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ORNAMENT OF STAINLESS LIGHT

AN EXPOSITION OF THE *Kālacakra Tantra*

Khedrup Norsang Gyatso

Ornament of Stainless Light

The Library of Tibetan Classics is a special series being developed by THE INSTITUTE OF TIBETAN CLASSICS aimed at making key classical Tibetan texts part of the global literary and intellectual heritage. Eventually comprising thirty large volumes, the collection will contain over two hundred distinct texts by more than a hundred of the best-known Tibetan authors. These texts have been selected in consultation with the preeminent lineage holders of all the schools and other senior Tibetan scholars to represent the Tibetan literary tradition as a whole. The works included in the series span more than a millennium and cover the vast expanse of classical Tibetan knowledge—from the core teachings of the specific schools to such diverse fields as ethics, philosophy, psychology, Buddhist teachings and meditative practices, civic and social responsibilities, linguistics, medicine, astronomy and astrology, folklore, and historiography.

Ornament of Stainless Light: An Exposition of the Kālacakra Tantra
Khedrup Norsang Gyatso (1423–1513)

The *Kālacakra,* literally "wheel of time," likely evolved into a full-fledged system of theory and praxis within Indian Mahayana Buddhism around the tenth century. In expounding the root text of this important Vajrayana Buddhist tradition, Indian master Puṇḍarīka, who according to legend was one of the Kalkī kings of the mythic land of Shambhala, wrote the influential work *Stainless Light.* Our volume is an authoritative Tibetan exposition of this important Buddhist text. The transmission of the Kālacakra teachings came to Tibet in the eleventh century when Gyijo Öser translated the key texts of this system into Tibetan.

One of the central themes of the Kālacakra literature is a detailed understanding of a correlation between the human body and the external universe. As part of working out this complex correspondence, the Kālacakra texts present an amazingly detailed theory of cosmology and astronomy, especially about the movements of the various celestial bodies. They also present a highly complex system of Buddhist theory and practice that involve, among others, the employment of vital bodily energies, deep meditative mental states, and a penetrative focus on subtle points within the body's key energy conduits known as "channels."

The Kālacakra teachings attracted commentarial works from many great Tibetan authors. Khedrup Norsang Gyatso's *Ornament of Stainless Light,* which has been selected specially by His Holiness the Dalai Lama for inclusion in *The Library of Tibetan Classics,* ranks among the most authoritative works on the theory and practice of this important Buddhist system.

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Thupten Jinpa, General Editor

ORNAMENT OF STAINLESS LIGHT

An Exposition of the Kālacakra Tantra

Khedrup Norsang Gyatso
Translated by Gavin Kilty

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Message from the Dalai Lama

THE LAST TWO MILLENNIA witnessed a tremendous proliferation of cultural and literary development in Tibet, the "Land of Snows." Moreover, due to the inestimable contributions made by Tibet's early spiritual kings, numerous Tibetan translators, and many great Indian *panditas* over a period of so many centuries, the teachings of the Buddha and the scholastic tradition of ancient India's Nalanda monastic university became firmly rooted in Tibet. As evidenced from the historical writings, this flowering of Buddhist tradition in the country brought about the fulfillment of the deep spiritual aspirations of countless sentient beings. In particular, it contributed to the inner peace and tranquillity of the peoples of Tibet, Outer Mongolia—a country historically suffused with Tibetan Buddhism and its culture—the Tuva and Kalmuk regions in present-day Russia, the outer regions of mainland China, and the entire trans-Himalayan areas on the southern side, including Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, Kinnaur, and Spiti. Today this tradition of Buddhism has the potential to make significant contributions to the welfare of the entire human family. I have no doubt that, when combined with the methods and insights of modern science, the Tibetan Buddhist cultural heritage and knowledge will help foster a more enlightened and compassionate human society, a humanity that is at peace with itself, with fellow sentient beings, and with the natural world at large.

It is for this reason I am delighted that the Institute of Tibetan Classics in Montreal, Canada, is compiling a thirty-volume series containing the works of many great Tibetan teachers, philosophers, scholars, and practitioners representing all major Tibetan schools and traditions. These important writings will be critically edited and annotated and will then be published in modern book format in a reference collection called *The Library of Tibetan Classics,* with their translations into other major languages to be followed later. While expressing my heartfelt commendation

for this noble project, I pray and hope that *The Library of Tibetan Classics* will not only make these important Tibetan treatises accessible to scholars of Tibetan studies, but will create a new opportunity for younger Tibetans to study and take interest in their own rich and profound culture. Through translations into other languages, it is my sincere hope that millions of fellow citizens of the wider human family will also be able to share in the joy of engaging with Tibet's classical literary heritage, textual riches that have been such a great source of joy and inspiration to me personally for so long.

The Dalai Lama
The Buddhist monk Tenzin Gyatso

Special Acknowledgments

THE INSTITUTE OF TIBETAN CLASSICS expresses its deep gratitude to Richard Gere and the Gere Foundation for funding this translation project.

We also acknowledge the Hershey Family Foundation for its generous support of the Institute of Tibetan Classics' projects of compiling, editing, translating, and disseminating key classical Tibetan texts through the creation of *The Library of Tibetan Classics.*

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General Editor's Preface

It is a source of great joy to present this English translation of Khedrup Norsang Gyatso's classic work on the Kālacakra system of thought and practice entitled *Ornament of Stainless Light.* This work, ably translated by Gavin Kilty, is the debut volume in English from *The Library of Tibetan Classics,* although it is volume fourteen in the series.

Two primary objectives have guided the creation and development of *The Library of Tibetan Classics.* The first is to help revitalize the appreciation and study of the important texts of the Tibetan classical cultural heritage within Tibetan-speaking communities all over the world, especially among the younger generation, whose lives represent the challenge of coexistence between traditional Tibetan culture and the realities of modern industrial existence. To this end, efforts have been made to develop a comprehensive yet manageable body of texts that feature the works of Tibet's best-known authors and span the entire gamut of classical Tibetan knowledge. The second objective for *The Library of Tibetan Classics* is to help make these classical Tibetan texts part of global literary and intellectual heritage through translation into contemporary European and other languages. In this regard we have made extensive efforts to make the English text of the *Classics* series reader-friendly. As much as possible, efforts have been made to ensure the main body of the text is free of unnecessary scholarly apparatus, which often intimidates the general reader. For those specialists who wish to compare the translation with the Tibetan original, the page references to the critical edition of the Tibetan text have been embedded within the translation.

Several other important considerations underlie the development of this series. The texts in the series span more than a millennium, beginning from the development of the current Tibetan script in the seventh century to the first part of the twentieth century, when Tibetan society and its culture were abruptly confronted with the modern industrial age. The volumes are

thematically organized and cover the following sixteen broad categories of classical Tibetan knowledge: (1) specific teachings of the Tibetan schools, (2) the bodhisattva's altruistic ideal, (3) presentation of the three codes, (4) the generation and completion stages of highest yoga tantra, (5) the Perfection of Wisdom studies, (6) the theory of buddha-nature, (7) the Middle Way philosophy of emptiness, (8) logic and epistemology, (9) Abhidharma psychology and phenomenology, (10) the tenets of classical Indian philosophies, (11) advice on worldly wisdom and civility, (12) gateway for the learned, which includes such diverse fields as linguistics, poetry, and literature, (13) medicine, (14) astronomy and astrology, (15) tales from Tibetan opera, and (16) historical writings.

The first of these sixteen categories covers the teachings of Kadam, Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyü, Geluk, Jonang, miscellaneous Buddhist schools, and the Bön school. Texts featured in these volumes have been, on the whole, selected by senior lineage holders of the individual schools. As for other categories, selection of the texts has been based primarily on recognition of the historical reality of the development of the individual disciplines. For example, in the field of epistemology, the works of the Sakya and Geluk schools have been selected, while on the topic of buddha-nature, the writings of Butön Rinchen Drup and Kagyü masters feature with greater prominence. Where there are fields of common interest, such as the presentation of the three codes or the bodhisattva's altruistic ideal, efforts have been made to include the perspectives of all four major Tibetan Buddhist schools. It is hoped that with the creation of *The Library of Tibetan Classics*, a manageable reference library of key classical Tibetan works covering the entire expanse of classical Tibetan knowledge will become available to many libraries, educational and cultural institutions, and interested individuals.

This inaugural volume of *The Library of Tibetan Classics* expounds on a system of Buddhist thought and practice that exerted great influence in many key areas of classical Tibetan knowledge. Though belonging to the class of Vajrayana Buddhist teaching, the Kālacakra genre of texts also covers such diverse fields as cosmology, astronomy, and astrology, classical numerical system, and medicine and human physiology. Since the principal theme of this volume is the exposition of Kālacakra system of meditative practice, many of the practices presented presuppose that the reader has received initiation into the highest yoga tantra. Furthermore, given the esoteric nature of some of these meditative practices, it's worth bearing in mind

the proper context of profound symbolism and meaning that encompasses many aspects of the practices described here, some of which may appear transgressive to the modern reader.

The author of our present volume, Khedrup Norsang Gyatso, was a well-known Tibetan scholar and adept of the fifteenth century. He was a student of, among others, the First Dalai Lama Gendün Drup and Taktsang Lotsāwa Sherap Gyaltsen, and later became a principal teacher of the Second Dalai Lama Gendün Gyatso. Though belonging to the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism, Norsang Gyatso is recognized as a seminal figure in the promotion of a syncretic approach, between the Geluk and Kagyü schools, to the teachings and practices of the Buddhist tradition of mahāmudrā. Along with Phukpa Lhundrup Gyatso, Norsang Gyatso is also credited with the founding of the highly influential Phuk school of Tibetan astronomy and astrology. Most importantly in the present context, because of his dedication to intensive meditative practice for more than four decades as a "wandering hermit," moving from one solitary place of retreat to another, Norsang Gyatso came to be revered in Tibet as a great meditator and teacher. Today he is included among the lineage masters of many important practice traditions, including of course the lineage of Kālacakra. Norsang Gyatso died in 1513 at the age of ninety-one.

It has truly been a great privilege to be part of this important translation project. I would like first of all to thank His Holiness the Dalai Lama for selecting this important text for inclusion in *The Library of Tibetan Classics*. I thank Gavin Kilty for doing such a superb job in translating this monumental text, and to the following individuals and organizations I also owe my sincere thanks: to David Kittelstrom at Wisdom for being such an incisive and dedicated editor; to Gene Smith and the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center for lending crucial Tibetan texts, including a copy of Norsang Gyatso's text on astrology; to the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, India, for providing full access to its library to the Tibetan editors who have sourced the numerous citations in Norsang Gyatso's text; and of course to my wife, Sophie Boyer-Langri, for shouldering the numberless invisible administrative chores that are entailed in a collaborative project such as this. Finally, without the indispensable fuel of funding, no amount of dedicated energy could have accomplished a project such as the translation of this volume. So I would like to thank Richard Gere and the Gere Foundation for funding the entire cost of translating this volume. I would also like to thank the Hershey

Family Foundation for its longstanding support of the Institute of Tibetan Classics, without which the dream of creating *The Library of Tibetan Classics*, of which this volume is a part, would never have gotten off the ground. It is my sincere hope that through the publication of this volume, the many thousands of individuals outside the Tibetan-speaking community who have received the Kālacakra initiation from His Holiness the Dalai Lama will have an opportunity to study this important Buddhist system of thought and practice so that they could take their understanding and practice to a deeper level.Through the efforts of all those who have been involved in this important venture, may all sentient beings enjoy peace and happiness.

Thupten Jinpa
General Editor, *The Library of Tibetan Classics*

Translator's Introduction

The Kālacakra tantra is a Buddhist tantra, which means that it reveals a method for the completion of the Mahayana[1] path by following the principles of tantra in general and those of highest yoga tantra specifically. It is tantra because its methodology involves the utilization of the transformative power of the mind focused upon attainable forms of enlightenment to initiate an alchemical process of transmutation. Forms of physical and mental enlightenment are mentally imposed upon ordinary external and internal forms to such an extent that, through the power of faith, understanding, and concentration, these visualized enlightened forms are held to actually replace the ordinary phenomena that act as their bases. This practice, when fully developed in the yogi's mind, is combined with the physiological manipulation of the vajra body[2] that will eventually transform the mind, and all that is created by that mind, into the "real thing"—the enlightened mind and form of a buddha.

The practice of the Buddhist tantric yogi is built on deep faith and conviction in those practices and their authenticity. In the eyes of such a practitioner, the Kālacakra tantra was first taught by the Buddha himself in the form of the deity Kālacakra. The initial teaching was given in south India in the sacred place of Dhānyakaṭaka from within an initiation mandala formed from the constellations, in which the sun, moon, and the two shadow planets, Rāhu and Kālāgni,[3] were uniquely positioned in the four directions. Prime among the audience of thousands of bodhisattvas and celestial beings was King Sucandra of Shambhala, a fabulous kingdom somewhere on this earth where the Kālacakra teachings were held and propagated until their appearance in India in the tenth or eleventh century C.E.

Sucandra, a manifestation of the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, returned to Shambhala and wrote down the teachings in twelve thousand verses. This was the *Root Kālacakra Tantra* and was known as the *Supreme Original*

Buddha. From then on he taught the tantra to the inhabitants of Shambhala until his death. The lineage was taken up by his descendants and royal successors, who continued his work of spreading the *Root Tantra.* About six hundred years after the death of Sucandra, the Shambhala king Mañjuśrī Yaśas compiled an abridgement of the *Root Tantra* for the benefit of the many non-Buddhist adherents in Shambhala. This abridgement is known as the *Condensed Kālacakra Tantra* and is the work referred to when the textual term *Kālacakratantra* is mentioned. Its commentary, composed by Puṇḍarīkā, the son and royal heir of Mañjuśrī Yaśas, is called the *Vimalaprabhā* or *Stainless Light.* It is often referred to as the *Great Commentary.* The *Root Tantra* itself did not survive in its entirety.

The "stainless light" in Khedrup Norsang Gyatso's title refers to Puṇḍarīkā's commentary. *Ornament of Stainless Light* is an overview of the five chapters of the tantra and seeks to explain the major points and clarify areas of doubt rather than being an exhaustive commentary. Khedrup Norsang Gyatso was a teacher of Gendün Gyatso, the Second Dalai Lama (1476–1542), and a disciple of Gendün Drup, the First Dalai Lama (1391–1474). After extensive study and a four-year retreat, he became well known as a Kālacakra scholar and a proficient astrologer. Gendün Gyatso praised him as being inseparable from the Shambhala king Mañjuśrī Yaśas. He was also learned in Sanskrit, poetry, and composition. He composed, in collaboration with Phukpa Lhündrup Gyatso, the *Puṇḍarīkā Transmission: A Treatise on Astronomy* and founded the Phuk tradition upon which Desi Sangyé Gyatso's *White Beryl* was based. Apart from astronomy he also composed works on the Guhyasamāja tantra and on dependent origination.

When the tantra found its way to India in the tenth or eleventh century, it was not always enthusiastically received. This tantra was one of the last tantras to appear in India, and it seemed to contain concepts that were more akin to the non-Buddhist Sāṃkhya and Jain philosophies than that of the Buddhists. Nevertheless it eventually found acceptance and took its place among the other great tantras of India. A succession of great masters, such as Nāropa, Kālacakrapada (who some identify with Nāropa), Avadhūtipa, Abhayākaragupta, and many others, wrote supplementary works to the tantra and succeeded in transmitting the lineage to future generations.[4]

Not long after the tantra arrived in India, it was brought to Tibet by the eleventh-century translator Gyijo Öser, who is widely credited with making the first Tibetan translation of the Kālacakra. It was eventually translated

into Tibetan at least fourteen times, and two main traditions emerged. The Dro tradition was founded upon the translation by Dro Lotsāwa, who worked with the Kashmiri Pandit Somanātha in Tibet, and the Ra tradition was begun by Ra Lotsāwa (1016–98), who worked with the Indian master Samanthaśrī in Nepal or Kashmir. It seems that the Ra lineage became influential within the dominant Sakya tradition that flourished at those times and thereafter within the Geluk tradition founded by Jé Tsongkhapa (1357–1419), whereas the Dro lineage was predominant in the Jonang tradition that was made prominent by Dölpopa (Sherap Gyaltsen 1292–1361) and others.[5]

The fourteenth century saw the Kālacakra become especially important to both Dölpopa and another highly influential figure, Butön Rinpoché (Rinchen Drup 1290–1364). These two great masters were responsible for popularizing the Kālacakra and cementing its reputation in Tibet. Butön Rinpoche annotated and wrote extensively on the Kālacakra tantra, while Dölpopa ordered a revised translation of the tantra and its commentary, the *Vimalaprabhā*.[6] It has been said that Dölpopa was the first master to conceive of the idea of giving the Kālacakra initiation as a public event.[7] From then on the Kālacakra lineage has not only survived but flourished in Tibet, mainly in the Geluk tradition but also in the Sakya, Kagyü, and Jonang traditions. Although these days there is a tradition of giving the Kālacakra as a public and unrestricted initiation, this probably wasn't always the case. There is, however, a record of the Panchen Lama giving the initiation in China in 1932 in a huge thirty-two-foot sand mandala.[8]

The Practice and Philosophy of Tantra

The state of mind most suitable for the transformative processes of tantra is a very subtle level of mind called the *mind of clear light.* This is a subtle level of consciousness and not a newborn state of mind developed by practice. It exists therefore within the mental continuum of every sentient being but is rarely evident or manifest. It may surface infrequently during life and will appear naturally during the process of dying. The yogi employs completion-stage tantric methods to make manifest this mind of clear light. This involves the manipulation of the vajra body, which mainly involves bringing into the central channel the winds that normally would flow through the left and right channels of the vajra body. The subtle mind of clear light is the best state of mind in which to focus on an understanding

of emptiness, the ultimate and true nature of all phenomena. This mind of clear light is then developed into the nature of bliss. This bliss is not a heightened form of worldly happiness, nor is it the bliss brought on by sustained meditative concentration alone, but is developed generally from penetrative focusing upon points within the cakras[9] of the vajra body and specifically from what are called the *four joys*. These four joys arise from the elemental drops, which normally are stationary within the vajra body, moving up and down the central channel. This movement in turn is brought about by practices of union involving a real or imagined consort or from the practice of generating the inner fire.[10] Eventually the subtle wind that accompanies the subtle mind is developed into a form resembling the enlightened form that is the goal of practice. This is known as the illusory body. The clear-light mind of bliss and emptiness and the illusory body are a union that develops into the *dharmakāya* and *rūpakāya*—the mind and form of an enlightened being.

In tantra a student must work closely with his or her guru—much closer than in the Perfection or Sutra vehicles. Nowhere is this more true than at the outset of tantric practice during the process of initiation. One can only enter the tantric path through the doorway of such a transmission. The term *tantra* is often etymologized as "continuum," and while this continuum refers to the unbroken continuum of the primordial or clear-light mind, it may also refer to transmission in the form of an initiation. During the initiation ceremony transmission is from the guru to disciple, and it is the guru, therefore, who holds the key to the door of the celestial mansion housing the deities of the tantra. The disciple needs to request someone else to confer the initiation ceremony because the nature of the spiritual phenomena to be transmitted is such that an ordinary unenlightened person could not do it. For example, because of its nature, the fourth or word initiation can be successfully transmitted by Buddha Vajradhara and no one else. The vajra master conducting the ceremony is therefore understood to be Vajradhara in the form of a guru. In the yogic pure view, oneself and one's immediate environment are viewed through celestial eyes, thus it would be inconsistent if the guru who is responsible for setting the practitioner on the tantric path were not also regarded with the same pure perception. Therefore all the guru's actions and behavior are understood as being solely for the guidance of the practitioner, regardless of how they might appear. Because of this it is said that there is no act of devotion too great to be performed for the vajra master.

With initiation the practitioner enters the generation stage, which involves preparing or ripening the mind for the completion stage that follows. The generation stage is essentially a process of pure-view development powered by meditative concentration, which overrides all habitual and ordinary pretantric perception. Its center of focus is the celestial mansion and the deities and mandalas housed within it. These are regarded as purifiers or transformers of ordinary existence, which takes the form of our perceived world. In this way the generation stage prepares the mind for the radical procedures of the completion stage.

The completion-stage practices make use of the vajra body. The purified and powerfully concentrated mind developed by the generation stage focuses on and penetrates the vajra body at the locations of elemental drops and cakras, thereby causing the winds to travel there. The primary purpose of this practice is to bring the winds into the blocked central channel and so make manifest the subtle mind of clear light. This clear-light mind is focused upon emptiness, while the accompanying subtle wind eventually arises in the form of the illusory body.

Distinctive Features of the Kālacakra Tantra

The Kālacakra follows this general methodology of tantra, although it is unique in some aspects. The *Condensed Tantra* or *Kālacakratantra* has around 1,030 verses arranged in five chapters. These chapters are Realms or External World, Inner, Initiations, Methods of Accomplishment, and Gnosis. The first chapter discusses the external world—its creation, features, and dimensions. According to the Kālacakra tantra, the external world is centered on Mount Meru surrounded by various lands or continents, with the four elemental mandalas below as a foundation and the planetary and stellar systems above. The purpose of this first chapter is an esoteric one in which this external world is regarded as a product of the karma of sentient beings, and its features, therefore, are regarded as suitable phenomena for purification by the practices of the generation and completion stages. The dimensions of this Kālacakra universe correspond perfectly to the enlightened phenomena of deity and celestial mandalas that become the purifier or transformer of the world. This is a karmicly created correspondence that is exclusive to those destined to be Kālacakra practitioners. The human body in its dimensions also corresponds to this external environment.

The size, shape, color, and general description of a world realm as found

in Kālacakra differs greatly from that described in Abhidharma-based literature. Scholars might say that the reason for these discrepancies is that the Kālacakra literature was probably composed in the latter half of the first millennium somewhere in central Asia and had therefore lost touch with fundamental tenets of Buddhist cosmology. This could also explain the amount of non-Buddhist Sāṃkhya terminology employed throughout the text. Some Indian scholars of the past attempted a compromise in which some parts of the tantra were deemed to be provisional and other parts definitive.[11] Nevertheless, the dimensions of the Kālacakra world realm correspond perfectly to the dimensions of the human body and the mandalas of the celestial mansion, and such a correspondence is essential for the Kālacakra practitioner.

The Kālacakra is also at great pains to point out that neither the Abhidharma nor the Kālacakra presentation of cosmology constitutes the sole truth on the matter to the exclusion of all other presentations, and that it is not necessary to establish such a truth because each presentation suits its own purpose. For this reason, those who try to marry or harmonize Buddhist ideas of the cosmos with present-day scientific knowledge could well be pursuing a fruitless task. The differences need not be resolved. The generation-stage practices of corresponding enlightened phenomena to ordinary phenomena with a view to transformation indicates a system in which mind developed to its full potential takes precedence over objectively viewed "real" phenomena. This important pillar of Vajrayana thought may explain its emphasis on phenomena being mind-created, particularly its assertion that all things in samsara and nirvana are generally created by the mind, or by the everpresent subtle mind and subtle wind.

The purpose of the second or Inner chapter is to present the "person composed of the six elements," the elements being earth, water, fire, air, gnosis, and space. This person's ordinary body and vajra body are presented as objects for purification by the corresponding enlightened phenomena of the generation-stage mandalas. One of the assertions of the Kālacakra is that there are no phenomena beyond the six elements. This is applicable to bodily phenomena and is also true of the resultant enlightened phenomena, such as the five buddha families. Therefore, an ordinary or "obscured" phenomenon included within the continuum of an ordinary being is transformed into its corresponding enlightened state by the completion stage without ever going beyond its essential elemental identity.

It is not only the major constituents of the body that have corresponding enlightened phenomena in the celestial mansion. The process that is the

very creation and development of a human form is also linked to meditative processes occurring in the generation stage. Conception, pregnancy, and birth are therefore described in detail in the Inner chapter.

Unique to Kālacakra is its assertion that enlightenment is not attained on the basis of an illusory body developed in the intermediate state, or *bardo*. According to Khedrup Norsang Gyatso this is because in Kālacakra the primary and substantial basis of an enlightened body is the body of *empty form*,[12] and this is not achievable in the ordinary state, whereas in other tantras the subtle wind is manifest during death clear light and used as a basis for the creation of an illusory body. Others say that the Kālacakra completion stage needs a coarse material body for its accomplishment and that such a body is not found in the intermediate state.

The bulk of the Inner chapter discusses the channels, winds, and drops of the vajra body. Although the vajra body exists in a subtle state, it is nevertheless what is called an *obscured phenomenon* and is therefore suitable for transformation. Presentations in some parts of the Inner chapter are at odds with those of other tantras. For example, the Guhyasamāja asserts that the crown cakra has thirty-two channel petals and the throat cakra sixteen, while the Kālacakra presents the crown cakra with four petals, the forehead with sixteen, and the throat with thirty-two. However such contradictions are resolved using the same reasoning found in the Realms chapter to explain the discrepancies in the dimensions of a world realm of the Kālacakra and of the Abhidharma. Khedrup Norsang Gyatso points out that Jé Tsongkhapa stated that every tantra stands on its own and that its assertions and presentations are definitive and verified as such by those yogis with meditative experience. Other differences include the colors, functions, and pathways of the channels below the navel; the locations, colors, and flow of the winds; the Kālacakra assertion that wind flows through the central channel during the ordinary state; and the functions of the four drops.

The third chapter, called Initiations, deals primarily with the seven or eleven initiations conferred on the Kālacakra initiate. It begins with an assessment of the qualities of suitable tantric gurus—vajra masters—and their disciples, followed by stipulations for the type of mandala to be constructed for the ceremony.

The seven childhood initiations are analogous to stages of childhood and by themselves empower the disciple to practice the generation stage and to work for the attainment of worldly powers *(siddhi)*. There is much disagreement among Tibetan masters on the functions of the four higher and

four higher-than-high initiations.[13] All agree that they empower the disciple to enter the practices of the completion stage and to work for the supreme *siddhi* of enlightenment. Khedrup Norsang Gyatso argues that the higher-than-high, or nonworldly, fourth initiation must be conferred after the worldly, or higher wisdom-knowledge, third initiation in order to empower the disciple to complete the six-branch yoga that makes up the completion stage, and that the remaining three higher-than-high initiations are conferred subsequently.

The generation stage

The fourth chapter, called Methods of Accomplishment (Skt. *sādhana*), covers the generation-stage practices of Kālacakra. As with tantras generally, the purpose of the transformative practices of the generation stage in Kālacakra is to ripen or prepare the mind for the advanced practices of the completion stage. This involves the practice of changing ordinary perception into pure view and developing the pride of being the meditational deity, often referred to as *divine pride.* It is not mere visualization of the mandala and the deities. Pure view and divine pride require complete mastery over the mind for their full implementation, and so the meditative state known as *peaceful abiding (śamatha)* is necessary. The Kālacakra celestial mansion, consisting of body, speech, and mind mandalas and over seven hundred celestial figures, and the corresponding phenomena of the inner and outer worlds are described in this chapter.

In the development of pure view, one's environment is seen as the celestial mansion, one's body as enlightened form, one's possessions and enjoyments as pure bliss, one's circle as buddhas and bodhisattvas, and one's activities as enlightened deeds. These are known as the *five perfections,* and they appear to the mental consciousness and not to the senses. These five perfections are found in actuality in the enlightened state that is the result of Vajrayana practice. Hence, the generation stage is a practice of the *result as a cause.*

Gyaltsap Darma Rinchen[14] explains divine pride in the following way. Representations of the self or person that is the subject of the thought "I" can be found in one's mindstream from beginningless time up to one's attainment of the state of Buddha Vajradhara. This future-self Vajradhara, the goal of one's practice, is taken as the subject of divine pride and posited as existing now. Divine pride does not mean thinking "I am a buddha, and that buddha is me as an ordinary being." Such a perception is distorted in

the same way that the perception of a piece of rope as a snake is distorted. With this distortion ordinary or habitual perception cannot be transformed. Therefore the "I" of the divine pride that thinks "I am the deity" is the "I" of our future enlightened form.

Kālacakra generation-stage practice begins from the creation of the protection wheel to guard against interference and moves on to practices corresponding to the ordinary processes of dying and being reborn. A meditation on emptiness called the *four gateways to freedom* corresponds to actual death. Following this is a practice known as the emanation of the *sovereign mandala,* which corresponds to the formation of the body in the womb. This involves creating the external elemental mandalas, on top of which is placed the celestial mansion. This corresponds to the formation of the external world and to the mother's womb. This is followed by the formation of the Kālacakra deities within the mansion, corresponding to the month-by-month development in the womb. Of the four branches of the generation stage, this initial practice is known as the branch of *approximation* and corresponds to a resultant state of enlightenment known as *body vajra.*

The second branch of the generation stage corresponds to ordinary birth and is known as the branch of *near accomplishment* or as the *meditation on the sovereign activities,* corresponding to the resultant state of enlightenment known as *speech vajra.* This involves a meditation called *arousing by song,* in which Kālacakra and consort are aroused from their blissful state by the songs of four goddesses. This process corresponds to the movement of the four winds within the mother's womb that encourage the child to move into the outside world. After the deity and consort have awoken into the world, the mandalas are emanated again. Deities known as *wisdom beings* are summoned and merge with mandala and assembly to become the *samaya mandala.* These activities correspond to the child's first engagement with the outside world through the medium of the senses, which is brought on by the movement of the winds. The second branch of the generation stage concludes with the meditations known as *sealing,* in which the principal deities of the mandala are sealed or marked with various syllables to indicate their family or clan. This is followed by meditations involving blessings of body, speech, and mind and a purity meditation in which each enlightened feature of the mandala is identified with an ordinary phenomenon.

The third branch of the generation stage is that of *accomplishment* or *drop yoga* and corresponds to the resultant *mind vajra* and to the ordinary process of the development of seminal fluid up to the age of sixteen. The

fourth branch is that of *great accomplishment* or *subtle yoga* and corresponds to the resultant *gnosis vajra* and to the halt in the growth of seminal fluid at the age of sixteen. These two practices involve the simulation of the completion-stage practice of moving the elemental drops of the vajra body through the central channel to induce the four joys. These require the use of an imagined or actual consort and are ripening processes for similar practices performed during the completion stage.

The completion stage

The Kālacakra generation stage is also known as *contrived yoga* and *conceptually created yoga.* Its practices involve the development of mentally contrived creations together with the recitation of mantras. This is the meaning of conceptual in this context. The completion stage is *nonconceptual* in the sense that such mental construction is no longer necessary. Empty-form deities and signs arise naturally within the clear-light mind of their own volition, like the images seen in a clairvoyant's mirror.[15]

The completion stage of highest yoga tantra is usually defined by its accomplishment of having induced the winds that normally flow through the two side channels to enter the central channel. According to Khedrup Norsang Gyatso all six yogas of the six-branched yoga that make up the completion stage fulfill that definition. However some commentators say that the practices of the first two yogas, withdrawal and meditative absorption, merely prepare the winds of the left and right channels for entry into the central channel by making them more pliable, and that they do not properly enter the central channel until the third yoga.

The Kālacakra completion stage is taught in the *Condensed Tantra* in the fifth chapter, called Gnosis (Skt. *jñāna*). The six-branched yoga already mentioned is not the same as the six yogas of Naropa nor is it identical to the similarly named six-branched yoga taught in the *Later Guhyasamāja.* Like the generation stage before it, the practices of the completion stage are divided among the four branches of approximation, near accomplishment, accomplishment, and great accomplishment. The first four yogas are grouped in pairs, so that withdrawal and meditative absorption comprise approximation, and the third and fourth yogas, praṇāyāmā and retention, make up near accomplishment. The fifth yoga, recollection, is accomplishment, and the last yoga, meditative concentration, is great accomplishment. These four categories also correspond to the four vajras mentioned above, the body, speech, mind, and gnosis vajras. There are no intervening stages

or practices between the complete accomplishment of the six yogas of the completion stage and the enlightenment that is the state of Vajradhara.

In the first yoga, withdrawal, the winds of the left and right channels are initially induced into the central channel. This purifies the central channel and prepares it for the subsequent yogas. Withdrawal is practiced by following a strict and ascetic meditational procedure in a blacked-out room without a trace of light for the night yoga and under the open skies for the day yoga. The discipline of this yoga includes a strict and carefully positioned bodily posture, a particular gaze of the eyes, and a mental placement focused on the central channel's upper opening, which is situated between the eyebrows. These practices bring the winds into the central channel for the first time, and the clear-light mind is made manifest. This activation of the clear-light mind is indicated by the empty-form appearance of ten signs, including such things as smoke and a mirage, which themselves are reflections or images of the clear-light mind. These empty-form appearances are held and stabilized by the second yoga, meditative absorption.

The term *withdrawal* refers to the withdrawal of the five senses from their external objects to be replaced by celestial senses developed by the mental consciousness. This differs from the withdrawal yoga of the Guhyasamāja tradition, where the senses withdraw into their objects to be enjoyed as expressions of bliss and emptiness.

In the first two yogas, the clear-light mind is made manifest and merges indivisibly with the empty forms, particularly the empty-form appearance of Kālacakra and his consort. These two yogas are known as *body vajra* meditations and bear some resemblance to the completion-stage practice of the Guhyasamāja tradition known as *body isolation,* in which phenomena are isolated from ordinary perception and appear as expressions of bliss and emptiness. In the first two yogas of Kālacakra completion stage, phenomena are severed from the senses and are perceived by celestial and clairvoyant senses.

The function of the third yoga, praṇāyāmā,[16] is to bring the winds fully into the central channel and to block off the left and right channels. The implementation of praṇāyāmā consists essentially of two practices known as *vajra recitation* and *vase yoga.* Vajra recitation involves a process where the innate tones of the incoming and outgoing breaths traveling through the central channel are identified with mantra syllables. In the practice of vase yoga, the upper and lower winds of the vajra body are brought to a point at the navel where they unite as a vase-shaped sphere. Due to this

concentration of mind and winds at the navel, the empty form figure of Kālacakra appears effortlessly at the navel. The yogi focuses on this empty-form deity with a clear-light mind and merges with it to generate the divine pride of being Kālacakra. The vase-yoga concentration of the winds at the navel is the inner cause for the blazing of the inner fire, which melts the elemental drops, also known as *bodhicitta,* which fall and rise again through the central channel to create the four joys. The bliss of the four joys is used to meditate on the emptiness that is the ultimate truth of phenomena, known in Kālacakra as *nonaspected emptiness.*

The fourth yoga, retention, retains the winds in the central channel and brings them into the drops that reside at the cakras along the central channel. Praṇāyāmā and retention are speech vajra meditations, and in the Guhyasamāja tradition vase yoga and vajra recitation are identified as speech isolation practices.

The fifth yoga of the six-branched yoga, recollection, is so called because the empty-form Kālacakra with consort Viśvamātā that arose during the appearance of the signs in withdrawal yoga is now recalled and develops into an actual phenomenon rather than a mere appearance. The yogi ignites the inner fire and generates the bliss of the four joys by way of vase yoga or by relying on two types of consort. The clear-light mind develops into that bliss, and the yogi focuses on and merges with this empty-form Kālacakra as an actual phenomenon. This is known as the *recollection body,* and the empty-form consort Viśvamātā is the *mahāmudrā consort.* Desire for this mahāmudrā consort leads to the final yoga and the creation of the highest form of bliss in Kālacakra, unchanging bliss.

The sixth yoga is meditative concentration. Khedrup Norsang Gyatso describes meditative concentration as:

> A gnosis that is the indivisibility of an unchanging great-bliss consciousness and the object of that consciousness, an empty form endowed with supreme characteristics that has the power to transform all aggregates, sources, and elements into nonobscured phenomena, as quicksilver transforms base metal into gold.[17]

This describes a union with the mahāmudrā consort that brings about a stacked arrangement of 21,600 bodhicitta drops in the central channel. These create a similar number of instances of unchanging bliss, which in

turn consume proportionate parts of the material body and gradually transform it into the empty-form body of Kālacakra. At the same time, each of the 21,600 instances of bliss destroys its share of the perception that holds to the true existence of phenomena. The result is the enlightened union of an unchanging bliss consciousness one-pointedly focused upon ultimate truth, emptiness, and united inseparably with an empty-form, rainbow-like, and obscuration-free Kālacakra and consort known as *Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace.* No other tantra employs this methodology for its final transformation into enlightenment.

A major difference between the Kālacakra and other tantras involves the creation of two bases or foundations that through meditational development will transform into the enlightened mind and enlightened form. All Buddhist paths of sutra and tantra are paths of cause and effect in the sense that attainments along these paths are reached by creating their proper causes within the mindstream of the practitioner. Although tantra utilizes the result as the path, it is still subject to the law of cause and effect. Therefore the completion stage must generate causal phenomena that will develop into enlightened results. For the enlightened mind or dharmakāya, this completion-stage causal phenomenon is the subtle clear-light mind developed into the nature of bliss and focused single-pointedly upon emptiness. This subtle state of mind exists unmanifest in all sentient beings, and therefore all beings possess the innate cause of the dharmakāya. The Kālacakra, in agreement with other tantras, accepts this subtle mind as the cause of the dharmakāya. However it differs from other tantras on the causes that develop into the rūpakāya, or enlightened form in the aspect of the deity of the tantra. It is the yogi's identification with an empty-form Kālacakra that is the basis and cause for his future enlightened form in the aspect of Kālacakra. Other highest yoga tantras present an illusory body developed from the subtle or primordial wind that acts as a mount for the primordial clear-light mind as the basis for the future enlightened form of the yogi. In Kālacakra, therefore, empty form as a product or reflection of the subtle clear-light mind is the basis for the development of both dharmakāya and rūpakāya. In Kālacakra literature the subtle or primordial wind is not mentioned at all.

The Jonang Tradition

The practice and philosophical interpretation of Kālacakra will normally follow the philosophical tenets of the tradition or lineage into which it has been

transmitted. The Geluk tradition founded by Jé Tsongkhapa, for example, will interpret Kālacakra philosophy, especially as regards emptiness or ultimate truth, in the light of the Middle Way philosophy of the great Indian masters Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti. However, in the case of the Jonang tradition, the Kālacakra literature itself informed this particular tradition's tenets.[18] Under the leadership of Dölpopa Sherap Gyaltsen, Jonang Monastery in the Jonang region of Tsang in central Tibet became the center of a new and radical philosophy conceived from the Kālacakra literature.

Many sutras, tantras, and Indian treatises talk of a phenomenon existing innately in all beings that is pure of all defilement, untouched by desire, anger, and ignorance, and that is the very essence of our being. Sutra descriptions of this phenomenon are found, for example, in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* which belongs to the Buddha's third turning of the wheel of the teachings. In Indian commentaries such as the *Uttaratantra* by Maitreya, it is referred to the as buddha nature or buddha essence *(tathāgatāgarbha)* and is likened to a gold statue covered in filthy rags, and to gold lying hidden in a poor man's garden. Highest yoga tantras such as the Hevajra tantra talk of the innate and the primordial existing within. The Kālacakra literature talks of empty-form images, which arise of their own volition, uncreated by mind, like images arising in a clairvoyant's mirror. The highest of these images is the empty-form Kālacakra and consort that arise in the completion stage.

Dölpopa asserted that this Kālacakra mahāmudrā empty form is the tantric form of the buddha essence taught in the third turning of the wheel of the teachings and that the path of revealing and developing it is the path to enlightenment as taught in the Kālacakra. This buddha essence was held to be ultimate reality, and became known as *shentong,* "emptiness of other" or "extrinsic emptiness." This was in direct opposition to the ultimate truth referred to as *rangtong,* "emptiness of self" or "intrinsic emptiness," that was propagated by the Geluk and Sakya traditions. According to the Jonang tradition, ultimate-truth emptiness is shentong because it is empty of all other conventional and false phenomena. It is not rangtong because it truly exists and is not empty of itself. All phenomena other than shentong must be rangtong because they are false and only imputed by mind. Even the emptiness taught in the perfection of wisdom sutras of the second turning, which was propagated by Indian masters such as Nāgāruna as being the definitive Middle Way philosophy, is not the ultimate emptiness because it is devoid of characteristics or features and is therefore without essence, whereas shentong itself is known as the *Great Middle Way.* Therefore, in sutra the third

turning of the wheel was the definitive turning, and the second provisional and in need of interpretation. In tantra, shentong is apotheosized as the meditational deities, in particular Kālacakra and his consort.

Much of the rangtong-shentong debate centers on the meaning of the Kālacakra term *empty form* or *emptiness form,* which is linguistically close to the term *emptiness,* and used as a synonym of ultimate truth. Khedrup Norsang Gyatso, and the Geluk rangtong tantra tradition in general, say that in Kālacakra literature the term *emptiness* sometimes refers to conventional-truth empty form and not always to ultimate-truth emptiness. *United with emptiness* or *embracing emptiness* may at times refer to the conventional phenomenon of union with the empty-form mahāmudrā consort rather than ultimate-truth emptiness. Therefore, they discern two kinds of emptiness in the Kālacakra: ultimate-truth emptiness, or *nonaspected emptiness,* and empty-form emptiness, or *aspected emptiness.* Some commentators say therefore that the emptiness in the term *bliss and emptiness,* when found in Kālacakra literature, refers to the empty-form mahāmudrā consort. This is because union in Kālacakra, both on the path and in the enlightened state, refers to the clear-light mind in the nature of bliss merged with empty form. However, this does not mean the ultimate-truth emptiness as taught in the sutras by the second turning and by Nāgārjuna has no place in Kālacakra, because the focus of the bliss in *bliss and emptiness* is on ultimate truth or nonaspected emptiness. Therefore Khedrup Norsang Gyatso explains aspected emptiness as a conventional-truth empty form, such as the mahāmudrā consort endowed with every feature of enlightenment, and nonaspected emptiness as being the ultimate truth arrived at through analytical investigation of the aggregates.

Opponents of the shentong view also say that shentong philosophy is redolent of early Indian Vedanta and Sāṃkhya non-Buddhist philosophies, with their concepts of an all-pervading, indivisible, and causeless phenomenon that represents a final and truly existent reality and that exists as a findable phenomenon separate from conventional appearance. This is the same charge that had been leveled at the Kālacakra tantra itself by its Indian and Tibetan opponents. Kālacakra's rather radical approach to the path of mantra, its leanings toward Sāṃkhya terminology, its presentation of empty form, the attainment of enlightenment by way of the 21,600 instances of bliss, the omission of any reference to an illusory body formed from the subtle winds, and differences with the Abhidharma on dimensions of the universe, all contribute to make the Kālacakra a unique tantra. Masters

such as Chomden Rikral (thirteenth century) and even the great Rendawa (1349–1412), teacher of Jé Tsongkhapa, claimed that the Kālacakra was not a pure tantra. Rendawa wrote a series of letters setting out his criticisms, which in turn provoked replies from adherents of the tantra. Many of these points of criticism are dealt with in Khedrup Norsang Gyatso's work.[19]

The Astronomy of the Kālacakra

Astronomy as employed exoterically in the Kālacakra is the science of calculating planetary and stellar movement in order to provide a measurement of time through the medium of calendars. It is not to be confused with astrology as the term is used these days. Predictive systems that relied upon the movements of the planets or an examination of the elements do exist in Tibetan astrology, but these were not the prime concern of the Kālacakra. A famous maxim of the Kālacakra runs, "as without so within." This means that the outside world is mirrored within the inner world of sentient beings. It also means that the practices of the two stages make dynamic use of this outer world mirrored within. The esoteric purpose, therefore, of the Kālacakra practitioner becoming well versed in astronomy is to be able to correspond external planetary and stellar movement with internal processes in his own vajra body as part of completion-stage practices.

Tibetan masters of Kālacakra posit two systems of astronomy—*siddhānta* and *karaṇa*. The former is said to be the true system of the Kālacakra *Root Tantra* and the latter a system in accord with general non-Buddhist astronomy that was adopted by King Mañjuśrī Yaśas when converting the Brahmin sages *(ṛṣi)* and compiling the *Condensed Tantra*.[20] According to tradition the "barbarians" who arrived eight hundred years after the compilation of the *Condensed Tantra* hid the true or siddhānta astronomy and replaced it with a flawed karaṇa system. It wasn't until the eleventh Kalkī king of Shambhala, Aja, reformed the karaṇa system in 806 C.E. that it became acceptable.

When the Kālacakra tantra arrived in Tibet, its astronomy, like the rest of its cosmology, was not immediately popular because of the suspicion that Kālacakra was not a true Buddhist tantra. Astronomy and astrology had been present in Tibet for many years, some of it indigenous, some of it from China. Moreover, astronomy had been taught in other sutras and tantras such as the *Vajra Ḍāka Tantra* and the *Sutra of the Twelve Eyes*. However, when Butön Rinpoché and Dölpopa popularized Kālacakra,

they popularized its system of astronomy as well. The Third Karmarpa, Rangjung Dorjé (1284–1339), gave the Kālacakra initiation to the king of Hor and composed the *Compendium of Astronomy* in 1312. This became the first Tibetan astronomy manual. Butön Rinpoché composed his *Treatise on Astronomy: A Delight for Scholars,* and Khedrup Jé wrote his voluminous *Illuminating Reality.* Since those times Kālacakra astronomy has formed the basis for all subsequent development in the calculations of the sixty-year cycle, lunar months, years, equinoxes, eclipses, and so on of the Tibetan calendar.

Even though Tibetan systems of astronomy were independent enough to have individual identities, their root reference was always the *Kālacakratantra.* Two main traditions of astronomy flourished for many years in Tibet. Tsurphu Jamyang Chenpo Döndrup was a follower of Rangjung Dorjé and established a scriptural tradition of astronomy that was commentated on by Trinlepa Choklé Namgyal and Tsuklak Trengwa (1504–65). This became the Tsur tradition. Khedrup Norsang Gyatso and Phukpa Lhündrup Gyatso compiled the *Puṇḍarīkā Transmission: A Treatise on Astronomy,* which was taken up by Samgyal and others to become the Phuk tradition. In 1681 Minling Lochen Dharma Śrī (1651–1718) composed his *Light of the Sun: A Treatise on Astronomy,* and Desi Sangyé Gyatso (1653–1704) composed his *White Beryl* in 1687. These two works consolidated the Phuk tradition as the major system in Tibet. In the eighteenth century Sumpa Yeshé Paljor (1709–88) founded the New Geden tradition, which superceded the Phuk tradition.[21]

Acknowledgments

Not being well versed in Kālacakra and in tantra in general, I needed help in many areas of the text. I am indebted to Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoché, who explained Kālacakra concepts to me and who gave of his time even though he was unwell. I spent many hours going through the text with Jado Rinpoché, abbot of Namgyal Dratsang Monastery, Dharamsala, India. Rinpoché always gave me clear and unhurried explanations even though his duties gave him little free time. I must also thank my old Institute of Buddhist Dialectics classmate Ven. Tashi Döndrup, who for three months came almost daily to help me out on difficult points.

On Kālacakra astronomy, a subject I know little about, I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Edward Henning, who has to be the West's foremost

expert in this subject. The time I spent closeted with him in his London home was invaluable. The Jonang scholar Ven. Ngawang Dorje and Sonam Rinchen, student at the Tibetan Medical and Astro College, Dharamsala, also gave their time freely to help me on this subject.

Not knowing Sanskrit, I needed help in deciphering the grammatical analysis of certain Sanskrit terms that Khedrup Norsang Gyatso sometimes employs in the text. For this I must thank Ven. Lobsang Norbu Shastri of the Tibetan Institute in Saranath, India, and another old classmate from the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, Gareth Sparham. In providing the countless references to classical Indian texts from the Kangyur and Tengyur, especially to the *Stainless Light,* I relied heavily on the work of the Tibetan editors who developed the critical edition of Norsang Gyatso's text that has been published by the Institute of Tibetan Classics.

I would also like to thank Andy Wistreich and Rudy Harderwijk for their selfless work in putting together a Kālacakra website that has proved a valuable resource on the mandala and its deity assembly. I am grateful to the Institute of Tibetan Classics for honoring me with the assignment of this important translation project and for the Gere Foundation for its generous funding of the work. In addition, I must thank my editor at Wisdom, David Kittelstrom, whose editorial skills have helped make the final text much more readable, and to Thupten Jinpa, the general editor of the *Library of Tibetan Classics,* for his overall supervision of the project and for his critical comments on the introduction. To all these, and of course to Jacquie, I offer humble thanks.

As translator of this text, any errors in the translation are my responsibility. If scholars more knowledgeable than myself should find mistakes, I ask for their tolerance and patience.

Technical Note

THE NAME OF THE TIBETAN TEXT IS *Phyi nang gzhan gsum gsal bar byed pa dri med 'od kyi rgyan* and is catalogued under *kha* in the Potala edition of Khedrup Norsang Gyatso's collected works. The translation is of a rare copy of the text archived by the Tibetan Library of Works and Archives, Dharamsala, India (*ga* 3, no. 1868) and reproduced from an ancient print found at Gemur Monastery, Lahul, India.

Bracketed numbers embedded in the text refer to page numbers of the new critical and annotated Tibetan edition of Norsang Gyatso's text published in modern book format by the Institute of Tibetan Classics in New Delhi in 2004 as volume fourteen of the series entitled *Bod kyi gtsug lag gces btus.*

All Tibetan names in the main body of text are rendered phonetically in accordance with a style sheet developed by the Institute of Tibetan Classics and Wisdom Publications especially for the *Library of Tibetan Classics* series. There is a correspondence table at the back of the book where transliterated spellings can be found. Sanskrit diacriticals are used throughout, except for naturalized Sanskrit terms such as sutra, mandala, and nirvana.

Pronunciation of Tibetan phonetics
ph and *th* are aspirated *p* and *t,* as in *pet* and *tip.*
ö is similar to the *eu* in French *seul.*
ü is similar to the *ü* in the German *füllen.*
ai is similar to the *e* in *bet.*
é is similar to the *e* in *prey.*

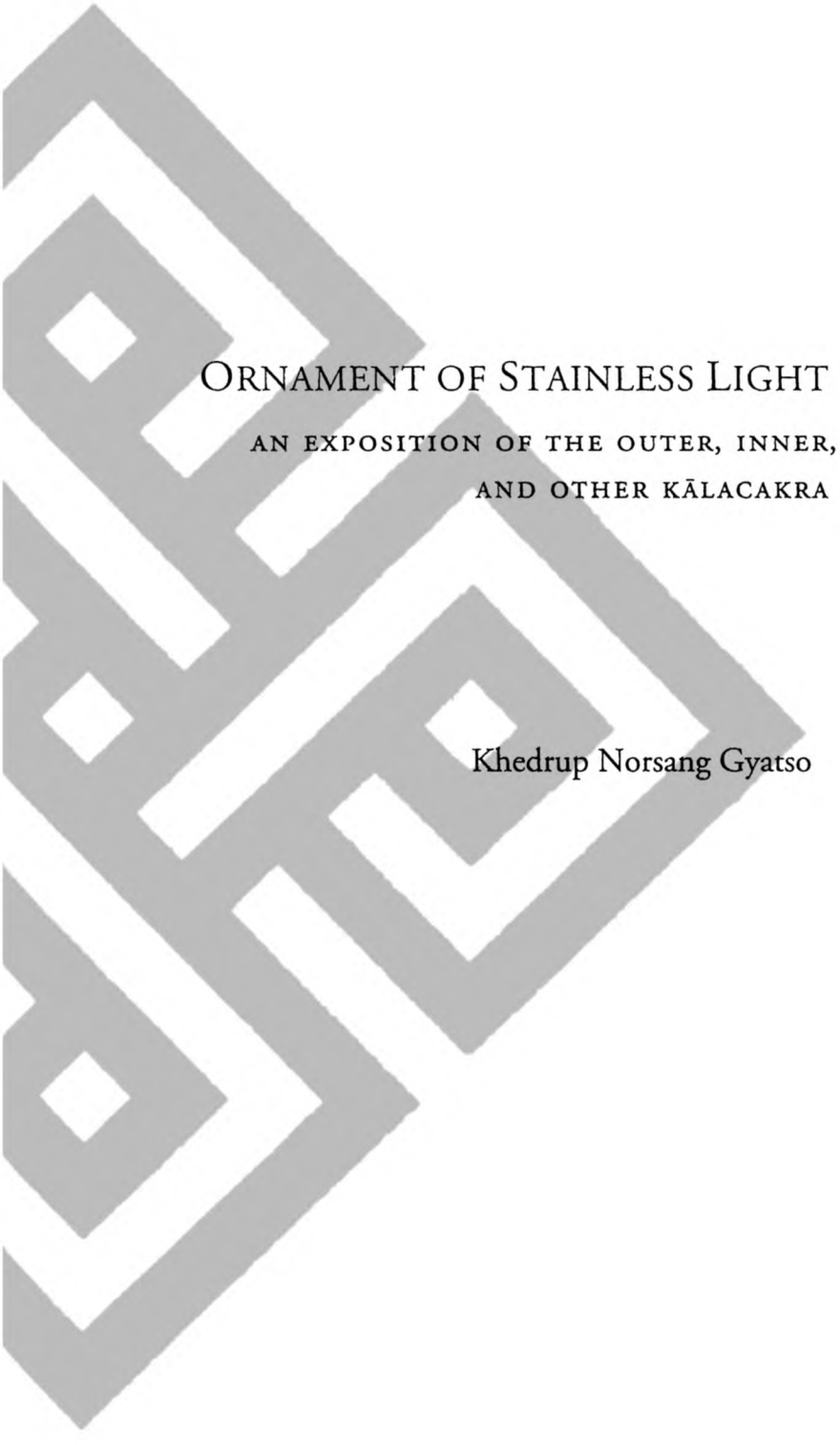
Pronunciation of Sanskrit
Palatal *ś* and retroflex *ṣ* are similar to the English unvoiced *sh.*
c is an unaspirated *ch* similar to the *ch* in *chill.*

The vowel *ṛ* is similar to the American *r* in *pretty.*
ñ is somewhat similar to a nasalized *ny* in *canyon.*
ṅ is similar to the *ng* in *sing* or *anger.*

In the original Tibetan text, there are a few annotations occasionally inserted in small fonts. These, according to Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoché, are by someone other than the author, and for the most part, they attempt to identify the unnamed holders of particular views quoted and often refuted by Khedrup Norsang Gyatso. These notes appear in my translation in parentheses.

Editions of the *Vimalaprabhā* and *Condensed Tantra* I have used for consultation were: *Vimalaprabhā,* archived at Tibetan Library of Works and Archives, Dharamsala, India; Peking Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka,* 2064, translated by Pandit Somanātha and Dro Sherap Drak; *Condensed Tantra,* in *Kālachakratantra and Other Texts,* Prof. Dr. Lokesh Chandra and Prof. Dr. Raghu Vira (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1966). However, since the referencing of the multiple citations from classical Indian texts from the Kangyur and Tengyur has been based on the Institute of Tibetan Classics' new critical edition of Norsang Gyatso's text, all references to *Stainless Light* are provided from the Dergé edition. The *Vimalaprabhā* is found in both the Kangyur and Tengyur of the Dergé collection. Endnote sources for *Vimalaprabhā* citations refer mostly to the Dergé Kangyur. The word *śrī* inserted after *Vimalaprabhā* references indicates Dro Lotsāwa's translation found in the Kangyur, while the letters *tha* and *da* indicate Shong Lotsāwa's translation in the Tengyur, when specific references are made to this edition.

In the notes, when both Tibetan and Sanskrit are given for technical terms, the Tibetan is given first.



Ornament of Stainless Light

an exposition of the outer, inner, and other kālacakra

Khedrup Norsang Gyatso

Introduction

1. Compilation of the Root and Condensed Tantra

Homage to noble Mañjuśrī, composite of the knowledge
and wisdom of every buddha.

Manifestation of unchanging and ultimate great bliss
in indivisible union with nonaspected wisdom,
arising from unchanging, immovable moon nectar
stacked in the skies of the central channel,
a supreme form, a mighty indranīla mountain
embraced by a few young clouds,
in empty-form aspect endowed with every attribute supreme,
embraced by the wisdom consort Viśvamātā:
to you I bow.

Not moving from realms of profound, unfathomable wisdom,
yet the untainted renown of your enlightened activity
in bringing the fortunate to the paths of ripening and freedom
dances before the ladies of the ten directions;
mighty conqueror, Losang Drakpa and your disciples,
I bow my head to your lotus feet.

From the great clouds of their knowledge
fall the rains of scripture and reasoning
to nourish the harvest of happiness.
Pens of wisdom have drawn in clarity upon their minds
precious pictures of the two types of knowledge.
By expounding the doctrine of the mighty dharma king,
you hold aloft a banner of stainless renown;
sublime masters, kindness without parallel,
remain forever upon the crown of my head.

[4] Here I will write a little on the Outer, Inner, and Other, which make up the three main themes of the glorious Kālacakra. There are four main outlines:

1. Introduction: How the Buddha taught the *Kālacakra Root Tantra*
2. The primordial mind and body: Principal themes of the highest yoga class of tantra
3. Explanations of the intentions of the highest yoga tantras
4. An exposition of the Outer, Inner, andOther: The three themes of Kālacakra

The first has three outlines:

1. How the Buddha taught the *Kālacakra Root Tantra*
2. Compilation of the *Tantra*
3. How the *Root Tantra* and the *Condensed Tantra* were taught by the dharma kings and the Kalkī[1] kings of Shambhala

How the Buddha taught the Kālacakra Root Tantra

Our teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha, actualized complete enlightenment in the noble country of India under the Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya and turned the wheels of dharma by teaching the perfections, particularly the perfection of wisdom, upon Vulture's Peak. He traveled to the great stupa of Dhānyakaṭaka near Śrīparvata in southern India. Inside the stupa he emanated the mighty dharmadhātu speech mandala below and the glorious constellation mandala above.

In this perfect place, a place of great bliss, he sat upon a vajra lion throne in the great Vajradhatu mandala. There this perfect teacher, the lion of the Śākya, entered the meditative concentration upon Kālacakra and became the master of the mandala. Surrounding him was the perfect mandala entourage of buddhas, [5] bodhisattvas, wrathful protectors, gods, nāgas, and goddesses, as well as the entourage of the tantra requestor, King Sucandra, an emanation of Vajrapāṇi, who had traveled by miraculous powers from the kingdom of Shambhala. By requesting the tantra an audience gathered, consisting of the ninety-six kings of the ninety-six lands of Shambhala, many bodhisattvas, and countless fortunate gods and *asura*. There the perfect dharma of worldly and nonworldly initiations, followed by prophecies of enlightenment and the *Twelve Thousand Kālacakra Root Tantra* was taught. Here "twelve thousand"

refers to the number of verses. In the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary*, in the second summary it says:

> "Twelve thousand" refers to a collection of 384,000 syllables, which comprise 12,000 thirty-two-syllable anuṣṭubh verses, and this is the *Twelve Thousand Tantra.*[2]

As this quote explains, a verse in *anuṣṭubh* meter consists of lines of eight syllables. Although the tantra taught in the Dhānyakaṭaka stupa was the *Kālacakra Root Tantra,* it is the assertion of the Kālacakra and its commentaries that every highest yoga tantra was being taught. The *Later Kālacakra Tantra* says:

> By the teaching of the *Twelve Thousand* in the dharmadhātu of Dhānyakaṭaka, all tantras of the Buddha were taught.[3]

This can also be known from the Sūryaśrī's *Drops of Nectar:*

> In the great and regal stupa of Dhānyakaṭaka, the conquering Buddha, the lion of the Śākya, was supplicated by those who wished to hear various tantras. There on the full moon of the middle spring month, in the form of the primordial buddha, he emanated the dharmadhātu speech mandala and the glorious constellation mandala above. There on that very day gods and others were initiated by the Buddha and taught extensively and in condensed form all the systems of secret mantra.[4]

But when did our teacher teach the *Root Tantra,* and what are the dates of the Buddha? [6] This should be explained in detail. The words of the *Root Tantra,* "Six hundred years from this year" are explained by the *Great Commentary* in the ninth summary from the Realms chapter:

> This is the year the Tathāgata taught the dharma. It was prophesized that six hundred years after that year the great Mañjuśrī Yaśas would surely appear in the land known as Shambhala, north of the Sīta River.[5]

Therefore, approximately six hundred years after the Buddha taught the

Root Tantra, the Kalkī king Mañjuśrī Yaśas appeared. The *Great Commentary* in the third summary from the Realms chapter says:

> Mañjuśrī became King Yaśas and from the bodhisattva lion throne he taught the dharma for a hundred years.[6]

Therefore, adding the hundred years of Mañjuśrī Yaśas to the previous six hundred since the time of the Buddha totals seven hundred years. The *Great Commentary* in the ninth summary from the Realms chapter states:

> "Naga hundred years from then" means that "naga, or eight, hundred years from the time of Yaśas's" passing, "definitely," meaning without doubt, the dharma of the barbarians will enter the land of Makha.[7]

Adding the above seven hundred years to these eight hundred years between death of Mañjuśrī Yaśas and the coming of the barbarians totals one thousand five hundred years. Adding fire, sky, and ocean[8] years to the above makes 1,903 years. Therefore, from the time of the Buddha teaching the *Root Tantra*, up to the end of the 221 years of astronomy,[9] 1,903 years elapsed.

The *Condensed Tantra* states, "The past years of prabhava[10] and so forth are to be added." The last of the 1,903 years, or the last year of the 221 years of astronomy, is established as the *kṣaya* Fire Tiger year.[11] Dividing 1,903 by sixty and working backward from Fire Tiger year in sixty-year cycles leaves a partial cycle of forty-three years. The first year of that forty-three, counting backward from the Fire Tiger year is the *tāraṇa* male Wood Monkey year. Therefore, that year is the first year of the 1,903, working backward from the last year [7] of the two 221 years of astronomy. It is also the first year of the six hundred years mentioned in the prophecy, "After six hundred years Mañjuśrī Yaśas will appear." Six hundred years is an approximation because between the teaching of the *Root Tantra* and the beginning of the six hundred years, King Sucandra compiled the *Root Tantra* and composed a commentary. This would have involved one or two years. How many years exactly? The *Great Commentary*, in the third summary, says:

> With the ascertainment of the tathāgata, the twelve-thousand-verse king of tantras and the extensive commentary of sixty

> thousand verses were written down in the languages of Shambhala and other lands and were taught by King Sucaṇḍra to those who lived in the many towns of the ninety-six lands. This teaching was heard and read by those with faith. They committed it to memory and taught it extensively to others. In the second year of teaching of the tantra, in order to create the causes for powerful attainments in others, he displayed the mandalas and magical creations, then entered the saṃbhogakāya enjoyment body, source of the nirmāṇakāya emanated body.[12]

This quote explains that in the second year of his teaching the *Root Tantra* and the extensive commentary Sucandra passed away. This year counts as the year of his passing. Before that, compiling the *Root Tantra*, composing the sixty-thousand-verse *Extensive Commentary*, and so forth took two years. Therefore, from the time of Sucandra first teaching the *Root Tantra* and commentary until he passed away, three years must have elapsed. In the "easy to understand" verses from the Realms chapter, it says:

> In Kalāpa, of the land known as Shambhala,
> glorious king, for some days you were the lord of men,
> supreme among gods, before returning to your abode.[13]

"Some days" is often explained as meaning three years and three fortnights,[14] and the phrase "some days" in this quote is no exception. The three years of Sucandra are not included in the six hundred years because in the *Great Commentary*, immediately after the words "he entered into the saṃbhogakāya enjoyment body, source of the nirmāṇakāya emanated body," it says:

> Then Sureśvara taught the tantra for a hundred years, as did Tejī, Somadatta, [8] Sureśvara, Viśvamūrti, and Sureśāna.[15]

Thus, the six kings each taught for a hundred years. Therefore, the three years of Sucandra and the year the Buddha taught the *Root Tantra* account for four years not included in the six hundred, and so in the quote that states that Mañjuśrī Yaśas will appear six hundred years after the teaching of the *Tantra*, the six hundred years are an approximation. Therefore, the actual first year of the six hundred years mentioned in the prophecy of

King Mañjuśrī Yaśas would be four years before Wood Monkey year.[16] This is Iron Dragon year and in this year on the full moon of the Caitra month the Buddha taught the *Root Tantra.* In the Gnosis chapter of the *Great Commentary,* in the Supreme Unchanging Gnosis summary, it says:

> Six hundred years after I have passed away, in the land of Shambhala, from the womb of Vijayadevī of Śākya lineage, Mañjuśrī as Kalkī Mañjuśrī Yaśas, son of Sureśāna will appear.[17]

The passage also states that Mañjuśrī Yaśas will appear six hundred years after our teacher taught the *Root Tantra.* Therefore, the *Root Tantra* was taught in the year of Buddha's passing.[18] This means that the *vikrama* Iron Dragon year was the year in which our teacher taught the *Root Tantra* and was also the year in which he passed away. From his birth our teacher stayed for eighty years and in his eighty-first year on the full moon of Vaiśākha, he passed away. His eightieth year was *pramathi* Earth Rabbit year and, counting backward from that year, the forty-sixth year is *jaya* Wood Horse year, and that is the year of our teacher's enlightenment. Using the same method, counting back from *pramathi* Earth Rabbit year, the eightieth year is *rudra* Iron Monkey year, which establishes it as the year of our teacher's birth. Moreover, in the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* it says:

> The bodhisattva turned twenty-nine, left the palace, and for six years practiced austerity. After that, it is known that he came to actualize the nectar of immortality.[19]

Counting forward from Iron Monkey year, the twenty-ninth year is *sarvadhara* male Earth Rat and that is the year of leaving the palace. Six years on from that year is *jaya* Wood Horse year, and that year is the forty-sixth year counting back from *pramathi* Earth Rabbit year. Therefore, in the Vaiśākha of Wood Horse year, the last of the spring months, on the full moon, in the last period of the night, at the onset of dawn, close to the beating of the drum, he became a complete and perfect buddha. [9] The *Lalitavistarasūtra* says:

> Monks, in that way, the bodhisattva in the third part of the night, as dawn approached, close to the time of the beating of the drum...[20]

In the first summary of the Initiation chapter from the *Great Commentary* it also explains that he became a buddha during Vaiśākha at the approach of dawn:

> As dawn approached on the full moon of the *vaiśākha* month, the conqueror, the mighty one of the Śākya, became a complete buddha. He turned the wheels of dharma and taught the three vehicles. Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon in Śrī Dhānyakaṭaka...[21]

This Vaiśākha full moon corresponds perfectly to the Vaiśākha full moon of the *jaya* Wood Horse year, fifty years[22] before the Water Sheep year, which is the year preceding the Wood Monkey year, the first year of the prophesied six hundred years, because of the following reasons. On the basis of the *karaṇa*[23] epoch data[24] that appeared at the end of the 221 years of astronomy and accepted as correct by all astrologers except for those of the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission* and the *Elimination of Error Tradition,*[25] calculating backward shows that on the full moon of that Vaiśākha, the planetary day was day one[26] and was forty hours old. The moon's lunar mansion was sixteen and one hour.[27] The lunar mansion position of the face of Rāhu was sixteen and twenty-nine hours.

Using *siddhānta* astronomy epoch data from the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission,* the planetary day was day one and thirty-eight hours. The moon's lunar mansion was sixteen exactly, and the face of Rāhu was also sixteen and twenty-nine hours.

Therefore, the claim that on the day the conqueror became a Buddha, at dawn the moon was held by Rāhu[28] is confirmed. How is such a claim made? A *Vinaya* passage states:

> When the Conqueror attained the highest wisdom, Yaśodhara gave birth to a son, and the moon was held by Rāhu.

Also:

> When he was born the moon was held by Rāhu. Therefore, the child's name was also Rāhula.[29]

In the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* it says:

> To King Śuddhodana, his people said, "Please the gods! The prince has attained the highest wisdom!" When that was heard, and on that very day, a son was born to Yaśodhara and a son was born to Amṛtodana. On that day also, the moon was held by Rāhu.[30]

[10] If our teacher taught the *Root Tantra* when he was close to passing away, doesn't this contradict the quote "Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon...?" Doesn't this line from the commentary explain that our teacher attained complete enlightenment on the Vaiśākha full moon and on the Caitra full moon of the following year he taught the *Root Tantra*? To avoid any contradiction that might arise on this point, the omniscient dharma master Butön and his followers hold that the quote "Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon" and the prophecy that six hundred years after the Buddha passed away Mañjuśrī Yaśas would appear are both valid, and assert that our teacher taught the *Root Tantra* in the second year of his enlightenment. They present many reasons why the two commentary quotes are not contradictory. The Jonang dharma master Choglé Namgyal[31] and his followers say that the quote beginning "Six hundred years after I have passed away..." is merely a note in the margins of the Indian text and therefore is invalid. The Jonang followers assert that our teacher taught the *Root Tantra* in the second year of his enlightenment.

Such claims can be understood as being wrong. If they were correct, then consider this. When our Teacher attained complete enlightenment it was the full moon night of Vaiśākha, and the moon was held by Rāhu, the sutra reference of which has been explained previously. According to the above claims, the first year of the six hundred years mentioned in the prophecy concerning the coming of Mañjuśrī Yaśas would have been the male *tāraṇa* Wood Monkey year.[32] Therefore, the preceding years would have been Water Sheep, Water Horse, Iron Snake, Iron Dragon, Earth Rabbit, and Earth Tiger. The following years would have been Wood Bird and so forth. If the above assertions were correct, then in one of those years, on the full moon of Vaiśākha there would have been an eclipse. However, the charts establish that there was no eclipse on the full moon of Vaiśākha of any of those years. This is because if a reverse calculation is made using *karaṇa* epoch data that arose after the 221 years of astronomy and accepted as being authentic during the time of *karaṇa* astronomy by all astrologers (except the *Elimination of Error Tradition*), then for none of those years is it possible

to construct a chart in which Rāhu eclipses the full moon night of Vaiśākha. However, the *Great Commentary* says:

> As dawn approached on the full moon of Vaiśākha, the Conqueror, the mighty one of the Śākya, became a complete buddha. He turned the wheels of dharma and [11] taught the three vehicles. Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon in Śrī Dhānyakaṭaka...[33]

Doesn't this indicate that the *Root Tantra* was taught in the second complete year of his enlightenment on the full moon of Caitra? Such a conclusion arises from holding Caitra always to be the first month in the Kālacakra tradition and Phālguna as always being the twelfth. The reality is that, in Kālacakra thinking, months are formed by being either "waxing-led" or "waning-led."[34] On the basis of being waxing-led, Caitra is the first of the months and Phālguna is the twelfth. On the basis of being waning-led, Vaiśākha is the first of the months and Caitra is the twelfth. The reasons for designating months in this way is as follows. In Kālacakra thinking the beginning of the seasons is established by the sun entering Aries at the spring equinox during either the waxing or waning phases of the moon. The mean sun entering Aries will appear between the first lunar day and the empty-sky lunar day[35] of a waxing-led Caitra. When this mean sun appears between the first and the fifteenth of the month, Aries, as the beginning of the seasons, is assigned to waxing-led Caitra. When the mean sun entering Aries appears between the sixteenth lunar day and the empty-sky lunar day, Aries as the beginning of the season is assigned to a waning-led Vaiśākha month. In this case Vaiśākha is the first month and Caitra is the twelfth. In the Realms chapter, in the ninth summary, it says:

> In this continent, south of Meru, when the sun dwells in Aries, it is Vaiśākha in the season of spring.[36]

Generally, months were designated this way. Therefore, "Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon," from the quote above, is made on the basis of a waning-led Vaiśākha as the first month and Caitra as the twelfth month. The line "Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon" and so on is commentary to "The end of Caitra is at the time of waxing," and so forth. "The end of Caitra" and so forth explains the full

moon of Caitra as being the end of the Caitra month. Immediately before the quote "Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon" is the passage: [12]

> Here in India after the last of the fifteen days of the bright side begins the first day of the dark side. Therefore, as dawn approached on the full moon of Vaiśākha, the Conqueror, the mighty one of the Śākya, became a complete buddha."

This indicates that the end of the full moon of Caitra, which begins the days of waning, is the beginning of Vaiśākha and is the first month of the year. The quote beginning "Mañjuśrī also, six hundred years after I have passed away" can therefore be left as it is, and the above commentary quotes are freed of contradiction.[37] Therefore, as asserted by those of the earlier traditions of Ra and Dro, by Palden Lama Dampa,[38] and as explained by the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission,* the explanation that the Conqueror taught the *Root Tantra* on the full moon of Caitra as he approached his passing away can be seen to be correct.

To summarize, the focus of the doubts is whether our teacher taught the *Root Tantra* in the year in which he passed away or in the year following his enlightenment. If the second year of his enlightenment is posited as the year he taught the *Root Tantra,* an eclipse of the moon on the night of the full moon of Vaiśākha at the time of his enlightenment cannot in any way be constructed in the charts. Some (such as Jamyang Chögön)[39] have constructed a chart showing an eclipse on the full moon of Vaiśākha of the *viśva* Water Horse year just before the beginning of the prophesied six hundred years. This is a reverse calculation using *karaṇa* astronomy, but within this particular method of calculation there are many quantitative faults regarding the sun and the planets in the 1,682 years,[40] and so it is not valid.

Some (such as Chögyal Jangpa)[41] have formulated an eclipse of the full moon in Vaiśākha of the *vyaya* Iron Snake year occurring in daytime. The way the chart was constructed is correct, but there is no terminology for Rāhu grasping the moon in the daytime. Moreover, the quote from the *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra* says:

> To King Śuddhodana, his people said, "Please the gods! The prince has attained the highest wisdom!" When that was heard, and on that very day, a son was born to Yaśodhara and a son was

> born to Amṛtodana. On that day also, the moon was held by Rāhu.[42]

This passage speaks as if the moon being held by Rāhu was actually seen by those around King Śuddhodana. Concerning the phrase "on that day," the calculation of one complete day is referred to as the "calculation of a day." Similarly, it is the complete day within which the eclipse occurred that is spoken of in the phrase "on that day." [13]

Therefore, our teacher taught the *Root Tantra* on the full moon of Caitra just before he passed away. The time of his passing is established as being the final part of the Vaiśākha full moon of *vikrama* Iron Dragon year. Eighty-one years back from that year is the Iron Monkey year and is established as the year of our teacher's birth. The month, the date, and planetary positions can be known by a thorough study of the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission.*

Compilation of the Tantra

This has two outlines:

1. Compilation of the *Root Tantra*
2. Compilation of the *Condensed Tantra*

Compilation of the Root Tantra

In the Realms chapter, in the third summary it says:

> Because of the ascertainment of the Tathāgata, the twelve-thousand-verse *King of Tantras* and the *Extensive Commentary* of sixty thousand verses were written down in the languages of Shambhala and other lands and were taught by King Sucandra to those who lived in the many towns of the ninety-six lands.[43]

Our teacher taught the *Root Tantra* on the full moon of Caitra in the Iron Dragon year. King Sucandra memorized the text and returned to Shambhala. After our teacher passed away, he wrote down the *Root Tantra* as well as his own composition, the sixty-thousand-verse *Extensive Commentary,* in the language of Shambhala. These he taught to the ninety-six kings of the nine hundred and sixty million towns and to other fortunate beings for three

years from the Iron Dragon year to the Water Horse year. Having completed his teachings in the Water Horse year, in the following Water Sheep year he created the Kālacakra mandala in order to bring about the causes of siddhi in others. There he displayed magical powers and passed away.

Where was this mandala created, and how was it created? South of the city of Kalāpa is the park of Malaya, twelve yojana across and of the same size as Kalāpa. There in its the center, built entirely of the five precious stones whose nature was that of gods and goddesses, stood the body mandala with four sides and four entrances. It was four hundred cubits wide, adorned by four portals and the eight cemeteries, enclosed by five walls, surrounded by the four mandala environments of earth and so forth and encircled by the vajra garland. [14]

Within the body mandala and of half its size was the speech mandala with four sides and four entrances, adorned by four portals and enclosed by five walls. In the center of the speech mandala and of half its size again was the mind mandala with four sides and four entrances, adorned by four portals and enclosed by three walls. In the center of the mind mandala and of half its size was the mandala of gnosis, beautified by sixteen pillars. In its center and of half its size was a lotus of eight petals. This mandala, with every feature complete, was created by the power of mind.

That Sucandra compiled the *Kālacakra Root Tantra* after our teacher had passed away is verified by the *Great Commentary:*

> In this noble country the Tathāgata attained complete enlightenment. When the Conqueror passed away, the compilers wrote down the three vehicles.[44]

Compilation of the Condensed Tantra

After King Sucandra passed away, Sureśvara and the other five dharma kings taught the *Root Tantra* for the next six hundred years beginning from the Wood Monkey year, the first of the prophesied six hundred years. Then, as it says in the Realms chapter, in the third summary:

> Mañjuśrī became King Yaśas and from the bodhisattva lion throne taught the dharma for a hundred years. When the hundred years ended...[45]

King Mañjuśrī Yaśas taught the *Root Tantra* for a hundred years. Then, with the power of the blessings of the Tathāgata's prophecy as a cause, and knowing with his five kinds of clairvoyance that the minds of Sūryaratha and the other ṛṣi were fully ripened and would move to the perfect path, on the Phālguna full moon of the hundredth year, the *rudhirodgārin* Water Pig year, he gathered his intended disciples, Sūryaratha and the other thirty-five million Brahmin ṛṣi, in the mansion of the Kālacakra mandala created by King Sucandra. There he announced:

> Sūryaratha and you other Brahmin ṛṣi, my words will produce the perfection of omniscience. Listen! Next month on the full moon of Caitra I will give you the teachings of the Vajra Vehicle.

[15] As soon as he had spoken these words, the ṛṣi fainted from fear. Seeing that this teaching and the thoughts of the ṛṣi were in conflict, King Mañjuśrī Yaśas said:

> I will lead you into this mansion of the conqueror Kālacakra and give both worldly and nonworldly initiations. Furthermore, by my command, you should eat, drink, and create relationships through marriage in accord with the vajra caste. If you choose not to do this, then leave my nine hundred and sixty million towns and go where you will. Otherwise, after eight hundred years the descendants of your castes will spread the barbarian dharma...

And so on until:

> Therefore, do as I say.

These words of King Mañjuśrī Yaśas with his admonishment struck the Brahmin ṛṣi like thunderbolts, and they called to Sūryaratha:

> Sūryaratha, tell King Mañjuśrī Yaśas that we will not enter the initiation of the vajra caste and that therefore, by his command, it would be better to go to the noble land of India.

Sūryaratha addressed the mighty Mañjuśrī Yaśas with words of praise for his qualities, beginning "O great king, supreme king," and so on. He continued:

> Show kindness to those who live within their own castes. If we must do as you say without question, we will not enter the initiation of the vajra caste, but by your command, it would be best for us to go south of the Śīta River to the noble land of India, which lies between the snow mountains and the island of Lanka.

King Mañjuśrī Yaśas replied:

> Then quickly leave the land of Shambhala.

On the command of King Mañjuśrī Yaśas, the Brahmin ṛṣi all rose and left the city of Kalapa. On the tenth day they entered a forest. With his clairvoyant powers King Mañjuśrī Yaśas was aware of this, and with many reasons in mind he entered the [16] meditative concentration known as *deluding the castes of Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Rudra* to temporarily bewitch the ṛṣi and to bring them back. By the power of that meditative concentration and the blessings of the gods, the ṛṣi were so spellbound that local hunters and others were able to capture them and carry them back to place them at the feet of mighty Mañjuśrī Yaśas. Once the ṛṣi were freed from the spell and saw the king, the mandala, and Malaya Park, they were amazed, and as they uttered words of astonishment, Sāgaramati, the king's minister and an emanation, praised King Mañjuśrī Yaśas and urged the ṛṣi to petition the king for initiation into Kālacakra. By the power of these words and by the blessings of the buddhas, the dharma minds of Sūryaratha and the other ṛṣi were truly awakened. The ṛṣi urged Sūryaratha to make the request. In response, and together with all the ṛṣi, he prostrated to the feet of King Mañjuśrī Yaśas, offered a mandala made of jewels and gold flowers, and made his petition:

> Bestow the worldly and nonworldly initiations, abridge the king of tantras within the *Supreme Original Buddha*[46] with a shorter version of the twelve thousand verses of the *Original Buddha* as taught to King Sucandra by the Tathāgata, and teach it to the ṛṣi.[47]

Mañjuśrī Yaśas listened to Sūryaratha's plea, and because of the inclination of the Brahmin ṛṣi and the power of the Tathāgata's blessings, he compiled the *Condensed Tantra.*

In what style was that accomplished? Sūryaratha and the others were adherents to good grammar, and to wean them away from their attachment to that the king employed "reliance upon meanings,"[48] whereupon some verses had bad grammar, some had poor line and word separation, some had no grammatical cases, while in others vowels and consonants were omitted. In some verses short vowels were long while [17] long vowels were short. Some that should have been in the fifth case were in the seventh, and some of the fourth case were in the sixth.

Therefore, encased in the *sragdhara* meter and consisting of 86,520 syllables, with each verse possessing eighty-four syllables, the twelve thousand verses of the *Original Buddha* were condensed into 1,030 verses and taught to the ṛṣi. This is mentioned in the *Root Tantra,* quoted in the Realms chapter, in the third summary:

> Therefore this condensed essential meaning
> is asserted by myself the omniscient one.
> In sragdhara verses of thirty more than ten hundred,
> in five chapters, the glorious tantra complete,
> will be taught by the king of orators.
> He too will be the compiler.[49]

However, in the current Jonang translations there are 1,042 verses, while in the Gyijo[50] and Ma[51] translations there are 1,043. On top of that, there are two verses from the Gnosis chapter, quoted in the *Great Commentary* in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary, that are not found in these root translations.[52] These are the 170th verse that begins, "Karma arises from disturbed states of minds, and from that comes suffering. Disturbed states of mind arise from one's suffering," and verse 182. Together these make up 1,045 verses. How is this to be explained? Thirteen verses, comprising ten verses beginning with verse 252 of the Gnosis chapter that begins, "The glorious dharma," plus the last verse of the Inner chapter beginning, "You are the mother, you are the father," as well as the ninety-fourth verse of the Realms chapter beginning, "Glorious Kālacakra," and verse 149 of the Realms chapter beginning, "On the pure supreme foundation," are the words of King Mañjuśrī Yaśas and Sūryaratha, and are not

compiled from the *Root Tantra.* Also it is said that the ninety-fourth verse of the Gnosis chapter is not compiled from the *Root Tantra.* This clearly leaves one verse not compiled from the *Root Tantra,* and that is something to examine. [18] Apart from those fifteen, the remaining 1,030 verses have been compiled from the *Root Tantra.*

How the Root Tantra and the Condensed Tantra were taught by the dharma kings and the Kalkī kings of Shambhala

This section is divided into two:

1. The main explanation
2. The duration of these teachings and the duration of the Buddha's teachings in general

The dharma king Sucandra taught the *Root Tantra* for three years. After he passed away, six dharma kings each taught the *Root Tantra* for a hundred years. These six kings are spoken of in the *Root Tantra,* which is quoted in the Realms chapter in third summary:

> Sucandra, Sureśvara, Tejī,
> Somatta, Sureśvara,
> Viśvamūrti, and Sureśāna[53]

The text continues to explain who these kings were emanations of:

> Vajrapāṇi is you Sucandra,
> then Kṣitigarbha, Yamāntaka,
> Viṣkambhī, Jambhaka,
> Mānaka, Khagarbha.[54]

Sureśāna taught the *Root Tantra* for a hundred years. After him his son, Kalkī Mañjuśrī Yaśas, taught the *Root Tantra* for a hundred years. In the hundredth year in the male Wood Rat year on the Caitra full moon, he gave initiation to Sūryaratha and the other ṛṣi, compiled the *Condensed Tantra,* and passed away. In that male Wood Rat year, his son Puṇḍarīka composed the *Vimalaprabhā* or *Great Commentary.* From then on, for eight hundred years, Puṇḍarīka and seven other Kalkīs taught the *Condensed Tantra* together with its commentary, each teaching for a hundred

years. In the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary*, in the ninth summary, it says:

> "Naga hundred years from then": naga (meaning eight) hundred years from the time of Yaśas's passing, definitely (meaning without doubt) the dharma of the barbarians will enter the land of Makha.[55]

This teaches that eight hundred years after the passing of King Mañjuśrī Yaśas, the barbarians would enter the land of Makha. In the "easy to understand" verses of the Realms chapter it says:

> Among the Kalkīs, sons and grandsons
> of time multiplied by hands, will have passed away,
> and at that time and without doubt,
> [19] the barbarian dharma will enter the land of Makha.[56]

"Hands" here means two and "time" means four. After eight Kalkīs comprising Mañjuśrī Yaśas, his son Puṇḍarīka, his grandson Bhadra, and the others have passed away, the barbarians will enter the land of Makha. Therefore, eight hundred years after the passing of Mañjuśrī Yaśas, the barbarians entered the land of Makha, and from his passing until that time, Puṇḍarīka and seven others appeared. This establishes that the eight Kalkīs from Puṇḍarīka to Subhadra each taught the dharma for a hundred years.

The nine Kalkīs from Mañjuśrī Yaśas to Subhadra are spoken of in the *Root Tantra* quoted in the third summary of the Realms chapter:

> Yaśas of Kalkī line,
> then Kalkī Puṇḍarīka,
> and Kalkī Bhadra, these three.
> Likewise, the fourth, Vijaya,
> then Sumitrabhadra, Ratnapāṇi,
> the seventh, Viṣṇugupta,
> Sūryakīrti, and Subhadra.[57]

As soon as Subhadra passed away, the barbarians arrived, and Kalkī Samudravijaya ascended to the throne. Samudravijaya taught the dharma for 182 years. After him came Kalkī Aja, who taught the dharma for 221

years. Therefore, the six dharma kings and twenty-three Kalkīs are similar in that they each taught for a hundred years. The reigns of Samudravijaya and Aja, however, lasted more than a hundred years. This can be known as follows. In the ninth summary it says:

> Six hundred years after the Tathāgata is the time of Mañjuśrī.[58]

This establishes the time of King Mañjuśrī Yaśas.

> Similarly eight hundred years from then is the time of the barbarians.

This establishes the time of the arrival of the barbarians. Similarly:

> Less 182 years from the time of the barbarians is the time of Kalkī Aja, who reformed the abridged karaṇa astronomy.

The years from the time of the barbarians arriving in Makha until the last of the 221 years of astronomy are the fire, sky, and ocean years. Subtracting 182 years from the fire, sky, and ocean years is to arrive at the first year of the 221 years of astronomy. That year is the time that Kalkī Aja appears. Establishing the fire, sky, and ocean years is primarily for the purpose of knowing the number of years that have passed since the barbarians arrived, but it is also for knowing the dates of these two kings.

It is incorrect to assert, as those of the past have done, that every Kalkī ruled for a hundred years. This is because from the time the barbarians first arrived in Makha until they are destroyed by Kalkī Rudra, their barbarian dharma will have been in existence for 1,800 years, and from the time of Kalkī Samudravijaya ascending to the throne simultaneous with the arrival of the barbarians until the coming of Kalkī Rudracakrī, the number of Kalkīs does not exceed sixteen. Therefore, positing the reigns of Samudravijaya and Aja as totaling 403 years accords perfectly with the duration of the barbarians, because each of the hundred years of the fourteen Kalkīs from Sūrya to Rudra, added to the 403 years of Samudravijaya and Durjaya totals 1,803 years. The *Later Kālacakra Tantra* establishes the barbarian duration as eighteen hundred years:

> For eighteen years times a hundred in Makha, and elsewhere in

noble lands, are those renowned as barbarians, those of the darkness. These I will destroy.[59]

In the "easy to understand" verses of the Realms chapter from the new Jonang translations it says:

In every continent, during the four ages, the barbarians will enter,
remaining there for a hundred of eight and one years.
Then their dharma will decline.[60]

"A hundred of eight and one years" is written using another system of enumeration. Putting eight last and one first and multiplying that by a hundred totals one thousand eight hundred. The sum of the reigns of the Kalkī kings from Samudravijaya onward must tally with the duration of the barbarians, and because of the differences found in the reigns of Samudravijaya and Aja, [21] it can be established that the remaining fourteen Kalkīs each reigned for a hundred years.

The sixteen Kalkīs beginning from Samudravijaya are stated in the *Root Tantra*:

Samudravijaya, Aja, Kalkī Sūrya is the twelfth,
Viśvarūpa, Śaśiprabha, Ananta, and Mahīpala,
Śrīpala, Hari, Vikrama, Mahābala, and Aniruddha,
Narasiṃha, Maheśvara, Kalkī Anantavijaya,
then his son, again the Kalkī Yaśas,
as Kalkī Rudra, possessed of the great wheel,
who by skillful speech, *the best of horses samādhi*,[61]
will put an end to the barbarian dharma.
For the skillful teacher of Sūryaratha and the others,
Sucandra, you will compile the *Root Tantra*
and be the composer of an extensive commentary,
and here sentient beings will be ripened.
For the condensed tantra of Vajra Mañjuśrī,
Padmapāṇi[62] will compose the commentary.[63]

Therefore, from King Sucandra to Kalkī Rudracakrī, thirty-two kings will have reigned. Rudracakrī also reigns for a hundred years. In the "easy to understand" verses in the Realms chapter it says:

> For a hundred years on the final throne of the thirty-two
> will sit the enemy of the asura, possessor of the wheel.[64]

Also:

> Vajra Mañjuśrī, Kalkī of the vajra caste,
> bowed to by the king of the gods, the supreme god.[65]

This states that Mañjuśrī Yaśas was an emanation of Mañjuśrī. Because he amalgamated the four castes into the vajra lineage, he is spoken of as a Kalkī. The verses continue:

> At the end of the ages, from the succession of twenty-five reigns,
> the caste of Kalkī bowed to by the greatest of gods,
> the wrathful Kalkī will appear.[66]

This teaches that the number of Kalkīs from Mañjuśrī Yaśas to Rudracakrī is ascertained at twenty-five, and that of the four ages of our teacher's doctrine,[67] [22] the Kalkī Rudra will appear at the end of the age of troubles.

Therefore, Rudracakrī appears when our teacher Śākyamuni's doctrine of tantra has reached the end of the age of troubles, and eighteen hundred years will have passed since the arrival of the barbarians in Makha. In the ninety-seventh year of his reign, aided by the armies of the twelve great gods and others, Kalkī Rudra will leave Shambhala to journey to the noble land south of the Śīta River, and there, in lesser Jambudvīpa, they will defeat in battle the armies of the barbarians with their asura allies and bring them and others dwelling in the barbarian dharma to the Vajra Vehicle. Then, clockwise from lesser Jambudvīpa, they will enter the other eleven sectors[68] one by one, and where the Vajra Vehicle of our teacher Śākyamuni has declined at the end of the era of troubles, they will restore it. In all twelve sectors, thereby, the teachings of the victorious Vajra Vehicle will bring about an era of completeness.

With such an accomplishment and his hundred-year life at an end, his two sons, Brahmā, an emanation of Mañjuśrī, and Indra, an emanation of Avalokiteśvara, will be appointed teachers of the Vajra Vehicle, and Rudra will pass away. Brahmā will be the dharma teacher in Shambhala north of the Śīta River for eight hundred years, while Indra will be the teacher of dharma in the noble country and other lands.

In this way, Rudracakrī brings the Vajra Vehicle of the Conqueror at the end of the age of troubles into an age of completeness. How long will that doctrine last? In each continent it will last for eighteen hundred years. In the "easy to understand" verses in the Realms chapter it says:

> The ages of completeness, of three, of two, and of troubles
> is ascertained by the measurements of None Higher.[69]

As this quote states, the total duration of the four ages of the restoration of the doctrine by Rudracakrī in the twelve continents is the length of one day in the realm of None Higher,[70] or in the human realm, 21,600 years. That divided by twelve is eighteen hundred and that is the duration of the four ages in each of the twelve sectors. Moreover, concerning the length of each of the [23] four ages of completeness, three, two and troubles, the tantra says:

> As to the length of each, a hundred human years
> multiplied by time and arrow.[71]

Therefore, the sum of each of the ages' duration in the twelve sectors is 5,400 years. That divided by twelve is 450 and is the duration of each age in each of the twelve sectors.

Therefore, the duration of the doctrine known as the four ages is of two kinds: the earlier four ages of the Buddha's doctrine and the later four ages of Rudracakrī's restoration of the doctrine. The four ages of the Conqueror's doctrine run from his passing until Rudracakrī has completed ninety-seven years. This is a total of 3,304 years. These years are made up of the four years from our Teacher delivering the *Root Tantra* until the passing of Sucandra, seven hundred years from King Sureśvara until the passing of Mañjuśrī Yaśas, eight hundred years from Puṇḍarīka until the passing of Subhadra, the 403 years of Samudravijaya and Aja, the 1,300 years of the thirteen Kalkīs from Sūrya to Anantavijaya and the ninety-seven years of Rudracakrī.

However, if Rudracakrī defeats the barbarians at the age of ninety-seven, in the "easy to understand" verses in the Realms chapter of the *Tantra* it says:

> The barbarian hordes destroyed with allies,
> at half one hundred human years,

the accomplishment of the Kalkī
in the great celestially designed palace behind Kailash.[72]

Doesn't this quote say that Rudracakrī will destroy the barbarians and their allies at the age of fifty and then pass away in Shambhala behind the mountain of Kailash? There is no contradiction. This quote explains that Kalkī Rudra, from his ninety-eighth year until the completion of his hundred years, will thoroughly destroy the barbarian hordes and their allies who have accepted [24] the barbarian dharma. Having weakened the non-dharma flourishing at the end of the age of troubles in the twelve sectors, he will appoint his sons Brahmā and Indra as dharma teachers at the end of his hundred years. Half one hundred, or fifty human years, after his passing into great bliss, the barbarians that he defeated and their allies will accomplish the path of the Kalkī. Where will this occur? In Shambhala, in the great celestially designed palace behind Kailash. If it were otherwise, and Kalkī Rudra defeats the barbarians at the age of fifty, then the barbarian duration of eighteen hundred years would be fifty years short. Furthermore, the *Tantra* says:

For a hundred years on the final throne of the thirty-two,
will sit the enemy of the asura, possessor of the wheel.[73]

This states that Kalkī Rudra reigns for a hundred years. Also:

In the age of completeness every dharma of the barbarians
will be destroyed by the master of the three worlds.
Appointing Brahmā for eight hundred years,
he will travel to the place of bliss.[74]

This explains that immediately after destroying the barbarian dharma, Brahmā will be appointed dharma teacher for eight hundred years, and Rudra will travel to the place of bliss, meaning that he will pass away.

It was previously explained that our teacher became a buddha and passed away on *vaiśākha* full moons. In the Realms chapter, in the second summary, it says:

Internally, "corpse" refers to the cessation of 21,600 in and out breaths, less 3,600.[75]

This passage explains that the Vajrapāṇi emanation King Sucandra was a tenth-level bodhisattva who had not yet negated two sets of 1,800 breaths.[76] There are similar explanations of the Mañjuśrī and Avalokiteśvara emanations, Mañjuśrī Yaśas and Puṇḍarīka, as being tenth-level bodhisattvas. Furthermore, in the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary,* in the seventh summary, in the part where it explains how the profound meaning of the Kālacakra is not for the attachment-free listeners,[77] [25] it begins, "Those free of attachment, the noble Ānanda and others,"[78] and goes on to explain how the profound meaning is not for the noble Ānanda and others. These statements and others are made in accordance with the views of the common vehicle in which disciples take the deeds of the Buddha and the emanations of bodhisattvas and śrāvakas as being factually true in the way they were performed. However, the final thinking of the *Root Tantra,* the *Condensed Tantra,* and the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* is expressed in the *Great Commentary:*

> The conquering Buddha in countless, countless emanated illusory and nonobscured forms in the great thousand world realms engages in the languages of every sentient being when various supplicants request the Buddha in the limitless tongues of limitless sentient beings. With omniscient speech he teaches worldly and nonworldly dharma. Yet the omniscient one is not more than one. Therefore, in order to teach worldly and nonworldly dharma to all sentient beings, the conquering Buddha first became the powerful one of the twelve levels, then with skilful and great magic, with great visual illusion, he took birth from the womb of Māyādevī, wife of Śuddhodana, king of the Śākya clan, to become the youth Siddārtha.[79]

As this quote indicates, Śākyamuni had already attained complete enlightenment in the past, and in the course of working for the benefit of countless sentient beings with countless emanations, in this world he manifested enlightenment and passing away. Similarly, Vajrapāṇi, Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and others had already attained complete enlightenment when they took the form of tenth-level bodhisattvas and worked for the benefit of others. These and other examples are beyond the scope of thought. In the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary,* in the third summary, it says:

> The great one of the world dwelt in the hells for the sake of sentient beings. There the messengers of death and the lords of death spoke these words of praise, "Although free from the chains of existence, he holds to existence for the sake of sentient beings. He is here to teach in order to empty hell and not as a result of previous actions. The taints of the mind have been burned off by the fire of wisdom, a mind always moist [26] with flawless compassion, whose deeds, without conception, are joyfully done for the benefit of sentient beings. To the Buddha we prostrate.[80]

More specifically in *Bright Lamp* it says:

> Why in this world are the venerable Ānanda and others renowned as compilers of scripture? Ānanda is the great bodhisattva Samantabhadra. He is Vajrapāṇi, undifferentiated from the great Vajradhara. Otherwise, how could Vajrapāṇi, having heard from the Tathāgata the eighty-four thousand volumes of sutra, memorize them on a single hearing without omission or addition?[81]

As scriptural support for the above, a passage from a highest yoga tantra called *Special Secrets* is quoted:

> Furthermore, I will explain the perfect entourage of the omniscient one. It is like this: Mañjuśrī was the great king Śuddhodana.[82]

Therefore, when the Conqueror taught the highest tantras, the teacher, compilers, and entourage of listeners were emanations of the Buddha and of the same continuum as the Teacher himself. Even those of the commonly accepted entourage such as Ānanda and King Śuddhodana were emanations of the Teacher and of the same continuum as the compilers of the tantras. Similarly, it should be known that it is the final thinking of the *Kālacakra Root Tantra* and its commentaries that King Sucandra and others, who were at the special gathering for the teaching of the *Root Tantra*, were also emanations of the Teacher. The *Hevajra Tantra* says:

> The teacher is me, the dharma too is me.
> The gathering and the listeners are me.
> The teacher of the world and the practices are me.
> The worldly and the nonworldly are me.[83]

In the commentary to the above by Vajragarbha it says:

> "The worldly and the nonworldly are me" means that all that is held with certainty by infantile beings—the Buddha and his queens, the sensual pleasure, the entourage, the teachings of the dharma, the teacher, the listeners, and teaching by desire[84]—are to be refuted. These are for developing the insights of sentient beings in the future. They are the play of the buddhas. [27] In reality, the form of a buddha is as a vajra, immovable as an ox.[85]

The duration of these teachings and the duration of the Buddha's teachings in general

In the sutra tradition the duration of the teachings has been variously put at one thousand years, two thousand years, and so on. In some volumes of the *Sutra of the Good Eon*[86] the duration is said to be five thousand years. In *Destroying Harm to the Three Mothers* it says, "It is taught that the Tathāgata's teaching will last for five thousand years."[87] Ācārya Mañjukīrti also says that the teachings would remain for five thousand years. Therefore, these claims can be taken literally, while other estimates found in the sutras, such as one thousand years, were taught, as the commentary *Illuminating Reality* says,[88] for specific reasons. This position is accepted by many masters, including those of the Sakya tradition, and therefore the five-thousand-year duration will be explained here.

The five thousand years are divided into ten sets of five hundred years. In the first three sets many arhats, nonreturners, and stream-enterers[89] appeared. These first three periods are known, therefore, as the period of the arhat, the period of the nonreturner, and the period of the stream-enterer respectively. Collectively they will be known as the *three periods of realization.* In the following three sets of five hundred years, many beings endowed with special insight, meditative concentration, and morality appeared. These three periods are known individually as the periods of special insight and so forth and collectively as the *three periods of practice.* In

the next three sets of five hundred years many teachers of Abhidharma, Sutra, and Vinaya will appear. Individually these periods will be known as the periods of Abhidharma and so forth. Collectively they will be called the *three periods of transmission.* In the last five hundred years there will be no pure views or practice and only the outward signs of monasticism will be adhered to. This period will be known, therefore, as the *period of adherence to mere signs.* These are the five thousand years from the passing of the Buddha until the completion of the period of adherence to mere signs. This is the duration of the Perfection Vehicle teachings.

However, this is not duration of the teachings based upon the Vajra Vehicle. As there is no presentation of the special path of mantra within the canon of the Perfection Vehicle, [28] there is no reason for it to state the duration of the teachings of the Vajra Vehicle. Therefore, the duration of the teachings of the Vajra Vehicle is as taught in the Kālacakra Tantra and its commentaries. The four ages of Śākyamuni's mantra teachings begin from the time of his teaching the *Root Tantra* and his passing until the time Kalkī Rudracakrī first defeats the barbarians. This has been explained as totaling 3,304 years. To this is added the four ages that make up the eighteen hundred years of Rudracakrī's restoration in Greater Jambudvīpa. This comes to 5,104 years.

Therefore, the duration as explained here and the duration as explained in the sutras differ by about a hundred years. This, however, is no error because the duration of the Perfection Vehicle teachings and of the Vajra Vehicle teachings are separate presentations from separate canons. For example, in the glorious Kālacakra and its commentaries, it is explained that in the northern continent of Uttarakuru, both sets of the four ages of the teachings will arise after each other, whereas in the Perfection Vehicle canon it is stated that the beings of Uttarakuru are unsuitable vessels for the Conqueror's teachings.

How much time has already passed and how much remains? Those of the past would have calculated, to quote one set of figures, that from the time of the Buddha's passing to this *śobhana* female Water Rabbit year,[90] 3,615 years have passed. Many differing calculations exist. Using the *Śrī Kālacakra Tantra* and commentaries as a basis, four years elapsed from the time of the Buddha's passing until the passing of King Sucandra. From then until the death of Mañjuśrī Yaśas, seven hundred years passed. After Yaśas came the eight hundred years from Puṇḍarīka to the arrival of the barbarians. Then came the fire, sky, and ocean years. Therefore, from the

passing of our teacher up to the last year of the 221 years of astronomy, 1,907 years elapsed. These figures have been sequentially quoted in the *Tantra* and commentaries. To this total is added the number of years of the teachings of past Kālacakra masters, such as Paṇḍita Śākyaśrī up to the end of this *śobhana* Water Rabbit year. This comes to seven sixty-year cycles and thirty-seven years.[91] As a total this comes to 2,364 years. Therefore, according to the Perfection Vehicle, [29] 364 years of the period of meditative concentration have passed, and 2,636 years of the teachings remain. According to the general duration of the teachings of the Vajra Vehicle, 2,740 years are still to pass.

Moreover, up until this *śobhana* Female Water Rabbit year, fifteen Kalkīs up to King Ananta have passed, and since Kalkī Mahīpala began teaching the dharma, fifty-seven years will have passed by the end of the year. Nine hundred and forty years from the end of this Water Rabbit year, Kalkī Rudracakrī will appear, and the Vajra Vehicle teachings of the conquering lion of the Śākya, such as the transmission and practice of the Śrī Kālacakra, will enter the age of completeness.

The introduction on how the Buddha taught the *Root Tantra* and so forth is complete.

2. The Primordial Mind and Body

The primordial mind and body: Principal themes of the highest yoga class of tantra

This has two main outlines:

1. Primordial mind
2. Primordial body

Primordial mind

1. The tantras and Indian scripture: Sources for primordial mind
2. A short explanation of the content of these passages

The tantras and Indian scripture: Sources for primordial mind

The *Great Commentary,* in the Gnosis chapter, says:

> Sentient beings are buddhas. Mighty buddhas other than that are not found in the world.[92]

In the Initiation chapter of the *Great Commentary:*

> That which abides in the hearts of sentient beings is gnosis. It is the indestructible sound, constantly in the character of the nāda.[93]

[30] The *Great Commentary* in the first summary on the Inner chapter says:

> "Gnosis is mixed with emptiness." That which dwells conventionally in the body in the form of a relationship between that

> which is pervaded and that which pervades is gnosis dwelling in the bodies of all sentient beings as emptiness.[94]

Similarly in the *Hevajra Tantra:*

> The great gnosis abides in the body.[95]

Also:

> Sentient beings are buddhas
> but are obscured by transient impurity.
> Once removed, there will be buddha.[96]

From the *Vajragarbha Commentary:*

> Since, from the beginning, all sentient beings are of the nature of the innate, they are buddhas.[97]

Similarly from the *Treasury of Songs:*

> Not seeing the primordial nature,
> the foolish are deluded,
> the foolish are deceived;
> thus speaks Saraha.[98]

There are many other such quotes.

A short explanation of the content of these passages

This primordial mind is the ultimate basis of purification for the generation stage and completion stage taught by these tantras, their commentaries, and other Indian scriptures. Its explanation is under six headings:

1. Identifying primordial mind
2. Synonyms
3. Its natural purity
4. The transience of the impurities
5. Its path of practice
6. Times when clear light manifests

Identifying primordial mind

The primordial mind is a very subtle mind, and when manifest, it takes as its objects phenomena such as the complete absence of any limiting conceptual elaboration,[99] the direct cognition of emptiness. It has the ability to create every quality of a buddha, and it has dwelt in the continuum of every sentient being since beginningless time without interruption. When it is purified it becomes the dharmakāya. However this is just a partial description. When even those who have actualized the primordial mind cannot describe it in words, what need to mention those who have not. In the *Treasury of Songs* it says:

> The nature of the primordial
> cannot be shown by anyone.[100]

Also:

> The nature of the primordial
> cannot be expressed in words, [31]
> but with the eyes of the master's teachings
> it will be seen.[101]

Advayavajra in his *Commentary to the Treasury of Songs* says:

> That which dwells in sentient beings forever,
> without cause and condition,
> when the time came for it to be spoken of,
> even the omniscient would be lost for words.[102]

There are many such quotes.

Synonyms

It is taught in the tantras and Indian texts under many names. These include, the innate, the mind of clear light, the dharmadhātu mind, natural clear light, primordial mind, the indestructible mind, foundation dharmakāya, and the vajra of the mind.

Its natural purity

This is under two headings:

1. It does not become good or bad by the force of circumstance.

The rays of the sun spread themselves equally upon the beautiful, such as jewels, and upon the ugly, such as filth, and yet it remains unaffected, either adversely or beneficially. Likewise, the mind of clear light is very subtle, and though it enters good states of existence such as those of the gods or bad such as those of hell, it remains unaffected by them, either adversely or beneficially. This is because, like the sun, it is pure by nature.

2. As an entity it never develops into the impurities of the mind.

Gold even when tarnished never becomes the tarnish. Water when dirtied never becomes the dirt. Likewise, the mind of clear light is very subtle, yet when dwelling with the impurities of deluded states of mind, conceptuality, and so forth, it never develops into the actual entities of these states of mind. If it did, it would not be possible to eradicate, with appropriate opponent forces, the conceptuality and deluded states of mind within the clear-light mind. Alternatively, if these impurities were eradicated, the continuum of the clear-light mind would also come to an end. The mind of clear light therefore is pure by nature. [32]

The transience of the impurities

In a mixture of water and dirt, the water has been created from its own substantial cause into its own clear and transparent nature, and its dirtiness has come about from its own causes, such as dust and so forth, which are distinct from the water's substantial cause. The dirt therefore can be separated from the water and is a temporary phenomenon.

Similarly, the mind of clear light and the impurities of the two kinds of obscuration have been linked since time without beginning. Nevertheless, the mind of clear light is developed from its own substantial similar-type cause into its own entity of purity. The impurities, on the other hand, develop from their causes of improper mental activity and arise from the clear-light mind like fish jumping from water. They are therefore temporary

phenomena, capable of being removed from a mind whose nature is clear light.

Furthermore, when water is not in contact with conditions such as dirt and dust, it is clear and transparent. Similarly, if the natural mind of clear light were separated from the causes and conditions that bring about the impurities, it would reveal its clarity in its separation from the entanglements of duality. As long as the mind of clear light dwells with impurities, such as desire generated by improper mental activity, it will not become manifest to ordinary beings even though it is everpresent. This is because it is obscured by these impurities and remains unseen.

Its path of practice

Firstly, the central channel is purified and empty forms appear to the meditator. These forms are created by the practices of the yogas of withdrawal and meditative absorption which make up the branch of *form accomplishment.* Then the winds from the left and right channels are brought into the central channel by the yogas of prāṇāyāma and retention, which make up the branch of *wind accomplishment.* This manifests the mind of clear light, and the appearance of that mind as empty form becomes progressively purer. The generation of the four joys of descent and ascent develops the mind of clear light into innate bliss, which is applied to emptiness, and the gnosis of bliss and emptiness is developed.

After the completion of the yoga of retention comes the yoga of recollection, in which an actual empty form in the aspect of father-mother union is meditated upon. Also, during recollection, the mind of clear light develops into bliss and, as a consciousness, is applied to its object of emptiness. [33] The resulting bliss-and-emptiness gnosis is meditated upon many times, which will eventually produce the mahāmudrā consort. Reliance on this consort will develop the ability to induce unchanging bliss. From that point onward the clear-light mind develops into the 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss on the yoga of meditative concentration. This unchanging bliss is applied to emptiness, and the resulting bliss-and-emptiness gnosis is meditated upon. One by one the twelve levels are attained, and the 21,600 karmic winds are halted. Impurities, such as the predispositions for emission,[103] are gradually eradicated, and the mind of clear light in the form of unchanging bliss becomes the body of great bliss.

Times when clear light manifests

There are two kinds of manifestation: natural or effortless manifestation and manifestation through the power of meditative concentration. The first occurs when sentient beings die. On the basis of the *Kālacakratantra* and its commentaries, when someone possessed of the six elements dies, first the water element weakens the fire element, then the earth element enters the water and disappears. The water element is subsequently dried by the air element, which in turn absorbs into the space element and disappears. At this time the knots of the central channel loosen, the flow of wind in the right and left channels is halted, and wind enters and dissolves into the central channel. When this happens, all conceptualization of transient objects ceases. The natural clear-light mind becomes separated from all limiting conceptual elaboration and takes on the aspect of a spacelike emptiness. Within that emptiness various empty forms arise of their own volition like images in a clairvoyant's mirror. This is known as the manifestation-of-death clear light. The *Great Commentary,* commenting in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter on the line beginning "Water weakens fire," says:

> "Water" and so forth means that in this human realm, at the time of death of those born from wombs, water weakens fire. Therefore, through the power of this meditative concentration, the process of fire is weakened by water, and this is the meditator's first practice within the body. Then, because of there being no fire, earth loses its solidity and dissolves like salt to become liquid, dwelling within the water element. Then the element of air [34] dries up every drop of water and disappears into space. In this way the elements quickly weaken. Then "the mind is the fire at the end of darkness,"[104] which means that the foundation consciousness is placed in the realm of space, in fully aspected forms empty of all objects, dwelling in the middle.[105]

Foundation consciousness in this quote refers to the mind of clear light, and in the line "The mind is the fire at the end of darkness," darkness is the near attainment at the time of death, while fire is the death clear light, which arises from near attainment.

This death clear light is experienced by ordinary beings but cannot be ascertained by them. Therefore, once the bardo state of one of the six kinds of existence has been formed, ordinary beings will move on powerlessly to another existence. However the yogi meditating on the completion stage during his lifetime develops the ability to manifest the mind of clear light and sets a powerful intention[106] for the ascertainment of death clear light. When he actually ascertains death clear light, he applies the clear light to emptiness and meditates on bliss and emptiness gnosis. Likewise, when the bardo existence arrives, the power of his meditation will ensure that he takes a special form of existence in his next life for the practice of tantra where the remainder of the path will be practiced and enlightenment realized.

However, in the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries*, there is no presentation of attaining enlightenment during bardo existence. There is a reason for this. Attaining enlightenment in the bardo means that death clear light is transformed into the path of the ultimate-mind isolation clear light. The clear-light mind rides upon the very subtle wind, from which arises the illusory body instead of the bardo existence. The remainder of the path is practiced in that form, and enlightenment is attained. The *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* do not present such a path but assert that the empty form that appears during the meditative equipoise of the six-branched yoga is a similar-type cause of the empty-form father-and-mother union of enlightenment, and there is no basis for the accomplishment of the form body existing in the ordinary state. This is the reason why there is no such presentation. However some scholars (such as Kumāramati)[107] [35] say that the reason there is no presentation of attaining buddhahood in the bardo within the tenets of the *Kālacakratantra* and its commentaries is that a coarse body is necessary for the development of unchanging bliss and, therefore, supreme unchanging bliss cannot be accomplished in the bardo mental body.[108] This is not correct. If that were the case, then similar consequences could be applied to the Guhyasamāja and other tantras that do assert the attaining of enlightenment in the bardo.

Manifesting the mind of clear light by the power of meditative concentration

Withdrawal and meditative absorption are the methods by which the winds enter the central channel to purify it, while vase yoga and the vajra

recitation in the branch of prāṇāyāma cause the flow of the winds in the right and left channels to be cut and so enter the central channel, where the mind of clear light is made manifest. Such a process of manifesting clear light arises from cutting the flow of the winds, or mounts of conceptuality, of the left and right channel by targeting the channels, drops, and winds of the vajra body and bringing those winds into the central channel. The *Great Commentary*, in the Realms chapter, in the first summary says:

> Although fire dwells constantly within wood,
> by cutting and separation it is not seen.
> Yet, when the fire-stick is worked with the hands,
> it is seen to dwell within.
> Similarly, by habitual conceptuality,
> the mind of clear light is not seen.
> But when the right and left channel
> are united as one, it will be manifest.[109]

As long as the mind to which objects of a transient nature appear is not halted, it is not possible to manifest the mind of clear light. To halt such a mind, the winds must enter the dhūtī,[110] and as long as the winds flow within the left and right channel, it is not possible to halt such a mind.

Some (such as Kumāramati and Kumāraśrī)[111] have said that the primordial mind of clear light that is the subject of the previous quotes from the tantras and commentaries is identical to the buddha essence, or impure suchness, as taught in the *Uttaratantra*, one of the five treatises of the protector Maitreya. They also claim that this buddha essence taught in the *Uttaratantra* and in the *In Praise of Dharmadhātu* is the causal tantra taught by the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* when it says:

> Tantra it is known means continuum,
> and that continuum is of three kinds.
> [36] The basis, the nature of suchness,
> and the invincible: is it thus divided.[112]

Their assertion cannot be seen to be correct because that would mean the path of practice as taught in the *Uttaratantra* also would have to be the method tantra taught in the line "the basis, that of the nature of suchness" because the reasoning is the same.[113] Furthermore it would also mean that

to manifest buddha essence as taught in the *Uttaratantra,* it would be necessary to halt the flow of winds in the right and left channel and bring them to the central channel. This is because in order to make manifest the primordial inborn mind of clear light as it is taught in the tantras and commentaries, it is necessary to halt the flow of winds in the left and right channels and to have them enter the central channel. As the *Great Commentary* says in the Realms chapter, in the first summary:

> Similarly, by habitual conceptuality,
> the mind of clear light is not seen.
> But when the right and left channel
> are united as one, it will be manifest.[114]

Some (such as the Jonang tradition) assert the existence of a buddha essence adorned with the features and signs of enlightenment, endowed with the ten powers, the four kinds of fearlessness, and every other excellent quality of abandonment. They assert this essence to be unchanging and permanent, of ultimate existence, and dwelling inside every sentient being since beginningless time but hidden within the temporary impurities. This they maintain is what is meant by the quotes from the tantra, such as the verses beginning "Pervading space, the vajra of space," "Sentient beings are buddhas," and so forth, as well as by the quotes from the commentaries quoted previously. They also maintain that this is the meaning of quotes such as that beginning "A statue of buddha wrapped in rags"[115] from the *Uttaratantra* and similar quotes from *In Praise of Dharmadhātu.* Furthermore they claim that the *Prajñāpāramitā* and other sutras in which the Buddha spoke of all phenomena being empty of any true existence are actually teaching an "emptiness of other," in which the above-mentioned buddha essence is empty of "other" transient impurities. Because this buddha essence is empty of the impurities or objects of negation and because it is truly existing, it is not an "emptiness of self." They also claim that this is the thinking of the [37] Kālacakra and its commentaries.[116]

To this, firstly I say the following. Of the ten powers, there is the power of the wisdom that knows what is and what is not the basis.[117] Does this power know what is and what is not the basis of a hairy old dog? If it does not know, it could not be a wisdom that knows what is and what is not the basis. If it does know, it could not be a wisdom covered by the obscuring impurities. Furthermore, if the meaning of statements that all phenomena

are empty as found in the *Prajñāpāramitā* and other sutras was that the buddha essence was empty of "other" impurities, empty of the impurities to be negated, and was itself truly existing, then you would have to agree that the emptiness spoken of in these sutras as being empty of the objects to be negated would also be truly existing. Even if you do actually assert this, it could not be correct, because in *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way* it says:

> The conquerors have said
> that emptiness uproots all views,
> and that those who have a view of emptiness
> will have no accomplishment.[118]

And from its commentary, *Clear Words:*

> Were someone to say, "I will not give you anything at all," and if I were to reply, "Then give me that which does not exist!" how would it be possible to hold that as not existing? Likewise, for those who even cling to emptiness as a reality, how will they negate their clinging to reality?[119]

Similarly the *Heap of Jewels Sutra,* quoted at this point in *Clear Words,* says:

> Kāśyapa, those who focus upon emptiness and have thoughts of emptiness fall far from my words. Kāśyapa, to have views on self the size of Mount Meru is tolerable, but with strong pride to have views on emptiness is not. Why is that? Kāśyapa, if emptiness is that which uproots every view, then Kāśyapa, I say that those who have a view on emptiness alone are beyond all cure.[120]

These quotes state that it is wrong to have a view on any phenomenon as truly existing, and to view emptiness as truly existing is said to be an especially incurable view. Such statements do great damage to the previous assertions.

[38] Furthermore to assert that the buddha essence is adorned by the features and signs of enlightenment, is endowed with the ten powers, the

four kinds of fearlessness, and every other excellent quality of the buddha, that it is unchanging and permanent, of ultimate existence, and dwells inside every sentient being since beginningless time is completely wrong because the words of the Buddha in sutras that teach this way are not to be taken literally, and such teachings are intended for interpretation. This is explained in Candrakīrti's commentary to his own *Madhyamakāvatāra,* where he quotes from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra:*

> "In the teachings on the buddha essence, the Conqueror spoke of that whose nature was pure and of clear light, pure since beginningless time, endowed with the thirty-two features of enlightenment, and existing within the bodies of every sentient being. The Conqueror taught that like a very precious jewel wrapped in dirty cloth, it lies permanent and unchanging, wrapped in the cloths of the aggregates, sensory spheres, and sense sources, eclipsed by anger, desire, and ignorance, tainted by the impurities of conceptuality.[121]

This passage describing a buddha essence accords with your assertions as taught by a sutra requiring interpretation. The sutra continues:

> "Conqueror, Tathāgata, if that is so, how is one who teaches on tathāgata essence unlike the outsiders who teach on self? Conqueror, the outsiders are also teachers of a self that is permanent, a nondoer, devoid of qualities, pervasive, and imperishable."

This passage states that a buddha essence described in this way is similar to the permanent self propounded by non-Buddhists and asks how it could be any different. The sutra continues with the reply:

> The Conqueror replied, "Mahāmati, my teaching of the buddha essence is not similar to the Tirthankara teachings on self. Mahāmati, the tathāgatas, conquerors of the enemy, perfectly complete buddhas, have taught the meanings of terms such as [39] emptiness, perfect reality, nirvana, the unborn, the signless, the wishless, and so forth as buddha essence. Children are

> frightened by no-self, and as a means to remove that fear, the door of buddha essence is shown. By doing so the nonconceptual state, the nonappearing object, is taught. Mahāmati, those great beings, those bodhisattvas of the future and of the present, should not hold fast to a self."[122]

The sentence beginning "Mahāmati, my teaching of" expresses the assertion that the teaching of the buddha essence as held by you is not similar to non-Buddhists' teachings of a permanent self. The list of terms beginning with "emptiness" reveals the thinking behind the teachings on buddha essence. The words "Mahāmati, the tathāgatas, conquerors of the enemy, perfectly complete buddhas, have taught the meanings of terms," and including the phrase "as buddha essence," reveal the ways in which the essence was taught. The purpose of the sentence beginning "Children" up to "remove that fear" is to reveal what is to be excluded, and the purpose of the sentence beginning "By doing so" reveals what is to be included. The last sentence, beginning "Mahāmati, those great beings," teaches that if the words of sutras that speak of this kind of buddha essence are held as literal, this leads to a clinging to a permanent self. Therefore the quote ends "should not hold fast to a self," which illustrates the actual damage done to the previous assertion. The text immediately following the above passage beginning "Mahāmati, for example" up to "Mahāmati, in this way the tathāgatas taught and are teaching the tathāgata essence in order to guide those who hold to the outsiders' assertion of self" explain that texts propounding a buddha essence within every sentient being, adorned with features of an enlightened being, endowed with qualities such as the ten powers and the four kinds of fearlessness, permanent and unchanging, are not to be adhered to literally but are for a particular purpose and are to be interpreted. Therefore, it can be understood that it is incorrect to explain the tantra and the *Great Commentary* by way of such a buddha essence. [40] This has been just a brief explanation.

Primordial body

The very subtle primordial mind explained above is inseparable from the very subtle wind. This indivisible entity of very subtle wind and mind is known as the *primordial body and mind.* In the confines of samsara, this primordial body and mind is the root of the aggregates, sensory spheres, sense

sources of sentient beings, and of every phenomenon of samsara. All phenomena of samsara are manifestations of the indivisible entity of primordial body and mind. In the *Vajra Garland* explanatory tantra it says:

> Be it birth, abiding, or destruction,
> life or the intermediate state,
> as long as it is bound by the world,
> it is a manifestation of the winds of the mind.[123]

The *Sandhivyākaraṇa Tantra* says:

> All that is tied to sentient beings,
> be it with consciousness or without,
> arises from the winds, is ended by the winds.
> The unknowing mind dwells in the ocean of samsara,
> where, by going wayward, it migrates
> into dogs, jackals, cows, and horses.[124]

The winds and the mind migrate into different living forms, and at death the aggregates, sensory spheres, sense sources, and the coarse winds and minds withdraw into the very subtle wind and mind. In this process the elements of earth, water, fire, and air dissolve in turn, and the minds of appearance, increase, and attainment arise in succession. When death clear light appears, there are no minds or winds of that person's continuum present except for the very subtle wind and mind. However, because this very subtle wind and mind is the primordial wind and mind, the continuum of that person's mind and body is not broken. With the wind of the very subtle wind and mind of death clear light acting as a substantial cause,[125] the bardo body will arise, and with the mind of the death clear light as a substantial cause, the coarse and subtle bardo minds will arise. [41] This is the thinking behind the two quotes above.

The yogi practicing on the path focuses on and penetrates the channels, drops, and winds and induces successively the minds of appearance, increase, attainment, and clear light. Then the final mind isolation, with its manifest subtle mind and wind, or the path of a suitable alternative, is actualized, and from this very subtle wind and mind arises the illusory body. This illusory body is a similar-type cause of the illusory body of the enlightenment union, while the subtle mind is a similar-type cause of the

dharmakāya. This is just an introduction. The process can be known extensively from the peerless *Lantern Illuminating the Five Stages.*

On individual presentations of primordial mind and primordial body in the context of Kālacakra, the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* and other commentaries concentrate primarily on subtle mind in their explanations of the winds and mind of the clear light and do not concentrate on the winds. The protector Nāgārjuna and other mahāsiddhas who wrote commentaries on the Guhyasamāja and other hidden tantras focused on the clear-light mind and wind equally in their explanations. The reason for these differing and individual explanations is as follows. According to *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries,* a similar-type cause of both bodies of a buddha can be fashioned from the clear-light mind itself, and a similar-type cause of the form body of a buddha is not created from the subtle wind. Another reason is that in the sense of being the creator of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana, the innate mind of clear light pervades everything.

According to commentaries on the *Śrī Guhyasamājatantra* and other hidden tantras composed by mahāsiddhas such as the protector Nāgārjuna, the mind of clear light is formed into a similar-type cause of the dharmakāya and the subtle wind becomes a similar-type cause of the form body. These two differing explanations have come about because of differing types of disciples. This will be explained later.

This has been a brief explanation of the primordial body and mind, the basis for the accomplishment of the two bodies of a buddha. [42]

Explanations of the intentions of the highest yoga tantras

The skillful transformation of the primordial body and mind, the two special themes of highest mantra, into similar-type causes of the two bodies of a buddha is the path of the completion stage, which is the main topic of highest mantra. The root tantras that describe this path are of two types: those that explain the stages of generation and completion in a concealed way and those that do so clearly and in an unconcealed manner. Examples of hidden tantras would be the short condensed tantras of Hevajra, Cakrasaṃvara, and Guhyasamāja. There are two ways in which the hidden meanings of these tantras are brought out. The first is to explain each root tantra by relying upon individual explanatory tantras. This was the method employed by Nāgārjuna and the other mahāsiddhas of India. The second way is to explain the tantra in accordance with the thinking of Kālacakra

and its commentaries. This is the method used by the *Vajragarbha Commentary,* the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary,* and others.

Concerning the first method, the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra* is explained by six explanatory tantras, such as the *Vajra Garland,* and these in turn have been explained by Nāgārjuna and his disciples, who taught them as the five stages of the path, beginning with the isolation of speech. The *Short Cakrasaṃvara Root Tantra* is explained by six explanatory tantras, such as the *Samvaraudbhava,* and they in turn have been explained by mahāsiddhas such as Vajraghanta in the format of the five stages, such as blessing of self and so forth. The *Short Hevajra Root Tantra* is explained by its explanatory tantras, such as the *Vajra Tent, Samputa, Caturyogānisamputa,* and so forth. These have been taught by the venerable Virupa in his presentation of the paths and results, which condense the actual completion stage into the paths of the three initiations.

The way that texts such as the *Vajragarbha Commentary* and the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary* explain the tantras as conforming to the thinking of Kālacakra and its commentary can be known by looking at these two commentaries, which explain the Inner and Outer, the six-branched yoga, and so forth, in light of the Kālacakra and its commentary.

Therefore it is necessary to classify commentaries into those of the mahāsiddhas of India [43] who explained the hidden tantras of *Guhyasamāja* and so forth and those such as the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries.* According to the *Vajragarbha Commentary,* the definitive meanings of the *Cakrasaṃvara* and *Four Seats* tantras should be understood from the *Five Hundred Thousand Hevajra Tantra.* The definitive meanings of the hidden tantras of the *Hevajra* and the *Short Cakrasaṃvara* should be understood from the *Four Seats Tantra.* The definitive meanings of all of them should be understood from the root tantra of the *Original Buddha Kālacakra* and from the *Hundred Thousand Cakrasaṃvara.* The *Vajragarbha Commentary* says:

> From *Hevajra* will *Cakrasaṃvara* and the *Four Seats Tantra* be understood. *Hevajra* and the *Short Cakrasaṃvara* will be understood from the *Four Seats Tantra.* From the words of the *Supreme Original Buddha* and from the *Great Cakrasaṃvara* will definitive meanings be understood.[126]

In this way, the verses on the six-branched yoga taught in the *Later Guhyasamāja* has led to two different interpretations. One accords with

the six-branched yoga of Kālacakra, and the other accords with the six-branched yoga as taught by Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti, and others. In his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* Nāropa explains these passages of the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* in accord with the six-branched yoga of Kālacakra, while in his commentary on the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* he explains them in accord with *Bright Lamp.*

How does the six-branched yoga taught in the Kālacakra differ from the six-branched yoga as explained by the *Bright Lamp,* where it is explained according to the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra*? The meaning of withdrawal in Kālacakra is that the sensory powers are withdrawn inward and do not engage their respective objects. According to *Bright Lamp,* withdrawal means that the sensory powers withdraw or gather into their objects, such as visual form, to be individually enjoyed in the manner of "taxes gathering unto a tax collector." Moreover the *Great Commentary* says in the Realms chapter in the second summary:

> The intermediate sign is that by 1,800 supreme and unchanging instances, the first level is attained.[127]

[44] This explains that the achievement of 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss by the branch of meditative concentration is the attainment of the level of an ārya, while the branch of recollection and below is at the level of an ordinary being. *Bright Lamp* explains the branch of retention as being the actual clear light, the branch of recollection as the arising of the actual clear-light reversal, the branch of meditative concentration as being union, and that once the actual clear light is attained, the practitioner becomes an ārya directly cognizing emptiness. This can be understood from the twelfth chapter of *Bright Lamp,* where it comments on the branch of retention:

> The sinking of all apprehending is explained as being retention.
> How is that?
>
> "It is called perfect reality.
> The mind becomes the cessation vajra
> and the signs of near attainment arise."
>
> Here vajra cessation is clear light, and the mind becomes that clear light.[128]

In this way, *Bright Lamp* establishes the branch of retention as being the actual clear light. The branch of recollection is established as being the time of the actual clear-light reversal, and this can be known from the same chapter in the section on the branch of recollection:

> Therefore, having meditated upon and actualized that whose nature is clear light, the forms of miragelike appearances and so forth are recollected as they were in the attainment of perfect reality. These emanate and are created in sequence. This should be known and understood as recollection.[129]

Therefore clear light is actualized in the branch of retention. Arising from this clear light, those previous forms of miragelike appearances that arose during the entering into clear light are here recollected, and they arise like those in the "attainment of perfect reality" clear light. "These emanate and are created in sequence" in a reverse sequence. This is to be understood as being the branch of recollection. *Bright Lamp* also asserts the branch of [45] meditative concentration as being the state of union.

If it is *Bright Lamp's* assertion that the branch of retention corresponds to actual clear light, then it is true that someone who has attained the stages of recollection and meditative concentration must be an ārya. However, doesn't the clear light explained as being the branch of retention refer to the similitude clear light? This is not so. In the section explaining the recollection of the "unborn," *Bright Lamp* says:

> The verse beginning "Within that" and so on teaches the arising of the state of union. The unborn is the branch of retention.

And so on until:

> After the branch of retention comes entity clear light. "Entity" refers to conventional truth. "Clear light" is ultimate truth. Clear light possessing entity is known as *entity clear light.* What is that? It is the body of the great Vajradhara, whose nature is nondual gnosis.[130]

Therefore, when arising from the clear light, which is explained as being the branch of retention, one arises in the body of union.

The thinking of the hidden tantras has been explained by the commentaries of the mahāsiddhas of India and by the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries,* and you should not use one to refute the other, nor make the mistake of thinking that similar terms in their respective presentations have similar meanings. Tantras that teach the paths of the generation and completion stages in an open and unconcealed way include the *Root Kālacakra Tantra* and *Condensed Kālacakra Tantra.* The *Great Commentary* says in the second summary of the Realms chapter:

> The Vajra Vehicle, in accord with the mentality of sentient beings, lies hidden within the vajra words in the *King of Tantras.* The Tathāgata said, "The fourth also is likewise."[131] The fourth is not the third and therefore is called the fourth. "Also is likewise" means that the wisdom-knowledge[132] itself becomes the fourth. Because of these words of the Conqueror, it lies hidden within the vajra words. In the *King of Tantras* the vajra words are not clear. They will be understood through the transmission of masters, and tantras will be understood from other tantras. This the Tathāgata has said.[133]

[46] This passage says that in hidden tantras such as the Guhyasamāja, profound meanings, as illustrated by the fourth initiation, are explained in a concealed fashion. The quote continues:

> Here in the *Original Buddha,* the Conqueror, has clarified those very vajra words by very clearly teaching, explaining, and well explaining. As proof of that, the signs of smoke and so forth on the path of mahāmudrā meditation are clarified.
>
> "Focus single pointedly upon the emptiness,
> and meditate for a whole day."[134]
>
> Because of these words of the Conqueror, vajra words within the *Supreme Original Buddha,* such as those which teach the signs of smoke on the path of the mahāmudrā meditation, are very clear and arise neither through the transmission of masters nor by the blessing of the masters.[135]

Therefore the profound meanings concealed in the hidden tantras are explained clearly in the *Original Buddha Root Tantra* and *Condensed Tantra,* and it is not necessary to rely upon the explanations of masters that apply explanatory tantra to root tantra.

This has been just a brief chapter on how the thinking of the highest yoga tantras is explained. [47]

Part I
The External World

3. The Three Themes of Kālacakra Tantra

An exposition of the Outer, Inner, and Other: The three themes of Kālacakra

This has three outlines:

1. Ascertaining the number of themes
2. The order of the themes
3. The characteristics of each

Ascertaining the number of themes

The *Great Commentary,* in the second summary of the Realms chapter, states:

> The coming together of the subtle particles is a prerequisite for the existence of a world realm. A world realm is a precondition for sentient beings. Sentient beings are preconditions for worldly and nonworldly initiations. Worldly and nonworldly initiations are preconditions for the attainment of worldly siddhi up to the ultimate existence of None Higher[1] by meditating upon the mandalas and gathering merit. With worldly siddhi as a precondition, and by wisdom, merit, and the force of predispositions of emptiness and compassion—conventional and non-apprehended—from previous lives, the collection of subtle particles is transcended and conceptual meditation upon the mandalas and so forth disappears, resulting in the siddhi of gnosis of mahāmudrā.[2]

This passage ascertains both the number of themes and their order. How is this done? The main topics of the *Root Tantra* and *Condensed Tantra* are

the necessary conditions for the path of practice of the primary intended disciples of Kālacakra. Three necessary conditions for the practice of such a path can be ascertained. They are: a basis for the path of practice, the actual path of practice, and the result of practice.

The basis for the path to be practiced is ascertained as the external world and the sentient beings of the world. The actual path of practice is ascertained as the bestowing of initiation in order [48] to create suitable vessels for that path, followed secondly by the generation stage, which suppresses the manifest impurity of the basis for practice and ripens the mind for the creation of the completion stage that will totally uproot this impurity. Thirdly, the completion stage eradicates forever the impurities of the basis for practice. The paths of these initiations and of the generation and completion stages along with the results of their practices fall under the heading of "other" within the three topics of Outer, Inner, and Other.

The necessary conditions for the path of the intended disciples of the Śrī Kālacakra are therefore ascertained as being the Outer, Inner, and Other, and with these in mind the chapters of the tantra are set at five. The Realms chapter mainly establishes the basis for practice in its form of the external world, while the Inner chapter mainly establishes the basis for practice in its form of the individual person. The Other, alongside its ancillary topics, comprises the conferring of initiations, the two paths of generation and completion, and the final goal. Of these, the conferring of initiations is mainly taught in the Initiation chapter. The Methods of Accomplishment chapter mainly establishes the generation stage as well as some aspects of the completion stage. The Gnosis chapter mainly establishes the completion stage and the stage of the final fruits of practice.

The order of the themes

This has two outlines:

1. A natural order
2. An order arising from the mode of practice

A natural order

The sentence that begins, "The coming together of the subtle particles" from the above passage says that the external world is preceded by the com-

ing together of subtle particles. This is because the destruction of a previous world brought about these subtle particles, which are known as *empty particles* and which exist as isolated fragments. Their coming together creates a physical world from the air mandala up to Meru. This is the intermediate stage of creation. Sentient beings must be preceded by a previously created world realm, because a place for inhabitation is created first and is followed by the sentient beings who become its inhabitants. [49]

The chapters that make up the Other are ascertained as those that teach initiations, the generation and completion stages, and the final result. The bestowing of worldly and nonworldly initiations must be preceded by sentient beings, because there must be disciples on whom the initiations are bestowed and masters who bestow them. The Other is primarily a similar-type cause of the form body of a buddha, and within it the generation stage is necessarily preceded by the bestowal of initiation, because those who enter the mandala without proper initiation will not become suitable vessels for the meditations of the generation stage.

The completion stage, which results in the attainment of the siddhi of mahāmudrā gnosis freed from all conceptual meditation, has to be preceded by the accomplishment of the generation stage, because the completed generation stage ripens the mindstream, and without the path of ripening, the path of freedom—of a complete and proper completion stage—will not be developed.

Therefore, as this is the natural order of things, this king of tantras in its five chapters sets out the outer, inner, and other in that order.

An order arising from the mode of practice

Before practicing the paths of generation and completion, the intended disciples of this tantra must know the external and internal bases of practice. These, therefore, are ascertained first. The world external to oneself should be understood from an extensive explanation, and then the corresponding inner world of sentient beings should be understood. As the *Tantra* says: "As without, so within."[3] With these two bases of practice as prerequisites, one must become a suitable vessel for the two Other paths of the generation and completion stages through the process of proper initiation. Therefore, after the Outer and the Inner comes conferral of initiation. This is followed by the generation stage to ripen the mindstream for

the inception of the completion stage. After the mindstream has been suitably ripened, the completion stage is practiced. The results of practicing these stages are the two bodies of a buddha.

Therefore the order of Outer, Inner, and Other, and within Other, the order of initiation, generation stage, completion stage, and their fruits, are ascertained in this way. With this in mind the second summary in the Realms chapter states: [50]

> Therefore first is the section on the realms of the world. Then comes the section on the inner, then the section on initiation, then the section on the attainment of worldly powers, then the section on the accomplishment of supreme unchanging gnosis. In this way the king of tantras is ordered in five sections or chapters.[4]

Thus the topics of the tantra are in divided into five sections, and the text that teaches them is also of five sections.

The characteristics of each

This has three outlines:

1. Presentation of the external world
2. Explanation of the inner, the world of sentient beings
3. Presentation of the other: initiations, generation stage, completion stage, and fruits.

Presentation of the external world

This is under four headings:

1. The formation of the external world and its dimensions
2. A general presentation of the inhabitants of this world
3. The gola circling Mount Meru above the Earth
4. Resolving any contradictions between the presentation of the world in the Kālacakra and that of the Abhidharma texts

4. The Formation of the External World and Its Dimensions

When a world undergoes destruction, there follows a time of emptiness. During this time the earth element is possessed of five qualities, namely smell, form, taste, tangibility, and sound. The water element has the above qualities, minus that of smell. The fire element has the above qualities, minus smell and form. The air element has the two qualities of tangibility and sound, while the space element possesses only the quality of sound. [51]

During this time of emptiness the subtle particles of these five elements exist as isolated fragments and are not in any conventional sense objects of the sensory powers of the eye and so forth. They are known as *empty particles* and remain isolated in empty space. When the potential of the collective karma of sentient beings is ripened, the subtle air particles come together to form air whose nature is light and moving. It is said that by this process we can come to know of extremely subtle and hidden airs. Similarly the subtle fire particles come together to become forms of fire, such as lightning possessed of air. The subtle water particles also amass to become forms of water, such as rain possessed of air and fire. The earth particles amass to become forms of earth, such as a rainbow possessed of air, fire, and water. The particles of the "taste" or space element pervade the other four source elements. This particular element of space is not unformed space but a formed space, whose presence separates forms from one another.

These four elements gradually expand to form the four foundation mandalas—of air, fire, water, and earth—whose individual thicknesses are fifty thousand yojana and which are stacked as air surmounted by fire, water, and then earth. The manner in which they are stacked is akin to smaller measuring cups successively stacked into larger ones.

The upper surfaces of each mandala are similar in that the distance from the center of the earth mandala to its rim is fifty thousand yojana and

likewise the exposed distance from the inner rim to the outer rim of the other three is also fifty thousand yojana. The thickness of each mandala is also fifty thousand yojana.

The distance from rim to rim of the earth mandala is one hundred thousand yojana. The diameter of the water mandala is two hundred thousand yojana, that of the fire mandala three hundred thousand yojana, and that of the air mandala four hundred thousand yojana. [52]

After the four mandalas have formed, winds that support, churn up, and shape, bring about the formation of Meru, the other mountains, and the continents. Standing in the center of the earth mandala, Meru rises to a height of one hundred thousand yojana. Above its summit, in empty space and in the aspect of "mental form," are Meru's so-called neck, face, and crown. The height of the neck is twenty-five thousand yojana, the face fifty thousand yojana, and the crown twenty-five thousand yojana, making a distance of one hundred thousand yojana from the base of the throat to the top of the crown. Therefore the base of Meru to the top of the crown is two hundred thousand yojana. The distance from the center of the earth mandala on which Meru stands to any of the four cardinal points of the base of Meru, such as the eastern edge for example, is eight thousand yojana. Therefore, at its base, Meru is sixteen thousand yojana across.

Surrounding Meru is a circular area extending outward for a distance of a thousand yojana. Beyond this circular area is an area stretching out to the edge of the Śīta Mountains for a distance of sixteen thousand yojana. This distance is the limit of the overhang of the summit of Meru.[5] This particular area on the earth-mandala surface is divided into eighteen regions. Six continents, six seas, and six mountain ranges make up these regions. From the inner to the outer, the six continents are Candra, Sitābha, Kuśa, Kiṃnara, Krauñca, and Rudra. The six seas, from the inner to the outer, are known as Honey, Butter, Curd, Milk, Water, and Wine. The six mountain ranges, from the inner to the outer, are known as Nīlābha, Mandara, Niṣaṭha, Maṇikara, Droṇa, and Śīta. The continent of Candra borders the terraces or immediate environs of Meru. Bordering the continent is the Honey Sea, and bordering the sea are the Nīlābha Mountains. [53] Likewise, the other continents, seas, and mountains are similarly arranged.

The five inner mountains are of the same height as the Śīta Mountains, and all six continents, seas, and mountains are of the same width. From the inner edge of the continent of Candra to the outer edge of the Śīta Mountains is a distance of sixteen thousand yojana. As there are six mountain

ranges, six continents, and six seas, this distance is to be divided by eighteen. This gives a figure of 888 yojana, three krośa, 1111 armspans, and ten fingerwidths. (To be even more detailed, 5 1/30 barley seeds should be added.) That is the width of each mountain range, continent, and sea.

From the outer limit of the Śīta Mountains to the inner rim of the water mandala is a distance of twenty-five thousand yojana. This area of the earth mandala is the seventh continent known as Greater Jambudvīpa, the realm of karma. Directionally from Meru it is divided into twelve parts, known as the twelve sectors or continents.[6] Outside of this, on the water mandala, is the seventh sea known as the Salt Ocean. Outside of this sea and on the fire mandala is the seventh mountain range, known as the Vajra Mountains, and the Fire of the Wild Mare's Face.[7]

The area of the twelve sectors stretches from the Śīta Mountains to the water mandala for a distance of twenty-five thousand yojana. Its 12,500-yojana inner half is divided into six regions. In Lesser Jambudvīpa these are the lands of Himālaya, Kailash, China, Khotan, Tibet, and India. Regions of similar size also exist on the other eleven sectors.

The mountains, continents, seas, and so forth that stretch out from the terraces or environs of Meru as far as the air mandala are in the forms of discs encircling Meru. Each is bound by a circumference that is three times its diameter.[8] Therefore, three times the 400,000-yojana diameter of the air mandala is 1,200,000 yojana. This is the circumference of the air mandala. Three times the 300,000-yojana diameter fire mandala is 900,000 yojana. By using the same calculations for the other mandalas, the circumference of each can be known. [54]

Between the air mandala and the crown of Meru are found the thirty-one existences. In the lower half of the 50,000-yojana-deep air mandala are the Vajra Flames hell and the Crying hell. In the upper half lies the Great Darkness hell. The air mandala, therefore, is home to three hell realms. Similarly, in the lower half of the fire mandala is found the Fire hell, and in the upper half is the Endless Smoke hell. These are hot hells, and they each plunge to a depth of twenty-five thousand yojana. Within the water mandala, the lower half contains the Swamps hell while the upper makes up the Sandy Water hell. These two are cold hells and also fall to a depth of twenty-five thousand yojana. The lower half of the earth mandala contains the Gravel Water hell. The upper half is the home of the asuras and the nāgas. Both these realms are twenty-five thousand yojana from top to bottom, while their widths are coterminus with the earth mandala itself.

The twelve sectors can be home for any of the realms of humans, animals, and ghosts. This tantra and its commentaries do not speak of any special abodes for animals and ghosts. Greater Jambudvīpa on the earth mandala is known as the realm of karma, while the six inner continents are known as realms of enjoyment.

The *Great Commentary* says:

> "The thousands of yojana upon the earth are of mountains, nāgas, planets, and directions." This means that the size in yojana of these four mandalas of earth are "mountains," meaning seven thousand, "nāgas," meaning eight thousand, "planets," meaning nine thousand, and "directions," meaning ten thousand.[9]

Again:

> "The air in the east is very round." This means that a characteristic of the air mandala in the east is that it is very round, having the shape of the full moon.[10]

There are many ways of explaining the meaning of these and other passages, but the correct way is as follows. East, south, north, and west are respectively the realms of [55] air, fire, water, and earth. Because of this correspondence, the diameter of the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha is about seven thousand yojana, and its shape is circular like the full moon. (It is also described as having the shape of a half moon.)[11] The central mass of the southern continent of Lesser Jambudvīpa has a size of about eight thousand yojana and is triangular in shape. The central mass of the northern continent of Uttarakuru is about nine thousand yojana and is the shape of a half moon. (It is also described as being circular.) The central mass of the western continent of Aparagodānīya is about ten thousand yojana and is square-shaped. These shapes refer to their outline shapes and not to their shapes protruding from the earth.

Concerning the gods of the desire realm, the *Great Commentary* says that "On Meru the gatherings of Indra, Brahmā, and so forth,"[12] thereby merely indicating the abodes of some of the gods of the desire realm, but these are not taught definitively. However Indra, king of the gods, and his

retinue must live on Meru, and gods of the desire realm in their entirety must be posited as being spread throughout Meru and the lower third of the throat of Meru. Therefore it must be that of the six realms of the gods of desire, the four known as Using at Will Creations of Others, Magical Creations at Will, Joyful, and Free of Conflict are stacked upon the lower third of the throat of Meru. How high is each of these four realms? A third of the 25,000-yojana throat of Meru divided by four is 2,083 yojana, one krośa, 666 armspans, two cubits, one finger and thumbspan, and four fingerwidths.

What is the color and shape of Meru, home of some of the gods of desire? In the Gnosis chapter it says:

> This emperor of mountains,
> on the east is pure indranīla,
> on the south ruby, the west is yellow,
> the north, like the moon, is white crystal,
> the center is green.[13]

As this quote indicates, the center, east, south, west, and north are green, blue, red, yellow, and white respectively. The shape of Meru is circular, and it has five horns that are slender at the base but with large tips. There are many differing assertions about these horns, but I will write of something approaching the truth. [56] The four lower circular horns girdle Meru like belts. The lowest horn hangs down like a platform as far as the outer rim of the immediate environs. The distance from the girdle of this lower horn to the peak of Meru is divided into four equal parts, and from the cusp of each of the first three parts a horn arches down. The girdling of these horns becomes progressively larger, like small bowls mounted by successively larger bowls. The topmost horn is at the level of the summit of Meru, spreading out into all directions and reaching down to touch the peaks of the Śīta Mountains. Included within the covering of the four upper horns are the six continents, six seas, and five mountain ranges.

The diameter across the summit of Meru is fifty thousand yojana. In the *Great Commentary* it says:

> The size of the upper surface of Meru is fifty thousand between the east and west, north and south.[14]

And:

> Above, five points[15] reach out to the surfaces and in all directions to the environs also. "Outside of that the continents, mountains," means that outside the environs of Meru, within the covering of the four tips, are the six continents.[16]

These quotes also explain the point well.

The throat of Meru, from the top of its lower third to the upper limit of the throat, is divided into four parts. These are known as the *realms of the white eon* and are the form realms Sphere of Brahmā, Chanting in the Presence of Brahmā, Great Realm of Brahmā, and Little Light. Similarly the 50,000-yojana face of Meru is divided into three parts, and each part is 16,666 yojana, two krośa, 1,333 armspans, one cubit, and eight fingerwidths. These three parts are known as the chin, nose, and forehead of Meru. The bottom of the chin to the nose is divided into four parts. These four are known as the *glorious eon* and comprise the form realms Limitless Light, Illuminating Light, Little Virtue, and Limitless Virtue. The lower limit of [57] the nose to the lower limit of the forehead, known as *beyond the world of Brahmā,* is in four parts comprising the realms Vast Virtue, Without Cloud, Creation of Merit, and Great Fruition. Similarly the area from the lower limit of the forehead to the base of the crown is divided into four parts known as the *eon of Brahmā,* comprising the realms Lesser, Untroubled, Farsighted, and None Higher.

The base of the crown to its tip is also divided into four parts. These are known as the *eon of pure dharma* and comprise the formless realms, namely Source of Limitless Space, Source of Limitless Consciousness, Source of Nothingness, and Source of No Recognition Yet No Nonrecognition. On the formless realms the *Great Commentary* says:

> "Pure dharma" refers to the formless existence. "Eon" refers to the length of time the gods remain there.[17]

The form realms can be understood similarly.

Each of the formless realms, therefore, measures 6,250 yojana from top to bottom. Each of the sixteen form realms, from its upper to its lower limit, measures 4,166 yojana, two krośa, 1,333 armspans, one cubit, and eight fingerwidths.

If the four formless realms are actually positioned above the form realm of None Higher, and if these four are also arranged above and below each other, then migration from an existence such as the desire realm to the formless realm would require a bardo existence. This is because, between the state of death in the desire realm and the taking of birth in realms above None Higher, which begin at 175,000 yojana above the earth, there must be a continuation between death in one state and birth in another in the form of an intermediate state, "like the growth of corn."[18] However this cannot be accepted. The Abhidharma teachings and commentaries state that birth in the formless realms requires no bardo. So what is the thinking behind the statement that the four formless realms are positioned above the form realm of None Higher and are also arranged on top of one another? [58] These doubts do occur. However I will write a little in order to dispel them.

"The formless is at the place of death."[19] This quote from the *Abhidhamakośa* explains that when migrating from the two lower realms to the formless realms, rebirth occurs at the very place of death. Therefore, to take birth in the formless realm, an intermediate continuum of a bardo between the state of birth and the previous death state is not necessary. Because of this the Abhidharma teachings say that for birth in the formless realms, there is no bardo. It is true that if the formless realms were actually above the realm of None Higher and were stacked on top of one another, then taking birth in a formless realm would necessarily require a bardo existence. However the reason for the assertion in this tantra and its commentaries that the four formless realms are above None Higher and are stacked on top of each other is that, just as there are levels of birth for the sentient beings of the three realms, so there are levels of birthplaces. On that basis to say, "I will attain this level" is to give these realms their own measurable status by positing them in space above the form realms, which is then used for the practice of outer and inner correspondence. However, in actuality, and as it is stated in the *Abhidharmakośa,* four formless realms divided into higher and lower and positioned above and beyond None Higher are not accepted.

There is, however, an alternative explanation. The teachings of the Abhidharma and so forth, which state that birth in the formless realms has no preceding intermediate state, rest upon the premise that a being of the formless realm is without form. As it says, "Because there is no form, there is formlessness."[20] Therefore, in the thinking of the Perfection Vehicle,

sentient beings of the formless realms are without form. However the position of highest tantra is that beings of the formless realms do have form, because according to the tantras and commentaries of Guhyasamāja and others, every sentient being possesses the very subtle mind and the very subtle wind. Moreover, this subtle wind is explained as being of five-colored light rays. Therefore, not only do beings of the formless realms possess the aggregate of form, they also possess source forms such as blue, yellow, and so forth.

Moreover, in the *Kālacakra Tantra* and its commentaries, [59] it is explained that these beings also possess the subtle particles of the five elements. In the Gnosis chapter, in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary, it says:

> The bodies of those of the formless realms are of the element of emptiness, as mere potentials within the mind and of the quality of sound.[21]

This says that the bodies of formless beings possess sound alone as their primary quality and are of the nature of the space element. The quote continues:

> Moreover fluid is without earth, water, fire, air, smell, form, taste, and tangibility.[22]

This states that the fluid of beings of the formless realms does not possess in primary form the elements of earth, water, fire, and air, as well as the four element-derived forms. The quote continues:

> The primary qualities of these four, earth and so forth, exist as mere general qualities. Without a collection of qualities, the potentialities of samsara would not arise from one quality alone.[23]

This explains that earth, water, fire, and air together with their qualities of form and so forth are present in the fluid drop of formless beings as qualities in general form only. This means that the four elements, their sense forms, and the subtle particle of fluid are to be understood as being in minuscule form. Also, in the explanations of tantras such as the

Guhyasamāja, the indestructible red and white elements of the very subtle mind and wind exist together as a single unit, which has been present in the mindstreams of all beings without a moment of interruption since beginningless time. "Indestructible" means nothing can destroy it.

Therefore, although beings of formless realms are said to be without form by the sutra tradition, it is the position of this tantra, the *Great Commentary,* as well as other highest tantras, that they do possess form. Similarly it is correct to accept as literal the statement that the four formless realms are above None Higher and are stacked one on top of another. Otherwise I would have to wonder how it could not be contradictory to accept as literal the other glaring differences with the Abhidharma tradition, such as the general size and shape of the world as being four hundred thousand yojana, the length of time spent in the hells, and so on. [60] Which of the two above explanations is the more valid is something to be examined.

Having explained in detail the size, divisions, and so forth of our four-continent world realm, a little of the situation outside of that world will be explained. The *Great Commentary* says:

> "Outside of that, only emptiness, no three worlds, no qualities, lacking all these." This means that outside the air mandala, at the bottom and the crown at the top, is only emptiness. This emptiness is solely an entity of individual particles of the five elements.[24]

Therefore, below the lower limit of the air mandala and above the upper limit of the crown, the subtle particles of the five elements of earth and so forth exist as individual and disconnected particles undetectable to the senses of ordinary beings. This is known as *mere emptiness* and appears as empty space. On the strength of this explanation, we can understand that beyond this four-continent world in the eight directions also lies the empty space of the disconnected particles of the five elements known as *total emptiness.* (Some scholars maintain the size of this emptiness of unconnected particles outside this world realm to be a hundred thousand yojana. They base this measurement on the Gnosis chapter, where it mentions the size of the world to be five hundred thousand yojana. They assert that the purpose is to include the one-cubit part of the body not grasped by consciousness, such as the nails and hair, as part of the basis of purification.) Existence outside of this total emptiness of disconnected and individual

particles is spoken of in the Gnosis chapter in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary:

> "One thousand" means that above and below the center of this *saha*[25] world realm are a thousand each. As above and below, so it is in the east, west, north, south, the unreal, the powerful, the air, and fire.[26] It is the same with the two and three thousand. Therefore, the *great thousand* refers to these countless world realms.[27]

[61] Therefore, with this *saha* world of ours as the center, there are a thousand four-continent worlds in each of the ten directions, and these worlds make up the thousand-world realm. Two thousand worlds at each of the ten directions, including the worlds of the thousand-world realm, make up the two thousand, or intermediate, world realm. Three thousand worlds at each of the ten directions, including the previous world realms, make up the three-thousand-world realm. The great thousand-world realm includes all these worlds and encompasses countless world realms. Therefore, although there are those (such as the great scholar Chomden Rikral)[28] who state that the *Kālacakra Tantra* and its commentaries omit mention of the three thousands, they have not investigated this.

It is said that a world realm is four hundred thousand yojana across. But what is the length of a yojana? In the *Condensed Tantra* it says:

> Eight most subtle make one subtle.
> Eight of the subtle make up the fine tip of a hair.[29]

Therefore, according to this and further quotes, the ultimate diminution of form is the very subtle particle, and eight of them strung together is the linear measurement of one subtle particle. A string of eight subtle particles is the width of a hair at its tip. Eight hairbreadths are one black mustard seed, eight mustard seeds are one louse, eight lice make one barley grain, and eight such grains are one fingerwidth. Twenty-four fingerwidths are one cubit, four cubits are one armspan, two thousand armspans are one krośa, and four krośa make one yojana.[30]

This tantra and its commentaries do not deal a lot with other worlds but concentrate on the presentation of the dimensions of this world. The reason for this is spoken of in the *Great Commentary:*

> And so, with omniscient knowledge, in order to ripen the ṛṣi, the Conqueror spoke of the dimensions of the world and the dimensions of the body for the purpose of the mandala.[31]

[62] The reasons, therefore, are firstly to bring about correspondence between the inner world of the practitioner's body and the outer world, which form the two bases for purification in the deity mandala meditation, and secondly to bring about correspondence between these two bases of purification and the mandala itself, which is the actual purifier.

The dimensions of the outer world, therefore, are given to correspond with the dimensions of the body. From the lower limit that is the base of the air mandala to the tip of the crown of Meru is a distance of four hundred thousand yojana. This corresponds to the distance of four cubits from the soles of the feet to the crown of the head of a person. The distance across the air mandala from rim to rim is four hundred thousand yojana. This corresponds to the distance of four cubits between the fingertips of the right hand and the fingertips of the left. From the lower limit of the air mandala to the base of Meru is a distance of two hundred thousand yojana, corresponding to the two-cubit distance between the soles of the feet and the hips.

The lower limit of the air mandala to the base of Meru is divided into seven hell locations[32] and one nāga realm, each realm occupying a quarter of a hundred thousand, or twenty-five thousand, yojana. This corresponds to the distance of two cubits between the hips and the soles of the feet, which is divided into eight sections, each section being a quarter of a cubit or six fingerwidths. Meru itself is one hundred thousand yojana. This corresponds to the spine, which stretches the distance of one cubit from the hips to the base of the throat.

The four desire realms, Free of Conflict and so forth, and the first four form realms of Sphere of Brahmā and so forth stretch for twenty-five thousand yojana up the throat of Meru. This corresponds to the measurement of the throat, which is a quarter of a cubit or six fingerwidths. From Limitless Light to None Higher upon the face of Meru is a distance of half of one hundred thousand yojana, corresponding to the distance of half a cubit, or twelve fingerwidths, from the base of the chin to the upper limit of the forehead. The span of the formless realms from the base of the crown of Meru to its tip is a quarter of one hundred thousand yojana, which corresponds to the distance of a quarter cubit, or six fingerwidths, from the

hairline to crown of the head. The reason that these higher god realms are called the throat, face, and [63] crown of Meru is to match them with the corresponding parts of the body.

The distance from the center of Meru to the righthand outer rim of the earth mandala is half of one hundred thousand, or fifty thousand, yojana. This corresponds to the measurement of half a cubit, or twelve fingerwidths, from the center of the chest to the edge of the right shoulder. The thickness of the water mandala on the right of Meru is half one hundred thousand, or fifty thousand, yojana. This corresponds to the half cubit, or twelve-fingerwidth, length of the right upper arm. Similarly the thickness of the fire mandala on the right side of Meru is fifty thousand yojana, corresponding to the half cubit, or twelve fingerwidth, length of the right forearm from the wrist to the elbow. The thickness of the air mandala on the right of Meru is half one hundred thousand, or fifty thousand, yojana. This corresponds to the half-cubit distance from the wrist to the fingertips of the right hand. The same correspondence can be applied to the left side of Meru and the left side of the body.

5. The Inhabitants of This World

A general presentation of the inhabitants of this world

This is under three headings:

1. The kinds of sentient beings
2. Their life spans
3. Causes for their birth

The kinds of sentient beings

The *Condensed Tantra* says:

> The thirty-one existences combine into three.[33]

The thirty-one existences are: asuras, humans, animals, ghosts, hells, the [64] six celestial desire realms, comprising Realm of the Four Great Monarchs, Heaven of Thirty-Three, Free of Conflict, Joyful, Magical Creations at Will, and Using at Will Creations of Others. These make up the eleven desire realms. The sixteen gods of the form realms are those of Sphere of Brahmā, Chanting in the Presence of Brahmā, Great Realm of Brahmā, Little Light, Limitless Light, Illuminating Light, Little Virtue, Limitless Virtue, Vast Virtue, Without Cloud, Creation of Merit, Great Fruition, The Lesser, Untroubled, The Farsighted, and None Higher. The formless realms are made up of Source of Limitless Space, Source of Limitless Consciousness, Source of Nothingness, and Source of No Recognition Yet No Nonrecognition.

These thirty-one can be condensed into the three existences of desire, form, and formless, the three realms of desire, form, and formless, or to the three levels below, on, and above the earth.

Their life spans

This is under five headings:

1. Life span of hell beings and nāgas
2. Life span of the desire realm gods
3. Life span of the form realm gods
4. Life span of the formless realm gods
5. Resolving doubts concerning life spans within other realms

Life span of hell beings and nāgas

The life span of beings in the hell of Gravel Water and of the nāgas is one short eon. The life span for the second and third hells known, as Sandy Water and Swamps, is one intermediate eon. Beings of the hell of Endless Smoke and the hell of Fire have a life span of one supreme eon, while those in the sixth and seventh hells, known as the hell of Great Darkness and the hell of Crying, live a life of one great eon. The life span of the eighth hell, called Vajra Flame, is for as long as the world realm exists. [65]

Life span of the desire realm gods

These six realms from the Four Great Monarchs to Using at Will the Creations of Others enjoy life spans ranging from one short eon to six short eons respectively.

Life span of the form realm gods

The life span of the sixteen realms from Sphere of Brahmā to None Higher are spoken of in the *Great Commentary:*

> Therefore the sixteen eons of the form realms range from sixteen eons to one eon.[34]

Life span ranges from one eon for Sphere of Brahmā to sixteen for None Higher. These eons are not short eons, because the life span of Using at Will the Creations of Others is explained as being six short eons, and Sphere of Brahmā must have a longer life span than Using at Will the Creation of Others. They cannot be great eons either, because beings of None Higher

have been explained as having a life span of sixteen eons, whereas the Peak of Existence[35] has been explained as enjoying a life span of four great eons, and the Peak of Existence must have a longer life span that None Higher. Therefore, although it is not stated which of the four kinds of eons these eons refer to, it must be either intermediate or supreme eons. My opinion is that the eons used to measure the life spans of the four ārya abodes from the Lesser to None Higher must be supreme eons, and those used to measure the life spans of the other form realms must be intermediate eons.

But aren't the terms "supreme eon" and "great eon" synonyms? Where is it taught that they are different? That these two are different is clearly stated in the *Great Commentary:*

> The first world of nāgas and the first realm of hell, by the power of virtue and evil respectively, have life spans of one short eon. The second and third hell both have life spans of an intermediate eon. In the fourth and fifth hells the life spans are of one supreme eon. In the sixth and seventh life is for one great eon.[36]

This quotes talks of eons as being small, intermediate, supreme, and great, which indicates that a supreme eon is longer than an intermediate eon and shorter than a great eon. [66]

Life span of the formless realm gods

Beginning with the lowest, the life span is one, two, three, and four great eons respectively.

Resolving doubts concerning life spans within other realms

But what are the life spans of humans, animals, and ghosts? In this section on the life spans of gods and so forth, the tantra is not clear on this question. However, when explaining how the very subtle breath is used for calculating the length of days, the *Great Commentary* says:

> "Subtle" means that one inhalation and one exhalation of a human breath divided into six hundred more than 21,000 is one subtle breath.[37]

This and further quotes reveal the answers to this question. This is because one breath of a human is divided into 21,600 parts. One such part is the length of one breath of a fully formed insect. 21,600 of such insect breaths is one of its days, thirty of such days are a month, twelve such months are one year, and one hundred of its years is the life span of a tiny insect.

Similarly thirty human breaths are equal to one breath of a ghost, and 21,600 of such breaths is one ghost day. Thirty of its days are a month, twelve months are a year, and one hundred of its years is the life span of a ghost. One human day is the length of one asura breath. 21,600 such breaths are one asura day, thirty days one month, twelve months one year, and one hundred such years the life span of the asura. 21,600 human breaths make up one human day, and one hundred human years is the human life span. Generally these life spans are those of a complete life and depict maximum life span, but they are not fixed. The *Great Commentary* says:

> Likewise 777,600,000 breaths are one hundred days[38] and one hundred years. Depending on karma, this complete life span could be more or could be less. For the yogis, by the power of their yoga and by the power of the meditative concentration of their asceticism, it will be more, and one breath will become hours. For those of nonvirtue, [67] by the force of their nonvirtue, it will become less.[39]

One human year is equal to one breath of the śakti[40] of None Higher, and the 21,600 human years, which is the length of Rudracakrī's establishment of the four ages in the twelve sectors, are equal to one breath of those in the formless realm Source of No Recognition Yet No Nonrecognition, who are referred to here by the name *prakṛti.* If that is so, it may be assumed that 21,600 of such breaths equal one day in each of these realms and so on, thereby arriving, as in previous examples, at the hundred-year life span of None Higher and Peak of Existence. This, however, is not the case. In the *Condensed Tantra* it says:

> 21,600 subtle breaths, breaths, *dhru,*[41]
> hours,[42] solar days,[43] *dhru,*[44] and the four ages[45]
> are, respectively, one day in the life of a small body,
> humans, ghostly spirits, gods, asura, śakti, and the prakṛti.
> On Earth the four ages are the measurements of the śakti.[46]

The breath measurements in None Higher and Peak of Existence and the corresponding length of the days and so forth are explained alongside the life spans of small insects, humans, ghosts, and asuras, but they are not there for the purpose of explaining the life span in None Higher and Peak of Existence. The lives of the gods of None Higher, Peak of Existence, and the desire realm are far longer than a hundred of their own years, as has been previously explained. In the *Great Commentary* it says:

> From these measurements, the measurements of the śakti, which are the measurements of the gods of None Higher, correspond to the four ages of Rudracakrī on the earth.[47]

The measurements of a breath and a day in None Higher are taught in order to know the length of the four ages of Rudracakrī and therefore are mentioned here for a different purpose.

The life spans of the hells and other realms are measured in different types of eons. But how long are these eons? The *Great Commentary* says:

> Concerning the divisions of a short eon, a pit one yojana wide and one deep is completely filled with tiny tips of hair. In a hundred years a hair tip is taken out. The time taken for the pit to be emptied is one day of one short eon. Thirty of those days are a month, twelve of those months are a year, and one hundred years is said to be one eon. [68] Likewise, a group of those eons is one intermediate eon, and a group of those is one supreme eon.[48]

Therefore a four-sided pit with length, width, and depth of one yojana is filled with round tips of hair. Every one hundred years one hair is removed until there are no more. The time taken for the pit to be emptied is one day of one short eon. 360 of those days make a year, and one hundred such years is the measurement of one short eon. A group of such eons forms one intermediate eon, and a group of intermediate eons forms one supreme eon. A group of supreme eons makes up one great eon.

But what amount of hair is in this pit, and how many human years make up a short eon? That, too, can be explained. The number of hairwidths lined up to make one yojana has been expressed as follows:

Space, emptiness, space, nāga, eyes,
mountain, sense organ, mind, and fire.[49]

This number multiplied by itself will give the number of hairs making up a single hairwidth layer of hair in the pit. This is expressed as:[50]

Space, space, drop, emptiness,
space, drop, veda, nāga,
opening, opening, ocean, time, ocean,
space, time, arrows, opening, nāga, and opening.[51]

This figure multiplied by "emptiness, space, space, nāga, eyes, mountain, sense organ, mind and fire" will give the total number of hairs in the pit when it is full. This is expressed as:

From the position of nine drops,
eyes, arrows, fire, nāga, taste, nāga, ocean,
nāga, fire, conqueror, taste, and space,
nāga, nāga, nāga, sun, moon, fire.[52]

This is the number of hairs, which multiplied by a hundred gives the number of human years that make up one day of a short eon. This is expressed as:

From the position of eleven drops,
eyes, arrows, fire, nāga, taste, nāga, ocean,
nāga, fire, conqueror, taste, and space,
nāga, nāga, nāga, sun, moon, fire.

This figure multiplied by 360 gives, in human years, the length of one year of a short eon, and one hundred short-eon years is the length of one short eon. (This, in human years, is expressed as:

Fourteen drops, eyes, mountain, taste,
space, taste, eyes, sense organs, elements, nāga, mountain,
mountain, ocean, eyes, space, mighty one, opening,
fire, taste, space, sun, and form
are the human years of a short eon.

[69] Expressed as numerals this becomes two *mahāprasuta,* seven *kaṃkara,* six *mahākaṃkara,* six *mahābimbara,* two *akṣobhya,* five *mahākṣobhya,* five *vivā,* eight *mahāvivā,* seven *utsaṃgah,* seven *mahotsaṃgah,* four *vāhana,* two *mahāvāhana,* seven *mahātiṭibha,* nine *hetu,* three *mahāhetu,* six *karabha,* two *indra,* one *samāpta,* and one *mahāsamāpta.*)[53]

If that is the length of a short eon, then how is an intermediate eon formed from a "group"[54] of short eons. There are two schools of thought on this. According to the new Jonang translation and the Shong[55] translation as quoted above, "Likewise, a group of those eons is one intermediate eon, and a group of those is one supreme eon." Here *group* means a mathematical grouping, and in the fourth summary of the Gnosis chapter it says "a two group is four" and "a three group is nine," and so on, until "a nine group is eighty-one and a ten group is one hundred."[56] Therefore each number is multiplied by itself to form a "group." In this way the hundred years of a short eon is multiplied by a hundred to make ten thousand short-eon years. This is the length of an intermediate eon. These ten thousand years are multiplied by ten thousand to make a hundred million. This is the number of short-eon years in a supreme eon. That one hundred million multiplied by one hundred million gives, in short-eon years and by using another numeration system, the seventeenth numeric unit[57] or *mahākaṃkara.* This is the length of one great eon.

Concerning the second school of thought, in many translations it says:

> Similarly, to replicate using the measurements of that category is to arrive at the length of an intermediate eon. Similarly, to replicate using the measurements of an intermediate eon is to arrive at the length of a supreme eon.

The Ra translations also state:

> A multiplication of that group will form an intermediate eon. A multiplication of a group of intermediate eons will form a supreme eon.

In this way of thinking, every hundred short-eon years a single hair is pulled from a pit filled with hairs as previously detailed, until the pit is emptied. This would be the length of one day of an intermediate eon. One hundred years of such intermediate-eon days would make up the duration of one

intermediate eon. If every hundred intermediate-eon years one hair was pulled from the pit, one day of a supreme eon would have passed. A hundred such years is the duration of a supreme eon. [70] This is spoken of in the commentary *Illuminating Reality.*

If these measurements of eons are to be understood by using systems of enumeration, then what are the numerical units? Such knowledge will be necessary in other contexts and so will be explained. There are two traditions of enumeration. The first is from the Abhidharma commentaries and is explained by the scholar Śāntipa[58] in his *Commentary on the Compendium of Sūtra.* In it he says:

> The different names of the numbers are taught in the Abhidharma. Numerical units are solitary and coupled. Solitary numerical units are, *eka, daśa, śatam, sahasram, prabhedaḥ, lakṣam, atilakṣam, koṭī, madhya.*[59] These are the nine solitary numerical units. There are three divisions of coupled numerical units. They are *ayuta, nayuta, prasuta, kaṃkara, bimbara, akṣobhya, vivā, utsaṃgaḥ,* and *vāhana.* These nine together with their nine "greater" units make up the first division of coupled units. *Tiṭibha, hetu, karabha, indra, samāpta, gati, nimbaraja, mudrā,* and *balaṃ,* together with their "greater" units make up the nine numerical units of the second division of coupled units. *Saṃjñā, vibhūta,* and *balākṣaṃ* make up, together with their respective "greater" units, the third division of coupled units. Therefore, the nine solitary and the forty-two numerical units that make up the three divisions of the coupled units together total fifty-one. These appear in the Abhidharma. The remaining eight numerical units do not appear in the text. However adding them to the category of coupled units makes fifty-nine. These fifty-nine have been given the name "numbers." The sixtieth is said to be apart from these names and is known as *asaṃkhyāṃ.* This has been taught by the master Vasubandhu.[60]

As this quote explains, there are sixty numerical units. Each unit has its own name, and the sixtieth is known as *asaṃkhyāṃ.*[61] Moreover each coupled unit consists of the unit and its greater unit, as in *ayuta* and *mahāyutaḥ,* for example. This doubling up is repeated for the others.

The second tradition is that taken from the sutras[62] [71] and is also explained by the scholar Śāntipa in his *Commentary on the Compendium of Sutra.* In it he says:

> The names of the divisions of numerical units are spoken of in the sutras: "Numerical units are of two kinds, coupled and solitary. Of the solitary there are 116. They are *jewa (spelled bye ba), khökhö (khod khod), thegu (thad dgu), traktrik (khrag khrig), thamtham (thams thams), nyangnying (myang mying), gangyang (gang yang), bendün (ban dun), charchur (phyar phyur), chakchik (lcag lcig), jangjing (byang bying), tsemtsem (tshem tshem), chalchöl (phyal phyol), chüchü (khyud khyud), serser (zer zer), tribtrib (khrib khrib), yangang (yang gangs), choma (cho ma), tramtrim (khram khrim), napnup (nab nub), sangsang (sang sang), gyüyé (brgyud yas), tangyé (gtang yas), trayar (bkra yar), sayé (gsa yas), mitsung (mi mtshung), lamlum (lam lum), yamyom (yam yom), traltrül (khral khrul), thethü (thad thud), samchö (bsam phyod), drangdring (brang bring), droyé (bgro yas), ngoyé (bsngo yas), sangyak (zang yag), tromgye ('phrom 'gye), tsechö (rtse 'phyod), yongten (yongs bstan), drukyö ('brug g.yos), sangyal (sang yal), thingyuk (mthing yug), yicho (yid 'phyo), napnep (nab neb), triktham (khrig tham), yalyal (yal yal), drangyé (bgrang yas), thukyal (thug yal), shangshang (shang shang), yakyak (yag yag), thamthim (tham thim), lomnyal (rlom msnyal), shalchö (gzhal 'phyos), shalyal (gzhal yal), shalmé (gzhal med), shalkhor (gzhal 'khor), shalthim (gzhal thim), garshal (gar zhal), shalsang (zhal sangs), shalthak (gzhal thag), shalphül (gzhal phul), shalshi (gzhal gzhi), chogyur ('phyo 'gyur), nyarnyer (nyar nyer), chakchik (phyag phyig), salsül (zal zul), salsal (sal sal), gyodek (gyo ldeg), phenphün (phen phun), nangyé (brnang yas), rimdröl (rim 'grol), dzigü (rdzi ngud), dzitül (rdzi rtul), phünyöl (phun yol), ngéngé (ngad ngad), drangtsi (bgrang rtsi), sabdrang (zab bgrang), gakyang (dga' brkyang), shungdül (gzhung 'dul), trukché ('khrug chad), ölchö ('ol chod), dapyé (gdab yas), chayé (bca' yas), dranglé (bgrang las), jimcho (byim 'phyo), yamé (ya med), nyalyé (bsnyal yas), taptep (ltab lteb), benché ('ban chad), phangphung (phang phung), kheutsang (khe'u tshang), shungsung (zhung zung), chokyöl (mchog yol), thatül*

> *(mtha' brtul), yüngyang (yun 'gyangs), bünlop (bun lob), lamlom (lam lom), nyeyé (bsnyad yas), langling (lang ling), japjip (ljab ljib), mitsal (mi rtsal), jamyé ('byam yas), ngadrang (nga sgrang), möyé (smos yas), trachal (bkra chal), logyé (lo rgyas), bumdip ('bum rdib), gamgum (gam gum), lalo (la lo),* and *drangchö (bgrang 'phyos).* On to these are added the seven root numerical units to make 116. These are the solitary units. [72]
>
> Of the coupled units there are ten. They are, *pakyé (dpag yas), yalchong (yal phyong), muyal (mu yal), drangyöl (bgrang yol), mijal (mi 'jal), samchö (bsam phyod), thayam (mtha' 'byam), pakthak (dpag thag), jödu mepa (brjod du med pa),* and *jödu mepai yang jödu mepa (brjod du med pa'i yang brjod du med pa).* Onto these ten are added replicated units from *drangchö* to *jödu mepa* to make twenty. In total 136 units have been named.[63]

As this quote explains, the total of solitary and coupled units is 136. The seven units referred to in the line "Onto these are added the seven root numerical units" are one, ten, hundred, thousand, ten thousand, hundred thousand, and million. These seven are put at the beginning. The units from one to *lalo* total 116 solitary units.[64] There are ten units from *drangchö* to *jödu mepa,* and because they are coupled units, that becomes twenty. These twenty added to the previous solitary units makes 136. Therefore it seems that the text of the sutra should run, "...*gamgum* and *lalo.* Onto these are added the seven root numerical units..."; and "Of the coupled units there are ten. They are, *drangchö, pakyé...*". Furthermore the coupled units would run from *drangchö* and *drangchö* replicated up to *jödu mepa* and *jödu mepai yang jödu mepa.*

Causes for their birth

Great nonvirtuous actions create birth in hell, middling nonvirtuous actions result in birth as a ghost, while small nonvirtuous actions bring about birth as an animal. Virtuous throwing karma together with the powerful completing karma of giving are causes for birth as an asura.[65] Virtuous throwing karma alongside either virtuous or nonvirtuous completing karma results in birth as a human. Virtuous throwing karma coupled with the completing karma of powerful acts of giving together with the force of mantra recitation results in birth as a god of the desire realm. [73] Non-

virtuous throwing karma with virtuous completing karma will bring about birth in the world of nāgas.

Birth in any of the sixteen realms of form requires a meditative absorption[66] vow that has discarded the ten nonvirtuous actions, plus throwing karma consisting of an individual preparatory meditative equipoise[67] for each of the sixteen realms, and a completing karma in the form of the meditative equipoise of the actual absorption[68] for each of the sixteen. Similarly, for birth in the formless realms, the preparatory meditative equipoise for each realm becomes the throwing karma, and the actual absorption is the completing karma. However, if this is true, the *Great Commentary* says:

> By the force of morality and by the meditative concentration of extinction by air[69] and so forth, the sixteen form realms, such as None Higher, will come to be.[70]

This and further quotes explain that from the meditation of extinction by earth comes birth in the Sphere of Brahmā and the following three form realms. From the meditation of extinction by water arises birth in Limitless Light and the next three form realms. From the meditation of extinction by fire comes birth in Vast Virtue and the following three form realms. From the meditation of extinction by air comes birth in the Lesser and the following three form realms. And from the meditation of extinction by space arises the four formless realms. Does this not contradict the previous explanation? There is no contradiction here, for although extinction by earth and so forth are used as terminology for the causal meditative equipoises of the form and formless realms, it is not the thinking of the *Great Commentary* that the meditative equipoises of the ten extinctions,[71] such as extinction by earth and so forth, are necessary causes for birth in the form and formless realms. If this were the *Great Commentary*'s thinking, then it would mistakenly follow that it was also the *Great Commentary*'s thinking that birth in these two higher realms would necessarily entail entering the teachings of the Buddha and the paths of the Buddha, and that without casting aside non-Buddhist philosophy it would impossible to gain birth in these higher realms.

How are the terms *extinction by earth* and so forth used for the causal meditative equipoise of the absorptions and the formless realms? These can be described in sequence. The throwing and completing meditative equipoises of the absorptions of the realms of Sphere of Brahmā, Chanting

in the Presence of Brahmā, Great Realm of Brahmā, and [74] Little Virtue extinguish the desires found in lower levels. They are therefore known as extinctions. Because the element is earth, they are extinctions by earth. Similarly the throwing and completing meditative equipoises for birth in Limitless Light, Illuminating Light, Little Virtue, and Limitless Virtue extinguish the desires found in their respective lower levels and are therefore extinctions. The element is water, and they are therefore extinctions by water.

The throwing and completing meditative equipoises for the four realms beginning with Vast Virtue, the four realms commencing with the Lesser, and for the four formless realms commencing with Source of Limitless Space also extinguish the desires of their respective lower levels and are known as extinctions. Because their elements are, respectively, fire, air, and space, they are therefore known as extinctions by fire, air, and space.

What is the purpose of referring to these preparatory meditative equipoises, or throwing karmas, and actual meditative equipoises, or completing karmas, not by their own names but as extinctions by earth and so forth? There is a special purpose in this. In Kālacakra thinking all phenomena are ascertained by their being in the nature of the five elements. With this in mind the causal meditative equipoise absorptions that produce the sixteen form realms categorized in sets of four are to be understood as being primarily of the elements of earth, water, fire, and air, respectively, while the causal equipoises that produce the formless realms are to be understood as being of the element of space. Furthermore the reason that these causal equipoises are not mentioned by name, but are taught using terms such as extinction by earth and so forth, is to make it clear that in order to migrate to the form and formless realms, the manifest desires lacking in each destination must first be extinguished.

The seed syllables that produce the thirty-one realms are mentioned in the Realms chapter:

> The four formless are *a* and so forth,
> separate from the two of *ha*.[72]
> *i* and so forth are the sixteen of form.
> *ha* and so forth are clear as being the ten of desire
> together with the one consonant *kṣa*.

Therefore, the seeds of the formless realms are, *a, ā, aṃ,* and *āḥ*. [75] The

seeds of the sixteen realms of form are, *i, ī, e, ai, ṛ, ṛī, ar, ār, u, ū, o, au, ḷ, ḷī, al, āl.* The seeds of the six kinds of desire gods are, *ha, hā, ya, yā, ra, rā.* The seeds of humans and *asura* are *wa* and *wā.* The seeds of ghosts and animals are *la* and *lā.* The seed of hell is *kṣa.*

6. The Stars and the Planets

The gola circling Mount Meru above the Earth

This has three outlines:

1. Lunar mansions, houses, and the emergence of the planets
2. How the stars and planets orbit the skies
3. The gola of the earth: Emergence of the seasons

Lunar mansions, houses,[73] and the emergence of the planets

Understanding this topic depends on understanding the birth houses of the planets and so forth. Therefore this will be explained. In the Gnosis chapter of the *Great Commentary*, in the fourth summary, it says:

> Now the birth houses are spoken of as Aries and so forth. The moon, Venus, and the sun arose in Aries, Gemini, and Cancer respectively. Mars was born in Leo, Jupiter in Virgo, Rāhu in Libra, Mercury in Scorpio, Saturn at the beginning of Sagittarius, and Ketu in the last.[74]

Therefore, in the beginning, the lunar mansions, houses, and the other stars were formed. Then the sun was born in the beginning of the house of Cancer. This marked the first actual year, and the sun became the ruler of the solar days.

The sun then moved counterclockwise, occupying the different lunar mansions, until it arrived at the beginning of the lunar mansion of *aśvinī*. In *aśvinī* the sun arrived directly in line with the meridian of the central sector of the east, and there, simultaneously, the moon was born in *aśvinī*. Therefore it is explained that the moon was born in Aries.[75] At the same

time, the first lunar day began,[76] the first light of the moon was born, and it was the beginning of that particular solar day. The moon became the ruler of that day, and the first *karaṇa* year[77] began. Because of this, Aries is posited [76] as the first of the houses, *aśvinī* as the first of the lunar mansions, the waxing is posited as the first of the two halves of the month, and because the lunar mansion on the fifteenth day of that moon was *citrā,* the month of that name[78] was posited as the first of the months.

From then on until Mars was born, the sun and the moon alternated in their rule over the days. The sun then arrived at the beginning of the lunar mansion *magha* within Leo. In *magha* the sun arrived directly in line with the meridian of the central eastern sector. At the same time Mars was born in the lunar mansion *magha* and became ruler of that day. The following day was ruled by the sun, and until Mercury was born, the sun, moon, and Mars rotated their lordship over the days.

The sun continued in its counterclockwise occupation of the lunar mansions and arrived at the halfway point of the lunar mansion *anurādha* within Scorpio. There, in *anurādha,* it arrived directly in line with the meridian of the central eastern sector. Simultaneously Mercury was born in *anurādha* to become ruler of that day. The following day the sun ruled, and in this way, until Jupiter was born, these four planets[79] rotated in their ruling of the days.

As it had done previously, the sun continued to occupy the lunar mansions until it arrived at the beginning of the lunar mansion *hasta* in Virgo. In *hasta* it arrived directly in line with the meridian of the central eastern sector. Simultaneously Jupiter was born in *hasta* and became ruler of the day on which it was born. The following day the sun ruled, and until the birth of Venus, these five ruled the days by rotation.

The sun then reached the beginning of the lunar mansion *punarvasu* in Gemini. Together with *punarvasu* the sun arrived directly in line with the center of the central eastern sector, and at the same time Venus was born in *punarvasu,* where it became ruler of the day in which it was born. The following day was ruled by the sun, and until Saturn was born, these six planets ruled, in order, successive days. [77]

Likewise Saturn was born at the beginning of the lunar mansion *mūla* within Sagittarius. Therefore, when the sun together with *mūla* arrived directly in line with the center of the central eastern sector, Saturn was born, and the ensuing process was as described above.

The reason why the planets must have been born in this order is that,

firstly, they could not have been born at the same time, because it is taught that they each had different birth houses and birth lunar mansions, and all seven alternating planets were born directly in line with the center of the central eastern sector. They were, therefore, born successively.

The order of the planets is taught as beginning with the sun and ending with Saturn. This is the order of birth, and is not the order found in the explanations from the chapters on the Other Kālacakra or in the order of practice. Furthermore the term *alternating planets* refers to their alternating lordship of successive days, which in turn is decided by order of planetary birth, hence the term *alternating planets.*

Moreover the birthplace of the planets is directly above the center of the central eastern sector, and it can be known that they were born while the sun was there also by the fact that the changeover time for the alternating planets directly at the center of the central eastern sector is at dawn from the standpoint of the direct center of the central southern sector.[80]

These planets are enemies to each to other. The *Great Commentary* says:

> Similarly, to clarify once more: "They fight with each other and are enemies." This means that there are the peaceful and the wrathful. Mercury and Maṅgala,[81] Jupiter and Venus, Saturn and Ketu—these fight each other and are enemies.[82]

The houses of Aries and Scorpio are the dominion of Mars, and if Mercury occupies these houses when he is dwelling in them, Mars and Mercury will fight. Similarly Mercury has dominion over Gemini and Virgo, and if Mars enters while he dwells there, Mars and Mercury will fight. The houses of Sagittarius and Pisces are the dominion of Jupiter, and if Venus enters while Jupiter is dwelling there, [78] then Venus and Jupiter will fight. The dominions of Venus are the houses of Taurus and Libra, and if Jupiter should enter, these two planets will fight. Saturn has dominion over Capricorn and Aquarius, and if Ketu enters, Saturn and Ketu[83] will fight. Moon's dominion is Cancer, and when Saturn enters, the moon and Ketu combine to cause trouble for Saturn.

Similarly trouble not only occurs when an enemy enters the dominion of another. Should an enemy appear in the birth lunar mansion of another, then those two will fight. This occurs when the planets gather as friends and enemies in each other's birth lunar mansions. In other houses and lunar mansions, mutual enemies will gather but will not fight.

Concerning the way the planets orbit and occupy the twelve houses, all the stars, lunar mansions, and planets are themselves propelled by the power of the gola[84] winds. This movement is known as *gola wind movement* and is solely a clockwise motion around Meru, at no time varying in its regularity. Concerning the individual movements of the planets, all planets except Rāhu and Kālāgni occupy the houses and lunar mansions in a counterclockwise motion by incremental steps. Concerning how they occupy the houses and lunar mansions, the progressive early steps and regressive later steps of the slow stages of the five planets and the sun are decremental, and the regressive early steps and progressive later steps are incremental.[85] When the five planets arrive in their own birth sign, all increment and decrement in the slow stages is canceled out. The progressive early steps and the regressive later steps of the fast stages of the five planets are incremental, while the regressive early steps and progressive later steps are decremental. When the step index is at zero, all increment and decrement in the fast steps are canceled out, and any of the five planets whose index is zero has disappeared into the sun and is conjunct with the sun.

When any of the five planets gather at their individual birth signs conjunct [79] with the sun, any increment and decrement in both fast and slow stages is canceled out. Therefore, within the period of time from the birth of a planet until it again becomes conjunct with the sun in its own birth sign can be found the imprint[86] of its fixed or mean motion. Therefore fixed motion is the averaged-out planetary orbit through the complete circle of lunar mansions. The fixed motion of the three kinds of days for each of the planets is found by dividing a planetary orbit in terms of its three kinds of days among the 1,620 hours of the lunar mansions.[87]

The appearance and disappearance of the five planets is to be understood in terms of the sun, because a planet separate from the sun is visible to the eye, while a planet conjunct with the sun is not. The *Great Commentary* says:

> Now the text speaks of the appearance and disappearance of planets. "Whatever planets dwell within the tenancy of the sun will definitely disappear." By the rays of the sun it will not be seen, and is said to have disappeared. However such a planet has not completely disappeared.[88]

Also:

> "Abandoning the sun, it will rise." By the power of its own movement, the planet that has set will leave the sun and rise, because it has left the rays of the sun.[89]

Similarly, when the peaceful planets Venus, Ketu, and Mercury set into the sun, they set from the left of the sun, and when they rise they do so also from the left. The wrathful planets—Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn—rise and set from the right of the sun. Similarly, when peaceful and wrathful planets meet, the wrathful will pass to the right of the peaceful, and the peaceful will pass to the left of the wrathful.

Rāhu was born in Libra in the lunar mansion of *citrā* while Kālāgni was born in the lunar mansion *revatī,* and from the time of their birth they occupy the houses or lunar mansions in clockwise motion. The Rāhu head to his Kālāgni tail covers half the house and lunar-mansion circle in a counterclockwise direction. The number of lunar mansions [80] and degree hours to appear in the chart of the body of Rāhu are counted backward from the lunar mansion *revatī,* while the numbers that appear in the charts of the head and tail are counted forward from the lunar mansion *aśvinī.*

The *Condensed Tantra* and the commentary talk in general terms about how Rāhu engages the moon at the times of full moon and no moon, but these are not discussed in depth.[90] In order to understand how Rāhu engages with the sun and moon, it is important to know how Rāhu orbits. The *Great Commentary* states:

> "Moving to the left and not to the right." This means that Rāhu moves to the left and not to the right, and that it grasps the moon from its left.

And:

> "To the right," means moving to the right and grasping the moon from its right.[91]

This, and Rāhu's self-orbiting around Meru and through the lunar mansions, is all the *Great Commentary* mentions on this topic, and it does not

expound on any left and right movements. These are explained by reference to the *Root Tantra* and to karaṇa astronomy. The *Great Commentary* states:

> Know that this is due to Rāhu's orbits. This is well known in all karaṇa systems, and therefore here the conqueror Mañjuśrī did not persist.[92]

Also:

> The orbiting and so forth of Rāhu can be known from the *Root Tantra* and from the karaṇa works of others.[93]

Therefore Rāhu's engagement with the sun and moon not occurring as calculated in the charts is due to the fault of not knowing precisely its orbiting habits.

Within its left and right orbiting, Rāhu has its northward and southward journeys. The *Great Commentary* says:

> In the circle of houses, every planet travels south and north. The sun, for example, occupies the lunar mansions and the six houses.[94]

Therefore every planet has its northward and southward passages. [81]

How the stars and planets orbit the skies

This is under two outlines:

1. Examination of the assertions of others
2. Presentation of our own position

Examination of the assertions of others

The *Great Commentary* says:

> "South from the center of the gola, the bow-shaped houses of time,[95] dwelling in the fire mandala." This means that from the center of the gola chart drawn at the time of equal day and night, the bow-shaped formation of six houses, half of the circle

> of stars, dwell in the south. "In the north, the Śīta Mountains and, like fine lotus petals, Aries in the east, Libra, and so forth." This means that just as in the south the six houses dwell within half the circle of stars, similarly, north from the center of the gola chart, there dwell, by division, six houses. "Aries in the east, Libra, and so forth" means that it stretches as far as Virgo. Similarly Libra and the others reach as far as Pisces.[96]

According to most scholars, the meaning of this passage from the *Great Commentary,* which incorporates citations from the *Condensed Tantra,* is the following. From here in the central southern sector on the morning of the spring equinox, the sun is in Aries above the skies of the eastern sector. These skies are divided into northern and southern parts. This division stretches across to the western sector, where the skies are also divided north and south. From this dividing line and above Meru, a chart is projected with the mind. In the northern part of the chart, in the eastern section[97] of the east, is Aries. In the northeast is Taurus. The north is in two parts. To the west of the north is Gemini, and in the half of the north to the east dwells Cancer. In the northwest is Leo. The west is also in two parts. In its western half lies Virgo. These are the six houses of the north. Similarly, in the eastern half of the west is Libra. In the southwest is Scorpio. The south is in two parts. In the western part is Sagittarius and in the eastern part, Capricorn. In the southeast is Aquarius, and in the western half of the east lies Pisces. The houses from the Libra to Pisces are the six houses of the south.

Furthermore, in this mentally constructed chart projected from the skies above Meru, [82] which is the midway point between the skies directly above the eastern sector and the skies directly above the western sector, the six northern houses from Aries to Virgo are said to be in the shape of fine lotus petals, and the six southern houses from the Libra to Pisces are said to be arranged in the shape of a bow. This is explained as being the meaning of the phrases "like fine lotus petals" and "the bow-shaped houses of time," as found in the tantra and its commentary.

This explanation is incorrect. When the sun is in Aries directly above the central meridian of the central eastern sector on the morning of the spring equinox at the central meridian of the central southern sector, and the houses are arranged upon their paths over the twelve sectors, it is true that the six houses of the north are of the shape of lotus petals. However, in this depiction, the phrase "In the north, the Śīta Mountains" makes no

sense. The formation of the six houses of the south are also not in the shape of a bow.

Some say that in the morning, the houses in the north are in the formation of lotus petals, while in the afternoon, the sun together with Aries will arrive at the center of the central western sector. At that time the six houses of the south are in the formation of a bow. Therefore the thinking behind the passage from the tantra and commentary is that it should be applied to both the beginning and the end of the day. However I cannot see this as being valid, because the statement from the *Great Commentary* that the six houses of the north are arranged as lotus petals and the six of the south are in the formation of a bow refers to an event happening at one particular time.

Furthermore, all those who follow the above traditions say that in the chart (mentioned in the phrase "from the center of the gola chart drawn at the time of equal day and night") that is projected in the skies above Meru from the eastern sector across to the western sector, the six houses arranged in the north of that chart are north of Meru, and the six houses placed in the south of the chart are south of Meru. To posit this as the meaning of the commentary and tantra passage beginning "South from the center of the gola, the bow-shaped houses of time" is completely incorrect. What the commentary is saying is that a circular gola chart of the twelve houses is to be bisected, and six houses placed in the northern section. This depiction reaches the Śīta Mountains, as in the phrase "In the north the Śīta Mountains." [83] Six houses are placed in the south, and these are depicted as reaching the Mountains of Fire, as in the sentence, "South from the center of the gola, the bow-shaped houses of time, dwelling in the fire mandala." If the arrangement were as you have stated above, the outer edge of petal-shaped formation in the north would reach to the Mountains of Fire, and the northern part of the bow-shaped formation would reach to the regions of the Śīta Mountains. This would be completely outside the meaning of quotes from the tantra and commentary, such as those beginning "South from the center of the gola, the bow-shaped houses of time."

Therefore it must be that the depiction of the six houses of the north meets the depiction of Śīta Mountains directly in line with our central southern sector, and the depiction of the six houses of the south meets the depiction of the Mountains of Fire also directly in line with our central southern sector. If it were otherwise, consider this quote from the *Great Commentary*:

> "In the center the chart of half the circle" refers to the chart of the equinox in the center of the circle of houses, at the point of 37,500 yojana, half of the 75,000 yojana.[98]

According to your assertion, this chart showing the sun's path on the equinox between the Śīta Mountains and the Mountains of Fire would also have to be projected from the skies above Meru.

Presentation of our own position

This is under three headings:

1. An explanation of the orbiting houses
2. How the houses orbit above the twelve sectors
3. An explanation of how the length of day and night are formed by the sun's occupation of the houses

An explanation of the orbiting houses

Each lunar mansion is divided into four, and each quarter is known as a *step.* Nine such steps make up one house or *lagna.*[99] The twelve houses are those of Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces.[100]

The lunar mansions of *aśvinī, bharaṇī,* and one step of *kṛttikā* make up Aries. Three steps of *kṛttikā,* the whole of *rohiṇī,* and two steps of *mṛgaśīrṣa* make up Taurus. The last two steps of *mṛgaśīrṣa,* all of *ārdrā,* and three steps of *punarvasu* make up Gemini. The last step of *punarvasu,* plus all of *puṣya* and *āśleṣa* make up Cancer. [84] *Magha, pūrvaphalgunī,* and the first step of *uttaraphalgunī* make up Leo. The last three steps of *uttaraphalgunī,* all of *hasta,* and the first two steps of *citrā* make up Virgo. The last two steps of *citrā,* the whole of *svātī,* and the first three steps of *viśakhā* make up Libra. The last step of *viśakhā,* all of *anurādha,* and *jyeṣṭha* make up Scorpio. *Mūla, pūrvāṣāḍhā,* and the first step of *uttarāṣāḍhā* make up Sagittarius. The last three steps of *uttarāṣāḍhā,* all of *śravaṇa* and *uttarāṣāḍhā* counted as one, and the first half of *dhaniṣṭha* make up Capricorn. The last two steps of *dhaniṣṭha,* all of *śatabhiṣak,* and the last three steps of *pūrvabhādra* make up Aquarius. The last step of *pūrvabhādra,* all of *uttarabhādra,* and *revatī* make up Pisces.

The boundaries of each of the twelve houses are as explained in *Arising Letters:*

> Eyes, lunar mansions, and lunar-day hours is the measure of Aries,[101]
> veda, sky, and fire is said to be Taurus,
> taste and forty-five is Gemini,
> nine and space is Cancer,
> six and fifteen Leo,
> thirteen and thirty is thought of as Virgo,
> fifteen and forty-five is Libra,
> wealth, moon, and emptiness is Scorpio,
> twenty and fifteen is the measure of Sagittarius,
> union, eyes, and thirty is Capricorn,
> conqueror and arrows is known to be Aquarius,
> circle is known to be Pisces.[102]

How the houses orbit above the twelve sectors

This is under two headings:

1. An explanation of the term *gola* as a way of understanding the path of the twelve houses above our Lesser Jambudvīpa
2. By understanding the above, how it is possible to understand the orbiting of the gola over each of twelve sectors

An explanation of the term gola

Gola is a transliteration of a Sanskrit word. If it were translated into Tibetan, it could be rendered as cylindrical, interior, round, and uneven in height. Here it means round,[103] and the spherical orbiting by the circle of lunar mansions over the twelve sectors is known as the *gola of the houses.* The way to understand this gola is from the circular charts drawn on paper and described in the tantra and its commentary with quotes such as:

> In the center, from *aśvinī* up to to half of *citrā*,[104] the gola chart of the equinox of day and night.

[85] These charts, therefore, are also known as *gola.*

The meaning of such quotes beginning "South from the center of the gola, the bow-shaped houses of time" is expressed in charts drawn on paper, and through them the path of the houses over our Lesser Jambudvīpa can be understood. First a diagram[105] is drawn to depict the water mandala and the twelve sectors between the Śīta Mountains and the Mountains of Fire, as previously described. Then, from the midway point between the Śīta Mountains that directly face the central point of the depiction of Lesser Jambudvīpa, the central sector of the south, to the depiction of the fire mandala, a circle is drawn to illustrate the circular skies above this central point. This is the meaning of the term *gola chart.* Then this circle is bisected directly along its east-west diameter to illustrate the path of the sun on the equinox at the central meridian of this sector. This diagram is the "chart" in the quote, "from the center of the gola chart drawn at the time of equal day and night."

Within that circle, east, south, west, and north are each divided into two parts. Together with the four intermediate directions, this makes twelve parts in all. In the northern part of the east is Aries, in the northeast is Taurus, in the eastern part of the north is Gemini, in the western part of the north is Cancer, in the northwest is Leo, and in the northern part of the west is Virgo. This illustrates the path of the six northern houses. In the southern part of the west is Libra, in the southwest is Scorpio, in the western part of the south is Sagittarius, in the eastern part of the south is Capricorn, in the southeast is Aquarius, and in the southern part of the east is Pisces. This illustrates the path of the six southern houses. This is the thinking behind the passage in the *Great Commentary* beginning "in one half of the east is Aries" up to "in one half of the east is Pisces is an explanation of the houses in the gola."

In this way, as soon as the mean sun arrives in any of the twelve houses, the path of the sun of that solar day at the central meridian of the central southern sector is also the path of the first stars of that particular house. For example, on the day on which the mean sun enters Aries, the sun together with Aries travels the path of the equinox over the central meridian of the central southern sector. Therefore the text from the tantra and commentary from "In the center, from *aśvinī* up to half of *citrā*" to "Aries in the east and Libra" [86] is explaining particularly the gola of Lesser Jambudvīpa at the center of the southern sector.

But what is the meaning of "bow-shaped" and "like fine lotus petals"? It is this. In the depiction of the path of the houses directly over the central

southern sector, the six houses of the south and the six of the north are bisected by a line representing the equinox path. The six houses of the south are then in the shape of a bamboo bow and are depicted in the regions of the Mountains of Fire in the south. The six houses of the north are in the shape of the petals of half a lotus and are depicted in the regions of the Śīta Mountains in the north. If it were otherwise, as those mentioned above have maintained, then the bow formation in the regions of the Mountains of Fire and the lotus formation in the regions of the Śīta Mountains could not be explained. Also, the shapes of both sets of six houses may be similar in that they are both semicircular, but in order to put these shapes into *sragdhara* meter,[106] the words "fine lotus petals" were used.

By understanding the above, how it is possible to understand the orbiting of the gola over each of the twelve sectors

The *Great Commentary* says:

> Now the gola of the world is spoken of in detail. "From the fire to the borders of the Śīta Mountains is a distance of space, space, space, arrows, and mountains, as thousands of yojana." This means that from the southern fire mandala to the borders of the great snows of the north is a distance of 75,000 yojana.[107]

This and subsequent passages clearly reveal that when charts are drawn depicting meridians running from above the Śīta Mountains directly in line with each of the twelve sectors stretching to a similar point above the Mountains of Fire, and when these meridians are bisected midway by lines illustrating the path of the equinox sun over each of the sectors, then the northern parts of these intersections would stretch for a distance of half of 75,000 yojana, or 37,500 yojana, to the edge of the Śīta Mountains. Similarly, south of the intersection, the distance to the edge of the Mountains of Fire would also be 37,500 yojana. From this the pathway of the twelve houses over the other eleven sectors can be known and is illustrated by the chart of the central southern sector. [87]

What is the pathway of the twelve houses over the other eleven sectors? A circle is drawn from the Śīta Mountains directly facing each of the sectors to a similar point directly above the Mountains of Fire, and its east-west diameter is bisected. This illustrates the path of the houses and lunar

mansions in which the sun has arrived at the time of the equinox for each of the sectors. Therefore, from the central meridian at the east-west center of the eastern sector of the south, the sun is in Pisces at the spring equinox. In the western sector of the east, it is in Aquarius, and in the central eastern sector it is in Capricorn. Moving to the left, this continues from Sagittarius in the eastern sector of the east up to Taurus in the western sector of the south.

To illustrate the pathway of all twelve houses above each of the eleven sectors, the four directions of east, south, west, and north within the charts are divided into two parts each. Together with the four intermediate directions, this makes twelve sectors. Applying this to the eastern southern sector, in the northern section of the east lies Pisces, in the northeast is Aries, in the eastern section of the north is Taurus, in the western part is Gemini, in the northwest is Cancer, and in the northern section of the west is Leo. These are the six northern houses. Similarly, in the southern section of the west is found Virgo, in the southwest is Libra, in the western section of the south lies Scorpio, in the eastern section of the south is Sagittarius, in the southeast is Capricorn, and in the southern section of the east lies Aquarius. These are the six southern houses.

Likewise, in the western southern sector, the directions are divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east is Aquarius, in the northeast Pisces, in the eastern section of the north Aries, in the western section of the north Taurus, in the southwest Gemini, and in the northern section of the west Cancer. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west lies Leo, in the southwest Virgo, in the western section of the south Libra, in the eastern section of the south Scorpio, in the southeast Sagittarius, and in the southern section of the east Capricorn. These are the six southern houses. [88]

Similarly the central eastern sector is divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east is found Capricorn. Then in the northeast, the second section moving to the left, is found Aquarius, in the third, the eastern section of the north, is Pisces, in the fourth, the western section of the north, is Aries, in the fifth, the northwest, is Taurus, and in the sixth, the northern section of the west, is Gemini. [89] These are the six northern houses. In the seventh section, the southern section of the west, is Cancer; in the eighth, or the southwest is Leo; in the ninth, the western section of the south, is Virgo; in the tenth, or the eastern section of the south, is Libra; in the eleventh, or the southeast, is Scorpio; and in the twelfth, the

southern section of the east, is Sagittarius. These are the six southern houses.

The eastern sector of the east is also divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east is Sagittarius, in the northeast Capricorn, in the eastern section of the north Aquarius, in the western section of the north Pisces, in the northwest Aries, and in the northern section of the west Taurus. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west lies Gemini, in the southwest Cancer, in the western section of the south Leo, in the eastern section of the south Virgo, in the southeast Libra, and in the southern section of the east Scorpio. These are the six southern houses.

In the western sector of the north the directions are also divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east lies Scorpio, in the northeast Sagittarius, in the eastern section of the north Capricorn, in the western section of the north Aquarius, in the northwest Pisces, and in the northern section of the west Aries. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west is Taurus, in the southwest is Gemini, in the western section of the south is Cancer, in the eastern section of the south is Leo, in the southeast is Virgo, and in the southern section of the east is Libra. These are the six southern houses.

In the central sector of the north the directions are also divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east lies Libra, in the northeast Scorpio, in the eastern section of the north Sagittarius, in the western section of the north Capricorn, in the northwest Aquarius, and in the northern section of the west Pisces. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west is Aries, in the southwest is Taurus, in the western section of the south is Gemini, in the eastern section of the south is Cancer, in the southeast is Leo, and in the southern section of the east is Virgo. These are the six southern houses.

In the eastern sector of the north the directions are divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east lies Virgo, in the northeast Libra, in the eastern section of the north Scorpio, in the western section of the north Sagittarius, in the northwest Capricorn, and in the northern section of the west Aquarius. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west is Pisces, in the southwest is Aries, in the western section of the south is Taurus, in the eastern section of the south is Gemini, in the southeast is Cancer, and in the southern section of the east is Leo. These are the six southern houses.

In the westernmost sector of the west the directions are divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east lies Leo, in the northeast Virgo, in the eastern section of the north Libra, in the western section of the north Scorpio, in the northwest Sagittarius, and in the northern section of the west Capricorn. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west is Aquarius, in the southwest is Pisces, in the western section of the south is Aries, in the eastern section of the south is Taurus, in the southeast is Gemini, and in the southern section of the east is Cancer. These are the six southern houses.

In the central sector of the north the directions are also divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east lies Cancer, in the northeast Leo, in the eastern section of the north Virgo, in the western section of the north Libra, in the northwest Scorpio, and in the northern section of the west Sagittarius. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west is Capricorn, in the southwest is Aquarius, in the western section of the south is Pisces, in the eastern section of the south is Aries, in the southeast is Taurus, and in the southern section of the east is Gemini. These are the six southern houses.

In the easternmost sector of the west the directions are also divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east lies Gemini, in the northeast lies Cancer, in the eastern section of the north is Leo, in the western section of the north is Virgo, in the northwest is Libra, and in the northern section of the west is Scorpio. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west is Sagittarius, in the southwest is Capricorn, in the western section of the south is Aquarius, in the eastern section of the south is Pisces, in the southeast is Aries, and in the southern section of the east is Taurus. These are the six southern houses.

In the western sector of the south the directions are also divided into twelve parts. In the northern section of the east lies Taurus, in the northeast Gemini, in the eastern section of the north Cancer, in the western section of the north Leo, in the northwest Virgo, and in the northern section of the west Libra. These are the six northern houses. In the southern section of the west is Scorpio, in the southwest is Sagittarius, in the western section of the south is Capricorn, in the eastern section of the south is Aquarius, in the southeast is Pisces, and in the southern section of the east is Aries. These are the six southern houses.

Therefore this particular way of constructing charts on paper and other materials is a method of knowing, clearly and unmistakably, the path of the

twelve houses over each of the twelve sectors. This is an illustration of the profound point "If one corner is held, the whole can be moved" and is the definitive position of the commentary. You who assert the above should look on this as new advice. [90]

The explanation that the path of the houses runs above a region stretching from the Śīta Mountains to the Mountains of Fire is based upon the path of the lunar mansions and houses together with the other stars. However, the actual path of the houses with the lunar mansions, sun, moon, and other planets is within an area that covers 12,500 yojana of the earth mandala and reaches outward up to three quarters of the water mandala to make an area of 50,000 yojana. This has been correctly taught by scholars (such as those of the *Elimination of Error Oral Tradition*). The reason for their assertion is as follows. If a gnomon is planted in the ground at midday here in our land of Tibet on the day the sun has traveled its farthest north, its shadow will still face slightly to the north. Therefore, this establishes that the sun, as well as the house and lunar mansion that the sun occupies, dwells to the south of our land of Tibet. Tibet is the fifth land of the six lands, which in order from the north are Himālaya, Kailash, China, Khotan, Tibet, and India. Therefore, in the sixth land, at the southern limit of India, one's shadow would simply surround oneself.

While it can be accepted that even at the time of the northernmost point of its travels the sun does not come up beyond the southern limit of India,[108] how is it established that the path[109] of the sun along with the houses and lunar mansions stretches for 50,000 yojana up to three quarters of the water mandala, 12,500 yojana inward from its edge? The *Great Commentary* says:

> Here the measurement of the gola is 75,000 yojana from the fire mandala of the south to the snows of the north. "Similarly orbiting east and west," this is taught clearly in the fifth chapter.[110]

Therefore a circular chart is drawn from the center of an equinox path and stretches to depictions of the Śīta Mountains and the Mountains of Fire in order to illustrate the path of the twelve houses above each of the twelve sectors. [91] However this illustration of the pathway of the houses, lunar mansions, and sun is a generalized and rough depiction. The specific path should be known from explanations found in the Gnosis chapter. The text of these explanations is missing from some translations, including the

Shong and new Jonang translations. However, after verse 190 from the Gyijo and Ma translations, there is this verse:

> The limits of the sun's travels north and south
> stretch three quarters of the Salt Ocean and up to Kailash
> for a distance of 50,000 yojana.
> In a halved chart, day and night are of space fire[111] hours.
> 50,000 is completed in eyes, nāga, and moon,[112]
> traveling from day to day.[113]

This verse is the reference for the previous commentary quote, and so those previously mentioned scholars who have taught this are correct.

An explanation of how the length of day and night are formed by the sun's occupation of the houses

The houses and the lunar mansions orbit Meru in a clockwise direction to the right, and by the force of the wind carrying the houses, the sun and the planets that occupy the houses also orbit Meru to the right. However, in terms of their individual movements, the sun and the other planets, with the exception of Rāhu, enter and occupy the lunar mansions by orbiting Meru in a counterclockwise direction to the left.

The planets make both southward and northward journeys, while the houses and the lunar mansions have no southward or northward path and no individual movements. They move over the same path they have always followed, regardless of the sector they are traversing. The *Great Commentary* says:

> Therefore this orbiting force is that of the houses but not that of the sun that dwells in the houses. The circle of the houses orbits to the right, the planets move into the houses to the left. Just as the circle of houses orbit, likewise Rāhu, facing west, travels to the right. The east-facing planets travel around Meru to the left and move through the circle of houses.[114]

[92] It is in this way that the sun is the main indicator of the differences in time and so forth. Therefore it is necessary to know, among other things, which house the sun is occupying in the regions of the twelve sectors at the

times of the limits of sun's northward and southward passages and of the equinoxes. This will be explained.

First let us explain the spring equinox. The lunar mansion position of the mean sun is set at zero in all places.[115] As soon as the mean sun arrives at Aries, it marks the beginning of the seasons and of the spring equinox at the central meridian of the central sector of the south. Likewise the spring equinox occurring at the direct center of the other eleven sectors clockwise from the south, such as the western sector of the south, can be matched to the immediate arrival of the mean sun in the other houses, such as Taurus. Therefore, by the arrival of the mean sun in Taurus, a spring equinox occurs at the direct center of the western sector of the south. Similarly, moving clockwise, when the spring equinox occurs at the third sector, the mean sun will appear in the charts in Gemini, at the fourth in Cancer, at the fifth in Leo, at the sixth in Virgo, at the seventh in Libra, at the eighth in Scorpio, at the ninth in Sagittarius, at the tenth in Capricorn, at the eleventh in Aquarius, and when spring equinox occurs at the direct center of the twelfth, or the eastern, sector of the south, the mean sun arrives in Pisces.

The above are the equinoxes over the direct center of the sectors, but to be more precise, within each sector more than thirty equinoxes can occur. From the moment the mean sun enters Aries until it enters Taurus, the area of land from the center of the central southern sector to the center of the western sector of the south can be divided into thirty parts that constitute thirty solar days, and on each day a spring equinox will occur. Similarly, from the arrival of the mean sun in Taurus until the moment of its arrival in Gemini, the area from the center of the western sector of the south to the center of the eastern sector of the west is divided into thirty parts, each covering a solar day, and on each day a spring equinox will occur.

The same applies to the other areas. The exceptions are the area from the center of the eastern sector of the west to the center of the central sector of the west, the area from the center of the eastern sector of the north to the center of the central sector of the north, and the area from the center of the eastern sector of the east to the center of the central sector of the east: all these are divided into thirty-one. [93] The area from the center of the eastern sector of the south to the center of the central sector of the south is divided into thirty-two. The spring equinox occurs on each of these solar days. These are exceptions to the above.

The months, named according to their full-moon lunar mansions[116] and designated as early, middle, and later,[117] are linked to particular houses in

which the sun dwells. The half-month in which the mean sun enters Aries will be one of the two halves of a waxing-led Caitra. If the mean sun entering Aries appears in the chart on any date from the first to the fifteenth of the waxing, Aries is assigned to Caitra. When the mean sun entering Aries appears in the chart on any date from the first to the fifteenth of the waning, Aries is assigned to a waning-led Vaiśākha, which is then designated as the beginning of the year. The *Great Commentary* says:

> In this Lesser Jambudvīpa, south of Meru, the houses of Aries and so forth, the times of spring and so forth, the months of Caitra and so forth, and the halves are all well known.[118]

This shows Aries assigned to a waxing-led Caitra. Again the *Great Commentary* states:

> In this continent south of Meru, the sun dwells in Aries, and Vaiśākha is the spring.[119]

This illustrates the house of Aries assigned to a waning-led Vaiśākha. In this way, the month assigned to Aries when that month is waxing-led will be Caitra in all of the twelve sectors, and when waning-led, the month assigned to Aries will be Vaiśākha in all twelve sectors. When the month of the sun entering Aries is designated a waxing-led month, here in our central sector of the south, middle spring is the month of Caitra. Proceeding counterclockwise, in the second sector, or the eastern sector of the south, later spring is Caitra. In the third sector counterclockwise, early summer is Caitra. In the fourth, middle summer is Caitra. In the fifth, later summer is Caitra. In the sixth, Caitra is in early autumn; in the seventh, Caitra is middle autumn; and in the eighth, it is later autumn. [94] In the ninth sector Caitra occurs in early winter, in the tenth in middle winter, and in the eleventh in later winter. In the twelfth sector, the western sector of the south, Caitra is in early spring.

When the month of the sun's residence in Aries is designated a waning-led month, in this central sector of the south, later spring is the month of Vaiśākha. Similarly, moving counterclockwise, in the second sector, early summer is Vaiśākha. In the third, middle summer is Vaiśākha, and so on, until the twelfth sector, the western sector of the south, where middle spring would be Vaiśākha.

When the sun, on its journey from Aries, arrives in Cancer, it has reached the limit of its northward journey from the standpoint of the center of this central sector of the south. Similarly, proceeding clockwise, the northern limit of the sun's journey from the standpoint of the direct center of each of the remaining eleven sectors can be applied to the moment the mean sun arrives in Leo and the other eleven houses. For example, at the direct center of the western sector of the south, it is the moment of the sun's arrival in Leo that marks the limit of the sun's northward journey. Similarly, moving clockwise, the moment of the mean sun's arrival in Virgo marks the limit of the sun's northward journey at the direct center of the third sector, or the eastern sector of the west. Similarly it is Libra at the fourth clockwise, Scorpio at the fifth, Sagittarius at the sixth, Capricorn at the seventh, Aquarius at the eighth, Pisces at the ninth, Aries at the tenth, Taurus at the eleventh. And the moment of the mean sun's arrival at Gemini marks the limit of the sun's northward journey at the direct center of the eastern sector of the south.

This can be looked at in more detail. Between the sun's journey from Cancer and the moment of its arrival in Leo, the area from the direct center of the central sector of the south to the center of the western sector of the south can be divided into thirty parts. In each part the sun will travel to its northern limit, which means a summer solstice,[120] occurring each time. A summer solstice, therefore, occurs thirty times. Likewise, between the sun's journey from Leo and the moment of its arrival in Virgo, the area from the direct center of the western sector of the south to the center of the eastern sector of the west can be divided into thirty parts. In each part the sun will travel to its northern limit, bringing about a summer solstice each time. Here, too, a summer solstice occurs thirty times. This process can be applied to the other sectors. [95] The exceptions can be known from the section above on the equinoxes.

The moment of the mean sun's arrival in Libra is the autumn equinox at the direct center of our central sector of the south. Similarly, the moments of the mean sun's arrivals at Scorpio and the other eleven houses, and, clockwise, the corresponding autumn equinoxes at the direct center of the western sector of the south and the other eleven sectors, can be known in the same way that the spring equinoxes were known.

The moment of the sun's arrival in Capricorn marks the limit of the sun's southward passage at the direct center of the central sector of the south, and is the winter solstice. Similarly the moment of arrival of the

mean sun in Aquarius and the other eleven houses marks the limits of the sun's southward passages and winter solstices at, clockwise, the western sector of the south and the other eleven sectors respectively. For example, the moment of the mean sun's arrival in Aquarius marks the limit of the sun's southward passage as well as the winter solstice at the direct center of the western sector of the south. Similarly, as soon as the mean sun arrives in Pisces, the sun's southward journey is at its limit for the direct center of the eastern sector of the west, and that moment marks its winter solstice. This continues until the moment of the mean sun's arrival in Sagittarius, which marks the winter solstice and limit of the sun's southward journey at the direct center of the eastern sector of the south.

If this is looked at in more detail, between the moment of the sun's arrival in Capricorn and the moment of its arrival in Aquarius, the area from the center of the central sector of the south to the center of the western sector of the south is divided into thirty parts. At each part the sun reaches the limit of its southward passage, and therefore the winter solstice also occurs. Correspondence between the remaining eleven houses and eleven sectors can be understood in the same way.

In this way, during the course of a year illustrated by the mean sun circling from Aries to Aries, the sun makes a little over 365 clockwise orbits of Meru. Therefore the area of the twelve sectors can be divided into three 365 parts, and at each part the sun will reach the limit of its southward passage, and at each limit a winter solstice will occur. In the same way the limits of the northward summer journeys as well as the spring and autumn equinoxes can also be known. [96]

Now I will discuss the scriptural references and reasonings that substantiate the above. The *Great Commentary* says:

> How are the additions and omissions to be known? Before the first month of the northward passage, ten days are to be studied by the shadow of the gnomon. As soon as the shadow of the sun stick turns from north, that day, that date, that yoga, that *karaṇa* is the solar day on which the sun changes its movement. On that solar day the sun is at twenty in the lunar mansion place[121] and at fifteen in the hours place. This is the primary definition.

Ten days before the winter solstice, the shadow of a gnomon is examined, and the time when the shadow turns from heading north is the time of the

winter solstice. The sun on that day is twenty lunar mansions and fifteen hours. This is explained as being the moment the sun leaves Sagittarius and enters Capricorn. The region where this occurs is the direct center of this central sector of the south. The country or region where the karaṇa astronomy taught in the tantra was mainly practiced is the noble country of India at the center of this central sector of the south. It is with this region in mind that it was taught that the sun's position of twenty lunar mansions and fifteen hours corresponds to the winter solstice at the moment the sun enters Capricorn. In the section from the *Great Commentary* explaining increment and decrement in the sun's stages according to karaṇa it says:

> "Because of its travels there is increment and decrement concerning the sun. Others have no accurate positions." These words are definitive.[122]

Explaining this line, the commentary continues:

> The result obtained by that fraction is a number of hours, and in the place of hours it is an increment. Because of its travels there is decrement. Because of its travels, there is also an increment in Capricorn and so forth and a decrement in Cancer and so forth.[123]

According to karaṇa methodology, the moment of the sun's arrival in Capricorn is the start of the northward journey, and the moment of the sun's arrival in Cancer is the start of the southward passage. [97] Therefore those scholars (such as Chögyal Jangpa)[124] are not correct when they maintain that the statement asserting twenty in the position of the lunar mansions and fifteen in the position of hours to be the winter solstice refers to the western edge of the central sector of the south. Here's why. It would follow that the statement positing the moment of the sun's arrival in Aries as being the spring equinox on the central sector of the south also refers to the western edge of the central sector of the south. This cannot be, because if that were the case, the statement that the sun in Aries at the direct center of the central sector of the east corresponds to the beginning of the day at the central sector of the south would also have to refer to the western edge of the central sector of the south. It cannot mean that, because it would contradict the quote beginning "For half the path of 300,000."[125]

Therefore, as explained above, the moment of the sun's arrival in Sagittarius marks the limit of the sun's southward passage for the eastern sector of the south at its the direct center. Then, for each of a little over thirty days, the area from the center of the eastern sector of the south to the center of the central sector of the south is divided into thirty parts, and it is established that the limit of the sun's southward passage occurs at each part, with a winter solstice occurring each time. This can be established. The master Abhaya[126] says in his *Kālacakrāvatāra:*

> Therefore I will speak on the path of *siddhānta.* These are the stages. On level ground in the middle of a circle of one cubit diameter, plant a stick in the ground that measures the length from the tip of your thumb to the tip of your middle finger. The line of the stick's morning shadow gradually shortens from outside the mandala. When it reaches the edge of the mandala, at that time and in that place, make the mark of the crowfoot.[127] That is the west. In the afternoon the shadow gradually lengthens from the center of the mandala. Repeat the process as before, and the mark will indicate the east. Anchoring thread at one of the marks, and beginning directly in front of the other mark, draw a circle with chalk. Anchor thread at the other mark and do the same, thereby creating the shape of a fish. In the middle of the two circles, the center of the mouth of the fish is the south, and the center of the tail is the north.[128] Having ascertained the directions rub out the circles. [98] Starting from the tenth day before the sun makes its northward journey, make observations at midday. When the shadow begins to move inside from the northern edge of the original circle, that is the day the sun changes to its northward journey.[129]

In an experiment similar to this, seven sixty-year cycles after Fire Rabbit year, the first of the past years, plus twenty single years, in the unfinished year of the male Fire Dog[130] (in the company of bright and intelligent scholars and in accordance with the words of the omniscient Paldrak[131]), I carried out observations using the gnomon at the time of the winter solstice. On the fifth day of the twelfth month of the Hor calendar,[132] the shadow was seen to turn from heading northward. Therefore on the fourth, the previous day, the winter solstice was established for the place where we had been standing.

It was also at the point where 4/13 of the fourth calendar day had passed. Using siddhānta astronomy, the mean sun of 3/13 of the fourth day was calculated to be at the position of eighteen lunar mansions and thirty-one hours, thirty minutes exactly.[133] A position of twenty lunar mansions and fifteen hours[134] is reached by adding twenty-three days plus 3/13 of one day of the sun's fixed motion.[135] Therefore the winter solstice is established for the direct center of the central sector of the south at the point of the completion of 3/13 of the twenty-eighth day of the twelfth Hor month. This established that the region we were occupying was the twenty-third region east of the center of the central sector of the south from among the division of thirty separate regions ranging from the center of the central sector of the south to the center of the eastern sector of the south, and in that region the winter solstice occurred on the fourth day of the twelfth Hor month of that year. Using the same reasoning, it is possible to know the winter solstice for each of the 365 regions divided among the twelve sectors.

The omniscient Butön calculated the sun's southern limit and winter solstice in our particular region as being the sun's occupation of nineteen lunar mansions and fifteen hours.[136] [99] However, the *Great Commentary* says:

> In the king of tantras, definitions[137] are not fixed. At the end of sixty years, the definitions are to be done again.[138]

Therefore, from the *prabhava* Fire Rabbit first year of the past years until this present Water Rabbit year,[139] 457 years have passed. Over that time in karaṇa astronomy, the middle place multiplied by Śiva[140] has accumulated an excess of about twenty-three hours for the sun. If those twenty-three hours are subtracted from nineteen lunar mansions and fifteen hours, which is asserted these days as being the position of the winter sun's solstice, the result is eighteen lunar mansions and fifty-two hours. Therefore this establishes that even according to those who use karaṇa astronomy these days, and who maintain the same mansion position as the omniscient Butön, at the time of the winter solstice in this land of ours, about nineteen days of the sun's coursing still has to be added before it arrives at the position of twenty lunar mansions and fifteen hours. Therefore, by this reasoning, even according those who assert the above would have to agree that our land was the nineteenth land eastward from the center of the central sector of the south among the thirty separate lands apportioned from

the eastern sector of the south to the central sector of the south, and that there would be a winter solstice on that nineteenth land counted eastward from the central sector of the south.

Contrary to the above, the presentations of those (such as Kumāra) who adhere to general karaṇa astronomy (which maintains that at the time of the winter solstice the sun is at a position of twenty lunar mansions and fifteen hours, and that that position is the winter solstice each year at each of the twelve sectors) can be known from their extensive refutation elsewhere.[141]

Furthermore, the *Great Commentary* says:

> "Orbiting the circle of houses in all regions of Meru, when the sun reaches the Fire in the region of the seventh, it touches the peak[142] of Meru and journeys above the mountains of snow." By this reasoning, the lengths of time and so forth of the sun dwelling in each house can be known in all.[143]

This passage indicates that the time of the winter solstice is ascertained generally at each of the sectors each year, and from that it can be understood that thirty winter solstices occur on each of these sectors. [100] How is this understood? Using the central sector of the south as an illustration, the passage explains that the moment the sun arrives in Cancer, the peak or horns of Meru directly facing the direct center of the central sector of the south are touched by the rays of the sun. On the same solar day the rays of the sun will also reach the regions above the inner limit of the Mountains of Fire that directly face the central sector of the north, which is the seventh sector counting from the central southern sector.[144] When the mean sun is at nineteen lunar mansions and seven hours and thirty minutes, which is the sun's arrival at the halfway point of Sagittarius, the rays of the sun touch the peak or horns of Meru facing the land of the eastern edge of the central sector of the south divided into thirty separate parts. On that day also on the seventh sector from the central sector of the south, the central sector of the north, on the land at the eastern edge, the rays of the sun will reach the regions above the inner limit of the Mountains of Fire. This can be inferred by the phrase "Orbiting the circle of houses in all regions of Meru."

Assertions contrary to the above say that there is only one limit to the sun's northward and southward passages on each sector each year. Other

scholars (such as Kumāra) maintain that there is only one winter and summer solstice each year in each sector. If these were correct, consider the following. When the sun arrives in Capricorn, the length of the day of the direct center of the east-west meridian of Kailash is twenty-five hours. According to the above, it would follow that the day must be twenty-five hours long also at the eastern edge of Kailash, because these two regions share the same time of winter solstice. If that is asserted, then consider this. As soon as the sun enters Capricorn, one zodiacal month[145] has passed since the winter solstice in the eastern sector of the south in the center of a region corresponding to Kailash, and the length of the day in that region is twenty-six hours and forty minutes. Similarly, in the eastern sector of the south, at the western edge of a region corresponding to Kailash, it would follow that a day would also have to be twenty-six hours and forty minutes, [101] because the winter solstice at the center of the eastern sector of the south and at the western edge of that sector occurs at the same time. If that is so, then it would be incorrect to hold that the length of a day at the eastern edge of Kailash of the central sector of the south was twenty-five hours, and on that very day the length of a day on the western edge of a region corresponding to Kailash on the eastern sector of the south was twenty-six hours and forty minutes, because the eastern edge of Kailash of the central sector of the south and the western edge of a corresponding region on the eastern sector of the south border each other. This matter can also be discussed by looking at the extent of the sun's rays, but that is enough for now.

Some say that the *Great Commentary* passage "Orbiting the circle of houses in all regions of Meru" and so on may indeed teach that at the time of the limits of the two passages of the sun, the rays of the sun reach the peak or horns of Meru and the regions above the inner limit of the Mountains of Fire. However, if this means that the disk of the sun itself does not travel to these two places, then consider this quote from the *Great Commentary:*

> "Having covered the Salt Ocean, the sun travels as far as the fire in the south." This means that the sun, having covered the Salt Ocean by way of the houses over each of the sectors divided by the twelve spokes, it travels to dwell in the south as far as the beginning of the fire mandala at the end of the oceans. From that point of the fire mandala, it travels to the north of Kailash, to Himālaya, moving north on its northward journey.[146]

Doesn't this quote preclude such an assertion? It does not, because these words from the *Great Commentary* teach that it is the rays[147] of the sun that travel to the regions above the inner rim of the Mountains of Fire and as far as the peak or horns of Meru. The *Condensed Tantra* says:

> Above at six and nāga, the rays of the sun at the northward limit.
> Then, in clockwise direction, lord of men, ceasing at 11,000.
> From the center at 81,000, less arrows hundred, the gola chart,
> increasing and decreasing space, space, arrows, and arrows,
> to the north and south.
> Having covered the Salt Ocean, the sun travels as far as the fire
> in the south.[148]

This quote shows that the phrase "rays of the sun" is to be applied as clarification to the subsequent lines beginning, "Having covered the Salt Ocean." Similarly:

> "Together with a half, eyes, nāga, moon, day after day is spent." [102] This means a total of 182½.[149] These are the individual solar days of one direction of the 75,000 yojana traveled by the sun.[150]

"Spent"[151] in this passage means spent by the rays of the sun. This is not a presentation that excludes the area covered by the "spender" but one that includes it, and so the line ending "the 75,000 yojana spent by the sun" is also talking of the area spent by the rays of the sun. If the "spender's" reach were not included in the portion spent, then the following consequence would occur. The circumference of the sun's disk is not clearly taught in this tantra and its commentaries, but in the *Abhidharmakośa* it says, "of fifty-one yojana,"[152] thereby explaining the measurement of the disk of the sun to be fifty-one yojana. Therefore you would have to accept that the sun travels for "Together with a half, eyes, nāga, moon" or 182½ days over 75,000 minus a third of fifty-one, or seventeen, yojana.[153] In that case, ask yourself how, even for you, that does not contradict the quote ending, "75,000 yojana traveled by the sun."

The Abhidharma assertion is a rough estimate made on the basis of commonly accepted views. This can be examined in more detail. A chain of sun discs arranged in a lunar mansion would not exceed sixty in number, and

in each lunar mansion there are sixty hours of distance. Therefore it must be that the distance between the northern and southern edge of the sun's disk is at least one hour of distance, and one hour of distance is a little over 231 yojana. To believe that at the time of the sun's northern limit, the sun's disk actually reaches the peak or horns of Meru would contradict our actual experience that here in this land of Tibet, the shadow of the gnomon still shows north on the day of the sun's northern limit, as previously described.

How far does the sun travel on each day of its northward journey? 182½ days are divided among 50,000 yojana. That results in a little over 273 yojana, three *krośa*, and 1,780 armspans. [103] (To be precise, it is over by three cubits, six fingerwidths, seven barley grains, and 85/365 of a barley grain.)

The height above the earth mandala that the sun travels is explained as follows. Whichever region the sun may be over at the time of its northern limit of that sector, its rays are at a height of 86,000 yojana. Above the area of the seventh sector from that particular region, which would be a region of the sun's southern limit, the rays are at a height of 86,000 yojana less 11,000, or 75,000 yojana. The sun therefore travels clockwise around Meru in an undulating[154] fashion. Therefore it is taught that in any region the distance between the ground and the rays of the sun is explained as being 86,000 yojana at the sun's northern limit and 75,000 yojana at its southern limit. It can be understood, therefore, that from the area of its northern limit until its southward journey is completed, the sun and its rays drop each day by sixty yojana, one *krośa*, 191 armspans, three cubits, two fingerwidths, and 350/365 of a fingerwidth. Similarly it can be understood that from the time of the sun's southern limit until its northward journey is completed, each day it gains in height by the same distance.

What is the reach of the sun's rays? Some say that it is 14,000 yojana, and others say 12,500 yojana. If the previous quote is to be translated, "touches the peak of Meru," then the rays of the lower regions of sun extend for 14,000 yojana, because at the time of its northern limit the disk of the sun is level with the peak of Meru.[155] The length of the directional rays, such as those from its southern side, for example, must be 12,500 yojana, because at the time of its northern limit the tip of the sun's rays must be posited as reaching the peak of Meru, and at such a time the distance between the disk of the sun and Meru is not more than 12,500 yojana. If we read the quote according to the Shong translation as "touches the horns of Meru,"[156] [104] the rays from the lower regions of the sun disk also travel for 12,500 yojana.

The circumference of the sun's undulating daily motion, the sun's ecliptic, and the distance from the lunar mansion of *aśvinī* to the lunar mansion of *revatī*[157] is 375,000 yojana. In hours that is equal to 1,620 hours of distance.

During the sun's undulating revolution around Meru, there are six places in each sector where night and day are of different lengths. These six places are explained as follows. Of the 25,000 yojana of the earth mandala that stretches from the outer edge of the Śīta Mountains to the inner rim of the water mandala, the northern half is divided into six separate parts. Of these the northernmost part of Himālaya borders the Śīta Mountains. The southern edge of the noble land of India directly faces the disk of the sun on the day of the sun's northern limit.[158] This is established by the shadow of a gnomon on that day. In this way, from the southern edge of the Śīta Mountains on the earth mandala of the central sector of the south to the inner rim of the water mandala, the northern half of the 25,000 yojana is divided into six regions comprising, from the north, Himālaya, Kailash, China, Khotan, Tibet, and India. Likewise the remaining eleven sectors can be presented as having six regions of similar proportions. At the direct center of the six regions of this central sector of the south, night and day can be of different lengths due to the sun's passages. Similarly, on the six regions of the other sectors, it should be understood that differences in the lengths of day and night will also occur.

The way night and day differ in length in the central sector of the south is as follows. At the time of equal day and night on the central meridian of the central sector of the south, daytime is thirty hours and nighttime is thirty hours in each of the six regions. Each day on from this time of a common equinox, the time of day increases and the length of night decreases by the following times on the six regions as the sun moves north. [105] At Himālaya it increases by three minutes,[159] five breaths, 3/5 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again. At Kailash it is three minutes, one breath, 2/3 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again. In China it is two minutes, four breaths, 6/7 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again. In Khotan it is two minutes, two breaths, 3/4 of a breath, and one 130/365 of that again. In Tibet it is two minutes, one breath, 1/9 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again. In India it is one minute, five breaths, 4/5 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again.

When the sun reaches the limit of its northward journey at the central meridian of the central sector of the south, the length of the daytime is thirty-six hours; thirty-five hours; thirty-four hours, seventeen minutes,

and 6/7 of a breath; thirty-three hours and forty-five minutes; thirty-three hours and twenty minutes; and thirty-three hours, respectively, in the six regions from Himālaya to India. The nighttime also decreases to twenty-four hours; twenty-five hours; twenty-five hours, forty-two minutes, five breaths, and 1/7 of a breath; twenty-six hours and fifteen minutes; twenty-six hours, forty minutes; and finally twenty-seven hours from Himālaya to India, respectively. Similarly, when the sun moves south from the equinox, the length of night increases and daytime decreases each day at each of the six regions by the same amounts as above. At the southern limit of the sun's travels, the lengths of day and night are the reverse of the above and can be known accordingly.

To match all this with supporting references from the tantra and commentaries, and to look at points of doubt, the *Great Commentary* says, on the thirty-eighth verse of the Realms chapter:

> Concerning this measurement, on the day of moving south, thirty-six hours are of daytime and twenty-four are of night. Similarly, when traveling north, the length of day and night can be known by reversing this.[160]

This explains that in Himālaya, daytime increases by twelve hours and nighttime decreases by twelve hours between the time of the sun's southern limit and the time of the sun's northern limit. In Kailash, from the southern limit to the northern limit, a fifth of a sixty-hour day and night is established as being the increase and decrease. The *Great Commentary* says on the fifty-fourth verse of the Realms chapter: [106]

> Here increase and decrease is by one sixth. By a sixth part of sixty, or ten hours, nighttime decreases and daytime increases from Capricorn to the end of Gemini. From Cancer to the end of Sagittarius, daytime decreases and nighttime increases. "Definitely sun and moon decrease and increase" means by one sixth. On the continent of Kailash, the ascertainment of the shadow is not that of India. In India, on the sun's journey from the north to its southern limit and from the south to the northern limit, the increase and decrease, as ascertained by the shadow, is by a tenth. Likewise, in the lands of Tibet, Khotan, China, and

> so forth, it is by a ninth, an eighth, a seventh, and so on. In this way, as far as the land of Shambhala, increase and decrease can be known by the reading of the shadow.[161]

Thus, in Kailash, from the limit of the southward passage to the limit of the northward passage, daytime increases and nighttime decreases by a sixth of sixty hours, or ten hours. In the lands of India, Tibet, Khotan, and China, daytime increases and nighttime decreases respectively by a tenth of sixty hours, or six hours; by a ninth, or six hours and forty minutes; by an eighth, or seven hours and thirty minutes; and by a seventh, or eight hours, thirty-four minutes, one breath, and 5/7 of a breath.

Therefore the increase and decrease of day and night found from one limit to the other in the six lands is twelve hours in Himālaya; ten hours in Kailash; eight hours, thirty-four minutes, one breath, and 5/7 of a breath in China; seven hours and thirty minutes in Khotan; six hours and forty minutes in Tibet; and six hours in India. These figures are halved, and one half is added to the thirty hours of equinox daytime, and one half is subtracted from the thirty hours of equinox nighttime, to arrive at the above figures for the length of daytime and nighttime on the day of the limit of the sun's northward journey at each of the six lands.

It is the thinking of the commentary that these increases and decreases in the length of a day as explained here refer to solar days. [107] The *Great Commentary* says on the thirty-eighth verse of the Realms chapter:

> The stages of the journey are 82½ solar days more than a hundred. In the south on these solar days, on the stages of the journey, nighttime increases, while in its north it is the daytime.[162]

Therefore the final increase and decrease at the limits of the travels is counted in solar days. Moreover any decrease and increase has to be noted from day to day.

Some might say, "According to you, the change each day in Himālaya is three minutes, five breaths, 3/5 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again. This contradicts the *Great Commentary* where it says:

> North of Kailash as far as Himālaya, each day the stages of the travel increase and decrease by four breaths and three minutes.[163]

"Also for you, in Kailash the increase and decrease for each day is three minutes, one breath, 2/3 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again. In India, according to you, the increase and decrease for each day is one minute, five breaths, 4/5 of a breath, and 130/365 of that again. In the *Great Commentary* it says:

> Each day, daytime and nighttime increases or decreases by two breaths and three minutes. This is the measurement for Kailash.[164]

"Also:

> In India, it should be known that on each day and night there is an increase or decrease of two minutes.

"Your assertions, therefore, contradict these quotes."

There is no contradiction. The increases and decreases of the solar days in the six lands that we have stated above are divisions of increase and decrease in daytime and nighttime between the limit of one passage and the limit of the other, whose times in hours and so forth are correct figures obtained by dividing by the 182½ solar days that exist between one limit and the other. Therefore they are correct as measurements of daily increase and decrease. The increase and decrease of three minutes and four breaths for each day in Himālaya as mentioned in the *Great Commentary* is an approximation. Concerning the three minutes and two breaths in Kailash and the two minutes in India, [108] these increases have been calculated by dividing by the 180 zodiacal days[165] that exist between one limit and the other. This results in three minutes and two breaths in Kailash and two minutes in India. These were taught, therefore, with convenience in mind. Therefore the calculations of those that have led to a chart difference of two breaths each day from India to Himālaya cannot possibly be correct.

That has been a general explanation. If it is explained astronomically, then at the moment of the mean sun's arrival in Aries, the days of the six lands at their direct centers are thirty hours long, and the nights are thirty hours long. All six lands thereby share the equinox. From then on individual daytimes in each of the six lands increase in length daily until the mean sun arrives in Taurus, when in India the length of daytime is thirty-one hours. In Tibet it is thirty-one hours, six minutes, and four breaths. In

Khotan it is thirty-one hours and fifteen minutes. In China it is thirty-one hours, twenty-five minutes, four breaths, and 2/7 of a breath. In Kailash daytime is thirty-one hours and forty minutes, and in Himālaya it is thirty-two hours.

Likewise, at the moment of the mean sun's arrival in Gemini, daytime in India is thirty-two hours. In Tibet it is thirty-two hours, thirteen minutes, and two breaths; in Khotan it is thirty-two hours and thirty minutes; in China it is thirty-two hours, fifty-one minutes, two breaths, and 4/7 of a breath. In Kailash it is thirty-three hours and twenty minutes, and in Himālaya it is thirty-four hours. The arrival of the sun in Cancer is the day of its northern limit at the direct center of the six lands, and the length of daytime has been explained previously.

The reasons why, on the same day in each of the six lands, the duration of the sun varies can be explained using the day on which the sun has reached its northern limit as an example. When the sun arrives above the meridian of the central sector of the east at the time of the mean sun arriving in Aries, it is the beginning of morning at the center of the six lands in the central southern sector, and when it arrives above the meridian of the central sector of the west, it is the end of the afternoon. This is true for all six lands. Then the sun moves steadily north until it reaches its northern limit. When the sun on that day arrives at a point one hour and thirty minutes east of the meridian of the central sector of the east, it is the beginning of morning in the center of India. [109] When the sun arrives at a point one hour thirty minutes west of the meridian of the central sector of the west, it is the end of the afternoon in India. Therefore the time from its rising in the east until it arrives at the direct center of India is sixteen hours and thirty minutes of morning. From then until the sun sets is sixteen hours and thirty minutes of afternoon. This makes thirty-three hours total.

At the center of Tibet, when the sun arrives at a point one hour and forty minutes east of the meridian of the central sector of the east, morning begins. When it arrives at a similar point west of the central sector of the west, afternoon ends. Therefore, from the moment of its appearance until the sun reaches the direct center of Tibet, it is morning, and a total of sixteen hours and forty minutes passes. From then until sunset is afternoon, and a total of sixteen hours and forty minutes also passes. Putting these two sums together, daytime in Tibet becomes thirty-three hours and twenty minutes.

In the center of Khotan, when the sun arrives at a point one hour, fifty-two minutes, and three breaths east of the meridian of the central sector of the east, morning begins, and when the sun arrives at a similar point west of the meridian of central sector of the west, afternoon ends. Therefore, from the point of its rising until the sun reaches the direct center of Khotan, it is morning, and sixteen hours, fifty-two minutes, and three breaths will have passed. From then until sunset is afternoon, and the same number of hours will pass. Morning and afternoon added together make daytime in Khotan, at that particular time, thirty-two hours and forty-five minutes long.

In the center of China, when the sun arrives at a point two hours, eight minutes, three breaths, and 3/7 of a breath east of the meridian of the central sector of the east, morning begins, and when it arrives at a similar point west of the central sector of the west, afternoon ends. Therefore, from the moment of the sun's rising until it reaches the direct center of China, it is morning, and seventeen hours, eight minutes, three breaths, and 3/7 of a breath will pass. From then until sunset is afternoon, and that same number of hours will pass. Adding together the times of morning and afternoon produces a total of thirty-four hours, seventeen minutes, and 6/7 of a breath. [110] This is the length of daytime in China at that time.

In the center of Kailash, when the sun arrives at a point two hours and thirty minutes east of the meridian of the central sector of the east, morning begins, and its arrival at a similar point west of the meridian of the central sector of the west marks the end of afternoon. Therefore, from the moment of the sun's rising in the east until its arrival at the direct center of Kailash, it is morning, and seventeen hours and thirty minutes will pass. From there until it sets, it is afternoon, and seventeen hours and thirty minutes will have passed. The times of morning and afternoon added together come to thirty-five hours, which is the length of daytime when the sun reaches its northern limit at the direct center of Kailash.

At the center of Himālaya, when the sun arrives at a point three hours east of the meridian of the central sector of the east, morning begins, and when the sun arrives at a point three hours west of the central sector of the west, afternoon ends. Applying the same calculations as above, and totaling morning and afternoon times, produces a figure of thirty-six hours, which is the length of daytime at the center of Himālaya on the day of the sun's northern limit.

Therefore the reasons for the individual and differing lengths of daytime

on the day of the sun's northern limit at the direct centers of the six lands are the differing positions of sunrise and sunset, as explained. If the times or positions of rising and the times or positions of setting were all the same, and none were earlier or later, then the reason for the differing lengths of daytime would have to be put down to the speed of the sun over the six lands. This would not be a suitable reason, because on a single base, the centers of the six lands, for a time that is the duration of a whole day, a single sun disk cannot be validly perceived[166] as moving quickly over one land and slowly over another land.

There is an excellent presentation of this in the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission,* where it explains that, as the mean sun arrives at [111] each of the twelve houses in turn, the length of daytime differs at the center of Kailash because of the different positions of rising and setting, thereby producing earlier and later sunrises and sunsets. With this and our rather brief explanation, one can know how to apply it to the times of the mean sun arriving in the other houses at the remaining five lands.

Most scholars of the past (such as those of the Jonang tradition) maintained that at any of the centers of the six lands of the central sector of the south, regardless of the mean sun's position in any of the houses, morning begins when the disk of the sun arrives at the direct center of the central sector of the east. Therefore morning at the direct center of India, for example, on the central sector of the south corresponds exactly with noon at the direct center of the central sector of the east. Similarly noon at the center of the central sector of the south and morning at the center of the central sector of the west occur at the same time. The same processes are applied to the other sectors. Also, while they accept that six *lagna*[167] occur during the day and six occur at night, they assert that three will always occur in the morning and three in the afternoon. Others (such as Dönkün)[168] take these assertions as a basis, and by doing so come to the conclusion that a clockwise movement of the four seasons is wrong. They assert, therefore, a counterclockwise movement. However this is refuted in the *Lamp Illuminating Clockwise Occurence,*[169] as a study of this text will reveal.

They all maintain that whenever the sun arrives at the meridian of the central sector of the east, it will always be the beginning of morning at the direct center of the central southern sector, and that whenever it arrives at the meridian of the central western sector, it will be the end of afternoon. They also assert that afternoon on the meridian of the central eastern sector and morning on the meridian of the central southern sector are at all

times of the same duration. These assertions contradict logic, because it would follow that at the time of the mean sun's arrival in the house of Aries, which corresponds to the spring equinox at the meridian of the central southern sector, afternoon on the meridian of the central eastern sector at a point corresponding to Kailash and afternoon on the meridian of the central eastern sector at a point corresponding to India would be of the same length. This is because, firstly, at that time afternoon on the meridian of the central eastern sector at a point corresponding to Kailash and morning on the meridian of Kailash would be of the same duration. Secondly, at that particular time, morning on the central meridian of [112] Kailash and morning on the meridian of India are of the same length, and thirdly, morning on the central meridian of India and afternoon on the meridian of the central eastern sector at a point corresponding to India would also be of the same length. The first and third of these reasons you must evidently accept.[170] The middle reason is consistent with the facts and must be accepted, because when the disk of the sun arrives above the meridian of the central eastern sector at the time of the spring equinox of the meridian of the central southern sector, it is the simultaneous beginning of morning at the meridians of Kailash and India. Moreover, when the disk of the sun arrives over the meridian of the central southern sector, you accept that it is noon at the meridians of both Kailash and India.

If it asserted that the original consequence is correct, that these two places would indeed have afternoons of the same length, then it would further follow that at the time of the spring equinox on the meridian of the central southern sector, a point on the meridian of the central eastern sector corresponding to Kailash and a point on the meridian of the central eastern sector corresponding to India would have daytime of equal length, because at the time of the spring equinox on the meridian of the central southern sector, it must be accepted that these two points would have mornings of equal length, and it is accepted that afternoons are also of equal length. This consequence cannot be correct, because at the time of the spring equinox on the meridian of the central southern sector, the sun has reached its northern limit on the meridian of the central eastern sector. Therefore, at a point on the meridian of the central eastern sector corresponding to Kailash, daytime is thirty-five hours, and at a point on the meridian of the central eastern sector corresponding to India, daytime is thirty-three hours. That was the point made by the previous explanations.

Therefore it should be known that within the six lands of Himālaya and

so forth, and the corresponding regions in the twelve sectors, the varying lengths of day and night throughout the sun's northward and southward passages are due solely to the different positions of sunrise and sunset. Because of the same reason, it should be known that the appearance times of the houses also vary. To explain that briefly, the *Great Commentary* says on the sixty-third verse:

> Now by dividing the continent of Kailash, the appearance times of the twelve houses are discussed: [113] "The house of Aries is in minutes." This means that concerning the house of Aries, from the time of its arising to the end of its arising, the number of minutes is space, nine, hands, which means ninety more than two hundred.[171]

This and further quotes speak of the appearance times of the houses. Using the direct center of Kailash at the meridian of the central southern sector as a basis, the appearance times of the houses, as the *Great Commentary* says, are 290 minutes[172] for Aries, 260 minutes for Taurus, 200 minutes for Gemini, 300 for Cancer, 360 for Leo, and 390 for Virgo. The appearance times for the remaining six, Libra and so forth, are in reverse order, as this diagram will show:[173]

Aries	290	Pisces
Taurus	260	Aquarius
Gemini	200	Capricorn
Cancer	300	Sagittarius
Leo	360	Scorpio
Virgo	390	Libra

The durations of six houses at night and the durations of six in daytime align perfectly with the length of day and night at any time of year. However, you might wonder, "This is true when the sun is at the cusps of the signs, but how would they align when the sun is halfway through the house of Aries, for example?" This will be explained. First calculate how many zodiacal days have passed since the mean sun arrived in that particular house. [114] Then divide the appearance time of that house by thirty and multiply the result by the number of zodiac days that have passed since the mean sun arrived in that house. Subtract that figure from the appearance

time of the particular house the mean sun inhabits and begin the counting from the remainder. Include the appearance times of the next six houses, and add this to the result obtained by dividing by thirty the appearance time of the seventh house on from the house inhabited by the mean sun, and, as before, multiplying it by the number of zodiac days passed since the sun occupied that house. This is the length of daytime at that particular time.

Similarly divide by thirty the appearance time of the seventh house on from the house occupied by the mean sun, multiply it as before, subtract that figure from the appearance time of this seventh house, and, counting from the remainder, include the appearance time of the other six houses, plus the result obtained by dividing the appearance time of the house occupied by the mean sun by thirty and multiplying it as before. This is the length of the nighttime at that particular time.

In the tantra and commentary these appearance times are taught using the direct center of Kailash of the central southern sector as a basis. By the same reasoning used there, appearance times on the other sectors can also be shown. As depicted above, the appearance times of the house on Kailash are set as 290 minutes, 260, 200, 300, 360, and 390. On the basis of each sector being at the beginning of its own spring equinox, the order of the above appearance times on the second sector clockwise from the central southern sector, which is the western sector of the south, at the direct center of a region corresponding to Kailash, begins with Taurus for the first six houses, and then proceeds in reverse order for the six houses beginning with Scorpio.[174] Likewise, on the remaining ten sectors at the center of a point corresponding to Kailash, when the mean sun has just entered the house for that sector's spring equinox, the house that heralds the spring equinox is the first of the six houses of forward order, and the house of the autumn equinox is the first of the six houses of reverse order. From the corresponding figures the lengths of day and night can be known.

In this way the differing appearance times for the house in each of the six lands and twelve sectors account for the lengths of day and night. [115] This can be illustrated using the center of Kailash as an example. The beginning of Aries appears over the meridian of the central sector of the east. If the tail end of Aries appeared there also, then the Aries house would last for 300 minutes. The tail end of Aries borders Taurus, and therefore the place for Taurus to rise is from a point east of the meridian of the central eastern sector representing the time the sun would take to travel for fifty minutes.[175] This means that the appearance time of Aries's house is 290 minutes.

Similarly, the beginning of Taurus rises in the east at the place where the tail end of Aries rises. If the tail end of Taurus rose in the same place, then its appearance time would be 300 minutes. By rising east of the rising position of the beginning of Taurus, which is of a larger area than the end, its duration is 260 minutes. In this way the different rising places of the beginnings and ends of the houses account for the different appearance times of the house. The sun lying within the stars of a particular house will also rise from the rising place of those stars. Therefore the different durations of the house account for the different rising and setting positions of the sun in the east and west. In the sixty-third verse of the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary* it says:

> The appearance times of the house lessen and lengthen day and night, due to the sun's position.[176]

This requires a more detailed explanation, but because it would entail far too much explanation, this will have to do.

Thè gola of the earth: Emergence of the seasons

The *Great Commentary* says in the sixth verse of the Realms chapter:

> [116] The sun dwells in one of the houses, Aries and so on, and on the twelve sectors the six seasons, the twelve months, and the twenty-four sides[177] are formed from the orbiting of the wheel of houses.[178]

As this and further quotations explain, when the sun dwells in the house of Aries, it is spring in both the eastern and central sectors of the south. At the same time, proceeding counterclockwise, in the western and central sectors of the east, it is the hot season. In the eastern sector of the east and in the western sector of the north, it is summer. In the central and eastern sector of the north, it is autumn. In the western and central sector of the west, it is early winter, and in the eastern sector of the west and western sector of the south, it is late winter. This is how six seasons are formed upon the twelve sectors with the sun inhabiting the house of Aries.

Similarly, when the sun dwells in Taurus, it is spring in the western and central southern sectors. In the eastern sector of the south and the western

sector of the east, it is the hot season; in the central and eastern sectors of the east it is summer; in the western and central sectors of the north it is autumn; in the eastern sector of the north and the western sector of the west, it is early winter; and in the central and eastern sectors of the west, it is late winter. This formula should be similarly applied to the sun dwelling in the other houses.[179]

The way in which the seasons are divided into four is as follows. When the sun dwells in Aries, it is spring in the three southern sectors, summer in the three eastern sectors, autumn in the three northern sectors, and winter in the three western sectors. Similarly, when the sun dwells in Taurus, it is spring in the eastern sector of the west, in the western sector of the south, and in the central sector of the south. Then, proceeding counterclockwise, it is summer in the next three sectors, autumn in the following three, and winter in the last three. This formula should be applied to the times of the sun dwelling in the other houses.

Furthermore the formation, from the sun dwelling in a particular house, of the twelve smaller divisions of the seasons on the twelve sectors, such as middle spring and so forth, is as previously explained.

7. Resolving Contradictions between Kālacakra and Abhidharma Cosmology

Refuting any contradictions between the presentation of the world in the Kālacakra and that of the Abhidharma texts

This has three headings: [117]

1. The points of doubt
2. How such doubts are expressed
3. Commentary on the text that dispels such doubts

The points of doubt

The presentation of the world and its inhabitants found in the Abhidharma and the presentation of the world and its inhabitants as detailed here in the Kālacakra are very different. Here the differences in the presentation of the world will be briefly set out. The relevant presentations in the tantra and the *Great Commentary* are as previously explained. The way it is presented in the Abhidharma is as follows:

> In the physical world below the realms of desire,
> the measurements of the air mandala:
> one million, six hundred thousand, and beyond number.
> The water and so forth, a hundred thousand times eleven,
> and a thousand times twenty.
> Outside the measurements are eight hundred thousand.
> The remainder is of gold.
> Across the mandalas of water and gold
> is a hundred thousand times twelve,
> three thousand, and four hundred and fifty.[180]

Therefore, according to this and other quotes from the *Abhidharmakośa*, the basic foundation of the billion four-continent worlds is the air mandala. It extends to yojana "beyond number,"[181] and its depth is 1,600,000 yojana. Upon that air mandala, as foundations of each of the four-continent worlds, are individual water and gold mandalas.

The water mandala is 800,000 yojana deep, and the gold mandala is 320,000 yojana deep. Both the water and the gold mandala are 1,203,450 yojana in diameter, while the circumference of each is three times that number. The measurements of the foundations, therefore, are very different from those of the Kālacakra.

On the differences regarding Meru and the continents upon that mandala foundation, the *Abhidharmakośa* states:

> Meru is of four precious gems;
> eighty thousand under water,
> and as much as it is submerged,
> so above for eighty thousand yojana.[182]

Thus Meru has four sides and is made of four precious gems. The east is of silver, the south of lapis lazuli, the west of red crystal, and the north of gold. Each side is also the color of these gems. Meru sinks eighty thousand yojana into the sea, while eighty thousand yojana are above sea level. That is the Abhidharma explanation. Here, however, [118] Meru is taught as being circular, black in the east, red in the south, golden in the west, and white in the north, and while its height is taught as being one hundred thousand yojana.[183]

Again, the *Abhidharmakośa* says, "Yugandhara, Īṣādhāra, and Khadiraka,"[184] and so on. Also, "In between them, at each of the seven, an ocean,"[185] and so on lists the seven golden mountains and the seven bountiful lakes. Among them no continents are found. The shapes of the golden mountains and bountiful lakes are also said to be square. Here in the Kālacakra, a continent is located between each mountain range and lake to form the seven continents, whose shapes are all circular.

The *Abhidharmakośa* continues:

> The remainder is the outer ocean,
> of 322,000 yojana.
> Within that, Jambudvīpa of three sides.[186]

The outer Black Iron Mountains surround the the outer ocean, which contains the four continents and the eight lesser continents located at the four cardinal directions and in the eight intermediate directions, and which are piled into the ocean depths like heaps of rice. In the Kālacakra there are no seas between the Śīta Mountains and the water mandala, and the area of the circular earth mandala is divided into twelve connecting continents or sectors.

Furthermore the *Abhidharmakośa* says:

> Under this, at twenty thousand,
> the Hell of No Respite, and then no more,
> and above that, the seven hells.[187]

This states that the lowest hell begins twenty thousand yojana beneath Jambudvīpa. Moreover, the hot hells, cold hells, and neighboring hells are spoken of as being directly below this continent of Jambudvīpa. The *Abhidharmakośa* continues:

> On life span within the hells,
> one day in Reviving Hell, and so forth,
> is a lifetime of the desire gods.
> Life spans, therefore, mirror those of the gods.
> Those of Blazing and of Hell of no Respite
> are an intermediate eon.[188]

This is the Abhidharma explanation of the life spans within the hells. Also:

> From a store of sesame seeds,
> every hundred years one seed is taken until empty.
> Such time is the life span in the Hell of Blisters.
> The others are this times twenty.[189]

[119] That is the explanation of life span within the cold hells. Here in the Kālacakra, the lowest hell is at a depth of 200,000 yojana from Greater Jambudvīpa, while the hot and cold hells are beneath Meru and the mountains, continents, and oceans of the earth mandala. Similarly, concerning the life spans of those within the hell realms, the first hell has a life span of one small eon, the second and third of an intermediate eon, the fourth and fifth of a supreme eon, the sixth and seventh of a great eon, while the eighth

is taught as having the life span the length of a world realm's existence. As for the number of hells, no more than eight are mentioned, while the *Abhidharmakośa* and other texts talk of eighteen hells.

In this way the Abhidharma and the Kālacakra presentations of the inner and outer worlds do not agree at all on shape, size, number, and so forth. Also the Kālacakra presentation of channels, winds, and their movements within the human body differ from those of other tantras. These are the points of doubt.

How such doubts are expressed

Some Indian scholars and even some Tibetan scholars maintain that the Kālacakra is not a perfect tantra, citing its contradiction with the Abhidharma and other tantras as their reason, and assert that the compilers and composers of its commentaries were not manifestations of Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, Vajragarbha, Vajrapāṇi, and so forth. In the *Sheaves of Oral Transmission* it says:

> The knowledgeable and others have said that in the Kālacakra and those commentaries that follow it, there are many presentations in contradiction with the Three Vehicles, and that those responsible for these texts, possessing the names Yaśas, Puṇḍarīka, Vajragarbha, and Avalokiteśvara, are not bodhisattvas at all.[190]

In this quote, "the knowledgeable" refers to the master Śāntipa, and "others" refers to other Indians. Tibetans who maintain this position include Chomden Rikral and Düpa Chenpo Ngok. [120]

The venerable Rendawa said, "Like straightening a crooked tree,"[191] and produced many consequences for the apparent contradictions with other tantras.

Abhayākaragupta and some others maintain that the tantra and commentaries of Kālacakra are valid texts but that their presentations on the world and its inhabitants that contradict other tantras require interpretation. *Sheaves of Oral Transmission* says:

> Those parts taught in the Kālacakra that do not contradict other tantras, I follow as texts of our own scripture. Some, which are

> contradictory because they follow the inclinations of certain disciples, have been resolved. As to the rest, although the contradictions have not been resolved, there are no faults in them at all. This has been explained at great length and so they are perfectly acceptable.[192]

This means that whatever is taught in the tantra and commentaries and does not contradict the Guhyasamāja and others can be taken literally. Some topics, which do not actually contradict other tantras but which may appear as contradictory to the minds of some disciples, have been resolved. The rest, such as the presentations of the world, its inhabitants, and so forth, may contain unresolved contradictions, but because they have been explained previously in great detail as topics in need of interpretation, they are perfectly acceptable.

When is something explained as being in need of interpretation? *Sheaves of Oral Transmission,* prior to the previous quote, says:

> In Kālacakra the space mandala is spoken of separately, and is there to lead disciples such as Sūryaratha and others who cling to *tīrthika* views to the definitive meaning. It is solely in need of interpretation and intentionally equivocal, like the teaching on the arrangement of the three world realms in the upper regions of Meru, asserted by those who follow Varāha,[193] and so forth.[194]

Therefore, in the Kālacakra, the assertion that the space element wind[195] is separate from the other wind mandalas, such as the life-sustaining wind and so forth, and flows through the nostrils during normal existence requires interpretation. This indicates that the teachings on the presentation of the world also require interpretation. With this in mind they have "been explained at great length, and so they are perfectly acceptable."

[121] Some Tibetan lamas maintain that the teachings from the Kālacakra are definitive, while those from the Abhidharma tradition were taught to accord with the minds of the lower vehicles and are therefore provisional and not to be taken literally. To those who do not accept the Kālacakra as being valid at all, who talk of contradictions in the tantra and commentary and put forward proofs to dismiss it as an impure tantra, countless counterarguments dispelling their contradictions and refuting such proofs, as well as presentations that diverge from descriptions of world

realms in the Abhidharma, in the *Five Categories,* and in the sutras, can be found in *Illuminating Reality,* an extensive explanation of the tantra and commentary. Moreover commentary passages clearly show that the description of a world realm in the Kālacakra and in the Abhidharma tradition can both be accepted literally. This will be explained.

It may be wondered if those, such as Śāntipa, who state that the tantra and commentaries of Kālacakra are flawed texts accrue the heavy nonvirtue of abandoning the dharma? They do not. In the *Great Commentary,* in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary of the Gnosis chapter, it says:

> If the worldly go to hell through disparagement, then as all holders of views disparage each other, all holders of views will go to hell because of their disparagement. If that is so, this contradicts all valid scripture and tenets, and some might think that all ethics and all morality are meaningless.[196]

This doubt is raised, and the text continues with an answer:

> Therefore I will explain. The claim by the foolish that valid scripture and so forth would be contradicted is not so. Why? Because the intentions of holders of views are to examine meanings. Holders of views who express their views to one another are not at fault in their views, because these are states of mind that arise from examination of meaning, [122] and there are no thoughts of harming sentient beings but only thoughts of helping them.[197]

As this quote explains, Śāntipa, Chomden Rikral, and others are only examining the meanings of scripture, and their thoughts are totally focused on the benefit of the doctrine and sentient beings.

Commentary on the text that dispels such doubts

The passage to be explained runs from "Here worldly convention" up to "The Conqueror spoke of the dimensions of the world and the dimensions of the body for the purpose of the mandala." This passage dispels any notion that the teachings on the measurements and shape of this four-continent world contradict the presentation of this four-continent world as

found in the Abhidharma tradition.

The *Great Commentary* says:

> The Conqueror said that the size of a world realm was more than 3,600,000 yojana and that the size of a world realm was 400,000 yojana. Some will ask, "Does the Conqueror speak the truth?"[198]

In the *Abhidharmakośa* it says:

> Across the mandalas of water and gold
> is a hundred thousand times twelve,
> three thousand, and four hundred and fifty.[199]

This means that multiplying by three[200] the distance directly across the water and gold mandalas that act as the foundation of this four-continent world results in a circumference of 10,350 more than 3,600,000. If this figure and the figure of four hundred thousand yojana were both spoken by the Conqueror, a doubt could arise as to whether the Conqueror was speaking the truth. Therefore the text from this part of the commentary sets out to dispel any contradiction between these two differing descriptions of the size and shape of this one four-continent world. [123]

The text at this point can be explained in detail. "Ultimately," or in reality, it is not possible to conclusively measure this four-continent world exclusively according to the measurements found in either the Abhidharma or the Kālacakra. The descriptions here of the four-continent world are "mere worldly conventions."[201] The differing types of karma of sentient beings of differing dispositions have brought into existence differing shapes and sizes for this four-continent world, and as they exist, so the Conqueror taught sentient beings the measurements of this world realm in accord with their differing dispositions, and as he taught them, so they appeared in accord with their variety of karma.

How do the differing shapes and sizes of this four-continent world arise from the differing types of karma of sentient beings? "By the power of virtue" within virtuous sentient beings, some parts of this four-continent world are blessed with all things pleasant, and "by the power of demerit" in those of nonvirtue, other parts of the world are devoid of happiness and well-being.

It may be that the personal results[202] of those with meritorious karma and

of those whose karma lacks such merit manifest as individual environments for the experience of happiness and suffering, but for this one four-continent world, there are two completely different presentations of shape and size. One is according to Abhidharma, and the other is according to Kālacakra. How do these two contrasting presentations arise from the differing karma of sentient beings? This is explained by an example, beginning with the words "In a cave of five cubits." In a cave five cubits in height, length, and width lives "one without attachment," i.e., an arhat or a powerful bodhisattva. In that cave this person is devoted to accumulating merit and wisdom, and by the power of such devotion and by the force of magical powers, a universal emperor arrives with his vast army and enters the small cave. At that time no one enlarged the cave, nor were the universal emperor and his armies squashed together in the cave. [124] This is a phenomenon validly perceived as existing, and although such an accomplishment seems impossible, in actuality it is not, because it is brought about by the inconceivable power of the mighty bodhisattva's or arhat's merit and wisdom.

In the same way, on the one Meru of this four-continent world realm, two completely different sets of shape and size measurements, one from the Abhidharma and one from the Kālacakra, can be validly perceived to exist. When the universal emperor and his armies entered the five-cubit cave, they were not crowded together nor did the cave grow larger. Such a noncontradictory occurrence was due to the might of the bodhisattva's or arhat's merit and wisdom. Similarly, on this one four-continent world, one set of measurements of shape and size as taught in the Abhidharma and a completely different set as taught in the Kālacakra can exist on the one Meru. This congruent and noncontradictory occurrence is due to the separate types of karma of the intended disciples of the Abhidharma and tantras such as Guhyasamāja on the one hand and the intended disciples of the Kālacakra on the other.

Just as the merit and wisdom of that bodhisattva or arhat are inconceivable, so too are the powers or capabilities of the common karma of sentient beings. In the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* it says:

> The karma that produces various external phenomena is inconceivable. The karma connected with jewels, mantra, medicine, and secret lore is inconceivable. The karma of the powers of every yogi is inconceivable. The karma of the might of bodhisattvas is inconceivable.[203]

However, if the world taught in the Abhidharma and the world taught in the Kālacakra are equal in the sense that they both exist, then it should be perfectly acceptable for the world with the Abhidharma measurements to be taught here in the Kālacakra. [125] So what special reason is there for teaching a world system contradictory to the Abhidharma? The purpose of the teaching of a four-continent world realm of four hundred thousand yojana as found in the Kālacakra and yet in contradiction to the Abhidharma is found in the words of the *Great Commentary*, "As without, so within the body."[204] This means that this external four-continent world realm is a base to be purified by meditating upon the mandalas that correspond to this world realm. The body, whose measurements correspond to the measurements of the world, is also to be purified by meditating on the mandala circles that correspond to the measurements of the body. In the *Great Commentary* it says, "The body is said to be the mandala."[205] Therefore external Meru, in measurements that are mere worldly convention, is one hundred thousand yojana high. The height of the human spine is one cubit. This makes the height of the body four cubits. The height of Meru is one hundred thousand yojana. This makes the height of a four-continent world realm four hundred thousand yojana. If this four-continent world were to be explained in the Kālacakra as being other than four hundred thousand yojana, as taught in the Abhidharma tradition, then the correspondence indicated by the quote, "As without, so within the body," as previously explained, would not hold. This is because Meru as explained in the Abhidharma tradition is not a hundred thousand yojana, and this would not correspond to the one cubit height of the spine. Because of this, the measurements of a four-continent world realm here in the Kālacakra are taught conventionally to be four hundred thousand yojana, and as they are taught, so they exist.

However, it has been stated:

> As gold is burned and rubbed,
> my word is to be accepted by examining well,
> not out of respect.[206]

Good gold when burned turns red, when cut it shows white, and when rubbed it turns yellow; in these ways it should be tested. Similarly the words of the Buddha should undergo three tests, and when a teaching is seen to be pure, it should be accepted as valid, not merely out of respect or because

of bias. [126] However it is not the case here that we can say with valid and deep analysis that the Conqueror saw and ascertained this four-continent world realm to be solely four hundred thousand yojana and therefore spoke and declared this measurement in the Kālacakra. This is because, as previously explained, there are many differing measurements and shapes of this four-continent world due to the power of the various types of karma of sentient beings.

The measurements of this four-continent world are not exclusively as taught here in the Kālacakra. However the teaching and assertion of a 400,000-yojana world here plays a special role in the creation of merit and wisdom for entering the generation stage and then the completion stage. This explains the affirming purpose for teaching a four-continent world realm of four hundred thousand yojana in the Kālacakra. The negating purpose is to refute the notion held by Sūryaratha and others that this single dominion of Brahmā covers an area of ten million yojana.

In the Kālacakra the presentations of the measurements of a world realm together with descriptions of the movements of its five planets, its astronomy, and its zodiac of the houses and so forth, are not only for the purposes of inner and outer application, but they have another purpose. The thinking of the *Abhidharmakośa* and that of the Veda tenets are not in agreement on various features of this four-continent world realm. One of those disagreements is the false assertion made by followers of the Vedas that the dominion of Brahmā, this sole four-continent world, is of an area of ten million yojana. Sūryaratha and others cling to this assertion, and by reversing that, and in order to fully ripen them, this measurement of the dominion of Brahmā is destroyed.

Therefore, "having seen the Buddhist Abhidharma" teachings on the four-continent world, [127] do not think that the Kālacakra explanation is mistaken, with its measurements of four hundred thousand yojana, because the movements of the planets, the astronomy, and the zodiac of the houses as they are explained here can be actually confirmed by the charts.

However[207] the Conqueror taught in the *Abhidharmakośa* that the measurements of this four-continent world realm were "across the mandalas of water and gold a hundred thousand times twelve,"[208] which, as previously explained, results in a circumference of over 3,600,00 yojana. Similarly, in the Kālacakra, he taught this four-continent world realm to have a measurement of four hundred thousand yojana. If that is so, does not the Conqueror speak falsely, as some assert? The Conqueror did teach different

and individual measurements and shapes in the Abhidharma sutras and in the Kālacakra, but the wise who hold to the law of cause and effect should not believe in utterances such as "The Conqueror speaks falsely," because, as explained previously, on this one four-continent world realm there are intended disciples of the Abhidharma, Guhyasamāja, and so forth, and intended disciples of the Kālacakra. These disciples have different kinds of karma, and with these types of karma as dominant conditions,[209] different measurements and shapes appear, and the Buddha taught in accord with such appearances as they appeared to the minds of sentient beings.

It might be wondered to what particular text the Abhidharma mentioned here[210] refers? Lamas of the past say that the Abhidharma composed by the master Vasubandhu was written about three hundred years after the *Great Commentary,* and therefore it is not the Abhidharma referred to here. So which is it then? They maintain that it either refers to the *Seven Great Texts of the Abhidharma* or to the *Great Abhidharma of Specific Explanation,* which is an extensive and detailed exposition of the meanings of the *Seven Great Texts of the Abhidharma* and is also known as Abhidharma. However the phrase from the *Great Commentary* "having seen the Buddhist Abhidharma" looks like a prophecy. [128] Also the Abhidharma of the master Vasubandhu is well established throughout Tibet and other lands, and I wonder if the noble Avalokiteśvara[211] was not thinking of a text known as the "Abhidharma" to be written in the future by Ācārya Vasubandhu?

It might also be wondered if, in order to destroy or reverse the wrong view, held by Sūryaratha and others, that this four-continent world covers an area of ten million yojana, it would surely have been sufficient to teach the measurements as found in the *Seven Great Texts of the Abhidharma.* What need was there to categorically state the measurements found in the Kālacakra? In order to destroy this wrong view, it was necessary to state the measurements of this world realm together with its planets, its calculations, and its zodiac, because the movements of the five planets, their calculations, the way the circle of houses revolves, and the way the sun and moon move within it are taught in the Kālacakra and are ascertained by an earth-drawn chart. When this happens a conviction is born that these teachings can be held as being literally true, which in turn produces a conviction in the measurements of this world, and so the wrong view will be reversed. Otherwise, by just teaching the presentation of the world as explained in the Abhidharma, it would be difficult to destroy such wrong views as those held by Sūryaratha and others. The *Root Tantra* says[212] that "dispositions of

sentient beings are varied / they know of various tenets" such as ours and others. "They follow various paths" and doctrines taught by others. "Proud of their knowledge" of phenomena, "the conceited will never come / under the might of the omniscient one / unless presented with reasons" that prove and disprove and that create conviction regarding our tenets and those of others.

But surely it is wrong to teach something that does not validly exist instead of teaching the validly established truth? [129] That is not necessarily so. A butcher searching for animals that he will definitely kill may ask someone if he has seen the animal he is going to kill. Moved by compassion for those to be killed, the person will reply that they have not seen it even though they have. By such a lie the animals he is seeking to kill and the would-be killer himself are both benefited, and this lie becomes a cause for great merit. If emptiness is truthfully taught to someone unfit for teachings on profound emptiness, such a teaching would harm that person, and those truthful words would become a cause for the Hell of No Respite and so forth. One of the root downfalls of a bodhisattva is "Teaching emptiness to those who have not prepared their minds."[213]

The verse beginning "Miserly hungry ghosts"[214] expresses the inconceivable potential of the karma of sentient beings. By the force of their miserly nongiving, sentient beings are born as hungry ghosts. If they were to enter a house fully stocked with food and drink, by the force of that karma they would see it as a mountain totally bare of food and drink. For those wrongdoers born into hell, a beautiful house assumes the form of sharp weapons and sharp leaves and so forth. Similarly the verse beginning "Having gained the siddhi of the world below"[215] teaches the inconceivable power of the yogis who have gained the powers to make use of the worlds below the earth. They possess the power to travel to the cities of the goddesses and clearly see this solid and firm earth as hollow. These verses are from the *Root Tantra.*

The following passage beginning "Therefore the measurements of the world" gives a summary of the above explanation. "Therefore," in keeping with the previous reasons, "the words that the Conqueror spoke on the measurements of the world" were spoken because sentient beings have gathered various types of karma, and in tune with that karma, "each sentient being has predispositions in their minds by whose power" the world appears in many differing aspects. [130] In keeping with those appearances the Tathāgata likewise taught the measurements of the world, but "nowhere

did the Tathāgata look at the measurements of the world under the power of attachment and speak on them from" a false and dual appearance of "internal subject and external object," without regard to the way the world appears to sentient beings.

This has been a detailed explanation of this part of the commentary. To summarize: it is not right to use one set of measurements of the world found in the Abhidharma or in the Kālacakra to refute the other. The Abhidharma explanation is used by Ācārya Nāgārjuna and others when explaining the outside world as a purification base for the generation and completion stages of Guhyasamāja. If there were no outside world with no such measurements, the path of purification would also be invalid. Similarly, if there were no outside world with measurements as explained in the Kālacakra, it would not be valid as the purification base for the path, as expressed in the quote, "As without, so within the body."

Part 2
The Inner World of Sentient Beings

8. The Development of the Body

A presentation of the inner world of sentient beings

[131] This has two main headings:

1. The development of the body of a sentient being
2. Phenomena supported by the body

The development of the body of a sentient being

This has three outlines:

1. The bardo of the being about to take birth
2. How consciousness enters the blood and fluid after bardo has ceased
3. Development in the womb

The bardo of the being about to take birth

The *Abhidharmakośa* says: "With bodily form of the prior-state existence."[1] Also: "Seeing with unfettered eyes those of similar kind." And further: "Sense powers complete and unobstructed."[2] The bardo body therefore is taught to be a body composed of subtle particles, and whose shape and form is a visual form source.[3] The *Abhidharmasamuccaya* also talks of "where the bodily form will be born,"[4] thereby referring to the bodily form of the bardo as a visual form source. The *Great Commentary*, in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary, says:

> "At the time of death, the seed possessing the characteristics of the five[5] will definitely arise. Like a body of a dream, the empty body of imprints abandons the composite of subtle particles but does not cease." The body of imprints formed from the imprints

> of karma does not cease. Once again it will take hold of a body composed of subtle particles.[6]

[132] Thus it is stated that the bardo body has left behind the composite of subtle particles. Great scholars (such as Kumāra) have also said that the bardo body has the form of a mental phenomena source.[7]

Taken literally, the above quotes contradict each other. Whether this is due to individual traditions[8] or whether the Kālacakra passage is referring to the absence of the kind of subtle particles of the body of the prior-state existence is something to be examined.

How consciousness enters the blood and fluid after bardo has ceased

This is under two headings:

1. Defining the entering consciousness
2. How the consciousness enters

Defining the entering consciousness

As the bardo is coming to an end, the mind at that time is the very subtle mind of clear light. That mind and the mind that crosses over into the womb are of preceding and succeeding instants. In this way the mind that has just entered the womb is also the very subtle mind of clear light. Such a mind exists alongside innate bliss and is known as the foundation consciousness[9] and as innate mind. The *Great Commentary*, on the fifteenth verse of the Inner chapter, says:

> While the consciousness is in the womb, it is the foundation consciousness, a gnosis of the highest bliss.[10]

And farther on:

> Mother, father, and foundation consciousness are one at the time of bliss.[11]

What is the difference between the foundation consciousness assigned to the mind that has just entered the womb and the foundation consciousness explained as the "foundation of all" by those who assert eight types

of consciousnesses? Generally there are many differing assertions concerning the mind that has just entered the womb. The *Abhidharmakośa* says, "Birth existence is with delusion,"[12] thereby declaring that the mental consciousness is one of mental affliction. In the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and similar texts, those who assert the collection of eight types of consciousnesses describe it as a foundation consciousness, which is an untaught,[13] unobstructed phenomenon and associated with neutral feelings.

Highest tantras, such as the Kālacakra, are in agreement that the clear-light nature of mind is the basis of all things in samsara and nirvana. [133] This is the clear light of a bardo death, and in the *Great Commentary* this is referred to as "the foundation." Death clear light is also referred to as the "foundation" in the *Great Commentary* on the seventh verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> Like this the elements quickly weaken. Then "the mind is the fire at the end of darkness," which means that the foundation consciousness is placed in the realm of space, in fully aspected forms empty of all objects, dwelling in the middle.[14]

Therefore, in this tantra and its commentary, the mind that has just crossed over to the womb and the mind of the clear light of death are spoken of as a foundation consciousness. However this is not a foundation consciousness that is distinct from the mental consciousnesses, as is taught by those who assert the eight kinds of consciousness. That type of foundation consciousness is distinguished by many characteristics, such as being at all times an untaught, unobstructed phenomenon, associated only with neutral feelings, of unclear focus and apprehension. Moreover the consciousness at the cessation of the bardo and the mind of the clear light of death can become virtuous minds, can become associated with feelings of bliss, and are consciousnesses of a clear focus and apprehension arising from a clarity[15] "in the realm of space, in fully aspected forms empty of all objects, dwelling in the middle." Therefore the thinking behind calling this mind "the foundation" is that it is the foundation for the arising of all things in samsara and nirvana. As an entity, however, it is a mental consciousness. The *Great Commentary* says in the Gnosis chapter:

> How does it grasp the womb? Solely as a mental consciousness with the support of bodhicitta.[16]

This clearly states that the mental consciousness alone, supported by a base of red and white bodhicitta, is the consciousness of conception.

How the consciousness enters

[134] Generally four places of conception for sentient beings can be ascertained. They are the womb, heat and moisture, the egg, and miraculous birth. On miraculous birth the *Abhidharmakośa* says:

> Hell beings, gods, and those between existences
> are born miraculously.[17]

Hell, god realms, and the bardo are characterized by taking miraculous birth. The text continues:

> Hungry ghosts can also
> be born from the womb.[18]

This means that hungry ghosts may be of miraculous birth or womb birth.

> For humans and animals, four kinds.[19]

This states that all four kinds of birth can be found within the human and animal realm.

When describing the four kinds of birth found in the animal realm, the *Great Commentary*, on the fourth verse of the Realms chapter, says:

> "Animals are of four kinds of birth." Birth from an egg would be for the garuda hawk and others. It is an air-element birthplace. Birth from a womb includes the mighty elephant and others. It is a fire-element birthplace. Birth from heat and moisture is for some insects, butterflies, ants, and so forth. It is a water-element birthplace. Miraculous birth is for trees and is an earth-element birthplace. Similarly great miraculous birth is a taste birthplace.[20]

Regarding this quote the noble Kumāramati says:

> Including trees as animal birth
> is a tenet of the Jains.[21]

Although he is refuting the *Great Commentary* here, this passage is not actually classifying trees, mountains, and so forth as animal births. So what is the explanation? In Kālacakra all existent phenomena are assigned to the five or six elements. Here, in order to assign the four kinds of birth to five elements, miraculous birth is divided into two types, namely, mere and great. Mere miraculous birth is assigned to the earth element. "Great miraculous birth" refers to well-known miraculous births, and "taste" refers to the space element.[22] Therefore trees and so forth, which mainly grow from earth, are explained as being of miraculous birth, but this does not teach that trees are animal births.

Of the four kinds of birth found in the human realm, birth from egg would be, for example, that of the Sthavirakīrti and Upakīrti. An example of birth from heat and moisture would be that of King Mūrdhāta. A miraculous birth would be that of Āryadeva.

[135] There are four kinds of birth, and sentient beings are classified into six types, five types, etc. However here in the Inner chapter, which determines the inner world, the primary ascertainment is that of a sentient being possessed of a womb-born human body of the six elements[23] who will meditate in two stages in order to attain the supreme siddhi of enlightenment in this life. What is the purpose of such an ascertainment? It is to know and understand the bases of purification for the generation and completion stages as well as the locations for the practice of penetrative focusing in the completion stage. Therefore the development of a womb-born human body of the six elements is explained.

Amid the blood and fluid of mother and father in union arises the mental consciousness of the previous bardo being. This is a very subtle mind of clear light, known as the "foundation." The consciousness, fluid, and blood are united within the mother's womb, from which will develop the body of a sentient being. This agglomeration of fluid, blood, and consciousness dwelling in the mother's secret lotus[24] is supported by the element of earth of the mother's secret lotus, gathered together by her element of water, matured by her element of fire, made larger by her element of air, and given the room to grow by her element of space in its aspect of empty space within the womb. The five elements that make up this union of fluid, blood, and consciousness within the womb also perform individual functions. The earth element gives it weight and solidity, the water element gives it moisture, and it is matured by the fire element. The element of air agglomeration, which is the seed of the element-originated[25] ten winds that will develop in the future, enlarges this agglomeration of fluid, blood, and

consciousness. The element of space provides the room for growth. Concerning the developmental role of the winds, the *Great Commentary* says at this point:

> The ten great winds, such as the life-sustaining wind, etc., enlarge the form of this seed.[26]

"Wind" here must refer to the seeds of the ten winds, as mentioned above, because at this particular time the channels for the ten winds have not developed, and if that is so, then of course neither have the winds themselves. To say that "the ten winds" in the above passage refers to the internal winds of the mother's body contradicts the *Great Commentary* in this section when it says, "This speaks of the activity of the seed's own elements,"[27] thereby confirming that this passage is referring to the air element of the seed of fluid and blood itself.

Development in the womb

[136] The time from conception in the womb until death is taught in correspondence with the ten *avatāra,* or incarnations, of Viṣṇu. These ten, beginning with the fish, are tales of Viṣṇu and can be related in chronological order.

Once when the four Vedas had sunk into the ocean, Viṣṇu manifested as a fish and recited them. In the form of a turtle he hoisted up the world and held it there. In the form of a wild pig he crushed the worlds as far as the realms of Brahmā. With his lower half in the form of a man and his upper in the form of a lion, he killed Hiraṇyakaśipu, the king of the asura demons, by tearing out his stomach. Manifesting as a midget he deceived the demon Bali by taking three steps. Manifesting as Rama of the axe, the son of the Brahmin Jamādagni, he murdered those of the royal kṣatriya caste, such as Arjuna, and put an end to their rule. In his manifestation as Rāma, son of King Daśaratha, his wife was snatched by Rāvaṇa, the ten-throated rakṣās of Lanka, and so accompanied by the monkey Hanuman he defeated the rakṣās. As Kṛṣṇa he worked for sentient beings in the age of troubles.[28] He manifested as Buddha Śākyamuni and purified himself of the former murder of kings. As Kīrti,[29] the son of a Kalkī Brahmin, he will appear in the future and, having tamed many beings, a new era will begin.

Concerning the last two avatāra, the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary from the Gnosis chapter says the following:

> The ninth avatāra of Viṣṇu, the god of wealth, is the Buddha. Viṣṇu will manifest as Buddha Śākyamuni. His purpose will be as follows. In the past, in the realms of the asura, those who were not killed or defeated by the god of wealth will be born as low castes at the time of the Buddha. In order to send them to hell, he will deceptively refute the doctrine of rituals, and by doing so the extensive words of Bhārata, the words of Gīta,[30] and the words of the Veda will be refuted. Having refuted them, he will then teach the lower castes perverted doctrine and expound the ten perfections by saying, "practice the perfection of giving," and so forth, up to "do not practice the paths of the ten nonvirtuous deeds." [137] He will teach the four immeasurables, the abandonment of the ten nonvirtues, and other perverted doctrine. By such teaching, the latent dispositions of the lower castes will be awakened. They will shave their heads and put on the yellow robes to become monks. These lower castes, who in former times in the land of the asura were not defeated and killed by the wealth god Viṣṇu, will refute the Brahmins. By doing so they will go to hell. Therefore, at the time Viṣṇu manifests as the Buddha, the ordinary lower castes are formerly inhabitants of the land of the asura. In order to send them to hell, Viṣṇu enacts this deception of manifesting as the Buddha. The tenth avatāra is the lineage bearer. In the land of Shambhala the wealth god Viṣṇu will incarnate as the Brahmin Kīrti, and he will ride a stone horse and with spears of kuśa[31] will kill the barbarians and perform the fire offering of "plentiful gold." Once again the land will become Brahmin.[32]

According to the *Great Commentary* these last two incarnations as detailed here are not found in early Vedic texts:

> In this way, many false words were written by malicious Brahmins at the time of the Buddha. These are not in early Vedic literature.[33]

These ten avatāra of Viṣṇu, then, are taught as:

> Fish, turtle, and pig,
> man-lion and midget,
> the two Ramas and Kṛṣṇa,
> the Buddha and Kīrti,
> to make up the ten.[34]

The accounts of the ten avatāra of Viṣṇu are spoken of in the *Great Commentary:*

> On the outside, the narratives such as that of the fish and others, were written by malicious Brahmin sages to deceive the foolish. Such works are causes that result in hell. These are explained in greater detail in the later section on the supreme and unchanging gnosis.[35]

[138] Thus the accounts of the ten avatāra as related above are taught to be lies. Although these stories, which are well known to outsiders, are fabrications, the terminology of the ten avatāra is used to explain the corresponding times from the first moment of conception to death.

These are explained in order. The agglomeration of blood, fluid, and consciousness within the lotus of the mother's womb is the bodhicitta vajradhara, or mind vajradhara.[36] Using Viṣṇu terminology the first two months in the womb are designated the time of the fish, because the form of this agglomeration is like the red *rohita* fish. In the first of these two months, the blood and fluid exists devoid of any channels. In the second month the heart develops, and within it the ten very subtle channels of the heart are formed. These become the supports of the winds, such as the life wind and so forth. The navel is created, and within it develops the twelve very subtle channels that become the supports for the sixty-four channels of the navel cakra.

The third and fourth month of pregnancy is the time of the turtle. The turtle has four limbs and a head in the forms of protrusions. Similarly, from the beginning of the third month, the body within the womb develops, and mere indications of limbs and face start to protrude. At the end of the third month the limbs and throat are roughly formed, hence the resemblance to a turtle. From the beginning of the fourth month until its

completion the protrusions of the hands, feet, face, throat, etc., develop steadily, and the very subtle innate and *saṃbhoga* channels are formed in the areas of the six major limb joints and of the face and throat.

From the fifth month until birth is the time of the wild pig. The fifth month sees the beginnings of the 360 bones formed in dependence on the flesh, joints other than the six major joints, as well as the sense sources. In the sixth month blood and flesh separate, and feelings of suffering and happiness are experienced. In the seventh month it is said that the being inside the womb remembers its previous existence. [139] Concerning this the *Great Commentary* says:

> By the power of clairvoyance the former existence is remembered. Divorced from imprints in the mind, the sufferings of existence are held in contempt, while the path of the buddhas is praised.[37]

Concerning the 360 bones, the *Womb States of Nanda Sutra* is quoted in the commentary *Illuminating Reality:*

> Nine bones joined at the skull,
> two connected bones of the cheek,
> the teeth possess thirty-two,
> and similarly, their roots.
>
> The base of the ears, bones of the nape,
> palate bones, bones of the nose,
> those of the throat, and of the chest;
> in total, twenty bones.
>
> Four bones in the eyes,
> two pairs in the shoulders;
> the two hands and fingers;
> in total, fifty bones.
>
> The upper back has eight bones,
> the spine thirty-two,
> all of which have channels,
> they are therefore of four parts.

> The bones of the right rib cage
> are thirteen interconnected.
> Those connected of the left
> are also thirteen.
>
> Within this succession of bones
> three sets are interconnected,
> two sets have joints,
> the remainder are unconnected.
>
> The right and left thighs
> in short have fifty bones.
> The bones within the body in total
> number 360.[38]

The meaning of the quote beginning "By the power of clairvoyance the former existence is remembered" is understood differently by different commentators. Some scholars (such as Palden Lama Dampa) explain such clairvoyance in the womb as a natural occurrence and quote the *Adornment to the Sky Sutra* quoted by Khenpo Paltsek[39] in his *Compendium of Sutra:*

> In the thirtieth week the limbs, blood, skin, and pores are all completely developed. From then on it dwells in the mother's womb amid blood and fetid smell. [140] At that time it remembers past lives and in great despair thinks, "When I emerge from my mother, I will not take birth in another mother's womb, and I will strive toward virtue with constant effort." However the process of birth, being squeezed by the mother's body, the touch of the earth, the touch of hands, the pain of being washed, all dominate the mind and body, and past lives are forgotten.[40]

On this the omniscient Butön says:

> The meaning of the quote is that during pregnancy, wind dwells within the central channel like a stick, without inhalation or exhalation, and because of this, a quasi-clairvoyance arises that remembers the past.[41]

Other scholars (such as Chöje Chok)[42] say that although such experiences may arise during the time in the womb, they are like dreams and, therefore, are not certain to accumulate karma.

According to the commentary *Illuminating Reality:*

> Those of the past have applied this to womb births in general, but these are qualities whose particular causes have preceded them. Therefore it seems that these qualities, such as clairvoyance, must be special phenomena made manifest in the womb by the power of particular causes created in previous lives. This my omniscient master has said. Even though the being in the womb possesses that particular quality, for six months it will reside in the womb in a kind of unconsciousness and with no memory. Then at this particular time it remembers in this way. It was in order to make this point that this was spoken of.[43]

By the end of the seventh month, the eyebrows, hair, and the five inner sense sources, which began to develop in the fifth month, are now complete.

From the time of conception to the end of the first month no channels have developed. From the beginning of the second month, two hundred channels develop each day for the next twelve months. Therefore thirteen months from conception and twelve months from the growth of the first channel, 72,000 channels are complete. [141] From the actual text it is not clear which of the three types of days is being used in these calculations.[44] However, if "day" is taken to be a solar day, then a month also must be taken to mean thirty solar days. Alternatively, if a month is taken to mean a lunar month, then a day too must be read as a lunar day. This is because thirty times twelve multiplied by two hundred gives a figure of 72,000.

After the inner sense sources have developed, marrow forms inside the bones in the eighth month. The eye and other inner sense sources expand to create the organ of the tongue with its ability to taste. After the sense organ of the tongue has developed its ability to taste, urine and feces are formed.

Concerning the emergence from the mother's womb, some beings emerge as soon as nine months are completed, some are born in the tenth month, some in the eleventh, while others may be born in the twelfth month. For all of them, the fifth month in the womb until birth is designated the time

of the wild pig. The reason for this being that just as a pig lives on the filth of excrement and so forth, the being in the womb lives only on the foulness that is the essence of the mother's digested food and drink.

The time of emergence from the mother's womb is designated the time of the man-lion. This is because at the time of birth the being inside its mother opens up the womb. This correlates with the time when Viṣṇu, in the form of a man-lion with his upper half a lion and his lower a man, killed Hiraṇyakaśipu by tearing out his stomach. The time from birth until the growth of teeth is known as the time of the midget, because that is the form of the child.

Thirteen months after conception, the expansion of the channels is complete. The beginning of the fourteenth month marks the beginning of the expansion of the red and white elements, as well as loss of two channels each day from the 72,000 channels. In girls, the red menstrual element increases until the time of menstruation at the age of twelve. [142] After that the increase is halted. In boys, the white fluid element increases until the time of semen emission at the age of sixteen. From then on the increase is halted.

After birth the teeth appear. Eight years later they fall out and are replaced. This is the period of Rāma of the Axe. From the time the teeth are replaced up to the age of sixteen is the time of Rāmaṇa. From sixteen until the onset of gray hair is the period of Kṛṣṇa. From the growth of gray hair until the day of death is designated as the time of the Buddha. This is because, just as the Buddha has a mind at peace and is of stable behavior, so the aged are of peaceful minds and, because they lack the sexual company of women, are of stable behavior.

Death itself is designated the time of the lineage bearer. This is because the term *kalkin* means to make all as one caste. Similarly, at the time of death, all the elements come together as one.

That concludes the formation of the body.

Phenomena supported by such a body

This is under two headings:

1. A general explanation of such phenomena
2. A particular explanation of channels, winds, and drops

A general explanation of such phenomena

There are many phenomena supported by the body of a being endowed with the six elements. They include the six elements, namely, space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis; the six aggregates, consisting of consciousness, mental formations, feelings, recognition, form, and gnosis; the six organs of ear, nose, eyes, tongue, body, and mind; the six sensory source objects, namely, sound, smell, form, taste, contact, and mental phenomena; the six faculties, made up of the secret place, the voice, the hands, the legs, the anus, and the supreme organ; [143] the six activities of these faculties, namely, urinating, speaking, taking, moving, excreting, and emitting fluid; the six winds, namely, life-sustaining, coexisting, upwardly moving, pervading, *nāga*, downwardly expelling; another classification of winds, namely, joyful wind, turtle, lizard, *devadatta*, *dhanaṃjaya*, and the inborn joyful wind; the six cakras, consisting of the crown, heart, throat, forehead, navel, and secret place. Also included are the 21,600 winds, the 72,000 channels and, as mentioned in the *Womb States of Nanda Sutra*, the 360 bones and 360 joints.

None of the above phenomena are beyond the nature of the six elements. The six aggregates from consciousness to gnosis are respectively phenomena of space, air, fire, earth, water, and gnosis. Moreover the six aggregates and the six elements are classified as method and wisdom, with the six aggregates as method and the six elements as wisdom. If they are individually matched up, the aggregate of gnosis is method and the element of space is wisdom. The aggregate of form is method and the element of air is wisdom. The aggregate of discernment is method and the element of fire is wisdom. The aggregate of feelings is method and the element of water is wisdom. The aggregate of mental formations is method and the element of earth is wisdom. The aggregate of consciousness is method and the element of gnosis is wisdom.

Similarly the organs of the ears, nose, eyes, tongue, body, and mind are, respectively, phenomena of the elements of space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis. The sound, smell, form, taste, contact, and phenomena sensory source objects are respectively phenomena of gnosis, earth, water, fire, air, and space elements. Moreover the six organs and the six source objects correlate with each other as subject and object, and in this context the six objects are wisdom and the six subjects, in dependence on their individual objects, are method.

Similarly the six faculties, namely, the secret place (the *bhaga*[45] and male organ), the voice, hands, legs, anus, and the *śaṅkhinī*[46] supreme organ are respectively phenomena of the elements of space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis. [144] Urinating, speaking, taking, moving, excreting, and holding and emitting fluid are respectively phenomena of the elements of gnosis, earth, water, fire, air, and space. Furthermore the faculties are method and the activities they control are wisdom. In this way each can be paired up with its respective counterpart.

The life-sustaining, coexisting, upwardly moving, pervading, *nāga,* and downwardly expelling winds are phenomena of the space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis elements. Similarly, joyful, turtle, lizard, *devadatta, dhaṃnajaya,* and the innate joyful wind are phenomena of the space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis elements, respectively. The crown, heart, throat, forehead, navel, and secret-parts cakras are phenomena of the space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis elements respectively. Fingers and toes from the little finger or toe to the thumb or big toe are phenomena of the space, air, fire, water, and earth elements respectively.

The teeth are a part of the bone structure, and when the first two upper teeth appear in a child, the right tooth is an earth-element phenomenon and the left a water-element phenomenon. When the two lower teeth appear, the right is a fire-element phenomenon and the left tooth an air-element phenomenon. Therefore the earth element of the upper tooth and the air element of the lower are method and wisdom, and the water element of the upper and fire element of the lower are method and wisdom. When the next two upper teeth appear, the right is of the element of fire and the left of the element of air. When the next two lower teeth appear, the right is of the earth element and the left of water. The fire and water elements of the upper and lower match up as method and wisdom, as do the earth and air elements. The next right and left teeth, as above, are of fire and air in the lower and of water and earth in the upper, and so on. In this way the upper and lower teeth grow and increase in number. The thirty-two teeth should be understood as being phenomena of these four elements with pairings of earth and air as method and wisdom and fire and water as method and wisdom. Space and gnosis as method and wisdom cover all phenomena.

The colors of the phenomena of the six elements are as follows. Those of the element of space are green, those of the element of air are black, those of the element of fire are red, those of the water element are white,

those of the earth element are yellow, and those of gnosis are blue. [145] This last element covers all phenomena.

If the elements are applied to the six families, then phenomena of the element of space are of the vajra family, those of the element of air are of the karma family, those of the element of fire are of the jewel family, those of the water element are of the lotus family, those of the earth element are of the wheel family, and those of the element of gnosis are of the curved knife family.

9. Channels, Winds, and Drops

This is under two headings:

1. Explanation in accord with this tantra and commentary
2. An examination of the queries arising from the inconsistencies between this explanation of channels, winds, and drops and that of other tantras

Explanation in accord with this tantra and commentary

This has two outlines:

1. A description of the channels, winds, and drops
2. How the winds move within the channels

A description of the channels, winds, and drops

This has three outlines:

1. channels
2. winds
3. drops

Channels

The primary channels are the right, left, and central channel. These are located midway between the left and right halves of the body. They are closer to the back of the body and near the spine. The central channel runs in between the left and right channels. The upper tips of all three are located between the eyebrows. The lower tips are found at the *bhaga* or male organ and at the tip of the anus. At the cakras the left and right channels entwine themselves around the central channel to form a channel knot.

Above the navel the three channels are known by various names. [146] Sun channel, *piṅgalā, rasanā,* path of the sun, and so forth are terms used to denote the right channel. Moon channel, *igasa,*[47] *lalanā,* path of the moon, and so forth are names given to the left channel. The Rāhu channel, supreme channel, and so forth are names of the central channel. The left and right channels below the navel are known as the excrement and urine channels. Similarly the central channel below the navel is known as *śaṅkhinī,* the Kālāgni channel, the channel of descending fluid, and the supreme channel. The *śaṅkhinī* and the central channel are also referred to as *dhūtī.*

At points on the avadhūtī[48] are cakras entwined by the left and right channels. Of these there are six: the cakra of the secret place with its thirty-two channel petals, the cakra of the navel with sixty-four channel petals, the cakra of the heart with its eight channel petals, the cakra of the throat with thirty-two channel petals, the cakra of the forehead with sixteen channel petals, and the cakra of the crown with its four channel petals.

Concerning the makeup of the thirty-two channel petals of the secret-place cakra, six petals branch off from the hub of the cakra. These are the six inner channel petals. Four of these split into two to make eight, and together with the remaining undivided petals make up the ten intermediate channel petals. Of these ten, six split into two to make twelve petals, and with the remaining four make up the sixteen outer petals. The formation of the thirty-two channel petals of the secret-place cakra then is in three layers. The inner layer has six petals, the intermediate has ten, and the outer sixteen. The *Great Commentary,* on the forty-sixth verse of the Inner chapter, clearly describes the thirty-two petals:

> The secret place has thirty-two petals. On the sixteen outer petals are the vowel channels. On the ten inner petals are the channels of the aggregates and the channels of the elements. On the innermost petals are the six empty[49] channels.[50]

The formation of the sixty-four petals of the navel cakra is as follows. Four channel petals branch out from the center of the cakra. Each of these petals branches off into two to make eight petals. [147] These eight again split up to make sixteen petals. Except for the four petals located at the four intermediate points among these sixteen, each of the other twelve divide into

five to make sixty petals, making a total of sixty-four. However on the forty-first verse of the Inner chapter of the *Great Commentary* it says:

> The heart of the navel wheel possesses four petals. Outside of that there are eight. Beyond that are twelve.[51]

Doesn't this say that eight petals branch off into twelve? How, then, could it divide into sixteen? Of the sixteen petals that branch off from the eight, four are empty channels and twelve are the wind-movement channels.[52] Therefore the quote "Beyond that are twelve" refers to these twelve wind-movement channels. If this were not the case and the eight channels divided only into twelve, then the four empty channels would not exist and the sixty-four channel petals would be incomplete.

Twelve and a half fingerwidths above the center of the navel cakra is the center of the heart cakra. It has eight channel petals, each of which is named. The eastern petal is named *rohinī*, the southeastern petal is *hasti-jihvā*, the southern is *piṅgalā*, the southwestern petal is *puṣya*, the western is *jaya*, the northwestern is *alambuṣa*, the northern is *meṣa*, and the northeastern is *kuha*.

Twelve and a half fingerwidths above the center of the heart cakra lies the center of the throat cakra. This cakra has thirty-two channel petals. Eight petals branch out from its center, each of which splits into two to make sixteen channel petals. Each of these sixteen in turn divides into two to make thirty-two. Four of those are empty channels, in which coarse wind does not flow.

Twelve and a half fingerwidths above the center of the throat cakra at the forehead is a cakra of sixteen petals. From its center eight petals branch out, each of which divides into two to make sixteen. Two of them are empty channels, in which coarse wind does not flow. [148] The cakra of the crown has four channel petals.

In total, then, there are 156 channel petals within the six cakras. The descriptions here of six cakras are for the purpose of assigning channel petals to deities and so forth, but the cakras are not limited to six. In *A Short Teaching on Initiations* it says:

> To the lotuses of navel, secret, and jewel,
> body, speech, and mind descend.[53]

This quote indicates that at the center of the jewel also there is a cakra. The *Great Commentary,* on the forty-fifth verse of the Inner chapter, says:

> "By there being numerous joints, these glorious cakras take many forms." This means that because there are 360 joints in this body, there are 360 cakras, and a similar number of wind activities, such as those of the life-sustaining wind, and so forth.[54]

This states that at each of the locations of the 360 joints there is a cakra, and wherever there is a cakra there are the activities of the winds.

In the *Great Commentary* it says:

> Twelve and a half fingerwidths above the navel wheel in the region of the heart is a cakra of eight spokes.

And, further on:

> Twelve and a half fingerwidths above the lotus of the heart is the throat cakra.

And:

> Twelve and a half fingerwidths above the lotus of the throat lies the lotus of the forehead with sixteen petals.[55]

Concerning the above quotes, scholars such as the omniscient Butön say:

> The measurement of twelve and a half fingerwidths from the navel to the heart, from the heart to the center of the throat cakra, and from there to the center of the forehead cakra does not refer to the fingerwidths of an ordinary human but to the twelve and half fingerwidths that make up half the length of a buddha's forearm.

However the commentary *Illuminating Reality* is correct when commenting on this assertion:

> These words of commentary are from the section that speaks of the cakras acting as supports for the regular movement of wind

> at the heart of an ordinary being during ordinary existence. Therefore I do not see the relevance of that particular way of dispelling the contradiction.[56]

[149] The commentary goes on to explain:

> There are not twelve and a half of a particular being's fingerwidths between his or her actual navel and heart. However either the navel cakra is a little lower than the actual navel, or alternatively the heart cakra also is not to be found at the bottommost point of a heart of a size proportionate to the dimensions of beings such as gods and so forth, but is found halfway along the heart's vertical axis. I think the contradiction has to be resolved in this way, and that this is what the commentary is saying.

It seems that both the above passages have tried to resolve the contradiction on the basis of there not being twelve and a half fingerwidths of an ordinary being between the central point of the navel and the heart at a point midway between the two nipples. However the distance from the central point of the navel to throat is twenty-four fingerwidths. The height of the throat is six fingerwidths, as in the line "the throat of Meru is six fingerwidths on the body." There are twelve fingerwidths between the upper edge of the throat and the upper edge of the forehead, as stated by the line "from the throat to the edge of the forehead is twelve fingerwidths on the body." Of these, there are four fingerwidths from the upper edge of the throat to the nose, and from the tip of the nose to the point between the eyebrows there are also four fingerwidths. In total, therefore, the distance between the navel and the point between the eyebrows is thirty-eight fingerwidths. The *Great Commentary* states that from the navel to the heart, from the heart to the throat, and from the throat to the forehead are each twelve and a half fingerwidths, which gives a total of thirty-seven and a half fingerwidths. Therefore, although the distance between each of these points is given as twelve and a half fingerwidths, the distance from the navel to the lower edge of the forehead is thirty-eight fingerwidths. Therefore the previous measurement falls short of the forehead by half a fingerwidth. In this way, when the distance between the actual navel and the point between the eyebrows is divided into three sections of equal length,

there is no mistake in each part not coming out at twelve and a half fingerwidths. Therefore, although each part is given as twelve and a half fingerwidths, the half a fingerwidth distance of the forehead is to be divided into three, giving a distance of one barley seed and one thirtieth of a barley seed, and this measurement has to be added to each distance of twelve and a half fingerwidths from the navel to the heart, and so forth. [150]

This section of the *Great Commentary* explaining the location of the cakras is taught for the purpose of knowing where the centers of the cakras to be penetrated are located and, therefore, is to be taken literally. The measurements of twelve and a half fingerwidths given for the distances between the navel and the heart, etc., are to be understood as being on the basis of equal allotment and as an approximate calculation.

Winds

There are ten winds. The life-sustaining wind is of the element of space. The coexisting wind is of the element of wind. The upwardly moving wind is of the element of fire. The pervading wind is of the element of water. The *nāga* wind is of the element of earth. The turtle wind is of the element of air. The lizard wind is of the element of fire. The *devadatta* wind is of the element of water. The *dhanaṃjaya* wind is of the element of earth. The downwardly expelling wind is of the element of gnosis.

The life-sustaining wind in terms of its pathways can be divided into three—the wind that moves through the left channel, the wind that moves through the right channel, and the wind that moves through the central channel. In terms of its function, the downwardly expelling wind can be divided into three—two that push excrement and urine through the two lower orifices and one that carries fluid through the *śaṅkhinī,* or supreme channel.

Concerning the locations of the winds, eight winds beginning with the coexisting wind are to be found in the eight petals of the heart cakra. The coexisting wind is located in the eastern *rohinī* channel petal. The upwardly moving wind is in the southeastern *hastijihvā* channel petal. The pervading wind is located in the southern *piṅgalā* petal. The *nāga* wind is found in the southwestern *puṣya* petal. The turtle wind is found within the western *jaya* petal. The lizard wind is within the northwestern *alambuṣa* petal. The *devadatta* wind is within the northern *meṣa* channel petal. The *dhanaṃjaya* wind is within the northeastern *kuha* petal. These channels

are the primary birthplaces of these winds, although these winds also pervade and inhabit all the 72,000 channels. [151] With this in mind the *Great Commentary* says on the forty-second verse of the Inner chapter:

> The life-sustaining wind and others pervade the 72,000 channels. However the eight winds are created within the eight places.[57]

The guardians of the winds are as follows. The life-sustaining wind is the wind of Akṣobhya. The downwardly expelling is the wind of Vajrasattva. The coexisting is the wind of Amoghasiddhi. The upwardly moving is the wind of Ratnasaṃbhava. The pervading is the wind of Amitābha. The *nāga* is the wind of Vairocana. The turtle wind is the wind of Amoghasiddhi. The lizard wind is the wind of Ratnasambhava. The *devadatta* is the wind of Amitābha. The *dhanaṃjaya* is the wind of Vairocana.

Drops

As previously explained, the end of the thirteenth month after conception marks the first growth in the red and white drops. These drops continue to grow in the case of a boy until the age of sixteen and in a girl until the age of twelve. When a girl reaches the age of twelve, menstrual blood emerges from the secret place, and the growth of menstrual blood, or the red drop, is complete. When a boy reaches the age of sixteen, fluid emerges from the organ, and the growth in the drop, or fluid, is complete.

In general, red and white drops are to be found in every part of the body, like sesame oil in a sesame seed. The white is primarily situated in the cakra of great bliss in the crown of the head, while the red is primarily to be found in the cakras of the secret place and the navel. In its form of fluid, or white bodhicitta, the white drop dwells in and emerges from the left channel. In its form of menstrual blood, or red bodhicitta, the red drop dwells in and emerges from the right channel. The *śaṅkhinī,* or supreme channel, one of the three channels below the navel, carries both red and white drops.

At the center of the forehead cakra is found the drop that creates the waking state. In the center of the throat cakra is the drop that creates dream states. In the center of the heart cakra is the drop that creates the state of deep sleep. [152] In the center of the navel cakra is the drop that creates the fourth state.[58]

Similarly locations of drops that create the four states are also found from the navel downward. The one drop at the navel has the potential to create the fourth state as well as the waking state, and so it is said that both states share a common basis on that one drop. Therefore at the navel is found the drop that creates the waking state. At the secret place is the drop that creates dream states. In the center of the jewel lies the drop that creates deep sleep. At the tip of the jewel lies the drop that creates the fourth state.

In the drops at the forehead and at the navel, which create the waking state, resides the potential to create the endless conceptions of the waking state in ordinary beings as well as the potential to create limitless emanated bodies at the time of becoming a buddha. Similarly, in the drops contained at the throat and secret place can be found the potential to create dreams in ordinary beings and saṃbhogakāya speech[59] in all its aspects in the enlightened state. In the drops at the heart and in the center of the jewel that create the state of deep sleep is found the potential to create the unconsciousness of sleep in ordinary beings as well as the nonconceptual dharmakāya freed of all fabrication at the time of enlightenment. In the drops at the navel and at the tip of the jewel responsible for creating the fourth state can be found the potential to create contaminated pleasure in ordinary beings as well as the body of bliss that is the supreme and unchanging bliss of a buddha.

Therefore, on the paths of the generation and completion stage six-branched yoga, the potential of these eight drops to create the faults that arise in ordinary beings is purified, and the potential to create the qualities of the four bodies is developed in terms of ever-increasing quality until the ultimate result is actualized.

[153] To summarize: the red and white drops explained above are indispensable causes for the creation of a womb-born body. From beginningless time the imprints of the emission of the red and white elements have been planted again and again, and it is by these imprints of emission alone that the wandering in samsara continues. By meditative familiarization with the vajra yoga of penetrative focusing on the channels and winds of the vajra body, the red and white elements do not fall, and their movement is restrained. This alone will bring about the actualization of the indivisible union of the form body of empty form and the dharmakāya of supreme and unchanging bliss[60] inseparable from emptiness. This is how the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* explain the tantra. Therefore those who wish for

the supreme siddhi by following this particular path of practice should value the bodhicitta elements. In the first summary from the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary* it says:

> Those whose white fluid falls
> during their companionship with wisdom,[61]
> by what will their bliss increase?[62]

And:

> Occasionally, at the appropriate time of year,
> the deer-eating lion seeks the bliss of mating,
> while the gravel-eating pigeon does so constantly.
> Because their fluid falls once or many times,
> neither finds supreme bliss.
>
> Similarly the ascetic and the lustful
> lose their fluid in dreams and while awake.
> Bitten by a snake while asleep, one will not live;
> Similarly the ascetic weakened by not keeping his fluid
> is ruined by a woman's womb.[63]

How the winds move within the channels

This is dealt with under two headings

1. The flow of wind through the petals of the four cakras
2. Movement of wind through the nostrils

The flow of wind through the petals of the four cakras

The *Great Commentary* says on the sixty-second verse of the Inner chapter:

> For those born from a womb, the month of conception is Capricorn. From there the seventh, the month of Cancer, is the month of the creation of the life-sustaining wind.[64]

If this quote meant that every womb birth was conceived only in the actual month of Capricorn,[65] the consequences would be absurd. [154] It means that whatever the month of conception, it is to be known as the month of

Capricorn, and that the seventh month on from conception is known as the month of Cancer. In this way the passage means that seven months on from the month of conception, labeled Capricorn, in the month labeled Cancer, the first life-sustaining wind is formed.

From that time onward, and for as long as the being remains in the womb, the wind stays within the central channel as rigid as a stick, without moving through exhalation and inhalation. However, immediately after birth, fifty-six and a quarter winds flow from the central channel. From then on wind moves through either the left or right zodiac channels.

It is incorrect to understand the above line "For those born from a womb, the month of conception is Capricorn" as referring to the time of the flow of wind within the mother's Capricorn channel, and that conception for womb-born beings will always occur at that time. If that were the case, it would have to mean that the time when wind flows through the mother's Cancer channel, which is the seventh channel on from the channel of Capricorn, would be the time of the formation of the life-sustaining wind of the being in the womb. It would then follow that this wind would be created on the very day that the being entered the womb, and this cannot be so, because on the day of entering the womb not even the beginnings of the channels that carry the winds are present. Therefore "month of Capricorn" and "month of Cancer" must refer to external months.

Some have said that as well as referring to an external month, the quote beginning "For those born from womb, the month of conception is Capricorn" is made on the basis of those womb-born human beings conceived in the actual month of Capricorn and does not refer to every womb-born human. However the *Great Commentary* says on the thirty-eighth verse of the Inner chapter:

> "Lord of men, from the lagna[66] of Cancer" refers to the fact that in the external world, the birthplace of the sun was the house of Cancer. Similarly, in whatever lagna every birth takes place, that house is known by the name of Cancer and is the birthplace of the life-sustaining wind.[67]

"Every birth" includes every womb-born human, and so the previous explanation is correct. [155]

Having established this, as soon as a being emerges from the womb, fifty-six and a quarter breaths of wind move through the central channel

and flow equally through both nostrils. Each unit of breath is one exhalation and one inhalation. Immediately afterward, the space mandala wind flows through the Aries channel, or Aries lagna channel, on the left. This process continues until finally the earth mandala wind flows through the Pisces lagna channel on the right, at which time 21,600 winds will have flowed and one day will have passed.

The house, or *lagna,* channels are explained as follows. The intermediate circle of the navel cakra has twelve channel petals. Those at the front of the body are in the east. Those on the left are in the north, those on the right in the south, and those at the back in the west. In the same way that other phenomena of the four directions are enumerated by beginning with the east, here too they are counted from east at the front of the body. Therefore the first channel petal at the front left of the body is the house of Aries. Moving counterclockwise around the body, the second is Gemini, third Leo, fourth Libra, fifth Sagittarius, and the house of Aquarius is the sixth channel petal of the left. Likewise the first channel petal at the front of the body on its right is the house of Taurus. The second is Cancer, the third Virgo, the fourth Scorpio, the fifth Capricorn, and the sixth channel petal at the back on the right is the house of Pisces.

Having established these channels, the movement of wind through them can be explained. Immediately after birth, fifty-six and a quarter winds[68] flow from the central channel. After that, 1,800 breaths of the space-mandala wind, less fifty-six and a quarter, each breath consisting of one unit of inhalation and exhalation, flow through the Aries channel petal, the first petal of the left. Then fifty-six and a quarter of gnosis-mandala winds flow from the central channel at the point of the changeover of wind movement from the Aries channel petal, the first petal of the left, to the Taurus channel petal, the first petal of the right. After that, 1,800 breaths minus fifty-six and a quarter flow from the house of the Taurus petal, the first petal of the right. Similarly, at the times of the other house channel petals' changeover of wind movement, fifty-six and a quarter gnosis winds will flow from the central channel. [156]

After earth wind has flowed from the Taurus petal, the first channel petal of the right, the air-mandala wind flows from the second petal of the left. After that the water-mandala wind flows from the second petal of the right, followed by the fire-mandala wind from the third on the left. The fire wind also flows from the third on the right, the water-mandala wind from the fourth on the left, the air-mandala wind from the fourth on the right,

the earth-mandala wind from the fifth on the left, the space-mandala wind from the fifth on the right, the space wind also from the sixth on the left, and, finally, 1,800 breaths less fifty-six and a quarter of the earth-mandala wind flow from the house of Pisces, the sixth petal on the right.

In this way, in each of the channel petals of the twelve houses where these twelve major wind movements[69] occur, 1,800 winds of the five mandalas of space and so forth, less fifty-six and a quarter winds, to make 1,743 3/4 breaths, flow within each period. Also, at the changeover point of each of the twelve wind movements, fifty-six and a quarter winds flow from the central channel, making a total of 675 winds flowing from the central channel each day. 1,743 3/4 breaths in each of the twelve major movements totals 20,925. To this is added the 675 winds, making a total of 21,600 breaths. This is the way the wind moves in one solar day of twelve wind movements at the navel cakra.

At the beginning of the second solar day, air-mandala wind flows in the first channel petal on the left, which is the Aries wind-movement channel. Then in the first petal on the right, water-mandala wind flows in the Taurus channel. Similarly, from the second on the left to the sixth on the left, fire-mandala wind, water-mandala wind, earth-mandala wind, space-mandala wind, and air-mandala wind flow, respectively. Similarly, from the second on the right to the sixth on the right, fire-mandala wind, air-mandala wind, space-mandala wind, earth-mandala wind, and water-mandala wind flow, respectively. This is how the wind moves on the second day.

At the beginning of the third day, fire-mandala wind flows in the first channel petal on the left. Similarly, from the second petal to the sixth, water-mandala wind, earth-mandala wind, space-mandala wind, air-mandala wind, and fire-mandala wind flow, respectively. [157] After fire-mandala wind flows in the first petal of the left, fire-mandala wind flows in the first channel petal of the right, air-mandala wind in the second, space-mandala wind in the third, earth-mandala wind in the fourth, water-mandala wind in the fifth, and fire-mandala wind in the sixth petal. This is how the winds move on the third day.

At the beginning of the fourth day, water-mandala wind flows in the first channel petal on the left. After that air-mandala wind flows in the first petal on the right. In the same way earth-mandala wind flows in the second petal on the left, space-mandala wind in the third, air-mandala wind in the fourth, fire-mandala wind in the fifth, and water-mandala wind in the sixth. Similarly, on the right, space-mandala wind flows through the

second, earth-mandala air through the third, water-mandala wind through the fourth, fire-mandala wind through the fifth, and air-mandala wind through the sixth. This is how the winds flow on the fourth day.

At the beginning of the fifth day, earth-mandala wind flows through the first channel petal on the left. After that space-mandala wind moves through the first petal on the right. Similarly space-mandala wind moves through the second petal on the left, air-mandala wind through the third, fire-mandala wind through the fourth, water-mandala wind through the fifth, and earth-mandala wind through the sixth. Likewise earth-mandala wind moves through the second petal on the right, water-mandala wind through the third, fire-mandala wind through the fourth, air-mandala wind through the fifth, and space-mandala wind through the sixth on the right. This is the movement of the winds on the fifth day.

At the beginning of the sixth day, space-wind moves through the first channel petal on the left, and earth wind moves through the first channel petal of the right, as on the first day. The process is repeated every five days, with the winds flowing and circulating as before. The process has to be this way. The *Great Commentary* says on the sixty-fifth verse of the Inner chapter:

> In the six uneven petals of Aries and so forth, the emptiness[70] mandala flows, expelled by wind. In the right there are six days of flow, and with six days of changeover, the earth mandala flows in the even houses of Taurus and so forth expelled by the life wind.[71]

This says that the winds of the five mandalas of space and so forth flow within each of the twelve channel petals, and the way that each of the five mandalas flows through the petals has to be as explained above. [158] Furthermore, when the space-mandala wind has flowed through the first channel petal on the left, it will again flow through the sixth channel petal on the left. After that, when winds flow again through the left channels, they begin from the first petal on the left, and that wind will be the air-mandala wind, which comes after the space-mandala wind. In this way, the left and right major changeovers in the flow of the winds must occur, as previously explained, alternately left and right.

When wind flows through each of the house channels, the channel tubes are divided into five sections—four in the four directions and one in the

center. The minor-element space mandala flows through the center, the air mandala through the east, the fire mandala through the south, the water mandala through the north, and the earth mandala through the west. For each of these there are 360 breaths less eleven and a quarter.[72]

There are twenty-five mandalas of the minor elements. They are the space mandala of space, the air mandala of space, the fire mandala of space, the water mandala of space, and the earth mandala of space; the space, air, fire, water, and earth mandalas of air; the five mandalas from the space mandala of fire to the earth mandala of fire; the five from the space mandala of water to the earth mandala of water; and the five from the space mandala of earth to the earth mandala of earth. This makes twenty-five.

The flow of the five mandalas of the minor elements is as follows. Whatever wind of the major elements is flowing in the one of the major wind movements of the twelve channel petals, the five minor elements also flow in that wind. Such a flow, moreover, is strictly ordered. To illustrate this, when the mandala of the major element of space flows through the first channel petal of the left, the minor mandalas from the space mandala of space to the earth mandala of space also flow. When the mandala of the major element of earth flows through the first channel petal on the right, the mandalas from the earth mandala of earth to the space mandala of earth also flow.

The order in which they flow is as follows. When flowing through the left channel petals, the minor elements also flow in the order of space, air, fire, water, and earth. Similarly, when wind flows through the right channel petals, they flow in the order earth, water, fire, air, and space. [159] In this way, when the major wind movements change from the left to the right, the minor elements move from earth to earth,[73] and when moving from right to left, from space to space. This movement is fixed.

Each of the twelve channel petals of the major wind movements splits up into five petals of these five minor wind movements. The channel tubes of the major wind movements are divided east, west, south, north, and center, and the space, air, fire, water, and earth minor elements flow along these five directions. The five channel petals of the minor elements are also arranged east, west, south, north, and center, and the flow of winds within them mirrors the directional flow of the major wind elements. In each petal of minor wind movement, the flow is 360 breaths minus eleven and a quarter, or 348 3/4.

This is how winds flow within the petals of the navel. The flow in the

channel petals of the heart is mentioned in the *Great Commentary* on the forty-first verse of the Inner chapter:

> It should be known that within the eight petals of the lotus of the heart are channels of periodic wind movement. The five mandalas flow to the nostrils from these channels. The winds flow because of the channels, and the inhalations and exhalations of each channel number 2,700, or seven and a half hours.[74]

This quote says that in each of the eight petals of the heart, 21,600 divided by eight, or 2,700, breaths flow. This in hours comes to seven and a half.[75] This quote is made on the basis of not excluding the 675 breaths that flow in one day through the central channel. The actual measurement is explained as follows. At the changeover times of the twelve major wind movements of the navel channel, fifty-six and a quarter breaths flow from the central channel. These breaths flow in the central channel from the navel cakra to the upper opening of the central channel. Therefore they do not flow into the channel petals of the heart, the throat, and the forehead. 21,600 breaths less 675 leaves 20,925 breaths. This divided by eight comes to 2,615 5/8, and this is the actual number of breaths that flow within each petal of the heart cakra each day.

This is not the amount of wind that flows during each period of flow. [160] On the basis of the flow within each period, whatever quantity of wind flows during the period of each major wind movement at the navel, that much has to flow at each period within the petals of the heart, throat, and forehead. This is because, in one major wind movement on the left at the navel, 1,800 breaths minus fifty-six and a quarter will flow. That amount of wind will also flow through the left nostril. Moving to the right, 1,800 breaths minus fifty-six and a quarter will flow from one channel petal on the right. At the same time, the flow moves from the left nostril to the right, and a similar number of breaths will flow. Likewise, during each period of flow, the number of breaths at the left and right channel petals of the heart, throat, and forehead must be the same as the flow at the nostrils and at each of the wind movements at the navel-channel petals.

This process can be explained using the first flow of wind through the first navel-channel petal on the left while wind flows simultaneously through the first heart-channel petal on the left. Firstly, one set of 1,800 breaths flows through the first heart-channel petal on the left. Then one set

of 1,800 breaths flow through the first channel petal on the right. After that 900 breaths flow again through the first petal on the left. Then 900 breaths flow through the second petal on the left. After that 900 breaths flow through the first petal on the right, and then 900 breaths flow through the second petal on the right. Then 1,800 breaths flow through the second petal on the left, and after that 1,800 breaths flow through the second petal on the right. This process continues in similar fashion through the other petals. This has been calculated without separating out the flow of wind from the central channel, and so the number of breaths flowing through each petal of the heart should be known in this way as being 2,700.

The throat cakra has thirty-two petals, of which four are empty channels through which no wind flows. The way in which wind flows through the other twenty-eight is spoken of in the *Great Commentary:*

> In the twenty-eight petals flows the wind day and night. Through a division of sixty hours, the wind flows in each petal.[76]

This means that sixty hours or 21,600 breaths is divided among the twenty-eight wind-carrying petals. [161] This comes to 770 3/7 breaths. This is the number of breaths or winds that flow within each petal of the throat cakra each day. Similarly, the *Great Commentary* says:

> Of the sixteen petals of the forehead lotus two are ignored, and in the remaining fourteen flows the wind day and night. For a fourteenth of sixty hours, it flows through each channel.[77]

This means that for sixty hours, or 21,600 breaths, apart from the two empty petals, wind flows through the sixteen-petal forehead cakra. This number of breaths divided by fourteen gives a figure of 1,542 6/7 breaths, and this is the number of breaths that flow through each channel petal of the forehead each day.

These are all calculated on the basis of not separating out the flow of wind from the central channel. If they were, then the 675 breaths that flow through the central channel each day are to be subtracted from the 21,600 breaths to leave 20,925, and how this is to be divided up can be known from the above.

Movement of wind through the nostrils

Upon birth from the mother's womb, fifty-six and a quarter winds flow from the central channel through both nostrils equally. Then the same number of winds that are flowing in the major wind movement at the navel on the left will flow only through the left nostril. At the changeover period from left to right, the number of breaths flowing through the central channel will be the number of breaths that flow through both nostrils equally. Similarly the number of winds that flow in each major wind movement of the channel petals on the right is the number of breaths that move solely through the right nostril.

The wind of each major wind movement is divided into the wind of the five minor elements. The space-element wind flows through the center of the nostrils. The air-element wind flows through the upper part of the nostril. The fire-element wind flows through the sides of the nostrils that border the cheeks. The water-element wind flows through the center of the nostrils close to the bone. [162] The earth-element wind flows through the nostrils close to the base and toward the upper lip.

How far the breath travels outside the nostrils and inside is explained as follows. The earth-mandala wind travels twelve fingerwidths outside the nostrils. The water-mandala wind travels thirteen fingerwidths outside the nostril. The fire-mandala wind travels fourteen fingerwidths, the air-mandala wind travels fifteen, and the space-mandala wind travels sixteen fingerwidths. Each breath then returns, and the farther it travels outside, the shorter it travels inside, and the shorter it travels outside, the farther it travels inside. Therefore the space-mandala wind reaches the center of the navel. The air-mandala wind reaches one fingerwidth below the navel. The fire-mandala wind reaches two fingerwidths below the navel, the water-mandala wind three fingerwidths below, and the earth-mandala wind four fingerwidths below.

The wind in its five parts must travel at least as far as the navel, because at the times of a wind-movement changeover, wind enters the central channel, and it has to enter from the center of the navel cakra. Moreover the gnosis wind that enters the central channel after the flow of the five winds will travel the same distance inward or outward as the particular wind that precedes the gnosis wind. The *Great Commentary* says:

The gnosis-mandala wind enters in the middle after the earth-mandala wind and travels twelve fingerwidths from both nostrils. The wind entering the central channel after the space-mandala wind travels sixteen fingerwidths.[78]

10. Discrepancies between Kālacakra and Other Tantras

An examination of the queries arising from the discrepancies between this presentation of channels, winds, and drops and that of other tantras

[163] This is dealt with under two headings:

1. A brief explanation of the discrepancies between this presentation and presentations of channel, winds, and drops in other tantras
2. An explanation of the thinking behind presentations as given here and in other tantras

A brief explanation of the discrepancies between this presentation and presentations of channel, winds, and drops in other tantras

In the *Hevajra Tantra* it says:

> At the emanation wheel is a lotus of sixty-four petals, at the dharma wheel eight petals, at the enjoyment wheel sixteen petals, and at the wheel of great bliss thirty-two petals.[79]

This is to be taken literally and means that the throat cakra has sixteen petals and that the crown cakra, also explained as the wheel of great bliss, has thirty-two petals. In keeping with the *Great Commentary,* the *Vajragarbha Bodhisattva Commentary* says that the throat cakra has thirty-two petals and that the forehead cakra has sixteen. Concerning this reversal in the Kālacakra, the oral tradition of the lamas says that these two should be known as being of thirty-two and sixteen petals as explained, but that in Kālacakra the order is reversed. Therefore the line "and at the wheel of great bliss thirty-two petals" also refers to the forehead cakra. In this way, for the intended disciples of hidden tantra, the wheel of great bliss is

explained as being the cakra of the crown or *uṣṇīṣa,* with its thirty-two petals, and the cakra of the forehead, the cakra between the eyebrows, is known as the sixteen-petal wheel of wind. This is just a brief explanation of the inconsistencies in the presentation of the channels.

The inconsistencies in the presentations of the winds are as follows. The presentations of the ten winds are similar. However, concerning the locations and the guardians of the five root winds, the *Vajra Garland Explanatory Tantra* says:

> The life-sustaining wind abides in the heart,
> born from the family of Akṣobhya.
> The downwardly expelling, dwelling in the secret area,
> is born from Ratnasambhava.
> The upwardly moving dwells in the throat,
> in the nature of Amitābha.
> The coexisting is in the lotus of the navel,
> in the nature of Amoghasiddhi.
> The pervading dwells in every limb,
> in the nature of Vairocana.[80]

[164] Therefore the life-sustaining wind abides in the heart and is the wind of Akṣobhya. The downwardly expelling wind is found in the secret place and is the wind of Ratnasambhava. The upwardly moving wind dwells in the cakra of the throat and is the wind of Amitābha. The coexisting wind dwells within the navel cakra and is the wind of Amoghasiddhi. The pervading wind is found in all joints, such as those of the limbs, and is the wind of Vairocana.

Furthermore the life-sustaining wind dwelling at the heart is also explained as being of two kinds—coarse and subtle. The coarse wind brings about inhalation and exhalation at the nostrils, and although this coarse wind is in the heart cakra, it does not enter the dhūtī of the heart channel knot. The subtle life-sustaining wind is inseparable from the very subtle mind of clear light and is known as its indestructible mount. It dwells within the dhūtī of the channel knot at the very center of the heart cakra. The *Vajra Garland Explanatory Tantra* says:

> In the space within the lotus of the heart
> the wisdom vajra always sits.[81]

And:

> This is the worldly realm of powerful Akṣobhya,
> there his constant residence,
> under the name "wind of gnosis."[82]

Also the *Requests of the Four Goddesses Explanatory Tantra* says:

> Of tiny size, the supreme and subtle,
> the phenomenon of mind in the form of a drop,
> dwelling constantly at the heart's center,
> ablaze with great rays of light.[83]

Thus the indestructible and very subtle wind is also described as five blazing rays of light. The *Vajra Mandala Ornament Tantra* says:

> In the center of the heart, the indestructible,
> clear and like a lamp,
> unchanging and extremely subtle,
> the syllable "a" supreme.[84]

This, too, teaches the very subtle indestructible wind. *Illuminating Reality* talks of "emptiness perceived when the innate wind returns to its place after the other winds have dissolved." This innate wind is the very subtle life-sustaining wind. This very subtle wind and its very subtle mind of clear light form the foundation of all phenomena of samsara and are the special meditative foundations of the two forms of a buddha, with this wind being the special meditative foundation of the enjoyment body of a buddha. The above is the thinking behind hidden tantras as explained by their intended disciples. [165]

The *Great Commentary* says that the mind of clear light is the foundation of all phenomena of samsara and nirvana but does not even mention the very subtle wind. Furthermore the main seat of the winds is said to be the heart-channel petals, which is at variance with the locations of the four winds, from coexisting wind to pervading wind, as taught in the other tantras. Although the guardians of the winds coincide as far as the life-sustaining and coexisting winds are concerned, the *Great Commentary* mentions the upwardly moving as belonging to Ratnasambhava, the downwardly

expelling as belonging to Vajrasattva, and the pervading as belonging to Amitābha and not to Vairocana. Therefore there is some discrepancy concerning the guardians of these three winds.

Moreover, concerning which nostril the winds pass through at the times of their coming and going, of which element mandala they are, and of their colors, the *Vajra Garland Explanatory Tantra* says:

> The five buddha families
> arise from the nostrils,
> flowing upon the five winds,
> constantly active within the body.
>
> Flowing into the nose,
> emerging from the five openings,
> left, right, both, and gently,
> these are the four ways.
>
> From the right,
> the fire-mandala element,
> of the color red,
> the wind of the lotus protector.
>
> From the left,
> the air-mandala element,
> appearing as green and yellow,
> the wind of the activity protector.
>
> From both, the mighty mandala,
> the element of earth,
> the color of gold,
> the wind of the jewel protector.
>
> The element of the gently flowing,
> the color of pure crystal,
> the water mandala,
> wind of the vajra protector.
>
> That arising from all elements,
> supporter and supported,

the nature of Vairocana,
arising at death.

In meditative equipoise,
constant recitation on these four mandalas;
as to the number of mantras,
recite them constantly day and night.[85]

[166] Thus the five winds of the five buddhas flow through the nostrils. The way they flow is as follows. Only the coexisting wind flows freely through the left nostril, its color is a mixture of green and yellow, and it is of the element of air. The upwardly moving wind flows freely only through the right nostril, is red in color, and is of the element of fire. The downwardly expelling wind moves freely through both nostrils, flowing forcefully through both. It is yellow and of the earth element. The life-sustaining wind flows gently and freely through both nostrils. It is white and of the water element. The pervading wind does not flow freely through the nostrils during normal existence except at the time of death. It is pale blue in color and of the element of space.

The *Great Commentary* speaks of the life-sustaining wind being of the element of space and green in color. The downwardly expelling wind is of the element of gnosis and blue in color. The coexisting wind is taught as being of the element of air and black in color. The pervading wind is of the water element and white. There are, therefore, discrepancies in the colors of four winds and in the elements of three of the above winds. Similarly the *Great Commentary* speaks of the winds divided into the five elements flowing in sequence and of their own accord through left, right, and both nostrils. There is, therefore, disagreement in the way wind flows through the nostrils.

Hidden tantras and their commentaries, including the *Sandhivyākaraṇa Tantra*,[86] speak only of four winds—fire, water, earth, and air—flowing of their own accord through the nostrils during normal existence, and that each flow is 900 breaths. In this way, with flows following each other, each of the four winds flows 900 times multiplied by six in a single day. Moreover each set of 900 breaths is divided into four sets of 225 winds—one for each of the four goddesses. *The Drop of Freedom* says:

Each of the four mudrās is of 225,
which added together comes to 900.

And of that, twenty-four movements
makes two times 10,000 plus 1,600.[87]

[167] The winds of the four goddesses are correlated with the winds of the minor elements.

Also, according to the hidden tantras, apart from the time of death, there is no flow of wind in the central channel during normal existence.[88]

The *Great Commentary*, on the other hand, explains that 1,800 breaths less fifty-six and a quarter flow through the nostrils during the flow of each of the winds of the five elements, and that at the time of the changeover of the major wind movements at the navel and the changeover of the flow between left and right nostril, fifty-six and a quarter breaths of wind flow from the central channel.

Furthermore the hidden tantras talk only of the winds of the four elements flowing freely or predominantly through the nostrils and do not mention the flow of the space-element wind. This is in conflict with the *Great Commentary*, which talks of the flow of the space-element wind. The hidden tantras talk of 900 breaths flowing during each period of the four winds, each of which moves to other element mandalas six times, making in total twenty-four wind movements. The *Great Commentary* talks of 1,743 3/4 breaths flowing during each period of the winds of the five elements, each period changing from element to element twelve times to form the twelve major wind movements. These, therefore, are discrepancies in the number of breaths within each flow and in the number of wind movements. The hidden tantras say that except for the moment of death and while on the path, the winds do not flow in the central channel. *The Great Commentary* says that even during normal existence wind flows in the central channel. These are the discrepancies.

An explanation of the thinking behind presentations as given here and in other tantras

This has two outlines:

1. Abhayākaragupta's explanation
2. A presentation of statements by other scholars and their meanings

Abhayākaragupta's explanation

[168] Explanations from the hidden tantras are definitive, while those from the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* that comment on Kālacakra and others are interpretive and not to be taken literally. In the twenty-first chapter of the *Sheaves of Oral Transmission,* he explains that the space-mandala wind flows only as a secondary accompaniment to the other four winds, thereby rejecting that it flows of its own accord separately from the four other winds. This he does by quoting from *A Lantern of Condensed Practice* and backing that up with scriptural reference from the *Vajra Garland Tantra, Sandhivyākaraṇa Tantra,* and the *Triumph of Nonduality Tantra.* The teachings in the Kālacakra are interpretive, as they are based upon the views of Sūryaratha and other disciples. How are they to be interpreted? The twenty-first chapter of *Sheaves of Oral Transmission* says:

> The fifth element of space is pervasive, and so only flows at the times of the four mandalas flowing at the four places. It was therefore not taught as being separate. This was spoken of by the venerable Āryadeva: "From the openings of the vajra and lotus, rays of light rise and travel upward to flow from the tip of the nose. Within them the four mandalas of the elements of earth, water, fire, and air are exhaled. The pervading wind does not emerge, it is together with the pervading rays of light"[89]

This quote of Āryadeva continues until "One element mandala pervades four elements."[90] Abhayākaragupta validates this position by quoting from the *Sandhivyākaraṇa Tantra:*

> In the *Sandhivyākaraṇa* it says:
> "The recitations of Pāṇḍarā and so forth,
> 225 multiplied by four,
> are the four yogas—900 in each."

Also:

> "That taught as 900,
> by twenty-four similar kinds,
> totals 21,600."[91]
> This speaks of the number of breaths in the wind movements.

Concerning the validating quote from the *Vajra Garland,* the text continues:

> By including them in space, the *Vajra Garland* speaks only
> of the flow of four mandalas.
> "For the 'mustard seed at the tip of the nose,'[92]
> focus on prāṇāyāma,
> dwell within prāṇāyāma,
> meditate as buddhas,
> the five rays of light
> arising through the nose."

The *Vajra Garland* quote is continued until "The nature of the five wisdoms."[93] [169]

Concerning the validating quote from the *Triumph of Nonduality,* the text says:

> Similarly, in the *Triumph of Nonduality Tantra* it says:
> "That which the letter *ya* symbolizes
> is practiced by those who desire siddhis.
> With the three letters *ra* and so forth,
> engage in the welfare of others.
>
> "In mandalas of fire, air, earth, and water,
> two activities in half a session at a time."[94]

These quotes establish that within the flows of wind of the four element mandalas, the space-mandala wind does not flow independently or predominantly during normal existence. It can be inferred from the above that Abhayākaragupta would also not accept as literal the presentations of the channels and winds as found in the *Condensed Tantra* and the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* where they disagreed with the root and explanatory hidden tantras. Presentations, therefore, found in the *Bodhisattva Commentaries* on the *Kālacakratantra* and so forth are explained as being subject to interpretation. *Sheaves of Oral Transmission* continues:

> In the Kālacakra the space mandala spoken of separately is there
> to lead disciples such as Sūryaratha and others who cling to

> Tīrthika views to the definitive meaning. It is wholly in need of interpretation and intentionally equivocal, like the teaching on the arrangement of the three world realms in the upper regions of Meru asserted by those who follow Varaha.[95] However the wise and others have said that in the Kālacakra and the commentaries that follow it, there are many presentations that contradict the three vehicles, and that those responsible for these texts, possessing the names of Yaśas, Puṇḍarīka, Vajragarbha, and Vajrapāṇi, are not bodhisattvas at all. Therefore, as all contradictions have not been resolved, you may ask what is the point in trying to resolve part of the contradictions? Those parts of the Kālacakra that do not contradict other tantras of the doctrine, I follow as I would my own. Some contradictions I have resolved because they are adapted to the minds of certain disciples. [170] As to the rest, although the contradictions are not resolved, it has been explained at great length that there are no faults in these at all and so therefore they are acceptable.[96]

"The wise" mentioned in the above quote refers to Ācārya Śāntipa, and "others" refers to other Indians. The questio, "Therefore, as all contradictions have not been resolved, you may ask what is the point in trying to resolve part of the contradictions" expresses the following doubt. The Kālacakra and those texts known as the *Bodhisattva Commentaries* have been refuted by Śāntipa and other scholars. Therefore all contradictions have not been resolved, and so what is the point in you, Abhayākaragupta, persevering in resolving contradictions in parts of the text? This doubt is cleared up by the lines that follow, beginning with "Those parts of the Kālacakra."

A presentation of statements by other scholars and their meanings

Scholars (such as Kumāramati[97]) say that it is not right to posit as interpretive those presentations from the Kālacakra on the formation of the world realms and on channels and winds and so forth that conflict with the Abhidharma tradition and the hidden tantras. If it were, then almost everything taught in the eighth, ninth, and tenth summaries from the Realms chapter would have to be explained from the point of view that it does not

exist as literally taught. In the Inner chapter also, many presentations on channels, winds, etc., would not be literal. Therefore, in the remaining chapters, it also becomes very difficult to settle almost anything as being literally true. They go on to say that although the explanations from the Kālacakra and from the hidden tantras disagree, they should both be accepted as being definitive and should be explained as such. How is that to be explained? *Lantern Illuminating the Five Stages* says:

> However, according to the explanatory tantra of the Guhyasamāja, in half the breaths of a day there are twelve wind movements at the nostrils. According to the *Saṃvaraudbhava* there are eight, [171] and according to the Kālacakra, except for 675 breaths, there are twelve wind movements at the nostrils in a whole day. Are these statements contradictory? Although the tradition of Guhyasamāja has been explained by the *Oral Tradition of Mañjuśrī* and by Nāgārjuna and his disciples, it has been done so in its own context. The *Saṃvaraudbhava,* too, exists for the purpose of its own tantra. Therefore it is inappropriate to explain the meanings of those statements together. Concerning the flow of breath through the nostrils, it seems difficult to say that one tradition can be verified and that another cannot. They are taught, therefore, according to the needs of disciples and should not be held as being contradictory.[98]

This is how it should be understood. Moreover the validity as expressed in the explanatory tantras of the Guhyasamāja, such as the *Vajra Garland* and *Sandhivyākaraṇa* is as explained in the *Lantern Illuminating the Five Stages.* As for the Kālacakra, put aside all assertions that the *Kālacakratantra* and the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* are not valid. From the perspective that they are indeed valid texts, Abhayākaragupta is not correct when he presents the winds, etc., as taught in the Kālacakra as interpretive and not to be taken literally. The second summary from the Realms chapter states:

> The Vajra Vehicle, in accord with the mentality of sentient beings, lies hidden as vajra words in the *King of Tantras.*[99]

Thus in the root hidden tantras, the meanings are taught in an unclear or hidden style. Further on it says:

> In this the *Kālacakra Original Buddha,*[100] the Conqueror has clarified the vajra words by very clearly teaching, explaining, and well explaining.[101] As proof of that, the process of the signs of smoke, etc., in the mahāmudrā meditation is very clear.[102]

These and further quotes establish that the profound meanings, which are obscured in other hidden tantras, are taught clearly in the *Original Buddha* and are to be understood literally. Therefore the teachings on the winds and so forth must also be accepted literally. But how can both of these conflicting presentations be taken literally? In the two types of tantras the presentations on normal-existence channels, winds, and so forth and the practices on the paths of generation and completion are taught differently, [172] and this is because they were taught on the basis of the primary intended disciples of each tantra.

There are, therefore, two distinct presentations. Firstly, the four-continent world realm with its measurements, colors, and so forth, explained differently from the Abhidharma tradition and other tantras, arises as the dominant result[103] of the common karma of the primary intended disciples of the *Śrī Kālacakratantra.* How it arises is taught in the *Great Commentary* and was explained earlier. Similarly the dimensions of the body and the individual colors of its constituents correlating with the outside world, plus the channels and winds within the body and the way the winds move through the individual cakras and through the nostrils, all arise as the results of the ripening karma of those same disciples. These phenomena exist, therefore, as actual situations. This external world and the inner world of sentient beings with body, speech, and mind are the bases of purification practice. The presentations of the path correlating with those phenomena, and the winds, channels, and drops of these primary disciples existing as they are taught in the tantra and its commentaries, form a basis upon which the penetrating activities of the completion stage are practiced. From such practices, the winds of the left and right channels enter the central channel, thereby inducing the empty forms and unchanging bliss. As these processes are taught in the *Śrī Kālacakratantra,* so they actually exist. The fifty-ninth verse of the Inner chapter says:

> Therefore the 156 are channels that dwell in the nature of the Kālacakra gods and goddesses and that bring death to ordinary beings. Together with the channels of the six families, the 162

> channels, in the nature of the six Kālacakra wheels, bring bliss to the yogi when meditated upon.[104]

This passage teaches that the 156 channels comprise the thirty-two channel petals of the secret place, sixty-four of the navel, eight of the heart, thirty-two of the throat, sixteen of the forehead, and four of the crown. These are visualized as 156 lotus-seated gods and goddesses and meditated upon. [173] Likewise the three upper channels of the left, right, and middle plus the three lower channels of fluid, excrement, and urine are visualized and meditated upon as the six families. This generation-stage practice ripens the continuum and the meditations of the six-branched yoga of the completion stage, which penetrates the channels, winds, and drops and brings the yogi to ultimate happiness.

The *Great Commentary* says on the fifty-eighth verse of the Inner chapter:

> The six channels are the *time channels.* When meditated upon in accord with the guru's instruction, the fear of death will be destroyed. To the yogi this is nothing special.[105]

The "instruction" refers to the six-branched yoga. Regarding the sixtieth verse the *Great Commentary* says:

> Above, the moon, sun, and Rāhu dwell in the paths of the left, right, and center. Below, divided into moon, sun, and Agni, they dwell in the paths of excrement, urine, and fluid. These the yogi protects in the body. How? "By the precepts of the guru." The precepts of the guru are the six-branched yoga, which will bring protection from death. "They bring death to living creatures" because these six are entered by the winds. If the winds enter the six, at that time and at all times men will definitely be destroyed by death. Among the six is "the subtle" or the central avadhūtī. If the winds do not enter "the subtle," "how will the yogis destroy the realm of death?" Definitely they will not destroy the realm of death.[106]

Therefore, if the yogi does not induce the winds into the central channel by way of the six-branched yoga, the ultimate result of deathlessness is unobtainable.

Secondly, the presentation of the channels and winds of normal existence, plus the stages along the paths of generation and completion, as found in the root and explanatory hidden tantras, exist on the basis of their intended disciples and therefore are to be taken literally. This is done as follows. [174] For the primary disciples that the root and explanatory hidden tantras are intended for, the dominant result of their common karma is this four-continent world with its measurements and shape as taught in the Abhidharma tradition and in the root and explanatory hidden tantras, together with commentaries on their meanings unraveled by the great masters. That this world exists as a reality is clearly the thinking of the tantras and sutras. That it is also the thinking of the Kālacakra is taught by the words of the commentary that begin "In a cave of five cubits," which was explained earlier. Likewise, as taught in the hidden tantras and commentaries, the aggregates, realms, and sensory sources, and particularly the channels and winds, together with the way the winds move through the channel petals and the nostrils, all exist in reality as the ripening results of the common karma of the primary disciples intended for the root and explanatory hidden tantras. Celestial palaces are meditated upon as correlating with the external world as it exists; the aggregates, realms, and sensory sources are meditated upon as being of the nature of gods and goddesses; and in particular, the channels, winds, and drops are meditated upon as being of the nature of male and female heroes. These generation-stage meditations ripen the continuum of the mind. The channels, winds, and drops, existing exactly as they are taught, are penetrated by the meditations of the completion stage, whose ultimate development results in the two bodies of a buddha. Conversely, if one correlates with and focuses upon an external world and an inner world of channels and so forth that do not actually exist, it will be difficult to attain any kind of result.

Therefore, because of the separate and different types of karma of the two kinds of intended disciples, differences arose in the external worlds and the internal worlds of channels, winds, and so forth. Because of these differences, two ways of traveling the path arose—the method of the masters of India who explained the meanings of the hidden tantras, and the method of the followers of the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries.*

This has been a brief explanation of the presentation of the inner world.

Part 3
Initiations

11. Qualifications of Master and Disciple

Initiations

[175] This has three outlines:

1. By whom and upon whom initiations are bestowed: The definitions of master and disciple
2. Where the initiations are bestowed: A description of the mandala
3. Presentation of the initiations to be bestowed

By whom and upon whom initiations are bestowed: The definitions of master and disciple

This is under two headings:

1. By whom initiations are bestowed: A definition of a master
2. Upon whom initiations are bestowed: A definition of the disciple

A definition of a master

This is under three headings:

1. Definition of a guru to be relied upon
2. Characteristics of those unsuitable to be gurus
3. Ways of devoting oneself to someone who has become one's guru, plus exceptional circumstances

Definition of a guru to be relied upon

The second verse of the Initiations chapter from the *Condensed Tantra* says:

> Firstly, the guru to devote oneself to keeps his vows,
> dwells within the Vajra Vehicle, meditates upon the reality,[1]

is unattached, untainted, and of a patient nature,
has entered the path, shows the path to the disciples,
and takes away the fear of hell.
From reality he is of the brahmacarya,
and for māra he is the vajra club.
Such a one is known as a heroic vajra mind upon this earth.[2]

This passage speaks of the qualified guru. His qualities will be briefly explained. To request an initiation, one must first rely upon a guru. [176] What kind of guru should one rely on? One who keeps both interpretive and definitive samaya[3] and one who dwells within the path of the Vajra Vehicle, the highest secret mantra. This means to possess the mantra vows from the initiation of Kālacakra. "Meditates upon the reality" means one who meditates upon the Kālacakra completion stage preceded by the generation stage. "Unattached" means to have no attachment for wife, children, and so forth, and no regard for his own body. "Untainted" means to be untainted by desire, anger, ignorance, pride, jealousy, and miserliness. "Of a patient nature" means to have no regard for the fruits of fame and wealth but to be occupied instead by the welfare of the disciples. "Has entered the path" means that he has entered the general Mahayana path. "Shows the path to the disciples, and takes away the fear of hell" means that by showing the perfect path to those disciples who rely upon him as a guru, it becomes possible to remove the fears of hell. "From reality he is of the brahmacarya"[4] means that from meditating upon emptiness he has attained the unmoving brahmacarya, the supreme unchanging bliss. "For māra he is the vajra club" means that in destroying the four types of māras he is like the vajra club. The four kinds of māras are the aggregates, the delusions, death, and the *devaputra.*[5] One who possesses these qualities is famed as a heroic vajra mind upon the earth. These are the characteristics of a vajra master to be relied upon.

Furthermore the *Great Commentary,* commenting on the second verse of the Initiations chapter of the *Condensed Tantra,* quotes a text that says:

Stable, disciplined, and of intelligence,
patient, honest, free from deception,
knows mantra and the yogas of tantra,
is compassionate, wise in the commentaries,
knows well the ten activities,

is wise in mandala drawing,
a master skilled in teaching tantra,
of great faith and with senses tamed.[6]

This quote also teaches the characteristics of a vajra master. These are not difficult to understand. The ten activities mentioned in the line "knows well the ten activities" taught in the last chapter of *An Adornment to the Vajra Essence Tantra* [177]:

The two rituals for repelling,
the secret and wisdom-knowledge,
the ritual of separating, the ritual food,
vajra recitation, the ritual of wrathful expression,
consecration, mandala meditation,
these are the ten secret activities.
Mandala, meditative concentration, mudrā,
standing posture, seated posture, recitation,
the fire ritual, activity yoga, concluding.
These are the ten outer activities.[7]

The detailed meanings of these can be known from *A Commentary on the Fifty Verses on the Guru,* composed by the Omniscient Master.[8] Such a person, therefore, endowed with such characteristics is suitable to be a guru and is capable of bestowing initiations and so forth.

These characteristics may be further divided into those possessed by a fully ordained monk, those possessed by a novice monk, and those possessed by a layperson. Among these three types of persons worthy of being a vajra master, a fully ordained monk is the best, a novice monk is second best, and a layman the lowest of the three. Therefore, when all three are present, it is the fully ordained monk that one should rely upon as one's guru. Moreover kings should rely upon fully ordained monks as gurus, because if they rely upon laymen, it will bring harm to the teachings. How will this happen? If a layman is taken as a guru even though a fully ordained monk worthy of being a vajra master is accessible, the people will lose respect for the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, which in turn will lead to the disappearance of the doctrine. The *Great Commentary,* on the second verse of the Initiations chapter, quotes passages that say:

"Of the three who know well the ten activities,
the full monk is the best,
the novice is second best,
the householder the lowest."

Similarly:

"Except for those on ārya levels,
kings should not take householders as gurus.
Of those whose learning is complete,
who perform deeds of those possessing the signs,
except for those upon ārya levels,
venerating vajra masters
while they live as householders
will bring disrespect for Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha."

Also:

"For consecrating temples and so forth,
from among those possessing the signs,
if all three are in one place,
the white-clothed householder is not the one."

Therefore, by examining the master in many ways, disciples should devote themselves to a master as taught by the buddha.[9]

Therefore, knowing the characteristics of a guru worthy of devotion, one should seek out the proper guru. [178]

Characteristics of those unsuitable to be gurus

The third verse of the Initiations chapter says:

Proud, ruled by anger, and lacking vows,
greedy, without knowledge, working to deceive disciples,
a mind that has fallen from great bliss,
without initiation, totally attached to wealth,
unaware, of harsh and coarse words, filled with carnal desire,
the wise disciples should abandon taking such people

as causes of complete enlightenment
as they would abandon hell.[10]

People with such faults are not fit to be relied upon as gurus in the Vajra Vehicle. Even if one takes such a person as a guru and requests initiations and so forth, there can be no meaningful receiving of the initiation. Moreover one will become infected by a measure of his faults and fall from all elevated status in this and future lives. Most of the above verse is easy to understand. "Without knowledge" means to be without the essential teachings on the six-branched yoga, for example. "Working to deceive his disciple" means to delude disciples by telling lies. "A mind that has fallen from the great bliss, without initiation" means that without having received the initiation he is bestowing, he nevertheless teaches it to others. "Filled with carnal desire" means working only for the pleasure gained from the sexual union of the two organs.

Therefore the way to rely upon a guru is firstly to know the characteristics worthy and unworthy of devotion and then to examine thoroughly who is and who is not fit to be a guru. The *Great Commentary* says on the second verse of the Initiations chapter:

> Disciples who wish to gain worldly and nonworldly powers by way of mantra should first devote themselves to a guru. Furthermore one should examine the vajra master thoroughly. One should thoroughly examine his words. Otherwise, relying upon a guru unexamined, the disciples' dharma will be perverse, and perverse dharma will send them to hell.[11] [179]

Also the *Paramārthasevā* says:

> He, omniscient in the complete Vajra Vehicle,
> has said that very wished-for siddhi
> follows the master.
> If perfect disciples examine the master, therefore, as they would gold,
> they will not accrue even the tiniest of faults.[12]

However what should one do if one already regards as a guru someone endowed with those unworthy characteristics? The *Great Commentary* says:

> In mantra, even though one has taken as a guru a person with the faults of pride and so forth, wise disciples, meaning those of intelligence, will abandon him as a cause of complete enlightenment as they would abandon hell.[13]

Also:

> Because of these words, even though he has been taken as a guru, if he does these wrong deeds, disciples who strive for freedom should leave him.[14]

A passage quoted in the *Great Commentary* says:

> Without compassion, angry and malicious,
> arrogant, grasping, uncontrolled, and boastful,
> the intelligent disciple will not take such a one as guru.[15]

Therefore, if one has taken someone with these faults as a guru, then the disciple who is seeking freedom should part company with him and not associate with him again. These quotes from the *Great Commentary* teach just this point and this point only. They do not teach that one should lose one's faith due to seeing faults because, as it is so rightly said:

> Once that is used as a reason and one casts off the undertaking of holding him as a guru and as a field of reverence, one opens up the opportunity for a root downfall to occur. One must learn, therefore, to distinguish what is to be developed from what is to be discarded.[16]

Some explain the two instances of the phrase "taken as a guru" in the two *Great Commentary* passages above as applying to gurus taken by others.

What should one do if a qualified lama with all characteristics cannot be found? The *Paramārthasevā* says:

> In these troubled times
> faults and good qualities in gurus are mixed.
> None are completely without fault.
> The disciples will come to rely upon
> those discovered, after careful examination,
> to have a predominance of good qualities.[17]

[180] As this quote says, even if one is unable to find someone possessed of all the worthy characteristics of a lama, one should rely upon those whose good qualities predominate. In particular, it is essential that they have received the complete initiation, hold the tantric vows, and are wise in the rituals of initiation.

Ways of devoting oneself to someone who has become one's guru, plus exceptional circumstances

This is under two headings:

1. Ways of devoting oneself to a guru
2. Exceptional circumstances

Ways of devoting oneself to a guru

The *Great Commentary* says:

> Monks who wear the saffron robes should prostrate to the vajra master at all times.[18]

Fifty Verses on the Guru also states:

> With great faith and at all times,
> with flower mandalas, and with palms pressed together
> devote yourself to the teacher guru,
> bowing your head to his feet.[19]

As these quotes state, at all times, morning, noon, and night, devote yourself to the guru by bowing your head to the feet of one who has shown you the path of the Vajra Vehicle by bestowing upon you initiations and so forth. Is this then a partial prostration? It is not, because the mandala decorated with flowers is offered before pressing the palms together and prostrating.

What exactly is meant by devotion? The *Great Commentary* says:

> "Firstly, the guru to devote oneself to" means devoting yourself by pleasing him with your children, wife, and so forth.[20]

Fifty Verses on the Guru also says:

If to one's samaya master
one devotes oneself constantly
by giving that which is not to be given—
one's children, one's wife, and one's life—
what need to mention fleeting wealth.[21]

In the first chapter of the second section of the *Samputa Tantra* it says:

Prostrate and offer
your wife, your daughter,
your maids, and manservants.
Pledge, "All that I own,
with a mind of faith, I offer to the guru.
From this day on I offer myself
to you as servant."[22]

As the quotes indicate, you should serve the lama with offerings ranging from your possessions to your own life. [181] The way to accomplish that and the benefits of doing so are taught in *Fifty Verses on the Guru:*

Whatever is in the smallest way beautiful,
whatever is extraordinarily special,
offer it all to the guru.
Such giving becomes constant giving
to every enlightened being.
Such giving is the accumulation of merit,
from which comes the supreme accomplishment.[23]

Furthermore the reason why one should please the guru by offering even one's own body is stated in the same text:

Because the state of a buddha,
so hard to reach even over millions of eons,
is given in this very life
to those who strive.[24]

Therefore you should please the guru in many ways with wealth and devotion.

Exceptional circumstances

The *Great Commentary* says:

> Monks who wear the saffron robes should prostrate to the vajra master at all times. To householders and to novices, except at times of teaching, they should not. As it is said:
>
> "To avoid criticism from the worldly,
> place the holy dharma in front of one,
> and to householders and to novices,
> holders of vows should mentally prostrate."

Similarly:

> "Avoiding lowly tasks and prostration,
> holders of vows should make their devotions
> by arranging his seat, rising in his presence,
> and helping with his needs."[25]
>
> Therefore, if one is a householder or novice of the same status as a fully ordained vajra master, how should one act? One should avoid lowly acts, such as washing his feet, and one should not perform the five-limbed prostration,[26] but when the guru visits, one should perform devotions of offering gems, money, and so forth. At times of teaching, in order to avoid criticism from the worldly, prostrate to the holy dharma and so forth in front of one.[27]

The two verses beginning, "To avoid criticism from the worldly" and "Avoiding lowly tasks and prostration" appear in *Fifty Verses on the Guru* as they are quoted here in the *Great Commentary.* Therefore they must both have been taken from the same tantra.

The above are exceptions to the previously taught ways of devotion. When one is a monk and one's vajra master is a householder, or when one is a fully ordained monk and one's vajra master, although a monk, is not fully ordained and thus a novice, one should arrange his seat, rise in his presence, cater to his needs, and perform other such devotions, but one

should not prostrate or perform lowly tasks such as washing his feet. Also, when one's guru is a householder or novice and is teaching, [182] one places a volume of the holy dharma or a statue in front of oneself and physically prostrates to it while in one's mind prostrating to the guru.

The *Great Commentary* explains that the reason why a fully ordained monk should not prostrate to a householder or to a new monk who is not fully ordained is to prevent the people from losing faith in the doctrine. On this point the omniscient master [Jé Tsongkhapa] says that the teaching on not prostrating was taught to prevent a loss of faith in the doctrine, and therefore, on occasions where the possibility of such a loss does not exist, a fully ordained monk should always prostrate to his householder or novice-monk vajra master.[28] However, in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* when describing the food and drink ritual of the thirty-six kinds of maidservants, it says:

> If a householder or a novice monk becomes one's guru, during teachings the fully ordained holder of vows places the holy dharma and so forth in front and prostrates. However, at times other than teaching, that is not the case. At these other times, lowly tasks and prostrations should be avoided, while every other devotion, such as rising before he enters, arranging his seat, and so forth, should be performed. Lowly tasks, such as washing his feet as well as verbal and mental prostrations, are to be avoided, and devotions are to be made with offerings of wealth. This is to be done by the fully ordained for the householder and novice monk.[29]

This passage says that at times other than at teachings the fully ordained should *not* prostrate, even verbally and mentally, to his householder or novice-monk vajra master. I think this needs some investigation.

Furthermore "novice" refers only to being a novice monk, because the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* explains that a fully ordained monk should prostrate to his fully ordained vajra master, even though the master be younger in learning and so forth. [183] This can be known from the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* further on from the previous quote, where it says:

> The fully ordained monk who has received the initiation of a vajra master and become the vajra-holder guru is to be prostrated to by fully ordained monks at all times.[30]

Upon whom initiations are bestowed: A definition of the disciple

Disciples to be gathered by a completely qualified vajra master are of three kinds—lowest, middling, and best. Of the first kind, the *Great Commentary* says:

> The lowest are not to be brought together by initiation but by lay disciplines.[31]

Similarly the *Hevajra Tantra* states:

> First they are given purification practice,[32]
> then the ten areas of practice.
> They are taught the Vaibhāṣika tenets,
> then the Sautrāntika, followed by Yogacāra,
> and finally the Madhyamaka.[33]

Of low intelligence are those whose minds are yet to be ripened by any of the three vehicles. Initially they are gathered by lay disciplines and gradually led to the Madhyamaka view. Middling disciples have minds ripened by the path of the common vehicle. They are also attracted by the Vajra Vehicle, but they have no desire for the supreme siddhi of mahāmudrā in this life and strive only for various siddhis such as those of "peaceful activity" and common siddhis such as the eight siddhis. They are of middling intelligence, and in order to lead them into the meditations of the generation stage, they are gathered only by the seven initiations of childhood.[34] The *Great Commentary* says:

> Those who strive for the accomplishment of worldly powers are to be gathered by the seven initiations in order to bring them to the meditations upon mantra, mudrā, and mandala. This is the merit of the middling disciple.[35]

On the best disciple the *Great Commentary* says:

> Those who strive for the mahāmudrā are to be gathered by the initiations of the vase, the secret, and so forth, in order to bring them to the meditations of the path of emptiness.[36]

[184] Therefore those possessed of characteristics such as determination to attain the mahāmudrā siddhi and other characteristics taught in the tantra are gathered by the bestowal of the eleven initiations followed by the higher initiations of the vase, the secret, and so forth. What are the characteristics of this disciple as taught in the tantra? The fourth verse of the Initiations chapter of the *Condensed Tantra* says:

> A disciple with a mind for the profound and the vast,
> taking joy in the certainties of the guru, with the spirit of renunciation,
> a knowledge of the qualities, striving for freedom,
> respect for the tantras, of an undistracted mind,
> of that received well hidden, whose friends of the wicked become weaker.[37]

This verse teaches the characteristics of the disciple. The following lines teach how such a disciple is gathered by a guru:

> Such a one is gathered by the very wise gurus,
> with the wisdom initiation and so forth as the cause.[38]

To explain roughly these characteristics: in the line "a mind for the profound and the vast," *profound* refers to compassion without apprehension, or the gnosis of unchanging bliss and emptiness. *Vast* refers to aspected emptiness, or empty form endowed with every supreme aspect. These two, the vast and the profound, are indivisible. The disciple has "a mind for" and strives for the profound and vast.

"Taking joy in the certainties of the guru" means to be free of the fourteen root downfalls and to take joy in the ten virtues. "With the spirit of renunciation" means to have left behind the busy life and to have no regard for wealth and possessions. "A knowledge of the qualities" means to have an unshakable faith in the Three Jewels. "Striving for freedom" means to have no regard for the attainment of worldly siddhis, such as those of peace, and to strive only for nonworldly siddhis. "Respect for the tantras" means guarding the vows taught in the tantras. "Of an undistracted mind" means not to be distracted by or content with the worldly paths of the generation stage and so forth.

"Of that received well hidden" means that for as long as it falls outside

the realm of one's experience, all profound instruction received on the completion stage is kept well hidden. The "wicked" in the line "whose friends of the wicked become weaker" refers to those who live lives of nonvirtue, such as householders, and who work for material gain. Their "friends" are the paths of the ten nonvirtues, and in the disciple these become "weaker." [185]

To summarize, the best disciple is one whose mind has been purified by the Mahāyāna mind[39] along with other practices of the common path, and who has completed the generation stage. Alternatively, if the generation stage has not been completed, the best disciple is one who has received the seven initiations of childhood to ripen the mind for the generation stage and who has no desire to attain the common powers but strives from the depths of his heart to achieve the supreme siddhi of mahāmudrā.

12. Description of the Mandala

Where the initiation is bestowed: A description of the mandala

Ghaṇṭāpāda said:

> Before the initiation, the mandala,
> these are the words of Vajradhara.[40]

The seven initiations taught here and the vase and other initiations taught elsewhere are bestowed in mandalas of colored powder and other substances, whereas the vase initiation and the other higher initiations taught here are to be conferred in mandalas constructed from the body of the mudrā consort, the female organ, or bhaga, and the bodhi mind. The *Great Commentary* says:

> For the accomplishment of gnosis, the Buddha spoke of three other mandalas:
>
> "The body, bhaga, and mind,
> by vajras of body, speech, and mind,
> become three kinds of mandala,
> the other of five colors is not used."
>
> Therefore, to attain the great bliss, and for the supreme initiation, the mandala of colored powder is not used.[41]

Generally, for the initiations of the five tathāgatas, many kinds of mandalas have been described. These include those of colored powder, those drawn on cloth, body mandalas, and mandalas of meditative concentration.

Concerning the mandala for the bestowal of the seven initiations as described here, some lamas say that the disciple of middling intelligence is first initiated or ripened by the seven initiations of water, crown, and so forth, in external mandalas of colored powder, drawn on cloth, cast in metal, or in three dimensions, and so forth. [186] However this should be understood in terms of normal and exceptional circumstances. Usually the seven initiations as taught here are only to be bestowed in mandalas of colored powder. *A Short Teaching on Initiations* says:

> These seven initiations are given
> with mandala constructed.[42]

And Nāropa's commentary states:

> These seven initiations are only to be given in mandalas of colored powder and not in those drawn on cloth and so forth.[43]

Sādhuputra's commentary to the same text says:

> The seven initiations are bestowed only in mandalas of colored powder and not in mandalas drawn on cloth and so forth, because these were not taught by the Buddha in the tantras.[44]

There are exceptions. In the *Great Commentary,* regarding verse 200 of the Initiations chapter of the *Condensed Tantra,* it says:

> "Lacking the material" refers to bestowing initiations upon ascetic disciples. In such cases, if there is no material for these disciples, the guru "bestows the initiations without material, and by the words of the victorious master they are given to ascetics." This means that the seven initiations are given in order, and then the three, beginning with the vase, are given. "Similarly the fourth, with the paths of smoke and so forth" is to be given. Thus it is written.[45]

For ascetic disciples,[46] even when there are no materials for the drawing of the colored-powder mandala, it is taught that the master bestows the eleven initiations in their entirety. Therefore it is acceptable for ascetic disciples

to be given the seven initiations in mandalas of meditative absorption and so forth. These are exceptions.

Also it says in the third summary from the Realms chapter:

> I will lead you into this mandala palace of the conqueror Kālacakra and bestow upon you worldly and nonworldly initiations.[47]

Thus Sūryaratha and the other ṛṣi were lead into and initiated inside a mind-created mandala of the five precious substances. [187] This too was an exception.

It may be wondered if the mention of ascetic disciples in the commentary refers to the bestowing of initiation on ascetic disciples who lack the necessary wealth to be used as an offering for the initiation, and that even for these ascetic disciples the seven initiations must be conferred in a mandala of colored powder. However the meaning of the commentary passage is that the above procedure must be followed when an ascetic disciple lacks the material wealth for constructing a powder mandala. This is so because, as Kālacakrapāda says regarding the above lines in his commentary to *A Short Teaching on Initiations:*

> Now the seven initiations, in a mandala of colored powder previously built by those with wealth, are taken from a guru. As it is said:
>
> "These seven initiations are given
> with mandala constructed."[48]

This says that the mandala of colored powder is constructed on the assumption of the presence of wealth, and that special provision must be made for ascetic disciples. If this were not so, then the insistence on a mandala of colored powder as found in the two commentaries to *A Short Teaching on Initiations* would be incorrect.

A further point on this topic of using a colored-powder mandala in the seven initiations is that if the body, speech, and mind mandalas are not complete, it is acceptable to bestow the initiations using the mind mandala. The twenty-fifth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the *Condensed Tantra* says:

> Of the types of mandalas for initiation, the outer are inferior.[49]

This teaches that the initiations can be bestowed using the mind mandala, without the body and speech mandalas. The *Garland* also says:

> For initiations just the central mandala is drawn and the initiation given.[50]

Concerning the practices of approximation[51] mentioned in the lines, "Without purification by approximation, there is no engaging in mandala activities,"[52] all initiating deities are complete within the mind mandala, and so the approximation practices of the mind-mandala deities fulfill all necessary criteria. Therefore the teaching that such practice is acceptable is correct. [188]

How are the deity approximation practices to be performed for a complete mandala of body, speech, and mind? The *Great Commentary* says, on the thirty-fifth verse of the Initiations chapter:

> The sixteen-line mantra of the Conqueror recited ten million times accomplishes all tasks. Ten times 100,000 fire rituals will achieve all of the eight great siddhis, but before that, the approximation practices are required.[53]

A similar point is made for the seventy-two-line mantra. Approximation practice, therefore, is necessary. Great scholars have said, however, that if it were necessary to recite as many approximation practice mantras as there are deities, these days it would be difficult to complete even the approximation practices. Therefore one should use a skillful approach to the practice of approximation. How is that to be done? The *Great Commentary,* on the thirty-eighth verse of the Gnosis chapter of the *Condensed Tantra,* begins:

> The text speaks of reciting mantras in order to achieve worldly siddhis.

and continues until:

> In this way, the mantra chains are recited each day as complete circles of breath. Here do not count or say the mantra, but

> together with the breath entering and leaving, concentrate on the letters of the mantra entering and leaving, like a garland of flowers, in the nature of moon and sun, in forward and reverse order. In this way, inwardly the yogi performs 108,000 recitations in five days.[54] In five hundred days the yogi recites on 10,800,000 breaths. Then the body becomes pure. Likewise the speech is purified and similarly the mind.[55]

Each line of the seventy-two-line mantra chain lies between the three syllables *oṃ āḥ hūṃ*, which are the seeds of enlightened body, speech, and mind. The lines are also intertwined with the syllables of the ḍākinī and ḍāka name mantras and finalized with the syllable *phaṭ*. The seventy-two lines of this mantra chain are joined to the winds of the sixty minor movements of wind, as well as the gnosis wind that flows at the changeover point of the twelve major movements of wind. The count of corresponding in- and out-breaths are taken as the count of mantras. In this way, the count of the approximation practices also becomes the count of the breaths at the time of the mantra count. This is the assertion of a lama and great scholar (dharma master Sherinpa), but I wonder if it is correct.[56] It would be right for the discriminating to investigate.

13. The Initiations

A presentation of the initiations to be bestowed

[189] This is under three headings:

1. The number of initiations
2. The order of initiations
3. An explanation of each initiation

The number of initiations

The *Vajrapāṇi Commentary* of the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* states:[57]

> Similarly, in the *Ḍākinī Vajra Tent Tantra,* the Conqueror taught the fourth initiation apart from the third:
>
> "The vase initiation is the first,
> the second is stated to be the secret.
> Wisdom-knowledge is the third,
> the fourth is not like that."
>
> Also in the fifteenth chapter:
>
> "The water initiation is the first,
> the crown initiation the second,
> third is the ribbon empowerment,
> fourth the vajra and bell,
> the fifth is one's own conduct,
> name is the sixth,
> the Buddha's permission, the seventh,
> the eighth is the vase initiation,

> the secret initiation the ninth,
> the wisdom initiation is the tenth,
> reality is by the vajra yoga."[58]

Here passages from the *Ḍākinī Vajra Tent Tantra* are quoted. Immediately after this, the text continues:

> "Reality is by the vajra yoga." Clearly the eleventh was taught by the Conqueror principally so that the wise should understand the fourth or the eleventh initiation as separate.

This ascertains the number of initiations to be conferred. There are seven initiations, beginning with the water initiation, which proceed in accordance with the stages of childhood. These are followed by the three higher worldly initiations of the vase, secret, and wisdom-knowledge, and finally the nonworldly higher-than-high ultimate fourth initiation.

There is a reason for determining the number of initiations. This concerns the type of person to be gathered by the vajra master giving initiation. [190] There are those who for the time being seek only worldly siddhis and, therefore, wish to practice only the generation stage. Then there are those who seek only the supreme siddhi and, therefore, seek the practices of the completion stage. For the first of these types, only the seven childhoodlike initiations are conferred. The second type of person starts their meditations on the generation stage and, when that is perfected, practices the meditations of the completion stage in their entirety. For such a person all eleven initiations are bestowed. Just these eleven and no more are required to create suitable vessels for the meditation paths of these two types of persons.

The number of initiations is also ascertained as eleven in *A Short Teaching on Initiations:*

> First, the seven initiations
> for the children to enter by:
> three by worldly convention,
> the fourth by ultimate reality.[59]

Also, farther on, when explaining their meanings:

The initiations of the vase and the secret,
that known as wisdom-knowledge,
and again the gnosis
of that great wisdom:
change, change, and fall,
and then no farther fall.[60]

Thus the eleventh, or the fourth counting from the vase initiation, is explained as being the ultimate nonworldly initiation.

However four higher initiations and four higher-than-high initiations have been taught, making fifteen altogether. How is this explained? There is no error here, because the higher vase initiation and the higher-than-high vase initiation are similar insofar as they are both vase initiations. Likewise the two secret initiations are both secret initiations. The wisdom-knowledge initiations are both wisdom-knowledge initiations. That which is explained as the worldly fourth initiation is actually the third, or wisdom-knowledge initiation, and is given the name "fourth initiation." [191]

The order of initiations

The eleven initiations begin with the water initiation and end with the ultimate fourth initiation. As Ācārya Nāgārjuna says in his *Five Stages:*

Well established within the generation stage,
they yearn for the stage of completion.
This method, like the steps of a ladder,
the fully enlightened Buddha has taught.[61]

As this verse says, one moves to the completion stage having trained well in the generation stage. This is the defined order. Similarly one must first be made into a suitable vessel for the generation-stage meditations with the seven initiations and then turned into suitable vessels for the meditations of the completion stage by means of the higher initiations.

The order of the seven initiations is also clearly defined. When a child is born, it is washed in order to help it grow. Later its hair is tied to the top of its head. Its ears are pierced and so forth. The child is encouraged to laugh and talk, it discovers pleasures, it is given a name,[62] and finally it is

taught to read and write. The seven initiations are conferred in correlation with this sequence. The *Vajragarbha Commentary* says:

> At birth women wash the child,
> and the water initiation is given.
> Its hair is tied upon its head,
> this is known as the crown.
> The ears are pierced, and so forth,
> explained as being the ribbon initiation.
> The child laughs and speaks,
> the bell and vajra initiation is conferred.
> The fifth, childhood pleasures, is the conduct initiation.
> The name is the name initiation.
> Reading and so forth is the permission.
> These are given by mother and father,
> of which there are seven,
> known as the seven initiations.[63]

Therefore, because they follow in the footsteps of a child, they are taught as the seven childhood initiations. The order of the four higher initiations is defined by the significance of a preceding initiation that necessarily leads into the following initiation. [192]

Some say that there is no clearly defined order to the seven childhood initiations and the four higher initiations because the seven initiations must be conferred within an external colored-powder mandala, and in the higher initiations the colored-powder mandalas are rejected. The *Great Commentary* says, on the first verse of the Initiations chapter:

> For the ultimate truth, the colored-powder mandala is not drawn, because it was rejected by the Conqueror. This is stated in the *Original Buddha* by the Conqueror:
>
> "Construction of vajra lines,
> construction by colored powder also,
> are not to be done within mantra reality.
> If they are, enlightenment is difficult."

And so on until:

> Therefore, for the achievement of great bliss and for the giving of supreme initiation, the colored-powder mandala is not used.[64]

This, they say, clearly states that for the higher initiations, the colored-powder mandala is not necessary, whereas it is necessary for the seven initiations. They think, therefore, that it is acceptable to practice the six-branched yoga with just the four higher initiations and without the preceding seven initiations. This, they believe, is the intention of the tantra and its commentaries, and it seems that some past and present practitioners of the six-branched yoga practiced and continue to practice that way. This, however, is not correct. Nāropa's commentary to the line "these seven initiations" in *A Short Teaching on Initiations* says:

> Within the eleven initiations mentioned in *A Short Teaching* are the steps to the palace of the nonworldly siddhis. These are explained as the seven lower and conventional initiations with form.[65]

This teaches that in the achievement of the nonworldly siddhis, which are the fruits of the higher initiations, the seven initiations are compared to steps leading to a palace. Therefore the seven initiations must precede the higher initiations. Furthermore, at the time of taking the secrecy pledges, it is commanded:

> Do not speak of this to those who have not entered the mandala, or your pledges will weaken.

The mandala mentioned here has to be a colored-powder mandala. It makes no sense for the bhaga mandala and so forth to be the first mandala that the disciple enters. [193] Moreover the secrets, which if revealed result in a weakening of one's pledges, are secrets of mantra, and there are no greater secrets to be revealed than those of the higher initiations. Telling them, therefore, to those not ripened constitutes a root downfall.

There are also a number of different assertions concerning the order of the higher initiations. Some great scholars (such as the noble Rendawa), maintain that by just the initiations of the vase and the other three higher worldly initiations, one becomes a fit vessel to listen to the tantra and to meditate upon the six-branched yoga, and that the higher-than-high

initiations, including the ultimate fourth initiation, are the initiations of the vajra-master great lord,[66] enabling one to teach the entire tantra.

One scholar (Rendawa) says that the method of bestowing the nonworldly fourth initiation is not explained here, and therefore the secret initiation and the nonultimate wisdom-knowledge initiation renders one a fit vessel for the meditations on the path of the fourth initiation. On these points the *Great Commentary,* discussing verse 119 of the Initiations chapter, says:

> The higher initiations are of two kinds. One kind is for leading sentient beings,[67] for complete knowledge of the path, and for listening to the tantra. The other confers the status of great vajra master and creates the teacher.

And so on until:

> For the purpose of leading sentient beings, there are four nonultimate initiations.[68]

The above passage contains explanations of the four worldly initiations and a description of the fourth as "the bliss of embrace." The quote continues:

> Then, if they have studied and know every tantra and its extensive commentary, the initiation of the great lord is conferred.

Until:

> In the fifth chapter on the ultimate, the mahāmudrā gnosis will be explained extensively. Therefore it is not taught in detail here.[69]

The above passages explain the four higher-than-high initiations as being the initiations of the vajra-master great lord, and that is the literal meaning of the text. However, to become a fit vessel to listen to the tantras and so forth, the ultimate fourth initiation, in the form of a word initiation, must be bestowed. [194] The reason for this will be explained later.

The common assertion (of the Jonang followers) is that for the vajra-master lord initiation, the four higher-than-high initiations do not have to

be conferred, and some (such as the dharma master Tsalmin)[70] maintain that at the end of the first four higher initiations, just the nonworldly fourth is conferred, and for the lord initiation, the four higher-than-high initiations are not conferred. That, however, contradicts the previous quote that runs:

> The other confers the status of great vajra master and creates the teacher.

Here the word "other" refers to initiations, and is the commentary to "The disciple who is a householder offers the ten consorts to the guru" and so forth. This commentary explains that for the vajra-master lord, the higher-than-high initiations of the vase and so forth, in which one sits in union with the ten mudrās, are conferred.

They would reply that there is no fault, because for the vajra-master initiation there is the vajra-master lord initiation and vajra-master great lord initiation. Concerning the first, the *Great Commentary* says:

> Then the disciple who knows all tantras and dwells in the pledges is initiated by the guru into vajra lord.

The passage continues up to:

> This is the initiation ceremony of the vajra-master lord.[71]

At this point the ceremonies for the higher-than-high initiations have not been taught. The second initiation, the vajra-master great lord, is explained by the *Great Commentary* in the passage:

> Then, if they have heard and learned every tantra and its commentaries, the initiation of the great lord in its proper order is taught, and the disciple who is a householder offers the ten consorts to the guru.[72]

Thus they maintain that the vajra-master great lord initiation can be accepted as being the initiation ceremony of the vase and other higher-than-high initiations that include the union of the ten consorts. One may think this way, but dividing the vajra-master initiation into a lord initiation

and a great lord initiation and claiming based on the two quotes above that these two initiations are individually taught is not correct. If it were, then there would be three kinds of higher initiations—one for listening to the tantras, one for the vajra-master lord, and one for the vajra-master great lord. [195] The *Great Commentary,* however, divides them into two:

> The higher initiations are of two kinds. One kind is for leading sentient beings, for complete knowledge of the path, and for listening to the tantra. The other confers the status of great vajra master and creates the teacher.[73]

Therefore the higher initiations are for listening to the tantra and so forth, and the higher-than-high initiations of the vajra-master great lord are for teaching the tantra to disciples and so forth. Furthermore, in the earlier commentary passage, there are descriptions of the disciple on whom the vajra-master lord initiation is bestowed:

> Then the disciple who knows all tantras and dwells in the pledges.

And:

> Ah! Wonderful guru! Because of your kindness I now know all the paths of those who have traveled to bliss.

Also:

> He sees the disciple endowed with every good quality dwelling in the pledges.[74]

Descriptions of such a disciple also occur in the later passage:

> Then, if they have studied and know every tantra and its commentaries...

And:

> Ah! The Conqueror has attained every perfection! What can I do?[75]

Therefore there are no differences between the earlier and later passages concerning the subject on whom the vajra-master lord initiation is conferred. There are also no differences between the passages on the reason for conferring the vajra-master initiation. To explain the need for the initiation, the former passage says:

> The vajra-master initiation is conferred upon the monks, novice monks, and laymen, and speech permission to teach the tantra is given.

And:

> The monk who is initiated into the teacher initiation.[76]

In the later passage also:

> To become a lord, those who wish for the level of the vajra master of the great mandala should offer the ten mudrās.[77]

[196] Therefore the earlier and later passages are similar in that they both teach the purpose of the initiation to be the achievement of the status of vajra master of the great mandala—a bestower of initiations and a teacher of tantra.

Whatever the reason may be, in the earlier passage just the word "lord" appears and in the later passage the words "great lord" appear, and if these assertions arise because the word "great" might or might not appear, they are damaged by the quote in the later passage beginning "To become a lord," which only mentions the word "lord."

So what is the difference between the two passages? At the beginning of this fifth summary from the *Great Commentary*, it says:

> The rituals of consecration from the gloriously supreme *Original Buddha*.[78]

This section then is to be an explanation of consecration rituals. These include the consecration of human beings to initiate them as great lords and the consecration, or initiation, of the gods as taught by the words "Nāgas and so forth." In this way, by explaining parts of the initiation ceremony of the great lord, the earlier passage, as well as the root tantra, is giving a

condensed explanation. That same topic is explained in detail by the root tantra and commentary in the later passages where it says:

> Then, if they have studied and know every tantra and its commentaries...

For example, by giving a partial presentation of the initiations, the passage beginning "First the water" is the root tantra and commentary giving a condensed explanation of the higher initiations;[79] whereas the passage beginning "The glorious wisdom śakti"[80] is the root tantra and commentary giving a more detailed explanation.

Others maintain that to be empowered to listen to tantra and to practice the six-branched yoga, all four higher and all four higher-than-high initiations are to be given. This is not correct. The *Great Commentary* says:

> The higher initiations are of two kinds. One kind is for leading sentient beings...

This leads into the subject, and continues:

> Concerning the higher initiations for leading sentient beings or for listening to tantra: initially the faults of fear and confusion regarding these initiations are driven from the mind.

And up to:

> In order to lead sentient beings, four kinds of conventional and worldly initiations are ascertained.[81]

[197] This teaches that by just the four worldly higher initiations and the fourth initiation, as illustrated by the worldly fourth, one is empowered to listen to tantra and so forth. The *Great Commentary*, again as a lead-in, says:

> The other confers the status of great vajra master and creates the teacher.

Here "other" refers to the four higher-than-high initiations. Again, the *Great Commentary*, leading into an explanation of the higher-than-high initiations, says:

> Then, if they have studied and know every tantra and its commentaries, the initiation of the great lord is conferred.

And continues:

> ...in its proper order is taught, and the disciple who is a householder offers the ten mudrās to the guru.[82]

The tantra and it commentary is saying that the four higher-than-high initiations are for the sole purpose of the vajra-master great lord initiation. This contradicts the above assertion. Furthermore such an assertion would mean that the eleven initiations, comprising the four higher initiations and the seven childhood initiations plus the nonworldly fourth illustrated by the worldly fourth, would be unable to create vessels suitable for listening to the entire tantra and to practice the stages of generation and completion in their entirety, for to create such suitable vessels, separate initiations into the four higher-than-high initiations would be required.

An explanation of each initiation

This is under two headings:

1. The seven childhood initiations
2. The four higher initiations

14. The Seven Childhood Initiations

The root tantra, *A Short Teaching on Initiations,* states:

> Water, crown, and silk ribbon,
> vajra and bell, great conduct,
> name, and permission:
> these well bestowed, great king,
> are the seven initiations.[83]

[198] The seven initiations, from the water to the permission initiation, are the seven initiations that proceed according to childhood. All seven are rounded off by a water ritual and are therefore known as "the seven water initiations," but the term *vase initiation*[84] is not used. These seven initiations are bestowed upon the disciple, who is placed opposite the four entrances to the colored-powder mandala. In front of the northern entrance, facing the white northern form-face of the main deity, the disciple stands in the form of the body vajra. The initiation deities then confer initiation. This is performed in a way that differs from other tantras. The five mothers within the colored-powder mandala bestow the water initiation, and the five tathāgatas bestow the crown initiation.

The disciple is then led to the southern entrance to be in front of the red speech-face of the south. There he generates himself in the form of the speech vajra and is empowered with the ribbon initiation by the ten śakti, and with the vajra and bell initiation by the main deity and consort. The disciple is then led to the eastern entrance to face the black mind face and generates himself as the mind vajra. There the male and female bodhisattvas confer the conduct initiation, and the male and female wrathful deities bestow the name initiation. The disciple is led to the western entrance and faces the yellow gnosis face, where he generates himself as

gnosis vajra and is initiated into the permission initiation by Vajrasattva and consort.

These initiations can be illustrated by way of the water initiation. The water of the vases, which is the initiation substance, and the five elements of the disciple are generated into the five mothers. These deities melt, and the resultant vase water, in the nature of bodhicitta, is held aloft by the five mothers, who confer the water initiation. This purifies the five elements of all defilements and grants the disciple the fortune to achieve the powers of the five mothers.

Likewise the crown and the five aggregates of the disciple are generated into the five tathāgatas. The crown initiation purifies the aggregates of defilements and grants the disciple the fortune to achieve the powers of the five tathāgatas. Phenomena of the body are purified by these two initiations, and the purifier of these phenomena is the white body-face of the main deity. The disciple, therefore, is placed at the mandala entrance opposite this face, where, in the form of body vajra, he receives the initiation.

[199] In the ribbon initiation the ten ribbons and the ten winds of the disciple are generated as the ten śakti. The initiation purifies the ten winds so they become workable and capable of being brought into the central channel. In the vajra and bell initiation, the vajra and bell and left and right channel are each generated as the main deity and consort. The initiation renders the winds of the left and right channel capable of being gathered into the central channel. The ten winds and the left and right channel are phenomena of speech. Therefore the disciple is placed at the southern entrance facing the red speech-face, the purifier of these phenomena. There, in the form of speech vajra, the initiation is conferred on the disciple.

In the conduct initiation, the thumb vajra, the six sense powers, and the six sense objects of the disciple's continuum are generated as male and female bodhisattvas. The initiation is bestowed, creating the potential to remove the defilements of sense power moving to sense object. In the name initiation, the initiation bracelet and the action faculties and their activities[85] are generated into the male and female wrathful deities. The name initiation is conferred, and seeds for the removal of the defilements of the six action faculties and their six activities are planted. The bracelet used as initiation substance is said by Sādhuputra to be "a bracelet or garland of flowers tied around the arms and legs."[86] Phenomena purified by the conduct and name initiation are those of the mind. The disciple, therefore, is placed at the eastern entrance in front of the black mind-face of the main deity,

which is the purifier of those phenomena. There in the form of the mind vajra he receives the initiation.

In the permission initiation the phenomena to be purified are the aggregate of gnosis and the element of gnosis. The purifier is the gnosis vajra, and the disciple, therefore, is placed at the western entrance facing the yellow gnosis-face of the deity, where in the form of the gnosis vajra the actual permission to teach and so forth and the permission appendages are given.

The phenomena to be purified by the first six initiations are those of body, speech, and mind in two sets each respectively. The purifiers are the three pairs of initiations. *A Short Teaching on Initiations* says:

> Body, speech, and mind well purified
> by pairs of initiations.[87]

Regarding the aggregate and element of gnosis to be purified by the permission initiation, the same tantra says:

> The permission purifies gnosis.[88]

[200] Concerning the seven initiations purifying the elements, aggregates, and so forth, as explained above, the same tantra states:

> Water is the purification of the elements,
> the crown purifies the aggregates,
> the ribbon purifies the perfections.[89]
> By the vajra and bell, the great unchanging,
> and the unbroken voice of the Buddha,
> the sun and moon are purified as one.
> Purification of object and sense
> is by the unmoving vajra of conduct.
> Name purifies love and so forth, [90]
> permission purifies the very Buddha.[91]
> These are the seven initiations.[92]

The meaning of "by the vajra and bell, the great unchanging," is that the great unchanging bliss is symbolized by the vajra. The unbroken continuum of the Buddha's voice, which is an indestructible sound, is represented by the bell. The vajra and bell initiation is performed by the embrace of the

two hands holding vajra and bell, and "the sun and moon are purified as one," which means that the life-sustaining wind and the downwardly expelling wind that flow through the right and left channel are capable of dwelling as one within the avadhūtī. This has been taken from Nāropa's commentary.

With the seven initiations one is empowered only to meditate upon the generation stage and its branches. For the middling disciple who only strives for worldly powers, only these seven are conferred, and it is not proper to confer the higher initiations on them.

15. The Four Higher Initiations

This has two outlines:

1. Ascertaining the number of initiations and the order in which they are conferred
2. A description of each initiation

Ascertaining the number of initiations and the order in which they are conferred

[201] The *Great Commentary* says:

> The higher initiations are of two kinds. One kind is for leading sentient beings, for complete knowledge of the path, and for listening to the tantra. The other confers the status of great vajra master and creates the teacher.[93]

As this quote states, these initiations are determined as being of two kinds—the higher and those that are higher than high. The reason for this division is as follows. The primary intended disciple of the tantra, who is of the highest intelligence, listens to the complete tantra and is made into a suitable vessel for comprehensive practice of the completion stage. That is one kind of person. Having become such a suitable vessel, and whether or not the completion stage has been consummated within his mind, he comprehensively understands the meanings of the tantra and is worthy of teaching it to others. That is another type of person. The presentation of just the higher initiations is made on the basis of conferring initiation upon the first type of person, while the presentation of the higher-than-high initiations is made on the basis of conferring initiation upon the second.

Individually, the four higher initiations are the vase initiation, the secret

initiation, the wisdom-knowledge initiation, which includes the worldly fourth initiation, and lastly the nonworldly fourth initiation. These are determined as follows. The disciple has listened to the tantra and has become a suitable vessel for all the meditations of completion stage, which consists of the six-branch yoga. The vase, secret, and wisdom-knowledge initiations will empower the disciple to practice the first five of the six-branched yoga. The nonworldly fourth initiation is the word initiation, and therefore empowers the disciple to practice the sixth branch of meditative concentration. The thinking of the previous passage from the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary,* which quotes the *Ḍākinī Vajra Tent Tantra* and then determines the number of initiations to be eleven, is also that these initiations are conferred in order to create suitable vessels for listening to the complete tantra and so forth. It is the thinking of the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary* that the meaning of the *Ḍākinī Vajra Tent Tantra* verse is that, of these eleven, the eleventh is the nonworldly fourth initiation, [202] which is the definitive fourth initiation of the hidden tantras as taught by the line "the fourth is likewise." *A Short Teaching on Initiations* also says:

> Initiations of vase and secret,
> that known as wisdom-knowledge,
> again the knowledge of great wisdom.[94]

Here the three higher initiations and the eleventh, or nonworldly fourth, are listed as topics to be explained. Then, as an explanation, the text continues:

> Change, change, and fall,
> and then no farther fall.
> Purification of body, speech, and mind,
> the three initiations leading respectively
> to the fourth, the pure gnosis.
> Purifying body, speech, and mind,
> first a child, then a youth, and finally old,
> the fourth is the master of sentient beings.[95]

These quotes teach the initiations that create suitable vessels for listening to and meditating on the tantra. The lines "again the knowledge of great wisdom," "and then no farther fall," "to the fourth, the pure gnosis," and

"the fourth is the master of sentient beings" all teach the eleventh, or non-worldly fourth, initiation.

The two lines beginning "Initiations of vase and secret" and the lines "change, change, and fall," "Purification of body, speech, and mind, the three initiations leading respectively," and "Purifying body, speech, and mind, first a child, then a youth, and finally old"[96] all teach the three higher initiations from the division of higher and higher than high. This is so because, in earlier commentary on the lines beginning "Initiations of vase and secret," Nāropa says:

> For those yogis to develop the conventional worldly powers,
> three initiations of the vase and so forth are taught as semblances
> of the ultimate.[97]

In later commentary on these lines, Nāropa quotes passages from the *Condensed Tantra* in its explanation of the higher initiations of vase and so forth. These run from:

> Up to "direction" years, the one with ten aspects,[98]
> look, and touch.

[203] And up to:

> The first touch of the breasts of glorious wisdom
> is the initiation of the vase.
> Experiencing and looking at the "moon"[99] in its secret place
> is the secret initiation.
> Within the wisdom-knowledge initiation,
> all are purified by the families of the conquerors,
> and the guru, having bestowed initiation,
> gives the mudrā to the disciple.[100]

The text of the *Great Commentary* on this passage is quoted and explained in Nāropa's commentary. The *Great Commentary* runs from "For the vase and the other initiations, do not leave the young mudrā for ten years" up to "The air element, being devoid of particles,[101] is not to be held. This is thereby ascertained."[102]

Moreover, when Nāropa quotes the *Great Commentary* from "The

higher initiations are of two kinds" up to "In order to lead sentient beings, four kinds of conventional and worldly initiations are ascertained,"[103] he does this as commentary to "Initiations of vase and secret, that known as gnosis." Similarly it is the position of Nāropa's commentary that the lines beginning "Initiations of vase and secret" also teach the four higher-than-high initiations.

After explaining the vase, secret, and wisdom-knowledge initiations, Nāropa's commentary continues:

> Having briefly explained the three kinds of initiations for the accomplishment of worldly powers, the special eleventh initiation for the nonworldly powers is spoken of beginning with the words[104] "and again."[105]

This explains that the line "and again the gnosis of great insight" teaches the nonworldly fourth initiation. On this line Nāropa's commentary says:

> "Great insight" is the mahāmudrā, which will be explained, where nothing is posited by thought. Its gnosis is the great unchanging bliss produced by meditating upon it. This is the eleventh.

And later:

> The *Vajra Ḍākinī Tent Tantra* also speaks of the eleven initiations.[106]

[204] This leads into:

> The *Tent Tantra* is quoted in Vajrapāṇi's commentary: "The vase initiation is the first."

And so on. Nāropa's commentary continues:

> "Reality is by the vajra yoga." Primarily, the eleventh was clearly taught by the Conqueror so that the wise should understand the fourth or the eleventh initiation as being separate.[107]

The fourth, or the eleventh, as mentioned in the above line "should understand the fourth or the eleventh initiation as being separate," is the nonworldly and ultimate fourth initiation. Moreover the decisive "the" from the phrase "also speaks of the eleven initiations" is a word that determines the number of initiations to be eleven. Therefore, to become a fit vessel for listening to the whole tantra and for meditating on the generation and completion stages in their entirety, at the end of the three higher initiations of the vase and so forth, the nonworldly fourth must be given verbally. This is the thinking of the *Kālacakratantra*, of its commentary, and of mahāsiddha Nāropa.

Sādhuputra says the same in his *Mandala Ritual:*

> Slowly taken by the tongue from the lotus, the mind of suchness drinks of the bodhicitta in the nature of samaya.[108] This is the purification of mind, the ritual of the initiation of the wisdom knowledge. "Then the precious word initiation is given." After the special bliss, the bodhicitta is meditated upon and is developed after the three drops. It is totally free from all deluded thought, with no concept of any phenomena, in the nature of the great Vajradhara. This is the fourth initiation.[109]

This passage explains that after the three higher initiations of the vase and so forth, which are conferred to create suitable vessels for listening to the tantra and so forth, the fourth, or nonworldly, ultimate initiation is bestowed. Therefore the words "Then the precious word initiation is given" teach that the fourth initiation is expressed in words and that the disciples' actual understanding of the initiation is the meaning of the fourth initiation. Therefore those (such as the dharma master Tsalmin) are incorrect who maintain that after the instruction, "to place the mind in total nonconceptuality in a state in which there is no fabrication of the actual way phenomena exist," the disciple places his mind a little in nonconceptuality and that this is the bestowal of the fourth initiation. [205]

Others ask if Sādhuputra's description of the nonworldly fourth bestowed after the wisdom-knowledge third initiation actually refers to the higher-than-high wisdom-knowledge third initiation. This is not so, because the lines "Then the precious word initiation is given. After the special bliss" up to "This is the ritual of the conduct of the mind"[110] teach that after the three higher initiations, the nonworldly fourth together with its

appendages is given. Then, immediately after the line "This is the ritual of the conduct of the mind," the text continues:

> The receiving of every initiation, the meanings of every tantra, the path of those gone to bliss arising from hearing, thinking, and meditation, is by your kindness, glorious guru.

Up to:

> This is the bestowing of the wisdom-knowledge initiation.[111]

These lines teach up to the higher-than-high wisdom-knowledge initiation together with its appendages. Immediately after these lines, the *Mandala Ritual* says: "The remaining are as the previous."[112] This line is pointing for reference to the preceding explanation given when the nonworldly fourth initiation was conferred for the purposes of creating suitable vessels. Therefore the three higher-than-high initiations, which consist of the vase initiation in which the nine consorts are embraced, the secret initiation in which the nine consorts are relied upon, and the wisdom-knowledge initiation in which one enters union with the ten consorts, are conferred after the nonworldly fourth, which comes at the end of the three suitable-vessel-creating initiations of the vase, and so forth.

Some (such as the noble Rendawa) say that if the nonworldly fourth was necessary to create suitable vessels for the complete hearing of the tantra, then what does the following quote from the *Great Commentary* mean?

> For the purpose of leading sentient beings, there are four nonultimate initiations. Then, when they have heard and learned every tantra and its commentary...[113]

Does this quote not teach that in order to become fit vessels for a complete hearing of the tantra, [206] initiations up to the worldly fourth, in which the wisdom-knowledge initiation itself is given the name of the fourth, are sufficient? As far as what the words of the *Great Commentary* actually say, such a claim is true. However, in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* it says:

> First the vase initiation,
> the second is said to be the secret,

gnosis the third,
the fourth also is likewise.[114]

In the *Hevajra Tantra* also:

"The vajra master,
secret, and wisdom,
the fourth also is likewise."[115]

In two other tantras, therefore, there are four initiations.

In this commentary the fourth initiation as taught in the *Later Guhyasamāja* and the *Hevajra Tantra* are presented as topics for explanation. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* continues:

> Here the worldly nonultimate vase initiation is the master initiation. By looking upon the secret place, nectar is experienced, and that is the secret initiation. The activity mudrā consort[116] is given, and from the two organs arises bliss. Knowledge of this is the wisdom-knowledge initiation. The bodhicitta enters the jewel. Knowledge of its bliss is the gnosis fourth. By worldly truths, therefore, these are the four rituals of the interpretive initiations.[117]

Therefore it is the thinking of the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* that this quote describes how the hidden tantras literally teach the four initiations, and that the tantra line "the fourth also is likewise" literally teaches the wisdom-knowledge initiation to be the fourth while actually teaching the ultimate nonworldly fourth initiation in a concealed way. The *Great Commentary* also, when explaining the four higher initiations, literally teaches an actual fourth initiation, as in the line "the fourth also is likewise," and it has to be the thinking of the *Great Commentary* that the nonworldly fourth initiation, which is illustrated by this worldly fourth, is also conferred at this time in order to create fit vessels for hearing the tantra in its entirety. If this were not the case, it would contradict Sādhuputra's explanation. Moreover it cannot be correct to say that the first three initiations are necessary for creating fit vessels for the practice of the six-branched yoga up to the yoga of recollection but that the nonworldly fourth is not necessary for creating fit vessels for the meditation upon the sixth yoga of meditative concentration. [207]

A description of each initiation

This has two outlines:

1. A description of the higher initiations
2. A description of the higher-than-high initiations

A description of the higher initiations

This has four topics:

1. The higher initiation of the vase
2. The secret initiation
3. The wisdom-knowledge initiation
4. The worldly fourth

The higher initiation of the vase

"The first touch of the breasts of glorious wisdom is the initiation of the vase."[118] As this line indicates, the guru leads the disciple to embrace and touch the breasts of a suitably qualified mudrā consort. By embracing her body and touching her breasts, the elemental bodhicitta stirs within the body. From this bliss arises, which is applied to emptiness to become the bliss and emptiness that is the nature of the vase initiation. Because it is received from the vases of the mudrā's breasts, it is known as the vase initiation. It is also known as the initiation of the master, as the *Hevajra Tantra* says:

> By laughing, joy is attained.
> Pure laughing is the master.[119]

Also, because it is obtained by relying upon the body of a wisdom woman,[120] the initiation is taken within the body mandala.

The secret initiation

"Experiencing and looking at the 'moon' in its secret place is the secret initiation."[121] The guru sits in union with a fully qualified mudrā consort. The white element at the crown melts and falls along the path of his dhūtī, where this basis of bliss is revealed at the tip of his jewel as symbolizing the

inborn bliss. All the gods gather at the guru's body, and with thumb and ring finger they place those drops in their molten state upon the tongue of the disciple for his experience. [208] With the blindfold removed, the disciple looks upon the large lotus of the wisdom woman, and moved by great desire, the drops move within his body to create bliss. This bliss is applied to emptiness to become bliss and emptiness. This is the nature of the secret initiation. It is called a secret initiation because it is gained by the experience of secret substance and taken within the secret bhaga mandala. As it is said:

> By looking, joy is attained;
> looking is similarly the secret.[122]

The wisdom-knowledge initiation

The disciple is presented with a fully qualified wisdom woman by the guru. In accordance with his guru's instruction, the disciple searches for her channel, and when the indications are that it has been found, he sits in union with the wisdom lady in accord with instruction. During union the element melts and arrives at the secret-place cakra. The resulting bliss is applied to emptiness to form bliss-and-emptiness gnosis. This is the third initiation of wisdom-knowledge. Because it is gained by relying upon a wisdom woman, it is known as the wisdom-knowledge initiation, and because it is gained from the melting of the jasminelike[123] bodhicitta, it is taken within the nonultimate bodhicitta mandala.

When this initiation and the fourth worldly initiation are conferred using a wisdom woman, it is necessary to seek the channel of the wisdom woman. Sādhuputra mentions this in his *Mandala Ritual* when he says:

> With the finger visualized as a red *hri,* the left of the consort's channel is moved, the *śī* on the tongue is uttered.[124]

The worldly fourth

From sitting in union with the wisdom woman, the element moves to the vajra tip, and for as long as the state of retention can be maintained, innate bliss arises. This bliss applied to emptiness creates the gnosis of bliss and emptiness. This is the worldly fourth initiation. The line "the fourth also

is likewise" literally teaches this interpretive fourth initiation, and it is labeled the fourth within the wisdom-knowledge third. In this connection the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> The bodhicitta enters the jewel. Knowledge of its bliss is the gnosis fourth.[125]

16. The Higher-than-High Initiations

[209] This is under two headings:

1. The first three initiations
2. The nonworldly fourth

The first three initiations

Taken literally, the *Great Commentary* talks of the four higher-than-high initiations as being solely for the creation of the vajra-master lord.[126] However, in order to create suitable vessels for hearing the tantra in its entirety and so forth, the nonworldly fourth has to be conferred after the three worldly higher initiations. This has to be performed as explained by Sādhuputra and is the intention of the tantra and commentary as already explained.

The rituals and their order can be known from the texts on mandala rituals, so here I will just mention a few of the special characteristics of the first three initiations. In this vase initiation the disciple embraces the wisdom woman as encouraged by the guru and touches her breasts. From this action the nectar stream of the bodhicitta fluid descends from the crown to the sixteen petals of the forehead cakra. The resulting bliss divides into the joys of body, speech, mind, and gnosis. This is applied to emptiness to create the gnosis of bliss and emptiness.

In the secret initiation the disciple's vajra slightly penetrates the secret place of the wisdom woman he has embraced and whose breasts he has touched. This causes the bodhicitta to descend from the thirty-two petals of the throat cakra to the eight petals of the heart cakra. The resultant bliss divides into the supreme joys of body, speech, mind, and gnosis, which is applied to emptiness to create the gnosis of bliss and emptiness.

In the wisdom-knowledge initiation the vajra enters the secret place of the wisdom woman. From its vigorous movement bodhicitta moves down

from the sixty-four petals of the navel cakra to the thirty-two petals of the secret-place cakra. [210] The very clear semen is liquid and moves to the opening of the vajra jewel. The resulting bliss divides into the special joys of body, speech, mind, and gnosis, which is applied to emptiness to create the gnosis of bliss and emptiness. This is one way of describing the first three higher-than-high initiations. *A Short Teaching on Initiations* states:

> By touching the breasts of wisdom
> comes the bliss of moving bodhicitta.
> Initiation is by the breasts,[127]
> from its bliss it is conferred.
> This is the child.
>
> From moving to the secret place,
> the bliss of moving bodhicitta
> and the initiation of the secret.
> From its bliss is it conferred.
> This is the youth.
>
> From moving to the secret place,
> the moving bliss at the vajra tip,
> the initiation of wisdom-knowledge,
> from which comes movement and travel.
> This is the adult.[128]

I have presented above the meaning of these lines according to the venerable Nāropa's commentary, which says:

> The "wisdom" is a woman from the age of twelve to twenty. By conferring initiation she is the giver of the mind's joy. By touching her breasts, "comes the bliss of moving bodhicitta." This means that the stream of molten nectar moves from the four petals of the crown lotus to the sixteen petals of the forehead lotus. This produces the experience of bliss whose nature is bodily joy, the joy of speech, the joy of the mind, and the joy of gnosis. This is the child. Initiation is bestowed by the breasts of the yoginī. This is the first initiation and so is known as the child.
>
> Then the vajra slightly penetrates her secret place to produce

"the bliss of moving bodhicitta." This means that it moves from the throat lotus of thirty-two petals to the center of the heart lotus of eight petals to create the experience of bliss whose nature is supreme bodily joy, supreme joy of speech, supreme joy of the mind, and supreme joy of gnosis. This, because it is higher than the previous joy, is known as the "youth," and is the secret initiation.

Then vigorous motion produces "movement and travel," which means traveling from the navel cakra of sixty-four petals to the secret cakra of thirty-two petals. [211] The molten drops of fluid, in fifteen parts whose tips are very clear, travel to the very opening of the vajra jewel, producing the experience of bliss whose nature is the special bodily joy, special joy of speech, special joy of the mind, and special joy of gnosis. This is the "adult" and the initiation of wisdom-knowledge.[129]

Nevertheless to explain the secret initiation as being the supreme-joy gnosis produced from bodhicitta falling from the throat cakra to the heart cakra, the wisdom-knowledge initiation as being the special joy produced by the descent from the heart cakra to the secret cakra, and the actual wisdom-knowledge initiation as being the innate bliss applied to emptiness formed from the fluid arriving at the tip of the vajra jewel, is a good explanation[130] of the lines beginning "By touching the breasts of wisdom comes the bliss of moving bodhicitta."[131]

Nāropa's explanation of these lines from the tantra is also that of the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary*, whose explanation is also made on the basis of these initiations being higher-than-high initiations. This is so because after its explanation of the higher worldly fourth initiation, this commentary, referring to these initiations, says "The ultimate is to come; these are deluded and not ultimate."[132] The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* continues:

> Here, using different language from other tantras and with a meaning that is definitive, it is taught again using the name "vase." The changing bliss that arises from touching is the initiation of the vase. The changing bliss arising from the vajra approaching the secret is the initiation of the secret. When the two organs dwell together to produce the bliss of the descending fluid, this is the initiation of wisdom-knowledge. The unchanging

> bliss formed by desire for the mahāmudrā is the initiation described in the line "the fourth also is likewise." Therefore the four initiations are differentiated as "changing, changing, falling, and unchanging."[133] [212] In this way initiation is conferred. These are the initiations.

As reference for the above, the commentary quotes *A Short Teaching on Initiations:*

> As spoken of in the *Supreme Original Buddha,* "First, the seven initiations."[134]

And:

> "The initiations of the vase and the secret," up to "Purification of body, speech, and mind."[135]

Actual initiations of secret and wisdom-knowledge as described here are not suitable for the ordained. With this in mind the glorious Atiśa says in his *Light on the Path:*

> Because it is forcefully forbidden
> in the great tantra of the *Original Buddha,*
> the secret and wisdom-knowledge initiation
> should not be taken by those of brahma conduct.[136]
> If such initiations are taken
> within the asceticism of the brahmacarya,
> it becomes forbidden conduct.
> The vows of asceticism will weaken,
> becoming a downfall for those of disciplined behavior,
> they fall certainly to lower realms,
> with never a chance of attainment.[137]

By merely experiencing the secret substances of the secret initiation, the downfall mentioned in the line "becoming a downfall for those of disciplined behavior" will not occur.

Furthermore the vase initiation consists of bliss arising from embracing the nine mudrās and from touching the breasts, which is then applied to emptiness to produce the gnosis of bliss and emptiness. The secret initiation

consists of the guru sitting in sexual union with the nine mudrās, whose ages range from twelve to twenty, and sucking the *naranāsika,*[138] or lower tip of the wisdom woman's central channel. The vajra containing the elemental bodhicitta drops is placed in the mouth of the disciple, whose mindstream of practice has been purified. The bodhicitta is ejected, and the bliss arising from the experience of the ejected bodhicitta is applied to emptiness, producing bliss-and-emptiness gnosis. The wisdom-knowledge initiation consists of first sitting in sexual union with one's wife and then with those mudrās from among the nine twelve- to twenty-year-olds with whom one is able to perform the act of union, from the middle watch of the night for two hours until the sun rises.[139] [213] The bliss of this union is applied to emptiness to produce bliss-and-emptiness gnosis.

This explanation of the ways to confer the higher and higher-than-high initiations is made on the basis that these are actual initiations to be given to laypeople. For fully ordained monks and other monastics, however, these initiations are to be conferred by using just the imagination to introduce them to the real significance of the initiation. Vajradhara said again and again that the fully ordained monk is the best of mantra practitioners, and if a fully ordained or novice monk were to actually take the particular secret and wisdom-knowledge initiations as described above, they would fall from their precepts.

The nonworldly fourth

This is under three headings:

1. The fourth as taught in the Kālacakra
2. The fourth initiation in the hidden tantras as taught by the mahāsiddhas
3. How these two are interchangeable

The fourth as taught in the Kālacakra

The *Great Commentary* on verse 112 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> Laughing, looking, holding hands, and joining together: these four kinds of initiation do not become suchness. Here suchness is not found within the embrace. That resulting from an activity mudrā, if examined, does not become nondual gnosis.[140]

In this passage suchness, or the nonworldly fourth, is referred to as nondual gnosis. The duality that becomes nondual in the term *nonduality* refers to emptiness and bliss, and this is explained again and again by the tantra and the commentary. *Emptiness* does not only refer to an emptiness of true existence but to "empty form endowed with every supreme aspect."[141] *Bliss* also refers to a special bliss known as *great unchanging bliss.* [214] Empty form in its aspect of father and mother in union indivisibly united with the gnosis of supreme unchanging bliss and emptiness is the fourth initiation. This bliss has to be unchanging bliss, because the *Great Commentary* says on verse 114 of the Gnosis chapter:

> From that arises the bliss beyond sorrow,
> unmoving, innate, unchanging.
> This is the fourth.[142]

Concerning the emptiness also, the commentary states:

> The emptiness not produced by activity mudrā and wisdom mudrā is one clearly endowed with every aspect.[143]

This clearly talks of empty form endowed with every supreme aspect. Furthermore, in the first summary of the Realms chapter, the *Great Commentary* says:

> The supreme and unchanging fourth is the gnosis of the buddhas.[144]

This explains that "the fourth" from the line "The fourth also is likewise" refers to the supreme and unchanging bliss. The *Great Commentary* continues:

> That which again is likewise, was taught by the Buddha to be one's mahāmudrā.[145]

This teaches that the term *likewise* refers to empty form endowed with every supreme aspect, and that the inseparability of empty form with unchanging bliss and emptiness is the fourth initiation. Furthermore, in Nāropa's *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* he says:

> The mahāmudrā is of a form arising from space. From one's meditational experience arising from the subsequent desire for this form comes the "unmoving." This means that emission is prevented and does not move beyond the vajra jewel. The bliss of nonemission of the moon nectar in the form of the innate bodily joy, the innate joy of speech, the innate joy of mind, and the innate joy of gnosis is the great wisdom-knowledge and is the conferring of the fourth initiation as taught by the words "The fourth also is likewise." This is the unobstructed and nonworldly gnosis of great insight, whose taste changes the obstructed aggregates, the five spheres and so forth, into the five tathāgatas, the five goddesses, and so forth as copper is changed into gold. This is the completed development of a sentient being and is, therefore, known as the master of sentient beings.[146]

[215] The above is commentary to the verses:

> From desire for the great mudrā
> arises the unmoving bliss,
> the initiation of the great wisdom,
> from which comes the unmoving insight
> known as the master of sentient beings.[147]

This root text and commentary explains that in the branch of recollection, "form arising from space" refers to an actual mother-and-father empty form, for the mother of which, in her form of Viśvamātā, the yogi develops desire. From his meditation experience arises the unchanging bliss of the moon-nectar bodhicitta not being emitted from the vajra jewel. This is divided into the four joys of body and so forth, and this initial unchanging bliss is the nonworldly fourth initiation. From this explanation it can be understood that the initial attainment of the first of the 21,600 instances of bliss, from the beginning of the branch of meditative concentration, is the lower limit of the fourth initiation.

From sustained meditative development of this unchanging bliss there arises an unobstructed and nonworldly gnosis of great insight. The taste of this development completes the transformation of the five obscured aggregates, the five spheres, and so forth into sentient beings who are the nature of the five male and five female tathāgatas and so forth, as copper is changed

into gold. The fourth initiation, therefore, is known as the master of sentient beings.

But is the nonworldly fourth identified solely with unchanging bliss? It is part of the fourth initiation and therefore is called the fourth, but the complete fourth initiation is, as explained above, the gnosis of unchanging bliss and emptiness indivisibly united with the empty form endowed with every supreme aspect. This is also the thinking of Nāropa's commentary. The previous quote continues:

> A presentation of the body and the yoga of the supreme and unchanging gnosis is spoken of in the *Glorious Kālacakra:*
>
> "The body is of clarity, devoid of atoms, like the sky,
> well completed by the signs and so forth.
> The three worlds are free of obscuration,
> like appearances in a dream.
>
> "Speech is completely unbroken, in languages of many,
> entering the hearts of others.
> Mind is full of the highest bliss, unmoving,
> at all times embraced by the innate."[148]

[216] Having explained the "yoga of the supreme and unchanging gnosis" and the "body," or enlightened form, to be the fourth initiation, Nāropa states that this body and this mind of bliss, together with the way they are united, are explained in the tantra. He then quotes verse 164 of the Gnosis chapter of the *Condensed Tantra* beginning, "The body is of clarity."[149] These verses are saying that when the resultant body, speech, and mind of a buddha is identified, the clear empty form, obstruction-free like space, devoid of atoms, adorned with the signs and features,[150] is the body of a buddha and the unchanging bliss is the mind of a buddha. With this in mind Nāropa quotes the above verses, beginning "The body is of clarity, devoid of atoms," to show that the "body," which is an empty-form gnosis body indivisibly united with the mind of unchanging bliss inseparably absorbed into emptiness, is the fourth initiation.

To summarize, the nonworldly fourth initiation begins from the achievement of empty form in the aspect of mother and father in embrace indivisibly united with the unchanging bliss-and-emptiness gnosis gained from

the first moment of the branch of meditative concentration and continues up to the union of buddhahood. In this way every instance of unchanging bliss and emptiness indivisibly united with empty form can be posited as the fourth initiation. This is the thinking of the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries* and other commentaries.

The fourth initiation in the hidden tantras as explained by the mahāsiddhas

The ultimate meaning of the fourth initiation is the union at the stage of no further practice where the pure illusory body is indivisibly united with the ultimate clear-light bliss-and-emptiness gnosis. This is the seven-limbed embrace. Vāgiśvarakīrti explains the seven limbs as follows:

> The complete enjoyment body, the embrace,
> great bliss, of no nature, filled with compassion,
> unending, and unceasing.[151]

[217] These seven characteristics of the enjoyment body are: being adorned with the signs and features of enlightenment; being in the aspect of father-and-mother embrace; a great bliss that is unsullied, vast, of the highest quality, and in existence for as long as samsara exists; not truly existing and therefore of no nature; filled with compassion because it is a great compassion that pervades all sentient beings; unending, in that its continuity is never broken; and unceasing, because although emanated bodies are unending also, their appearance is transitory, whereas the appearance of the enjoyment body cannot possibly vanish until the destruction of space itself.

This explanation of the union at the level of no further practice as being the fourth initiation is made on the basis of the primary or highest level of fourth initiation. Other than that, indivisible unions of the pure illusory body and the actual clear light at the level of the practitioner in which the clear light of the fourth stage[152] arises in the form of the pure illusory body, are also nonworldly fourth initiations.

It may be that the body of the union at the level of no further practice is complete with all seven features, but how is it known that this is the fourth initiation? This is established from Vāgiśvarakīrti's *Seven Features:*

> Because it contains the words "like that,"
> because it contains the words "also,"

because it contains the words "likewise,"
I assert the fourth to be likewise.[153]

In some tantras this is rendered as "The fourth also is likewise"[154] and by some as "Like that, likewise the fourth also."[155] Therefore, when the fourth initiation is taught, it is done by taking the third initiation of wisdom-knowledge as an example. In the phrase, "Like that, likewise the fourth also," when the meanings of the individual words "like that," "likewise," and "also" are explained, the fourth initiation is established as possessing the seven features. Therefore "I," Vagisvarakirti, "assert the fourth to be likewise," meaning "as previously explained."

This section has been a mere illustration. A more extensive explanation can be known from the *Great Path of Mantra*.[156]

How these two are interchangeable

[218] The masters who have written on the thinking of the hidden tantras explain the fourth initiation as being the indivisibility of the pure illusory body and the actual innate bliss. The illusory body is formed from the five lights of the winds that act as the mount of the clear-light mind, while the bliss is described merely as being innate and not as unchanging bliss. In the Kālacakra the branches of withdrawal and meditative absorption produce empty forms, whose appearances continue to develop until, on the branch of recollection, an actual mother and father in embrace is created. This empty form continues to develop, and from the sixth branch of meditative concentration onward, it is produced merely within the yogi's mind. The basis for the accomplishment of this empty form is not found in ordinary existence. Concerning the bliss, it is not sufficient for it to be merely innate, it is also explained as being "unchanging." Therefore there are some differences in the understanding of "union" in these two systems. Nevertheless, in their defining of the ultimate fourth initiation as being the indivisibility of the two bodies endowed with the seven features, there is agreement.

Moreover the empty form in the aspect of the mother and father in embrace gained from the branch of meditative concentration onward can substitute for the pure illusory body in the aspect of mother and father in embrace, and the explanation of bliss-and emptiness gnosis is similar in both traditions. However, in the explanations of those masters who have

commentated on the meanings of the hidden tantras, there is no mention of the 21,600 levels of unchanging bliss, nor is there any actual presentation of the mudrā consorts that induce these levels. This is something to be investigated.

Therefore the way of conferring the fourth initiation in both systems is that the meaning of the fourth initiation is communicated by words, and merely by gaining an understanding of them, the disciple is conferred with and receives the fourth initiation verbally. Furthermore the fourth initiation is received within the mandala of ultimate bodhicitta, subtle contamination of body, speech, and mind is removed, one is blessed with the great fortune to develop the body of the three indivisible vajras, and one is empowered to meditate upon the union of the completion stage.

This has been just a brief and condensed presentation of the initiations.

Part 4
Sādhana: Methods of Accomplishment

17. The Two Stages

Stages of generation and completion and the results of their practice

[219] This section is under three headings:

1. Ascertaining the two stages and their correct order
2. Presentations of each stage
3. A presentation of the results of practice

Ascertaining the two stages and their correct order

This has two outlines:

1. Ascertaining the two stages
2. Ascertaining the correct order

Ascertaining the two stages

In the glorious Kālacakra the special path to be developed is ascertained as consisting of the two stages of generation and completion. This is because those who are made into suitable vessels by the Kālacakra initiation for meditation on the paths are of two types. One type of person will aim only for the lower and middling worldly siddhis, and one type will strive for the highest siddhi of unsurpassed enlightenment. The path of practice for the first type of practitioner is ascertained to be the generation stage. For the second type, the generation stage is ascertained as being the path that ripens the practitioner for completion-stage practice. Once the mindstream has been ripened, the completion stage is ascertained as being the main cause for the attainment of the highest siddhi.

Ascertaining the correct order

In his *Five Stages,* composed upon the *Guhyasamāja Tantra,* the master Nāgārjuna said:

> Dwelling well within the stage of generation,
> wishing for the stage of completion,
> this method, the Buddha has said,
> is like the steps of a ladder.[1]

Therefore, assuming that one is traveling by the highest path of mantra from its very beginning, there is a definite order in which one first completes the generation stage, from which will arise a full completion stage. This is a definite sequence, because without ripening one's continuum with the generation stage in order to remove the coarse outer and inner faults, a full completion stage, which brings about cessations beginning from subtle outer and inner faults, will not arise. [220] Particularly at the time of the completion stage, various empty forms appear, and in order to transform them into empty forms in the aspect of father and mother in embrace adorned with the signs and features, one must have first completed a generation stage with attributes, which involves seeing and coming into contact with deities with their particular forms, numbers of hands, and faces.

Some say that even on the basis of traveling by the highest path of mantra from its very beginning, it is not the case that the generation stage necessarily precedes the completion stage. If it were the case that when traveling by the highest path of mantra from its very beginning, the generation stage had necessarily to precede the completion stage, then to reach enlightenment by the highest path of mantra, generation-stage meditation would definitely have to precede the completion stage. However, they say, this is not the case, because the completion of the generation stage only ensures the attainment of worldly siddhis and is not a cause for the great siddhi of enlightenment. This is so, they say, because the first summary from the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary* says:

> By meditating on the mandalas
> with thoughts of form and so forth,
> one will attain worldly siddhis,
> but where is the great desired siddhi?[2]

This is true, but this quote does not prove that when one enters the highest path of mantra from the beginning of its practice, it is not necessary to meditate on the generation stage in order to attain enlightenment. These words from the commentary merely teach that fulfillment of the generation stage alone will result only in the accomplishment of worldly siddhis and not in the achievement of the highest siddhi.

To this the others reply, if that is so, then it follows that having entered the highest path of mantra from its beginning, the attainment of enlightenment is not possible by the completion stage alone without the prerequisite of the generation stage, because to attain enlightenment having entered the highest path of mantra from the beginning, the meditations of the generation stage are a necessary prerequisite. However it is not possible, they continue, for you to agree with this, because in the first summary from the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary* it says:

> The yoga of the completion stage,
> freed from the concepts of *hūṃ, phaṭ,* and others,
> as spoken of in the generation stage,
> is the method for accomplishment.
> There is no other.[3]

[221] Therefore, they ask, does this not mean that the yoga of the completion stage, devoid of the thoughts of the conceptual meditation upon deities and of the speech of *hūṃ, phaṭ,* and so forth spoken of during the generation stage, is the one and only method of attaining the final goal? In reply to this, it can be said that if your explanation represents the meaning of the above passage, then you must accept the serious consequence that there is no other cause of enlightenment than the completion stage. Those who speak such things maintain that the generation stage is not a cause of the highest siddhi. This is refuted in *Illumination of Reality,* where it states that such a position is in direct contradiction to the sequence of the five chapters of the *Kālacakra.*

So what do these words from the commentary mean? The verse preceding the one beginning "The yoga of the completion stage" runs:

> The path of various concepts
> lacks the path of the sixteen and the four
> and will not arrive at the suchness
> spoken of by the Tathāgata.[4]

"The suchness spoken of by the Tathāgata" refers to the highest siddhi, and such a goal will not be reached by the generation stage alone, for it is a "path of various concepts" of hands, faces, and so forth of the deities, and it lacks the divisions of the sixteen aspects and the four joys. So what is the primary cause of the accomplishment of the highest siddhi that cannot be attained by a path lacking the sixteen aspects and so forth? The main cause is "the yoga of the completion stage" of the six-branched yoga, divorced from spoken words such as *hūṃ* and *phat* and from the conceptual meditations taught in the generation stage. This is because the primary method for the accomplishment of the highest siddhi is the completion stage, and "there is no other."

Therefore the generation stage ripens the mind for the creation of a full and complete completion stage. In this way the generation stage is a cause of buddhahood, and this is the thinking of the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries.* The *Great Commentary* states on the forty-eighth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> In this way, to lead the foolish and to purify their minds, lord of men, Sucandra, teach the methods of accomplishment. Ultimately phenomena that are of "the essence of permanence or impermanence are not to be practiced here." Therefore, for the accomplishment of buddhahood, "the methods to be practiced" are ascertained. Here those practices that are conceptually created methods of accomplishment are "false." This is for all Vajradhara methods of accomplishment.[5]

[222] The phrase "In this way, to lead the foolish and to purify their minds" refers to the practice of the generation stage as a cause of purifying the mind. The phrase "for the accomplishment of buddhahood" refers to the practices of a conceptually created method of accomplishment,[6] or generation stage, as causes of buddhahood, and these practices are necessary as ripening agents for the creation of the completion stage.

Moreover the second chapter of the second part of the *Hevajra Root Tantra* says:

> Floating like gourds upon the ocean,
> amid phenomena vast as space,
> how do sentient beings reach attainment
> through the forms of desired deities?

This question, asked by Vajragarbha, is answered:

> The Conqueror said,
> "Either by the yoga of no-self
> or by effort in glorious Heruka,
> wishing for siddhis, do not remain
> with other minds, even for an instant."[7]

Regarding this verse, the *Vajragarbha Commentary* says:

> Vajragarbha, it is like this. Furthermore the yogi who dwells in the beginning stages has been led into the mandala as previously taught. This is the time for the pride of deity generation. When that has been accomplished, the yogi dwells in the yoga of no-self,[8] where he will without doubt become Hevajra. Therefore those who wish for siddhis should rely only upon the two stages and should not remain with other minds even for an instant.[9]

In the beginning stages, the yogi first dwells in the apprehension of shape and color. "When that has been accomplished" or completed, "the yogi dwells in" or practices "the yoga of no-self." These words teach that when the generation stage of the pride of deity generation has been accomplished or completed, the yogi dwells in the completion stage of no-self yoga, "where he will without doubt become Hevajra." Therefore those who wish for the supreme siddhi of becoming Hevajra should practice only the two stages [223] "and not remain with other minds even for an instant."

Concerning the way to practice the generation stage, the commentary says:

> The beginner first dwells with the apprehension of the generation-stage practices of deity shape and color. When the generation stage has been accomplished or completed, he practices the completion stage of no-self yoga.

These words teach the generation stage as a ripening agent for the creation of a fully endowed completion stage, thereby clearly illustrating the order of these two stages. Immediately following the above passage, the *Vajragarbha Commentary* continues:

> From that the fortunate one completes the yoga of generation and develops the withdrawal process of the first of the six branches of perfect wisdom, known as *withdrawal.* From this will arise the signs.[10]

This passage explains that the fortunate meditator completes the generation stage and practices the branch of withdrawal, the first yoga of the six-branched yoga, from which will arise the signs of smoke and so forth. Therefore this passage also clearly lays out the order of the generation and completion stages.

These teachings on the order of the two stages are mainly given on the basis of someone who enters the highest path of tantra right from its beginning. A practitioner who has become a "last-existence," tenth-level bodhisattva by the path of sutra and then enters tantra does not need to travel through the generation stage before embarking on the completion stage for enlightenment. Such examples are exceptions.

It may be asked if a "last-existence," tenth-level bodhisattva has to enter the highest path of tantra in order to reach buddhahood, is enlightenment through the sutra path alone not possible? Such a thought is not only the opinion of the *Guhyasamāja* and others but also of the *Kālacakra* and its commentaries. The *Great Commentary* in the sixth summary of the Realms chapter says [224]:

> Therefore those who do not know the *Supreme Original Buddha* do not know the *Saṃgīti.*[11] Those not knowing the *Saṃgīti* will not know the gnosis body of Vajradhara. Those who do not know the gnosis body of Vajradhara do know the Vajra Vehicle. All those not knowing the Vajra Vehicle are of samsara, bereft of the path of the conqueror Vajradhara.[12]

18. The Generation Stage

Presentations of each stage

This is under two main outlines:

1. Generation stage
2. Completion stage

Generation stage

This has four headings:

1. The place of meditation
2. The meditator
3. The purpose of the meditation
4. The way to meditate

The place of meditation

The third verse of the Methods for Accomplishment chapter from the *Condensed Tantra* says:

> In pleasant groves, on mountains, in places of the great Conqueror,
> in empty temples, in the places of great practitioners,
> in cemeteries, by lakes and places of beauty, and in places hidden away,
> wherever the mind is content, there one should practice, great king.
> With soft bedding, there on a seat, one first recites the protection.[13]

This passage mentions places for the practice of the generation stage. These include pleasant groves for the feats of gaining power and of summoning; mountains for the feats of stupefying, paralyzing, and stabbing; shrines blessed by the Conqueror for the eight siddhis; empty temples and the sides of the ocean for the feats of expelling and separating; the places of great practitioners for the siddhis of activity mudrā consorts; cemeteries for the secret practices; by lakes and places of beauty, meaning rich and expansive, for the two siddhis of peace and increase; and hidden places, meaning caves or mud huts, for the feat of ruling over the three worlds. [225] These places are mentioned on the basis of being conducive to the attainment of tantric powers.[14] These places all have common requirements, which are mentioned in a verse from the *Great Commentary:*

> A place of dharma,
> where inhabitants live in peace,
> a place free of strife,
> there the yogi practices.[15]

In such a place, seated on soft bedding, one should practice the yoga of the generation stage, which will be explained later.

The meditator

The meditator should be one who has received the seven childhood initiations, as previously explained and who abides by the vows and samaya pledges.

The purpose of the meditation

The common disciples of the Kālacakra meditate in order to attain the worldly siddhis, such as those of peace and increase, as well as the eight great siddhi. The primary disciples of the Kālacakra meditate in order to attain the highest siddhi of enlightenment by suppressing the coarse impurity of the inner and outer bases of purification with generation-stage practices and by regarding this stage as a ripening agent for the creation of a fully endowed completion stage, which has the power of complete and total purification.

The way to meditate

"One first recites the protection." As this line says, the yogi performs a preliminary meditation on the protection wheel, as taught in the Realms chapter, then engages in practices that begin from the merit-field visualization as taught in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, and finishes with the final requests at the end of the session.

The main features of Mantra Vehicle that distinguish it from the Sutra Vehicle are the practices of the five perfections,[16] whose aspects are replicated and meditated upon, from the time of practice onward, to produce similar-type causes of an enlightened form body. These five, which will be present at the final result of practice, are one's environment as a celestial palace, one's body as a form adorned with the signs and features of enlightenment, one's enjoyments as undefiled bliss, one's entourage as buddhas and bodhisattvas in the forms of gods and goddesses, and one's deeds and actions performed by light rays emitting from one's body to bring all sentient beings to buddhahood. [226] This "path of the result" is present in all four classes of tantra, but deity yoga correlating to the birth and destruction bases of purification within samsara together with a generation stage that becomes a ripening process for the creation of a completion stage is only found in highest yoga tantra. Therefore the generation stage discussed here must be one endowed with these two characteristics.

This tantra talks of the correlation of the Inner, Outer, and Other, as well as giving a very extensive presentation of deity yoga. The main reason for this is that the Inner and Outer are the bases of purification while the Other is the purifier. By meditating on the Other in its aspect of the generation stage and correlating it to inner and outer bases of purification, one's mindstream is ripened, and by accomplishing and completing the meditations on the Other in its aspect of the completion stage, every imprint that arises in the form of the impure appearances of the Outer and Inner is removed, and the yogi becomes the Other, or resultant Kālacakra, whose nature is the four bodies. Furthermore the more extensive a presentation of deity yoga, the more fruitful will be the purification of the Outer and Inner, and the more fruitful will be the development of a generation stage as a ripening agent for the creation of a completion stage. It is with this in mind that the deity yoga of the generation stage in this tantra is so extensive. If that were not the case, then what other reason would there be for such an extensive presentation of the deities and mandalas?

The way that such a generation stage simulates the processes of birth and destruction within samsara is as follows. The primary disciples of highest mantra in general and the primary disciples of this tantra specifically, are those of the highest intelligence who, as human beings of this world of Jambudvīpa, are endowed with the six elements and possess a form for the attainment of enlightenment within one life by the practices of the generation stage and the six-branched yoga of the completion stage, the main topics of this tantra. This is stated very clearly in the tantra and in the *Great Commentary*. Therefore, when determining the Inner, one is primarily determining the birth and death of a womb-born human being of this world. Similarly the generation stage is a meditation simulating the processes of birth and destruction of such a human being. [227]

Therefore the way of meditating upon the generation stage is under two main headings:

1. Gathering the two kinds of accumulations, which correlates with the death process that occurs at the end of gathering of merit
2. The yoga of four branches, correlating with the after-death process of linking up to a new birth and taking a body

19. The Two Accumulations

Gathering the two kinds of accumulations, which correlates with the death process that occurs at the end of gathering of merit

This is under two outlines:

1. Accumulation of merit from the merit field, which correlates with the gathering of karma before one dies
2. Accumulation of wisdom by meditating upon the four gateways to freedom, correlating with death

Accumulation of merit from the merit field, which correlates with the gathering of karma before one dies

This is the practice of merit accumulation, which acts as a conducive circumstance for determining the quality of the creation of a generation-stage yoga. The merit field of the Kālacakra mandalas and deities are invited, and the seven-limbed practice and other rites as taught in the commentaries are performed. This correlates with the gathering of good karma as a cause for birth in the future life.

Accumulation of wisdom by meditating upon the four gateways to freedom, correlating with death

This practice, which correlates with death, is the accumulation of wisdom by meditating upon the four gateways to freedom. The meditations upon the four gateways to freedom are deity yoga meditations involving the dependent deities and supporting mandalas, which will be explained later, arising as the play of meditative concentration of bliss and emptiness. This is a meditation that correlates with the death process for a human endowed with the six elements. The death process of a human endowed with the six

elements is the actual object of correlation and is described in the *Great Commentary:*

> At the time of death of those born from a womb in this human world, water weakens fire.[17]

And further:

> Then, because of there being no fire, earth loses its solidity and dissolves like salt to become liquid, dwelling within the water element. Then the element of air dries up every drop of water and disappears into space. Like this the elements quickly weaken. Then "the mind is the fire at the end of darkness,"[18] which means that the foundation consciousness is placed in the realm of space, in fully aspected forms empty of all objects, dwelling in the middle.[19]

These quotes are referring to the dying process in which first the water element of the body weakens the fire element. Then water dissolves earth, air dries up water, and air itself disappears. [228] "The mind is the fire at the end of darkness" refers to the end of the process of near-attainment,[20] when a clear light in its state of clear vacuity arises, and in which various aspected empty forms appear. This is death clear light and is an object of correlation with the above meditation.

This explanation differs from the explanation given by the Guhyasamāja tradition of Nāgārjuna and his disciples on the order of dissolution and on the objects appearing within the death clear light. Such a difference must be attributed to a difference in the stages of the death process of the primary disciples of the tantras. This has already been dealt with in the Inner chapter.

The meditations of the four gateways to freedom correlating with this death process are taught in the *Great Commentary,* beginning, "Therefore, through the power of this meditative concentration, the process of fire is weakened by water, and this is the meditator's[21] first practice within the body." As quoted above, the passage continues from "Then because of there being no fire" up to "empty of all objects." Therefore, in the vacuity that is the indivisibility of the great-bliss gnosis and the emptiness of the four gateways, an empty form like an image in a prognostic mirror is to be

visualized. The necessity of visualizing this empty form in the aspect of an image in a prognostic mirror can be found in the line "the foundation consciousness is placed in the realm of space, in fully aspected forms empty of all objects, dwelling in the middle." This means a fully aspected empty form devoid of all objects of materiality is visualized as indivisible from the four-gateway emptiness "dwelling in the middle," meaning divorced from the extremes of existence and nonexistence, and this visualization is a meditative equipoise in conjunction with the death clear light and goes under the name *foundation consciousness.*

If those words of the *Great Commentary* meant that the gnosis indivisible from the emptiness of the four gateways to freedom was itself to be visualized in the aspect of empty form, it would follow that this meditation could not become a path that takes on the aspect of the dharmakāya, and neither could it be a means for the practice of accumulating wisdom.

But doesn't this contradict the two phrases "meditate upon them as empty forms beyond the reality of matter" and "in the realm of space, in fully aspected forms"? [229] They do not because of the following reason. "Form" in Sanskrit is *rūpa,* which has the meaning of both "form" and "nature." Here it should have been translated as "nature." "Form" is a mistranslation. This is a query and resolution that has been spoken of before.[22] It should be discussed a little. It is perfectly acceptable to translate *rūpa* in this way,[23] but that meaning is not to be applied to the phrases "devoid of all aspects" and "emptiness beyond the nature of matter," when used many times as synonyms of empty form in other places. Therefore, in the Shong and other translations, *rūpa* is often translated as "form."[24]

However it is not contradictory here to also practice taking on the aspects of the dharmakāya, and so forth, because the teaching here on meditations of the four gateways to freedom must teach a correlation with the basic death process of a womb-born human as well as with the resultant dharmakāya. The former has been explained. Correlation with the latter is that unchanging bliss in the aspect of a prognostic-mirror–image empty form, and indivisible from the emptiness in which not even an atom of existence exists from in its own side, is the ultimate gnosis of the dharmakāya. On this subject of correlation the *Great Commentary* says:

> The three realms of animate and inanimate are to be examined with this verse: "There is no meditation upon no phenomena..."[25]

This and the remaining lines of the verse mean that all phenomena, comprising the three realms of animate sentient beings and the inanimate world, are examined using ultimate reasoning, which determines that phenomena, although functioning under the process of cause and effect, have no nature. This is expressed as the four gateways to freedom—namely, being empty, without attributes, without aspiration, without engagement—and is single-pointedly concentrated upon. From within this state great bliss arises, and while this bliss is perceiving emptiness, one meditates on various visualized prognostic-mirror–like empty forms.

20. The Body Vajra

The yoga of four branches, correlating with the after-death process of linking up to a new birth and taking a body

[230] This is under four headings:

1. The branch of body-vajra approximation: A meditation on the sovereign mandala, correlating with body formation inside the womb
2. The branch of speech-vajra near accomplishment: A meditation on the sovereign activities, correlating with birth and the activities of the faculties
3. The branch of mind-vajra accomplishment: A meditation on drop yoga, correlating with the expansion of the drop
4. The branch of gnosis-vajra great accomplishment: A meditation on the yoga of the subtle, correlating with the completion of bliss at the age of sixteen

The branch of body-vajra approximation: A meditation on the sovereign mandala, correlating with body formation inside the womb

This has two main outlines:

1. How the generation of the celestial mansion correlates with the ordinary base
2. How the generation of the dependent deities correlates with the ordinary base

How the generation of the celestial mansion correlates with the ordinary base

This is under three headings:

1. Correlation with the outside world, the place where one is to be born

2. Correlation with the mother's body where womb conception takes place
3. Correlation with the practitioner's body

Correlation with the outside world, the place where one is to be born

The limitless-space source triangle[26] that is produced when creating the seat of the mandala correlates with the space of the air mandala. The meditation on the stacking of the mandalas of air and so forth within the source triangle correlates with the four mandalas from air up to earth. [231] The meditation on Meru as mentioned in the line "Upon the earth mandala, Meru, the nature of the vajra" correlates with the external Meru. The meditation on a variegated lotus upon Meru correlates with the center of Meru. The meditation on the sun, moon, and Rāhu in the center of the lotus correlates with the sun, moon, and Rāhu gathering externally at the end of the day of the empty sky.[27]

All phenomena from the source triangle up to Rāhu are visualized as blending into one and meditated upon as the seed syllables *haṃ kṣa ma la wa ra ya*. Although the objects of both outer and inner correlation of this stacked meditative arrangement are separate from each other, this blending into one is to show that the one gnosis of Kālacakra manifests as the stacked arrangements of the foundation below the celestial mansion. Again the letters of the syllables *haṃ kṣa ma la wa ra ya* individually produce space, air, fire, water, earth, Meru, lotus, moon, sun, and Rāhu,[28] on top of whose completed forms is the vajra tent. Inside the vajra tent are the complete mandalas of body, speech, and mind. These preceding and succeeding meditations on space, air, fire, water, earth, Meru, lotus, moon, sun, and Rāhu are taught by the *Great Commentary*. On the first meditation it says:

> The features to be created inside and out are limitless space and the three-cornered wisdom source.[29]

On the second meditation it says:

> Meditate upon the seed letters *haṃ kṣa ma la wa ra ya*. From them visualize that the world is produced. This is the external. The inner as previously taught is the mother's body.[30]

When this meditation on the celestial mansion resting upon lotus, moon, sun, and Rāhu on top of Meru is applied to its outer correlation, it may be drawn or meditated upon as a thousand cubits or just one cubit square. However it is still ascertained as being a four-cubit mansion of the mandalas themselves. The mandalas or celestial mansion of complete body, speech, and mind mandalas to be meditated upon can be visualized as being of any size, but they still represent a four-cubit mandala system of the celestial mansion. The body mandala, therefore, is four cubits square. This correlates with the outer air mandala, which has a diameter of 400,000 yojana. [232] The speech mandala, which is half the size of the body mandala at two cubits, correlates with the water mandala, which has a diameter of 200,000 yojana from rim to rim. The mind mandala, which at one cubit square is half the size of the speech mandala, correlates with the 100,00 yojana of the earth mandala's diameter. The wheel of great bliss is twelve fingerwidths and half the size of the mind mandala, correlating with the 50,000-yojana diameter of the summit of Meru. The six-fingerwidth diameter of the lotus seat of the main deities is half the diameter of the wheel of great bliss and correlates with the 25,000-yojana diameter of the center of Meru.[31] The stacked arrangement of the moon, sun, and Rāhu upon the lotus, forming the seat of the main deities, correlates with the moon, sun, and Rāhu stacked at the end of the day of the empty sky.

Correlation with the mother's body where womb conception takes place

The two meditations explained above, involving the phenomena of the source triangle of limitless space up to Rāhu, correlate simultaneously with phenomena within the mother's body. The visualized source triangle correlates with the triangular source of the mother's secret area, the womb where one takes birth. The visualized air mandala correlates with the area between her crown and forehead. The visualized fire mandala correlates with the area from the forehead to the throat. The visualized water mandala correlates with the area between the throat and the heart. The visualized earth mandala correlates with the area from the heart to the navel. Meru visualized on top of the earth mandala correlates with the area from the mother's navel to the secret area. The lotus visualized on Meru correlates with the lotus of the secret place. The moon, sun, and Rāhu visualized within the lotus correlate with the three channels carrying excrement,

urine, and fluid that come together at the center of her secret-place cakra. The vajra pavilion visualized above the lotus, moon, sun, and Rāhu correlates with the vajra of the father entering the lotus of the mother. [233] The celestial mansion visualized there correlates with the womb in which one is to be reborn.

At the center of the complete and fully endowed celestial mansion on the lotus, moon, sun, and Rāhu or Kālāgni seat is a moon mandala marked with the thirty-two vowels correlating with the father's fluid at conception. The sun mandala visualized beneath the moon and marked with the eighty consonants correlates with the mother's blood at conception. The meditation on the syllable *hūṃ* resting in the center of the moon, like the sign of a rabbit, from which arises a vajra marked by the syllable *hūṃ*, correlates with the bardo consciousness entering the blood and fluid. The syllable *hi* visualized at the same time correlates with the wind acting as the mount of the bardo consciousness. The meditation involving the vowels, consonants, moon, sun, vajra, merging together as one into the syllables *hūṃ* and *haṃ*, from which arises the complete form endowed with the syllable *haṃ*, correlates with the fluid, blood, consciousness, and its mount of wind blending together to produce the first signs of a body in the womb.

Correlation with the practitioner's body

The body mandala correlates with the area of the body stretching from the heart down to the secret area and from the heart up to the crown. The speech mandala correlates with a body area ranging from the navel to the throat. The mind mandala reaches down from the heart halfway to the navel and up halfway to the throat.

Alternatively the mind mandala, speech mandala, and body mandala correlate respectively with the area from the heart out to both shoulders, the area from the heart out to the elbows, and the area from the heart to the left and right fingertips.

How the generation of the dependent deities correlates with the ordinary base

[234] This has two outlines:

1. The generation of the main mother-and-father deity, the śakti, and the direction vases correlating with the first three months in the womb

2. The male and female tathāgatas and so forth correlating with the remaining period of growth in the womb

The generation of the main mother-and-father deity, the śakti, and the direction vases correlating with the first three months in the womb

The moon marked by the thirty-two vowels, which have the nature of the thirty-two physical signs, is the manifest enlightenment of the mirrorlike gnosis. The sun marked by the eighty consonants, which have the nature of the eighty physical marks, is the manifest enlightenment of the gnosis of equality. The vajra marked by *hūṃ*, arising from a *hūṃ* syllable upon the moon disk, is the manifest enlightenment of the gnosis of analysis. The syllable *hi*, coexisting with the *hūṃ*, is the manifest enlightenment of the wisdom of accomplishment. The fusion of these to produce the compete form endowed with the syllable *haṃ* is the manifest enlightenment of the wisdom of reality. These are the five manifest enlightenments from which the main deity, the conqueror Kālacakra, is formed. That moment until the generation of the emblems is a time correlating with the first three months of development in the womb, known as the months of ignorance, volition, and consciousness.

The ways that various parts of the body of the main deity correlate with outer and inner phenomena are as follows. The single body correlates with a single inner solar day of twelve lagna[32] wind movements and outwardly to a single year. The two feet of Kālacakra correlate inwardly with the two sets of six lagna wind movements and outwardly to the passing of the two sets of six months. Three throats correlate inwardly with three sets of four lagna wind movements and outwardly with the three sets of four months in a year. Four faces correlate inwardly with four sets of three lagna wind movements and outwardly with the four sets of three months in a year. The six shoulders that stretch from the east to the west correlate inwardly with the six sets of two lagna wind movements and outwardly with the six sets of two months in a year. The twelve upper arms correlate inwardly with the twelve lagna wind movements and outwardly with the twelve months of a year. Twenty-four lower arms correlate inwardly with twenty-four half lagna wind movements and outwardly with twenty-four half months in a year. The 360 joints of the fingers correlate internally with the 360 breaths that make up 1/60 of the 21,600 breaths of one day. Externally they correlate with the

360 days of a year.[33] [235] There are 360 joints because each of the twenty-four hands has five fingers and each of the fingers has three joints.

By meditating upon the correlation of the parts of the Kālacakra body with inner and outer phenomena, the mind becomes ripe for the creation of a completion-stage practice that will actually render these two bases free of obscuration. The completion-stage practice produces the resultant Kālacakra body, which is meditated upon at this point of practice and whose divisions or parts are the purified aspects of the inner and outer years, months, days, and their constituent parts as mentioned above. Therefore the feet of Kālacakra that are meditated upon at this point of practice, and that stand in a position of sport or play upon the terrified forms of Māra and Rudra, are the feet of resultant Kālacakra. One foot stands upon the four māras—the aggregates, afflictions, death, and the desire god Kāma—and the other upon the attachment, resentment, ignorance, pride, and jealousy symbolized by Rudra. The two feet symbolize the actualization of nondwelling nirvana, in which samsara and nirvana are as one.

These features of the body also illustrate how the yoga of the completion stage is produced from this ripening of the mindstream. The deity seats comprising the moon, sun, and Kālāgni illustrate the right, left, and central channels, which are areas of penetrative focusing within the completion stage. The conch and Rudra on the Kālāgni seat illustrate the breath flowing from the left and right channels. The right leg extended in a position of sport and standing upon the moon, sun, and Kālāgni, with its conch and Rudra, illustrates the winds of the right and left channels and the red and white bodhicitta flowing into and held in the central channel. The winds and red and white bodhicitta held in the central channel causes the white bodhicitta to stabilize at the crown, which is symbolized by the white and bent left leg. The red bodhicitta stabilized at the tip of the jewel is illustrated by the extended red right leg. With the white and red bodhicitta stabilizing at the crown and the jewel, the consciousness transforms into supreme and unchanging bliss, and this is symbolized by the body of Kālacakra being blue from the top of the thighs upward. The supreme and unchanging bliss is actually induced by the yoga of recollection, where an empty form in the aspect of father-and-mother embrace arises. [236] This is illustrated by the conqueror Kālacakra embraced by Viśvamātā in father-and-mother union.

From the perfection of these completion-stage yogas comes the resultant Kālacakra body, and the purified phenomena, as illustrated by the different parts of this body, will be the inner and outer time divisions explained above.

The male and female tathāgatas and so forth correlating with the remaining period of growth in the womb

This has four points:

1. The male and female tathāgatas and the five wrathful guardians correlate with the increase in the womb during the fourth, or name-and-form, month of growth

After the generation of the śakti goddesses, vases, and emblems, the principal deity emanates Akṣobhya and consort, which then enter the principal deity's body. Then Vajradhātvīśvarī embraced by Vajrasattva is emanated and enters the consort Viśvamātā's body. Then the four male and four female tathāgatas and the five wrathful guardians are generated. This process correlates with the growth of the body within the womb during the time of the fourth month, known as name-and-form month.

2. The generation of the male and female bodhisattvas correlates with the expansion of the womb during the fifth and sixth, or six sources and contact, months

After the five wrathful guardians have been generated, Khagarbha and the other five male bodhisattvas with consorts are generated. Sparśavajrā and the other female bodhisattvas with their consorts are also generated. This process correlates with the expansion of the body in the womb during the fifth, or six sources, month and the sixth, or contact, month. The six sources begin their development in the fifth month and are completed in the sixth.

This does not mean that a particular generation of a celestial figure correlates only with a particular development within the womb. Vajrasattva, Akṣobhya, Amoghasiddhi, Ratnasambhava, Amitāyus, and Vairocana [237] correlate with and are the purifiers of the six basic aggregates of gnosis, consciousness, volition, feelings, recognition, and form, respectively, and from the purified six aggregates will arise these six male tathāgatas. Similarly Prajñāpāramitā, Vajradhātvīśvarī, Tārā, Pāṇḍarā, Māmakī, and Locanā correlate with and are the purifiers of the six basic elements of gnosis, space, air, fire, water, and earth respectively. From the six purified elements will arise the six female tathāgatas. The five wrathful guardians correlate with

and are purifiers of the five basic faculties, and the five wrathful guardians will arise from the purified faculties. Vajrapāṇi, Khagarbha, Kṣitigarbha, Lokeśvara, Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhī, and Samantabhadra correlate with and are purifiers of the six basic sense faculties, or inner sources, of ear, nose, eye, tongue, body, and mind. From the six purified inner sources of consciousness arise these six male bodhisattvas. Similarly Śabdavajrā, Sparśavajrā, Rasavajrā, Rūpavajrā, Gandhavajrā, and Dharmadhātuvajrā correlate with and purify the six basic outer sources of sound, tangibles, taste, form, smell, and mental phenomena. From the six purified outer sources will come the above six female bodhisattvas.

3. The generation of the speech-mandala yoginīs correlates with the growth in the womb during the seventh, or feeling, month

After the figures of the mind mandala have been generated, the seventy-two yoginīs of the speech mandala, such as Carcikā and so forth, are generated. This process correlates with the growth in the womb seven months after conception during the feelings month. Furthermore the seventy-two goddesses of the speech mandala correlate with the sixty-four channel petals of the navel channel plus the eight channel petals on the second rim of the throat cakra, which have split off and doubled from the first four petals of that cakra. These seventy-two channel petals and seventy-two goddesses are phenomena to be purified and purifiers respectively. From the purified channel petals come the seventy-two goddesses. [238] This correlation is due to the speech mandala itself correlating with the square area formed between the throat and the navel.

4. The generation of the 360 lunar-day deities correlates with growth in the womb during the eighth, or grasping, month

After the emanation of the speech-mandala yoginīs, the 360 deities of the lunar days are generated within the body mandala. They correlate with the growth of the body within the womb during the period of the eighth month after conception. These 360 deities of the days also correlate with the channels of the action-faculty cakras, as opposed to the activity wheels, found within the hands and feet. On each of the twelve major limb joints, there are thirty channels. Of these, twenty-eight channels correlate with the twenty-eight entourage deities of the days. The two remaining channel

petals correlate with the main deities in father-and-mother aspect in the center of the lotus. The 360 deities also correlate with the 360 lunar days[34] of an external year. The inner and outer phenomena of the channels and lunar days are the basic phenomena to be purified. The deities of the lunar days are the purifiers. From the purified outer and inner lunar days and from the purified channels come the 360 deities of the days.

The major joints of arm and leg comprise one joint between shoulder and upper arm, one between upper and lower arm, and one between lower arm and hand, making six joints on the arms. On the legs there is a joint between the hip and the thigh, between the thigh and the lower leg, and between the lower leg and the foot, making six joints on the legs. These twelve major joints are known as action-faculty cakras. The reason is that these major joints are action faculties that initiate activities. Similarly the sixty joints of the twenty digits of hands and feet are known as activity cakras, because the joints of hands and feet engage in the activities of taking, going, and so forth. Each of twenty digits of the hands and legs has three joints, and each joint has six channels, to make a total of 360. These channels correlate with the deities of the days and are the basic phenomena to be purified by them. The deities of the lunar days are the purified channels.

The correlation between purifier and phenomena to be purified can be broken down in more detail. [239] The thirty deities of the lunar month Caitra correlate with the thirty channels of the cakra on the joint between the left upper arm and lower arm. The five joints from the middle joint of the little finger of the left hand to the middle joint of the left thumb each contain six channels, and the thirty deities of Caitra also correlate with these thirty channels.

There is a similar correlation between the lunar-day deities of the month of Vaiśākha and the thirty channels of the cakra between the right lower arm and right hand, as well as the thirty channels comprising the six channels on each of the joints from the upper joint of the right thumb to the upper joint of the right little finger. The lunar-day deities of the month of Jyeṣṭha correlate with the thirty channels of the cakra on the joint between the left lower arm and the left hand, as well as with the thirty channels of the five upper joints from the left little finger to the left thumb. The lunar-day deities of the month of Aṣaḍha correlate with the thirty channels of the cakra on the joint between the right hip and right thigh, as well as with the thirty channels of the lower joints from the big toe to the little toe of the right foot. The thirty lunar-day deities of the month of Śrāvana correlate

with the channels of the joint between the left thigh and left hip, as well as with the channels of the lower joints running from the little toe to the big toe of the left foot. The lunar-day deities of the month of Bhādra correlate with the channels of the joint between the thigh and the calf of the right leg, as well as with the thirty channels of the middle toe joints that run from the big toe to the little toe of the right foot. The lunar deities of the month of Aśvinī correlate with the channels of the joint between the thigh and the calf of the left leg, and with the channels that run across the left foot from the middle joint of the little toe to the middle joint of the big toe. The lunar-day deities of the month of Kārttikā correlate with the channels of the joint between the calf and foot of the right leg, and with the channels of the upper joints of the toes of the right foot from the big toe to the little. The lunar-day deities of the month of Mṛigaśira correlate with the channels of the joint that lies between the calf and the foot of the left leg, and with those that run across the left foot from the upper joint of the little toe to the upper joint of the big toe. The lunar-day deities of Puṣya correlate with the channels of the joint between the right shoulder and right upper arm, and with those of the lower joints that stretch from the thumb to the little finger of the right hand. The lunar-day deities of Maghā correlate with the channels of the joint between the left shoulder and left upper arm, and with the channels of the bottom joints of the fingers of the left hand running from the little finger to the thumb. [240] The lunar-day deities of Phālguna correlate with the channels of the joint between the right upper and lower arm, and with the channels of the middle finger joints that run from the thumb to the little finger of the right hand.

As explained previously, the correlation between the deities and channels above is one of purifier and phenomenon to be purified, and the above lunar-day deities are the purified forms of the channels. The following doubt can arise here. Surely there is agreement on the channels to be purified and the lunar-day deities that purify them, as well as which deities are of which months? However the Methods of Accomplishment chapter explains that the *ca* consonant group with short vowels enter and emerge from the winds in reverse order to create the lunar-day deities of Caitra and that the Vaiśākha lunar-day deities emerge from the winds in forward order from the *ca* group of consonants with the five long vowels plus the *visarga*.[35] This contrasts with the *Great Commentary* on the sixty-seventh verse of the Inner chapter, which says:

> Similarly on the joint of the right lower arm are the channels of Caitra, and on the joint of the left lower arm are the channels of Vaiśākha.[36]

This quote, which continues with extensive explanation, says that the lunar days of Caitra are to be applied to the channels of the right upper and lower arm joint, and that the lunar days of Vaiśākha are to be applied to the channels of the joint between the left upper and lower arm. It also states that the Caitra lunar-day seed syllables are of the *ca* consonant group, with five long vowels plus the *visarga,* and that they enter the winds in forward order, and that the Vaiśākha lunar-day seed syllables are of the *ca* consonant group with five short vowels plus the *anusvāra,*[37] and that they enter the winds in reverse order. How can these two not be contradictory? This is a very valid doubt, and the reason why it is not contradictory will be well explained.

First of all, understand this. The thirty zodiacal days from when the mean sun enters the house of Aries until it enters the house of Taurus are to be applied to the thirty channels of the left elbow joint. Similarly the days of Taurus are applied to the channels of the right wrist joint. The days of Gemini are applied to the channels of the left wrist joint. [241] The days of Cancer are applied to the channels of the right hip joint. The days of Leo are applied to the channels of the left hip joint. The days of Virgo are applied to the channels of the right knee joint. The days of Libra are applied to the channels of the left knee joint. The days of Scorpio are applied to the channels of the right ankle joint. The days of Sagittarius are applied to the channels of the left ankle joint. The days of Capricorn are applied to the channels of the right shoulder joint. The days of Aquarius are applied to the channels of the left shoulder joint. The thirty zodiacal days of the mean sun entering the house of Pisces are applied to the thirty channels of the right elbow joint.

How that is taught in the *Great Commentary* can be found in its text on the sixty-seventh verse of the Inner chapter of the *Condensed Tantra:*

> Among them, on the joint of the right shoulder and upper arm, are the thirty channels of the thirty-day division of Capricorn.[38]

This teaches that the thirty zodiacal days of Capricorn are to be applied to the channels of the right shoulder joint. The *Great Commentary* continues on the sixty-eighth verse:

> The divisions of days of Maghā and the passage of Capricorn...[39]

Thus the house of Capricorn and Maghā are linked. On the same verse, the *Great Commentary* continues:

> Here Phālguna and the passage of Aquarius are the thirty channels of the faculty cakra of the joint between the left shoulder and upper arm.[40]

Thus the house of Aquarius and the month Phālguna are paired, and both are applied to the left shoulder joint. Similarly the house of Pisces is paired with Caitra, Aries with Vaiśākha, Taurus with Jyeṣṭha, Gemini with Asaḍha, Cancer with Śrāvana, Leo with Bhādra, Virgo with Aśvinī, Libra with Kārttikā, Scorpio with Mṛigaśira, and Sagittarius with Puṣya. Moreover the *Great Commentary* continues on the sixty-seventh verse:

> On the joint of the left shoulder and upper arm are the thirty channels of the thirty-day division of Phālguna.[41]

The text continues, "Caitra is on the right upper arm joint," "Vaiśākha is on the joint of the left upper arm," [242] "Jyeṣṭha is on the joint of the right lower arm and hand," "Aṣaḍha is on the joint of the left lower arm and hand," "Śrāvana is on the joint of the right hip and thigh," "Bhādra is on the joint of the left hip and thigh," "Aśvinī is on the joint of the right thigh and calf," "Kārttikā is on the joint of the left thigh and calf," "Mṛigaśira is on the joint of the right calf and foot," and "on the joint of the left foot and calf are thirty channels of the nature of the thirty days of Puṣya."

If the earlier and later passages from the *Great Commentary* on the pairing of zodiacal months and lunar months[42] are compared, it can be seen that they verify the way the houses linked with the channels of the twelve major joints of the arms and legs have been explained here. This can be taken as a basis. Lunar months are either waxing or waning-led.[43] On the basis of being waning-led, the way that lunar months and zodiac months are paired is that the house of Aries is paired with Vaiśākha and so forth, as taught by the *Great Commentary* above. When that occurs, it is taught that the *ca* consonant group with the five short vowels plus the *anusvāra* enter the winds in reverse order as the seed syllables of the zodiacal days of Aries, and

that these same seed syllables are those of the lunar-day deities of Vaiśākha. Similarly the seed syllables of the zodiacal days of Pisces are explained as those of the *ca* consonant group with the five long vowels plus the *visarga* entering the winds in forward order, while the same syllables are those of the lunar-day deities of Caitra.

But isn't it possible to ascertain definitive sets of seed syllables for the lunar days and zodiacal days? There are no fixed seed syllables. The explanations from the sixty-seventh verse of the Inner chapter describe the seed syllables of the days belonging to the period of the gradual disintegration of the channels that begins three years and three months before the timely end of a hundred-year life. As this channel disintegration is a sign of oncoming death, it is a disintegration brought on by the elements gradually withdrawing. The consonants disappear beginning with the *ka* group, and from the major joints of the arms and legs, [243] the channels of the right shoulder and upper arm joint are the first to die, followed by those of the left shoulder joint, those of the right elbow joint, and so on, alternating right and left as far as the channels of the left ankle.

The channels of the joints on the right arm and leg are those of wisdom. In the process of dying, their seed-syllable consonants are therefore stacked, the consonant groups are in forward order, and they enter the winds with the long vowels plus *visarga* in reverse order. The channels of the left arm and leg are method channels, and the consonant groups therefore are single, in reverse order, and they enter the winds with the short vowels plus *anusvāra* in forward order.

This can be illustrated with an example. The stacked syllables *kkāḥ, kkḷīḥ kkā, kkī, kkū, kkṛī, kkī, kkā,* together with the same vowels on each the consonants *kha, ga, gha,* and *ṅa* to make thirty syllables in total, are applied to the thirty channels of the right shoulder joint. Likewise, on the channels of the left shoulder joint are the single syllables *ṅa, ṅi, ṅṛi, ṅu, ṅḷi,* and *ṅaṃ* plus similar groups made up of the consonants *gha, ga, kha,* and *ka,* to make thirty in total. On the channels of the right elbow joint are the long-vowel stacked consonants of the *ca* group. On those of the left elbow joint are the short-vowel single syllables of the *ca* group. On the channels of the right wrist joint are the long stacked *ṭa* group syllables. On the channels of the left wrist joint are short single syllables of the *ṭa* group. On the channels of the right hip joint are the long stacked syllables of the *pa* group. On those of the left hip joint are the short single *pa* group syllables. On the channels of the right knee joint are the long stacked syllables of the *ta* group. On those of

the left knee joint are the short single *ta* group syllables. On the channels of the right ankle joint are the long stacked syllables of the *sa* group, while on those of the left ankle joint are the short single *sa* group syllables.

The commentary from the sixty-seventh verse of the Inner chapter is in the context of channel dissolution at the end of a completed life[44] and also in the context of the houses being applied to a waning-led month. Therefore the lunar deities of Vaiśākha are assigned to the *ca* group of consonants entering the winds in reverse order and with short vowels plus *anusvāra* in forward order. [244] The lunar deities of Caitra are assigned to the *ca* group of consonants entering the winds in forward order with long vowels plus *visarga* in reverse order.

The first channels of the action-faculty cakras to die at the end of a completed life are those of the right shoulder joint. Of the consonant groups the first is the *ka* group. Death is a withdrawal process, and so the consonants of the elements of earth, water, fire, air, and space are of the *ka* group in forward order, while the five vowels of those elements beginning with *ḷī* are in reverse order. Finally the *visarga* of the gnosis element sinks into the winds. When the houses are assigned to a waning-led lunar month, the syllables of the channels, house days, and lunar months are as explained above. However the explanation of the lunar-day deity emanation taught in this section of the text is different. So what is the difference? The lunar-day deity emanation as taught in this part of the text begins with the emanation of the lunar-day deities of Caitra. They emanate in the creation order of the elements, which are in a state of inactive absorption, as space, air, fire, water, and earth, respectively. The houses also are assigned to a waxing-led month. Those are the differences.

The thirty days of the house of Aries, the thirty lunar days of a waxing-led Caitra, the thirty channels of the left upper and lower arm joint, and the thirty channels in five groups of six from the middle joint of the left little finger to the middle joint of the left thumb are those of the air element. Its syllable group, therefore, is *ca*. Because this process begins with the creation of the elements, the *ca* group is in reverse order. Between method and wisdom it belongs to the method sphere, and its vowels—*a, i, ṛi, u, ḷī, aṃ*—therefore are short and in forward order.

Similarly the thirty house days of Taurus, the thirty lunar days of the waxing-led Vaiśākha, the thirty channels of the action-faculty cakra of the joint between right lower arm and hand, the thirty activity-wheel channels in five groups of six on the upper joints of the right hand running

from the thumb to the little finger, are also of the air element and are assigned to the *ca* syllable group. [245] The elements on the right of the body, of the wisdom sphere, begin from the withdrawal process, and the *ca* consonant group, therefore, is in forward order. The vowels, plus *visarga,* are long and in reverse order.

From this example, therefore, one can know that the zodiacal days, the lunar days of a waxing-led month, the channels of action-faculty cakra and activity-cakra joints, and the consonant groups assigned to the left are all in reverse order, whereas those assigned to the right are in forward order. On the consonants in reverse order, the vowels are short, while the consonants in forward order have long vowels.

Of the houses in this section, Aries is first. Of the lunar months Caitra is first. Of the consonant groups the *ca* group is first. Of the withdrawal and creation of the elements, creation comes first. Of the vowels the short vowels come first. Of the channels of the action faculty cakras situated at the joints, the channels of the left upper and lower arm joint are first. Of the activity-cakra channels, those spread across the middle joints of the left hand from the little finger to the thumb are first. After this group comes Taurus and the other houses and Vaiśākha and the other lunar months.

The lunar months and zodiacal months are assigned to the consonant groups from *ca* to *ka.* On the odd-numbered houses and months, the consonants enter the winds in reverse order with short vowels in forward order. On the even-numbered houses and months, the consonants enter the winds in forward order with long vowels in reverse order. This is not difficult to understand.

Concerning the sequence of the channels for the various correlations, those of the left elbow joint are followed by those of the right wrist joint. Then come those of the left wrist joint, followed by the right hip joint, the left hip joint, the right knee joint, the left knee joint, [246] the right ankle joint, the left ankle joint, the right shoulder joint, the left shoulder joint, and the right elbow joint.

When correlation is made in this order, the channels on the left, starting from those of the left shoulder joint to those of the left ankle joint, are assigned the odd-numbered houses of Aquarius, Aries, Gemini, Leo, Libra, and Sagittarius, respectively, as well the odd-numbered lunar months of Maghā, Caitra, Jyeṣṭha, Śrāvana, Aśvinī, and Mṛigaśira. The consonant groups on the left run from *ka* to *sa* and enter the winds in reverse order with short vowels in forward order.

The joint channels on the right run from those of the right elbow joint, down to those of the ankle and up to the channels of the right shoulder joint. They host the even-numbered houses of Pisces, Taurus, Cancer, Virgo, Scorpio, and Capricorn, as well as the even-numbered lunar months of Phālguna, Vaiśākha, Aṣaḍha, Bhādra, Kārttikā, and Puṣya. The consonant groups run from *ka* to *sa* and enter the winds in forward order with long vowels in reverse order.

Also, when the lunar-day deities emanate, the order of emanation is from Caitra to Phālguna. The lunar-day deities of the odd-numbered months emanate from their respective consonant groups that have entered the winds in reverse order with short vowels in forward order. Those of the even-numbered months emanate from their respective consonant groups that have entered the winds in forward order with long vowels in reverse order.

The reasons for the above are as follows. The left channel is the channel of seminal fluid and of the moon. Similarly the channels of the action-faculty cakras and activity cakras on the left, the odd-numbered houses, the odd-numbered months, and the lunar-day deities of the odd-numbered months are all moon and seminal fluid phenomena. Between method and wisdom they belong to the realm of method, and so their individual seed-syllable consonant groups enter the winds in reverse order with short vowels in forward order. [247] Also the elements correlating with these channels and other phenomena through to the lunar-day deities are in their creation order of space, air, fire, water, and earth. In terms of the major elements, *ka* is space, *ca* is air, *ṭa* is fire, *pa* is water, *ta* is earth, and *sa* is gnosis. In terms of the minor elements, *ṅa* is the space of space, *gha* is the air of space, *ga* is the fire of space, *kha* is the water of space, and *ka* is the earth of space. Likewise the sequence runs from *ña* as the space of air to *ca* as the earth of air. *Ṇa* is the space of fire, and so on, to *ṭa* being the earth of fire. *Ma* is the space of water, continuing on to *pa* as the earth of water. *Na* is the space of earth, continuing on to *ta* as the earth of earth. *Kṣa* is the space of gnosis, continuing in sequence to *sa* as the earth of gnosis.

In terms of the major elements, the channels of the action-faculty cakras on the left elbow joint and those on the right wrist joint, the channels of the activity cakras on the middle joints of the left fingers and those on the upper joints of the right fingers, the two houses Aries and Taurus, the lunar months Caitra and Vaiśākha, and the lunar deities Rakṣā plus entourage and Vāyu plus entourage, are all of the element air. Similarly each pairing of channels, houses, lunar months, and lunar deities, in the order explained

above, correlate with the remaining elements of fire, water, earth, gnosis, and space.

In terms of the minor elements, those of the sphere of method are in the minor-element creation order. Therefore the consonant groups enter the winds in reverse order, while the vowels are in the order of space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis, entering in forward order.

The houses, lunar months, and lunar-day deities applied to the channels on the right are the phenomena of blood and sun, and therefore are of the sphere of wisdom. [248] The arrangement of the seed syllables, the withdrawal order of the major and minor elements, and the length of the vowels, which are long because wisdom is twice that of method, can all be known by referring to the above explanations.

In the Inner chapter and Realms chapter it is explained that because wisdom is twice the length of method, the consonants are also written as stacked doubles. However, here in this section, the generation of the lunar-day deities is assigned to the bright half of the month and their growth to the dark half. Therefore the lunar days compared to the house days are of the sphere of method and are phenomena of the moon. Therefore, even when the consonants enter the winds with long vowels, they are not stacked but are single.

21. Analysis of the Colors of the Lunar-Day Deities

At this point the colors of the lunar-day deities need to be examined. This has two outlines:

1. Its presentation in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter
2. How that presentation has produced two different explanations

Its presentation in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter

The *Great Commentary* on the thirty-third verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> "Outside of that, the sun lotuses," means that outside of that are the twelve lotuses of the body mandala. To the right of the eastern gate and so forth on the walls of the fence, like Khagarbha and the others, Nairtya and so on are numbered.[45]

This establishes the directions and how the deities are placed on the walls of the fence. The text continues:

> "Asura" means Nairtya, placed to the right of the eastern gate.[46] "Cala" refers to Vāyu, who is in the southeast. Yama is to the left of the southern gate. On the right is Agni. In the southwest is Ṣaṇmukha. To the left of the western gate is Yakṣa and to the right is Śakra.[47] In the northwest is Brahmā. To the left of the northern gate is Rudra, to the right Samudra. In the northeast is Gaṇapati. To the left of the eastern gate is Viṣṇu. All have four hands.[48]

This passage teaches very clearly the positions of the lunar-day deities. The text continues with commentary on the thirty-fourth verse:

> In the two right hands of each of these twelve are implements. In the first of Nairtya, a sword and a curved knife.[49]

And so on until:

> In the first of Viṣṇu a wheel, and in the second a club.

[249] Up to this point the passage is teaching the implements in the right hands. The text continues:

> Then on the left, in the first hand of Nairtya a shield, and in the second a skull.

And so on until:

> In the first of Vāsudeva[50] a lotus, and in the second a conch of five lives. These are, in order, the implements held in the two left hands.[51]

This passage teaches the symbols held in the left hands. In the same section, the text states:

> The lunar days of Caitra are on the petals of the Nairtya lotus.

And so on until:

> The lunar days of Phālguna are on Yama.[52]

This passage explains which lunar-day deities of which month are the entourage of which of the twelve great gods. The text continues:

> The colors, implements, and forms of the goddesses are similar.[53]

The colors and so forth of the female deity entourage[54] are those of the central deity. On the eighty-fourth verse of the *Condensed Tantra*, the *Great Commentary* says:

> This teaches the seed syllables of Śakra and the others of the body mandala. The syllable *tam* is Śakra.

And so on until:

> These are the seed syllables of the lunar-day deities.[55]

This passage numbers the lunar-day deities as 360, gives the seed syllables from which they emanate, the names of each of the deities, which lunar-day goddess sits on which petal of the lotus, and how these deities emanating from their individual syllables correlate with particular months.

How that presentation has produced two different explanations

Abhayākaragupta has the lunar-day deities of the east and southeast[56] as black, those of the south and southwest red, those of the north and northeast white, and those of the west and northwest as yellow. Specifically he says that Rudra and entourage, who are the lunar-day deities of Mṛigaśira to the left of the northern door, are white. Kubera[57] and entourage, the lunar-day deities of Puṣya to the left of the western gate, are yellow. Viṣṇu and entourage, the lunar-day deities of Maghā sitting to the left of the eastern gate, are black. [250] Yama and entourage, the lunar-day deities of Phālguna to the left of the southern gate, are red.

According to the tradition of Sherap Sengé, the great Kālacakrapāda of Rong,[58] and others, these groupings of deity colors are wrong. They refute the above presentation because in their words, the fifty-eight lunar-day deities[59] of Mṛigaśira and Puṣya are of the gnosis element, are created from the *sa* consonant group, and are blue in color. The fifty-eight lunar-day deities of Maghā and Phālguna are of the space element, develop from the *ka* consonant group, and are green. This assertion they back up with scripture and logic. The scripture comes from the *Great Commentary* on the seventeenth verse of the *Gnosis* chapter:

> Now the generation of the Akṣobhya class is taught. "From the emptiness of the pure crown" means that from the pure aggregate of consciousness and the pure element of space within the crown cakra arises the great Vajradhara Akṣobhya sealed by gnosis and green in color. Similarly Vajradhātvīśvarī, Uṣṇīṣa, Vajrahūṃkāra, Raudrākṣī, Khrodinī, Vajrapāṇi, Dharmadhātuvajrā, Viṣṇu, Yama, and the nāga Jaya, emanate from the upper

> face. They are of many qualities, granting siddhis of every activity, marked by the sign of the vajra, sealed by Akṣobhya, arising as green from the color of space.[60]

Therefore because Viṣṇu and Yama are of the major element of space, their color is "the color of space," or green. The passage continues:

> From the purified aggregate of gnosis and the purified element of gnosis within the secret cakra arises a blue Vajrasattva marked by a three-pointed vajra sealed by consciousness. Similarly Prajñānīla, Sumbha, Vajravega, Atinīla, Khrodinī, Īśvarī, Rudra, Jambhala, Samantabhadra, Śabdavajrā, and the nāga Vijaya, all of the gnosis element, these benefactors, causes of the liberation of sentient beings, emanate from the phenomena of gnosis in the lower foundation, arising in the color blue from the dharmadhātu gnosis and sealed by Vajrasattva in the form of a blue Akṣobhya in order to accomplish every activity.[61]

[251] This says that Rudra and Jambhala, or Kubera, are blue in color. Moreover the previous passage from the Methods of Accomplishment chapter clearly lays out the twelve great deities with their number of hands, faces, hand implements, and where and in what direction of the wall they are placed. With the words "like Khagarbha and the others, Nairtya and so on are numbered," the colors of these twelve deities in their respective places are clearly stated as being similar to the colors of the twelve male and female bodhisattvas in their respective places in the mind mandala. Therefore the deities Viṣṇu, Yama, Rudra, and Kubera positioned on the left of the four gates are green and blue, as explained above, in the same way that the male and female bodhisattvas Vajrapāṇi, Dharmadhātuvajrā, Samantabhadra, and Śabdavajrā in the mind mandala are also green and blue. If that is not the meaning of the above passages, then the line "like Khagarbha and the others," which teaches a similarity to Khagarbha and other bodhisattvas, and which is not taught elsewhere in this section, would become meaningless, because except for the colors of the lunar-day deities, all other features such as their positions in the wall being similar to those of Khagarbha and so forth are dealt with and clearly taught in this section of text.

Furthermore the *Great Commentary* says on the forty-second verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> In the colored-powder mandala all the goddesses who dwell in space and below, whoever they may be, are below the portals of the east and west gates. The direction protectors and so forth are meditated upon as dwelling in the places as taught. The four, Samantabhadra and others, on the left of the gate are similar.[62]

Therefore when the powder mandala is drawn, [252] the green and blue space-element and gnosis-element goddesses dwelling above in space and in the lower regions are all placed under the east and west portals. To resolve a doubt as to whether the green and blue space-element and gnosis-element deities among the upper and lower direction protectors Viṣṇu, Rudra, Yama, and Kubera, and the male and female bodhisattvas Samantabhadra and so forth, should be visualized as being above and below like the upper and lower goddesses, the passage continues, "The direction protectors and so forth are meditated upon as dwelling in the places as taught. The four, Samantabhadra and others, on the left of the gate are similar." This illustrates that although Samantabhadra and so forth and Viṣṇu and so forth have been taught as being upper and lower gods, when meditating on the sādhana, one should meditate on their positions as taught in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter. Therefore explaining Viṣṇu and the others as being upper and lower gods establishes these four as being green and blue as previously explained. This is because the space-element upper deities of Kālacakra are green and the lower gnosis-element goddesses are blue.

The sādhana composed by Sādhuputra states:

> These are in the south. Left of the east on a red garuda and lotus the letter *kam* and a wheel, from which arises a green Viṣṇu in embrace with Lakṣmī, who is similar to Yakṣa.[63]

Also:

> From the letter *sam* and a trident arises a blue Hari with a trident, arrow, and a *khaṭvāṅga*[64] staff.[65]

This text therefore states that Viṣṇu is green and Hari, or Rudra, is blue. In the same text, where one would expect Yakṣa to be similar to Rudra, the sādhana states, "Yakṣa holds a jewel, club, mongoose, and lotus and is like Viṣṇu," thereby explaining that Kubera, or Yakṣa, is of a color similar to Viṣṇu. Where one would expect Yama to be similar to Viṣṇu, the text has,

"Yama, similar to Hari," thereby explaining that Yama is similar in color to Rudra. These must be misprints or mistranslation. [253] For example, in what should read, "From vajras and from the letter *a* arises Śabdavajrā, of the nature of sound, together with Vajrapāṇi," the sādhana reads, "similar to Vajrapāṇi,"[66] thereby stating that Śabdavajrā is similar to Vajrapāṇi.[67]

Therefore Sādhuputra also explains Viṣṇu as green and Rudra as blue, whereas in this section on the lunar-day deities, there is no mention at all of Viṣṇu as black, Rudra as white, Kubera as yellow, and Yama as red. This damages the former assertion. They may reply that it may not be mentioned in this section on the lunar-day deities but it is taught elsewhere, and so cannot we infer, in this section on lunar-day deities, that also Viṣṇu is black and so forth and that is the reason it was not taught in this particular section? In the Initiation chapter, in the section on the protection wheel, the *Great Commentary* says:

> From *gha* and *ghā* arise Brahmā and Viṣṇu, green and blue. Brahmā is above the fence area and Viṣṇu below.[68]

This describes Viṣṇu as being blue and says that Viṣṇu is placed below. Therefore this accords with the gnosis element below being blue and with the lunar deity emanating from the gnosis *sa* consonant series as being blue. The *Great Commentary* continues:

> Similarly, in the south and southwest from *ḍhṛ* and *ḍhṛī*, Yama and Agni.[69]

This describes Yama as being red, which agrees with your[70] description of the lunar-day deity Yama and entourage as being red. However the protection-wheel Yama, which emanates from the syllable *ḍhṛī*, is of the fire element and is in the south. The lunar-day Yama and entourage is produced from the *ka* consonant series, is of the space element, and is a deity of the upper direction. Therefore they are similar in name only.

Furthermore the *Great Commentary* says:

> In the north and northeast from *bhu* and *bhū* come Samudra and Śaṅkara[71]

This passage talks of a white Rudra, which agrees with your assertion of a

white lunar-deity Rudra. However the Rudra, or Śaṅkara, of the protection wheel is produced from the syllable *bhū*, is of the water element, and is in the north. The lunar-day Rudra and his entourage emerges from the *sa* consonant group, is of the gnosis element, and is a god of the lower directions. They are, therefore, similar in name only. The same is true of Kubera. [254] They all arise in the colors of the element of their syllables.

Moreover Sādhuputra's sādhana says, "From the syllable *haḥ* and from a club arises a red Vārāhī and a white Śaṅkara,"[72] explaining that red Vārāhī is embraced by white Rudra. Similarly it is explained that white Rudrī is embraced by red Yama, and yellow Brahmāṇī is embraced by a black Hari,[73] or Viṣṇu. The white Rudra who embraces the feelings-aggregate Vārāhī is of the recognition aggregate, of the water element, and is therefore white. The Viṣṇu embracing the form-aggregate Brahmāṇī is of the volition aggregate, of the air element, and is therefore black. The Yama who embraces the recognition-aggregate Rudrī is of the feeling aggregate, of the fire element, and is therefore red. The *Great Commentary* says on the eighty-third verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> Vārāhī and Kaumārī are of the feeling aggregate. Those facing them are of the recognition aggregate and arise from the letter *u*. Aindrī and Brahmāṇī are goddesses of the form aggregate. Facing them are those of the volition aggregate, who arise from the syllable *e*. Rudrī and Lakṣmī are of the recognition aggregate, and those facing them are of the feeling aggregate, arising from the letter *ṛ*.[74]

Therefore, in the protection wheel, Viṣṇu is a protector of the lower directions and is therefore blue. Likewise the Rudra and the other figures of the protection wheel and the Rudra and other deities embracing the main female deities of the speech mandala are of elemental and directional colors determined by their individual syllables and major elements. In the same way, here in this section, the lunar-day deities must necessarily be of elemental and directional colors determined by their individual syllables and major elements. For example, in the Initiation chapter, the *Great Commentary* says, "Similarly, in the south and southwest from *ḍhṛ* and *ḍhṛī*, Yama and Agni."[75] On the basis of the minor elements, the syllable *dha* as the root of *ḍhṛ* is air, but the *ṭa* consonant group is predominant and deter-

mined as being of the major element of fire, thereby creating in that section a red Yama and Agni. Similarly, the text continues, "In the north and northeast from *bhu* and *bhū* come Samudra and Śaṅkara."[76] [255] The *bha* of the syllable *bhu* is space on the basis of the minor elements, but the *pa* consonant group predominates and is determined to be of the major water element, and so Samudra and Śaṅkara are posited as white.

Therefore, with the exception of the individual consorts of the main lunar-day deities, the thirty lunar deities are put in five groups. On the basis of the minor elements, the syllables of these five groups will produce varying elements. However, on the basis of the major elements, every syllable of the twenty-nine deities is the same, and apart from the consort of each lunar-day main deity, the colors of the twenty-nine are the same.

Using Abhayākaragupta's assertion, it is not much of a reason to say that Viṣṇu is black because when meditating on the sādhana and placing deities in the mandala he is in the east,[77] for the same would have to apply to the male and female bodhisattvas placed on the left of the gates of the mind mandala also. Therefore the main reason for his position must be that in the speech mandala there is a black Viṣṇu, a white Rudra, and a red Yama, all embracing the main female deities. Viṣṇu and the others who emanate embracing the main female deities of the speech mandala also emanate as the main deities of Phālguna and the other lunar months in the body mandala. Therefore Viṣṇu and the others as lunar-day deities, and Viṣṇu and the others embracing the main female deities of the speech mandala, must be similar in being black and so forth. This I think is the best reason.

Again, these two assertions are (1) that the colors of the lunar-day deities of Mṛigaśira, Puṣya, Maghā, and Phālguna are definitely green and blue or (2) that they are definitely black and so forth in accord with the colors of the directions. Our wise gurus (such as the great Sherap Rinchen) maintain that either position is acceptable. Nevertheless this is a topic to be thoroughly and honestly examined.

After the emanation of the lunar-day deities, [256] the wrathful male and female guardians are generated to correlate with the eighth "grasping" month of pregnancy, during which the channels of the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, the crown, and the anus are completed. After that, the nāgas and the fierce females generated in correlation with the ninth or "taking" month of pregnancy, when the twenty finger and toe channels are completed. The ten nāgas are the purified forms of the channels of the ten toes, and the ten ferocious females represent the purified forms of the chan-

nels of the ten fingers. The thirty-five million elemental spirits inhabiting the far regions of the air mandala correlate with the period in the ninth month of pregnancy when hair and body hair has grown.

This generation process, up to the emanation of the thirty-five million elemental spirits, correlates with the completion of a human body endowed with the six elements after nine months in the womb. It also represents the completion of the deity generation within the body, speech, and mind mandalas of the sovereign mandala as applied to the bases of purification. The *Great Commentary,* on the thirty-eighth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, states:

> Likewise the purified hair on head and body represented by the thirty-five million elemental spirits are born at the "far edges of movement," which means at the farther reaches of the air mandala. They are generated outside because hair is known to be on the skin at the far reaches of the body. In this way the body at the end of nine months and the collection of deities is complete.[78]

The offering goddesses of the mind mandala and the goddesses of desire and nondesire are generated here in the sovereign mandala, and it may be wondered if they are generated as deities of the body, speech, and mind mandalas correlating to particular bases of purification. It would appear that they are not applied to bases of purification in the same way that the terraced offering goddesses are in other mandalas, such as those of Guhyasamāja. This is because the emanation of the thirty-five million elemental spirits represents the completion of deity manifestation applied to the duration of pregnancy, and the mind-mandala offering goddess and the desire and nondesire goddesses are not mentioned in the *Great Commentary* as correlating with a period of pregnancy. [257] Moreover, if the deities generated within the sovereign mandala are to be applied to particular bases, they must be applied to the periods of pregnancy.

However the *Great Commentary* says on the forty-second verse:

> Then, in the nature of the ten channels of the heart, on terraces to the left and right of the four doors of the mind mandala, offering goddesses emanate. In the east the goddesses of scent and of garlands.[79]

This passage says that ten mind-mandala offering goddesses are purified forms of the ten channels at the heart cakra. However they cannot be correlated with the ten channels of the heart, because when the deities in the sovereign mandala are applied to various bases, each group of deities correlates with a particular month of pregnancy and to a stage of development in the womb. The ten channels at the heart develop before the sixty-four channels at the navel and eight channels at the throat, which correlate with the speech-mandala yoginīs. These offering goddesses, on the other hand, are generated after the elementals, as is stated by the words "Then, in the nature of" above.

Therefore the sum total of deities actually described in terms of their number of faces and hands in this section on the sovereign mandala is as follows. The main father and mother plus the eight śakti are ten. Four male tathāgatas are embraced by four female tathāgatas, and those four females are separately embraced by four male tathāgatas to make sixteen tathāgatas. This totals twenty-six deities. Six male bodhisattvas are embraced by six female bodhisattvas, and those six female bodhisattvas are embraced by six male bodhisattvas, to make twenty-four bodhisattvas,[80] which together with the ten father-and-mother wrathful guardians from the mind mandala makes thirty-four and brings the total to sixty. With the ten mind-mandala offering goddesses, this makes seventy mother-and-father deity figures. This is the number of deities in the mind mandala.

In the speech mandala each of the eight main goddesses is embraced by a god, making sixteen mother-and-father deities. Each of the main goddesses has an entourage of eight goddesses, making sixty-four and bringing the total to eighty. This totals 150 deities so far. The thirty-six desire goddesses make 186 deities up to and including the speech mandala.

There are the 360 lunar-day deities and twelve body-mandala wrathful guardians comprising six father-and-mother pairs, which makes 372 and 558 in total. [258] There are ten nāgas in mother-and-father union and ten fierce females also in mother-and-father union. This makes 598 deities. The thirty-six nondesire goddesses make 634. These are figures whose colors, numbers of hands, and faces are all clearly taught. The emanations of the thirty-five million elemental spirits are taught in a way that does not clarify the numbers of hand and faces. These are clearly described in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter in the section on the sovereign mandala. Furthermore it is taught that there are eleven deities in each of the eight cemeteries, to make eighty-eight figures in the cemeteries. This makes a

total of 722. Apart from the thirty-five million elemental spirits, these are the total number of deities in the complete body, speech, and mind mandalas of Kālacakra.

In terms of mind and body, "body" deities are generally green in the upper regions, blue in the lower regions, black in the east and southeast, red in the south and southwest, white in the north and northeast, and yellow in the west and northwest. "Mind" deities are the reverse. "Body" upper-region fathers embrace "mind" lower-region mothers, and "body" upper-region mothers embrace "mind" lower-region fathers. Those of the east and southeast and those of the west and northwest are method and wisdom respectively. Likewise those of the south and southwest and those of the north and northeast are method and wisdom respectively. Because of this, the green upper male and female deities are embraced by the blue lower female and male deities, and the blue lower male and female deities are embraced by the green upper female and male deities. Similarly the black male and female deities of the east and southeast are embraced by the yellow female and male deities of the west and northwest. The yellow deities of the west and northwest are embraced by the black deities of the east and southeast. The red deities of the south and southwest are embraced by the white deities of the north and northeast. The white deities of the north and northeast are embraced by the red deities of the south and southwest.

This is only a general explanation. More specifically the *Great Commentary,* on the seventy-fifth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> Similarly the great one, the master, the aggregate of gnosis and Viśvamātā, the element of gnosis, are body and mind for each other.[81]

[259] This means that the gnosis-aggregate Vajrasattva and the gnosis-element Viśvamātā Prajñāpāramitā are method and wisdom. The text continues, "Consciousness and the element of space," which means that the consciousness-aggregate Akṣobhya and the space-element Vajradhātvīśvarī are method and wisdom. Likewise the *Great Commentary,* on the fifty-fourth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, states when explaining how the samaya beings and gnosis beings become of one taste:

> Here, in the generation yoga, in the stages of generation, "consciousness is together with space," meaning together with Vajradhātvīśvarī, "within the central lotus," meaning the great bliss, and upon fire, moon, sun, Rāhu, and Kālāgni, the samaya being and the gnosis being come to be of one taste.[82]

The phrase "fire, moon, sun, Rāhu, and Kālāgni" is taken from the Shong translation. Other translations can be somewhat different.

It is taught that the consciousness-aggregate Akṣobhya, whose nature is the main deity, and the space-element Vajradhātvīśvarī are mother-and-father method and wisdom. Such a statement is made in terms of pervading consciousness and gnosis being fused together within the being of the main deity and are not statements made on the basis of individual method and wisdom where, for example, consciousness-aggregate Akṣobhya in the form of method embraces one of his family, such as space-element Vajradhātvīśvarī, in the form of wisdom. This is so because in the thinking of the hidden tantras, such as Guhyasamāja, Vairocana and Locanā, for example, embrace each other as same-family method and wisdom, whereas in Kālacakra thinking, method and wisdom involves mutual embracing between different families, while union within the same family is rejected. As the *Great Commentary* says:

> "From the mandala, for the sake of the highest bliss." This refers to union between different families.[83]

Of the 634 figures whose colors, hands, and faces are actually mentioned in this section from the tantra and commentary on the sovereign mandala, apart from the desire and nondesire goddesses, the colors, implements, positions, seats, and so forth of all of them are clearly described, [260] and they can be known in the same way as the colors of the lunar-day deities described in the discussion above.

The colors of the desire and nondesire goddesses[84] are the colors of the directions. Determining their hand implements in line with the implement symbols from which they are individually created, as the *Puṇḍarika Transmission Sadhana* has done[85] is in tune with the thinking of the tantra and commentary. The *Great Commentary* says:

> Therefore Vajra Śṛṅkhalā and the others go to their facing positions in families of the east and so forth. Because of the family, in the first right hand of Śṛṅkhalā is a sword.[86]

This quote explains that the reason why the implements of the first hands of the wrathful goddesses are swords, for instance, is because they belong to that particular family. Similarly, although the hand implements of the desire and nondesire goddesses are not clearly taught, they can be known from the implements of the first hand of the families from which they are born. So from which families are they born? This is clearly set out in the *Great Commentary* beginning from the line, "In the east born from Tārā, dividing into desire goddesses." Wherever a particular desire goddess is born, so the corresponding nondesire goddess is also born. How can the number of faces and hands be determined? If they are to be determined by whoever creates each goddess, then the numbers of hands and faces would vary. Therefore I think that Sādhuputra's assertion that they all have one face and two hands is correct. His sādhana says:

> In the offering substances to the left of the southern door are *ka, kha, ga, gha, ña* together with *visarga.* From these syllables, and from individual implements, arise five desire goddesses with two hands and rabbit[87] face.[88]

He also applies these descriptions to the nondesire goddesses.

In the *Great Commentary* it says:

> From Vajradhātvīśvarī comes the goddess Tribhavāprāṇāpahārinecchā. From Viśvamātā comes the goddess Utpādanaecchā.[89]

If these two were counted separately, as is quoted here, there would have to be thirty-eight desire goddesses. Therefore they should be counted as one. As the *Great Commentary* states:

> The thirty-seven desire goddesses are in the speech mandala, divided into their families, in their respective positions.[90]

[261] This states the number of desire goddesses to be thirty-seven. These two counted as one pervade all thirty-six and therefore are not counted in

the placement upon the mandala terraces. This is also applied to the nondesire goddesses. The line "divided into their families, in their respective positions" clearly teaches placement.

However the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission Sādhana* says:

> The desire and nondesire goddesses are presented here in forms similar to their creators, as was taught by Abhaya and Vibhūticandra.[91]

This means that desire and nondesire goddesses who are born from the *caṇḍālī*[92] should have the faces of dogs, pigs, and so forth.

22. Resolving Doubts Concerning the Process of Generation

There are a few further areas of doubt to be examined. These doubts can be put under four headings:

1. The generation of the main deities
2. The generation of the entourage deities
3. The seats of the deities
4. The number of deities on lotus seats

The generation of the main deities

Sādhuputra's sādhana states:

> From a completely formed white letter *aṃ* arises a mirrorlike gnosis moon mandala. From a completely formed red *āḥ* arises a sun mandala whose nature is the gnosis of equality.[93]

Thus the moon and sun, which are the bases for the placement of the vowels and consonants whose natures are the physical signs and marks of an enlightened being, arise from *aṃ* and *āḥ* respectively. Later scholars (such as the dharma master Kumāra) maintain that the moon arises from the thirty-two vowels and the sun from the consonants. Their sources come from the *Vajragarbha Commentary:*

> From the causes of a buddha's signs,
> the moon on which are thirty-two vowels.

Also:

> From *a* and so forth, from *ka* and so forth,
> the three realms made pure will arise, lord of men.[94]

[262] Also the Supreme and Unchanging Bliss summary says:

> On top of that, from the chain of vowels and chain of consonants the moon and the sun.[95]

Thus they assert their positions with scriptural authority. Rongpa Kālacakrapāda and his followers, as well as the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission Sādhana*,[96] maintain as actually taught in the *Great Commentary* that the moon and sun are not created from seed syllables. So who is right? Scholars have presented as scriptural authority the teaching that the phenomena of the three realms are produced from the letters *a* and *ka* and so forth, while the Supreme and Unchanging Bliss quote above teaches that the moon and sun seat of the main deity arises from the vowels and consonants. Therefore there is common ground in the scriptural authority. Moreover the Supreme and Unchanging Bliss summary also says:

> From *a* and so forth and *ka* and so forth, the moon and sun are produced by *ha* and *kṣa*.[97]

The moon is created from *ha* and the sun from *kṣa,* thereby explaining that the sun and moon arise from individual letters. The text continues:

> The moon mandala is of the nature of the letter *a* or the letter *ha*, and the sun mandala is of the nature of the letter *ra* or the letter *kṣa*.[98]

This quote explains that the moon and sun as seats of the main deity also arise from the letter *a* and *ra.* The *visarga* can be a development of either the letter *ra* or the letter *sa,* and therefore Sādhuputra's assertion that the sun is created from *āḥ* is correct. The syllable *aṃ* is a development of *āḥ,* and therefore his statement that the moon is created from *aṃ* is correct. The letter *aṃ* exists within the thirty-two vowels that are the causes of the thirty-two signs of a buddha, and therefore this conforms with the scriptural authority of the quote, "From the causes of a buddha's signs, the thirty-two vowels as the moon."[99]

In general, the sun and moon at this particular time should definitely arise from seed syllables, because at other times when the sun, moon, and so forth are created, they are created from seed syllables, and it is no

different here. Because of this Sādhuputra says that the moon and sun at this point arise from the letters *aṃ* and *āḥ*.

At the time of the main deity generation from the five enlightenments, Rongpa Kālacakrapāda and the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission Sādhana* do not develop the hand implement[100] out of *hūṃ*. [263] This accords with the literal meaning of the *Great Commentary*. The thinking of the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission* masters, however, is that the gnosis of analysis arises in the form of a vajra from the *hūṃ* in the center of the sun and moon marked with the consonants and vowels. *Illuminating Reality*, when explaining the "generation stage devoid of generation stage,"[101] expressed by verses such as the one beginning "Vowels and consonants in union"[102] in the section on making prostrations to the definitive Kālacakra, states:

> Prostration is to whom? To resultant Kālacakra. How does it differ? The union of moon and sun, meaning in embrace and marked by vowels and consonants, the placement of the seed syllable *hūṃ* and the letter *phaṭ* blocking the flow of the elements at the tip of the vajra, and the meditations of the hand implement formed from the syllable as taught by the phrase "and so forth," are all "abandoned."[103]

This passage speaks of a meditation in which the five enlightenments are created by the moon and sun in embrace, marked by the vowels and consonants, in the center of which a hand implement arises from the *hūṃ* seed syllable. This is also the thinking of the tantra because the tenth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the *Condensed Tantra* states:

> On moon and sun, the vowels *a* and so forth,
> the consonants *ka* and so forth, together with the vajra,
> and from the five, such as the mirrorlike,
> five light rays spread, pure light radiates.
> Meditate upon Kālacakra.[104]

Thus a meditation is taught in which moon and sun in embrace are marked with the vowels and consonants, and in their center is the vajra hand implement. Similarly the *Great Commentary*, on the seventy-third verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> The seed syllable creates the implement, the implement creates the deity, and this is understood at all times by the yogi. This is affirmed by the tantra.[105]

Sādhuputra's sādhana also, from "Then on top of that the letter *a*" up to "the eighty consonants,"[106] teaches the generation of the sun and moon marked by the vowels and consonants. Immediately after this line the sādhana continues:

> Then meditate that in their center is a blue letter *hūṃ,* from which arises a crossed vajra marked by *hūṃ* and which is of the nature of gnosis of analysis. Then meditate on all three blending as one, adorned with the letter *hi* of the nature of gnosis of accomplishment. Then every part of the body is complete, and the nature of the letter *haṃ* is the very pure gnosis of reality. This is the glorious Kālacakra explained below in the section on prostration. However the twenty-six armed one....[107]

[264] "Crossed vajra" and "twenty-six armed one" refer to Vajravega. The rest applies to the creation of the main deity at this particular time.

At this time the following occurs. Sun and moon marked with consonants and vowels are the manifest enlightenments arising from the mirror-like gnosis and the equality gnosis. In the center is a *hūṃ* from which arises a vajra marked with a *hūṃ* at its center. This is the enlightenment arising from the gnosis of analysis. The heart of this vajra together with the other previously mentioned manifest enlightenments, or alternatively, the heart of a vajra and *hūṃ* that has arisen from these manifest enlightenments blending into one, is "possessed of the letter *hi,*" meaning marked by the letter *hi.* This is the enlightenment of the gnosis of accomplishment. From that comes the conqueror Kālacakra, all body parts complete, together with the letter *haṃ.* This is enlightenment of the reality gnosis.

The above should be explained in connection with the tantra and commentary. The tantra states, "On moon and sun, the vowels *a* and so forth, the consonants *ka* and so forth, together with the vajra," to which the commentary remarks, "Moon and seminal fluid are with the vowels" and further, "Sun and blood are with the consonants."[108] This explains that the vowels and consonants are held on moon and sun bases. "Together with a vajra" indicates the vajra as a base. The commentary on this begins,

"Together with the gandharva letter *hūṃ*,"[109] indicating the *hūṃ* held in the vajra. With this in mind Sādhuputra says, "In their center is a blue letter *hūṃ* from which arises a crossed vajra marked by a *hūṃ*." This vajra and the other enlightenments, or the vajra arising from these enlightenments blending into one, are marked by a *hūṃ*. This vajra is that which "possesses," and the letter *hi* is that which is "possessed." On this the commentary says, "They become one together with the wind letter *hi*." Just as the moon and sun "possess" the vowels and consonants, the letter *hi* must have a base, and that has to be the vajra. [265] With this in mind Sādhuputra writes, "All three blend as one, adorned with the letter *hi* of the nature of the gnosis of accomplishment." From the vajra, the letter *hūṃ*, and the letter *hi* arises Kālacakra, every part of his body complete and marked by the letter *haṃ*. This is indicated by commentary:

> Then all parts of the body are complete, together with the consciousness syllable *haṃ*. This is the very pure gnosis of reality.[110]

Sādhuputra also says:

> Then every part of the body is complete, and the nature of the letter *haṃ* is the very pure gnosis of reality. This is the glorious Kālacakra explained below in the section on prostration. However the twenty-six armed one...

How the main deity is actually created from the five enlightenments is subject to much disagreement. However it has been settled by the strength of the explanations of the material from the tantra and commentary.[111]

The main deity Kālacakra that has been generated this way is meditated on as having the nature of Vajrasattva, the purified gnosis aggregate whose hands and faces, etc., are in the form of the main deity. In the section on the withdrawal of the main mother-and-father deities and the eight śakti, the *Great Commentary* says, "Together with mudrā, the complete Vajrasattva."[112] This indicates that the complete generation of the main deity is the complete Vajrasattva. This also teaches that the eight śakti are consorts of the main deity.

The generation of the entourage deities

Most Tibetan scholars say that Akṣobhya and so forth in the form of the mandala assembly enter the body of the main deity and are melted by the fire of great desire into the form of bodhicitta, which then flows from the vajra to fall into the lotus of the mother. There individual drops become the seed syllables of deities, which in turn transform into hand implements and finally into deities who emanate from the mother's lotus to take their places on their seats within the external mandalas. [266] Some scholars maintain that when generating the deities of the sovereign mandala, first the base mandala is created again within the lotus of the consort, and then the dependent deities are generated in this lotus mandala and not to an outside mandala. If they were emanated to an outside mandala, "this would mean that the samaya mandala would be complete, and the instruction to emanate a samaya mandala in the section on the sovereign activity would be incorrect." As verification of this assertion they quote, "Here in the lotus of one's consort" and so on. Moreover the *Great Commentary* says on the nineteenth verse of the *Condensed Tantra:*

> The melted moon emerges from one's vajra into the lotus of one's consort to transform into the mandala assembly of gods and goddesses, the full and complete base and dependents.[113]

They apparently think that "base and dependents" indicates that the mandala base, too, has to be created within the mother's lotus, and that the line "emerges from one's vajra into the lotus of one's consort" teaches that the dependent deities and the base mandalas are only created within the lotus and are not emanated to an outside mandala. To conclude from this that the meaning of the commentary is that from the drops falling into the mother's lotus, both mandala base and dependent deities must be created within the lotus seems like a good explanation, but great masters of the past have explained "base" as meaning "seed." Therefore who is correct needs to be investigated.

However to assert that the whole deity assembly of the sovereign mandala is completed by their creation within the mother's lotus and that they do not emanate from the mother's lotus to an outside mandala is not correct. If it were, there would have to be an explanation on how the mother and father of the sovereign mandala along with the śakti are created within

the lotus of the mother, but no such explanation is found in the tantra and commentary, nor can any such understanding be inferred. Furthermore, if the sovereign mandala were complete merely by the creation of the base mandala and the dependent deities within the mother's lotus, consider this quote from the *Great Commentary* on the fiftieth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> "Then the vajra holder also dissolves into the 'moon.'" The word "also" means that the wisdom also dwells with mind vajra and gnosis vajra inside the avadhūtī and the *śaṅkhinī*.[114]

[267] This says that when the main deity dissolves, the mother also dissolves. Therefore, when the mother dissolves, it must be accepted that the deities within the lotus of the mother also dissolve. If that is the case, you must ask how it could be possible for the four goddesses to perform the arousal by song.[115]

Furthermore to assert that during the meditation of the sovereign mandala the deities do not emanate from the mother's lotus to an outside mandala contradicts the tantra and commentary. The *Great Commentary* from "The melted moon emerges from one's vajra into the lotus" until "the full and complete base and dependents" teaches the formation of the base mandala and dependent deities within the mother's lotus from the drops that have traveled there. The *Great Commentary* continues:

> Meditate upon Akṣobhya as the great lord who enters the body of the primordial buddha.[116]

This shows that Akṣobhya travels from the mother's lotus to enter the body of the main deity. The text continues:

> Then on the direction lotuses are emanated "ocean" buddhas, meaning four buddhas, of nine eyes, with "fire" faces, meaning three faces, and "time" hands, meaning six hands.

This emanation must be an emanation from the mother's lotus, because the emanation from the father's vajra into the lotus is taught immediately prior to this passage. Therefore these passages from the *Great Commentary* teach that the deities emanate from the mother's lotus and are placed in their

cardinal and intermediate positions within the celestial mansion, and that means being placed within an external base mandala.

Furthermore the *Great Commentary,* on the fifty-first verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, in the section on deity emanation during the sovereign activities says:

> For the sake of the samaya mandala, they enter one's body and arrive at the wisdom lotus, on which stand the individual letters in the form of a mantra. Then from the lotus, as before, characterized by their faces, hands, hand symbols, and forms, they emanate to the gnosis, mind, speech, and body mandalas. In the phrase "again the mandalas are manifested," the word *again* means "as before."[117]

This means that in the section on the sovereign activity, the deities manifest with faces, hands, hand symbols, and forms and emanate to the gnosis, mind, speech, and body mandalas from the mother's lotus, and all this is done in the same way that the previous emanation of the sovereign mandala was performed. [268] Therefore the above assertion contradicts this tantra and commentary passage also.

However the previous consequence, "this would mean that the samaya mandala would be complete, and the instruction to emanate a samaya mandala in the section on the sovereign activity would be incorrect," still does not follow. The purpose of initially visualizing an outside base mandala is to purify the mother's womb into which one is conceived. Creating the deities in the mother's lotus during the sovereign-mandala meditation and sending them out from the lotus to take their place within the base mandala is for the purpose of purifying the aggregates, elements, and sources of the being inside the womb. Emanating the deities and placing them within the base mandala during the sovereign-activity meditation is for the purpose of purifying the aggregates at birth. Therefore it does not follow that when the deity emanation of the sovereign-mandala meditation is complete, the creation of the samaya deities is also complete, because in terms of its base of purification, the samaya mandala emanation is not complete.

When the male and female tathāgatas are first emanated, Akṣobhya is meditated upon as the great lord embracing the consort Prajñāpāramitā and sent from the mother's lotus to enter the body of the main deity. This is taught by the previous quotes, beginning "Meditate upon Akṣobhya as

the great lord" and "Akṣobhya enters." However Vajrasattva embraced by consort and entering the main deity is not taught by the *Great Commentary,* nor is it implicit. This is because the nature of the main deity is Vajrasattva, as has been made clear in the *Great Commentary* in a previous quote.[118]

The ten śakti are explained as being consorts of the main deity. Eight of them, excluding Prajñāpāramitā and Jñānapāramitā, are of the nature of the other eight perfections, beginning with the perfection of giving and so forth, and these are the eight goddesses, Kṛṣṇadīptā and so forth, placed upon the petals of the central lotus. The two śakti in the east and southeast are of the air element. Those of the south and southwest are of the fire element. Those of the west and northwest are of the earth element, and those of the north and northeast the water element. Prajñāpāramitā is of the element of gnosis, and Jñānapāramitā is of the element of space. Viśvamātā is of the nature of both Prajñāpāramitā and Jñānapāramitā while being generated in the aspect of Viśvamātā. [269] This is because the consorts of the main deity are ascertained as being the ten śakti, and at this part of the generation stage, Viśvamātā also has to be established as being of the nature of a śakti. The *Great Commentary,* on the sixteenth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> Jñānapāramitā is included within Viśvamātā. The other eight paramitas of giving and so forth are the eight goddesses on the petals.[119]

Similarly, after Akṣobhya has been sent forth and has merged into one's body, Vajradhātvīśvarī embraced by Vajrasattva is sent forth from the mother's lotus and enters Viśvamātā. The reason for this will be explained in the section dealing with doubts concerning the numbers of deities on lotus seats. There is no need for Prajñāpāramitā embraced by Akṣobhya to enter the mother because Viśvamātā is of the nature of Prajñāpāramitā.

If the nature of the main deity is Vajrasattva, then the following doubt might occur. The *Great Commentary* says "with the crown of Vajrasattva,"[120] thereby affirming that at this stage, the main deity has Vajrasattva as his crown. However, in the Gnosis chapter, it says that gnosis is sealed by consciousness, and consciousness is sealed by gnosis. Moreover the *Great Commentary,* on the sixtieth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "Now the crown" and so forth talks of the deities being sealed by their families. Here in the mandala of the supreme original buddha, on the crown is a vajra in the manner of two vajras crossed. Why? Because consciousness and gnosis are perfectly united. Therefore gnosis is applied to consciousness, and consciousness is applied to gnosis.[121]

Therefore gnosis Vajrasattva and consciousness Akṣobhya are sealed by each other. Is this not contradictory? There is no fault here. The quote that the main deity, who has the nature of Vajrasattva, is adorned with the crown of Vajrasattva illustrates that here in the sovereign-mandala meditation, the main deity in the form of Kālacakra has the nature of Vajrasattva, and is a statement made on the basis of the main deity being generated in that way during the process of deity creation. During the process of sealing, the statement that gnosis and consciousness are sealed by each other is made on the basis of Vajrasattva and Akṣobhya being of distinct forms [270] and being sealed by their family lord after the initiation meditation.[122]

The seats of the dieties

In the meditation on the celestial mansion foundation in its stacked arrangement, Rāhu is visualized on top of the moon and sun, but it is not the thinking of the tantra and commentary that Kālāgni is visualized on top of Rāhu. The *Great Commentary* says:

> On that is the letter *haṃ*, from which arises a moon mandala the size of the lotus center. On that is a *visarga*, from which arises a sun mandala. On that there is a drop, from which arises "fire," meaning the mandala of Rāhu, dark blue in color. These all fuse into one to become *haṃ kṣa ma la wa ra ya*. Meditate on this as the seed syllable and think that from this the realms of the world are created.[123]

This teaches that Rāhu is visualized on top of a moon and sun, but it does not teach that Kālāgni is to be visualized on top of Rāhu. Moreover, in ascending order, the ten letters of the powerful ten-syllable stack, such as the life-giving *a* and so forth, are the seed syllables of space, air, fire, water, earth, and Meru, in whose center is a lotus, moon, sun, and Rāhu. There

is no letter for Kālāgni separate from Rāhu. On the meditation of this stacked arrangement as it is applied to the inner world, the *Great Commentary* says:

> The three channels of excrement, urine, and fluid are the mandalas of the moon, sun, and Rāhu coming together at the center of the secret lotus.[124]

Thus no inner application is taught for Kālāgni separate from Rāhu. Some may wonder if the *nāda*[125] of the drop is the seed syllable of Kālāgni? If that were so, the powerful ten-syllable stack would not add up, because it would have to contain eleven seed syllables. Furthermore, in this section on the meditation upon the stacked arrangement of the foundation mandalas, there is no mention of *nāda* visualization in the commentary on the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, as the previous quote reveals. [271] Also the *Great Commentary* on the Realms chapter, in the section on the formation of the mantra, says:

> *Haṃ kṣa ma la wa ra ya* is the assembly of the worlds and the vajra body. In space the letter *ya*, the mandala of air. On top of that the *ra* fire mandala. On top of that the *wa* water mandala. On top of that the *la* earth mandala. On top of that the *ma* Meru. That is the fifth. Above that the *kṣa* lotus of animate beings. On top of that the formless worlds *ha*. From the *ha* the *visarga* is the sun, the drop is the moon, and the *nāda* is the sign of the one-pointed vajra.[126]

The *nāda*, therefore, is drawn on top of the drop. However it is not a seed syllable letter but symbolizes a one-pointed vajra, which in turn illustrates indestructibility. Nowhere is it spoken of as being the seed syllable of Rāhu or Kālāgni.

Furthermore *haṃ kṣa ma la wa ra ya* is the mantra of the ten seed syllables, and there are ten corresponding phenomena that they illustrate. With this in mind, the *Great Commentary* quotes a passage from the *Saṃgītī*.

> Ten parts of ten meanings, the mighty one of ten powers,
> the all-pervading master, accomplishing the wishes of all,
> the great and powerful in ten aspects.[127]

However the *Great Commentary* says:

> The secret lotus is like the lotus of the Conqueror. The three channels of excrement, urine, and fluid are the mandalas of the moon, sun, and Rāhu coming together at the center of the secret lotus.[128]

Concerning this quote the question might arise, "In the secret lotus are found the moon and sun channels, and isn't the central channel the *śaṅkhinī* channel of Kālāgni?" Generally there are many instances in the tantra and commentary of the three channels of excrement, urine, and fluid being termed the channels of the moon, sun, and Kālāgni. However here the line "The three channels of excrement, urine, and fluid are the mandalas of the moon, sun, and Rāhu" does not teach the three channels to be those of the moon, sun, and Kālāgni but teaches that these three channels correlate with the outer phenomena of the moon, sun, and Rāhu. Likewise "The secret lotus is like the lotus of the Conqueror" explains that the mother's secret lotus and the visualized lotus are correlated phenomena.

[272] Similarly it is also correct to say that the seat of the main deity is either Rāhu or Kalāgni upon a moon disk, but to posit both Rāhu and Kālāgni is not the intention of the tantra and commentary. Again and again the tantra and commentary talk of the three seats of moon, sun, and Rāhu or Kālāgni, and that arrangement perfectly fits the outer-inner correlation, whereas four seats does not. How is this taught in the tantra and commentary? In the first summary from the Realms chapter it says:

> Mandalas of air, fire, water, and earth,
> Meru, lotus, moon, sun, and Kālāgni,
> on top of these, upon Īśvara and the head of Māra,
> his feet with those of the mother of existence.[129]

Similarly, from the second summary from the Realms chapter:

> "Sitting on the vajra lion throne." The vajra lion throne is of moon, sun, and Agni mandalas, indestructible and indivisible. Alternatively the letter *e* of the element of space is the vajra-lion throne.[130]

In the fourth summary from the Realms chapter it says:

> "The Buddha sat upon the lion throne." The lion throne is of the element of space. Alternatively, sitting upon the lion throne of moon, sun, and Agni mandalas, he "sat upon the lion throne."[131]

These quotes show that the teacher of the tantra in the form of the main deity of the mandala sat in the center of the mandala on a seat of moon, sun, and Agni, and the seat of the visualized mandala should be similar. The second verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> Feet on moon, sun, and Agni mandalas, upon Māra and Rudra.[132]

The *Great Commentary* on the ninth verse of Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> Half that size is the lotus of the Conqueror. Its center takes up one third of the lotus, as does the moon, sun, and Rāhu mandalas.[133]

On the tenth verse also:

> In the center of the mandala, the mandalas of the moon, sun, and Rāhu, and on the moon mandala are thirty vowels.[134]

On the eleventh verse:

> "On the central lotus, on moon, sun, and Agni," means upon the *lalanā, rasanā,* and avadhūtī.[135]

[273] The *Great Commentary* on the fifty-seventh verse of the Initiation chapter, in the section on the placing of the deity symbols, says:

> "The color of the variegated lotus of the conquering lord" refers to the color green.[136] "On a moon, sun, and Agni is the letter *hūṃ.*" At the end of the empty sky, the moon, sun, and Rāhu join, and the seat of the mandala is well endowed with the moon, sun, and Agni. Inside, well endowed with *lalanā, rasanā,* and avadhūtī, is

> the heart lotus. On top of that the moon, sun, and Rāhu, on top of that the letter *hūṃ* to be drawn using blue powder. [137]

In some of these passages the name "Rāhu" is used and in others "Kālāgni" is used. Sometimes when the term "Kālāgni" is used in the tantra, it is commented upon using the name "Rāhu." This is done to indicate that either name can be understood as Rāhu or Kālāgni. Likewise the *Great Commentary* on the sixty-first verse of the Initiation chapter, when explaining the seed syllables of the seat of the main deity, says:

> In the center the letters *aṃ, āḥ,* and *a.* These are the individual seats of the moon, sun, and Rāhu.[138]

Here only the three syllables of moon, sun, and Rāhu are taught. In the Shong translation of the *Great Commentary,* on the fifty-fourth verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, it says:

> "In the great bliss and upon fire," meaning on moon, sun, Rāhu, and Kālāgni, the samaya being and the gnosis being come to be of one taste.[139]

However other translations say, "'on fire,' meaning on moon, sun, Rāhu, or Kālāgni mandalas," thereby positing either Rāhu or Kālāgni. Therefore, using an accurate translation, there are no passages teaching a stacking of both Rāhu and Kālāgni as seats of the main deity.

Furthermore the way that these three stacked seats of the main deity are applied to inner and outer phenomena is as taught in the previous quote from the Initiation chapter, where Kālāgni is used in the line "on a moon, sun, and Agni," which is from the tantra, and Rāhu is used in the commentary in the line "At the end of the empty sky, the moon, sun, and Rāhu join."[140] In the external world, in the empty sky, the sun and moon are sometimes eclipsed by Kālāgni and sometimes by Rāhu, and the thinking behind the above quote is that just as eclipses can be caused by either Rāhu or Kālāgni, [274] so the seat of the main deity can have either Rāhu or Kālāgni on top of the moon and sun. If this were not the case, the external world would not correlate with either the Other or the Inner, because it is impossible for the sun or the moon to be eclipsed simultaneously by Rāhu and Kālāgni. As the *Great Commentary* says:

> Inside, well endowed with *lalanā, rasanā,* and avadhūtī, is the heart lotus. On top of that the moon, sun, and Rāhu.[141]

Therefore, when meditating on the stacked arrangement with Rāhu on top of moon and sun, the three seats correlate with the left, right, and central channel at the heart. When meditating on the stacked arrangement with Kālāgni, the three seats correlate with the channels of excrement, urine, and fluid gathered at the secret area.

This assertion of three seats consisting of moon, sun, and Rāhu or Kālāgni is in accord with the thinking of venerable Gyaltsap's *Six Yogas* and with the Jé Tsongkhapa's *Notes on Kālacakra.*

The number of deities on lotus seats

Although it is not actually taught in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter that the eight nāgas and the eight fierce females are on lotus seats, such an assertion, as taught in the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission,* is valid, because in the Inner chapter, 156 lotus-seated deities are mentioned, and the eight nāgas and eight fierce females are included among them. So how are these lotus-seated deities counted?

This is under two headings:

1. The tantra and commentary passages to be explained
2. Determining the number of deities by explaining the above passages

The tantra and commentary passages to be explained

The *Great Commentary* says:

> The ten perfections are the ten śakti. Uṣṇīṣa and so forth are the ten wrathful ones. Thus there are ten of each.[142]

Also:

> "Five are the buddhas and goddesses" refers to the five buddhas Akṣobhya and so forth and the five goddesses Vajradhātvīśvarī and so forth. Thus there are five of each.[143]

[275] Also:

> Rūpavajrā and others making six, and Kṣitigarbha and the others to make six. Thus there are six of each.[144]

Also:

> Of Indra and so forth there are twelve.[145]

Also:

> Carcikā and others make eight, Ananta and others make eight, and Śvānavaktrā and others make eight.[146]

Therefore the śakti and the wrathful protectors make twenty. The ten male and female tathāgatas and the twelve male and female bodhisattvas bring the total to forty-two. Twelve main lunar-day deities and the twenty-four deities consisting of eight yoginīs, eight wrathful females, and eight female nāgas make thirty-six, bringing the total to seventy-eight. The *Great Commentary* states:

> Again these are divided into wisdom and method. Therefore, multiplied by two, there are 104 Kālacakras. Half of that comes to fifty-two deities.[147]

Also:

> Again, individually, 156 deities should be known within the Kālacakra.[148]

These quotes talks of deities individually and in union. Therefore in union they number seventy-eight and individually 156. After the above quote the text continues: "These are determined as being the assembly of deities within the center of lotuses," thereby ascertaining that each of these deities is positioned within the center of a lotus. These are the principal deities of the mandala as presented in the *Condensed Tantra.* This can be understood from the text following "Śvānavaktrā and others to make eight," which says:

> All these deities are each differentiated by name
> in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter.[149]

By counting the deities and consorts individually, how does one arrive at 156? It is like this. The four tathāgatas, Amoghasiddhi and so forth, the

four female tathāgatas, Tārā and so forth, the twelve male and female bodhisattvas, the eight yoginis, the twelve deities of the lunar months, the eight nāgas and the eight wrathful females are clearly enumerated both individually and with consort in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter. The ten śakti can be counted individually and with consort as follows. As quoted above, "Jñānapāramitā is included within Viśvamātā," which means that Jñānapāramitā is combined within Viśvamātā, who has the nature of Prajñāpāramitā. [276] Viśvamātā being of the nature of two śakti and embracing the main deity thus forms two mother-and-father pairs. The eight śakti arranged upon the lotus petals one by one embrace the main deity in the center, thereby forming eight mother-and-father pairs. This is how the ten śakti become the ten mother-and-father pairs.

Akṣobhya embraced by Prajñāpāramitā enters the main deity, and Vajradhātvīśvarī embraced by Vajrasattva enters the mother to form two mother-and-father pairs in union and also to stand in the main mother-and-father lotus center. Vajradhātvīśvarī embraced by Vajrasattva and entering the mother is not explicitly taught in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, but it has to be this way because Vajradhātvīśvarī embraced by a father deity is explained as being a lotus-seated deity in the *Condensed Tantra,* but no separate lotus seat is mentioned for them.

The ten mother-and-father wrathful-protector pairs comprise five from the mind mandala and, excluding Uṣṇīṣacakrī, five of the body mandala. Uṣṇīṣacakrī of the body mandala is one with Uṣṇīṣacakrī of the mind mandala and is therefore not counted separately. If it were, the wrathful protectors would number eleven, which would directly contradict the *Great Commentary.* Moreover those who do not count the ten śakti as being ten consort pairs, those who count Vajrasattva mother and father apart from the main deity, and those who do not count Vajradhātvīśvarī embraced by consort also contradict the *Great Commentary.* Furthermore to use the quote "in the lap of method, wisdom is not the main deity, and in the lap of wisdom, method is not the main deity" as the reason for not including Vajradhātvīśvarī who enters the mother embraced by the father is just wrong, because when Vajradhātvīśvarī is embraced by the father, it is a case of the father being in the lap of wisdom.[150] The mother, therefore, becomes the main deity. That will be discussed later, and this will suffice for the time being.

Concerning the 156 lotus-seated deities plus the six sealing deities, the *Great Commentary* says:

> Now it is taught how the *Condensed Tantra* arose from the *Supreme and Original Buddha.* The twenty more than 1,600 supreme and original buddhas were divided by thirty to become fifty-four deities. This again was multiplied by the three mandalas of body, speech, and mind to become sixty-two more than a hundred.[151]

[277] The principal deities were compiled and condensed from the 1,620 deities of the *Root Tantra* mandala. The mandala of the *Root Tantra* is known as the *glorious constellation mandala.* On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> The Buddha has said that the assembly of deities in the *Supreme and Original Buddha* mandala of constellations are of the number of hours in the constellations.[152]

162 lotus-seated deities, including the six sealing deities, were compiled and taught from the assembled deities of the glorious constellation mandala. The thinking behind this is that after meditating upon the Kālacakra deities, the bases are to be purified, and these are the 156 main channels of the six cakras plus the channels of the six families. The channels of the six families are, "*lalanā, rasanā,* and avadhūtī, and the flow of excrement, urine, and fluid." Thus 162 channels are taught. The 156 channels are mentioned in the *Great Commentary* in a passage that runs from "Likewise the channels of Kālacakra are taught. There are four at the crown" until "encircled by thirty-two"[153] These are the four channel petals at the crown, eight at the heart, sixteen at the forehead, thirty-two at the throat, sixty-four at the navel, and thirty-two in the secret place. Of these, six inner petals and ten intermediate petals of the secret-area channels act as bases for the creation of illnesses caused by a combination of wind, bile, and phlegm. The four petals of the crown and the sixteen of the forehead are bases for phlegm illnesses. The thirty-two petals of the throat and the eight of the heart are bases for bile-related illnesses. The sixty-four petals of the navel and the sixteen outer petals of the secret area are bases for wind-related problems. [278] Of the 156 channels in these particular aspects, the *Great Commentary* says:

> Therefore the 156 are channels that dwell in the nature of the Kālacakra gods and goddesses and that bring death to ordinary beings.[154]

Therefore the 156 channels in purified form are in essence the male and female deities. Those same channels bring death to ordinary beings who lack the skilful means. When possessed of these means, they enjoy not only long life and health but also the achievement of supreme enlightenment. The *Great Commentary* says:

> Within the six cakras the 156 channels are to be understood as channels of Kālacakra. These death-bringing channels, by the power of the guru's teaching, also bring long life and health. The Kālacakra channels are said to dwell within the six channel wheels, and when meditated upon in accord with the guru's instruction, the fear of death will be destroyed. To the yogi this is nothing special.[155]

Therefore the 156 channels are to be meditated upon as being Kālacakra lotus-seated deities or are to be perceived as channels for purification. If they are meditated upon as the 156 lotus-seated deities, long life and health will follow. For the yogi this alone is nothing special, for far greater is the attainment of the supreme siddhi of enlightenment that will follow.

Will such attainments come about by meditating only upon the generation stage as a purifier of the channels? From this practice alone they will not, but generation-stage meditations ripen the mind for the creation of the completion stage, and then with "certainty from the guru," meaning instructions of the guru, if one meditates upon the six-branched yoga of the completion stage, the temporary achievements of long life and good health, as well as the permanent attainment of the supreme siddhi, will come about.

The *Great Commentary* states:

> Again, in each of the 162 channels flow the ten winds and forms in the nature of the ten elements and aggregates. These in total multiplied by ten become twenty more than 1,600, the number of hours within the twenty-seven constellations. Similarly there are that number of main deities of wisdom and method within the glorious constellation mandala of the Supreme and Original Buddha. From this vast constellation mandala the deities of the nonultimate mundane flowing elements of phlegm and so forth bring about the accomplishments of physical or worldly siddhis.

> For these attainments Mañjuśrī taught the six main cakras and ascertained the number of Kālacakra channels.[156]

[279] This passage explains that ten winds together with the five aggregates and five elements flow within each of the 162 channels. Therefore externally there are 1,620 *Root Tantra* gods and goddesses divided into method and wisdom within the glorious mandala of constellations, and that by 1,620 generation-stage meditations, worldly siddhis such as the siddhi of peace, are directly achieved, while indirectly the temporary achievements of health and extended life and the permanent attainment of the supreme siddhi will be attained.

The part of the passage beginning "From this vast constellation mandala" teaches that in the nonultimate worldly generation stage, one meditates upon the deities that nourish the element channels of phlegm and so forth, as mentioned above, and directly attain worldly siddhi or, indirectly, health and long life, as well as the supreme siddhi. To this end the conqueror Mañjuśrī compiled the *Condensed Tantra* deities from the *Root Tantra,* and these deities are the lotus-seated deities that purify the 156 channels of the six main cakras.

Immediately after the sentence ending "ascertained the number of Kālacakra channels," the *Great Commentary* continues:

> "Six" and so forth talks of guarding the channels of the six families. It is said that in the body, the cakras of these six channels are to be halted. They are in three pathways. Above, the moon, sun, and Rāhu dwell in the paths of the left, right, and center. Below, divided into moon, sun, and Agni, they dwell in the paths of excrement, urine, and fluid. These the yogi protects in the body. How? "By the instruction of the guru." The instruction of the guru is the six-branched yoga, and that will bring protection from death. "They bring death to living creatures," because the winds flow within these six. If the winds flow in the six, at that time and at all times, men will definitely be destroyed by death. Among the six is "the subtle," or the central avadhūtī. If the winds do not enter "the subtle," "how will the yogis destroy the realm of death?" Definitely they will not destroy the realm of death.[157]

[280] In this passage the text beginning from the sentence, "They bring death to living creatures" up to the last sentence, "Definitely, they will not destroy the realm of death," teaches that the winds of karma enter the six channels—the three upper left, right, and central channels and the three lower channels of excrement, urine, and fluid. And as long as their flow is not halted and the winds do not flow solely in the central avadhūtī, then for so long will death continue to destroy. The text from "In the body" until "These the yogi protects in the body" teaches that the life-sustaining wind and downwardly expelling wind, which flow and dwell in the three upper and three lower channels, are halted and brought to the central channel, and that the yogi will accomplish the temporary fruits of protection from physical death and illness as well as the permanent attainment of the supreme siddhi. How is this accomplished? The 156 lotus-seated deities together with the six sealing deities are focused on as being the purifiers of 162 channels comprising the 156 channel petals of the six main cakras together with the right, left, and central channel and the three channels of excrement, urine, and fluid, known collectively as the channels of the six families. This generation-stage practice ripens the continuum, after which the six-branched yoga, as instructed by the guru, is meditated upon. The winds of each channel then enter the central channel to induce the unchanging bliss. The yogi is protected from illness and death and accomplishes the supreme siddhi. This process is taught in the lines, "How? 'By the instruction of the guru.'" The instruction of the guru is the six-branched yoga and that will bring protection from death."

To summarize: from the fifty-third verse through to half of the sixtieth verse of the Inner chapter of the *Condensed Tantra,* the tantra and commentary teach the application of the deities of the *Root Tantra* and *Condensed Tantra* to the channels of the body, as illustrated by the quote:

> "Śakti" and so forth teach the number of Kālacakra gods and goddesses. The assembly of deities is in the nature of the various channels of the six cakras.[158]

[281] This meditative application teaches a generation stage in which the channels are visualized as being deities or concentrated on as purifiers. The purpose of these meditations is taught by three quotes:

> The yogi, who is "the glorious Mañjuvajra, destroys the fears of

> samsara, and this alone creates a buddha." This determines the arising of deities of the *Root Tantra* and *Condensed Tantra.*[159]

Two previous quotes run, "the fear of death will be destroyed. To the yogi this is nothing special" and "These the yogi protects in the body." The attainments taught in these quotes depend upon the winds being held in the central channel. This actually occurs during the six-branched yoga of the completion stage. However, to create such a completion stage, the mind must definitely be ripened by the generation stage. Therefore the main purpose of the generation stage is to ripen the mind, which then becomes the main cause of the creation of the special completion stage in which the winds are held within the central channel. Therefore, if the words of these quotes from the tantra and commentary are correctly understood, the maligning of the generation stage as not being a cause of enlightenment is easily refuted. A complete generation stage acting as a ripening agent of the mind in order to create the special completion stage must come first in the sequence of generation and completion stages, and it is in order to make this very clear that the meaning of these quotes has been explained. This has been just a brief explanation of how certain doubts arising at this point can be cleared up.

The meditations that follow the previously explained emanations of the desire and nondesire goddesses are discussed in the *Great Commentary* by the lines "In the nature of the five kinds of gnosis" until "are initiated for compassion."[160] [282] From the heart of oneself as the conqueror Kālacakra, who has the nature of the five kinds of gnosis, light rays emanate to bring into the mandala every sentient being of the six types. Light rays again emanate from one's heart to summon Vairocana and the other mother-and-father tathāgatas and to place them in one's heart. There the fire of desire arising from oneself in mother-and-father embrace melts the mother-and-father tathāgatas into bodhicitta, which then flows to the secret area and from one's vajra to initiate the sentient beings. Every sentient being touched by these bodhicitta light rays is transformed into a deity having three or a varying number of faces. Their essence is method and wisdom, and they are filled with the happiness of the supreme joy. With a brief glance these sentient beings become of the nature of the body-mandala assembly. Then they are focused upon in sequence, which involves the following. To their seed syllable *kṣa* is added the vowels *a, i, ṛ, u, ḷ* in both long

and short form, the five *guṇa* letters plus *aṃ,* the five *vṛddhi*[161] letters plus *āḥ,* and the five semivowels in short and long form.[162] These thirty-two syllables merge into their winds and reemerge as thirty-two deities. The five aggregates of these sentient beings become the five tathāgatas, their five elements become the five mothers, the twelve inner and outer sources become the twelve male and female bodhisattvas, their five action faculties become the five wrathful guardians, and the activities of the five action faculties become the fierce females. These deities then travel to their respective buddha realms. This meditation is a compassion initiation and correlates with one's deeds as a buddha and not to normal existence. On this meditation the *Great Commentary* says:

> The letter of the whole consonant group is *kṣa.* Therefore whatever the first consonant of the name, this covers all.[163]

This means that the letter *kṣa* is a combination of the first consonant *ka* and the last consonant *sa,* which is changed to the retroflex *ṣ.* This conjunct covers the whole range of consonants, and therefore, when all sentient beings are visualized and initiated as one, *kṣa* becomes the seed syllable, and the first consonant of the name of the deities also becomes a seed syllable. [283] When individual beings are being initiated, the first consonant of that individual's name becomes the seed syllable.

How does the letter *sa* develop into retroflex *ṣa*? The grammar texts say: "From the letter *ka* the following *sa* becomes *ṣa.*" Therefore *sa* is changed to *ṣa.* The letter *ka,* without its life-giving vowel *a,* is placed on top of the letter *sa* to become *kṣa.*

If this meditation is to be performed more extensively, every sentient being enters one's heart, where they are melted into bodhicitta. They are brought into the mother's womb, where the first consonant of every sentient being's name becomes a seed syllable to be transformed into the deity. The rest of the meditation proceeds as before.

This has been an explanation of the branch of the body-vajra approach, a meditation on the sovereign mandala, correlating with the formation of a body inside the womb.

23. The Speech Vajra

The branch of the speech vajra near accomplishment: A meditation on sovereign activities, correlating with birth and the engaging in the activities of the action faculties

This has six outlines:

1. Arousing by song
2. Arising and mandala generation
3. Summoning the wisdom beings to enter
4. Sealing by family
5. Blessings of body, speech, and mind
6. Purity meditation

Arousing by song

At the end of the nine months in the womb, the development of the body is complete, but the winds of the five mandalas, or the ten winds such as the life-sustaining wind, downwardly expelling wind, [284] and so forth are still rigidly bound inside the central channel, not entering or leaving through the upper and lower openings. However, in the tenth or "becoming" month, the winds operate through the upper openings, which results in the development of vocal capacity and in the engaging of consciousness with outer objects through the individual senses. At the end of the sixteenth year for males and the twelfth year for females, these beings will be able to engage in the joys of the movements of their elements. It is for these purposes that the winds of the four inner elements stir and encourage birth into the outside world. In correlation with that process, the mother-and-father main deities, who have dissolved and transformed into a drop, are encouraged to emerge by the four goddesses of the four elements.

On the dissolution of mother and father, the *Great Commentary* says:

> On the deity the letter *ho* is inscribed in the avadhūtī path at the navel and crown. At the forehead is the body-vajra *oṃ*, at the throat the speech-vajra *āḥ*, and at the heart the mind-vajra *hūṃ*. This arising of body, speech, and mind are of the characteristics of the moon, sun, and Rāhu.[164]

With oneself as the main deity, *oṃ* appears at the forehead, *āḥ* at the throat, *hūṃ* at the heart, and *hoḥ*[165] appears in the avadhūtī at the navel and crown. This arising of the enlightened body, speech, and mind correlates with the left, right, and center channels of moon, sun, and Rāhu in the womb. The *Great Commentary* continues:

> By the lights of gnosis of the letter *hoḥ* at the navel, dissolution and bliss is experienced. On the lotuses the body, speech, and mind vajras are melted by the passion for Prajñā. In the line, "As well as the all-pervading vajra master," the words "as well as" mean becoming like the moon together with Prajñā.[166]

The great passion of the embrace of the wisdom mother causes the caṇḍālī fire of the navel letter *hoḥ* to blaze. Its rays of gnosis bring about great bliss in the main deity, the all-pervading Vajradhara of the three vajras, who then dissolves into a moonlike bodhicitta drop. This involves not only the main deity, because the words "as well as" indicate that the wisdom woman Viśvamātā and the eight śakti also dissolve with the main deity.

The arousing by song from this dissolution is performed as follows. [285] The four goddesses who perform the song arousal correlate with the winds of the four mandalas that encourage the unborn child's birth into the outside world. The four goddesses are the mandala goddesses Locanā, Māmakī, Pāṇḍarā, and Tārā. They are of the essence of earth, water, fire, and air and of equanimity, joy, compassion, and love. The objects to be aroused by their songs are the mother-and-father deities, who have dissolved into a drop. This correlates with the point of birth, up to when the consciousness has been in a dream state since the seventh month. The *Great Commentary* says:

> Like consciousness in a dream being urged into the waking state, the goddesses, Locanā and the others, urge for the sake of sentient beings.[167]

The actual arousing from dissolution is found in *Root Tantra* verses quoted in the commentary. Locanā arouses the gnosis vajra of the main conqueror with these words:

> I, Locanā, mother of sentient beings,
> dwell in the "similar to cause" effect within the yogi[168]
> by the nature of my mandala.
> Arise, Kālacakra, fulfill my desire.[169]

The meaning of these words is that I, Locanā, the purified form of the element of earth, am the mother that produces the gnosis of the ārya in sentient beings. My winds of the earth element are held unmoving in the avadhūtī at the yogi's navel. This brings about an effect similar to the cause, which means that the fluid travels from the jewel to the navel to produce the dwelling in great bliss. Therefore Kālacakra, gnosis vajra, arise from the fluid and fulfill my desires by emanating the deities of the gnosis mandala.

Māmakī arouses the body vajra with these words:

> I, Māmakī, the sister,
> dwell in the ripening within the yogi
> by the nature of my mandala.
> Arise, Kālacakra, fulfill my desire. [170]

[286] This means that I, Māmakī, the purified form of the element of water, am the sister showing the yogi the fortune of great bliss. I dwell within the ripened result that occurs during the yogi's path of practice—the great bliss of the fluid reaching the water-element heart center. This bliss arises by my element of water holding the winds unmoving at the heart. Therefore Kālacakra, body vajra, arise from the fluid and fulfill my desires by emanating the deities of the water-element family.

Pāṇḍarā arouses the speech vajra:

> I, Pāṇḍarā, the daughter,
> dwell in the personally created result within the yogi
> by the nature of my mandala.
> Arise, Kālacakra, fulfill my desire.[171]

I, Pāṇḍarā, the purified form of the fire element, am the daughter, the granter of good qualities, who dwells in the personally created result[172] that is the great bliss arising during the yogi's path of practice when the fluid travels to the fire-element throat center. This arises because my element of fire holds the winds unmoving at the throat. Therefore, Kālacakra, in the nature of the speech vajra, arise from the fluid and fulfill my desires by emanating the deities of the fire-element family.

Tārā arouses the mind vajra:

> I, Tārā, the niece,
> dwell in the eradication result within the yogi
> by the nature of my mandala.
> Arise, Kālacakra and fulfill my desire.[173]

I, Tārā, the purified form of the element of air, am the niece born from the sister that is the fluid held at the heart. I dwell in the eradication result that is the great bliss of the fluid having traveled from the throat to the crown during the yogi's path of practice. This arises because my element of air holds the airs unmoving at the crown. Therefore Kālacakra, in the nature of the mind vajra, arise from the fluid and fulfill my desires by emanating the deities of the air-element family.

How can the great bliss arising from the bodhicitta arriving at the crown be an eradication result? This differs from the other three and is similar to the unchanging bliss of the Buddha being equated with the nature body. Therefore there is no fault here.[174]

In unison all four goddesses sing:

> From the experiences of the emptiness mandala,
> with the thought to save sentient beings,
> great protector of sentient beings,
> emanate the mandalas of body, speech, and mind.[175]

[287] This means that "You, mighty protector who shields sentient beings from suffering, with the greatly compassionate thought of bringing sentient beings out of samsara, emanate the deity assembly of the body, speech, and mind mandalas from your accomplishment and experience of the emptiness, or space, mandala that is the bliss of dissolution into fluid."

On this section of arousal by song, the *Great Commentary* says:

> The arousing is of two kinds. The first is to complete the winds; the second is for the completion of the joy at the end of the sixteenth year.[176]

On the meaning of this quote, scholars (such as Kumāra)[177] have said:

> Two kinds of arousal are taught: one for the completion of the winds, one for the completion of joy. Therefore it is evident that there also has to be a song arousal at the end of the drop yoga, but the lamas of the past only posited it once.

The meaning, however, of the quote beginning "The arousing is of two kinds" is that there are two ordinary bases to which the arousal is directed. The first is the sentient being inside the womb being aroused to emerge into the outside world in order to complete the development of the winds flowing externally. The second is the fluid, which is aroused to travel to the opening of the organ in order to complete the development of the joy of element emission at the end of the sixteenth year of life. The dissolution song arousal correlates with the first. The subtle and drop yoga meditations that focus on joy correlate with the second kind of arousal, during which there is no dissolution of the main deity, and so arousal from dissolution by song is not necessary. It is with this in mind that lamas of the past only posited it once.

Arising and mandala generation

[288] This is under two headings:

1. Arising from the fluid into the forms of the main mother and father
2. Emanation of the mandalas

Arising from the fluid into the forms of the main mother and father

> The conqueror, well immersed in emptiness, is awoken by the four goddesses' melodic arousal and sees all beings as like illusions. From the melted moon fluid arises a blue *hūṃ,* from that a five-pointed blue vajra, and from that arises the main deity in the form of Kālacakra, in essence Akṣobhya. To indicate that, he

> wears the crown of Akṣobhya and is embraced by Vajradhātvīśvarī Viśvamātā.

As this passage from the *Great Commentary* indicates, the main deity embraced by Viśvamātā, who is in essence Vajradhātvīśvarī, is generated together with the eight śakti and is followed by the other deities. Some assert the causal Vajradhara main deity of the sovereign mandala to be in essence Akṣobhya and the Vajradhara of the sovereign activities to be of the nature of Vajrasattva. However, as evidenced by a previous quote, the tantra and commentary assert the causal Vajradhara to be of the nature of Vajrasattva.[178] Moreover that resultant Vajradhara is in the nature of Akṣobhya, and that his consort is in the nature of Vajradhātvīśvarī can be understood from the *Great Commentary* when it explains that the main deity mother-and-father samaya beings are of one taste with the gnosis beings:

> Here, in the generation yoga, in the stages of generation, "consciousness is together with space," meaning together with Vajradhātvīśvarī, "within the central lotus," meaning the great bliss, and upon fire, moon, sun, Rāhu or Kālāgni, the samaya beings and the gnosis beings come to be of one taste.[179]

In this passage, "consciousness" refers to Akṣobhya, who is in the nature of consciousness. Any contradiction arising from the statement that this embrace has to be with different families can be resolved as previously explained.[180] [289]

Arising from the arousal by song into the forms of the main mother and father correlates with birth from the womb as a basis of purification.

Emanation of the mandalas

Some say, "Visualize that they enter their respective deities of the emanated gnosis, mind, speech, and body mandalas." They maintain that the deities are emanated from the mother's lotus and visualized as entering the deities dwelling on the base mandala who were emanated during the sovereign-mandala practice. That contradicts the *Great Commentary* quote beginning, "For the sake of the samaya mandala,"[181] which states that the deity emanation in the sovereign activities is to the samaya mandala. Furthermore the *Great Commentary* states:

> In the phrase "again the mandalas are manifested," the word *again* means "as before."[182]

This quote also damages the above assertion, because it says that the deity emanation here is similar to that of the sovereign mandala. Therefore, after the main deity father and mother plus the śakti have been created during the sovereign-mandala meditations:

> By the power of method-and-wisdom union, the five mandala buddhas come to the space above and enter one's body for the sake of the samaya mandala possessing the nature of the aggregates, elements, sources, and so forth. They come to the lotus of Prajñā as mantras in the form of individual letters.[183]

As this passage indicates, the sound of bliss that emanates from the main deity mother and father in union calls the male and female tathāgatas of the nature of the five mandalas, and all the other deities placed in the previously emanated mandala up to the desire and nondesire goddesses, into the space above, and for the purpose of a samaya mandala, which is in the nature of the aggregates, elements, and sources, they enter one's body, where they are melted by the fire of great bliss and sent to the mother's lotus. There in the form of the individual letters of the deities, they transform into the symbols of the different deities and then to the deities themselves, and are sent from the mother's lotus to the base mandala. In the quote beginning, "Then in the lotus, as before,"[184] the *Great Commentary* confirms that this has to be done as it was during the sovereign-mandala practice [290].

Therefore deity emanation within the sovereign activities correlates with the moment immediately after birth when the fully developed body, still wrapped in the "clothes of the placenta," clearly exists in the outside world. It starts to cry, and the ten winds, or winds of its five elements, engage with the outside. This is confirmed by the *Great Commentary*:

> As before, again the mandalas of mind, speech, and form, in the nature of method and wisdom, are emanated, and the newborn child awakens and cries.[185]

Also:

> In the phrase "again the mandalas are manifested" the word

> *again* means "as before." When the child emerges from the womb, the ten winds, such as the life-sustaining and so forth, are born. When the disciples enter the mandala, flowers are scattered. The purification of "the naked child in the clothes of the placenta" is the completion of the mandala of the samaya deities.[186]

Furthermore the lines beginning "Inside, the five mandalas flow "also teach the objects of correlation and the bases for purification.

Summoning the wisdom beings to enter

After the desire and nondesire goddesses have been emanated, the wisdom beings are summoned. This is done by Vajravega, who is in essence the purified gnosis wind, as indicated by the line "The pure winds of the central channel, Vajravega." His color and number of faces and hands are as described in the lines "of blue light" and so forth in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the *Great Commentary.* He emerges in that form from a vajra, which in turn has emerged from *hūṃ,* as indicated by the line "an emanation of *hūṃ* and vajra."[187] "Arising from wisdom and method"[188] indicates that he arises from the wisdom mother and the method father in embrace and is emanated from the lotus of the mother. On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> Here the winds of the central channel within the newborn child arise. They are of blue light. Their arising awakens the sense organs, and the six consciousnesses engage with external phenomena. This is the inner.[189]

[291] Therefore the emanation of Vajravega correlates with the time when the fifty-six and a quarter gnosis winds in the central channel of the newborn child begin to flow. This awakens the sense organs, and the six consciousnesses engage with external objects. Concerning the emanation of Vajravega the *Great Commentary* says:

> Then from the lotus of the navel the winds emerge, summon external phenomena, and then return. Therefore the pure, stainless light goes forth and decisively pierces with vajra hook the

> navel of the mighty one of the wisdom assembly and binds his twenty-four arms with a vajra-serpent[190] lasso. He frightens him with his weapons, gathers the wisdom assembly, moves the entire assembly of various phenomena, and then returns home.[191]

As this passage says, this is a meditation in which the manifested Vajravega pierces with his vajra hook the navel of Kālacakra, the mighty one of the wisdom assembly and the principal deity of the wisdom beings. He binds Kālacakra's twenty-four arms with his vajra-serpent lasso, summons the mighty one of the wisdom assembly by terrifying him with his other weapons, invokes the various deities of the mandala, and then returns to absorb into his abode within the heart of the main deity. This correlates with the time of birth when the life-sustaining wind emerges from the lotus of the navel cakra to summon the consciousnesses to their respective objects and then returns to the lotus of the navel cakra.

The *Great Commentary* says, "The wisdom assembly is well served,"[192] meaning that offerings are made to the invited assembly of wisdom beings. It continues:

> Concerning the absorption, the consciousness of sight born from the foundation consciousness and the sense organ of sight is Jambhaka.

And so on until:

> Meditate upon them as being of one taste.[193]

[292] This states that after Vajravega has summoned the wisdom beings, one meditates that the wrathful protectors, Jambhaka, Stambhaka, Māṇaka, and Atibala, correlating respectively with the eye, body, tongue, and nose consciousnesses of the newborn, bring about the absorption, binding, delight, and one-taste union, respectively, of the wisdom and samaya beings. At the same time, when summoning one utters *jaḥ,* when absorbing one utters *hūṃ,* when binding one utters *baṃ,* when delighting one utters *hoḥ,* and when becoming of one taste one utters the syllable *hi.* These are to be said forcefully. The mudrās are vajra hook, vajra, vajra noose, vajra and bell, and vajra staff respectively.

Concerning the individual wisdom beings and samaya beings becoming

of one taste, the *Great Commentary* explains the one-taste merging as it occurs in the mind mandala from the line beginning "Here, in the yoga of generation" until "on the central lotus."[194] The merging of the body-mandala wrathful protectors is described incidentally. The explanation of the merging of the remaining deities of the body and speech mandalas is left uncommented on as found in the *Condensed Tantra,* because it is deemed "easy to understand." Those merging processes that are actually taught in the commentary can be understood by reading them, but the one-taste process as described in the "easy to understand" sections of the *Condensed Tantra* will be explained very briefly. The text from "The mandala born from speech" until "meditate also on the moon and sun on the earth mandala"[195] describes the one-taste merging from the remaining speech-mandala goddesses up to the wisdom and samaya merging of the sun and moon that rise over the land surrounding the mandala. Within this, of the main mother speech yoginīs, Cāmuṇḍi[196] in the east is embraced by Indra; Vaiṣṇavī in the northeast is embraced by Brahmā; Vārāhī in the south is embraced by Rudra, or Īśvara; Ṣaṇmukhī in the southwest is embraced by Gaṇapati; Aindrī in the west embraced by Nairtya, or Rakṣā; Brahmāṇī in the northwest is embraced by Viṣṇu; Rudrī, or Īśvarī, in the north is embraced by Yama; and Lakṣmī in the northeast is embraced by Ṣaṇmukha. [293] Together with their entourage deities, they all undergo the one-taste merging of samaya and wisdom beings.

A similar process occurs with the main mother-and-father lunar-day deities. To the right of the east gate in the center of the lotus, Rakṣā the asura king is embraced by Rakṣī. In the southeast Vāyu is embraced by Pracaṇḍī. To the right of the south gate, Agni is embraced by Varuṇī. In the southwest Ṣaṇmukha is embraced by Lakṣmī. To the right of the western gate, Devendra[197] is embraced by Vāyudevī. In the northwest Brahmā is embraced by Vidyutī. To the right of the northern gate, Samudra, or Varuṇa, is embraced by Vārāhī. In the northeast Gaṇapati is embraced by Ṣaṇmukhī. To the left of the north gate, Rudra, or Īśvara, is embraced by Gaurī. To the left of the south gate, Yama is embraced by Yamārī. To the left of the east gate, Viṣṇu is embraced by Lakṣmī. To the left of the west gate, Yakṣa is embraced by Yakṣiṇī. Wisdom beings merge into these deities and their entourage and become of one taste.

Outside the walls of the body mandala, on platforms in the four directions, are the nāgas. On the eastern platform, on air mandalas, stand Padma and Karkoṭaka. In the south, on fire mandalas, stand Vāsuki and

Śaṅkhapāla. In the north, on water mandalas, stand Kulika and Ananta. In the west on earth mandalas stand Takṣaka and Mahāpadma.

Similarly the fierce females are in the grounds of the cemeteries. In the eastern cemetery called Pierced lives dog-faced Śvānavaktrā. In the southern cemetery called Blazing lives the pig-faced Śūkarāsyā. In the northern cemetery called Putrid lives the tiger-faced Vyāghravaktra. In the western cemetery called Wolf lives the wolf-faced Jambukāsyā. In the southeastern cemetery called Remainder lives the crow-faced Kākavaktrā. In the southwestern cemetery called Unending War lives the vulture-faced Gṛidhavaktrā. In the northwestern cemetery called Magical Food lives the hawk-faced Khagapativadanā. In the northeastern cemetery called Death of the Foolish lives the owl-faced Ulūkavaktrā.

The nāgas are embraced by fierce females, and the fierce female mothers are embraced by nāgas. [294] The embracing has to involve different families, and so those of the east and west mutually embrace, as do those of the north and south, southeast and northwest, southwest and northeast. This is the meaning of quotes from the *Condensed Tantra* that state:

> Similarly, on the earth mandala, in families,
> stand Takṣaka and Mahāpadma in the cemeteries
> with Śvānavaktrā and other fierce females as their wisdom consorts,
> who in turn stand with Padma and the others as their method consorts.
> Therefore it is with other families that they are paired for the highest bliss.[198]

Therefore one should meditate on the nāgas and fierce female mother-and-father samaya beings as being of one taste with the wisdom beings, and the samaya moon and sun as being of one taste with the wisdom moon and sun. This is a brief explanation of text from the *Condensed Tantra* deemed "easy to understand."

Sealing by family

The *Great Commentary* says:

> Now "the crown" and so forth talks of the deities being sealed

> by their families. Here in the mandala of the supreme original buddha, on the crown, "a vajra in the manner of two vajras crossed." Why? Because consciousness and gnosis are perfectly united. Therefore gnosis is on consciousness and consciousness is on gnosis. On the heads of both is the mind vajra in robes and with crown protrusion, in lotus posture, with earth-touching mudrā, giving the breath of the tathāgatas. It is rejected that the essence family is sealed by the five families. This is because it is the creator of buddhas. Alternatively, because of the phenomena of gnosis and consciousness, the crown, in essence the five buddhas, sometimes seals. Thus it is ascertained.[199]

[295] This passage has produced many differing explanations. Some scholars say that the phrase "On the heads of both" refers to the heads of the mother-and-father main deities. Some say it refers to Vajrasattva and Akṣobhya. Concerning "the essence family," some explain it as referring to the form of a monk. Some say it refers to Vajrasattva. Others say it means that the five families do not crown-seal themselves. However it will be explained as follows. When the six families are explained as those of the vajra family and so forth, Amoghasiddhi is of the sword family, Ratnasambhava is of the jewel family, Amitābha is of the lotus family, Vairocana is of the wheel family, and Vajrasattva and Akṣobhya are both of the vajra family. Therefore the commentary to the *Condensed Tantra* text, "a vajra in the manner of two vajras crossed" says, "Therefore gnosis is on consciousness" and so on. This teaches that Vajrasattva of the gnosis family and Akṣobhya of the consciousness family are similar in that they both belong to the vajra family. Therefore they are crown-sealed by each other, and the heads of both Vajrasattva and Akṣobhya are crown-sealed by mind-vajra Akṣobhya in robes with crown protrusion and so on.

The meaning of the lines beginning "It is rejected that the essence family" is that Vajrasattva is of the essence family, or gnosis-aggregate family, and he is not crown-sealed by the five families with crowns of tied-up hair, because the gnosis aggregate, or the subtle clear-light mind, is the creator of all things in samsara and nirvana and, similarly, its purification in the form of Vajrasattva is the creator of buddhas.

Concerning the line beginning "Alternatively, because of the phenomena," in many translations "alternatively" is rendered as "however," and in keeping with that translation, this line means that "However, because

gnosis and consciousness are crown-sealed by each other, it is fitting that sometimes green Akṣobhya, who is in essence the five buddhas, crown-seals a blue Vajrasattva." "Thus" indicates that this is an exception.

Having explained the way Vajrasattva and Akṣobhya are crown-sealed, the *Great Commentary* continues:

> "On form is Akṣobhya," teaches enlightened mind in its aspect of enlightened form. "Becoming Vairocana holding a lotus" talks of the body, which expresses individual speech. "Holder of a mighty jeweled lotus" refers to blood. "In the crown of Amoghasiddhi the supreme jewel" teaches that from the blood arises flesh.[200]

[296] This explains that the other four families are crown-sealed in the manner of the cause crown-sealing the result. Enlightened form arises from enlightened mind, and this body, or enlightened form, expresses speech. From water, which has the nature of Amitābha, arises blood. From blood arises flesh. Therefore, in order, Akṣobhya seals Vairocana, Vairocana seals Amitābha, Amitābha seals Ratnasambhava, and Ratnasambhava seals Amoghasiddhi.

The *Great Commentary* continues:

> "Vairocana and the deity to the left," or Amitābha; Avināśa, or Ratnasambhava; his son, or Amoghasiddhi; Vaśin, or Akṣobhya; Kālāgni, or Vajrasattva: these in the nature of earth, water, fire, air, space, and gnosis, the ordinary aggregates are sealed by the pure aggregates with robes and crown protrusion. These six have crowns of tied-up hair.[201]

Some just explain this passage as meaning that the six families with crowns of tied-up hair are sealed by the six families with crown protrusion and robes, but which family is sealed by which is not clear. Other scholars say that it is acceptable for the crown-sealing to be performed by any of them, because "The crown sealing is performed on the heads by the mind vajra as the emanation body in the form of a monk. This is done on the basis of being of identical nature, because the main deity, the five families, and all the others in the mandala are of one nature with Śākyamuni." It appears that, according to this statement, the sealer with crown protrusion and

robes who seals the six families with crowns of tied-up hair is Śākyamuni. This contradicts the teaching that those with crown protrusion and robes who perform the sealing are of the same nature as the purified aggregates, as evidenced by the line [297] "the ordinary aggregates are sealed by the pure aggregates with robes and crown protrusion."

The *Puṇḍarīka Transmission Sādhana* states that Vairocana, Amitābha, Ratnasambhava, Amoghasiddhi, Akṣobhya, and Vajrasattva with crowns of tied-up hair are crown-sealed respectively by Vairocana and the others with crown protrusion and robes.[202] If this interpretation is followed, then to say that the line "It is rejected that the essence family" means that that the five families do not crown-seal themselves would be contradictory. Therefore the meaning of this line has to be as I have explained it above.

The *Great Commentary* lines from "Alternatively, because of the phenomena of gnosis and consciousness" up to "In the crown of Amoghasiddhi the supreme jewel" explains who crown-seals whom in the six families. Concerning the bodily form of those who seal and the bodily form of those who are sealed, an explanation is given in the lines that run from "The six have crowns of tied-up hair" up to "the ordinary aggregates with crowns of tied-up hair are sealed by the pure aggregates with robes and crown protrusion." This passage teaches that the six pure aggregates or elements, symbolized by the six families with crown protrusion and robes, crown-seal the six bases of purification in the form of impure aggregates or elements, symbolized by the six families with crowns of tied-up hair. The passage should be explained in this way. Thus, for example, Akṣobhya in the form of a monk crown-seals Vairocana in the form of one possessing a crown of tied-up hair.

Concerning the crown-sealing of the remaining deities, the *Great Commentary* says:

> The head ornaments of the remaining gods and goddesses are crowned by various jewels and by their respective families.[203]

Therefore those belonging to one of the six families are sealed by the six families in enjoyment-body emanation. Furthermore, except for the śakti, black gods and goddesses who belong to a family are sealed by Amoghasiddhi, red deities by Ratnasambhava, white by Amitābha, yellow by Vairocana, and green by Akṣobhya. [298] The śakti and blue gods and goddesses are sealed by Vajrasattva.

Blessings of body, speech, and mind

The *Great Commentary* says:

> Here the body, speech, and mind of the newborn child are blessed to become the waking state, dreams, and sleep.[204]

The blessing by enlightened body, speech, and mind is performed in correlation with the body, speech, and mind of the newborn child in the three states of waking, dreams, and deep sleep. Concerning the procedure the *Great Commentary* says:

> On the brow, throat, heart, navel, secret, and crown are *oṃ, āḥ, hūṃ, hoḥ, svā,* and *hā.* These are the stages of the blessings. As a mother washes her child, so the supreme lord is washed by the "goddesses," or yoginīs.[205]

On the brow, throat, and heart center of the mother-and-father deities are *oṃ, āḥ,* and *hūṃ* respectively. At the navel of the mother is *hoḥ,* at her secret area *svā,* and on her crown *hā.* This is a synopsis of the blessing procedure. The explanation of the actual blessing starts from the next line in the *Great Commentary,* which begins "Here the blessing. First one meditates that the yoginīs wash the main deity and supreme lord with vases of water. This correlates with the child being washed by its mother. Now the body, speech, and mind blessing begins. From an *āḥ* at the brow of both mother-and-father deities arise moon disks on which stand the syllable *oṃ.* They transform into eight-spoked wheels, which in turn change into the white body-vajra deity in union with his wisdom consort. Their faces and hand implements are clearly described in the *Great Commentary.* [299] One meditates that the body vajra emerges from the brow center to produce countless replicas. They fill the realms of space, teaching the dharma to the sentient beings to be tamed by body vajra deities, and then return to merge into a single deity that stands before the meditator. One then makes the request, "Holder of the body vajra, grant me initiation." Goddesses of the body family perform the actual initiation with vases of nectar. The body-blessing initiation occurs when the visualized body vajra enters the moon disk at one's brow and one recites the two verses beginning "Glorious holder of the body vajra." The meaning of the first verse[206] is as follows: "Glorious indivisible

gnosis held in the immutable body drop, holder of the body vajra." This is an address to the deity. "By meditating on the indivisibility of the body, speech, and mind vajras during the practices of the path, you have actualized the body vajra. Bless me in the place upon the brow, grant me now the attainment of the body vajra."[207] The second verse follows the same pattern.

In the speech blessing one visualizes the letter *ra* at the throats of mother-and-father main deity. This changes into a sun disk, on top of which is the syllable *āḥ*. That becomes a red lotus of eight petals, which in turn becomes the speech vajra, whose color, faces, hands, and hand symbols are clearly described in the *Great Commentary* and who is in union with his wisdom consort. He emanates to fill the realms of space and teaches those to be tamed by speech-vajra emanations, before returning as a single deity in front of oneself. One requests, "Holder of the vajra, grant me initiation," and as before one visualizes that goddesses of the speech family come to bestow initiation. The speech vajra returns to the sun mandala at the throat, and one recites the two verses beginning "Glorious holder of the speech vajra." The meaning of the verses is "Glorious indivisible gnosis held in and arising from the immutable speech drop, holder of the speech vajra."[208] [300] This is an address to the deity. The remaining lines are similar to the previous verse except that "speech" is substituted for "body" and the place of blessing is the throat.

In the mind blessing one visualizes a drop at the heart of both mother and father. This becomes a dark blue Rāhu mandala on top of which is the syllable *hūṃ*. This transforms into a five-pointed vajra, which in turns becomes a black mind vajra in union with his wisdom consort and whose faces, hands, and implements are clearly taught in the *Great Commentary*. He emanates to fill the realms of space, where the emanations teach dharma to those who are to be tamed by mind-vajra emanations, and then returns to become a single deity in front of the meditator, who requests, "Holder of the mind vajra, grant me initiation." Goddesses of the mind family bestow initiation. The mind blessing occurs when the mind vajra returns to the Rāhu mandala and one recites the two verses of request that begin, "Glorious holder of the mind vajra." The meaning of the verses is "Glorious indivisible gnosis held in and arising from the immutable speech drop, holder of the mind vajra."[209] This is an address to the deity. The remaining lines are similar to the previous verse except that "mind" is substituted for "body" and the place of blessing is the heart.

After the mind blessing one recites the mantra *oṃ sarva tathāgata kāya*

vāka citta svabhāva ātmako haṃ. The meaning of this mantra is "I the yogi hold the pride of being of the nature of the body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas." This is because *oṃ* at the beginning heads the mantra; *sarva* means all; *kāya* means body; *vāka* means speech; *citta* means mind; *svabhāva* means nature; *ātmakaḥ* means self; *ahaṃ* means I. In the mantra, *ko haṃ* is a product of amalgamation.[210] The *Kalāpasūtra* says:

> Between the letters a it becomes u;
> between *a* and voiced letters also.[211]

[301] Thus the *visarga* between the life-giving letter *a* of the letter *ka* and the voiced letter *ha* becomes the letter *u.*

> On the letter *u* it becomes the letter *o.*

Thus the life-giving *a* of *ka* becomes *o.* The *a* on the other side is erased, and *k* is brought to *o* to become *ko,* thereby resulting in *ko haṃ.*[212]

This has been a shared blessing by the body, speech, and mind of both mother and father. Concerning the individual blessings from the mother, the *Great Commentary* says:

> Similarly the letter *hoḥ* at the navel of the wisdom consort.[213]

The blessings from the wisdom consort are granted by the letter *hoḥ* at her navel, *svā* in her secret area, and *ha* at her crown. The reason why there are three blessings from the father and six from the mother is mentioned in the *Great Commentary:*

> From the fluid phenomena there are three of method. From the blood and fluid phenomena there are six of wisdom.[214]

Purity meditation

This is under two headings:

1. Meditating on the purity of the celestial mansion
2. Meditating on the purity of the resident deities

Meditating on the purity of the celestial mansion

There are two types of celestial mansion purity. Purity as applied to the body is taught in the first summary of the Gnosis chapter and can be ascertained there. Here in the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, the purity of phenomena without obscuration is taught. When the celestial palace was described, the explanation was purely descriptive, but here the purpose is meditation, and so the meanings of that description need to be explained. The purity of the celestial mansion is taught in order to reverse the perception that the deities and the celestial mansion are separate entities, like the ordinary world and its inhabitants. The purity of the deities is taught in order to reverse the perception that because the main deities, their entourage—males and females and so on—have different forms, they must be different beings. [302] Therefore here meditation is important.

On the purity of the celestial mansion, the *Great Commentary* quotes from the *Root Tantra:*

> Mind, speech, and body mandalas
> of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha;
> four vajra lines of the four places of Brahmā;
> the perfect squares of the four foundations of mindfulness;
> twelve gates of the twelve limbs;
> similarly the beautiful portals of the twelve levels;
> cremation grounds of the eight directions
> of the eight limbs of the noble path;
> pillars of the sixteen kinds of emptiness;
> the walls of the elements;
> the eight porch walls of the eight freedoms;
> the facing and side-door walls of the eight material qualities
> divided among mind, speech, and body;
> five pure colors of the five aggregates of morality, etc.;
> three surrounding walls of the three vehicles,
> five surrounding walls of the forces of faith and so on,
> five surrounding walls of the powers of faith and so on,
> of the mandalas of mind, speech, and body;
> mandala terraces of concentrations and dhāraṇī;
> beautiful jeweled friezes of the ten perfections completed;

double and single crystal garlands of the eighteen exclusive
dharmas;
the *baguli* of the powers;
the *kramaśīraṣa* of the virtues,
filled with the chimes of freedoms such as emptiness,
filled with victory banners of magical power concentrations,
shining with mirrors of the eradications;
the moving yaktail fans of the limbs of enlightenment;
decorated by the garlands of the nine branches;
adorned by the corner crossed vajras
of the four ways of gathering;
decorated by the jewels of the four truths
on the gates and porch walls;
encircled constantly by the five great circles
of the fivefold clairvoyance;
surrounded by the vajra garland
of omniscient enlightenment;
the iron fence of the one bliss;
similarly the vajra flames of gnosis;
the constant moon and sun of wisdom and method;
the dharma wheel, great vase, great drum,
and bodhi tree mind of mind, speech, body, and purity;
likewise the wish-fulfilling jewel, and so on.
This is the glorious Kālacakra dharmadhātu.[215]

[303] The Three Jewels of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are the mind, speech, and body mandalas respectively. The four places of Brahmā,[216] immeasurable love, and so on are the four vajra gridlines. The four pure forms of the four foundations of mindfulness[217] of body, feelings, mind, and phenomena are the perfect squares of the gridlines. The cessation of the twelve limbs of dependent origination, ignorance, and so on are the twelve gates of the mind, speech, and body mandalas. The twelve ārya levels are the twelve portals. The pure forms of the eight limbs of the noble path, right view, and so on are the eight cremation grounds of the eight directions. The pure forms of the sixteen kinds of emptiness, such as inner and outer emptiness and so on, are the sixteen black inner pillars. The five pure elements are represented by the complete enclosure of the celestial palace above, below, outside, and inside. The pure forms of the eight freedoms,

such as regarding form as form and so on,[218] are the eight protective porch walls on each of the mind, speech, and body mandalas. The eight material qualities devoid of obscuration, which are the pure forms of earth, water, fire, air, smell, form, taste, and touch, are the eight facing door walls of the three mandalas. The pure forms of the three sun qualities of activity, darkness, and lightness,[219] and the five moon qualities of sound, smell, taste, touch, and form, are the eight side-door walls of the three mandalas. The five pure aggregates of morality, meditative concentration, wisdom, freedom, and the gnosis of freedom are the five colors. The three pure vehicles of Hearer, Solitary Realizer, and Mahayana are the three surrounding walls of the mind mandala. The pure forms of the five forces of faith, effort, memory, meditative concentration, and wisdom are the five surrounding walls of the speech mandala. The pure forms of the five powers of faith, effort, memory, meditative concentration, and wisdom are the five surrounding walls of the body mandala. [304] These are the pure forms of the walls of the mind, speech, and body mandalas.

The four pure meditative concentrations—the warrior, treasury of space, vajralike, and lion pose—plus the four pure meditative retentions, or dhāraṇī, of words, meanings, mantra, and forbearance are the terraces on the three mandalas. The ten pure perfections are the jeweled friezes studded and beautifully decorated with precious stones. The eighteen pure and exclusive qualities of a buddha are represented by the single and double hanging jeweled net garlands. The ten pure powers: namely, power over life, karma, necessities, wishes, prayers, dharma, mind, birth, magical creation, and gnosis, are the *phakulī,*[220] or ornamented guttering. The ten pure virtues are the *kramaśīraṣa,* or parapets.[221] The pure forms of the four freedoms, namely, emptiness, no sign, no wish, and no activity, are the all-pervading chimes of bells. The pure forms of the four magical-power meditative concentrations, namely, aspiration, effort, mind, and investigation, are the profusion of victory banners.

The four perfect eradications—namely, not developing those nonvirtues as yet undeveloped, eradicating those already developed, developing virtues not yet developed, and increasing those already developed—when purified are the decorative and shining mirrors. The purification of the seven limbs of enlightenment, namely, memory, analysis, effort, joy, pliancy, meditative concentration, and equanimity, are the yaktail fans. The pure gnosis that produces the nine branches of scripture[222]—namely, sutras, occasional-verse teachings, specific prophecy, verse teachings, person-nonspecific

teachings, person-specific teachings, stories, Buddha's previous lives, and vast teachings—are the decorative profusion of flower garlands. The purified forms of the four ways of gathering disciples, namely, giving, kind words, according with disciples' behavior, and according with disciples' wishes, are the decorative crossed vajras in the corners of the celestial mansion. The purified forms of the four truths of suffering, source, path, and cessation are the four jewels that decorate the gates and porch walls. The purified forms of the fivefold clairvoyance, namely, celestial sight, celestial hearing, knowing the minds of others, remembering past lives, and knowledge of magical powers, are the five great surrounding circles, such as the earth circle and so on. The pure omniscient enlightenment is the outer encirclement by the vajra garland. [305] The vajra-garlanded iron fence is in essence the uncontaminated great bliss. Similarly the vajra flames are in essence the five kinds of gnosis. The pure form of wisdom is the moon constantly shining in the northeast, and the pure form of method is the sun constantly shining in the southwest. The pure forms of the mind, speech, body, and gnosis vajras are respectively the wheel of dharma, the great vase, the great drum, and the Bodhi tree that stand on ledges within the body mandala. The pure forms of the four vajras are also the wish-fulfilling jewel, wish-fulfilling tree, dharma gong, and dharma conch that stand within the great bliss mandala.

Therefore this is a meditation to reveal these various aspects of the base mandala as the definitive and pure dharmadhātu mandala of glorious Kālacakra, endowed to perfection with every possible obscuration-free excellence.

Meditating on the purity of the resident deities

This is in two sections:

1. Channel purity
2. Aggregate and sphere purity

Channel purity

This is taught in verse 101 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the *Condensed Tantra*, from the line beginning "The vases and the eight, such as Dhūmā, are the dharma wheel at the heart" until "the finger joints."[223] This is explained as follows. The purified forms of the eight channel petals

of the heart are the eight vases and the eight śakti. The purified forms of the sixteen channel petals at the brow are the four male tathāgatas with consorts and the four female tathāgatas with consorts. The purified forms of the four channel petals at the crown are the dharma conch, the jewel, the dharma gong, and the wish-fulfilling tree. The purified forms of the thirty-two channel petals of the throat are the six male bodhisattvas with consorts, the six female bodhisattvas with consorts, and the four wrathful protectors with consorts. The purified forms of the sixty-four channel petals of the navel are the sixty-four goddesses, such as Bhīma and so on, of the speech mandala. The purified forms of the thirty-two channel petals of the secret area are the eight main goddesses, Cāmuṇḍi and so on, of the speech mandala and the eight offering goddesses, Lāsyā and so on, each in method and wisdom aspect to make thirty-two. The purified forms of the 360 channel petals arrived at by totaling the thirty petals on each of the twelve cakras of the twelve major arms and leg joints, are the 360 lunar-day deities. [306] The purified forms of the two sets of thirty cakras on the finger and toe joints plus the two sets of two pervading channels are the sixteen figures of the eight nāgas and eight fierce females divided up twice into method and wisdom to make two sets of thirty-two.

Aggregate and sphere purity

This is taught in the second half of verse 102 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the *Condensed Tantra,* from the line beginning "Time in its pure form is the vajra holder" up to "The body hairs are the host of spirits in the cemeteries."[224] This is explained as follows. External time is the sun moving through the twelve houses, while internal time is the cause-and-effect phenomena of the twelve links of dependent origination. In their purified form these become the vajra holder Kālacakra, the main deity of the mandala. The way the twelve links of dependent origination are causes and effects is explained by the *Great Commentary:*

> Internally the twelve links of the cycles of houses, Capricorn and so forth, are of the nature of cause and effect. Five are causes, seven are effects. The causes have the nature of afflictions and karma. The effects have the nature of suffering. This is taught in the Realms chapter.[225]

Thus ignorance, compositional karma, grasping, taking, and becoming are causes. Consciousness, name and form, the six sources, contact, feeling, birth, and aging and death are all effects. The way that one circles in samsara within these causes and effects is as follows. Affliction and karma drive the cycle of saṁsara. From the twelve links, ignorance, grasping, and taking are afflictions, while compositional karma and becoming are karma. The link of becoming is the point when the seeds of karma gain in strength to develop the capacity to create a new birth and, therefore, is not actually karma but is merely labeled as such.

The way these effects are produced from these causes is as follows. Because of ignorance, virtuous and nonvirtuous compositional karma is accumulated. [307] This compositional karma, which is capable of creating the links from consciousness to feeling through the process of impelling,[226] plants seeds on the mindstream. These seeds, nourished by the link of grasping and then by the link of taking, both of which have the nature of attachment, grow in strength and form the link of becoming, which has the capacity to create a future birth. From the link of becoming comes the link of consciousness that has just linked to a mother's womb. From consciousness arises name and form, the six sources, contact, and feeling, all arising from preceding links. The moment of the consciousness linking to a mother's womb is known as birth, and the process of moving from name and form to feeling is labeled aging. Death is posited as the cessation of life.

The above is the thinking of the tantra and commentary and therefore is at one with the thinking of Master Nāgārjuna when he says in his *Verses on the Essence of Dependent Origination:*

> Two come from three,
> seven come from two,
> and three come from seven;
>
> this wheel of existence
> turns again and again.[227]

During the deity emanations of the sovereign-mandala deity, when a correlation is made with the ordinary base, the passage beginning "Ignorance, compositional karma, and consciousness" teaches that the length of time in the womb is applied to the links of dependent origination, in which the

names of the links are given to the months of pregnancy. The reason for this is as follows. As previously explained, the month of conception, regardless of what the actual month might be, is known as the month of Capricorn. Seven months on from then, the winds are created in the navel channel petals, and therefore that month is known as the month of Cancer. Because of this the month of conception is known as the month of ignorance, and the following months of pregnancy are named compositional karma, consciousness, and so on. The reason why Capricorn is the month of ignorance is that when the twelve links of dependent origination and the twelve zodiacal months are assigned to each other as an internal and external correlation, the first of the twelve links and the first zodiacal month of pregnancy have to be assigned to each other, [308] and in this part of the generation stage, the *Great Commentary* comments, "Internally, the zodiac cycle of Capricorn and so on are the twelve links," while in verse 112 of the Realms chapter of the *Condensed Tantra* it says, "Ignorance is in the month of Puṣya when the sun enters Capricorn."[228]

The cessation of the twelve links of dependent origination is Viśvamātā. The *Great Commentary* states:

> Similarly the cessation of the twelve links is the pure Prajñā.[229]

The purified forms of the eight channels at the heart, which are the supports for the equalizing wind and so on, are the eight śakti, Dhūmā and so forth. The purified forms of the two parts of the central channel, avadhūtī above and *śaṅkhinī* below, are the two other śakti, Jñānapāramitā of the gnosis element, symbolized by the *visarga,* and Prajñāpāramitā of the space element, symbolized by the drop.

The ending of pride and the three poisons is Rudra under the left foot. The ending of the four kinds of māras, namely mental afflictions, lord of death, the aggregates, and Devaputra, is Māra under the right foot. The ending of obstructions to the body is the conch. The ending of obstructions to speech is the gong. The ending of obstructions to mind is the jewel. The ending of obstructions to gnosis is the wish-fulfilling tree. The cessation of the right and left bone marrow is represented by the two vases in the east. Assigning left and right to the following also, the cessation of blood is symbolized by the two vases of the south. The nonemission of urine is illustrated by the two vases of the north, and the nonemission of excrement by the two vases of the west. The nonemission of seminal fluid

is illustrated by the upper vase, the nonemission of menstrual blood by the lower. Eight vases are actually placed in the mandala, while the *jaya* and *vijaya* vases pervade them all.

The purification and freedom from obscuration of the aggregates of compositional factors, feelings, recognition, form, and consciousness are Amoghasiddhi, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Vairocana, and Akṣobhya respectively. The purified and obscuration-free elements of gnosis, space, air, fire, water, and earth are Viśvamātā, Vajradhātvīśvarī, Tārā, Pāṇḍarā, Māmakī, and Locanā respectively.

The purification and freedom from obscuration of the ear, nose, eyes, tongue, body, and mind [309] are Vajrapāṇi, Khagarbha, Kṣitigarbha, Lokeśvara, Viṣkambhī, and Samantabhadra respectively.

The purified sources of sound, smell, taste, form, touch, and phenomena are Śabdavajrā, Gandhavajrā, Rasavajrā, Rūpavajrā, Viśvamātā, and Dharmadhātuvajrā respectively.

The purified forms of the powers of faith, effort, memory, concentration, and wisdom are the wrathful protectors Uṣṇīṣa, Vighnantaka, Prajñāntaka, Padmantaka, and Yamāntaka respectively. The purified forms of the organs of the female organ, speech, arms, legs, and anus are Sumbha, Nīladaṇḍa, Takkirāja, Acala, and Mahābala respectively. The purified forms of the organ faculties are the wrathful goddesses, Raudrākṣī and so forth. The purified forms of the eight periods are the eight main goddesses of the speech mandala, Cāmuṇḍi and so forth.

The purified forms of the sixty channel petals carrying the winds of the sixty hours of the twelve lagna or ascendants of one day, plus the four empty channels to make up the sixty-four channel petals of the navel or emanation cakra, are Bhīma and so on, the sixty-four goddesses of the speech mandala.

The purified and obscuration-free forms of the twelve months of Caitra and so on are the twelve main lunar-day deities—Nairtya, Vāyu, Agni, Śaṇmukha, Samudra, Gaṇapati, Śakra, Brahmā, Rudra, Yakṣa, Viṣṇu, and Yama. The purified forms of the 360 breaths of one hour and the 360 days of one year are the 336 entourage deities of the lunar-day deities plus the twelve consorts of the lunar-day deities and the twelve goddesses of the mind mandala, Lāsyā and so forth. The pure forms of the thirty-two channel petals of the secret area are the eight nāgas and eight fierce females, each in method and wisdom aspect, to make thirty-two.

In terms of their qualities, the purified and unobstructed forms of bodily actions, such as digging in the earth, are the thirty-six desire goddesses

and the thirty-six nondesire goddesses. Hairs in their purified forms are the siddhas. The purified forms of the thirty-five million pores are the thirty-five million elementals in the cemeteries.

[310] In the purity of the base mandalas and dependent deities as explained here, the purified and untainted forms of the aggregates and so on appear in the forms of these mandalas and deities. On this point, there are those phenomena that actually exist as the base mandalas and dependent deities and those that, while not actually existing that way, are meditated on as being so. The first type is illustrated by Śākyamuni in the form of the Kālacakra, lord of the mandala, manifesting the body, speech, and mind mandalas of the Kālacakra mandala. For the second type, the generation-stage meditator dwells in the pride of being Kālacakra, lord of the mandala, visualizing and meditating upon the bases of purification, such as the aggregates, channels, and so forth, appearing as the pure and untainted phenomena of the base mandalas and dependent deities. This is the meaning of the meditation upon the purity of the base mandalas and dependent deities. Therefore, when the *Great Commentary* says, "With the cessation of the elements, the pure other elements arise"[230] and "The other forms and so forth, the other eyes and so forth,"[231] the term *other* in this context must refer to the aspects of the base mandalas and dependent deities that appear to the mind of the generation-stage practitioner. In particular the *Great Commentary* says:

> When conventional phenomena have ceased, there are other compositional factors and so forth. Therefore the pure compositional factors are Amoghasiddhi, the end of obscuration to compositional factors.[232]

"Other compositional factors" of this passage indicates the generation-stage deity that the aggregate of compositional factors is to be visualized as. The phrase "and so forth" refers to "other feelings" and "other recognition," which indicate the generation-stage deities that the aggregates of feeling and recognition are to be visualized as. The reason why this has to be the explanation of the term *other* is stated in the part of the quote beginning "Therefore the pure compositional factors are Amoghasiddhi." The Amoghasiddhi mentioned here must be the generation-stage deity Amoghasiddhi, because this part of the tantra and commentary deals with

the purity meditation of the generation stage. This reasoning can be applied to the other phenomena of the purity meditation also.

Furthermore the *Great Commentary,* on the forty-seventh verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> Here the emanation and withdrawal of the world-realm outer,
> the bodily inner, and imputed other mandalas.[233]

[311] The "other" mandalas mentioned here clearly refer to the base mandalas and dependent deities imputed or mentally conceived during the generation stage. Because of these reasons, every instance of the term "other" in the Kālacakra tantra and commentary should not be understood as referring to a permanent and unchanging tathāgata essence.[234]

24. The Mind Vajra

The branch of mind-vajra accomplishment, a meditation on drop yoga correlating with the expansion of the drop

This has two outlines:

1. A brief description of the assertions of others and examination of their validity
2. Our own assertions

A brief description of the assertions of others and examination of their validity

Some scholars (such as the master Kumāra[235]) assert the subtle and drop yogas as taught here to be both generation-stage and completion-stage meditations. They maintain that the generation stage involves relying upon an activity mudrā consort to move the drop to the jewel and then to draw it up by the power of the winds. This "waterwheel" descent and ascent is practiced again and again until the worldly innate bliss becomes stable. This, they maintain, is the drop yoga of the generation stage, while drop yoga and subtle yoga using a mahāmudrā consort are yogas of the completion stage. They also explain the *Root Tantra* line "A qualified consort aged sixteen" as teaching the six-branched yoga.

It is not correct to say that the practice of relying on an activity mudrā consort to move the drop down to the jewel and then through the force of the winds to draw it up again to produce innate bliss is a generation-stage meditation, because the development of such an innate bliss requires the ability through yoga to move the winds into the central channel, and the innate bliss produced from the winds entering the central channel cannot be a generation-stage practice. This is because a method for moving the

winds into the central channel is not taught in the generation stage, [312] and the yoga in which the bodhicitta element ascends and descends again and again like a waterwheel using the power of the winds must be within the completion stage.

Furthermore it is hard to understand how the line "A qualified consort aged sixteen"[236] teaches the six-branched yoga. The *Great Commentary* says:

> In the generation stages the completion of the enlightened body is within the sovereign mandala. The completion of enlightened speech is within the sovereign activities, because the action faculties engage in activity. The completion of the drops of bodhicitta is within the drop yoga. Bliss arising from the movement of the fluid is within the subtle yoga.[237]

This passage explains that the subtle and drop yogas as taught here are generation-stage practices, and the *Root Tantra* line "A qualified consort aged sixteen"[238] is quoted here as scriptural authority for this way of meditating on the subtle and drop yoga at this time.

Our own assertions

This is under two headings:

1. Correlation with bases of purification
2. An explanation of the practice based upon *Root Tantra* quotes

Correlation with bases of purification

When a child reaches the age of sixteen, the power of his white element is complete. Seeking the bliss that comes from emission of the drop, he takes a bride and leads her by the hand and so forth. In correlation with this the vajra master gives a wisdom mudrā consort to the student during the initiation. Yogis meditating on the subtle and drop yogas will rely upon an activity or wisdom mudrā consort as appropriate. In normal existence, from the age of sixteen onward, a man sits in union with a mudrā, and the common caṇḍālī fire blazes from the secret area. The drop melts and gradually descends from the crown to the tip of the organ, thereby increasing the bliss. In correlation with this the bodhicitta element descends from the crown to the tip of the vajra through reliance on one of the two types of

mudrās and produces the four joys, which are applied to meditation upon emptiness. This is drop yoga meditation.

An explanation of the practice based upon Root Tantra quotes

The teachings from the tantra and commentary on the meditations of the subtle and drop yogas of the generation stage in this part of the text are intended for the primary disciples of the tantra. [313] These are jewellike persons destined in one life to actualize the state of Vajradhara. They complete the deity yoga of the coarse generation stage and then meditate on the subtle and drop yogas. The explanation from the tantra, therefore, is given on this basis. Such a person enters the practice of drop yoga by relying upon one of the two types of consort. If he uses an activity consort, the *Root Tantra* says:

> A qualified consort aged sixteen,
> adorned with youth and beauty;
> teach her well,
> then initiate and begin the practice.[239]

A mudrā consort should be sought. She should have all the right characteristics of youth and beauty and be between the ages of twelve and twenty, as indicated by the phrase "aged sixteen." She should be taught thoroughly the fundamental points of practice, receive initiation, be given tantric vows, and be instructed in the deity-yoga meditation. Then the practice of drop yoga can begin. What is the procedure of practice?

> Body, speech, mind, and desire,
> placed at the brow and so forth,
> *svā, hā,* at the secret and crown.[240]

Oneself is clearly visualized as main-deity Kālacakra, and the activity consort or wisdom consort as Viśvamātā. At the brow, heart, throat, and navel of both mother and father are placed the *oṃ* body vajra, the *āḥ* speech vajra, the *hūṃ* mind vajra, and the *hoḥ* gnosis vajra. The syllable *svā* is placed in the secret area and *hā* at the crown. Next is the purification of the secret space:

Then the lotus is purified.[241]

This is an introduction. The next lines teach the actual purification:

From the syllable *āḥ,* an eight-petal lotus;
by the syllable *hūṃ,* it is with vajra;
the cause of movement
of the wisdom lotus with vajra,
one's vajra by the syllable *hūṃ*
visualized with five points;
in its center an eight-petal lotus
conceived with the syllable *āḥ.*[242]

From the nonapprehension of the secret area of the consort arises the letter *āḥ.* This becomes a lotus of eight petals. Its center is "with vajra," which means marked with a vajra that arises from or "by the syllable *hūṃ.*" Then "by the syllable *hūṃ*" or from a *hūṃ* within the nonapprehension of one's secret area while clearly visualizing oneself as the main deity, a vajra "visualized with five points," which is "the cause of movement of the wisdom lotus with vajra." [314] In the center of this vajra is an eight-petal lotus "conceived with the syllable *āḥ,*" meaning visualized as arising from the syllable *āḥ.* That is the purification of the secret organs. Now the practice:

With the pride of vajra holder,
the vajra with lotus enters the lotus.
With *liṅgam* placed into the *bhaga,*
the yogi performs *hūṃ phaṭ;*
the bodhicitta is not emitted.[243]

One's own secret-area five-pointed vajra marked with a lotus enters the consort's lotus. Within that state the yogi holds the pride of being the vajra holder main-deity Kālacakra, he utters the syllables *hūṃ phaṭ,* and dwells within the activity of union arising from placing the father's *liṅgam* into the mother's *bhaga.* This brings the elemental bodhicitta drop down to the tip of the jewel, where it is not to be emitted.

The way the bodhicitta travels down from the crown to the tip of the jewel during this union and how the four joys are created from that process is taught in the next lines:

At the navel the caṇḍālī fire blazes,
the five tathāgatas are burnt,
Locanā, eyes, etc., are burnt,
the *haṃ* moon syllable falls
with the characteristics of nectar fluid,
in the form of a drop it descends.
This is drop yoga.[244]

These lines can be explained in accord with the *Condensed Tantra* and commentary. When meditating on the coarse generation stage, seventy-two channel petals, consisting of the twelve zodiac channel petals of the navel cakra and the sixty channel petals that carry the sixty mandala winds, are purified and blessed by meditation upon seventy-two yoginīs of the speech mandala. From these and from mother and father in union, the caṇḍālī fire blazes, and at the emanation navel cakra, the mandala winds of the five tathāgatas, Vairocana and so forth, on the left, the five mandala winds of Locanā and so forth on the right, the five sense organs of the eyes and so forth, the five objects of form and so forth, are all "burnt," [315] meaning that they are temporarily halted from performing their individual functions. The moon bodhicitta arises from the syllable *haṃ* at the crown and falls. The nectar fluid in the form of a drop descends from the crown to the tip of the jewel. It descends from the crown to the throat to produce joy. Falling from the throat to the heart, it produces supreme joy. Falling from the heart to the navel, it produces special joy. Falling from the navel to the secret area or tip of the jewel, it produces innate joy. These four joys of descent are applied to emptiness to create bliss-and-emptiness yoga. This is the drop yoga of the generation stage. This description accords with the *Great Commentary* beginning from the line, "The nine of the navel cakra" until "at the throat the gnosis drop,"[245] which is commentary on the above root text passage. Within that commentary are the lines:

> "The fire of the caṇḍālī gnosis blazes up" refers to conventional gnosis, desire, and the fire is the fire of desire. When that fire of desire blazes, Vairocana and the others of the five mandalas of the left at the emanation navel wheel...[246]

These and following lines teach that ten airs are burnt at the navel and that they are burnt by the fire of desire. Therefore this caṇḍālī fire is the caṇḍālī

of the secret area. Also the line "conventional gnosis, desire, and the fire is the fire of desire" teaches that this fire of desire is fanned by the desire for the mudrā consort, and therefore this fire is of the ordinary external caṇḍālī. Another reason why this must be so is that if the caṇḍālī that melts the bodhicitta were the inner caṇḍālī of the *śaṅkhinī* channel, the four joys at this juncture would have to be the four joys of the bodhicitta descending within the central channel, and those four joys are only found in completion-stage practice and not in the generation stage.

25. The Gnosis Vajra

The branch of gnosis-vajra great accomplishment: A meditation on the subtle yoga correlating with the completion of bliss at the age of sixteen

> Sixteen, half and half[247]
> holding the drop,
> partless beyond parts,
> held at the peak of the four meditative absorptions.[248]
> This is the subtle yoga.[249]

[316] The meaning of these *Root Tantra* lines is explained by the *Great Commentary* in the lines beginning:

> "Dwelling in the pure wisdom[250] the bodhicitta again," means,
> as it arrives so it returns.[251]

The commentary states that the drop descends to the tip of the jewel and travels back up again in the manner of its descent. Traveling from the secret area to the navel as a similar-to-cause result, the meditative absorption of joy is experienced. Traveling from the navel to the heart as a ripening result, the meditative absorption of supreme joy is experienced. Traveling from the heart to the throat as a personally created result, the meditative absorption of special joy is experienced. Traveling from the throat to the brow as an eradication result, the meditative absorption of innate joy is experienced. The four joys are mixed with emptiness, and the resulting bliss-and-emptiness yoga is the "subtle yoga great accomplishment."

The root text from "A wisdom consort aged sixteen" until "This is the subtle yoga" teaches mainly the generation-stage subtle and drop yogas.[252] The lines from "moving up, similar to the cause, etc." up to "yoga, medita-

tive absorptions, and so on"[253] teach the completion stage. On this point, some people, imagining it to be the position of the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission Sādhana,* say:

> The drop-yoga simulation practice of the generation-stage practitioner can be understood from the actual teaching of the completion-stage drop yoga found in the lines beginning "At the navel the caṇḍālī fire blazes."[254]

Such statements contradict the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission Sādhana.* A passage of the *Sādhana* that runs from "Urged by the downwardly expelling wind of the caṇḍālī" to "The moonlike melted drop form arrives at the throat from the crown to create joy"[255] [317] comments on the root text from "At the navel the caṇḍālī fire blazes" until "in the form of a drop, it descends," in accord with its the literal meaning. After that it goes on to say:

> Even during the generation stage the caṇḍālī blazes, causing the element to actually melt. From this arises the generation-stage four joys applied to emptiness to produce a true bliss and emptiness. This causes the element mandalas and the entire three realms to arise vividly before the mind as the sport of bliss and emptiness in the form of the deities and mandalas.[256]

This is stated in the *Sādhana,* and the above assertion, therefore, would contradict it.[257]

The reason why the lines beginning "At the navel the caṇḍālī fire blazes" express such a literal meaning during the subtle and drop yoga practices of the generation stage is as follows. When the primary and jewellike disciple of the tantra and commentary has completed the coarse generation stage, whatever he visualizes will vividly appear as if it were the actual object. Divine pride will transfer to wherever it is placed, the mind will not wander from whatever object it is placed upon, and will remain with a real or contrived peaceful abiding. In such circumstances the activity mudrā consort is visualized as Viśvamātā. If a wisdom mudrā consort is used, she is visualized as an actual person, real enough to touch. The visualized sexual union also appears as real, and the bodhicitta is able to travel from the crown to the tip of the jewel. With a vivid meditation of the syllable *phaṭ* at the opening of the jewel, the bodhicitta emission is stopped. With a

clear and firm visualization of the stopped bodhicitta being drawn upward, the meditator is able to draw it back to the crown.

These particular subtle and drop yogas are special ripening practices that develop into an actual completion stage in which the special caṇḍālī fire inside the central channel stops the winds of the left and right channels and is itself fanned by the winds that enter the central channel. The bodhicitta arisen from the syllable *haṃ* at the crown moves through the central channel to create the four or sixteen joys of descent and ascent. [318] With this in mind the *Great Commentary* says:

> It is taught that the undeveloped accomplish that bliss through the activity mudrā consort. The middling practitioner relies upon a wisdom consort. The supreme yogi uses a mahāmudrā consort.[258]

Therefore, having explained the kinds of mudrā consort that can induce the four joys of generation-stage subtle and drop yogas, the commentary says "the undeveloped accomplish that bliss through the activity mudrā consort. The middling practitioner relies upon a wisdom consort." Immediately after this line, it says, "The supreme yogi uses a mahāmudrā consort," thereby teaching the exclusive mahāmudrā consort that induces completion-stage supreme unchanging bliss. In the *Root Tantra* also, immediately after the line "This is the subtle yoga," the texts talks of the completion stage.

If this yogi uses an activity mudrā and wisdom mudrā to bring the bodhicitta to the tip of the jewel for the four joys of descent and then to draw it up to the crown for the four joys of stable ascent, what is the meaning of the following lines from the *Great Commentary*?

> The activity mudrā is she who grants the falling bliss. The wisdom mudrā is she who grants the moving bliss.[259]

Activity mudrā here refers to the power of a mudrā consort lacking skillful means who grants the bliss of emission. A wisdom mudrā merely grants the bliss of the bodhicitta element moving throughout the parts of the body. Therefore there is no contradiction here. Those who have not completed the coarse generation stage do not have the abilities of those who have, and they should practice by way of simulation.

Mantra Recitation

After the meditations of the subtle yoga come the mantra recitations, offerings, tasting the nectar, and the requests to return. These can be learned from the *Puṇḍarīka Transmission Sādhana* among others. Here I will explain a little about mantra repetition. This has three outlines [319]:

1. The need to become skilled in friends and enemies in mantra practice
2. The way to calculate friends and enemies within letters
3. The way to recite mantras armed with the knowledge of friends and enemies

The need to become skilled in friends and enemies in mantra practice

The *Great Commentary,* on verse 168 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> It is the same with the letters of the name of the practice. If the first letter of the name of the practitioner is an enemy, the practitioner will die. If it is neutral, he will remain with affliction.[260] If it is a friend, he will become the deity. An enemy vowel brings death. An enemy consonant brings illness.[261]

This means that if the vowel of the first letter of the name of the deity of practice and the vowel of the first letter of the name of the practitioner are enemies, there is the danger that the practitioner will die. If the two first consonants of practitioner and deity are enemies, there will be a risk of illness. If the first letters of the names of deity and practitioner are friends, regardless of whether they are vowels or consonants, the practitioner will become the deity of that practice. If the first two letters of the names are neither enemies nor friends but of a neutral relationship, neither advantage nor disadvantage will occur. Therefore one should know about friends and enemies within letters.

The way to calculate friends and enemies within letters

This is under two headings:

1. How the letters of the five elements become friends and enemies
2. Recognizing the elements of the different letters

How the letters of the five elements become friends and enemies

The *Great Commentary* says:

> All air letters are enemies of water letters. The vowels are of the vowels, and the consonants are of the consonants. Likewise water letters are enemies of fire letters, as fire letters are of earth letters, and earth letters of air letters. Space letters are friends of all, and all letters are friends of space letters. Likewise the friend of earth is water. The friend of fire is air, and the friend of air is fire. The friend of water is earth. These are the classes of friends. The neutral of air is water, the neutral of fire is earth, the neutral of water is fire, and the neutral of earth is air.[262]

[320] When these are put in an abbreviated verse form:

> The enemy of water is air,
> earth the enemy of air,
> the enemy of earth is fire,
> water the enemy of fire,
> space is the friend of all,
> all are friends of space,
> earth and water are mutual friends,
> fire and space are mutual friends,
> the neutral of air is water,
> the neutral of fire is earth,
> the neutral of water is fire,
> the neutral of earth is air.[263]

These are the ways in which the letters of the five elements become friends, enemies, or neutrals. The calculation of friend enemy and neutral should be done vowel to vowel and consonant to consonant. This is taught by the lines "The vowels are of the vowels and the consonants are of the consonants."

Recognizing the elements of the different letters

The vowels *ā* and *a,* the five consonants of the *ka* group, the letter *ha,* and the *thka* are all guttural and of the element of space. The *Root Tantra,* quoted in the *Great Commentary,* says:

> *a, ku,*[264] *ha, thka,* from the throat,
> whether vowels or consonants,
> are of emptiness and are constant friends
> of air and so forth.[265]

Likewise *ī* and *i,* the *guṇa* vowel *e,* and the *vṛiddhi* vowel *ai,* the five letters of the *ca* group, the letter *ya,* and the letter *śa* are all palatal and are of the air element. The *Root Tantra* says:

> *i, cu, ya, śa* arise from the palate;
> these vowels and consonants,
> arising from the element of air,
> are enemies of those arising from water.[266]

The vowels *ṛ* and *ṛī,* the *guṇa* letter *ar,* the *vṛiddhi* letter *ār,* the five letters of the *ṭa* group, and the letters *ra* and *ṣa* are all produced from the crown[267] and are of the element of fire. The *Root Tantra* says:

> *ṛ, ṭu, ra, ṣa* are born from the crown;
> these vowels and consonants,
> arising from the element of fire,
> are enemies of those born from earth.[268]

[321] The vowels *u* and *ū,* the *guṇa* and *vṛiddhi* letters *o* and *au,* the five letters of the *pa* group, the letter *wa* and *kpa* are all labial and are of the water element. The *Root Tantra* says:

> *u, pu, wa, kpa*[269] are produced from lips;
> these vowels and consonants,
> arising from the water element,
> are enemies of those from fire.[270]

The vowels *ḷ* and *ḷī*, the five letters of the *ta* group, the *guṇa* and the *vṛiddhi* letters *al* and *āl*, the letter *la*, and the letter *sa* are all dental and are of the earth element. The *Root Tantra* says:

> *ḷ, tu, la, sa* are produced from the teeth;
> these vowels and consonants,
> arising from the element of earth,
> are the enemies of those of air.
> Constantly the friend of air is fire,
> the neutral water has no power,
> so the friend of fire is air.
> Because the neutral earth has no power,
> the friend of water is earth.
> Because the neutral fire has no power,
> the friend of earth is water,
> and the neutral is air. [271]

These passages from the *Root Tantra* quoted in the *Great Commentary* explain this subject clearly.

The description of the *ka* group as space, the *ca* group as air, the *ṭa* group as fire, the *pa* group as water, and the *ta* group as earth, is made on the basis of the major elements. The syllables *ku, cu,* and so forth, as presented in the *Root Tantra,* represent the five letters in their respective groups. This can be understood by the line "*u* includes the group."

Moreover one has to know the consonant friends and enemies of the minor elements also and be able to calculate the friend-enemy relationship on the basis of the first letters of the name of the practitioner and the deity of practice. The *Root Tantra* quoted in the *Great Commentary* says:

> The five consonants
> of earth and so forth
> of the letters *ka,* etc., of one group,
> should be known for mantra practice.[272]

Therefore, in mantra practice, calculations should be made for the minor elements also. What are the letters for the minor elements, and how can their enemy-friend relationships be calculated? The *Root Tantra* says:

ṅa, ña, ṇa, and *ma*
are the friends of those
born from air and so forth.[273]

The five letters *ṅa, ña, ṇa,* and *ma* belong to the space element of the five minor elements and are friends of all the letters of the remaining elements, air and so forth, regardless of whether they belong to the same group. Similarly the remaining letters are friends of these five.

Likewise:

gha, jha, ḍha, bha, dha
are enemies of the water produced.
ga, ja, ḍa, ba, da
are enemies of the earth produced.
kha, cha, ṭha, pha, tha
are enemies of the fire produced.
ka, ca, ṭa, pa, ta
are enemies of the air produced.
This applies to the letter at the head of the mantra
and the letter of the practitioner,
whether of one's group or another.[274]

[322] Therefore the five letters *gha, jha, ḍha, bha,* and *dha* are of the air element of the minor elements and are enemies of those of the water element, whether or not they are from the same group. The letters *ga, ja, ḍa, ba,* and *da* are of the fire element and are enemies of those of the earth element. The letters *kha, cha, ṭha, pha,* and *tha* are of the water element and are enemies of the fire element. The letters *ka, ca, ṭa, pa,* and *ta* are of the earth element and are enemies of the air element. Friends and neutrals can be worked out from the elements by following the process used in the major elements.

The way to recite mantras armed with the knowledge of friends and enemies

This has two outlines:

1. The mantras to be recited
2. The way they are to be recited

The mantras to be recited

Leaving aside the *oṃ* at the beginning and the *svāhā,* for example, at the end of the mantra, the first letter of a deity's name mantra is the mind-vajra mantra. The whole of the name mantra is the speech-vajra mantra. Except for the branch mantras, other mantra letters added onto the name mantra are body-vajra mantras. Branch mantras are chain mantras.

The deity mantras are examples. This procedure can be applied to all animate and inanimate phenomena. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 167 of the *Condensed Tantra,* says:

> Now the text speaks of mantras. "The first name" and so on refers to the first letter of the name of whatever moving or nonmoving phenomenon found in these three worlds. "That becomes the mind vajra, lord of men, of the gods and goddesses." The whole of the name becomes the speech vajra—for example, Tārā, Pāṇḍarā, Māmakī, Locanā. These names are the speech vajra. This is likewise with the whole name of every phenomenon. Letters "other than the complete name are those of the body vajra," for example, *oṃ tāre tutāre ture svāhā.*[275]

[323] The commentary continues with examples of the other goddesses' mantras and then states:

> All chain mantras apart from the body-vajra mantras are branch mantras.

The way they are to be recited

This is in three parts. First, the way to recite mind-vajra mantras. The *Root Tantra,* quoted in the *Great Commentary,* says:

> In meditation and recitation,
> for the practice of
> the first of the mantra,
> whether consonant or vowel,
> it is taught that the activities
> are of six types.[276]

Therefore those who meditate upon and recite the first letter of the name mantra, whether it is consonant or vowel, must perform six kinds of activities. Concerning these six, the *Root Tantra* says:

> First, piercing, then descent,
> followed by burning,
> raising up by mantra,
> increase, and pleasing.[277]

Therefore the six activities are piercing, descending, burning, raising, increase, and pleasing. Concerning piercing, the text continues:

> Emptiness with *visarga*
> added before the mantra,
> pierced by the king of weapons,
> and attained while unconscious.[278]

"Emptiness with *visarga,*" meaning the element of space-letter *ha* with a *visarga,* is added "before the mantra," meaning on top of the first letter of the mantra, and recited. This pierces the deity with the king of weapons, and the practitioner attains the deity while it is unconscious. On the number of recitations to perform and the function of this activity the text says:

> With a hundred thousand
> recitations of the mind vajra,
> the mantra deity loses consciousness,
> abandons all pride,
> and is under the power of the yogi.[279]

On the second activity, called descending, the text says:

> Similarly if air is added,
> the deity comes to the yogi.[280]

If the air-element letter *ya* with a *visarga* is added on top of the first letter of the name and recited, the deity will come to the yogi. This activity of descending will be accomplished by one hundred thousand recitations.

On the activity of burning, the *Root Tantra* says:

If fire is added,
burning is accomplished.[281]

[324] If the fire letter *ra* plus *visarga* is added to the top of the first letter of a particular mantra and recited, the fire activity is initiated. It will be accomplished by one hundred thousand recitations.

On the activity of raising, the text says:

Similarly, by water,
raising is performed.[282]

If the water letter *wa* plus *visarga* is added to the top of the first letter of a particular mantra and recited, the raising activity is initiated. It will be accomplished by one hundred thousand recitations.

On the activity of increase the text says:

If earth resting on the crown
is recited, the deity increases.[283]

If the earth letter *la* plus *visarga* is added to the top of the first letter of a particular mantra and recited, increase is initiated.

On the activity of pleasing, the text states:

If "drop" is added to the crown,
it grants the greatest delight.[284]

If "drop" or an *anusvāra* is added to the crown or head of the first letter of a particular mantra and recited, the activity of pleasing the deity is initiated.

As the *Condensed Tantra* says:

If the recitations of these six activities are performed, the deity being practiced will grant the supreme.[285]

The last two activities are also accomplished by one hundred thousand recitations. The text states:

Six hundred recitations
will fulfill one's wishes.

In the *Original Buddha Mahātantra*
the Buddha has taught this
as preliminary meditation.[286]

Therefore each of the six activities requires a hundred thousand recitations.

The endings of the mantras of the six activities are respectively *phaṭ, hūṃ, boṣaṭaṃ,*[287] *namaḥ, svāhā,* and *baṣaṭa.* The beginning of each is *oṃ.* The text continues:

The syllable *phaṭ,*
likewise *hūṃ, boṣaṭa,*
namaḥ, svāhā, baṣaṭa:
these the meditator puts
onto the mantras of
the six activities respectively.
At the beginning, Vairocana.[288]

First the six hundred thousand mantra recitations of the six activities are performed. Then fire offerings of one tenth of the recitations are offered. After that ten million speech vajra recitations of the deity's whole name mantra are performed, and fire offerings of one tenth of the recitations are performed. [325] After that, body-vajra recitations of mantras other than the name mantra are performed, and fire offerings of one tenth of the recitations are performed. The text goes on to say that whatever deity one is practicing, it will be accomplished by these activities:

Again the recitations are performed.
After ten million have been completed,
fire offerings of one tenth;
perform the rituals taught in the tantra,
and deity practice will be accomplished.
With these powers the mantra practitioner
is granted the supreme deity and all desires.[289]

However will the deity practice and other attainments that one strives for, such as the *siddhis* of peace, increase, and so forth, be accomplished merely by these recitations as they are explained here? The teachings in the text are given on the basis that certain conditions such as the family of one's deity,

the rituals used to accomplish the activity, the time of practice, the seed syllables of the mantras, the element family, the place of practice, the direction, the practitioner's seat, and so on are all complete and are followed as taught in the tantra and commentary. If these conditions are not met, the activities will not be accomplished. The text continues:

> All activities of other families,
> other rituals, other times,
> mantra families, places,
> directions, and seats,
> will produce no result.[290]

On this point, the *Great Commentary,* on verse 168 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, clearly explains how the six activities and the mind-vajra, speech-vajra, and body-vajra mantra recitations are to be performed in application to the mantra of Tārā before moving on to other families:

> Concerning the mantras, piercing, etc., is as follows. First it is taught using the mantra of Tārā. With this one can know the others. The mantra *oṃ hatāḥ*[291] *phaṭ* accomplishes the piercing and is to be recited one hundred thousand times. *Oṃ yatāḥ hūṃ* accomplishes the descent. *Oṃ ratāḥ bauṣaṭa* accomplishes the burning. *Oṃ watāḥ namaḥ* accomplishes the raising. *Oṃ latāḥ svāhā* accomplishes the increase. *Oṃ tāṃ waṣaṭa*[292] accomplishes the pleasing. Six hundred recitations and sixty thousand fire offerings are to be performed. Then the speech vajra *oṃ tāre svāhā* is recited ten million times, and fire offerings of one tenth are made. Then the body vajra *oṃ tāre tutāre ture svāhā* is recited ten million times, at the end of which one million fire offerings are made. In this way the yogi is granted the supreme deity of the mantra, but in other ways not.[293]

[326] Therefore the mind-vajra recitations and the six activities followed by speech-vajra and body-vajra meditations, each with the requisite number of recitations, must be learned before the practice of each deity. Moreover, to accomplish deity practice and to accomplish the activities, these practices must be performed without confusion regarding deity family and so on as

described in the individual tantras. This is the peerless thinking of the tantra and the *Great Commentary.*

This has been a presentation of the generation stage roughly compiled from the Methods of Accomplishment chapter.

Part 5
Gnosis: The Completion Stage

26. The Six-Branched Yoga

Presentation of the Completion Stage

[327] This has three outlines:

1. The sites of penetrative focusing: A special explanation of the vajra body
2. Penetrative focusing: A common presentation of the piercing six-branched yoga
3. Presentation of each of the six yogas

The sites of penetrative focusing: A special explanation of the vajra body

This is under three headings:

1. The host channels
2. The winds
3. The placed bodhicitta drops

The host channels

This is in three sections:

1. The six great channels and the six cakras
2. The channels as sites of penetrative focusing
3. Which channels are to be penetrated during which of the six yogas

The six great channels and the six cakras

The right, left, and central channels reach down to the tip of the genital organ and the anus, and up through the center of the body just in front of

the spine. Inside the skull they bend, so that the upper tip of the right channel is at the right nostril, the left channel is at the left nostril, and the tip of the central channel reaches the bridge of the nose directly between the nostrils.

The central channel above the navel is known variously as the Rāhu channel, dual elimination,[1] and avadhūtī. It is green in color and belongs to the element space. [328] The right channel above the navel is known as *rasanā* and as the sun channel. It is red, of the fire element, and mainly carries blood. The left channel above the navel is known as *lalanā* and as the moon channel. It is white, of the water element, and mainly carries seminal fluid. These three channels above the navel are dominated by the life-sustaining wind, which flows within them.

Below the navel the central and right channels continue to the tip of the genital organ. The continuation of the central channel below the navel is known variously as *śaṅkhinī*, the all-pervading channel, and the Kālāgni channel. It is blue, of the gnosis element, and mainly carries seminal fluid. The right channel below the navel is known as *meṣa*[2] and as the urine channel. It is black, of the wind element, and mainly carries urine. The continuation of the left channel below the navel reaches to the anus. It is known as *piṅgalā*[3] and as the excrement channel. It is yellow, of the earth element, and mainly carries excrement. These three are ruled by the downwardly expelling wind, which flows through them. In this way the three channels above the navel and the three below make up the six great channels.

As previously explained in the section on the Inner chapter, the six cakras comprise the four-petal crown cakra, the sixteen-petal brow cakra, the thirty-two-petal throat cakra, the eight-petal heart cakra, the sixty-four-petal navel cakra, and the thirty-two-petal secret-place cakra. At the locations of these six cakras, the right channel and its continuation below the navel is coiled around the central channel, and the left channel and its continuation is also coiled around the central channel, thereby producing a series of double channel knots. At each of these channel knots the channel petals on their immediate right reach into the entwined central and right channels, and the channel petals on the immediate left reach into the joined left and central channels.

Between cakras, from the crown cakra to the brow cakra, brow to the throat, throat to the heart, heart to the navel, and navel to the secret place, [329] the central channel is in the center, while *rasanā* and *lalanā* and their two urine and excrement continuations are on the right and left

respectively. Therefore between each cakra there are three pathways. From the secret area onward, the excrement channel is in the center and travels to the anus. The urine channel is on the left, and the *śaṅkhinī* is on the right, and they both travel to the tip of the sex organ. The authority for this explanation comes from the *Great Commentary* on verse 120 of the Gnosis chapter:

> "Arriving at the place of nectar, channels are knotted in series." The place of nectar is the brow. "Arriving at the place of nectar" refers to *lalanā, rasanā,* and avadhūtī. They are knotted in series, and so between the navel and the heart there are three pathways. The avadhūtī is central, traveling from the center of the navel. The *lalanā* and *rasanā* flow into the left and right petals. Then, between the heart and the throat, there are three pathways. Similarly there are three pathways between the throat and the brow and three between the brow and the crown. In this way there are four lots of three paths. The *lalanā* travels from the left nostril to other locations for a distance of twelve and "part."[4] This is taught in the Inner chapter. The *rasanā* travels from the right. The avadhūtī travels from between the two nostrils. Between the navel and the secret area are the three pathways. The excrement and urine channels travel from the left and right. The *śaṅkhinī* in the center travels to the secret lotus. Below the secret lotus the excrement channel travels from the center. The urine channel travels from the left to the male or female organ. The seminal fluid channel travels from the right.[5]

Other descriptions state that below the navel, the central channel bends to a position on the right, the continuation of the *lalanā* left channel bends to the center, and the continuation of the *rasanā* right channel bends to the left. This description is in contradiction to the above commentary text.

The numbers of channel petals, the elements they belong to, and their descriptions are clearly taught in the Inner chapter of the tantra and commentary and have been explained in the section on the Inner chapter. The source for those descriptions is the Inner chapter, whereas the sources for the descriptions of the [330] six great channels in this section are in the Gnosis chapter.

The channel petals penetrate the entwined left, right, and center channels.

In the channel petals on the left, the winds of the elements flow in the order of space, air, fire, water, and earth before flowing through the left channel and through the left nostril. In the right channel petals they flow earth, water, fire, air, and space into the right channel and through the right nostril. As for the inward flow of wind, the earth wind flows as far as the navel, the water-element wind reaches one fingerwidth below the navel, the fire wind reaches two fingerwidths below the navel, the air-element wind reaches three fingerwidths, and the space-element wind reaches four fingerwidths below the navel. Fifty-six and a quarter breaths flow through the upper opening of the central channel during each of the twelve great wind movements. Moreover, at the locations of each of the cakras, there are entrances for the winds to flow into the central channel. These tenets are particular to this system.

The channels as sites of penetrative focusing

Penetrative focusing[6] means that mental focus is fixed on points of the body, such as the cakras, and major points of the body are pierced or penetrated to produce gnosis. This is penetrative focusing on the body. These major points are inside the central channel, at locations in the middle of the cakras, and also at the central channel's upper and lower openings. The experiences arising from piercing these points and meditating upon them are different for each point.

Which channels are to be penetrated during which of the six yogas

During the yogas of withdrawal and meditative absorption, the focus is on the upper opening of the central channel. During prāṇāyāma and recollection it is the point at the center of the navel cakra. During the yoga of retention the focus for penetration is inside the central channel at the centers of the six cakras. During meditative-concentration yoga, focus is from the lower opening of the central channel to the upper opening.

The winds

As explained previously during the section on the Inner chapter, there are ten winds. [331] They are: life-sustaining, downwardly expelling, coexisting, upwardly moving, pervading, *nāga,* turtle, lizard, *devadatta,* and

dhanaṃjaya. The places where these winds are first created and where they reside in the meantime[7] are the ten channel petals of the heart cakra.[8] The inside of the dhūtī above the upper channel knot of the heart cakra is where the life-sustaining wind is first produced and where it resides. Inside the lower dhūtī, the downwardly expelling wind is first created and resides. The currents of the life-sustaining wind are in the three great upper channels, and the downwardly expelling winds are in the three lower great channels. The eight channel petals from the one at the east, or front, of the body clockwise around to the northeastern petal are the birthplaces and locations of the equalizing, turtle, upwardly moving, lizard, *nāga, dhanaṃjaya,* pervading, and *devadatta* winds. The pathways of these winds are like the waters of large irrigation canals, which divide up and flow into many more smaller canals. Each of the ten winds that dwells within the ten channel petals divides off into many other smaller channels, thereby spreading through all the channels of the body.

The placed bodhicitta drops

A general description of the red and white drops was given in the Inner chapter. Here the focus will be on the drops that produce the four periods.

The body, speech, mind, and gnosis drops, the four enlightened body, speech, mind, and gnosis drops, and the drops of the four periods are synonymous. Their locations are as follows. In the center of the brow cakra is the body or enlightened body drop, which creates the waking period. In the center of the throat cakra is the speech or enlightened speech drop, which creates the dream period. In the center of the heart cakra is the mind or enlightened mind drop, which creates the deep sleep period. In the center of the navel cakra is the gnosis drop, [332] which creates the fourth or bliss period.

The four drops that create the four periods are also found, in the above order, at the center of the navel, secret, and jewel cakras, and at the tip of the jewel, the lower opening of the central channel. The reason for positing the fourth period at the navel and at the tip of the jewel is as follows. In ordinary existence, when the element melts and falls—for instance, during sexual desire—the bliss experienced is greater when it arrives at these two places than at other places. This is because the drop that creates the fourth period is located in these two places.

Concerning the locations of the red and white elements, a predominance of the white element with a little of the red is found in the center of

the brow and jewel cakras and also at the tip of the jewel at the lower end of the central channel. However the actual basic white element that is responsible for its own increase is found at the brow cakra. A predominance of the red element with a little white is found at the centers of the navel, throat, and secret cakras. At the heart cakra the red and white elements dwell in equal quantities.

As for the nature of these drops located in these places, previous lamas of this tradition of the six yogas have said that we can understand them as taught in the *Vajra Garland Explanatory Tantra,* namely, droplike mixtures of the red and white elements the size of mustard seeds.

According to the tradition of this tantra and its commentary, the root of all obscuration is the obscuration of the four periods. How then are the drops that create the waking period and so forth explained as obscurations? The great scholars have asserted these drops to be matter.[9] Moreover, considering that it would be unsuitable to posit matter, particularly matter that is newly produced in this life, as actual obscurations present since beginningless time, these scholars have said that very subtle mind and wind are hidden [333] within each of these drops, and on these winds is imprinted the potential for obscurations. From these potencies, the obscurations of mental afflictions arise, from which arise phenomena obscurations.

The way these four drops exist in the four places is spoken of in the *Great Commentary* on verse 120 of the Gnosis chapter:

> "Nāda" refers to the enlightened mind drop at the heart that creates the periods of very deep sleep. "Drop" refers to the enlightened body drop at the brow that creates the waking periods. "Part" refers to the enlightened speech drop at the throat that creates dreams. "Gnosis" refers to the gnosis drop that creates the fourth period.[10]

The reasons why these four drops are said to create deep sleep and so forth are as follows. In ordinary existence coarse winds gather at the center of the jewel and at the heart. When this happens, mostly dreamless sleep occurs. The winds spread out from those places, and when they arrive at the secret place and at the throat, mostly long dreams occur. Spreading out from these two places, the winds arrive at the navel and the brow, where sleep ceases and the appearance of various objects occurs. The reason the other drop is said to create the fourth period has already been explained.

Generally highest yoga tantra asserts that we possess within us something that, by skillful means, can be transformed into the qualities of enlightenment. In particular the *Great Commentary* talks of the four drops as being drops of enlightened body, speech, mind, and gnosis. Such passages teach that the body drop possesses the capacity to create various enlightened forms, such as the nirmāṇakāya, the speech drop has the capacity to produce the saṃbhogakāya of fully aspected speech, the mind drop has the capacity to produce the nonconceptual dharmakāya mind, and the gnosis drop has the capacity to produce the svabhāvikakāya, the nature body, of great bliss. Within these four drops, which produce the periods of waking, dream, deep sleep, and the fourth state of bliss, is found the capacity to produce during ordinary existence, respectively, various appearances, faulty utterances such as lies, unclear nonconceptual minds such as deep sleep, and the bliss of emission. [334] These capacities are purified by practice on the path. This means that their capabilities to merely produce various forms, sounds, nonconceptual states, and bliss are brought into the path and these are transformed into various empty forms, indestructible sound, nonconceptual gnosis, and unchanging bliss. These in turn are further purified and developed by the path to produce the final results of practice, the various nirmāṇakāya forms, the fully aspected saṃbhogakāya of speech, the nonconceptual dharmakāya mind, and the svabhāvikakāya of great unchanging bliss.

One should learn this general description of the vajra body, and specifically the descriptions of the channels, winds, and drops, because the whole path of the completion stage is a piercing of the channels, winds, and drops.

Penetrative focusing: A common presentation of the six-branched yoga

This is under three headings:

1. General structure of the six-branched completion-stage yoga
2. Determining the number and order of the yogas
3. Texts to rely on for explanations of the six-branched yoga

General structure of the six-branched completion-stage yoga

The six yogas can be condensed into three—virtue at the beginning, virtue in the middle, and virtue at the end. These are known as the *three purities.*

They may also be condensed into the four vajras, the four yogas, the four branches of approximation and accomplishment, and the four branches of accomplishment of form, accomplishment of wind, accomplishing bliss, and accomplished bliss. How do the six yogas fit into these structures? [335] The first two yogas, withdrawal and meditative absorption, make up the purity of virtue in the beginning, the body vajra of the four vajras, shape yoga of the four yogas, approximation from the four branches of approximation and accomplishment, and the branch of accomplishment of form. The next two yogas, prāṇāyāma and retention, make up the purity of virtue in the middle, the speech vajra, mantra yoga, the branch of near accomplishment, and the branch of wind accomplishment. The last two yogas, recollection and meditative concentration, make up the purity of virtue at the end. The yoga of recollection is the mind vajra, the dharma yoga, the branch of accomplishment, and the branch of accomplishing bliss. The yoga of meditative concentration is the gnosis vajra, the purity yoga, the branch of great accomplishment, and the branch of accomplished bliss.

Determining the number and order of the yogas

The number and order of the yogas are determined by the nature of the final attainment. In this practice the final attainment is the nondual gnosis of enlightenment, which is a method-and-wisdom indivisible union of unchanging great bliss and empty form. The immediate cause of such an attainment must be the yoga of meditative concentration, because there is no need to train on any path higher than the branch of meditative concentration. The *Five Stages* says:

> Dwelling in meditative concentration of union,
> there is no training again in any other.[11]

In Kālacakra practice, likewise, when dwelling in the branch of meditative concentration, "there is no training again in any other." For the yoga of meditative concentration to induce the great unchanging bliss, it must be preceded by the yoga of recollection, which consists of an experience of great innate bliss induced by relying upon the three kinds of mudrā consorts. This includes the creation of an actual empty-form mahāmudrā consort, because if an actual empty-form mother and father in union is not created, the basis for the creation of the great unchanging bliss is missing.

While relying on the three kinds of mudrā consorts, the bodhicitta element is not emitted but held at the cakras to produce the great bliss of the yoga of recollection. This must be preceded by the yoga of retention, in which the winds and drops are held unmoving at the very center of the cakras. This yoga of retention must be preceded by the yoga of prāṇāyāma, in which the flow of wind [336] in the left and right channels is halted and made to flow only in the central channel. Before the winds of the right and left channels are halted and made to flow only in the central channel, they must first enter the central channel and purify it. Before an actual empty-form body can be created for use in the yoga of recollection, a saṃbhogakāya within a "black line emitting pure light rays"[12] must be developed. These attainments are achieved by the yoga of withdrawal. The yoga of meditative absorption stabilizes the signs attained by the yoga of withdrawal. These two yogas, therefore, precede the others.

In this way the attainment of the final goal, wherein unchanging bliss and the empty-form body of enlightenment are indivisibly united, must be preceded by the six yogas. Moreover, because the completion stage requires no more yogas than these six, the number of the yogas is determined as six, while the order of the yogas is determined as above. With this in mind the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* says:

> With the branches of meditation at six,
> practice to accomplish the supreme.
> Practices using other means
> do not become the supreme siddhi.[13]

This verse states explicitly that if these six branches are not completed in their entirety, there will be no supreme accomplishment, which means conversely that a complete practice of the six branches on the completion stage will bring the supreme accomplishment. Therefore the practices are enumerated as six, and the sequence of practice is similar to the above explanation. What are these six branches? The text continues:

> Withdrawal, meditative absorption,
> prāṇāyāma, retention,
> recollection, and meditative concentration:[14]
> this is the six-branched yoga.[15]

Texts to rely on for explanations of the six-branched yoga

The omniscient Tsongkhapa said:

> Know that withdrawal and meditative absorption
> gather winds into the upper opening of avadhūtī.
> Know the spontaneous, profound vajra recitation performed
> with mantra and wind inseparable in the Rāhu path.
> Know how the life and downward winds, by vaselike meditation,
> are in the central channel in the form of embrace.
> Know how winds enter the drops by retention [337]
> and emanations go forth from and withdraw back into
> the pure body.
> Know how the lotus of the empty-form mudrā consort
> in recollection yoga induces great unchanging bliss.
> Therefore, teachers of Kālacakra,
> this system is superior to other systems;
> not to know that, teachers of Kālacakra,
> is to be like reflections of the moon in water.[16]

The meanings of these vajra words were taught by Jé Tsongkhapa himself and were transcribed by others in the past in the form of notes. Using these words as a basis, further supplemental texts that provide a sure and firm knowledge of these topics include the *Condensed Tantra,* the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries, Short Teachings on the View, Paramārthasevā,* Nāropa's *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* the *Six Yogas* by the mahāsiddha Anupamarakṣita and its commentary by Sūryaśrī, three works, all entitled *Six Yogas,* by Kālacakrapāda, Cilupa, and Śavaripa, and *Commentary to the Six Yogas of Kālacakra Tantra* by Avadhūtipa.

Presentation of each of the six yogas

Jé Tsongkhapa's *Notes on Kālacakra* says:

> If the outlines also are presented this way, it will engender great certainty of understanding regarding the body of the path.[17]

Therefore this topic will be presented under two headings:

1. The accomplishment of empty form, the actual creator of great bliss
2. The branch of meditative concentration: The final attainment of the meditations

The accomplishment of empty form, the actual creator of great bliss

1. Indirect accomplishment
2. Actual accomplishment

Indirect accomplishment

1. Accomplishment of form
2. Accomplishment of the winds

Accomplishment of form

1. Accomplishment of form as yet unachieved: The branch of withdrawal
2. Stabilizing form once accomplished: The branch of meditative absorption [338]

Accomplishment of form as yet unachieved: The branch of withdrawal

According to the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission*, "All have six divisions."[18] This means that each of the six yogas are to be explained in six sections. Therefore this outline of the achievement of form as yet unachieved, or the branch of withdrawal, has six parts:

1. The meaning of the term *withdrawal*
2. The time for meditation
3. The way to meditate
4. Valid cognition
5. Purification divisions
6. Results

The meaning of the term withdrawal

Verse 116 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> In withdrawal within the body, the ten subjects and objects are not engaged.[19]

The *Great Commentary* on this verse says:

> Now the definition of withdrawal and so forth is taught. *Withdrawal* means that within the body, consciousness is not engaged in the conjunction of the ten subjects and objects. The five others, eyes and so forth, are engaged in empty-form objects.[20]

These two passages teach the etymology of the term *withdrawal.* The five sense organs of the eyes and so forth are halted from engaging with their individual objects of external form and so forth and are withdrawn inside. Therefore this branch is called *withdrawal.* Because the connections between individual sense organs and individual objects are abandoned or cut, this yoga is also known as *individual abandonment* and *individual severing.*

How are connections to the sense objects severed, and how are the senses prevented from engaging their objects? Stopping the sense consciousnesses from engaging their objects by the power of mindfulness and awareness[21] and by one-pointedly fixing the mind upon an object is not sufficient here. In those cases, the sense consciousnesses do not engage their objects simply because the immediate preceding cause is missing or because the mind is dwelling firmly in common peaceful abiding.[22] The *Compendium of Valid Cognition* says:

> Consciousness absorbed by something has no power to engage anything else.[23]

So where is the mind placed in this context? By focusing on and penetrating the points on the body the winds will enter the dhūtī. Because the winds are vehicles of the sense consciousnesses, the sense consciousnesses themselves are turned away from their objects, [339] and the connection

between sense and object is broken. This is a severing of the connection between the five senses and the five objects and not a break between mental consciousness and its objects.

Severing the connection between sense and sense object is an explanation of the term *withdrawal* in terms of what is negated. As an explanation of its etymology in terms of what is accomplished, the *Great Commentary* says:

> The five others, eyes and so forth, are engaged in empty-form objects.[24]

The other five senses, such as the fleshly eye[25] and so forth, are engaged in five other objects, such as empty form and so forth, with each withdrawing into its own individual object. This is also why this yoga is called *withdrawal.* This explanation of the meaning of this term has certain similarities to the etymology of withdrawal found in *Bright Lamp.* One difference is that in the *Bright Lamp* explanation, the ripened sense organs[26] engage in external form and so forth, while here the fleshly eye, rather than the ripened eye, engages with empty forms and so forth. Concerning these empty sounds and empty forms, such as smoke and mirages, the *Great Commentary* says on verse 115 of the Gnosis chapter:

> With the yoga of forms one hears all manner of indestructible sound. From the appearance of form comes the nirmāṇakāya, and from the appearance of sound comes the saṃbhogakāya.[27]

From the above, we must also infer empty form, smells, tastes, and touch. Therefore four "other" senses, in addition to the "other" eye, or fleshly eye, can be asserted.

The *Great Commentary,* on verse 103 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> Now near accomplishment is taught. "Individual" and so on refers to withdrawal. The withdrawal of the surroundings refers to the sense organs of the eyes and so forth apprehending their objects of form and so forth, and the abandoning of that is called withdrawal. Concerning empty forms, other eyes such as eyes of flesh, apprehend other forms as their objects. This is near accomplishment.[28]

This passage mirrors the explanation of withdrawal as described above. But isn't this section [340] the branch of approximation consisting of withdrawal and meditative absorption? What does *near accomplishment* refer to here? When the completion stage is divided into its four branches of approximation and accomplishment, withdrawal and meditative absorption do comprise the branch of approximation. But the quote above is based on the inner and outer samaya and so forth being posited as the branch of approximation, and so there is no fault.[29]

The time for meditation

Some say that the time for meditation is when the earth wind flows from the right nostril onto the right side of the lips. However this is not conclusive, because the earth wind that flows onto the lips is to the earth wind of the minor elements, and the instruction that one should begin the meditation of withdrawal when earth wind flows from the right nostril is given for purposes of illustration only. Therefore the *Great Commentary* on verse 122 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> "Earth" is an illustration. If the yogi meditates when it flows through the right channel, this is the time for the ritual, but not when it flows through the left channel, because that is in the order of space and so forth.[30]

This passage teaches the time for beginning withdrawal meditation. Illustrating this with the earth wind passing through the right nostril means that when any kind of wind passes through the right nostril, it will be in the dissolution order,[31] and therefore withdrawal is easier. This is the reason for beginning withdrawal meditation at that time. When the winds flow through the left nostril, they flow in the creation order of space, air, fire, water, and earth. This makes withdrawal harder, and therefore it is not taught as the time for withdrawal meditation.

The way to meditate

This has five outlines: [341]

1. Sources for the assertion that during withdrawal, winds must enter the central channel by the force of meditation

2. Division of withdrawal into two parts, plus reasons for the division
3. The meditations of the two parts
4. Ritual of enhancement at times of nonaccomplishment
5. Even if one dies with the remainder of the meditations unfinished, the power of the yoga ensures continuation

Sources for the assertion that during withdrawal, winds must enter the central channel by the force of meditation

The *Root Tantra,* quoted in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary of the Gnosis chapter, says:

> Meditating on smoke and so forth
> mind is made immovable,
> the central channel is purified.[32]

And in the same summary:

> Meditating on the signs of smoke and so forth,
> the beginner purifies the central channel.[33]

These quotes teach that during withdrawal, the central channel is purified. On how this is done, *Notes on Kālacakra* says:

> Using the comparison of an irrigation canal that must be cleaned before feeding water into it, the cleaner or purifier of the central channel is the wind. Without entering the central channel, how could the winds clean the inside of the channel from the outside? To say that one could clean the inside of an irrigation channel from the outside would be strange indeed![34]

As this quote makes clear, it is necessary for the winds to enter the central channel in order to clean the inside of it. Also the *Great Commentary* on verse 120 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> "Wind in the central channel" and so forth speaks of the yoga of withdrawal. Here initially the yogi places the winds in the central channel, by which he will see the signs within the avadhūtī.[35]

These quotes clearly state that the winds must enter the central channel during the process of withdrawal. But one may wonder if this quote refers to the branch of prāṇāyāma. That cannot be, because the quote continues, "Glorious guru, body vajra of the Buddha,"[36] [342] thereby placing it in the approximation and body vajra section. After this sentence the text continues, "Prāṇāyāma is the second, the speech vajra," thereby placing prāṇāyāma within the speech vajra section. Furthermore the *Great Commentary,* on verse 115 of the Gnosis chapter, says:

> Here the winds enter the central channel, and from the total emptiness the signs of smoke and so forth are seen. Therefore, "with the mind fixed into space, the eyes unclosed, the vajra path is entered. From the emptiness arises smoke, mirage, a clear, uncontaminated light in the sky, a butter-lamp flame." These are seen in the night yoga.[37]

This clearly states that during the night yoga of the withdrawal process, the winds enter the central channel, causing empty forms to arise. The *Great Commentary* states on verse 118 of the Gnosis chapter:

> Like an illusory town they have colors, such as white and so forth, but because they are immaterial there are no colors. Although they are endowed with many features, they are never seen by ordinary beings. Why is that? "It is by the power of the māra of mental affliction," whereby the winds flow in the left and right channels.[38]

From this quote too we can understand that for the empty forms of the withdrawal yoga to appear, winds must enter the central channel, because while winds are flowing in the right and left channel, empty forms as part of the yogas of withdrawal and so forth are not seen. In the commentary called *Filled with Good Qualities* by Sūryaśrī, it says:

> These appearances to the mind are seen when the left and right channel join as one.[39]

This means that seeing the appearances of smoke and so forth is due to the right and left channel joining as one in the central channel. Śavaripa also says:

> By the three unmoving,
> the ten winds enter the dhūtī,
> outer and inner conceiving is halted,
> and the signs arise;
> this the branch of individual cutting.[40]

This also means that for the ten signs of withdrawal to arise, the ten winds must move into the central channel. The *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* also states:

> Meditate on withdrawal this way:
> meditate on emptiness, the object of meditation,
> and halt the winds that are to be stopped.[41]

Therefore, by meditating on the practices of withdrawal, the winds of the right and left channel are halted and moved to the central channel. These and other quotes are from the tantra, its commentary, and other Indian texts. Earlier scholars of the Kālacakra tradition, [343] such as those of the Jonang, also accepted this explanation.

However the *Great Commentary* says:

> During withdrawal and so forth, when forms are seen but instances of the unchanging have not been generated, because the winds have not been bound, at that time meditate on the nāda, which will be explained, and by wrathful means bring them to the central channel.[42]

Doesn't this teach a scenario where the empty forms of withdrawal are seen but the winds have not entered the central channel? These words do teach a time during the meditations of withdrawal where the signs of smoke and so forth can be seen without the winds having entered the central channel. However such an experience is not on the actual path of withdrawal, because before the definitive empty forms on the path of withdrawal are seen, the winds must have entered the central channel, and if that is not the case, one should perform the above-mentioned enhancement ritual to accomplish it.

If the winds have to enter the central channel during withdrawal, how is that achieved? To this some reply by quoting the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission:*

> On a comfortable seat,
> guard the body in vajra position,
> tongue turned back, clasped to stomach,
> eyes turned upward, in the manner of
> Uṣṇīṣacakrī,[43] hands vajra-bound.
> This will bind the winds.[44]

Therefore, they maintain, by adopting a sitting posture and gazing in a certain way, the winds will be bound within the central channel. This cannot be correct. Why? Because it would mean that the meditations of withdrawal would not involve practices of mental placement. This follows because the primary effect of the withdrawal meditations is that the power of the winds in the central channel causes the signs of smoke and so forth to appear, and, according to you, adopting a seated posture and placing the eyes in a certain way by themselves halt the winds of the right and left channel and send them into the central channel, and moreover, in the yoga of withdrawal, the process of winds entering the central channel to bring about the resultant appearance of empty-form signs is a natural cause-and-effect occurrence. You must accept the reasons for this consequence, but you cannot accept the consequence itself,[45] because there are explanations of mental placement in the *Great Commentary.* [344]

The Jonang tradition and most Tibetan practitioners of the six yogas assert a positioning of the eyes that takes place in a darkened room. They say the eyes are fixed on a point in space outside the body directly in front of the point midway between the eyebrows. The mental placement involves focusing the mind one-pointedly on that very point in the space of a darkened room on which the eyes have focused. There it is held without the slightest wandering, in a relaxed manner, and without any mental activity.[46] This, they maintain, ensures that the winds enter the central channel and that the signs will appear. If this were the case, they must assert, and do assert, that a mental placement determined by the position of the eyes and body is sufficient to bring the winds into the central channel. If so, then it must be accepted that when an ārya traveling the path by the Perfection Vehicle is in the sevenfold position of Vairocana[47] in meditative equipoise and focused single-pointedly upon emptiness, he has necessarily halted the flow of winds in the left and right channels. Alternatively, if that is not accepted, then you would have to differentiate between this situation, where the winds have not entered the central channel, and the situation

where the winds have entered the central channel through placing the mind one-pointedly on a point in space in a darkened room. However it is difficult to make a distinction between these two situations.

Our position is that it is the mental placement itself that brings the winds into the central channel. This and the sources will be explained below.

Division of withdrawal into two parts, plus reasons for the division

This is under two headings:

1. Dividing withdrawal into night yoga and day yoga
2. Reasons for this division

Dividing withdrawal into night yoga and day yoga

The *Great Commentary*, on verse 115 of the Gnosis chapter, says: [345]

> Yoga meditations of the Perfection Vehicle and the Mantra Vehicle are of two kinds, namely those in space and those without cover.[48]

Yoga meditations are of two kinds: those "in space" are night yogas, and those "without cover" are day yogas. The way yoga meditations of the Perfection Vehicle are divided in two is found in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary:*

> Therefore, in the meditations of withdrawal, the Buddha has said that conceptual meditation is not seen. This meditation the Buddha has taught in the perfection of wisdom scriptures:
>
> "Then Indra, Lord of the gods, said to Subhūti, 'Noble Subhūti, how does one practice yoga in the perfection of wisdom?' Subhūti replied, 'Kauśika, one who practices yoga in space practices yoga in the perfection of wisdom. Kauśika, one who practices yoga without cover practices yoga in the perfection of wisdom.'"

> Therefore the Buddha taught the mahāmudrā meditation by which the prognostic imagelike and the illusionlike appear in the cloudless sky.[49]

The passage quoted from a perfection of wisdom sutra teaching the yoga practices "in space" and "without cover" shows similarities with the Buddha's teachings from the highest yoga tantras that explain the night yogas and day yogas of the withdrawal practice, wherein various illusionlike and prognostic imagelike empty forms are seen. This is indicated by the sentence of the commentary beginning, "Therefore the Buddha." However do not take this commentary to mean that the day and night yogas of withdrawal are taught in the perfection of wisdom sutras. If that were the case, it would mean that becoming a suitable vessel for receiving the perfection of wisdom sutras would entail receiving all four initiations.

Reasons for this division

Previous lamas have said that a year consists of the sun's northward and southward passages, [346] a month consists of two periods of waxing and waning, and a day consists of daytime and nighttime, and that those are reasons for the division into day and night yogas. Our own position is that both day and night yogas are necessary to ensure that whenever the meditation is performed, in daytime or in darkness, all desired signs are made manifest. In nighttime meditation the empty-form signs are easier to manifest and to ascertain than in daytime meditation. Therefore it is taught that the night yoga is performed first and followed by the day yoga. The reason for the difference in the degree of difficulty in manifesting the signs is explained as follows. When the eyes are positioned and the meditation object is held during the day, the winds of the eyes are not rigid, and it is not possible to banish an everpresent grayish appearance. This makes it difficult for empty forms to arise. In darkness this grayish appearance is not there, and this makes it easier for empty forms to appear.

27. Withdrawal: Night Yoga

The meditations of the two sections

This has two outlines:

1. Nighttime yoga meditations
2. Daytime yoga meditations

Nighttime yoga meditations

This is under five headings:

1. The place of meditation
2. Posture and binding
3. Positioning the eyes
4. Mental placement
5. The signs of meditative accomplishment and their appearance

The place of meditation

The *Great Commentary,* on verse 115 of the Gnosis chapter, says:

> Those who practice the yoga in space are in the night, in the darkness of a room with no holes.[50]

[347] Mañjuśrīkīrti, a manifestation of Mañjuśrī, states in the *Essence of the Three Yogas:*

> In a house with no break in the darkness.[51]

In Cilupa's *Six Yogas* also:

First is withdrawal;
begin at night then in the day
in a tall house with no holes.[52]

The meditations should be performed in the kind of darkened room that matches the description taught in these and other quotes. What should that room be like? Those who have the means should meditate in the middle story of a three-story house. The reason is that such a room avoids the harms of vapors from the earth below and the dripping of water from above. If that is not possible, the room should be built on dry ground, not damp underfoot, with a high ceiling. The windows should be narrow on the outside and wide on the inside and be easy to cover, with a blanket, for example. Apart from those openings, there should not even be a hole the size of a hair tip in the room. Everywhere should be smoothly plastered, and the entrance should have three turns in it to cut out all light. If that is not possible, hang a curtain over any cracks or openings in the door, and make the room very dark. The reason for this is that if any light enters the room, it will damage the eyes, thoughts will appear, and deluding appearances will be seen.

Posture and binding

Essence of the Three Yogas says:

In a house with no break in the darkness,
the practitioner in deep equipoise
performs the five actions
and the two bindings,
which can be known from the guru.[53]

The five actions are the actions of parts of the body. The two bindings refer to the holding of mind and winds within the central channel. The way these can be known is by the guru's demonstration. They are described in the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission:*

On a comfortable seat,
the body straight, in vajra position,
tongue turned back, clasped to stomach,

eyes turned upward, in the manner of
Uṣṇīṣacakrī, hands vajra-bound.
This will bind the winds.[54]

Cilupa says:

Mount Meru is straight,
four continents gathered in,
sun and moon spread above,
the tongue is moved,
vajra binding subdues the oceans,
the great winds of the heart flow:
these are the actions of the body;
they will hold the winds inside. [348]
Look with the look of great Uṣṇīṣa.[55]

The two passages teach five postures as the actions and also that these actions are instrumental in binding the winds and mind. The explanation of these two passages is as follows. "The body straight" and "Mount Meru is straight" mean that the spine is straight and erect. Of the two phrases "in vajra position" and "four continents gathered in," the former teaches the vajra position itself[56] and the latter that the four limbs are gathered in. Therefore the feet are in the vajra position. The line "vajra binding subdues the oceans" teaches that the two hands are bound as overlapping vajra fists and clasped to the abdomen. The phrases "clasped to stomach" and "hands vajra-bound" from the first passage teach the same. The phrases "tongue turned back" and "eyes turned upward" from the first passage and "the sun and moon spread above, the tongue is moved" from the second teach that the tongue is touching the palette and that both eyes look upward. How they gaze upward is also clearly taught by the lines "in the manner of Uṣṇīṣacakrī" and "Look with the look of great Uṣṇīṣa."

To summarize, the spine is straight and erect, the feet are in the vajra position, and the hands are bound as vajra fists crossed over the abdomen. Alternatively the right hand is placed upon the upturned left with the thumbs touching in the equipoise mudrā, or both hands bound as vajra fists are placed upon the thighs in the Vajrasattva mudrā.[57] Any of these positions is acceptable. The *Great Commentary* states:

> Hands are bound as vajra fists, thumbs held by fists, on the right and left thighs, resting on the vajra seat to become the vajra mudrā.[58]

Together with the tongue against the palette and the eyes looking upward, this five-part posture constitutes the five actions. The winds and the mind held in the central channel by these five constitute the two bindings. This is the explanation of the line "performs the five actions and the two bindings." But wasn't the assertion that the winds could be bound into the central channel by positioning the body and the eyes refuted? [349] That was a refutation of the assertion that positioning *alone* could bring the winds into the central channel. The intention of the passages quoted from these Indian texts is that it is primarily the placement of the mind that brings the winds into the central channel. However here they are describing the positioning of the body and the eyes as conducive conditions for the binding of the winds into the central channel. Therefore there is no contradiction.

Positioning the eyes

The *Great Commentary,* on verse 120 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, states:

> "With the wrathful look of Uṣṇīṣa," with eyes not closed and looking above, the signs will appear.[59]

This quote speaks of the eyes not being closed and looking with the wrathful look of Uṣṇīṣa. "Looking above" means looking upward. "Eyes not closed" means half shut and not moving. The position of the eyes is also taught in the *Rigi Ārāli Tantra* when it states, "Half eyes turned upward."[60] Therefore the eyes are half covered by the eyelids and look toward the object of the mind's focus. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 115 of the Gnosis chapter, says, "With the mind fixed into space, the eyes unclosed,"[61] which teaches that wherever the mind is fixed, there the eyes are positioned also, and that the eyes are slightly open and unmoving. These explanations are mirrored by the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission,* when it says "eyes turned upward, in the manner of Uṣṇīṣacakrī"[62] and by Cilupa, "Look with the look of great Uṣṇīṣa."[63]

Mental placement

If the eyes are positioned wherever the mind is placed, then what is the placement of the mind? This topic is under two headings:

1. Refuting that mental placement is a state of no thought
2. The validity of mental placement by mental application to an object

Refuting that mental placement is a state of no thought

The *Hevajra Tantra* says:

> Abandon all thoughts,
> meditate thoroughly for a day.[64]

Also the *Great Commentary* begins, on verse 114 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> "First the emptiness enlightenment" means that in the darkness, do not think at all.[65]

[350] Some think that the meaning of these and other quotes is that the mental placement for the yoga of withdrawal is to halt all mental activity and to place the mind in a state of no thought. This is clearly refuted by the *Great Commentary* in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary. It begins with a presentation of the above assertion:

> In the perfection of wisdom sutras, the Buddha has taught the no-thought gnosis of the tathāgatas to be the way to the attainment of the perfect and complete enlightenment of a buddha.

The passage continues up to:

> The accomplishment of enlightenment is by the no-thought gnosis of the tathāgatas and not by conceptual meditative concentration.[66]

This is the assertion. The text continues with the refutation:

> In this way the ignorant assert no thought to be gnosis. They are falling to a great extreme. Some assert this, and therefore it is discussed.[67]

This passage continues up to:

> If at such a time there was no thought or appearance of a precious lamp, how could it come to be known as the *meditative concentration of the precious lamp*?[68] It is the same with other meditative concentrations: they are not without thought because they possess the characteristics of self-perception and are not examples of inanimate emptiness.[69]

This passage also includes a refutation by logical consequence, which states that in a deep sleep, a state of no thought and no mental activity naturally occurs, and therefore all living beings must be buddhas.

Wouldn't the above passage also refute the meditation tradition of mahāmudrā handed down through the oral transmission? If this system of meditation has become a tradition not unlike that of Hoshang[70] in which nothing is brought to mind, then we must say that it does. I concur with the words of the great masters who say that the yoga of the mahāmudrā is well known to involve looking at the mind, but that "mind" refers not to the various transient states of mind but to the primordial mind of clear light.

So what are the meanings of lines such as "abandon all thoughts" and [351] "in the darkness do not think at all?"[71] They mean that during withdrawal, "abandon all thoughts" apart from mental application to the objects of meditation, and "do not think at all." In his commentary on the lines beginning "meditative absorption destroys the afflictions"[72] from the second chapter of the second part of the *Hevajra Tantra*, Vajragarbha says:

> The first of the six yogas is withdrawal, and by withdrawing and meditating, these signs will appear. Even if there is no wish to enter the perfect path, simply for the sake of a spectacle, focus your mind one-pointedly on the objects for half a month or even for a day and a night.[73]

Even those who have no wish to enter the perfect path, meaning those who

do not strive for such a path, should apply their minds to the objects of meditation for half a month or, if that is not possible, for a day and a night, in order to see the spectacles of empty forms, such as smoke and so forth. This passage talks of a single-pointed mental application to objects during the withdrawal yoga. The next verse of the *Hevajra Tantra* says:

> Having abandoned all thoughts,
> the mind in deity form
> unceasingly for a day,
> complete the meditation.[74]

On this verse Vajragarbha says:

> If those who lack the fortune to be able to strive in this yoga of no-self for half a month can place their minds one-pointedly on emptiness for even a day, abandoning all other objects of mind, trustworthy signs of the path will appear. These are signs of the withdrawal achieved by withdrawal yoga. Anything other than that is the foolish, in their deluded wisdom, slandering the teaching of the Tathāgata.[75]

Therefore this passage states that if the mind is placed one-pointedly on the meditation objects of withdrawal, trustworthy signs of the path, such as the empty forms of smoke and so forth, will arise. "Abandon all thoughts" is explained by the line "abandoning all other objects of mind," which means to abandon meditation objects other than those of withdrawal yoga. The *Vajragarbha Commentary* continues: [352]

> Therefore abandoning all thoughts by using meditative concentrations other than those of the concentrations of withdrawal yoga and meditating for a day and night will not produce the trustworthy signs.[76]

This clearly teaches that abandoning all other thoughts and meditating on the concentrations of withdrawal yoga for a day and a night will produce trustworthy signs. Other meditations will not.

The validity of mental placement by mental application to an object

This has two outlines:

1. Presenting sources to show its validity
2. The actual placement of mind

Presenting sources to show its validity

Verse 115 of the Gnosis chapter, quoted in the *Great Commentary,* says:

> With mind fixed into space, eyes unclosed,
> the vajra path is entered. From the emptiness
> arises smoke, mirage, a clear, uncontaminated light
> in the sky, and a butter-lamp flame.[77]

The commentary to this says:

> Those who practice the yoga in space are in the night, in the darkness of a room with no holes. "With mind fixed into space, eyes unclosed, the vajra path is entered." Here the winds enter the central channel, and from the total emptiness, the signs of smoke and so forth are seen. Therefore:
>
> "With mind fixed into space, eyes unclosed,
> the vajra path is entered. From the emptiness
> arises smoke, mirage, a clear, uncontaminated light
> in the sky, and a butter-lamp flame."
>
> These are seen by the night yoga.[78]

This passage clearly teaches the objects of meditation during withdrawal yoga, as well as the placement of the mind on those objects in conjunction with the positioning of the eyes. It also teaches that the winds enter the central channel from that placement of mind and eye position, and that from the winds [353] entering the central channel, the signs of smoke and so forth appear. How are these taught? The lines beginning "the vajra path is entered. From the emptiness arises smoke" and the ensuing commentary,

"Here the winds enter the central channel, and from the total emptiness, the signs of smoke and so forth are seen," teach that as a result of the vajra activity of the winds entering the central channel, the definitive signs of withdrawal yoga, smoke and so forth, will be seen. However they will not be seen without the winds entering the central channel. What is the method for bringing the winds into the central channel in this meditation? The lines from the *Condensed Tantra* and the *Great Commentary*, "With mind fixed into space, eyes unclosed, the vajra path is entered" teach the object of meditation to be "space" and that a single-pointed placement of the mind onto that object is the mental placement. Wherever the mind is placed, there the unclosed eyes are focused. From this the winds will enter the central channel.

Furthermore Nāropa in his *Commentary to a Short Teaching on Initiations* says:

> Those who practice the yoga in space are in the night, in the darkness of a room with no holes, with the mind fixed into space, and all thoughts abandoned. There with the mind one-pointedly on emptiness, meditate for a day. "The eyes unclosed, the vajra path is entered. Here the winds enter the central channel, and from the total emptiness, the signs of smoke and so forth are seen."[79]

Cilupa also says:

> Focusing on space, look into space;
> the five signs, smoke and so forth, will appear. [80]

The *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* states:

> At night and without cover,
> focus on space, meditate on the emptiness.[81]

These and other Indian texts on the same topic and their commentaries have explained the object of withdrawal meditation as taught in the phrase "the mind fixed into space" from the tantra and commentary as being an "empty space." This emptiness is mentioned in the second summary of the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary:*

> To accomplish this, the meditation on mahāmudrā, the path of the signs of smoke and so forth are clearly taught:
>
> "The mind one-pointedly into emptiness,
> meditate thoroughly for a day."[82]

This explains that an emptiness is the object of meditation. Similarly, in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* it says:

> Therefore, abandoning thoughts of existence and nonexistence, with no grasping, meditate on the deep nonapprehended emptiness. [354] The yogi will then see the arising of the signs of smoke and so forth.[83]

Ācārya Anupamarakṣita's commentary is similar to this:

> Therefore, abandoning thoughts of existence and nonexistence, with no support, meditate on the deep nonapprehended emptiness.[84]

The meaning of these quotes on emptiness will be explained later.

When explaining the meaning of the lines beginning "the mind fixed into space," the commentary on Anupamarakṣita's six yogas says:

> "Night" means darkness. "The mind fixed into space" means that the mind draws toward space and becomes of one taste with it. Entering into the vajra path, the winds reach the avadhūtī.[85]

This explains that space is the object of meditation. In that case, space and emptiness, both explained as being the objects of meditation during withdrawal yoga, must be synonymous. Therefore a space that is the mere lack of any obstruction and obscuration, an emptiness with no material support, is the meditation object of withdrawal yoga. How is the mind to be placed in such a state?

The actual placement of mind

This is under two headings:

1. The assertions of previous Tibetan masters
2. The assertion of Jé Tsongkhapa and the proof of its validity

The assertions of previous Tibetan masters

The omniscient Butön asserts that the eyes are focused into the space of a darkened room directly in front of the point midway between the eyebrows. The mind also is one-pointedly focused on the emptiness that is the space of the darkened room upon which the eyes are positioned. Without wandering to anything else, and without any other thoughts whatsoever, the mind is released into this state.[86] The Jonang and their followers mention many ways in which the mind is held still by the "three nonmovements." However, in each method, the mind is one-pointedly focused onto the external place where the eyes have been positioned in the space of a darkened room. These two assertions seem to take the meaning of "empty space" as taught by the phrase "the mind fixed into space," [355] and other phrases from the tantra and its commentaries, to refer to an external emptiness within a darkened room.

Those who hold these positions must differentiate between the practices here in Kālacakra, with their ability to bring the winds into the central channel by mental placement on various points of the body, and the practices in the Perfection Vehicle and three lower tantras, where no amount of mental placement will bring the winds into the central channel.

The assertion of Jé Tsongkhapa and the proof of its validity

As explained previously, withdrawal yoga is a practice in which the winds must enter the central channel. For beginners there are three methods of bringing the winds into the central channel: using an external mudrā consort to awaken the practice of prāṇāyāma, the wind yoga practices of highest tantra, and thirdly, penetrative focusing upon the points of the vajra body. The last method involves the centers of the six cakras and the upper and lower openings of the central channel, which are entrances through which the winds enter the dhūtī and are therefore locations of penetrative focusing. This practice is accomplished by the mind being placed single-

pointedly on those places and held there without distraction. With the mind placed on these points, the winds will also gather there, because mind and wind engage similarly.

Which method is used here to bring the winds into the central channel? The emptiness and space explained as being the object of mental focus by the tantra, the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries,* and the above Indian texts and commentaries refers to the empty space of the cylindrical hole that is the upper opening of the central channel located internally between the eyebrows. The mind is placed one-pointedly on this space, and all other thoughts on all other objects are abandoned. This placement of mind is what the lines "Having abandoned all thoughts" and "the mind one-pointedly into emptiness, meditate totally for a day" are referring to.

How can we know that the emptiness and space spoken of in the tantra and commentaries in this section refer to the space that is the cylindrical hole of the upper opening of the central channel? I will explain. [356] In keeping with the *Great Commentary* statement "Tantras will be understood from other tantras,"[87] the *Rigi Ārāli Tantra* says:

> The eyes are not open, not closed,
> mind is placed between the eyebrows;
> in the medium of total darkness,
> initially the yogi sees.[88]

The first line describes the position of the eyes. The second teaches how the mind is placed upon an object, and the last two lines explain how the signs will arise. Between the eyebrows, or in the center of the eyebrows, is where the upper opening of the central channel is found, and the placement of the mind described in this verse means that the mind is held there. Furthermore the *Root Tantra,* quoted in the *Great Commentary* on verse 110 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> The great mudrā of withdrawal
> has the characteristics of empty space.
> At that tip the mind is solely placed.
> In the black line, last of the signs,
> meditate on inanimate and animate
> in all their variety.[89]

This clearly teaches that the mind is to be placed in the space of the empty interior of the central channel. How? The mind meditating on withdrawal yoga, which is characterized by the mind being single-pointedly placed into empty space, is single-pointedly and exclusively placed in the empty space "at that tip." This produces the signs of smoke and so forth, the last of which is a hair-sized black line, in which the yogi meditates vividly on all the various prognostic mirrorlike animate and inanimate phenomena. The verse says that the mind is to be placed in the empty space at a "tip."[90] On that tip the *Root Tantra* says:

> This *śaṅkhinī* is the great mudrā,
> spoken of as *caṇḍālī*.
> Above the navel Lakṣmī,
> the avadhūtī, the human tip.[91]

Here the *avadhūtī* is referred to as a "tip." Therefore the first quote teaches that during withdrawal yoga, the mind is to be focused upon a tip, and the second quote explains that tip to be the dhūtī. This clearly indicates that the mind is to be focused on the dhūtī. That this tip refers to the upper tip will be explained later.

Furthermore the *Condensed Tantra* says:

> With the mind fixed into space, the eyes unclosed,
> the vajra path is entered

And the commentary on this says:

> Here the winds enter the central channel, and from the total emptiness, the signs of smoke and so forth are seen.

[357] This teaches the necessity of the winds entering the central channel as the immediate cause of seeing the signs of smoke and so forth. The commentary continues:

> Therefore, with the mind fixed into space, the eyes unclosed, the vajra path is entered. From the emptiness arises smoke, mirage...[92]

This clearly teaches that both the mind fixed into space and the unclosed eyes bring the winds into the avadhūtī, or vajra path, through which the signs of smoke and so forth will arise from the emptiness. Therefore it also explains that "space" in the phrase "the mind fixed into space" is the space of the emptiness that is the inside of the central channel and that the mind is placed one-pointedly in it.

Assuming that the space and emptiness spoken of in this section on mental placement in withdrawal yoga do refer to the emptiness that is the inside of the central channel, how is it proven that this refers to the upper opening of the central channel? The verse quoted above that runs "The eyes are not open, not closed, / mind is placed between the eyebrows"[93] refers to the space that is the emptiness of the central channel's inner hollow, whose upper opening lies directly at the point midway between the eyebrows. Moreover the *Great Commentary* says on verse 120 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> In the phrase "The look of Vighnantaka,"[94] Vighnantaka means *amṛtavarta.*[95] His look "reaches the place of nectar," which means reaching the brow. The look of Vighnantaka reaches the place of nectar, and by this, near accomplishment of the six branches will be achieved. The word "also" refers to prāṇāyāma and retention. "Having seen the forms of the winds" refers to near accomplishment.[96]

This passage clearly refers to the upper opening of the central channel. How? The commentary says that the Vighnantaka of the root text quote, "The look of Vighnantaka," refers to *amṛtavarta,* and that "the place of nectar" refers to the brow. "His look" means "his reach." In other words the look of Vighnantaka reaches the brow or place of nectar. Withdrawal and meditative absorption have already been explained as being the branch of approximation, and the words "by this" mean that by the accomplishment of the branch of approximation, which involves the mind being placed at or reaching the upper opening of the dhūtī within the brow, or place of nectar, meditate "also" upon the [358] practices of prāṇāyāma and retention in the branch of near accomplishment. Seeing the images of the winds refers to near accomplishment.

This passage from the *Great Commentary* talks of a mental placement,

which involves the place of nectar, or the brow. This particular mental placement is not that of prāṇāyāma and retention, which means it can be none other than that of withdrawal and absorption. The yoga of meditative absorption is a stabilizing of withdrawal, and therefore this passage is an establishment of withdrawal mental placement.

Therefore the line from the root text and commentary, "Approximation is the first yoga, of ten aspects, with the look of wrathful Cakrī," describes the positioning of the eyes during the yoga of withdrawal. The line "The look of Vighnantaka reaches the path of nectar" refers to the positioning of the eyes during withdrawal yoga as well as the focus of the mind. The word "also" indicates that with the attainment of the withdrawal and absorption branch of approximation, the near-accomplishment branch of the six yogas, prāṇāyāma and retention, is also to be practiced.

Some say that the term *amṛtavarta* as mentioned here does not refer to the branch of approximation, because a verse from the *Later Guhyasamāja* in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* and in Nāropa's *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations* links the appearance of *amṛtavarta* with the practice of near accomplishment:

> During near accomplishment,
> the image of *amṛtavarta.*[97]

There is no contradiction here. The *amṛtavarta* that has been described as "The look of Vighnantaka" and so forth has been explained as referring to the brow. The *amṛtavarta* mentioned in the *Later Guhyasamāja* verse, "During near accomplishment, the image of *amṛtavarta,*"[98] which appears in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* and is quoted by Nāropa, is explained by both these commentaries as provisional language referring to the winds. Therefore this verse is referring to the winds as being the meditative object during the prāṇāyāma and retention yogas, the near-accomplishment branch of the six yogas. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* when explaining the lines "during near accomplishment," says:

> "The image of *amṛtavarta*" refers to the winds by way of provisional language. Furthermore the Buddha spoke similarly of the "five aspects" in the *Later Guhyasamāja,* where he says, "Breath, the nature of the five jewels."

[359] Nāropa also reproduces these words from the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* and when explaining the line "The look of Vighnantaka" in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* he mirrors the words of the *Great Commentary:*

> Vighnantaka in the line "The look of Vighnantaka" refers to *amṛtavarta.* His "look" reaches the place of nectar, which means reaching the brow. By this the near accomplishment of the six branches will be achieved. The word "also" refers to prāṇāyāma and retention.[99]

Likewise the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* clearly states that the brow is the location of penetrative focusing:

> Life wind is brought to the drop at the brow;
> meditate when the wind on the right flows.[100]

Furthermore, in Avadhūtipa's *Opening the Eyes to What Is Hidden,* it says:

> The manner is as follows: the eyes are not closed, the mouth is open, breath is natural, there is no holding to phenomena, nothing that grasps and nothing to be grasped, the breath entering and dwelling within the deep channel between the eyebrows. This is the stance of that wrathful one. Similarly those who practice to accomplish the yoga must adopt a similar stance, and the five signs of the night yoga will arise.[101]

"The deep channel between the eyebrows" mentioned during the positioning of the eyes in withdrawal yoga refers to the dhūtī between the eyebrows, and this passage teaches that the practitioner of the nighttime yoga must meditate on the breath entering at that point. This establishes that the focus of the mind, which brings the winds with it, must also be at this point.

To summarize: The eyes half covered by the eyelids look upward to the point midway between the eyebrows, to the opening of the upper tip of the central channel in the space of its empty aperture. The eyeballs are rolled up toward the inner corners of the eyes. Together with the mind these half-closed eyes are one-pointedly focused, and they do not move at all from this

position. This is the placement of the eyes. Likewise the mind dwells within the emptiness that is the space of the empty aperture of the upper tip of the central channel and is held there in single-pointed equipoise. [360] This is the placement of the mind. This validates the placement of the eyes and mind and the way the winds enter the central channel in dependence on that placement, as taught by Jé Tsongkhapa:

> Know that withdrawal and meditative absorption
> gather winds into the upper opening of avadhūtī.[102]

However, in his *Six Yogas*, the great dharma master Butön says:

> Holding the previous position of the eyes, with eyeballs unmoving, eyelashes not fluttering, and the eyes looking at one place, the entrances of the right and left channels that carry the flow of conceptual winds are blocked. By this restriction the winds, which rise and flow through the eyes, together with the eye consciousness, are halted. By this restriction the mind is held, which in turn halts the other senses.[103]

The meaning of this passage seems to be that by positioning the eyes, the winds, which act as mounts for the five sense consciousnesses, will enter the central channel, and the signs will arise. This also appears to be his understanding of the following verse from Anupamarakṣita:

> When the half eyes are firmly placed
> upon the pure space,
> smoke and so forth will nonconceptually appear
> from the nonconceptual consciousness
> of great bliss and emptiness.[104]

Furthermore, regarding placement of the mind in the same *Six Yogas*, dharma master Butön said:

> Within the state of this previous positioning of the eyes and physical posture, all grasping to existence, nonexistence, and so forth will be destroyed. One relaxes into an uncontrived state and dwells within nonapprehension.[105]

As a source for this assertion, he quotes the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary:*

> Therefore, abandoning all perception of existence and nonexistence, not grasping, meditate on the profound nonapprehended emptiness.[106]

Therefore he also asserts this meditation to be one on actual emptiness. The *Vajragarbha Commentary* also talks of "this yoga of nonself" and "placing the mind one-pointedly in emptiness,"[107] and although he seems to think that this is the meaning of these quotes and of "meditate on the profound nonapprehended emptiness" from the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary,* I cannot see this assertion as being correct. For a mental placement in which all grasping to existence, nonexistence, and so forth is eliminated, [361] the mind released into an uncontrived state, is not a meditation on the nature of reality.[108] Even assuming that it were, it could not be a nonaspected emptiness meditation at this time in the practice of withdrawal. Practitioners of this path need a mere understanding of emptiness produced by listening and contemplating, even at the time of requesting initiation, but the time for its primary meditation is during the two yogas of prāṇāyāma and retention, when mastery is gained over the winds, and the caṇḍālī fire blazes within the dhūtī to melt the elements and produce the great bliss. This bliss takes nonaspected emptiness as its object of meditation to develop a similar-in-type cause of dharmakāya. However, here in the yogas of withdrawal and absorption, the meditations are on empty forms, either by creating them anew or stabilizing those already produced in order to develop similar-in-type causes of the enlightened form body.

In that case, it may be wondered what the meaning of this passage from the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary* is?

> Therefore, abandoning all perception of existence and nonexistence, not grasping, meditate on the profound, nonapprehended emptiness, and the yogi will see the signs of smoke and so forth arise.[109]

The meaning of this passage is similar to that given previously on the line, "Having abandoned all thoughts." Having abandoned all perception of objects existing and nonexisting, except for those of withdrawal meditation,

there will be no grasping to those existing and nonexisting objects. Focusing and meditating on the [362] previously described meditation objects of withdrawal will bring about the profound nature of the path of withdrawal, which is the "nonapprehended emptiness," endowed with every supreme aspect. How does this occur? "The yogi will see the signs of smoke and so forth arise."

Moreover Nāropa, in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* with an explanation of the meaning of these *Great Commentary* words in mind, clearly says:

> Therefore, abandoning perception of existence and nonexistence, with no support, the signs of the profound, nonapprehended emptiness will arise. The yogi meditates for the arising of the signs of smoke and so forth.[110]

The meaning of this passage is similar to others quoted previously. "With no support" means no material or objective support but having instead a focus of empty space, as previously described. Similarly Anupamarakṣita says in his *Six Yogas:*

> Therefore, abandoning thoughts of existence and nonexistence, with no support, meditate on the deep nonapprehended emptiness, and signs of verification will occur. The signs of verification are those of smoke and so forth, and the yogi meditates upon these.[111]

Also Sūryaśrī in *Filled with Good Qualities* says:

> The meditation on emptiness is a perception of fully aspected emptiness. "Night" refers to darkness. "Day" refers to light.[112]

Therefore "profound, nonapprehended emptiness" and so on should be understood as referring to an emptiness endowed with every supreme aspect developed during the actualization of the path of withdrawal. Likewise the lines "this yoga of nonself" and "placing the mind one-pointedly in emptiness" from the *Vajragarbha Commentary*[113] are also referring to an empty form that is the very path of withdrawal. This is so because the empty form endowed with every supreme aspect belongs to the wisdom category of

method and wisdom, and so it is referred to as "this yoga of nonself" and so forth.

This explanation of the above topics is the definitive meaning of these words from the *Great Commentary,* and those whose explanations are to accord with the thinking of Jé Tsongkhapa should definitely explain them in this way.

The signs of meditative accomplishment and their appearance

This is under two headings:

1. Descriptions in the tantra and commentary and in Indian texts
2. Summarized description of how the signs arise

Descriptions in the tantra and commentary and in Indian texts

A Short Teaching on Initiations states:

> With all conceptuality abandoned,
> smoke, mirage, fireflies,
> and the flame of a butter lamp arise.[114]

The *Condensed Tantra* says:

> From the emptiness arises smoke, mirage,
> a clear uncontaminated appearance within space,
> and a butter-lamp flame.[115]

On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> "From the emptiness arises smoke, mirage, a clear uncontaminated appearance within space, a butter-lamp flame." These are seen by the night yoga.[116]

[363] These four signs, therefore, are described as being night signs. As for their scriptural source, the *Great Commentary* says:

> Of the ten signs, those of the night are found in the Guhyasamāja and others.[117]

"Others" refers to the *Vajra Tent Tantra.* Therefore the *Great Commentary* teaches that the night signs are spoken of in these two tantras. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* also speaks of the night signs as coming from the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* and the *Vajra Tent Tantra:*

> Smoke is the first sign, mirage the second, lights in the sky the third, a lamp the fourth, and the clarity of a cloudless sky is the fifth. These are spoken of by the Buddha in the *Later Guhyasamāja* and the *Ḍakinī Vajra Tent.*[118]

In the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* itself, these signs are taught as follows:

> To the mind of vajra cessation,
> signs, closely held, will appear.
> These signs are of five kinds,
> Bodhivajra[119] has explained.
> The first is the form of a mirage,
> the second that of smoke,
> third is light in the sky,
> fourth is a burning lamp,
> and fifth is a constant clarity,
> like a cloudless sky.[120]

In accord with the *Later Guhyasamāja, A Short Teaching on the Views of Mañjuśrī* also states:

> Meditate on signs of reliability:
> the first the form of a mirage,
> the second is like smoke,
> the third, fireflies,
> the fourth, like a lamp,
> the fifth is a constant clarity,
> like a cloudless sky.[121]

These lines list the signs as they are spoken of in the *Guhyasamāja.* The text continues with the lines "Arising from space, self-arising,"[122] and so on, which is a description of the signs taken from the *Saṃgīti.*[123] After these lines the order of signs as listed in the Kālacakra are quoted:

Smoke, mirage, fireflies,
lamp alit, moon and sun,
darkness, great drops,
various forms, and clear light;
with eyes closed and unclosed,
in the emptiness, not imputed,
dreamlike forms are seen.
Meditate constantly on these forms.

[364] In the *Guhyasamāja* the miragelike sign comes first. Here in the Kālacakra the smokelike sign is said to be the first. Is this not a contradiction? In order to resolve this, some say that there is no contradiction, because the *Guhyasamāja* quote is taught with its deep meaning hidden and is, therefore interpretative, whereas here the meaning is taught clearly and openly and is therefore definitive. It appears they think this is the meaning of a passage from Nāropa's *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* which is their authority for their assertion:

> "Signs, closely held, will appear" means that the signs of smoke and so on closely held will appear very clearly. The reversal of the first and second signs is due to the teachings of the gurus.[124]

However this is not a correct resolution of the contradiction. Meditative practices that follow such texts as the *Five Stages* and the *Oral Tradition of Mañjuśrī,*[125] which teach according to the thinking of *Guhyasamāja,* will produce the miragelike sign first. This has been verified by the experiences of the great siddhas, such as Nāgārjuna, who have recorded them literally in the great Indian texts. Nāropa also, while commenting on the *Later Guhyasamāja,* is writing literally when he says that the miragelike sign is the first. The smokelike sign arising first, as described in the Kālacakra withdrawal, is also established by the actual experience of Kālacakra withdrawal practitioners and is presented in the tantra and commentary accordingly. To summarize: different traditions of practice mean that signs arise in different orders. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> From the instructions of the guru, the yogi who practices in the space of night first sees smoke, not a mirage. This will be known from his experience. After that comes the mirage.[126]

This passage explicitly teaches that when the six yogas of the *Short Guhyasamāja* are practiced according to Kālacakra, the instructions of the guru are given in accordance with Kālacakra, from which "the yogi who practices in the space of night first sees smoke, [365] not a mirage." Furthermore "this will be known from his own experience." Implicitly it teaches that when the six yogas of the *Short Guhyasamāja* are practiced according to the *Oral Tradition of Mañjuśrī* and *Bright Lamp,* the yogi, by following the instructions of the guru, will know from his own experience that "first comes the mirage, not the smoke," after which comes the smoke. This has to be the way to understand it, because the above commentary passages refer to the verses of the *Later Guhyasamāja* and the *Vajra Tent* in order to dispel any doubts concerning the sources for the night signs. If it were not the case that different signs appear first depending on the tradition of practice, and if the teaching of the mirage appearing first was solely a provisional teaching, then that fact would have been mentioned in the commentary. Instead it says, "This will be known from his experience."

Furthermore, Sūryaśrī in his *Filled with Good Qualities* says:

> Other tantras say "first the miragelike." It should be understood therefore that the order is reversed.[127]

Therefore the description in the *Guhyasamāja* of the mirage as the first sign reverses the order of the tradition that begins with the smokelike sign. He goes on to explain the reasons for this reversal:

> This can be understood from the instructions of the holy guru, the extensive commentary of the bodhisattva, and from one's own experience.[128]

This means the teaching that the first sign is the mirage followed by smoke has to be reversed here. This is due to the instructions of the holy gurus on the six yogas being taught according to the Kālacakra. By practicing these instructions as taught by the gurus, the smokelike sign arising first followed by the miragelike sign will be known from one's own experience. This can also be known from *Stainless Light,* "the extensive commentary of the bodhisattva" Puṇḍarīka. Therefore, when the six yogas of the *Later Guhyasamāja* are practiced according to a guru's teachings in keeping with the

Kālacakra, [366] the first sign will be smoke followed by the mirage. The commentary continues with an explanation of the arising of the signs in accord with their actual presentation in the *Later Guhyasamāja:*

> Primarily the five signs, of the nature of the five pure elements, are to be understood as being those of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* and others. This is so because the text also talks of the element of space.[129]

Therefore, beginning with the mirage, the five signs are explained as being the signs of the elements dissolving into each other. Applying that to the *Guhyasamāja,* the commentary continues:

> In the eighteenth chapter it states, "Water, fire, air, earth, and space, all of these." These are similar in form and aspect to those of the bodhisattva.[130]

This is the topic to be explained. The explanation follows:

> Earth absorbs into water from which arises the mirage. Water sinks into fire from which arises the smoke. Fire is absorbed into air from which arise lights in the sky. The appearance of the three subtle elements is like the appearance of a lamp in space and is therefore known as the sign of the lamp. From the sinking of that appearance arises a constant appearance like the cloud-free sky, known as the cloudless sky–like sign. These are the five signs.[131]

The commentary then provides the source for this explanation:

> First earth goes into water.
> Water goes into fire,
> fire sinks into air,
> air enters consciousness,
> consciousness, the apprehending,
> enters the clear light.[132]

Therefore it is acceptable to explain the *Guhyasamāja*'s assertion of the mirage as being the first sign as a literal explanation and, moreover, they are

the signs of the elements progressively dissolving. Similarly, the commentary continues:

> The *Net of Illusion Tantra* says that by the daytime yoga, the six signs having the nature of the six pure aggregates arise from the element of space. The glorious *Mahārāja Primordial Buddha Tantra* primarily speaks of ten signs having the nature of the purified method and wisdom of the senses and their objects.[133]

This means that the four signs of the progressive dissolution of the elements as found in [367] the *Guhyasamāja* are similar to the four night signs of the Kālacakra and therefore are explained as night signs. The six signs of the six purified aggregates as spoken of in the *Net of Illusion Tantra* are similar to the six daytime signs of the Kālacakra and are therefore explained as daytime signs. However the nature of the ten signs from Kālacakra is that of purified method and wisdom: the five sense objects, form and so forth, are wisdom, and the five sense organs, eyes and so forth, are method.

These ten types of purified method and wisdom arise from the ten winds entering the central channel. These ten winds consist of apprehending winds and apprehended winds. At the heart are located the five winds that move the five sense consciousnesses to the five sense objects. These engage objects in dependence upon the five sense organs. Also at the heart are the five enhancing and clarifying winds of the five sense objects of form and so forth. These winds clarify and enhance forms, sound, and so forth. These ten winds are stopped from flowing into the right and left channels and to the sense-organ entrances and instead enter the dhūtī. This halts the activity between the five senses and five sense objects, thereby bringing about the appearance of the ten signs. Verse 116 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter also conveys this meaning:

> In withdrawal within the body,
> the ten subjects and objects are not engaged.[134]

The *Great Commentary* on this verse says:

> *Withdrawal* means that within the body, consciousness is not engaged in the connection between the ten subjects and objects. The five, eyes and so forth, are engaged in empty-form objects.[135]

These apprehending and apprehended winds are spoken of in the *Vajra Garland Explanatory Tantra:*

> Within the heart, the light of bliss,
> the illuminating light of the Buddha sun,
> the apprehending and apprehension of form:
> these the ten rays of light.
>
> Expanding light, rays of light, brilliance,
> the illuminating and shining, the shining light:
> they apprehend external form
> by way of the eyes and so forth.
>
> Light, luminosity,
> illuminatingly beautiful, illuminating light,
> illuminating sun:
> these in aspects of external form.[136]

The first five winds are called *expanding light* and so forth. The second five are called *light* and so forth and are in the aspect of "objects." [368]

Summarized description of how the signs arise

When the yogi has developed some concentration from a correct practice of mental placement, posture, and eye positioning as previously explained, the position of the eyes will cause the winds that move the eye consciousness to its objects to stiffen and withdraw. The winds that move the other sense consciousnesses to their objects will do the same. At this time the connection between sense and sense object is broken, and various signs will appear. However these are not the actual signs of withdrawal. Then the apprehending and apprehended winds along with other winds that flow though the nostrils will enter the central channel. At that time various appearances arise, and the way they arise can be understood from the instruction texts composed by the masters.

The winds flowing equally though both nostrils indicates that the winds are flowing in the central channel. This ensures the appearance of definitive signs. However, in ordinary existence, 675 breaths flow through the central channel every day, and therefore the winds merely entering the cen-

tral channel is no guarantee that signs will arise. However, when the winds are definitely flowing equally through both nostrils through the force of practice, with the body, eyes, and mind positioned and placed, the winds will have entered the central channel through the power of meditation. From the ten winds entering the dhūtī, the night signs will arise. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> "Signs" refers to the appearances that are like clouds, smoke, and so forth. Those ending with the lamp are seen first.[137]

The commentary *Filled with Qualities* also says:

> Concerning "smoke" and so forth: pervading everything inside and out, a smokelike empty-aspect appearance arises. Here too a cloudlike appearance arises without hindrance. As it is taught, first comes the cloudlike appearance, then the smokelike.[138]

In the above passages the first sign is the cloud-like, the second is the smoke-like, followed by the mirage-like, firefly-like, lamp-like, and a vacuity like a clear sky. Although the signs are presented this way, here in the section on night signs the [369] cloud-like sign and the cloudless sky–like sign are not included.

The above quote states, "everything inside and out is pervaded by a smoke-like appearance," meaning that when the four signs first appear, they seem to pervade everything inside and outside the body. Later, as one's meditational development becomes more stable, the signs appear within the dhūtī. The *Great Commentary* on verse 121 of the Gnosis chapter clearly says:

> Here, initially, the yogi places the winds in the central channel, by which he will see the signs within the avadhūtī.[139]

The first sign gradually appears in the form of blue wisps of smoke. Nothing else is seen. After that a bluish shimmering miragelike appearance occurs. When that has cleared, the fireflies sign arises. After that the form of a flame appears. After that has cleared, a vacuity will dawn, resembling a completely clear sky. With each successive meditation on the objects of withdrawal yoga, the winds enter the central channel, and the signs will

gradually but definitely appear in the dhūtī. When that occurs the night-time signs are complete, and from this point onward the yogi enters the daytime yoga.

Some instruction texts, thinking it to be the position of Jé Tsongkhapa, say that for the signs of withdrawal yoga to arise, the winds must enter, abide, and dissolve within the central channel. This is not the position of Jé Tsongkhapa. Notes taken by discerning disciples on Jé Tsongkhapa's actual words on the six yogas reveal that the night signs arise from the winds merely entering the dhūtī. The day signs do not appear from the winds merely entering the dhūtī but arise from a special way of entering. Śavaripa also says:

> By the ten winds entering the dhūtī,
> the day and night signs will be seen,
> this is the branch of withdrawal.[140]

These lines say that the signs arise from the winds entering the central channel but say nothing about the winds abiding and dissolving there. The tantra and commentary says:

> "The vajra path is entered." Here the winds enter the central channel, and from the total emptiness the signs of smoke and so forth are seen.[141]

[370] Many similar quotes state that the signs of smoke and so on arise from the winds entering the central channel, but nowhere is there a passage that talks of the winds having to abide and dissolve. Reliable Indian texts also talk of the signs arising from the winds entering the dhūtī but say nothing of the winds having to abide and dissolve. For example:[142]

> By the three unmoving,
> the ten winds enter the dhūtī,
> outer and inner conceiving is halted,
> and the signs arise;
> this is the branch of individual cutting.

28. Withdrawal: Day Yoga

Daytime yoga meditations

This has five outlines:

1. Place of meditation
2. Posture
3. Positioning the eyes
4. Mental placement
5. The development of the signs

Place of meditation

Verse 116 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> Into pure cloudless space the yogi should look with eyes wide open.[143]

On this line the commentary says:

> This is the daytime yoga. Into pure cloudless space the yogi should look with eyes wide open. This is in the morning and evening with the back to the sun. Otherwise the rays of the sun will bedazzle and cause harm.[144]

This passage says that the place of meditation should afford an expansive view of cloudless skies. Therefore one should be under the overhang of a house or on a mountain spur surrounded by a wall that prevents others from looking in. There, under the vast expanse of the cloudless sky, where no water or snow is in the line of vision, where the eyes are not exposed to the wind and to the glare of the sun, one should meditate. [371] The text

advises facing west in the morning and east in the evening. Lamas of the past have said that the same criteria apply when facing the intermediate directions.

Furthermore this description of the place of meditation from the tantra and commentary is found in *Essence of the Three Yogas:*

> Free of clouds, in the clear sky,
> in the morning back to the sun,
> in the evening likewise.
> The midday sun will harm the eyes,
> therefore leave the meditation.[145]

The second, third, and fourth outlines on the posture and so on are as described in the nighttime yoga.

Some say, "It is not correct to maintain that the positioning of the eyes in day yoga is the same as that of the night yoga because in the above quote it says, 'Into pure cloudless space the yogi should look with eyes wide open.' Therefore the eyes are open wide and look into a cloudless sky. In nighttime yoga you have described the positioning of the eyes as being on the space that is the opening at the upper tip of the central channel. For such a positioning it would make no sense to talk of clouds or lack of clouds." There is no contradiction. The positioning of the eyes for both day and night yogas must be the same. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 119 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "Cakrī" means Uṣṇīṣa. "With his wrathful look" means the yogi sits with eyes not closed, looking upward, and the signs will appear. These are the four of the night yoga and the six of the day yoga.[146]

This teaches that "eyes not closed and looking upward" is the common position of the eyes for both day and night yogas. I have explained and established by scripture and reason the positioning of the eyes for the night yoga. The line "look with eyes wide open" will be explained later.

In his writings the omniscient dharma master Butön says:

> The way of looking, the actions, the bindings, and the mental placement on the object of meditation is similar to the previous.

> One difference is that the mind is projected [372] into the sphere of cloud-free space, not traveling to or distracted by surrounding objects but one-pointedly held in meditation.[147]

As a source for this assertion the passage beginning "This is the daytime yoga. Into pure cloudless space" is quoted. He is asserting that the positioning of the eyes is similar to that of the night yoga but that there is a difference in the mental placement, as taught by the commentary words "pure cloudless space." It appears he asserts this "space" to be external cloudless space. Moreover many Tibetan lamas teach that this "space" refers to the positioning of the eyes and is external space. This appears to be an important subject for discussion, and I will explain the thinking of the tantra and commentary as I understand it.

When entering the day yoga, meditation is first performed with the eye positioning, posture, and mental placement of the night yoga. This will produce the signs of smoke and so forth, which ensures a continuation into the quick appearance of the day signs. The way this happens is as follows. At the end of the four nighttime signs, a totally pure and cloudless space–like appearance arises and appears to the yogi, who looks into it with wide-open celestial eyes or with fleshly eyes. From such a totally pure and cloudless space–like appearance come the six day signs of the blazing and so forth. Therefore, in the quote, "Into pure cloudless space the yogi should look with eyes wide open," "space" must refer to the cloudless space–like appearance that occurs after the four signs of smoke and so forth have arisen, and the "eyes" that are wide open must refer to either celestial eyes or fleshly eyes. This is so because when meditating on the day yoga, the first appearance is that of the cloudless space that follows on from the last of the four nighttime signs. Immediately after that comes the appearance of the daytime signs. Moreover, during that spacelike appearance, it would make no sense to say that we look at it with the ordinary ripened eyes we possess now, because from the moment the first of the four night signs of smoke and so forth arise, the subject and object connection necessary for [373] engaging in external form is broken.

Some might reply: "If it could be established that in the practice of daytime yoga meditation, the four signs of smoke and so forth arise first, followed by the cloudless space–like appearance, and then finally the day signs, then it would be as you assert. But where is the scriptural evidence to prove that in the daytime yoga meditation, first the four signs of smoke

and so forth arise, followed by the cloudless space–like appearance, and then immediately by the day signs?"

This scriptural evidence is very important and will be explained extensively. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Here "self-blessing" refers to withdrawal, wherein conventional emptiness is seen. "Signs" refers to the appearances that are like clouds, smoke, and so forth. Those ending with the lamp are seen first. Then comes a totally pure cloudless space. In other tantras are [374] found other signs, such as blazing and so forth, ending with drops. These six signs are spoken of by the Buddha in the Net of Meditative Concentration chapter of the *Net of Illusion Tantra:*
>
> "Self-created, created from space,
> the great fire of wisdom knowledge,
> the great light illuminating,
> the brilliance of gnosis,
>
> "a lamp for beings, a lamp of wisdom,
> great radiance and clear light,
> greatest of knowledge, mighty secret,
> the king of secret mantra, accomplisher of great purpose."[148]
>
> With these two verses in the *Net of Illusion Tantra,* the Buddha speaks of the signs using provisional language. The appearances that arise from the previously mentioned cloudless space arise from a mind totally devoid of conceptuality and therefore is "Self-created, created from space." Here the great fire of wisdom knowledge is the appearance of "blazing."[149]

Scriptural evidence is clearly presented in this passage. How? The passage from "Here, 'self-blessing'" up to "Then comes a totally pure cloudless space" describes how the night signs are presented in the *Vajra Tent Tantra.* From "In other tantras are found other signs" up to "using a provisional language" describes how the day signs are taught in the Net of Meditative Concentration chapter of the *Net of Illusion Tantra.* The phrase "the pre-

viously mentioned cloudless space" in the next sentence refers to the cloudless space of "a totally pure cloudless space" mentioned in the description of the night signs. The "appearances" in the line "the appearances that arise from the previously mentioned cloudless space" are the day signs of blazing and so forth. The appearance of the day signs of blazing and so forth arise from "a mind totally devoid of conceptuality" in its cloudless space–like aspect, hence the line, "Self-created, created from space." To what does this line refer? This is answered by the lines "the great fire of gnosis" and so forth, which are lines spoken "using provisional language," and therefore "Here, the great fire of wisdom knowledge is the appearance of 'blazing.'" This is the meaning of the passage.

The "cloudless space" explained in this passage on the night signs, "'The fourth a burning lamp, the fifth a constant clarity, like a cloudless sky.' Then the form of fire, preceded by an appearance similar to that of cloudless space" is a cloudless space determined as arising after smoke, mirage, fireflies, and lamp have appeared in that order. On top of that "The previously mentioned cloudless space" refers to the space in the line "Then comes a totally pure cloudless space," and immediately after the spacelike appearance of "The previously mentioned cloudless space," the day signs of blazing and so forth appear. This therefore establishes that in the meditation on the day yoga, the day signs will appear immediately after the four preceding night signs and after the cloudless space, which itself is like a night sign.

Furthermore Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations* says: [375]

> In the glorious Guhyasamāja and others, the first and second are taught in reverse order:
>
> "To the mind of vajra cessation
> signs, closely held, will appear.
> The first is the form of a mirage,
> the second that of smoke,
> the third is light in the sky,
> the fourth a burning lamp,
> the fifth a constant clarity,
> like a cloudless sky."

> Then the form of fire, preceded by an appearance similar to that of cloudless space, blazes in the form of an empty appearance.

This continues up to "Appearing in the form of a moon mandala," and immediately after that the commentary states:

> These six signs arise from cloudless space–like appearance. Therefore this is the day yoga and the yoga "without cover."[150]

This passage also clearly teaches that by meditating on the day yoga, the signs of smoke and so on up to the cloudless space–like appearance are deliberately produced initially, after which the day signs of blazing and so forth arise from that very cloudless space–like appearance.

Similarly *Filled with Good Qualities* says:

> After the Guhyasamāja has explained the signs beginning with the mirage up to the cloudless space–like appearance, it talks of an empty form–like fire blazing out of the cloudless space–like appearance.[151]

This is similar to Nāropa's descriptions. The *Great Commentary* also says:

> Then the yogi looks into the cloudless space, and from that space, the "self-created, created from space" of the yoga of daytime.[152]

"Space" in the above line "Then the yogi looks into the cloudless space" has to be the cloudless space–like appearance that arises [376] after the four signs of smoke and so forth have appeared, because "from that space, the 'self-created, created from space' of the yoga of daytime" explains that this "space" is the space of "self-created, created from space," and the space of "self-created, created from space" is spoken of in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* as being the cloudless space–like appearance that arises after the appearance of the four signs of smoke and so forth.

What are these celestial eyes and fleshly eyes that look upon the cloudless space–like appearance that arises in day-yoga meditation following the appearance of the four signs from smokelike to lamplike? First of all, by meditating on the objects of meditation in withdrawal yoga, the winds

enter the central channel, the connection between sensory subjects and objects are cut, and then, when the signs of smoke and so forth first arise, they are seen by celestial eyes or fleshly eyes that exist in the mind of the yogi. The *Great Commentary* says:

> With tathāgata fleshly eyes one first sees the appearances within one's own mind.[153]

On verse 116 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, the *Great Commentary* says:

> "Withdrawal" means that within the body, consciousness is unengaged in the connection between the ten subjects and objects. Five other eyes and so forth are engaged in empty-form objects.[154]

Here "other eyes" refers to fleshly eyes. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* also states:

> Here in withdrawal the five sense organs do not engage the five sense consciousnesses in the external objects, such as form. The celestial sense organs engage the celestial sense consciousnesses in inner objects.[155]

The fleshly eyes also will arise from the withdrawal meditations. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 125 of the Gnosis chapter, says:

> In order, the fleshly eyes, celestial eyes, buddha eyes, wisdom eyes, and eyes of gnosis will arise from meditation.[156]

Therefore the passage beginning with the phrase "Into pure cloudless space"[157] teaches the place for day yoga meditation and explains the space of the cloudless space–like appearance [377] from which the day signs arise. Both the tantra and its commentary agree on this.

Furthermore, even if the passage beginning "Into pure cloudless space" were applied to the eye positioning in the day yoga, as some lamas have asserted, the line "eyes not closed, looking upward" would still teach the common eye position for both night and day yogas. The way of looking

upward in the night yoga would be as explained previously, whereas in the day yoga, both eyes would be wide open and look into external cloud-free space. This procedure would still not prevent the winds from entering the central channel, because during the night-yoga meditations, with the positioning of the eyes and the placement of mind as explained previously, the winds would enter the central channel, and the night signs would appear. With the night yoga completed, the day yoga would begin, and at that time the winds in the central channel would have become well established. Because of this the mental placement is the same as the night yoga—the eyes are wide open and look into external cloud-free space. After the night signs have quickly arisen, the day signs of the blazing firelike appearance and so forth arise in the cloudless space–like appearance that occurs at the end of the night signs. Concerning the positioning of the eyes, the winds that operate through the entrances of the sense organ become stiff, the eyes do not blink, the eyeballs do not move but stare wide open into external space. This method also will accomplish the practice.

To explain withdrawal according to the thinking of Jé Tsongkhapa, an explanation of this passage from the tantra and commentary is very important, and yet other commentators have said nothing on this topic. Now I may be of little intelligence and weak in practice, but I would request the intelligent to examine well my rough explanation.

The development of the signs

Verse 115 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> [378] Blazing, moon, sun, vajras,
> the supreme part and the drop are seen.
> In the center the form of the Buddha,
> the nonobject, manifold saṃbhogakāya;
> in cloudless space the yogi looks with wide-open eyes,
> until a black line emitting rays of pure light
> is seen in the channel of time.[158]

The commentary on this says:

> Then the yogi looks into cloudless space, and from that space comes the yoga of daytime, "self-created, created from space."

> "The great fire of wisdom knowledge" is the blazing within the cloudless space. Likewise "the great light illuminating, the brilliance of gnosis" is the moonlike appearance. [379] "A lamp for beings" is the sun. "The lamp of wisdom" is the vajra or Rāhu. "The great radiance and clear light" is lightning, or the supreme part. "Greatest of knowledge, mighty secret" is the drop. These are the ten signs. The Buddha taught the night signs in the Guhyasamāja and others and the day signs in the *Saṃgīti.* "The king of secret mantra, accomplisher of great purpose" refers to seeing the fully aspected forms of the vase, friezes, and so forth. "In the center" means in the center of the drop, where is seen "the form of the Buddha." Because it is nonsubstantial and unimputed, it is "the nonobject manifold saṃbhogakāya."[159]

Also:

> Look each day until, in the center of the drop, "a black line" the width of [380] a hair "emitting rays of stainless light is seen in the channel of time," or avadhūtī.[160]

The above commentary describes the six signs and other signs arising after the completion of the ten signs.

Similarly the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Here "the great fire of wisdom knowledge" is the appearance of "blazing." "The great light illuminating" is the moonlike appearance, which is also "the brilliance of gnosis." "A lamp for beings" is the sunlike appearance. "The lamp of wisdom" is the Rāhu-like appearance. "Great radiance and clear light" is the lightninglike appearance. "Greatest of knowledge, mighty secret" is the droplike appearance. It is blue in color and shaped like the moon. "The king of secret mantra, accomplisher of great purpose" means that with the eyes created by withdrawal, the yogi sees all appearance within the three realms as being like illusions, like dreams, and like forms within a prognostic mirror.[161]

These two commentaries clearly decode the "other language" used by the *Saṃgīti* to describe the six signs and the signs that arise after them.

Therefore, after the completion of the night yoga, in a place for day-yoga

meditation, as previously described, the posture and mental placement are the same as was described for the night yoga. Either of the two eye positions can be practiced. From the meditation the signs, from smoke to the cloud-free spacelike appearance, arise quickly. After that, in the very space of that spacelike appearance, the blazing firelike appearance occurs first, followed by the moonlike and the sunlike appearances. Then comes the Rāhu-like appearance, like many sparks glittering in the dark. After that comes the "supreme" or lightning-flash appearance, followed by an appearance similar to a blue drop in the circular shape of a moon disk. After that various forms, such as those resembling a vase and so on, are seen. At the same time, in the center of the blue circular drop, a black line appears. It is the width of a hair and emits rays of stainless light. Within that line is the saṃbhogakāya in the form of Vajrasattva and consort in embrace as well as the three worlds in various forms, all of which are the nature of that saṃbhogakāya. The drop and the black line are seen in the "channel of time," meaning the avadhūtī central channel.

Filled with Good Qualities also states:

> "Uṣṇīṣa form" is the form of the Buddha. "The three realms" means that in the center of the great drop is a black line in which various forms of the three worlds individually appear, all of which are of the nature of the saṃbhogakāya.[162]

This passage appears to be the explanation of the above quote, "In the center of the drop, 'a black line' the width of a hair 'emitting rays of stainless light is seen in the channel of time,' or avadhūtī."

What sees these phenomena? Nāropa, in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* says:

> The fleshly eye consciousnesses and so forth of the fleshly sense organs engage in the inner forms and focus on the inner emptiness. Like forms seen by a clairvoyant maiden looking into her mirror, all imputed phenomena are seen within an unimputed emptiness. This is spoken of as the branch of withdrawal.[163]

This passage states that by meditating on the objects of withdrawal yoga, the organ of the fleshly sight is developed. This is an organ other than the normal sight organ. The fleshly eye consciousness that arises from that

organ of sight is what "sees" in withdrawal. The kinds of objects that the fleshly eye consciousness can generally apprehend are spoken of in *Filled with Good Qualities:*

> The fleshly eye sees phenomena up to one hundred yojana.[164]

So how does it differ from the celestial eye? The same text says:

> The celestial eye sees the subtle and individual forms of limitless world realms.[165]

There is this difference, and although the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* talks of "celestial organs of the eyes," it should be understood as referring to fleshly eyes.

The nature of these empty forms is that they are images or reflections of the primordial clear-light mind, which itself appears as an object in the form of a cloudless space–like vacuity. These empty forms lack the substantiality of subtle particles, are not imputed by the mind, but are self-arising forms of smoke and so forth. The tantra and commentary say, "From the emptiness, smoke and mirage."[166] The "emptiness" in this phrase refers to a vacuity that is an aspect of the clear-light mind, and the phrase itself means that from this vacuity arises its empty form images. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* which shares the thinking of the tantra and commentary, says:

> Inwardly, focusing on the emptiness, all unimputed phenomena are seen. These are like forms seen in a mirror by a prognostic maiden, reflections of the three-world [381] forms of the Buddha. This is spoken of as the branch of withdrawal.[167]

This passage speaks of focusing inwardly on the clear-light mind vacuity from which the empty forms are seen. Also *Short Assertions on Our Views* states:

> Beyond existence and nonexistence,
> this uncontaminated mind,
> a profundity without apprehension;
> meditate for the signs of reliability.
> First comes the mirage.[168]

This means that the clear-light mind lacks manifest contamination and is beyond the duality of holding objects as existing or not existing. This profundity is without apprehension, and within this nonapprehended state, smoke and the other signs of reliability will arise. The yogi, therefore, should meditate on this nonapprehended state.

Likewise Nāropa, in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* clearly says:

> The mind of emptiness, devoid of perceiver and perceived, is a wisdom consciousness. Its images appear directly to the yogi.[169]

The first summary from the Realms chapter also says:

> Similarly the clear-light mind is not seen
> by the methods of conceptual meditation.
> In its actuality, with left channel
> and right channel as one, it will be seen.[170]

This explains that the clear-light mind will not be seen by the methods of the conceptual meditations of the generation stage. How is it seen? It is seen in its actuality when the winds that flow within the left and right channels combine as one in the central channel. That is the meaning of this passage and others from the commentary that explain how the clear-light mind is seen as a result of the winds entering the central channel. It is the meaning also of many commentary passages previously quoted that talk of empty forms being seen as a result of the winds entering the central channel.

The way smoke and the other empty forms arise as images of the clear-light mind is as follows. During the yoga of withdrawal the meditations upon the methods for bringing the winds into the central channel, as described previously, cause the winds to enter the central channel for the first time. [382] A little of the clear-light mind is experienced, from which arises the smokelike clear-light mind image. Then as the amount of wind entering the central channel gradually increases, so the clear-light mind becomes clearer, and the mirage, firefly, and lamplike signs arise as images of that mind until, finally, just a cloud-free spacelike vacuity appears. With the signs of the night yoga completed, the day yoga meditations begin. The signs from smoke up to the spacelike vacuity again arise quickly, and by looking at and meditating single-pointedly within this spacelike vacuity,

the day signs arise. The preceding explanation is the definitive meaning of the following two passages from the *Great Commentary:*

> Here the winds enter the central channel, and from the total emptiness the signs of smoke and so forth are seen.[171]

Also:

> Then the yogi looks into the cloudless space, and from that space, the "self-created, created from space" of the yoga of daytime.[172]

That the meaning of "Then the yogi looks into the cloudless space" and so on is as it has just been explained is clearly supported by the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* as previously quoted.

Lamas of the past have explained the "space" as external or actual space and the "emptiness" of "From the emptiness, smoke and mirage" as referring to nonaspected emptiness or as a totally nonapprehended source. This position also needs deliberation.

When this natural clear-light mind is manifest, empty forms such as smoke appear as images of this mind, like forms appearing in a prognostic mirror. When the death clear-light mind is manifest at the time of death, the empty forms are as described in the Inner chapter. When the primordial clear-light mind is made manifest on the path by the ten winds entering the central channel, images of this clear-light mind are formed, like the sun and its rays. These appear as various empty forms, like forms in a clairvoyant's mirror. [383] These empty forms become clearer until finally their characteristics are that they become limitless and obscuration-free phenomena of the three worlds. This is the wheel *(cakra)* of Kālacakra and is the wisdom of method and wisdom. The clear-light mind itself, in dependence on other factors, become the cause for the supreme and unchanging consciousness freed from all obscuration. This is time *(kāla)* and is the method of method and wisdom. Such phenomena and consciousness, or wisdom and method, become the inseparable and unified wheel of time. The *Great Commentary,* in the Supreme and Unchanging Consciousness summary in the fifth chapter, states:

> The conqueror Kālacakra is of the nature of method and wisdom. This is taught as a relationship between consciousness and

> phenomena. Here the supreme and unchanging consciousness is the cause that puts an end to all obstruction. This is said to be "time" and method. The limitless phenomena of the three worlds are the "wheel" and the wisdom. That consciousness and those phenomena as one, is the wheel of time.[173]

By focusing on these empty forms of smoke and so forth that are unified with the clear-light mind and meditating single-pointedly, they become the limitless and obscuration-free phenomena of the three worlds. The clear-light mind itself, developed into unchanging bliss and placed in single-pointed meditative equipoise upon emptiness, will create the dharmakāya indivisibility of emptiness and unchanging great bliss, which is in an inseparable union with the limitless and obscuration-free phenomena.

The empty forms of smoke and so forth, especially the enjoyment body in the form of Vajrasattva and consort in embrace that appears in the center of the black hairwidth line, are similar-type causes and bases for the accomplishment of the resultant empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace. The empty forms of smoke and so forth, especially those of the three realms such as the vase that appear like the forms in a clairvoyant's mirror after the ten signs have appeared, are bases for the accomplishment of the various obscuration-free empty forms. Therefore these have to be the primary objects of single-pointed meditation. [384]

During the yogas of withdrawal, meditative absorption, and so forth, the features of the individual empty forms clearly appear to the mind, but beyond that these forms cannot perform their individual functions. However every empty form at its resultant stage is capable of performing its own function of form, fire, and so forth. This is a great difference. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Therefore the Buddha has said that the initial signs of smoke and so forth are signs at the time of meditation. All those who say "at the time of accomplishment" are finding fault with the assertions of the Buddha. They are dismissing teachings of the Buddha, such as, "All thoughts abandoned, meditate for a day." At the time of accomplishment, the illusionlike and dreamlike worldly smoke and so forth are no longer signs. Here is actual smoke and fire, capable of performing the function of burning. It is the same with the rain of saffron, flowers, jewels, and gold.

> Therefore the signs of smoke and so forth appear within the six-branched yoga.[174]

The word "here" from the phrase "Here is actual smoke" means "here at the time of accomplishment," and the passage therefore makes the point clearly. This passage also refutes the assertion that the signs of smoke and so forth are ultimate truths and that to see them is to see the dharmakāya. This is so because this passage teaches that the empty forms of withdrawal yoga transform into perfected resultant empty forms, and that which is an ultimate truth cannot be perfected. Moreover it is contradictory to assert that the dharmakāya can perform functions of burning and so forth. Furthermore the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Here "self-blessing" refers to withdrawal, wherein conventional emptiness is seen. "Signs" refers to the appearances that are like clouds, smoke, and so forth. Those ending with the lamp are seen first.[175]

This passage states that the signs of smoke and so forth are conventional truths. Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations* says the same.[176] It should be understood [385] that these passages refute empty forms as ultimate truths.[177]

Common meditative concentrations by themselves that do not focus on bringing winds into the dhūtī can bring about the appearance of moonlike, sunlike, and vajralike signs. This is stated in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra.*[178] Meditations that do focus on bringing the winds into the dhūtī can also bring about the signs of smoke and so forth before the winds enter the dhūtī. Therefore it is important not to confuse these two with the definitive signs of withdrawal. If the former is confused with definitive withdrawal signs, the practitioner will go astray by holding non-Buddhist meditative concentrations and some common meditative concentrations as being completion-stage paths. If the latter is confused with definitive withdrawal signs, the practitioner will wrongly assume the accomplishment of withdrawal before the winds have entered the dhūtī. You will look to see if you possess the benefits that accrue from attaining withdrawal as taught in the tantra and commentary, and realizing you do not, you will create the karma and obstruction of thinking that what has been taught in the tantras is not true. So how can we differentiate between the signs of smoke and so forth

that appear before the winds enter the central channel and those that appear afterward? The *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* says, "From the stable vajra path,"[179] and its commentary *Bright Lamp* says:

> "From the stable vajra path" means the progression of the five signs, not transgressed.[180]

Therefore, when the signs of smoke and so forth appear in the proper order and are focused on and meditated upon in this order, it is an indication that the winds have entered the dhūtī.

Ritual of enhancement at times of nonaccomplishment

Verse 119 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> If by withdrawal and so forth
> the wishes of the mantra practitioner are not met...[181]

This and following lines in the tantra and commentary teach the enhancement rituals of the withdrawal and prāṇāyāma yogas. Prāṇāyāma is included in the phrase "and so forth" [386] and will be discussed in its own section. Concerning the enhancement necessary here for the withdrawal yoga, *Opening the Eye to What Is Hidden* says:

> The forceful practice of the yogis should be known. When the yogas of withdrawal and so forth bring about the appearance of various form bodies in the body of emptiness, and yet the yogi has not bound the winds and therefore not developed an instance of the bliss of nonemission, at that time the yogi should practice the wrathful method and the nada meditation, which will be explained later. The yogi straightens the body, sits in vajra position, with breath natural and mind undistracted. With the right hand gradually press the veins of the neck or the two sleep-countering veins, and remain unmoving. Do this gently again and again, many times, for as long as the upper body and the head remain without pain. If this is done, the winds will flow into the central channel, and the four drops of bodhicitta that have entered the vajra jewel placed inside the lotus of wis-

> dom are prevented from leaving, thereby creating bliss. This bliss, not approaching a hundredth part of that nonfalling, similar-to-cause bliss, has nevertheless accomplished the significance of the body comprising instances of innate bliss. Therefore it will be seen in this life. This is the first wrathful method.[182]

As this passage explains, some people may meditate on the objects of withdrawal, causing the signs of smoke and so forth to arise, but the winds will not have entered the central channel. If that happens, the ritual for enhancement is as follows. How it is actually performed is described in the lines from "The yogi straightens the body" until "and the head remain without pain." Straightening the body and so forth means to adopt the body and eye positions of withdrawal. The thumb and ring finger of the right hand gradually press the right and left neck veins or the right and left sleep-countering veins. The mind remains single-pointedly placed and unmoving in its focus. This is to be practiced quite gently again and again. How many times? For as long as the upper body and the head are without pain. If this is done, the winds will flow in the central channel. The winds flowing in the central channel will prevent the bodhicitta [387] drops falling from the opening of the jewel. When in union with a mudrā consort, the four drops of bodhicitta that create the four periods of waking, dream, sleep, and sexual bliss, and which have entered the yogi's vajra jewel placed inside the lotus of the wisdom consort, are stopped and do not emerge from the opening of the jewel. This creates the ascending innate bliss. "This bliss, not approaching," or not standing comparison with, "a hundredth part of that nonfalling," or unchanging, "similar-to-cause bliss, has nevertheless accomplished," or created, "the significance," or cause, of the body comprising instances of innate bliss. Therefore this body of great innate bliss will be seen and accomplished in this life. The lines from "If this is done, the winds will flow into the central channel" onward teach the function and benefits of this enhancement ritual.

At the completion of withdrawal yoga, one can choose to use a mudrā consort or not. If a consort is used, the ability to prevent the bodhicitta from leaving the jewel will have been achieved.

If this ritual is performed and the winds have still not entered the central channel, *Opening the Eye to What Is Hidden* describes a method for inducing bliss:

> Now the second forceful method will be described. When in meditative union with wisdom, who is the nature of emptiness, and there arises a hot sensation on the body or the sensation of tingling at the opening of the downwardly expelling wind channel in the secret place of the method, who is the nature of compassion, press the base of the vajra jewel with the right hand. With the body unmoving concentrate the mind in bliss and draw it up. Push the flesh of the lower stomach against the joint.[183] Stare with eyes wide open. Bend the toes in and stretch out the heel. With both wisdom and method unmoving and mind placed on bliss, this is the second forceful practice.[184]

The phrase "wisdom, who is the nature of emptiness" refers to the consort. "Method, who is the nature of compassion" refers to the yogi. The rest is not difficult to understand. [388] This practice must be learned from a lama. The above explanation from *Opening the Eye to What Is Hidden* has been reproduced here because it is necessary for practice, but in the thinking of the tantra it is to be explained in the section on prāṇāyāma.

In the writings of the dharma master Butön it states:

> In the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* it is said:
>
> "The enhancement of withdrawal
> forcefully completes binding and activities."[185]
>
> When the body and eyes are not in their positions, attempt to position them in the daylight, and check if this has been been accomplished. If not, then as before, enter into meditation according to this excellent instruction.[186]

Therefore both the dharma master Butön and the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* maintain that this particular enhancement practice is for correcting the posture and eye position. This is not correct because this enhancement ritual is to be performed when, having implemented the posture and eye position as described previously, the meditation does not bring the winds into the central channel. Therefore the words of Jé Tsongkhapa, "instruction on the initial meditation is not suitable to be an enhancement ritual"[187] are very true.

Some practitioners of the past have advised, "Stare blankly into a copper vessel full of water. Look at that blankness and into space, and empty forms will arise." This and many other rituals described as being the enhancement ritual of this section seem mostly to be rituals for producing the appearance of empty forms, whereas the teachings on the enhancement ritual taught in the tantra and commentary at this juncture are for occasions during withdrawal yoga when the empty forms have appeared but the winds have not entered the central channel.

Even dying with the remainder of the meditations unfinished, the power of the yoga ensures continuation

Verse 97 of the Inner chapter states:

> With the mighty yogas unachieved,
> should the migration of the mind bring death,
> the yogi will be born into a great and powerful family
> in a glorious human world possessed of the yoga.
> By past familiarity, once again the yogi will hold
> the pure and vast gnosis yoga.
> The yogi, achieving gnosis,
> travels to a place supreme and eternal,
> never to take birth anywhere again.[188]

[389] If a practitioner practicing a yoga such as withdrawal dies before attaining the higher yogas, in his next life he will be born in buddha and bodhisattva families endowed with the foundation for the practice of mantra. On that foundation he will meditate on the remainder of the path and attain the highest state of the unity of unchanging great bliss and the empty form endowed with every supreme aspect.

Valid cognition

The fleshly eye sensory consciousness arises in dependence upon the fleshly eye sense organ. It sees clearly the empty forms of smoke and so forth, it is undeceiving, and therefore it is a sensory and direct valid cognition. This is in keeping with the *Vajragarbha Commentary*, which describes withdrawal as a sensory and direct valid cognition.[189] Likewise *Opening the Eye to What Is Hidden* says:

> Here, concerning the objects that appear to the mind, the tathāgata fleshly eye sees for a thousand yojana. Similarly the pure celestial eye sees for two thousand yojana. The pure eye of the Buddha sees the minds and consciousnesses of others. The Buddha taught the five sights in the *Dharmasaṃgītisūtra.* They are, in order, the fleshly eye, celestial eye, eye of the Buddha, eye of wisdom, and eye of gnosis, and they will arise by the power of the yogi placing the mind in the avadhūtī and meditating. Then there is nothing that the omniscient mind does not see or does not understand.[190]

The first sentence of this passage describes how empty forms of withdrawal are seen by the fleshly eye consciousness. The next three sentences from "Similarly" up to *"Dharmasaṃgītisūtra"* describe how empty forms are seen by the remaining four sights on the progressively higher paths, as well as indicating the sutra source for the five sights. The next sentence, beginning "They are, in order" teaches that the five sights arise from the winds and the mind being brought inside the central channel. The last sentence teaches [390] that there is nothing the perfection of the five sights or enlightened gnosis does not see or understand.

This passage from *Opening the Eye to What Is Hidden* is similar to the passage in the *Great Commentary* on verse 119 of the Gnosis chapter, which says:

> With tathāgata fleshly eyes one first sees the appearances within one's own mind. With the celestial and other eyes, the minds and consciousnesses of others are seen. In the *Dharmasaṃgītisūtra* the Conqueror taught the five sights. They are, in order, fleshly eyes, celestial eyes, Buddha eyes, wisdom eyes, and eyes of gnosis. These will arise from meditation.[191]

The descriptions of these sights in Nāropa's *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations* and the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* can be seen in previous quotations from these texts.

Purification divisions

The gnosis aggregate, gnosis element, and so forth of the gnosis-aggregate group are the six phenomena to be purified in withdrawal yoga. Withdrawal

is the purifier and is of the Vajrasattva family. The divisions are the ten signs of smoke and so forth. Verse 115 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> Withdrawal is Vajrasattva and the ten forms.

On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> The first practice is withdrawal. This is Vajrasattva, the gnosis aggregate. Because that is divided into ten signs, there are "ten forms" that appear. They are smoke, mirage, fireflies, lamp, blazing, moon, sun, Rāhu, part, and drop. These form the unimputed gnosis aggregate.

What are the six phenomena of the gnosis aggregate group? They are gnosis aggregate, gnosis element, mind, sound, the supreme organ, and the emission of urine. These six are the bases of purification for the paths of the Vajrasattva family. When purified these six become free of obscuration, are of a single taste, and are fused together as one. [391] Vajrasattva pervades all families, and so it should be understood that withdrawal yoga pervades all lower paths.

Results

There are immediate and final results. On the immediate results, verse 118 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> In withdrawal the yogi apprehends no objects
> and is blessed by every mantra.[192]

On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> By the power of withdrawal, when the forms are stable and the yogi has attained purification, he is blessed by every mantra and is able to perform giving by words and so forth.[193]

The *Guhyasamāja* says:

The meditator by withdrawal
is blessed by every mantra.[194]

When the yogi has completed withdrawal yoga, he is blessed by every mantra and develops the power of "giving by words." For example, by saying "Let there be no poison," the poison disappears.

The final result of withdrawal is the complete nonobscuration of the six phenomena of the gnosis aggregate in the form of Vajrasattva, Jñānapāramitā, and so forth.

29. The Yoga of Meditative Absorption

The second yoga, the stabilizing meditative absorption

This has six outlines:

1. The meaning of the term *meditative absorption*
2. The time for meditation
3. The way to meditate
4. Valid cognition
5. Purification divisions
6. Results

The meaning of the term meditative absorption

This branch is called *meditative absorption*[195] because it holds single-pointedly to empty forms. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 115 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says of its meaning:

> In meditative absorption the five object types and five consciousnesses are as one [392] in various forms.[196]

In the writings of the dharma master Butön it says:

> Because of the mind undistracted and single-pointedly held on empty forms, it is known as *meditative absorption.*[197]

The dharma master Chogpa[198] says the same. Others who assert the position of the dharma master Khedrup Jé say of the etymology of meditative absorption:

> Because it single-pointedly stabilizes the mind upon the empty forms, it is known as *meditative absorption.*

This is refuted by Jé Tsongkhapa in his *Notes on Kālacakra:*

> The assertion by some that "because it stabilizes withdrawal it is known as *meditative absorption*" does not correspond to the etymology.[199]

This means that the term *stabilize [brtan]* in the lines "it single-pointedly stabilizes the mind upon the empty forms" and in the phrase "stabilizes withdrawal,"and the term *absorption [gtan]* in "meditative absorption" are of similar pronunciation but of different spellings.[200] Therefore the statement that it "does not correspond to the etymology" is very true.

The time for meditation

The *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* says, "The time is the time of the flow of space,"[201] thereby asserting that meditation should begin after the space winds begin to flow. Although this appears to be based on the fact that meditative absorption yoga is the branch of Akṣobhya, it is not clearly stated in the tantra and commentary. Therefore our own position is that the meditation begins after the appearance of the tenth sign and the various empty forms that subsequently appear. The tenth sign is the saṃbhogakāya form seen in the black line inside the drop. *A Short Teaching on Initiations* says:

> Like dreams, forms are seen.
> Meditate constantly on these forms.[202]

Nāropa, in his commentary to this text, says:

> "Forms" are various forms. "Meditate" means to stabilize with the branch of meditative absorption.[203]

The same commentary says:

> The time for approximation is that firstly one meditates with withdrawal, and then one stabilizes with the branch of meditative absorption.[204]

Therefore the ten signs and the subsequent various empty forms are achieved by withdrawal, and stabilization is accomplished by meditative absorption. [393]

The way to meditate

This is under five headings:

1. Purpose of the meditation
2. Actual way to meditate
3. Subdivisions
4. Measure of completion
5. Signs of accomplishment

Purpose of the meditation

The purpose of the meditation is to stabilize the empty forms achieved during withdrawal. This can be understood from the above quote from Nāropa's commentary beginning "The time for approximation."

Actual way to meditate

This has two outlines:

1. Refuting the position of others
2. Our own position

Refuting the position of others

Some, thinking it to be the position of Jé Tsongkhapa, say:

> Empty forms appearing during meditative-absorption yoga are all conceived by one's own effort. They are transformed into the forms of deities one has the greater meditative familiarity with and that appear easily to the mind. These are meditated on repeatedly, and upon the culmination of that meditation, one transforms them into forms of Kālacakra. After this practice they all transform into light and absorb into one another to become the form of Kālacakra in the form of Vajrasattva and consort. Previously this form appeared at a distance from oneself,

> but from here onward one's mind enters this form and becomes indivisible with it. Pride is generated and meditation is performed again and again. Finally the deity no longer appears at a distance from oneself, and one is able to transfer a natural uncontrived pride to the deity. Such a meditation creates a special basis for the development of deity form in the branch of recollection.[205]

This passage is from an instruction manual. It may sound very profound, but I cannot see it as being correct, because the empty forms in this and other sections are not imputed or conceived by the mind at all but must arise on their own accord. The fifth summary from the Realms chapter says:

> That which is taught as ultimate truth is beyond the world, and is for the attainment of the mahāmudrā siddhi endowed with every supreme feature. It grants the desired result, manifestly appearing in the space of the yogi's clear-light mind, like images in a mirror seen by a maiden, devoid of phenomena imputed by the mind. It produces the gnosis of unchanging bliss.[206]

Also: [394]

> Because the form of the Buddha is without substance and because it is unimputed.[207]

Similar passages are found throughout the tantra and commentary, and yet you say that the empty forms that appear during meditative absorption are deliberately conceived by the mind and changed into the forms of deities? It would follow, too, that the ten signs that appear during withdrawal would also have to be transformed by the mind into forms of deities.

According to the above assertion it seems that if it were not possible to transform the various manifest empty forms into deities and especially into a single Kālacakra mother and father, then the appearance of these empty forms would have no purpose. However Kālacakra in the form of Vajrasattva mother and father adorned with the features and signs in the black line is stabilized by meditative absorption and is the basis of the empty-form Kālacakra of the branch of recollection. Likewise the various aspected empty forms, such as the vase and so forth, that appear after the ten signs are also stabilized by meditative absorption and are the perfect basis for the

unobscured empty forms of enlightenment. There is no need to transform them into the forms of deities. Verse 122 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> The emptiness becomes the forms of the ten signs.
> The signs are fully aspected and become
> the unending, supreme indestructible bliss.[208]

On this the commentary says:

> Likewise the emptiness becomes the definite forms of the ten signs of smoke and so forth, and the signs are fully aspected form. From the forms comes the unchanging bliss.[209]

Therefore the emptiness, which is the clear-light mind in its aspect of vacuity, becomes the ten signs of smoke and so forth, and the signs of the various empty forms such as the vases and friezes are fully aspected forms. The passage says that the unchanging bliss comes from these fully aspected forms. It does not say that they are transformed into the forms of deities. On these empty forms of the vases, friezes, and so forth being fully aspected forms, the *Great Commentary* says: [395]

> The fully aspected forms of the vases, friezes, and so forth are seen.[210]

Furthermore the previous assertion is not that of Jé Tsongkhapa. His *Notes on Kālacakra* says:

> Withdrawal is meditation for the creation of form not yet created. Meditative absorption is meditation for the stabilization of form already created. What is the object to be stabilized after the meditation? The continuity of the object of meditation itself is to be stabilized.[211]

Therefore the empty forms are single-pointedly concentrated upon as they appear in the meditations of withdrawal. Some apply this particular way of meditating to each branch. This is not correct, because this branch is at a level of insight that only comes from the mental placement of meditative absorption, which will now be explained.

Our own position

The meditation is performed in the place of day or night withdrawal yoga with eye and body positions and mental placements held as in withdrawal. When the empty forms arise, it is these forms that are single-pointedly concentrated upon. *A Short Teaching on Initiations* says that meditative absorption focuses constantly upon the empty forms themselves:

> Like dreams, forms are seen.
> Meditate constantly on these forms.[212]

The *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* also says:

> The objects of mind are empty forms.
> On empty forms of previous meditation,
> mind is placed looking into space.
> Mind placed in emptiness is wisdom.[213]

This is also Jé Tsongkhapa's position, as can be understood from the above quote from *Notes on Kālacakra.*

Subdivisions

Verse 116 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter states:

> Meditative absorption also is wisdom, conception, discernment, joy, and unmoving bliss of a single-pointed mind.[214]

On this the *Great Commentary* says: [396]

> Similarly, within this form, there is "wisdom," which means the view, "conception," meaning apprehending phenomena, "discernment," meaning ascertainment, "joy," meaning attraction to form, and "unmoving bliss," meaning the mind and form together as one.[215]

Nāropa explains these by commenting on them as they appear in the *Later Guhyasamāja*, which says:

Meditative absorption is in five forms:
conception, discernment, joy,
bliss, and single-pointed mind.
This is meditative absorption in brief.[216]

These are the five divisions in brief. The tantra continues with their explanation:

Three secrets arising is conception;
its application is discernment;
vivid joy the third; gathered bliss the fourth;
self-mind, the cessation of arising consciousness
and objects of consciousness, is the fifth;
it is of the nature of all buddhas,
it is pacification,
all desire abides this way.[217]

The meaning of these verses Nāropa has explained in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations*:

Concerning "three secrets" and so forth, the three times and three realms, whose nature is the enlightened body, speech, and mind, are the three secrets. The one-time mind, holding just their rough forms vividly illuminated as the three realms, is the "arising." Experiencing and understanding this is the "three secrets arising." That is "conception." "Its application is discernment" means discernment applied to the objects of conception. The apprehending of phenomena possessed of animate and inanimate characteristics, such as the vase and the friezes and so forth, is "discernment." "Vivid joy" means joy that is the blissful state keeping the mind on all objects held by discernment. "Gathered bliss" means that the experience of the blissful state coming from the mind dwelling in all phenomena becomes a cause of great pliancy within the body. Concerning "self-mind, the cessation of arising consciousness," etc., "consciousness" refers to the six consciousnesses of sight and so forth that engage the "objects of consciousness," which in turn refers to the finality of the six spheres of phenomena. "Arising" means the arising of these consciousnesses and objects of consciousnesses. Their

> "cessation" is the single-pointed mind [397] in which the apprehending and the apprehended are possessed of the characteristics of emptiness. This is "self-mind." Self-mind in such a form is in the nature of all buddhas. Because concepts of form and so forth have been pacified, there is "pacification" appearing vividly as the three realms. This is the sole and ultimate emptiness. Concerning "all desire abides," "all desire" means all phenomena, and these phenomena abide in a form vivid and indivisible from one's mind.[218]

This passage should be explained a little. "Three secrets arising" is the meaning of conception. What are the three secrets and what does "arising" mean? Empty forms appearing in the aspects of the three times and the three realms and whose natures are the enlightened body, speech, and mind are the three secrets. "Arising" refers to the "one-time" mind holding the rough or coarse aspects of the vivid empty forms appearing as the three realms. In short, experiencing and perceiving in a rough but vivid form, the empty forms, whose nature is the enlightened body, speech, and mind, and which appear in the forms of the animate and inanimate phenomena of the three times and three realms, is what is meant by "three secrets arising." That is the first branch, called *conception.*

Application to the objects of conception is the division of discernment. How is this application carried out? The objects of conception are the empty forms of animate and inanimate phenomena, and the details of these empty-form phenomena, such as those of the vases, friezes, and so forth, are discerned and clearly appear. This is *discernment.*

Although mental pliancy is the actual cause of the mind being naturally settled on the detailed empty forms that make up the objects of discernment, joy is a blissful or joyful mind that induces such a state. Bliss is the bliss of the physical pliancy that arises from the mind being single-pointedly held on the discerned empty forms.

The "single-pointed mind" spoken of in the *Later Guhyasamāja* is the same as the "wisdom" taught in the tantra and commentary and is explained by lines beginning "self-mind, the cessation of arising consciousness." [398] Consciousness here refers to the six consciousnesses from sight to mental consciousness. "Objects of consciousness" refers to the six objects from visual form to mental phenomena. "Arising" refers to the six consciousnesses engaging with the six objects. "Cessation" refers to severing

the connection of the apprehending subject and the apprehended object, which lies between the mind with its six consciousnesses and the six objects themselves. The main characteristic of the "emptiness" that is the severing of this connection is the "single-pointed mind," spoken of as "self-mind." Although connections between the five sensory consciousnesses and their objects are severed from withdrawal yoga onward, the same is not true of the connection between mental consciousness and its objects. Therefore, up to the division of bliss in meditative absorption, the empty forms and the mental consciousness that abides single-pointedly within them exist in separate aspects as apprehended and apprehender. However the empty-form objects and clear-light–mind subject do not exist in separate aspects as apprehended and apprehender. Subject and object are as one. This "self-mind" is a single-pointed mind, indivisible from all buddhas in the aspect of empty forms. In particular it is indivisible from the empty-form Kālacakra in the aspect of mother-father embrace. In this way "concepts of apprehended form," or objects, "and so forth," referring to the apprehending consciousness, "have been pacified." "Therefore this pacification" is the "sole and ultimate" mind, indivisible from the "emptiness" form "appearing vividly as the three realms," and especially indivisible from the empty form that is Kālacakra in mother-and-father union.

Measure of completion

During withdrawal, meditation is directed upon the sites of penetrative focusing within the body. When empty forms arise, these are meditated upon with constant single-pointed equipoise. In the branches of conception and discernment, rough empty forms followed by detailed empty forms are seen. The continuity of these empty forms is single-pointedly focused upon and, at the end of a continuous session of meditative concentration, joy and bliss, induce the twin benefits of mental and physical pliancy. The empty-form apparition of Kālacakra mother and father, as a mere appearance within one's mind, [399] is indivisibly mixed with one's own mind. That enlightened form no longer appears as mind, and one is able to move self-pride effortlessly to that enlightened form. At that time meditative absorption has been accomplished. From then onward one moves into prāṇāyāma yoga.

To summarize: In the branch of meditative absorption, the body and eye positioning and the mental placement are the same as in withdrawal.

Meditation brings about a special entry of the winds into the dhūtī, from which the winds of the indicative conceptual states of mind are stopped from flowing through the right and left channels, and the conceptions themselves are halted. The nonconceptual mind of clear light arises together with empty forms, which are vividly seen by the meditator with a fleshly eye consciousness. These forms, and especially the empty-form Kālacakra mother and father that appears within the black line inside the dhūtī at the midway point between the eyebrows, are single-pointedly focused on by the clear-light mind. From the ensuing meditation the empty-form objects and clear-light–mind subject merge indivisibly until all appearance of a separate apprehender and apprehended is lost, and the yogi is able to transfer self-pride to the form of Kālacakra mother and father. The empty form in its appearance as Kālacakra mother and father, to which self-pride has been transferred, is the basis and similar-type cause for the actual realization of the saṃbhogakāya Kālacakra mother and father during the branch of recollection and the resultant state.

Signs of accomplishment

The previously described signs become more and more distinct until they are of a brilliant clarity. Moreover appearances of limitless buddha fields and limitless beings of the six realms arise. Empty-form images of pleasant and unpleasant sounds, smells never before experienced, pleasant and unpleasant tastes, and sensations, such as heat and cold, all appear. At first they appear externally, and then they appear inside the black line. When they are purified, clairvoyance will arise. This description is according to the dharma master Butön.[219] [400]

Valid cognition

> Because the empty forms are clearly seen by clairvoyant eyes and such seeing is nondeceptive, the cognition is a sensory and direct valid cognition.

Purification divisions

The *Great Commentary* says:

> "Meditative absorption is Akṣobhya" refers to the consciousness aggregate. Its ten forms are the five object types and five consciousnesses. These are as one in various forms in meditative absorption.[220]

The consciousness-aggregate group of six is to be purified until it becomes nonobscured. Meditative absorption is divided into the five branches of conception and so forth, each of which is divided into consciousness subject and object to make ten.

Results

These are of two types: immediate and final.

Immediate results

Verse 118 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> Lord of men, five kinds of clairvoyance are achieved,
> purified by the yoga of meditative absorption.[221]

On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> When the eyes are not closed, they become celestial eyes. Similarly the celestial ear and so forth are purified by meditative absorption.[222]

Likewise the *Later Guhyasamāja* says:

> By the meditative equipoise
> of meditative-absorption gnosis,
> five types of clairvoyance are achieved.[223]

The immediate result of completing the meditative absorption branch is the attainment of the five kinds of clairvoyance as well as countless other benefits, such as being able to listen to the buddhas and to work extensively for living beings.

Final results

The consciousness aggregate, the element of space, the organ of hearing, the element of mental phenomena, the secret organ, and the control of seminal fluid, are all purified to become six unobscured phenomena, beginning with Buddha Akṣobhya.

The omniscient Butön posits an enhancement ritual for the yoga of meditative absorption. In his writings it says:

> "Meditate forcefully on the empty forms of meditative absorption" means in order to make firm the activities, bindings, and body positions, centralize the mind by way of the previous instructions.[224]

As in withdrawal yoga the practice of correcting the body positions and so forth [401] cannot be an enhancement ritual. Also in his writings he quotes verse 195 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, the first of the last forty verses left by the *Great Commentary* as "easy to understand" verses, which says:

> Turn from the sun, stand in its rays, and stare at your shadow,
> externally examine the pure sky, and a person that is the color of smoke
> and one with the sky will be seen.
> With six months meditative yoga becomes pure,
> earth's treasures will be seen through earth's openings.
> Or move to the shadow of a tree,
> and in the heart of space, garlands of drops will form.

On the meaning of this verse he comments:

> In an isolated place, turn your back to the sun. In front of you look at your shadow with meditative-absorption placement. Then look into the cloudless sky, and a shadow person will be seen. Look at this with the samādhi of meditative absorption. If you meditate in this way for six months, the meditative absorption will become pure, and you will see the treasures beneath the earth. Alternatively, sitting in the shadow of a tree with the

> shadow in front, meditate on meditative absorption. Then look into space, stabilize with meditative-absorption meditation, and in six months you will see the treasures.[225]

He maintains that this passage from the tantra teaches an enhancement ritual. Because the very next verse, 196, beginning "The śakti,"[226] teaches the prāṇāyāma enhancement ritual, it may seem that the previous verse quoted above, beginning "Turn from the sun," must similarly teach a meditative absorption enhancement ritual. However these two verses are not similar. The verse beginning "The śakti" describes the enhancement rituals of both withdrawal and prāṇāyāma, because it says in the *Great Commentary,* on verse 119 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, "Nāda meditation will be explained,"[227] and the later verse that this line refers to is the one beginning "The śakti." Therefore there is no question that the verse beginning "The śakti" describes the enhancement ritual for withdrawal and prāṇāyāma. The verse beginning "Turn from the sun" is clearly a verse that describes the accomplishing of various feats, such as seeing the treasures beneath the earth. *Notes on Kālacakra* says:

> Meditative absorption is just the stabilizing of withdrawal. Therefore, if withdrawal [402] has been accomplished and meditative absorption meditation is performed, it is impossible not to achieve it. However, if withdrawal has not been attained, there is no meditative-absorption meditation. Therefore "and so forth" mainly refers to prāṇāyāma.[228]

This is an assertion that meditative absorption does not require an enhancement ritual.

30. Prāṇāyāma: The Yoga of the Winds

The branch of wind accomplishment

This has two main outlines:

1. Prāṇāyāma: The branch of bringing the winds into the dhūtī, having halted their flow in the left and right channels
2. Retention: The branch of stabilizing the winds in the dhūtī

Prāṇāyāma: The branch of bringing the winds into the dhūtī, having halted their flow in the left and right channels

This is under six headings:

1. Meaning of the term *prāṇāyāma*
2. The time for the first meditation
3. Branches of the meditation
4. Valid cognition
5. Purification divisions
6. Results

Meaning of the term prāṇāyāma

Of the Sanskrit terms *prāṇa* and *āyāma, prāṇa* refers to the winds and *āyāma* can be rendered as "effort," "stopping," and "lengthening." Affixing these three meanings to the term *prāṇa* results in the Tibetan translations, "wind exertion," "wind stopping," and "wind lengthening." Here we are concerned with the second and third meanings. In the Kālacakra, *prāṇāyāma* is taken to mean "wind stopping." In the *Guhyasamāja, prāṇa* means "life" and *āyāma* means "to lengthen." Therefore, in terms of the Kālacakra explanation, *prāṇa* refers to the winds such as the downward wind and so forth, and *āyāma* has the meaning of "stopping." These winds are stopped

from flowing in the left and right channels and brought into the dhūtī.

Moreover this can be confirmed if the grammatical formation of this term is explained.[229] Concerning the *Dhātusūtra* passage "*Prāṇa* means life-holding," the affix[230] *ac* is added to the root. The consonant *c* is a marker[231] and therefore is dropped. Concerning the *Dhātusūtra* line "Yamu means stopping," the affix *ghañ* is added to the root. Before the letter *ya* of the word *yamu,* the prefix[232] *āng* is added. The life letter *u* of the root *mu* is there for reasons of articulation,[233] the *ng* of the prefix *āng* and the affix *ghañ* are markers and are therefore omitted. Concerning the formation of the term, "Those joined to *ñ* and *ṇ* follow *a* and *c*" and "From *aṇ, ac, aṭ,* the nearby[234] *a* is lengthened," meaning that the life vowel *a* of the letter *ya* is lengthened. This results in the amalgamation, *prāṇāyāma.* Added to that is the singular particle letter *si* from the first case. The life vowel *i* of *si* is for articulation and is therefore dropped. The *s* becomes a *visarga,* and the resulting term is *prāṇāyāmaḥ.* On this Nāropa says;

> Concerning *āyāma,* "*yamu* means stopping." Here the letter *a* of the root stops all conception. This is *āyāmaḥ,* which means that the paths of the life air and downward air are stopped and brought into the central channel.[235]

The time for the first meditation

Some texts, thinking it to be the position of Jé Tsongkhapa, assert:

> After the ten signs indicating that the winds have entered and dissolved within the central channel are complete and have been stabilized by meditative absorption, prāṇāyāma meditation is begun.[236]

However, not only do the ten signs of the winds dissolving not arise during withdrawal and meditative absorption, it is not even the position of Jé Tsongkhapa that such signs arise during prāṇāyāma. His *Notes on Kālacakra* states:

> The function of prāṇāyāma is to bring the winds into the central channel. However keeping the winds in the central channel is the function of retention. Therefore asserting that this task is

> performed by prāṇāyāma is incorrect, because if prāṇāyāma also accomplished the keeping of winds in the central channel, what would be the purpose of meditating on the branch of retention? Therefore the function of prāṇāyāma is to bring the winds into the central channel, and when the signs of winds having entered the central channel clearly and unmistakably arise, that function is complete.[237]

Therefore, if it is not the function of prāṇāyāma to even hold the winds in the central channel, how could it possibly dissolve them? Furthermore the previous text says:

> Then one meditates for an extended period, and for however long one sits, inhalation and exhalation of breath become progressively shorter. When inhalation and exhalation have stopped, the winds abide completely. In the Guhyasamāja and other tantras, it is taught that vajra recitation brings about the abiding that is the severing of inhalation and exhalation as well as the dissolving, and that this in turn induces the innate bliss. It would be incorrect to say that vajra recitation is able to bring about such a result in the context of Guhyasamāja but is not able to here.

However this passage is also refuted by the above quote from *Notes on Kālacakra*. How do those explanations from the Kālacakra tradition and those from the Guhyasamāja and others [404] differ on this topic? *Notes on Kālacakra* states:

> In general the highest yoga tantras talk of the winds entering the dhūtī, dwelling in the dhūtī, and dissolving in the dhūtī. Here dissolving in the dhūtī is referred to as "binding," "mixing," and "killing" the winds, whereas entering and abiding are spoken of as being separate branches. These are the branch of prāṇāyāma, which halts the flow of winds in the left and right channels and brings them into the dhūtī, and the branch of retention, which keeps the winds in the dhūtī.[238]

This passage is saying that in the Guhyasamāja and other tantras, during the practices of body isolation and speech isolation, for example, penetrative

focusing on the points of the body will bring about the entering, abiding, and the dissolving of the winds in the dhūtī during one continuous practice. However here the branch of prāṇāyāma that brings the winds into the dhūtī and the branch of retention that keeps them there are two separate methods and, moreover, are two separate branches within the six-branched yoga. The above passage also says that dissolving the winds in the dhūtī, referred to here as "killing the winds," occurs in the sixth branch, meditative concentration. Moreover the tantra, the *Great Commentary,* and other authoritative commentaries, which act as sources for the *Notes on Kālacakra,* do not even mention the abiding and dissolving of the winds in the central channel in any of the chapters up to the branch of prāṇāyāma.

Our own position is that when the empty forms of withdrawal and meditative absorption have been seen and stabilized, the branch of prāṇāyāma, as illustrated by the vase yoga, should begin. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 117 of the Gnosis chapter, says:

> Then, "when form is seen, each day the winds are to be halted" refers to the vase yoga.[239]

Similarly Nāropa, in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations,* teaches that prāṇāyāma meditation begins immediately after the completion of meditative absorption:

> The lines on prāṇāyāma begin, "When images of form are seen." When miragelike and dreamlike images of fully aspected form are seen, "meditate constantly on prāṇāyāma" and halt the life and downward winds with filling, vase, and expelling yogas.[240]

These words refute the suggestion [405] that meditation on prāṇāyāma not preceded by the practices of withdrawal and meditative absorption will develop into the correct path.

Branches of the meditation

This is under four outlines:

1. Identifying the path of prāṇāyāma
2. Divisions

3. The meditation
4. Enhancement ritual

Identifying the path of prāṇāyāma

The appearance of the empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace within the center of the navel cakra, indivisible from the clear-light mind that has arisen from a very special entry of winds into the central channel brought on by the prāṇāyāma practices of vajra recitation and vase yoga, is the path of prāṇāyāma. This is taught by the *Great Commentary* on verse 120 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> "Purified by prāṇāyāma" means that when the yogi is "divorced from the paths of the sun and moon" and is constantly within the central channel, he will be purified by the prāṇāyāma and therefore will be "praised by the bodhisattvas."[241]

What is to be purified? The clear-light mind and the empty forms that are of the same nature as this mind are the phenomena to be purified. What is the purifier? It is prāṇāyāma practice, which induces the special entry of the winds into the central channel. This occurs when the sun and moon right and left channels are divorced from their flows of wind. "Therefore," which means because of this purification, the yogi will be "praised by the bodhisattvas." The empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace as the actual path of prāṇāyāma is taught by verse 122 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> The winds enter the center, divorced of objects,
> embracing Viśvamātā.[242]

That this phenomenon appears in the center of the navel cakra is taught by the *Great Commentary* on verse 120 of the Gnosis chapter: [406]

> "In the center of the two winds meeting" means in the center at the navel, where the life wind and downward wind meet. "The arising and engaging in the objects by object-engagers," such as eyes and so forth, at the navel is a topic that has been discussed previously. The word "objects" is without a grammatical case.

> "Apprehending the signs of smoke and so forth also" is by way of the avadhūtī. The word "also" refers again to the navel.[243]

How does this passage teach that the empty form appears in the center of the navel cakra? It does so like this. By meditating on the vase yoga of prāṇāyāma, the life-sustaining wind and the downwardly expelling wind meet at "at the navel," meaning at the center of the navel cakra, where the arising and engaging of object-engagers such as eyes focusing on objects such as forms and so forth has been halted. Because of this, the empty-form signs of smoke and so forth, and especially the empty-form Kālacakra in mother-father embrace, are perceived. Where are they seen? "By way of the avadhūtī" means inside the avadhūtī. The word "also" means inside the dhūtī in the center of the navel cakra. The way that the process of object-engagers such as eyes engaging in objects such as forms and so forth has been halted "is a topic that has been discussed previously" in the section on withdrawal.

Therefore, in this section on prāṇāyāma also, wherever one focuses within the dhūtī, there the winds will gather, and at that particular place an empty-form Kālacakra in mother-father embrace will definitely arise of its own accord, unconceived and unimputed by the mind. Therefore, during vajra recitation, when the empty form at the upper end of the dhūtī enters and mixes with winds, there is no need for a separate visualization of it arriving at the navel. This is because the power of vase yoga will bring the life and downward winds to meet at the navel, and the union of these two winds is meditatively focused on inside the dhūtī at the center of the navel. There empty forms will appear by their own volition, unimputed and unconceived by the mind, as taught by the above passage from the *Great Commentary.* [407]

Divisions

The dharma master Butön and other masters of the past talk of six divisions, namely, vajra recitation, inhalation, filling, expelling, vase yoga, and *racaka,*[244] or "particle limit." However *Notes on Kālacakra* says:

> The tantra and commentary mention only vajra recitation and vase yoga, and these two will accomplish the purpose. Although

> the tantra teaches no more than these two, they do not need supplementing.[245]

This position should be accepted, and because the other wind yogas mentioned above are similar in not having any focus upon the central channel, it is difficult to see how they could be prāṇāyāma practices for bringing the winds into the central channel. Therefore vajra recitation and vase yoga are the two divisions of prāṇāyāma.

31. Vajra Recitation

The meditation

This has two main outlines:

1. Vajra recitation
2. Vase yoga

Vajra recitation

This is under two headings:

1. The function or actual purpose of vajra recitation
2. The meditation

The function or actual purpose of vajra recitation

The *Great Commentary,* on verse 116 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "In the prāṇāyāma meditations also the two pathways," referring to the left and right pathway, "collapse," meaning are blocked, and winds enter the central pathway.[246]

Similarly the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Prāṇāyāma means blocking the left and right paths of *lalanā* and *rasanā* so that the winds are constantly in the avadhūtī.[247]

As these quotes say, by the meditations of vajra recitation and vase yoga, [408] the flow of winds in the right and left channels is stopped and directed to enter only the central channel. This is the function of both

types of prāṇāyāma. The tantra's use of the plural "meditations" indicates that it is referring to the functions of both prāṇāyāma practices, and although it does not describe vajra recitation directly, it does teach vase yoga. In the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* vajra recitation and vase yoga meditations are both described, as will be understood from the following presentations.

The meditation

This is under five headings:

1. Place of meditation
2. Body posture
3. Eye position
4. The focus and method of the meditation
5. Signs of accomplishment

Place of meditation

The place of meditation is the same as described in the section on withdrawal.

Body posture

This is the same as described in withdrawal and meditative absorption, the only difference being that the heel of the right foot does not block the anus but presses against the base of the vajra.

Eye position

The eye position is explained as being the "look of *amṛtavarta.*" *Amṛtavarta* has an interpretive and definitive description. In the interpretive, as described in withdrawal, the eyes are turned upward and look toward the location of the white bodhicitta nectar in the dhūtī between the eyebrows. The definitive description is found in the *Later Guhyasamāja:*

> During near accomplishment
> the image of *amṛtavarta.*[248]

Explaining this verse, the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Using provisional language, "the image of *amṛtavartā*" refers to the winds.[249]

The eyes themselves cannot look at the winds, and so it is the mental consciousness that actually looks, and this refers to focusing upon the entering, abiding, and leaving of the winds during vajra recitation and upon the life and downward winds joining at the navel during vase yoga.

The focus and method of the meditation

This is clearly taught in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary:*

> *Prāṇāyāma* means blocking the left and right paths of *lalanā* and *rasanā* so that the winds are constantly in the avadhūtī central channel. In the yogas of filling, vase, and arising, the syllable *oṃ* in the avadhūtī brings about the entering, [409] the syllable *hūṃ* brings about the halting, and the syllable *āḥ* creates the arising. The yogi meditates on these, whose natures are the moon, Rāhu, and sun. This is prāṇāyāma.[250]

How does this passage teach the focus of meditation? The first sentence shows the purpose or function of vajra recitation by stating that the winds are stopped from flowing in the left and right channels and are made to flow constantly in the central channel. How is this achieved? By filling the dhūtī with wind, by vase yoga, and by arising yoga. How are these performed? The innate tone of the breath entering arises as the sound of *oṃ,* the moon body-vajra syllable, and is visualized as entering the dhūtī. The innate tone possessed by the breath abiding internally arises as the sound of *hūṃ,* the Rāhu mind-vajra syllable. It is visualized as abiding in the dhūtī, which is the meaning of "vase" and "halting." The innate tone of the breath being expelled arises as the sound of the syllable *āḥ,* whose nature is the sun speech vajra and is visualized as being expelled from the dhūtī. This is "arising." This is vajra recitation meditation.

Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations* cites this explanation from the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary:*

> *Prāṇāyāma* means blocking the left and right paths of *lalanā* and *rasanā,* from which the winds constantly enter the avadhūtī. In the avadhūtī, by the yogas of filling, vase, and expelling, the syllable *oṃ* brings about the entering, the syllable *hūṃ* brings about the halting, and the syllable *āḥ* creates the arising. The yogi accomplishes those whose natures are the moon, Rāhu, and sun. This is the branch of prāṇāyāma.

Some lamas focus on the winds coming and going from the right and left channels and so forth and then consider it unnecessary to visualize the winds entering and leaving the central channel. This method of vajra recitation is well refuted by the two passages above, which talk of "the syllable *oṃ* in the avadhūtī brings about the entering," etc., and "In the avadhūtī, by the yogas of filling, vase, and expelling," etc.

In the great vow[251] section of the Gnosis chapter it says: [410]

> The definitive meaning is that at all times it is stabilized, and at all times during the vase yoga, the yogi meditates on the winds that enter and arise as being in the central channel.[252]

Some lamas say that the "vase yoga" mentioned here refers only to the stage of abiding, the inhalation and exhalation having been stopped by the power of vajra recitation. This is incorrect, because it is not the position of Jé Tsongkhapa as explained previously. Moreover the *Great Commentary* talks of "winds entering the central pathway."[253] The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* talks of "the winds constantly entering the avadhūtī."[254] These quotes point out that it is the constant flow of wind in and out of the central channel and not the stage of abiding that accomplishes the function of vajra recitation. So what does the above passage from the Gnosis chapter mean? That will be explained below.

Three Bodhisattva Commentaries speaks of the entering wind being assigned to the syllable *oṃ,* the abiding wind as assigned to *hūṃ,* and the wind being expelled as assigned to *āḥ.* In the *Great Illusion Tantra* the expelling is assigned to *oṃ* and the abiding to *hūṃ.* The *Guhyasamāja* speaks of the entering wind as *oṃ,* the abiding wind as *āḥ,* and the wind being expelled as *hūṃ.* Although there are differences in the way the syllables are assigned, there are no differences insofar as they are all prāṇāyāma yogas that block the flow of wind in the right and left channels and bring

it into the central channel. Therefore the innate tone of the breath entering, abiding, and leaving is visualized as the appropriate sound of the three syllables. However the disagreement that arises on the tantra's position when trying to establish which of the innate tones of the three breath stages are assigned to which sounds of the three syllables is confusing and should be examined.

The *Great Commentary* says:

> Here there is no counting or saying of mantra, but together with the breath entering and leaving, concentrate on the letters of the mantra entering and leaving like a garland of flowers, in the nature of moon and sun, and in forward and reverse order. In this way, inwardly the yogi performs 108,000 recitations in five days.[255] In five hundred days the yogi recites on 10.8 million breaths. Then the body becomes pure. Likewise the speech is purified and similarly the mind. [411] In this way the breath of fifteen hundred days remains unmoving, and the state of the vase wind is achieved. The yogis will develop the five kinds of clairvoyance, and with the perfect flow of winds in the left, right, and central channels, this is the vajra recitation and neutral recitation. This has been determined by the Buddha.

Also:

> The definitive meaning is that at all times it is stabilized, and at all times during the vase yoga, the yogi meditates on the winds that enter and arise as being in the central channel.

Using these passages as a basis, Butön Rinpoché[256] explains that the letters of the great-vow ḍāka and ḍākinī mantras intertwined with the seventy-two-line mantra are recited like a threaded flower garland upon the twelve major movements of wind,[257] each of which is divided into five elemental mandalas to make sixty, to which is added the twelve flows of gnosis wind that occur between each of the twelve movements, to make seventy-two in total. These letters are recited in forward order for the entering and the abiding, which are in the nature of the moon and Rāhu respectively, and in reverse order for the arising, which is in the nature of the sun. If this is done with no distraction and no interruption, then in one day 21,600 recitations are performed. In three blocks of five hundred days each, the

body, speech, and mind are purified, and one has reached the time for vase yoga. Therefore he posits the above passages as being the tantra and commentary description of the completion-stage vajra recitation of the branch of prāṇāyāma. Other texts that claim to be commentaries in keeping with the position of Jé Tsongkhapa and his disciples also explain this passage from the commentary as a description of the vajra recitation of prāṇāyāma from the six-branched yoga.

I cannot see these claims as being correct, because in a preceding passage that comments on the tantra lines "the letters of wisdom and method," which teach these mantra recitations applied to breaths like garlands of flowers, the *Great Commentary* says:

> The text speaks of reciting mantras in order to achieve worldly powers.[258]

[412] Therefore the recitations of this passage are for the achievement of worldly powers. Also the line "together with the breath entering and leaving, concentrate on the letters of the mantra entering and leaving like a garland of flowers" describes a recitation in which the forms of the mantra syllables are strung together like a garland of flowers on the thread of the entering and leaving breath. Focusing on the winds and mantras as being separate in this way and focusing on the forms of the mantras is incompatible with vajra recitation. Moreover, in the above description, focus is placed on the winds of the twelve major movements, which flow within the left and right channels. However, in vajra recitation, the winds are to be visualized as entering and leaving the central channel. Furthermore the *Great Commentary* in that section says:

> The inseparable branch, the winds together with the mantras, are recited by the mind.[259]

This explains that the mantra recitation of that passage is mental recitation. Moreover the *Great Commentary* refers to the mental recitation of the generation stage as vajra recitation. Therefore, although the passage talks of "vajra recitation and neutral recitation," it must be the intention of the tantra merely to label mental recitation as vajra recitation.

Others say that the eyes and the mind are focused within the dhūtī between the eyebrows, and merely by single-pointed concentration a very

special empty form will appear due to the power of previous familiarity. Self-pride is placed in this empty form, and when the winds are inhaled, the mind, which has become one with the empty form, merges with the winds so that winds, mind, and empty form are not regarded as separate entities but are merged in the mind. This is single-pointedly concentrated upon, and during its gradual descent from within the upper opening of the dhūtī, its tone is visualized as the actual sound "oṃ." This process is asserted as being part of the profound focus of vajra recitation meditation. However, if examined, it can be seen to be faulty. When the eyes and the mind are focused in the dhūtī between the eyebrows and a very special empty form appears just by the power of single-pointed concentration, the flow of winds in the right and left channels will typically have been severed and brought to the central channel. Specifically this is the time of the completion of meditative absorption. [413] Therefore, as the line "cessation of arising consciousness and objects of consciousness"[260] explains, the object and object-engager connection, which refers to the six consciousnesses of sight and so forth engaging the six objects, form and so forth, has been cut because the winds, or mounts of those consciousnesses, have been brought into the central channel. Therefore, at that particular time, the consciousness of hearing and the bodily consciousness do not engage their objects of sound and bodily sensation. Therefore how would it be possible to visualize the gradual descent from within the upper opening of the dhūtī as emitting the sound *oṃ*?

Furthermore, when beginning the practice of vajra recitation, even if the actual status of the winds is that they are still flowing in the left and right channels, one nevertheless practices by visualizing them as entering the central channel. According to the above assertion, however, the time for beginning the practice of vajra recitation is when a very special empty form appears due to the power of the winds having already entered the central channel. Therefore at that time you would have to say that the winds were already entering and leaving the central channel. How could that be correct? Through this and other reasons a lot of damage can be done to this assertion.

To summarize our own position on vajra recitation meditation: the eyes and body are positioned as previously explained, and at the beginning of the practice of vajra recitation, regardless of whether the winds are actually flowing in the right or left channels or the central channel, the incoming breath is visualized as descending within the central channel to arrive at the

center of the navel cakra. There it remains for however long the duration of one breath may be. When it arises, it does so again through the central channel. The innate tone[261] of the breath entering is visualized as *oṃ*, the innate tone of abiding as *hūṃ*, and the innate tone of leaving or arising is visualized as *āḥ*. This process is to be single-pointedly concentrated upon.

The actual way the mantras are applied to the winds is that the innate tones of the breaths resonate as the sounds of the three syllables as if they were actually being heard. The reason why it takes place in the central channel within the very center of the navel cakra is that although in the branches of withdrawal and meditative absorption the special empty form appears within the upper opening of the central channel, from the branch of prāṇāyāma onward it has to be an appearance in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra. [414] The reason why is stated by Khedrup Jé in *Illuminating Reality:*

> The special empty-form mudra as an actual phenomenon is first developed on the branch of recollection. This is taught as an empty form arising from the winds entering, abiding, and dissolving within the avadhūtī at the center of the navel cakra. Therefore the special cause that induces the special innate gnosis is first developed at the navel cakra. Because of this the navel cakra is spoken of as the innate deity form. This is a special assertion of my omniscient master.[262]

An actual empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace that is not just an appearance within the mind of the yogi is first developed during the branch of recollection, and the place where it is developed is in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra. The foundation and immediate cause of this special empty form is the empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace developed during the branches of prāṇāyāma and retention, which arises unconceived and unimputed within the yogi's mind. This too must arise in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra. For the arising of such an appearance, the winds must abide in the central channel at the navel cakra during retention and must enter the central channel at the same location during prāṇāyāma. Therefore vajra recitation is applied to the processes of entering, abiding, and arising at the navel, and it is in that location that vase yoga holds the winds together in union.

What does it mean to say, "the navel cakra is spoken of as the innate

deity form"? This is taught by the twenty-seventh verse of the Inner chapter, which says:

> At the secret, crown, and navel also,
> the innate form of the Buddha,
> without and with nature.[263]

On this verse the *Great Commentary* says:

> Therefore, at the secret lotus, the crown lotus, and the navel lotus, the pure form, the supreme deity. Without nature, and unimputed, its nature is like form in a clairvoyant's mirror.[264]

To summarize: during the practices of the six-branched yoga, sometimes the winds are entering the central channel, sometimes the process of entering is at its peak, sometimes the winds abide in the central channel, [415] and sometimes the winds are "killed" or dissolved in the central channel. By the power of these processes, the clear light, whose nature is the primordial mind, appears in unification with its images at all stages within the meditations of the six yogas. These images are empty forms, especially the countless saṃbhogakāya forms, which appear like phenomena in a clairvoyant's mirror. Although the final clear light cannot be actualized until the attainment of omniscience, nevertheless, when the winds are initially brought into the central channel by the power of meditation, a little of the clear-light mind is experienced. During the stages of peak entering, abiding, and dissolution, the clear-light mind becomes progressively clearer, and the empty forms also become clearer.

At the stages of withdrawal and meditative absorption, the empty forms are seen with fleshly eye consciousness. From the completion of meditative absorption, when clairvoyance is gained, until the completion of prāṇāyāma, retention, and recollection, and for as long as there is no separation from desire for the union of the two organs, the empty forms are seen with the clairvoyance of the celestial eye. From the completion of the branch of recollection, in which a mahāmudrā consort has been actually created and separation from desire for the karma and wisdom mudrā consorts is attained, the empty forms are seen with the buddha eye. From the very first moment of attaining the unchanging bliss on the first of the twelve bodhisattva levels, the forms are seen with the eye of wisdom. When

the perfect and complete enlightenment is attained, empty forms are seen with the eye of gnosis. Verse 232 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> Objects of celestial sight are two,
> those of inferential and of direct cognition.
> With the application of direct cognition,
> manifold saṃbhogakāya forms arise, like stars in the sky.[265]

On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> There is direct and inferential cognition. With the application of direct cognition, "manifold saṃbhogakāya forms arise, like stars in the sky," meaning like a host of stars, the forms are seen with the fleshly eye and so forth, and the three worlds and the three times are like dreams and illusions. Here initially the beginner yogi without clairvoyance sees various forms with the fleshly eye. Then, with the attainment of clairvoyance, they are seen by the celestial eye. [416] With the attainment of separation from desire, they are seen by the buddha eye. With the attainment of the bodhisattva stages, they are seen by the eye of wisdom. With the attainment of full and perfect enlightened mind, they are seen by the gnosis eye, "freed from remainder." In this way the fleshly eye of the tathāgata and the other sights that make up the five eyes are for the seeing of emptiness. Other living beings are blind to the objects seen within the view of emptiness.[266]

If this passage is analyzed, it can be understood that any part of the six-branched yoga is solely a time of meditative equipoise on the winds entering, abiding, or dissolving in the central channel, within which empty forms will definitely arise. In the illusionlike postmeditation times when the winds flow in the right and left channels, the empty forms do not appear. For example, in *Guhyasamāja* thinking, it is only in the meditative equipoise of the winds entering, abiding, and dissolving in the central channel that the clear light along with the appearances, increases, and attainments of the path will definitely occur, whereas these are not experienced in the postmeditation sessions. With this in mind Jé Tsongkhapa and his disciples maintain that although an actual empty-form mahāmudrā consort

is achieved from the branch of recollection onward, its continuum is cut during the postmeditation times and only achieved in the meditative equipoise sessions of the branches of recollection and meditative concentration.[267]

Signs of accomplishment

These can be understood from *Notes on Kālacakra,* which says:

> Lamas of the past have mentioned the heat of bliss, seeing the channels, and the colors of the winds and so on. Seeing the channels and the colors of the winds is the result of practice. However being able to see the cakras and then the colors of the moving winds, as well as being able to see many worlds, is like seeing visions in a dream, and although some may be genuine, they are unreliable. The *Vajra Garland* teaches that when the isolation of the body is complete, vajra recitation should be performed for six months, and that in the fourth month the colors of the cakras are seen. This is an actual sight of the cakras, and although this is a common experience of vajra recitation meditation, [417] the most important thing is that the unmistaken signs of the winds having entered the dhūtī must arise.[268]

32. Vase Yoga

This has two main headings:

1. The function or purpose of vase yoga
2. The actual meditation

The function or purpose of vase yoga

The function or purpose of vase yoga is to mix the life-sustaining and downwardly expelling winds at the navel and to ignite the caṇḍālī fire.

The actual meditation

This is under five headings:

1. Place of meditation
2. Posture
3. Positioning of eyes
4. Focus and method of meditation
5. Signs of accomplishment

The first three topics are as described in the section on vajra recitation.

Focus and method of meditation

Holding the winds inside without letting them enter or leave can also be explained as vase yoga and is found in the lower tantras. Moreover it has been taught that vase yoga is found in the non-Buddhist Sāṃkhya tradition. Pandit Kṣitigarbha[269] said that it is difficult to differentiate the wind yogas of non-Buddhists and those of the mother tantras.[270] Lamas of the past have maintained that they are differentiated on the basis of their view and by whether or not they encompass bodhicitta but not on the basis of

being wind yogas. Although it may seem that the different vase yogas are not differentiated by their individual characteristics, there is actually a huge difference in the fundamental features of these yogas. Generally, in the Sāṃkhya tradition, there is no bringing together of upper and lower winds, and specifically there is no inducing of the innate great bliss by uniting and holding the winds in the centers of the cakras as taught in the highest yoga tantras. Vase yoga in which the winds are merely kept inside without leaving or entering can be found in non-Buddhist traditions and in the lower tantras. Therefore a special vase yoga meditation is necessary here, and that will be explained. It is under two headings:

1. How it is presented in the tantra and commentary [418]
2. The actual focus and method of the meditation

How it is presented in the tantra and commentary

The *Great Commentary,* on verse 117 of the Gnosis chapter, teaches the need for vase yoga and its duration:

> Then, "when form is seen each day, the winds are to be halted" refers to the vase yoga. "Until mandalas of light are seen to encircle the entire body": these are within and emerging from the forms previously mentioned.[271]

The way vase yoga is practiced is taught in verse 194, an "easy to understand" verse of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> Mouth too is closed, and from the two nostrils
> all outer wind is drawn in by the power of prāṇāyāma
> and joined with pure lightninglike downward wind.
> From familiarization with the yoga over time,
> moon and sun are as one in the center of fire.
> In the body thirst and hunger are destroyed,
> and freedom from death too is granted.[272]

The mouth is closed, and the outer wind is drawn in through the two nostrils by the power of the life-sustaining upper wind. This is joined with the downwardly expelling lower wind, whose color is yellow, like that of pure lightning, in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra. From the

practice of this yoga over a long time, the winds that flow in the moon left channel and the sun right channel are as one in the "center of fire," meaning inside the central channel at the center of the Kālāgni, or navel cakra. The immediate benefits of completing the vase yoga are that thirst and hunger are destroyed and freedom from death is granted.

Therefore do not think that these words from the tantra do not clearly teach that the uniting of the winds is to be meditated upon within the central channel. This verse definitely teaches that when familiarization with this practice has been fully developed, the life and downward winds of the left and right channels are as one inside the central channel, and for that to happen these two winds must be brought together in the central channel.

Furthermore *Notes on Kālacakra* quotes a verse from *Later Guhyasamāja* that says:

> Breath, the nature of the five wisdoms,
> the nature of the five elements,
> uprooted as a globe-shaped form,
> meditate at the tip of the nose.[273]

Notes on Kālacakra goes on to explain how the commentary on this verse, as found in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* clearly teaches vase yoga. [419] *Notes on Kālacakra* first corrects the translation—"In some translations 'globe-shaped form' is rendered 'amassed form'"[274]—and then continues with the explanation. The way that the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* explains this verse from the tantra is as follows:

> The term "five jewels" refers to the phenomena of the five *rasanā* mandalas, which are the five elements of earth and so forth. Breath in the nature of the five elements is of the nature of the five jewels, and is in the right nostril. Likewise the phenomena that are the five *lalanā* mandalas of the five buddhas are the five aggregates—consciousness and so forth. The winds blessed by these are in the left nostril. "Globe-shaped" in the line "uprooted as a globe-shaped form" means the life winds of the left and right mandalas are as one in the avadhūtī. The life winds are "uprooted as a globe-shaped form, meditate upon the tip of the nose." The word "nose" here is used to mean the lotuses of the

> navel, heart, throat, forehead, and crown. Here, to meditate at the tip, as in the line "meditate at the tip of the nose," refers to the center of the navel at the location of right and other lotus petals.[275]

This passage needs to be explained a little. The term "five jewels" refers to the breath that possesses the nature of the five elements or mandalas of earth, water, fire, air, and space, and that flows through the right *rasanā* channel and through the right nostril. The term "five buddhas" refers to the breath that possesses the nature of five aggregates of consciousness, and so forth, and that flows through the left *lalanā* channel and through the left nostril. These winds become as one globe-shaped form or one "amassed form," which is "uprooted" or "led" through the avadhūtī. "Nose" in the line "meditate at the tip of the nose" is used here to mean the lotuses, or cakras, of the navel, heart, throat, forehead, and crown. The "tip" refers to the central dhūtī of those cakras. The term "nose" refers to the cakras, but at the tips of which cakra is one to meditate? The line "meditate at the tip of the nose "means to meditate within the dhūtī at the center of "the location of the right and other lotus petals," meaning the right and left channel petals of the navel. [420] That this is the meaning of the above passage is confirmed by *Notes on Kālacakra:*

> This is clearly explained in the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* in which a verse from the *Later Guhyasamāja* is quoted:
>
> "Breath, the nature of five wisdoms,
> the nature of the five elements,
> uprooted as a globe-shaped form,
> meditate at the tip of the nose."
>
> In some translations "globe-shaped form" is rendered "amassed form." Therefore the five mandala winds, whose natures are the five wisdoms and which flow individually through both channels, become as one amassed form, which is "uprooted" or "led" through the avadhūtī. "Tip of the nose" refers to the cakras, and therefore "tip of the nose" here refers to examining, or meditating, in the center of the navel cakra.[276]

Similarly Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations*, when explaining the meaning of just this one verse, which begins "Breath, the nature of five wisdoms," says very clearly:

> This talks of the third branch. The five wisdoms from the line "Breath, the nature of five wisdoms" are the five buddhas, Akṣobhya and so forth, referring to the five aggregates of consciousness and so forth, which are phenomena of the *lalanā* mandalas. Breath, which is of their nature, is in the left nostril. Here the term "five elements" refers to the element of earth and so forth, phenomena of the *rasanā* mandalas. Breath, which is of their nature, is in the right nostril. "Globe-shaped," from the line "uprooted as a globe-shaped form," refers to the life winds of the right and left mandalas together as one in the avadhūtī. That wind is "uprooted as a globe-shaped form," and the "nose" of the phrase "tip of the nose" refers to the centers of the navel, heart, throat, forehead, and crown lotuses. Having uprooted the winds, "meditate at the tip of the nose" refers to the meditation, which is in the center of the navel but not on the left and right lotus petals.[277]

The meaning of most of this passage is similar to that expressed by the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* passage. The meaning of the lines from "the nose of the phrase," [421] up to "which is in the center of the navel but not on the left and right lotus petals" is that the first part, from "the nose" up to "crown lotuses," identifies the nose of the phrase "tip of the nose." The "winds," or life-sustaining upper winds, that flow through the left and right channels are "uprooted," or led, solely through the pathway of the dhūtī and meditated upon in the dhūtī in the center of the "tip of the nose," or navel cakra. From where are the winds led? From the nostrils, down through the dhūtī, to the center of the crown-channel lotus, through the forehead, throat, and heart lotuses and as far as the dhūtī at the center of the lotus of the navel cakra. The winds are not led through the "left and right lotus petals" and left and right channels.

This rough explanation of the scriptural description of the purpose of vase yoga focused on the dhūtī leads to the second outline:

The actual focus and method of the meditation

This is under four headings:

1. The order of drawing the upper and lower winds
2. The pathways from where winds are drawn
3. Mental placement on the winds drawn and brought together
4. Duration of meditation

The order of drawing the upper and lower winds

Notes on Kālacakra says:

> Ordinarily, when life-sustaining wind leaves from the upper opening, downwardly expelling wind leaves from the lower opening. When life-sustaining wind enters, downwardly expelling wind enters and reaches as far as the navel. Therefore it is possible to bring them together and bind them simultaneously.[278]

However, in the *Guhyasamāja Completion Stage*,[279] it says that the upper and lower winds are drawn one after the other. Whatever the case, here they are to be drawn one after the other. The place of meditation, posture, and position of eyes are arranged as they were in vajra recitation. When drawing in the winds, the upper, life-sustaining wind must be drawn in first if you do not have the instructions for preventing the emission of bodhicitta. If you draw in the lower, downwardly expelling wind first, there is a danger of bodhicitta emission, which must be avoided. If you have the instruction on the prevention of bodhicitta emission, it is taught that drawing in the lower wind first is acceptable.

The pathways from where winds are drawn

For the upper, life-sustaining wind, the mouth is closed, [422] and with one of the yogas of "taking from above," "taking from below," or *yogama*, the wind is slowly drawn through both nostrils and pulled down the dhūtī until it reaches the center of the navel cakra. There it is focused on and added to without allowing it to stray upward. After that the lower, downwardly expelling wind is drawn up through the dhūtī from the two lower

orifices to the center of the navel cakra, where it is to be focused upon. Both winds are held and added to without being allowed to stray up or down.

Mental placement on the winds drawn and brought together

The life-sustaining upper wind and downwardly expelling lower winds are drawn through the dhūtī as far as the navel. This unites the two winds inside the dhūtī at the center of the navel cakra, where the dhūtī is constricted by the knots of the right and left channels. These united winds are then the focus of a single-pointed placement of mind. The purpose of focusing on the winds themselves in vase yoga is found in the quote beginning "The look of Vighnantaka," which explains that prāṇāyāma is practiced with the look of Vighnantaka. The definitive Vighnantaka, or *amṛtavarta,* is said to be the winds. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> "The images of *amṛtavarta*" refers to the winds using provisional language.[280]

The prāṇāyāma vase yoga taught here is performed after vajra recitation, and the measure of vajra recitation completion is that just by focusing on the vajra recitation objects of meditation, the winds are stopped from flowing in the left and right channels and move constantly within the central channel. Because of this, empty-form signs of the winds having entered the central channel will appear without fail and in the correct order. When vajra recitation has been mastered and the yogi begins to engage in the practice of vase yoga, a little vajra recitation is first performed to bring the winds into the central channel, after which the upper wind is slowly led down through the central channel. The reason for this is that the tantra states that external wind is drawn in and moves through the nostrils:

> Mouth too is closed, and from the two nostrils
> all outer wind is drawn in by the power of prāṇāyāma.[281]

If wind enters through the nostrils, it has to then move through the central channel and in order for the winds to move through the central channel, the first moments of vase yoga must be preceded [423] by a vajra recitation that brings the winds to the central channel.

The mind is single-pointedly placed upon the upper and lower winds brought together inside the dhūtī at the center of the navel cakra. Wherever the mind and winds dwell within the dhūtī at the navel, there an empty-form Kālacakra will appear by its own volition unconceived by the mind. Therefore any practice that involves drawing down mind and winds, indivisibly united, in order to merge them with this Kālacakra empty form makes no sense. From the branch of meditative absorption onward, the appearances of the primordial clear-light mind and its special empty forms are no longer separate subjects and objects and appear indivisibly as one, thereby enabling self-pride to be assigned to the special empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace. Similarly, in all instances from prāṇāyāma onward, wherever mind and winds are focused within the central channel, there mind and winds will enter, thereby enabling a natural, uncontrived self-pride to be assigned to each of the special empty forms that arise there. The special causes of this are the ability to place a natural uncontrived self-pride in the main deity developed during generation-stage practices and similar concentration practices developed in the branch of meditative absorption. The teachings here on vase yoga are for the special disciples of the tantra, those "jewellike persons" who have undertaken all preceding practices of the generation and completion stages. Beginners in vase yoga who have not accomplished these previous practices should learn vase yoga methods from the teachings of the gurus.

Duration of meditation

Meditation on the winds held together should continue until the head begins to hurt, until the yogi sees his body encircled by light, or until the heart starts to jump. If meditation continues after these signs appear, there is a danger of death. If one dies under these circumstances, what happens? If death occurs, the yogi should place concentration one-pointedly on the empty forms, and by doing so he will actualize a realm of great bliss. This is what will actually occur. However the previous advice is given to avoid gaining the bad reputation of being a yogi who meditates on the path and then dies. [424] Verse 121 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> Prāṇāyāma grants fruits of complete equalized bliss,
> desirable for as long as the head is.
> Beyond that it produces the undesirable, the fear of death,

cause of definite destruction of aggregates.
To leave through the opening at the crown
without doubt joins one to a place of great bliss.
Without aggregates, the yogi finds blissful peace,
but he has no reputation in the world.[282]

On this verse the *Great Commentary* says:

> When he sees the empty forms, the yogi performs prāṇāyāma "for as long as the head is," which means until the head begins to hurt. This will grant the fruits of equalized bliss. "Beyond that" means that going beyond the bounds of a painful head will produce "the undesirable, the fear of death," a cause of the loss of the aggregates. If, by the power of yoga, the prāṇāyāma moves through the opening at the crown, the yogi is joined "to a place of great bliss," meaning to the empty forms. "Without doubt" means definitely.

And further:

> "But he has no reputation in the world" means a reputation that "this yogi has died."[283]

Signs of accomplishment

The *Great Commentary* says:

> "In the center of the two winds meeting" means in the center at the navel, where the life wind and downward wind meet. "The arising and engaging in the objects by object-engagers" such as eyes and so forth at the navel is a topic that has been discussed previously. The word "object" is a without a grammatical case. "Apprehending the signs of smoke and so forth, also" is by way of the avadhūtī. The word "also" refers again to the navel.[284]

This passage, as previously explained, teaches that the life and downward winds are merged within the dhūtī at the center of the navel cakra. The winds that are the mounts of the six consciousnesses enter this union,

resulting in the severing of the six types of objects, form and so forth, from their object-engaging consciousnesses. This in turn produces a definite and ordered sequence of signs, such as smoke and so forth, and particularly the appearance of many saṃbhogakāya forms in the aspect of Kālacakra mother-and-father embrace within a hair-sized black line to which self-pride is assigned. This appears clearly in the midst of this union of life and downward winds.

Furthermore this union of life and downward winds ignites the caṇḍālī fire at the navel. This melts the bodhicitta element, which then falls, [425] and without emerging from the tip of the jewel, induces the four joys of descent and the four joys of stable ascent, in which the bodhicitta increases to reach to the forehead cakra. This great bliss is applied to aspected and nonaspected emptiness. These meditations are the primary signs of accomplishment, while seeing the colors of the channels and their winds are common signs.

How does the completion of vase yoga induce the four joys of descent? The *Great Commentary* says:

> Then, "when form is seen each day, the winds are to be halted" refers to the vase yoga. "Until mandalas of light are seen to encircle the entire body": these are within and from the forms previously mentioned.

This passage teaches the activity and measure of completion of prāṇāyāma vase yoga. The text continues:

> Then, devoid of the inferior sensation of the union of the two organs, "in six months, the meditator who is a beginner in *brahmacarya* conduct, enters the path of the mind" or mind of empty form "of equalized bliss," meaning unchanging bliss.[285]

The passage teaches that the jewellike persons or primary disciples of this tantra accomplish vase yoga and then strive in the paths of retention and recollection. After six months, even if they are at the stage of a beginner, those of *brahmacarya* conduct, meaning those who have not experienced the loss of bodhicitta, will come to the path of the mind of equalized or unchanging bliss that is devoid of desire for the inferior sensation of the

coupling of the two organs. This path of the mind is an attainment in which mind and the empty forms are indivisible. In short this passage is saying that if jewellike disciples who have completed vase yoga strive on the path for six months, they will achieve the branch of meditative concentration.

The continuation of the above passage, from "Next, full and perfect enlightenment by single instances" up to "at the crown all winds are ended. This is the twelfth,"[286] teaches how the instances of bliss increase to 21,600 and how these are responsible for "killing" the winds of karma at the six cakras, resulting in the attainment of the twelve levels.

The continuation of the passage, from "Therefore, until the blazing of *oḍa*"[287] until "bliss will increase," [426] teaches the development of the four joys in descent and ascent that occurs from the practice of vase yoga up to recollection.

It is clear that the blazing of the caṇḍālī fire melts the bodhicitta and induces the descent, but how is the ascent brought about? After "bliss will increase" the passage continues:

> "By the certainties of the gurus" means that from the previously taught halting of the winds comes an increase as far as the forehead and that "this is no surprise."

This means that it should come as no surprise that from the prior practice of the prāṇāyāma halting of the winds comes the stable ascent, wherein the bodhicitta increases from the secret place to the forehead. The reason for this is that the ability to draw up the bodhicitta is dependent upon the winds being "halted" in the central channel.

Prāṇāyāma enhancement ritual

Verse 119 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> If by withdrawal and so forth,
> the wishes of the mantra practitioner are not met,
> perform nāda meditation by wrathful means,
> and they will be accomplished by blocking the drop
> in the vajra jewel within the lotus.[288]

On this the *Great Commentary* says:

> Now wrathful yoga is taught. During withdrawal and so forth, when forms are seen but instances of the unchanging have not been generated, because the winds have not been bound, at that time meditate on the nāda, which will be explained, and by wrathful means bring the winds to the central channel. The bodhicitta drops in the lotus of wisdom are halted within the vajra jewel and are unmoving. By this is accomplished an instance of the unchanging. This is the wrathful yoga.[289]

This passage means that by the meditations of withdrawal, nondefinitive signs of smoke and so forth are seen, but the winds have not been bound in the central channel. Therefore an instance of the bliss that arises from the bodhicitta "unchanging," which means not falling from the opening of the vajra jewel, has not been generated. [427] When this happens, meditate on the nāda as it is explained in verse 196 of the "easy to understand" verses of the Method of Accomplishment chapter, beginning with the words "The śakti." With this wrathful yoga the winds are brought to the central channel, and when the yogi relies upon an activity mudrā consort, the winds within the yogi's vajra jewel, which is placed within the lotus of the wisdom consort, are halted by the force of being brought to the central channel. The bodhicitta does not move outside, and an instance of the unchanging or nonfalling bliss is created.

Therefore, once the winds have been moved into the central channel by the power of meditation, the yogi possesses the certainty of being able to hold the bodhicitta from emission by the power of the winds, and it becomes possible to induce the innate bliss through the power of the winds even from the branch of withdrawal. Therefore the phrase "instance of the unchanging" mentioned in the passage above is used to describe the bliss that arises from the bodhicitta being held at the tip of the jewel and prevented from falling, but it is not the definitive unchanging bliss. This can be understood from the lines "accomplished by blocking the drop in the vajra jewel" in the above verse.

The enhancement ritual can be dealt with under three headings:

1. When to perform it
2. The actual ritual
3. The creation of bliss from binding the winds

When to perform it

If the meditations of withdrawal and prāṇāyāma have produced many visible empty forms but there are no signs of the winds having entered the central channel, this enhancement ritual is to be performed because its enactment will bring the winds into the central channel. Moreover this ritual is specifically designed to bring winds into the central channel, because the tantra teaches that if bliss is not developed due to the winds not being bound in the central channel, wrathful means are employed to bring that about. Therefore there are two occasions when this ritual is to be performed. One is when the meditations of withdrawal are unable to bring the winds into the central channel. The other is when the meditations of prāṇāyāma, as indicated by the words "and so forth," are also unable to bring the winds to the central channel. If withdrawal has brought the winds into the central channel, it is impossible for the winds not to be brought into the central channel during prāṇāyāma. Therefore prāṇāyāma enhancement is necessary when the winds have not entered the central channel during withdrawal.

If this wrathful yoga brings the winds into the central channel, [428] then isn't it acceptable to perform it at the very outset of practice? If the yogas of withdrawal and prāṇāyāma are first performed gently and over a long time but do not produce results, then this ritual is to be performed. However, if forceful methods are used from the beginning, not only will the yogi not be able to bring the winds to the central channel, but many obstructions will be created. Therefore such a practice is unsuitable at the outset. Practicing a meditation such as withdrawal over a long time makes the winds very pliant, and even if wrathful methods are employed at that time, no obstruction will be created.

The actual ritual

This is taught by verse 196 in the "easy to understand" verses of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> The śakti from the center of the navel to another place
> travel a distance of twelve and a distance of "part,"
> they are halted at the navel,
> together with the pure lightninglike,

drawn up in the form of a stick.
They travel from cakra to cakra and disappear,
moving through the central channel.
At the crown opening, by wrathful method,
a needlelike sensation on the outer skin.[290]

To explain this verse a little: *nāda* translated means "mere sound," which changes the phrase[291] to "meditate on the sound." The "sound" is the sound of *hūṃ*. The way this *hūṃ* is meditated on is as follows. Feet are placed in vajra position, arms in vajra-fist position are crossed across the heart, and the head is slightly bent. "Śakti" here means the life-sustaining wind. "Another place" in the line "From the center of the navel to another place" refers to the nostrils. From here to the outside, the earth-element wind travels a distance of twelve fingerwidths, the water-element wind a distance of thirteen, fire-element wind fourteen, air-element wind fifteen, and the space-element wind travels a distance of "part,"[292] or sixteen, fingerwidths. These life-sustaining winds are inhaled violently, not through the mouth but through the nostrils, and descend through the central channel as far as the navel. The innate tone of the winds is visualized as the sound of *hūṃ*. At the same time, from either of the two lower orifices, the downwardly expelling wind, similar in color to pure lightning, is drawn up through the pathway of the central channel and is upright "in the form of a stick." These two winds are "halted at the navel," meaning held together at the navel. From the navel cakra to the crown cakra, these two winds "disappear" from the left and right channels [429] and penetrate instead the centers of succeeding cakras, moving through the central channel. When they reach the opening of the crown cakra by "wrathful method," meaning moving by the force of the wind, and the skin on the outside of the head feels as if it is being pricked by needles, this is a sign that the winds have been brought into the central channel by these forceful means.

That is the ritual for bringing the winds into the central channel. However, if consciousness transference is to be performed at this point, the tantra continues:

At that time the downward wind, by supreme wrathful method,
is urged into the upward path, and if the two winds are blocked,
they travel to the supreme city from the crown opening.[293]

"At that time," meaning when wrathful methods have produced needlelike sensations, the downward wind is urged into the upper avadhūtī path by "supreme wrathful method," meaning by the power of even more forceful winds. This blocks the winds from flowing through the left and right channels, and instead they travel to the supreme city of the ḍākinī from the central channel at the crown opening.

The creation of bliss from the binding of winds

Generally, in most highest yoga tantras, development of clear-light mind and innate bliss is mainly taught in the completion stage. The *Kālacakra Tantra* and *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries,* which teach in accord with Kālacakra thinking, teach methods for the development of empty forms and great innate bliss once the winds have entered the dhūtī. The development of empty forms is a limb of or method for the development of unchanging bliss. Therefore the *Kālacakra Tantra* teaches mainly unchanging bliss and, as a method for its attainment, the development of empty forms. That is the reason for categorizing Kālacakra as mother tantra. Therefore these empty forms cannot be just any appearance of empty forms but must be those brought about by the winds having entered the dhūtī. So for the empty forms and the innate bliss of a definitive completion stage to occur, the winds must have entered the central channel.

Therefore, if the winds are brought into the central channel by this wrathful method, [430] the bodhicitta element is held by the power of the wind and does not fall from the opening of the vajra jewel. From the achievement of that ability on the path of withdrawal until the attainment of the ability to induce the unchanging bliss by reliance upon a mahāmudrā consort, one engages in union with an activity mudrā consort. The drops are held in the vajra jewel, and from the bliss of nonemission comes the development of the bliss of descent and ascent. The same is true for a wisdom mudrā consort.

Valid cognition

The cognition is a valid, nonconceptual, direct mental perception focused on the winds within the central channel.

Purification divisions

The *Great Commentary,* on verse 115 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "Prāṇāyāma is the sword family"[294] refers to the aggregate of mental formations.[295] "In ten aspects" refers to the ten mandalas left and right combined as one.[296]

The six phenomena of the mental formation aggregate group are to be purified into a state of nonobscuration. There are ten divisions—the ten mandala winds on the right and left—which are halted and combined as one in the central channel.

Results

Immediate results are taught in verse 118 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> Purified by prāṇāyāma,
> divorced from the paths of sun and moon,
> the yogi is praised by the bodhisattvas.[297]

Because the winds move through the central channel divorced from the moon and sun channels on the left and right, the yogi is praised by the bodhisattvas and will receive a prophecy of enlightenment from the buddhas. By mastering the winds, the yogi gains mastery over the bodhisattvas. The definitive meaning of this is that "bodhisattvas" refers to the six organs, and these organs have become celestial eyes and so forth and are able to see hidden phenomena. The *Great Commentary* says:

> "Purified by prāṇāyāma" means that when the yogi is "divorced from the paths of the sun and moon" and is constantly within the central channel, the yogi will be purified by prāṇāyāma and therefore is "praised by the bodhisattvas."[298]

[431] For the final results, mental formations, wind element, the nose, touch, the anus, and the discharge of excrement are all purified to a state

of nonobscuration and transformed into a group of six consisting of Amoghasiddhi and so on.

This has been an explanation of the branch of prāṇāyāma, as taught by the following vajra words:

> Know the spontaneous, profound vajra recitation performed
> with mantra and wind inseparable in the Rāhu path.
> Know how the life and downward winds, by vaselike meditation,
> are in the central channel in the form of embrace.[299]

33. The Yoga of Retention

The branch of retention: Stabilizing or keeping the winds in the dhūtī

This is under six main outlines:

1. The meaning of the term *retention*
2. The time for retention meditation
3. The meditation
4. Valid cognition
5. Purification divisions
6. Results

The meaning of the term retention

This branch is called *retention* because the winds are brought into the drops in the central channel at the center of six or five cakras and held or retained there. The *Vajrapāṇi Commentary* says:

> *Retention* means that the winds of the earth, water, fire, and air mandalas enter the navel, the heart, the throat, and the forehead and, without emerging, are held in the drops. This is the branch of retention.[300]

Filled with Good Qualities also says:

> *Retention* means that the winds of the mandalas of earth, water, fire, and air enter the navel, heart, throat, and forehead and, without emerging, enter the drops. This is the branch of retention.[301]

These two passages only mention four cakras, so how is it possible to talk of six or five cakras? The four mentioned in these two passages are for illustration only. [432] That they actually refer to six cakras will be understood from later explanations.

The time for retention meditation

When the power of prāṇāyāma has gathered the life and downward winds in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra and combined them as one, and vase yoga has been completed; when the external sign of the life-sustaining and downwardly expelling winds combining—the two breaths' lack of smell—has manifested; when the inner sign—the fierce caṇḍālī fire—and the secret sign—when one of the winds is bound, the other is bound also—have both arisen, then this is the time to meditate on retention. If the two winds have not combined in the central channel at the cakras, then the basis for retention, wherein the winds in the cakra centers neither enter nor leave, is not there.

The meditation

This has five headings:

1. Identifying the path of retention
2. Divisions
3. The way to meditate
4. Experiences gained from meditation
5. Incidental topic: Attaining the nectar of immortality

Identifying the path of retention

After the downward and life winds have been combined within the dhūtī at the center of the navel cakra by the power of prāṇāyāma, the winds are prevented from entering or leaving, and these mounts of the mind are stabilized within the drops that are inside the dhūtī at the centers of the six cakras. From this there arises an indivisibility of empty forms and great bliss. *Filled with Good Qualities* says:

> "Gradually the winds disappear and are within the drops" means that within the bodhicitta drops, the life winds, the mounts of the mind, are one with emptiness.[302]

Divisions

Retention has six branches corresponding to the winds being held in the central channel at the center of the six cakras, for instance the secret cakra. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 115 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "Retention is Ratnasambhava" refers to the aggregate of feeling. The retaining of the winds refers to their entering and leaving the lotuses of the navel, the heart, throat, forehead, and crown. In this way it has ten aspects.[303]

This passage adds the crown cakra to the four mentioned by the *Vajrapāṇi Commentary* to make five. [433] These same five are mentioned by Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations:*

> Retention at the lotuses of the navel, heart, throat, forehead, and crown.[304]

Also Sūryaśrī says in his *Filled with Good Qualities:*

> "The movements of both are destroyed" means that within the navel, heart, throat, forehead, and crown, there is no movement and no leaving.[305]

Although the secret cakra is not actually mentioned, the writings of Butön state:

> In the center of the five or six wheels of the navel and so forth.[306]

Also in the same text, in the section on divisions of retention, it says:

> The tantra talks of "The six branches of near accomplishment," which refer to the six vase yogas.[307]

On this, *Notes on Kālacakra* says:

> Although that is not the meaning of the quote from the tantra, it is acceptable to posit six kinds of retention in the six cakras.[308]

The way to meditate

This is under four headings. The first three, place of meditation, posture, and eye positioning, are the same as in prāṇāyāma.

Focus of the meditation

Meditation is focused on the "sphere" of wind that is the combination of the life and downward winds. As it says in the *Kālacakrapāda Transmission:*

> The focus is the wind of bliss.[309]

The way mind is placed on this object is that with mind and wind rolled together as one, the mind is one-pointedly focused on the combined winds concentrated within the drops in the dhūtī at the centers of the cakras. The *Root Tantra* states:

> Placing the vajra in the lotus,
> the winds enter the drops.[310]

Also the *Later Guhyasamāja* says, "Breath, the nature of the five jewels" and so on. The meaning of this quote was explained by the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* in the section on vase yoga and also needs to be understood here, because the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* applies the meaning of these lines from the tantra to both prāṇāyāma and retention. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary*, after the explanation of these lines from the tantra, says:

> Like this, within these locations of the drops, the winds, in globe-shaped form, are halted. That is retention.[311]

[434] This passage is saying that in the drops of body, speech, mind, and gnosis located inside the dhūtī at the centers of the cakras, the winds are combined in a sphere or globe-shaped form and are halted from flowing through the left and right channels. Combined with these drops, the mind dwells one-pointedly upon the winds, and this is the way to meditate on the branch of retention.

What is the procedure of the meditation? As the notes and writings of the dharma master Butön state, the meditation begins at the center of the navel cakra.[312] There the "sphere" that is the combination of the life and downward

winds is held by vase yoga as an indivisible entity of drop, mind, and winds inside the central channel at the center of the sixty-four-petal earth-mandala navel cakra. Expelling the wind outside is done gently and without effort. Because of this, in the manner of earth dissolving into water, the focus of meditation is then held at the heart, in the same way it was held at the navel. In the manner of water dissolving into fire, the focus moves to the throat. In the manner of fire dissolving into air, it moves to the forehead. In the manner of air dissolving into space, it moves to the crown, and in the manner of space dissolving into gnosis, the meditation moves to the secret cakra. This can be explained in more detail. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> From blocking the left and right pathways, the winds constantly flow within the central avadhūtī.[313]

As this quote indicates, the accomplishment of the practice of vajra recitation ensures that the winds enter and leave only from the central channel during the one-pointed meditation on vajra recitation. These winds travel from the navel to the outside when leaving and as far as the navel when entering. Therefore the yogi who has accomplished the practice of vajra recitation has mastered the ability, during the single-pointed session on vajra recitation, to move the winds between the navel and the nostrils[314] solely by way of the central channel. The winds only move up and down through the dhūtī at the centers of the cakras. Therefore, on the accomplishment of vajra recitation, the channel knots at the cakras must have loosened, because if they had not, the winds would not flow up and down solely through the dhūtī at the centers of the cakras.

Therefore, when vajra recitation is mastered and before the commencement [435] of vase yoga, a little vajra recitation is performed to get the winds to enter the central channel. This is followed by the life and downward winds being drawn from above and below. This is not just imagined or visualized; the winds are actually drawn through the central channel to combine at the navel. This vase-yoga meditation is continued session after session to eventually produce the outer, inner, and secret signs. The caṇḍālī fire at the navel blazes up to melt the bodhicitta and create the four joys of descent and stable ascent. After the completion of vase yoga, retention meditation is performed. At this point the upper life wind and the lower downward wind have been drawn from above and below into the central channel and combined as one in the navel cakra. At this point these winds and channels are actually seen. This spherelike amalgamation of life and downward

winds is combined with the drop that creates the waking state and that is located in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra. The mind is single-pointedly placed on this and held there determinedly, with the winds not being allowed to stray up or down. This is practiced repeatedly, and at first the combined winds will not naturally stay in place without effort. However the time will come when the two winds mixed with the drops will remain there naturally without effort. When that occurs, it is meditated upon and eventually stabilized. Then the meditation moves on to the heart cakra, as in the procedure explained above.

By the power of meditation the winds enter the central channel during prāṇāyāma and abide there during retention. At all times during these meditations, the clear-light mind is directly experienced, and various empty forms appear. In particular, wherever the mind and winds are held, there an empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace, indivisible from the clear-light mind, unimputed and unconceived, will appear of its own accord. This is a natural cause-and-effect process. In the section on vajra recitation it is not taught that the caṇḍālī fire blazes due to the practice of vajra recitation. However it will blaze on the completion of vase yoga, causing the bodhicitta to melt and to bring about the four joys of descent and ascent. Here, in the section on retention, it is taught that the four joys of descent and ascent are greater than those of vase yoga. [436] At these two times, when the four joys are generated, the clear-light mind becomes a mind of great bliss. This great-bliss mind is placed one-pointedly on the noninherent nature of the empty forms that arise simultaneously with this mind. Within this state the empty forms clearly appear, and they too are single-pointedly focused upon.

Some say that when the upper wind is drawn in, the winds and mind are made indivisible from the empty forms and are then drawn to the location of the drop at the center of the cakras. However, when the upper wind is drawn inside, empty forms do not appear, so how could they be made indivisible from the winds and mind?

Experiences gained from meditation

Sūryaśrī Jñāna says:

> "Selves, powers, and the jewel all cease;
> holding to this is retention."

> To explain this in greater detail, "Selves" refers to the objects of form and so forth. "Powers" refers to the eyes and so forth. Selves and powers cease and dissolve. Then the jewel, which is the basis for the objects and sense powers and refers to the jewel of the mind, ceases together with prāṇāyāma and disappears. This is to be focused upon. That is retention.[315]

This means that the situation after the completion of retention is that the "selves," or objects of form and so forth, and the sense powers of the eyes and so forth have ceased and dissolved. Then, after this dissolution, "the jewel, which is the basis for the objects and sense powers and refers to the jewel of the mind, ceases together with prāṇāyāma and disappears." Here *prāṇāyāma* means "winds." This means that the clear light arises as a vast emptiness. The master Butön says that if a definitive clear-light emptiness arises, it is not possible to be without fear, and that one should meditate well armed with instructions.[316]

Furthermore, when the life and downward winds are combined at the navel, the caṇḍālī fire blazes, and all food or drink taken becomes a fire offering to the caṇḍālī fire. Its nourishment improves the body's complexion. All waste in the body is burnt away by the caṇḍālī fire, and excrement and urine are no longer passed. The body becomes light and of good odor and color. From this time onward one cannot be harmed by untimely death. [437] The *Kālacakrapāda Transmission* says:

> No eating, no hunger;
> even if eating, all is digested.
> Downward winds do not descend,
> but bliss descends.
> Great powers, great stomach,
> nonconceptual bliss
> in body, speech, and so on.[317]

At first this meditation can only be maintained with effort, and under its own power it will not last. However with prolonged meditation there comes a point from which the downward and life winds combined in the dhūtī remain there of their own accord. From that time onward they can remain for a day, half a month, a month, six months, a year, and even beyond a year. In these periods the bodhicitta can be held immobile at the

forehead, throat, heart, navel, secret area, and jewel tip. This is explained in *Notes on Kālacakra.*

Incidental topic: Attaining the nectar of immortality

Verse 193 of the "easy to understand" verses of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> Locked in vajra position, teeth not touching, mouth open,
> gather in outside air, together with nectar,
> bringing them to the center of the navel.
> All torments, hunger, and thirst will be destroyed,
> and in the supreme body all poison also disappears.
> Surrounded by the vowels of the forehead white drop,
> this practice is accomplished by emanating nectar.[318]

The body is locked in the vajra position. The upper and lower teeth do not touch each other. The mouth is slightly open. Air is gathered from outside and is brought to the center of the navel cakra together with nectar gathered from the uvula.[319] This will destroy all torments of fever, hunger, and thirst. Together with an attainment such as the branch of retention, all poison and untimely death, which is indicated by the word "also," will disappear from the body of the supreme yogi. This is the supreme nourishment.

What is the uvula nectar? In the center of the sixteen-petal forehead cakra on a moon mandala is the white drop completely encircled by vowels from which nectar descends. [438] The tongue is turned upward touching the uvula, and one meditates on the nectar falling from the uvula. With practice the mouth becomes filled with saliva, which increases in sweetness until finally it develops the supreme nectarlike taste and becomes the supreme nourishment. It is taught that if this is performed too often during one session, the nectar falling from the uvula can cause illness. Therefore this should be performed gradually.

Valid cognition

This is taught as being a direct and mental valid cognition.

Purification divisions

The six phenomena of the feeling aggregate group are the phenomena to be purified. At each of the five cakras the winds are divided into those that enter and those that leave. Therefore there are ten aspects. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 115 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "Again ten aspects: retention is Ratnasambhava" refers to the aggregate of feeling. The retaining of the winds refers to their entering and leaving the lotuses of the navel, heart, throat, forehead, and crown. In this way it has ten aspects.[320]

Results

The maras and afflictions that are equated with the movement of the winds in the right and left channels have been weakened, and therefore untimely death is no longer a threat. Winds no longer enter or leave, and so the mind engages the "ten powers," or empty forms. These are the immediate results. The *Great Commentary* on verse 118 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter says:

> "Maras, afflictions, and so forth weaken, and the ten powers are engaged" refers to the mind apprehending the empty forms. "This is by the power of retention" means by the power of the winds no longer coming and going and being combined as one.[321]

The final results are that the feeling aggregate, the fire element, the eye sense power, the element of taste, the hands, and the activity of going all become free from obscuration, and take the form of Ratnasambhava and so forth.

This has been an extensive explanation of the branch of retention as taught by these vajra words:

> Know how winds enter the drops by retention
> and emanations depart and withdraw into the pure body.[322]

34. The Yoga of Recollection

Branch of recollection: The actual creator of unchanging bliss

[439] This is under six main headings:

1. Meaning of the term
2. Time of the meditation
3. The meditation
4. Valid cognition
5. Purification divisions
6. Results

Meaning of the term

Oneself as the empty-form father-and-mother Kālacakra that originally arose from the accomplishments and stabilizations developed by the practices of withdrawal and meditative absorption is now to be recollected or recalled as an actual phenomenon. The three-world empty forms, like forms in a clairvoyant's mirror, that were emanated by this father-and-mother Kālacakra in space are also recollected—hence the term *recollection.* The *Later Guhyasamāja* says:

> That meditated upon is recalled
> and its forms perfectly emanate;
> know this as *recollection.*
> Illumination is created there.[323]

The meaning of this verse is explained by Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations:*

> "That meditated upon" refers to that stabilized by the branches of withdrawal and meditative absorption. By nature it illuminates

> the three worlds, and it is a conventional truth. That is to be recalled and by doing so, "its forms perfectly emanate." "Its forms" refers to conventional forms, while "perfectly emanate" means seeing them as pervading all realms of space. "Know this as recollection" means that seeing the three worlds of the three times should be understood as the branch of recollection. Because of that it was taught. "Illumination is created there" means the illumination of the three realms is created "there" in the branch of recollection.[324]

To explain this passage a little, "That meditated upon" refers to an empty-form real[325] mother-and-father Kālacakra in embrace arising from the primary accomplishments and stabilizations of the branches of withdrawal and meditative absorption. It radiates light capable of illuminating the three worlds, and itself is a conventional truth. This is to be recalled or recollected, and therefore this branch is known as recollection. [440] "Its forms perfectly emanate" refers to being in the form of a conventional-truth empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace that emanates and pervades the realms of space, and that this too should be regarded as recollection. This is to be focused on or recollected. "Know this as recollection" means that, furthermore, seeing the three-world empty forms of past, present, and future, which were stabilized previously by withdrawal and meditative absorption, should also be known as the branch of recollection. Because of these reasons it was taught. "Illumination is created there" means that the well-illumined empty forms of the three worlds are actual phenomena and not just appearances in the mind, and that they are created "there" in the branch of recollection. Therefore the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* talks of signs arising when first meditating on empty forms and of signs arising at the time of accomplishment. Concerning the latter:

> Here is actual smoke and fire, capable of performing the function of burning. It is the same with the rain of saffron, flowers, jewels, or gold.[326]

The "time of accomplishment" referred to by this passage begins from the attainment of recollection, and this can be known from the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra,* as quoted above, and its commentary. Furthermore "accomplishment" must refer to actual creation as opposed to mere appearances in

the mind. Otherwise it would follow that there would be no difference between the empty forms of the branches of withdrawal and meditative absorption and the empty forms of the branch of recollection.

Time of the meditation

The time for meditation is when retention has been completed and the bodhicitta can be held and kept at each of the cakras without being allowed to fall. When this attainment is reached, one enters the recollection meditation.

The meditation

This is under four headings:

1. Definition
2. Divisions
3. Actual meditation
4. How to make use of the two mudrā consorts

Definition

The branch of retention is completed, and one enters union with one of the two types of consorts. [441] This ignites the caṇḍālī fire, whose appearance manifests as empty forms in the space of the three realms. In particular, the yogi single-pointedly recollects the empty-form Kālacakra in father-and-mother embrace, now as an actual phenomenon and located within the dhūtī at the center of the navel cakra. The blazing caṇḍālī fire dissolves the element and produces the four joys of descent. The clear-light mind in the nature of these joys is divorced from all conception and is one-pointedly immersed in this special empty form as well as in its emptiness of any inherent existence. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 117 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> The appearances of the caṇḍālī fire are in the space of the three worlds. This is recollection.[327]

This quote is saying that empty-form appearances of the blazing caṇḍālī fire manifest in "the space of the three worlds," or realms, and that these empty

forms are to be recollected, hence the term *recollection.* The text here merely says "in the space" and is not that specific. However the *Great Commentary* says on verse 119:

> "Recollection is excellently pure." Recollection, as spoken of here, refers to a mind embracing the forms and divorced from all conception.[328]

This is saying that the nature of recollection is a clear-light mind "embracing" or inseparable from empty forms, divorced from all conception. This quote is clearly referring to empty forms "in the space." How are these forms described? The *Great Commentary* continues:

> Therefore, when they become pure, at that time there are "mandalas of pure light." The word "also" refers to the five rays of light radiating and traveling through the pores. "From the gnosis form" means from the empty forms.[329]

To explain this passage a little: The nature of recollection is a clear-light mind divorced from all conception that embraces or is indivisible from an actual empty-form mother-and-father Kālacakra. Therefore, when the branch of retention is completed, the empty forms, which at that time are mere appearances to the yogi's mind, are purified and are endowed with "mandalas of pure light" to become actual and definitive empty forms. [442] The word "also"[330] refers to a special empty-form deity that is within this coarse body[331] and from which the five light rays shine. These rays radiate and travel out through the pores of the coarse body. From where do these light rays radiate? "From the gnosis form," meaning from that empty form. All this is clearly taught in the above passage.

Similarly the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> In recollection the desired deity is seen in the form of an image, free from conception. From it many rays of light radiate in the form of mandalas of light. From this image many forms emanate in the nature of the three realms. This is spoken of as the branch of recollection.[332]

The meaning of this passage should be understood in the way the previous passage was explained.

What is the caṇḍālī fire mentioned in the line "The appearances of the caṇḍālī fire "? This refers to the caṇḍālī fire, seen and experienced by the yogi, that blazes in the dhūtī at the navel, brought on by the power of the completion of the branch of retention. "The appearances of the caṇḍālī fire are in the space of the three worlds" means that the blazing caṇḍālī fire produces the special empty form of an actual Kālacakra in mother-and-father union endowed with mandalas of light. These light mandalas emanate countless mahāmudrā buddha light rays of empty forms, like images in a clairvoyant's mirror. "The appearances of the caṇḍālī fire" refer to this and to the various empty forms emanated by that special empty form.

Furthermore, concerning the line "Achieving the image of the deity,"[333] the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Concerning "Achieving the image of the deity," the power of retention causes the yogi to see, divorced from all conception, the caṇḍālī fire blazing at the navel. Like forms in a clairvoyant's mirror, countless mahāmudrā buddha light-ray clouds are emanated by the mandalas of light. This is said to be the practice of the branch of [443] recollection, a meditation on caṇḍālī fire upon the completion of retention.[334]

Divisions

There are three divisions. Those of sharp intelligence enter union with as many mahāmudrā consorts as there are atoms in Mount Meru. Those of a middling intelligence enter union with as many wisdom mudrā consorts as there are goddesses in the mandala. Those of low intelligence enter union with an activity mudrā consort.

Actual meditation

This is under two main headings:

1. The meditation common to all three types of persons
2. The meditations of each type

The meditation common to all three types of persons

Up to the completion of retention, empty forms such as the father-and-mother Kālacakra exist only as appearances to the mind and not as actual phenomena. Therefore recollection represents the accomplishment of actual empty forms. By igniting the special caṇḍālī fire at the navel, great bliss is generated. This mind of great bliss focuses on and meditates upon the empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace that has appeared in the dhūtī at the navel. By the power of this meditation, the appearance of this Kālacakra mother and father becomes purer and purer and transforms into an actual empty-form Kālacakra mother and father. The five light rays emerge from this deity form, pass through the pores of this coarse body, and radiate outside. Also countless actual deity forms emerge from this inner deity form in identical aspect and pervade the reaches of space. [444]

The great bliss arising from the the special caṇḍālī fire at the navel is produced in three ways: by focusing the mind single-pointedly on the caṇḍālī fire blazing at the completion of retention, by reliance on an activity mudrā consort, and by reliance on a wisdom mudrā consort. The three types of person develop the great bliss by relying on these three methods. The assertion that the three types of person will develop the great bliss by relying on an activity mudrā consort, is taught in the "easy to understand" seventy-third verse of the Gnosis chapter:

> To increase this innate bliss of the conqueror,
> first rely upon an activity mudrā consort;
> then create the sun form, with body, face,
> legs, crown, all limbs complete;
> in a flash of lightning resemblance,
> arises a definitive creator of unmoving bliss,
> all features complete.[335]

The meaning of this is as follows. In the first five branches, from the attainment of the ability to hold the bodhicitta element and prevent it from falling by the power of the winds up to the ability to generate the supreme and unchanging bliss, one first relies upon an activity mudrā consort in order to increase the innate bliss. After that, in recollection, a deity form is created endowed with the rays of the sun, with body, face, legs, crown,

and so forth, all completed and in the aspect of Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace. The consort of this union is the definitive mahāmudrā consort, the creator of the unmoving drop and unchanging bliss, created in the great bliss of the blazing caṇḍālī fire resembling a "flash of lightning." She is an actually created consort with "all features complete."

The reason why all three types of person—sharp, middling, and dull—must rely upon the activity mudrā consort in the first five branches is as follows. In those five branches one practices on the path in order to prevent bodhicitta emission, to develop a nonchanging bliss[336] and to attain similitude and definitive empty forms. For these attainments one relies, with skillful means, on an activity mudrā consort, and having habituated to nonemission, [445] one must develop nonfalling bodhicitta and nonchanging bliss as well as empty forms, which are the objective aspects of that bliss. The *Great Commentary,* in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary, says:

> By mudrā consort yoga, instinctual emission is transformed into instinctual nonemission, like mercury and fire. This is spoken of by the Buddha in verse 224 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the king of tantras:[337]
>
> "Fire is enemy of quicksilver;
> without fire quicksilver is never bound.
> Unbound it will not create gold;
> no gold is of no use to man.
> Similarly, not in union with a consort,
> the yogi's mind is forever unbound.
> Unbound, his body is not penetrated,
> a body not penetrated does not grant innate bliss."[338]

Therefore the meditation common to all three types of persons is under five headings:

1. Place of meditation
2. Meditation posture
3. Position of the eyes
4. Actual meditation
5. Signs of accomplishment

Place of meditation

The "easy to understand" seventy-fourth verse of the Gnosis chapter says:

> With these four mudrā consorts giving fruits of unchanging bliss,
> in towns, in isolation, in cemeteries, in unclean and clean places,
> in houses, and in temples, at all times in the joy of joys,
> free from worldly paths, engaging in the accepted and unaccepted,
> with food and drink giving bodily strength and well-being,
> the yogi should meditate.[339]

The yogi meditates in these places in extreme isolation.

Meditation posture

It is taught that the posture used in withdrawal and meditative absorption when inducing bliss by inner focus is an acceptable posture here.

Position of the eyes

The eyes are single-pointedly focused on the empty-form Kālacakra mother and father that has arisen in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra. The *Guhyasamāja Tantra* says:

> The yogi, striving in accomplishment, [446]
> meditates on the form of the deity,[340]

These lines teach that at the time of the practice of recollection, which is the branch of accomplishment from among the four branches of approximation and accomplishment, the yogi looks at and meditates upon the form of the deity. Although in the actual meditation it is the clear-light mind in the nature of great bliss that looks and meditates, I think the eyes also should be positioned as if they were looking inside the central channel at the navel cakra.

Actual meditation

After the completion of retention, the three kinds of practitioners will ignite

the navel caṇḍālī fire by relying on either outer or inner causes. This causes the bodhicitta to melt and to induce the great bliss of descent and stable ascent. The clear-light mind develops into that bliss, focusing and meditating single-pointedly on the empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father aspect that has arisen in the central channel at the center of the navel cakra. At this time the empty form in this meditation is only an appearance and not an actuality. However, with prolonged meditation, that appearance is transformed in an actual empty-form Kālacakra mother-and-father deity. This moment represents the attainment of the actual path of recollection.

Signs of accomplishment

After the completion of retention, the outer cause of the two mudrā consorts and the inner cause of focusing and meditating single-pointedly on the combined life and downward winds as indivisible from the drop within the dhūtī at the navel cakra will produce signs that are mere appearances but in a more distinct form than previous signs. These range from those of smoke up to the empty-form Kālacakra mother and father. At those times the caṇḍālī fire at the navel blazes and the bodhicitta melts to induce the four joys of descent and stable ascent. These are the ordinary signs.

The clear-light mind of that period in the nature of bliss focuses and meditates single-pointedly upon the appearance that is the empty-form Kālacakra mother and father. This causes the empty-form deity appearance to transform into an actual form of a Kālacakra mother-and-father deity, encircled by mandalas of stainless light. From this form [447] light rays of five colors emerge and emanate through the pores of the coarse physical body. Countless more forms in identical deity aspect emanate as actual phenomena and pervade the reaches of space. The bliss of descent and stable ascent is developed from reliance upon the three kinds of mudrā consorts and experienced from the time of the development of the actual-phenomena empty forms up to the attainment of unchanging bliss. This is the actual path of recollection and the primary signs of accomplishment. The references for this are the passages from the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* and so on, which were explained previously.

How is the bliss of descent and stable ascent described? It arises from the creation of and desire for an actual mahāmudrā consort or, if a mahāmudrā consort has not been developed, from reliance upon an activity or wisdom mudrā consort. The special caṇḍālī fire at the navel melts the bodhicitta at

the crown, which descends to the forehead, and joy is experienced. Descending to the throat and to the heart, one experiences supreme joy. Falling from the heart to the secret place, one experiences special joy. Arriving at the tip of the jewel, one experiences innate joy. *A Short Teaching on Initiations* says:

> From the crown, the lotus of the head,
> fluid comes and there is joy;
> at throat and heart supreme joy.
> Then comes joy that is special joy,
> then various joys at the navel
> and at the secret lotus.
> From secret place to vajra jewel
> comes innate joy and the unmoving.[341]

The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Light rays of this gnosis burn the aggregates, spheres, sources, and so forth. They travel to the left and right channels, where they combine with the five aggregates of consciousness and so forth and the five mandalas of earth and so forth, and come to reside in the moon mandala at the forehead. Then gnosis light rays melt the moon, and the bodhicitta moves down in the form of a drop. In the lotuses of the throat, heart, navel, and secret place is joy, supreme joy, and joyless joy, [448] and at the tip of the vajra jewel is innate joy. Also they are of the nature of variety, ripening, rubbing, and being without characteristics.[342]

To explain this passage a little, gnosis light rays arise from focusing and meditating on the caṇḍālī fire itself or from the caṇḍālī fire that arises from reliance on one of the three mudrā consorts. These rays proceed to "burn the aggregates, spheres, sources, and so forth," meaning that these phenomena are scorched by the heat of the caṇḍālī fire. From these aggregates, spheres, and sources arises bodhicitta, which travels to the right and left channels. There it combines with the bodhicitta that is of the nature of the five aggregates of consciousness and so forth and of the nature of the mandalas of the five elements of earth and so forth, and comes to reside in the moon mandala, or bodhicitta, at the center of the forehead cakra. Again

the caṇḍālī fire blazes, and its gnosis light rays melt the moon, or bodhicitta, at the forehead. The bodhicitta, in the form of a drop, moves down from the forehead to the throat to produce joy. Moving from the throat to the heart, it produces the supreme joy and from the heart to the navel, joyless joy. Moving from the navel to the secret place and from there to the tip of the vajra jewel, it produces innate joy. Furthermore these four joys "are of the nature of variety, ripening, rubbing, and being without characteristics." After this line the text continues:

> In this way the sixteen parts are complete. At the tip of the jewel, meditation produces bliss. Such joy of nonemission is only an example. Its nature is bliss born from the two organs and therefore does not come to within even a ten-billionth part of the supreme unchanging bliss. Here, during the time of nonchanging bliss, the innate bliss is that of a child, and yogis should know it as an immediate result.[343]

[449] The meaning of this passage is as follows. The four joys are each divided into four to make sixteen, and "in this way the sixteen parts are complete." The bodhicitta reaches the tip of the vajra jewel, where it remains, and "meditation produces bliss." This is the nonchanging bliss of descent arising from the bodhicitta not falling from the opening of the vajra jewel and is produced in reliance upon an activity mudrā consort. Such bliss is only an example presented to illustrate the definitive unchanging bliss. By itself it could not illustrate even a fraction of unchanging bliss, because the "bliss born from the two organs does not come to within even a ten-billionth part of unchanging bliss." "Here" in the context of explaining Cakrasaṃvara in accord with the Kālacakra, "during the time of nonchanging bliss," compared to unchanging bliss, the nature of this innate joy of the four joys is that of a child, and yogis should know it as an immediate result of recollection.

The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* from "Light rays of this gnosis" up to "and yogis should know it as an immediate result," explains the formation of the deity form of recollection and the four joys in the context of meditation methods for developing the branch of meditative concentration, before which the unchanging bliss is not truly developed. Nevertheless all developments of four joys are illustrated by this description because they share similar characteristics. Therefore, whenever bliss is created by targeting the

winds and channels of the body or by relying on the two mudrā consorts, the drops that are located in all parts of the body are first gathered at the forehead or crown and then brought down to the channel of the vajra jewel.

The meditations of each type of person

[450] Recollection meditation for those of high intelligence is under two headings:

1. Meditation for attaining the recollection deity form
2. Meditation after attaining the recollection deity form

Meditation for attaining the recollection deity form

The meditation place, meditation posture, and position of eyes are as explained in the above section on the common meditation. After the accomplishment of the branch of retention, the life and downward winds are combined at the navel, and so mental placement is primarily a single-pointed focus on the empty-form Kālacakra mother-and-father as just an appearance illumined by the light of the caṇḍālī fire in the center of the navel cakra. Constant meditation on this form, together with enhancement by relying on the two types of mudrā consorts, will ignite the special caṇḍālī fire and generate innate bliss. Clear-light mind is developed into the nature of this bliss and placed one-pointedly into the empty-form Kālacakra mother-and-father deity that vividly appears before it. This is meditated on again and again, and as much as that is undertaken, the appearance of that deity form becomes progressively purer, finally developing into an actual empty form in the aspect of Kālacakra mother and father. This is the recollection body. From that form countless bodies emanate to fill the three realms. These are also actual recollection bodies.

Meditation after attaining the recollection deity form

The empty-form Kālacakras in the aspect of mother-and-father embrace, both that dwelling in the center of the navel cakra and those pervading the three realms, have become actual phenomena and definitive recollection forms. All these outer and inner Kālacakra mother-and-father forms are of the same mental continuum as the yogi and, therefore, by way of attraction to the consort in the form of Viśvamātā, these Kālacakra forms enter into

union. Meditative equipoise is held single-pointedly on this union, and after repeated meditation, the yogi arrives at a point when the bodhicitta elements located within parts of the gross body gather at the forehead cakra and gradually travel to the vajra jewel, from which arises the sixteen joys. [451] As the white element arrives at the tip of the jewel, the red element arrives at the crown. These two do not move elsewhere and are firmly located in their respective places. From these drops an instance of the stable supreme and unchanging bliss arises. This is an indication of the actual attainment of the branch of meditative concentration. Therefore the path from the first of the four or sixteen joys onward is established as being the path of recollection.

It may be thought that the yogi of high intelligence, after the attainment of the recollection body, only needs to rely upon the mahāmudrā consort and has no need of the other two types of consort. On this point some say that after completing the branch of retention, the intelligent yogi has the ability to actually raise the recollection body from within the equipoise of the meditative concentration of retention without break or interruption to the session, and to induce the unchanging bliss at that time by entering in union with the empty-form Viśvamātā. Therefore they assert that recollection can be completed within the one continuous meditation session of the meditative concentration of retention, and that the unchanging bliss of the branch of meditative concentration can also be attained in that session. They also maintain that the yogi of high intelligence, while developing the recollection form, and even after it has been developed, does not rely upon activity and wisdom mudrā consorts.

This is not correct. After the completion of retention it is necessary to train in caṇḍālī fire practice, to rely on activity and wisdom consorts, and to undertake many other practices in order to attain the recollection body. Therefore how would it be possible to complete recollection and attain meditative concentration in one continuous session of retention meditation? The yogi of high intelligence, when developing recollection, relies upon an activity mudrā consort as previously quoted in the *Condensed Tantra:*

> To increase this innate bliss of the conqueror,
> first rely upon an activity mudrā consort.

Therefore, after the completion of retention and during the development of recollection, an activity mudrā consort is used. This causes the caṇḍālī

fire to ignite, which melts the bodhicitta to produce great bliss, which is then single-pointedly placed on the similitude empty form. With repeated meditation a definitive and actual empty-form Kālacakra mother-and-father form is achieved. [452] At that time a mahāmudrā consort, the creator of the bliss of the unmoving element, is created as an actual phenomenon. This is taught by the following lines, which have been explained previously:

> Then create the sun form, with body, face,
> legs, crown, all limbs complete;
> in a flash of lightning resemblance,
> arises a definitive creator of unmoving bliss,
> all features complete.[344]

Furthermore the yogi of high intelligence relies upon the activity mudrā consort even after the attainment of the recollection form. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 121 of the Gnosis chapter, states:

> "Mind in closeness to the mudrā" means that from desire for the form, the bodhicitta melts, the yogi abides in supreme bliss, and the vajra is raised. This is the third, the face of the mind. If joy is not realized through the use of form, at that time "use the sound of the vajra in the lotus," which means to move it slowly. If a girl is not found, then penetrate the lotus of the hand. This is to done to increase bliss and not to create a downfall.[345]

Therefore, after the development of an actual recollection empty form, the yogi desires the empty-form Viśvamātā. From this "the bodhicitta melts, the yogi abides in supreme bliss," and because of the desire, "the vajra is raised." This represents the third of the four vajras, which is Kālacakra's "face of the mind," or the mind vajra of recollection. If at this time the yogi has great desire for this empty form but joy is not generated through reliance on this empty form, "use the sound of the vajra in the lotus" of an activity mudrā consort, which means to generate the bliss by moving the vajra slowly in the lotus of an activity mudrā.

If it is thought that this passage is not about the attainment of the definitive recollection body, then it should be known that this passage is in the section that comments on recollection as well as on the attainment

of meditative concentration following the achievement of recollection, for the passage continues:

> This bliss of not expelling the seed destroys the fear of death and is the fourth face of the guru, or the gnosis vajra. This is a confirmation of the yoga meditations.

[453] This passage talks of the gnosis vajra and, of the four vajras, the branch of meditative concentration has been taught as the gnosis vajra.

It could be thought that this may indeed be a passage on the attainment and postattainment of recollection but that it is a teaching on the need for the yogi of low intelligence to rely upon an activity mudrā consort. That would not be correct, because this is not a section in which the tantra and the commentary are teaching for any particular type of person but a section that explains the central tenets of the path. The central tenets of the path are taught for the primary intended disciples of the tantra, and the primary intended disciples of the tantra are those of high intelligence.

Furthermore the *Great Commentary,* on verse 120 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> Concerning the line beginning "Moved toward the wisdom, the moon drop," the movement refers to that of the moon drop, whose movement is generated by desire for the wisdom. The moon drop is the bodhicitta drop, which moves to the wisdom but remains in the vajra. Of that, the three nonchanging at the secret area, the navel, and the heart represent accomplishment. This is the third branch known as accomplishment. Practice accomplishment in this way.[346]

Therefore, in this section on the branch of completion-stage accomplishment, the bodhicitta, which moves toward the activity mudrā consort, stays in the vajra, thereby inducing the bliss of stable ascent that is the three nonchanging or nondescending states at the secret area, navel, and heart. Moreover, among the four branches of approximation and accomplishment, the branch of accomplishment is established as being recollection. These tantra and commentary passages also explain the central tenets of the path.

Furthermore the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary,* on the lines "With the mind placed inside, meditate upon the siddhi of desire," says:

> The bodhicitta dwelling in the vajra jewel is spoken of as the "mind placed inside." With the mind placed inside, this nonemitting bodhicitta associates with an activity mudrā or wisdom mudrā, and the characteristics of the three-realm world are meditated on as forms of the Buddha. The three-realm world refers to the animate and inanimate characteristics of the desire, form, and formless realms, [454] and to functional and nonfunctional phenomena, all of which are possessed of supreme characteristics. They are wisdom gone beyond, possessed of supreme characteristics. On all these the yogi meditates.[347]

Therefore, when one has the ability to hold the bodhicitta within the vajra jewel without emission, one associates with activity or wisdom mudrā consorts and induces the great bliss. Because of this great bliss the characteristics of the three-realm world appear as the forms of all buddhas in empty form. These are single-pointedly focused upon. A more detailed explanation of the "three-realm world" follows from the sentence beginning "The three-realm world refers to" up to the sentence "On all these the yogi meditates." The bliss induced by reliance upon activity and wisdom mudrā consorts is single-pointedly focused on empty forms. These empty forms are "wisdoms gone beyond" and are actual empty forms "possessed of supreme characteristics." This is the meaning of the above passage, and therefore it can be established that all three kinds of yogis, of sharp, middling, and dull intelligence, when on the first five branches, and especially on the branch of recollection, have to generate bliss by relying upon activity and wisdom mudrā consorts.

Furthermore the commentary on the line "meditate upon the siddhi of desire" runs:

> Here "desire" is great desire, is Vajrasattva, of great significance, supreme and unchanging.[348]

Therefore "desire" is explained as being the supreme and unchanging bliss. The passage continues:

> "Siddhi" is the mahāmudrā, the wisdom gone beyond, possessed of supreme characteristics.[349]

"Siddhi" is explained as meaning empty form. This empty form is said to be of two kinds. The commentary continues:

> The meditation is of two kinds: earlier meditation on images and later meditation on images. The earlier meditation is the complete meditation on the signs of smoke and so forth.[350]

Therefore the earlier meditation refers to those during withdrawal and meditative absorption on images ranging from those of smoke and so forth up to the manifold saṃbhogakāya images. The commentary continues:

> Concerning the later meditation, when the image is seen, the *liṅgam* is placed in the *bhaga,* [455] and meditation is performed in order to increase the supreme and unchanging bliss.[351]

The later meditation is asserted as being a recollection meditation, and when the image of an actual entity empty-form Kālacakra mother and father of the branch of recollection is seen, the *liṅgam* of the yogi is placed in the *bhaga* of an activity mudrā consort, and the yogi meditates upon great bliss. The purpose of this meditation is to develop and increase the supreme and unchanging bliss of the branch of meditative concentration. The commentary continues:

> Again, to increase the great bliss, the activity mudrā consort and the wisdom mudrā consort are abandoned for meditation on a mahāmudrā consort. Here the abandoning of the activity mudrā consort and the wisdom mudrā consort was spoken of by the Conqueror in the twelve-thousand-verse *Supreme Original Buddha:*
>
> "Activity mudrā is left behind,
> wisdom mudrā is abandoned;
> with supreme unchanging yoga
> meditate upon the mahāmudrā."[352]

By relying on activity and wisdom mudrā consorts, the yogi meditates on great bliss. "Again, to increase the great bliss," or unchanging bliss, during the branch of meditative concentration, "the activity mudrā consort and the

wisdom mudrā consort are abandoned for meditation on a mahāmudrā consort." This means inducing the unchanging bliss by meditating on desire for the mahāmudrā consort. The authority for the assertion that in the meditations of the path of meditative concentration, which has the ability to develop the actual unchanging bliss, all meditations on activity and wisdom mudrās are abandoned is stated in the lines beginning "was spoken of by the Conqueror" up to "meditate upon the mahāmudrā."

Therefore, with the only difference between them being their consort of primary reliance, yogis of sharp, middling, and low intelligence will rely upon activity and wisdom mudrā consorts, generating the four joys of descent and stable ascent and applying that bliss to emptiness until they are able to induce great unchanging bliss through the mahāmudrā consort. [456] They develop the recollection body, which is an actual entity of an empty-form Kālacakra mother and father, and during the four joys, the mind of clear light develops into the entity of the bliss and takes on the aspect of desire for union between oneself as Kālacakra and his consort. Meditating in this way will eventually create the ability to generate great unchanging bliss through reliance on the empty-form mahāmudrā Viśvamātā. Therefore one must know when to rely on and when to abandon the activity and wisdom mudras, as taught in the tantra and commentaries.

Recollection meditation for yogis of middling and low intelligence

The meditations for developing the recollection body and the meditations following its development are basically the same as those of the yogi of high intelligence. The difference is that the yogi of middling intelligence relies mainly on the wisdom mudrā consort for inducing the bliss of descent and stable ascent that arises from igniting the caṇḍālī fire, whereas the yogi of low intelligence relies mainly on the activity mudrā consort.

All three types of yogis, when meditating for the achievement of the recollection body upon the completion of retention, will rely upon their own primary methods for creating great bliss, which will generate the great bliss of descent and stable ascent. The clear-light mind develops into the entity of great bliss, focusing and meditating single-pointedly again and again on the empty-form Kālacakra mother and father in whose aspect the yogi has appeared, unimputed and unconceived in the dhūtī at the navel cakra. Finally that similitude empty form in its aspect of Kālacakra in mother-and-

father embrace becomes an actual empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father embrace.

In some instruction texts it is written that the caṇḍālī fire blazes, induces bliss, and from within the state of bliss and emptiness, one meditates to impel[353] the arising of the recollection body.[354] This seems to be applying here to the process found in the *Guhyasamāja* and other tantras, wherein one impels the arising of an illusory body from within either the state of bliss and emptiness or the state of clear light. [457] However these two are not similar. The explanation from the *Guhyasamāja* and other tantras is that within bliss and emptiness, or within the clear-light mind applied to emptiness, the illusory body develops from the subtle wind that acts as a mount for the clear-light mind. However the empty-form body taught here is an empty form whose appearance first arose during withdrawal and meditative absorption, was then prepared by the paths of prāṇāyāma, retention, and so on, and whose attainment is accomplished by the gradual purification process of that empty-form body.

In the explanations on the divisions of recollection, the explanation that those of sharp intelligence enter into union with as many mahāmudrā consorts as there are atoms in Mount Meru, that those of a middling intelligence enter into union with as many wisdom mudrā consorts as there are goddesses in the mandala, and that those of low intelligence enter into union with activity mudras, are ways of practicing the path of recollection after the recollection body has been attained. On the topic of union with a mahāmudrā consort, one instruction manual that claims to follow Butön Rinpoché and Jé Rinpoché divides recollection up into three divisions and then says:[355]

> Then the empty forms that pervade space transform into the ten śaktis and so forth. Also mahāmudrā consorts as many as there are atoms in Mount Meru transform, enter into union, and create unchanging bliss as before.

This is all that is written on the subject, and Butön Rinpoché himself does not elucidate on union with a mahāmudrā consort. So this should be examined a little. How is union with a mahāmudrā consort achieved? Does the yogi achieve it with his gross body, or does he enter into union as the father of the empty-form father-and-mother aspect? It cannot be the former because the mother in the aspect of empty-form Viśvamātā is in the

form of an unobscured and unobstructed rainbow body, and entering into such a union with one's coarse body would not be possible. Therefore the latter is correct. [458] The yogi in the form of Kālacakra mother and father has emanated to pervade the three realms. The mother mahāmudrā consorts of that union numbering as many as the number of atoms in Mount Meru and the yogi in the aspect of the Kālacakra father of that union also numbering as many forms as there are atoms in Mount Meru, enter into union. This is the meaning of the assertion that those of sharp intelligence enter into union with as many mahāmudrā consorts as there are atoms in Mount Meru.

The way that the bliss of the melting elements is generated from this union is that the yogi focuses upon himself as empty-form Kālacakra mothers and fathers in union, and by dwelling single-pointedly in this desire, the four or sixteen descending joys are generated from the crown of the gross body down to the forehead, then to the throat and so on, and finally to the tip of the vajra jewel. Therefore, during recollection, the yogi of high intelligence practices repeatedly the method for developing bliss by reliance upon the mahāmudrā consort and enhances the practice by relying on the other two types of mudrā consorts. The *Great Commentary,* in the section explaining that the mind vajra refers to recollection and the gnosis vajra refers to meditative concentration, says:

> Desiring the form, the bodhicitta melts, he abides in supreme bliss, and the vajra is raised.[356]

Therefore, in the practice of mind-vajra recollection, the primary intended disciples of this tantra desire the form of the mahāmudrā consort, and the vajra of the yogi is raised. This brings about the melting of the bodhicitta, and the yogi dwells in the bliss that arises from the melting. If such a disciple does not generate the four joys of the melted bodhicitta by desiring the form of the mahāmudrā consort, "use the sound of the vajra in the lotus" of an activity mudrā consort, which means generating bliss by moving the vajra slowly in the lotus of an activity mudrā. These and other lines, which have already been explained, clarify this point. Also the primary intended disciples of this tantra are yogis of high intelligence.

Those of middling and low intelligence rely mainly on wisdom and activity mudrā consorts, respectively, from which they develop the four joys of descent and stable ascent and apply the bliss to emptiness. The yogi

arises as the empty-form mother and father and meditates repeatedly on the desire for the mahāmudrā mother. [459]

Whether they have achieved the recollection body or not, the three kinds of practitioners at all levels of recollection practice rely on the caṇḍālī fire as well as on wisdom and activity mudrā consorts to induce great bliss, which is then applied to emptiness. The meditations on that bliss-and-emptiness gnosis ripen the mindstream and are similar-type causes for the development of the 21,600 instances of meditative concentration unchanging bliss. Moreover the empty-form mahāmudrā consort is a special cause of an unchanging bliss not found in the hidden tantra traditions. Therefore great significance should be attached to the achievement of empty form.

Relying on the two mudrā consorts

This has three headings:

1. Wisdom mudrā consort
2. Activity mudrā consort
3. The explanation from the tantra of the four mudrā consorts

Wisdom mudrā consort

With the generation stage already accomplished, and especially with the attainment of accomplishment of form and wind accomplishment,[357] clear images can be created by thought alone. Therefore, with oneself clearly visualized as Kālacakra mother and father, on a moon disk at the forehead of both father and mother there is a white *oṃ,* on a sun disk at the throat a red *āḥ,* on a Rāhu disk at the heart a black *hūṃ,* on a Kālāgni disk at the navel a yellow *hoḥ,* on a gnosis mandala at the secret area a blue *svā,* and on a space mandala at the crown a green *ha.* From one's secret area, which is in a nonapprehended state, arises a *hūṃ,* which transforms into a blue five-pointed vajra. At its center is the syllable *āḥ* which turns into an eight-petal lotus. From the mother's secret area, which is in a nonapprehended state, the syllable *āḥ* appears and transforms into a red eight-petal lotus. In its center is the syllable *hūṃ,* which transforms into a vajra.

With this visualization the yogi single-pointedly meditates on entering into union. This meditation brings about the melting of the bodhicitta element, which descends from the forehead to the tip of the jewel and is held there without being emitted. This generates the innate bliss of the

four joys of descent, followed by the four joys of stable ascent, involving the upward return from the tip of the vajra jewel to the crown. [460] The clear-light mind develops into the nature of this great bliss and meditates single-pointedly on the empty forms, actual or facsimile, that simultaneously appear, as well as on the emptiness that is the noninherent nature of these empty forms. If this is practiced during the period in which an actual phenomenon empty-form mahāmudrā consort has yet to be achieved, the yogi alternates between his own inner meditative concentration and the mudrā consort meditation. These provide mutual enhancement until an actual phenomenon empty-form mahāmudrā consort is attained. The great Nāropa says:

> "Meditate" refers to meditation on the wisdom mudrā consort. The aggregates, spheres, and sources are purified by being in deity aspect. The mandalas are clearly visualized, and the yoga of constant movement causes the fire of gnosis to blaze. The letter *hūṃ* is burnt, and the moon descends from the forehead to the throat, heart, navel, vajra, and center of lotus. All senses and their objects possessing the nature of this bodhicitta are unified in a one-taste state of great bliss. In this meditative concentration, union is entered into and endures until the approach of the glorious mahāmudrā consort.[358]

Just as this is applied to a wisdom mudrā consort, it can also be applied to meditations on an activity mudrā consort and on the caṇḍālī fire.

Activity mudrā consort

The correct kind of activity mudrā consort to be relied upon is described in the tantras. The root *Hevajra Tantra* says:

> When discovered,
> she will have wide open eyes,
> adorned with beauty and youth,
> camphor and sihla,[359]
> well trained by bodhicitta.[360]

On this the *Vajragarbha Commentary* says:

> This teaches the characteristics of a mudrā consort. Her eyes are quite large, with the red and white well separated. Her waist is like a vajra. She is one, age twelve or sixteen, whose blood is flowing and who delights in bodhicitta. Similarly that mudrā consort is to be trained.[361]

[461] This teaches the characteristics of a mudrā consort and the necessity of training. On the method of training, the tantra continues:

> Beginning from the ten virtues,
> teach her the dharma well;
> a mind in deity form,
> similarly, a well-pledged mind.[362]

Beginning from the practices of the ten virtues, she is trained in the common path. Then, as the line, "teach her the dharma well" indicates, she is given initiation and transformed into a suitable receptacle for tantra. She is taught the meaning of tantra and given vows and pledges according to her level of understanding. She is trained in the deity yoga of having a "mind in deity form," becomes wise in the arts of desire, and has a conviction on the view of emptiness. Using the rituals taught in the tantras, the yogi should rely on such a mudrā consort with these and other skills. If she is not trained in this way, very serious faults will occur. The tantra continues:

> An untrained girl in Hevajra yoga
> weakens the pledges, and one will be ruined.
> Train her, therefore, by teaching dharma.[363]

Knowing these faults, do not enter into erroneous liaison with any female not trained as a mudrā consort, using the power of the winds or various instructions to ensure the drop is not lost as a reason.

The way to rely upon a mudrā consort according to the rituals in the tantra is taught in the *Root Tantra,* quoted in verse 110 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the *Great Commentary:*

> A qualified consort aged sixteen,
> adorned with youth and beauty;
> first teach her well,

then initiate and begin the practice.
Body, speech, mind, and desire,
placed at the brow, and so forth,
svā, ha, at the secret and crown.
Next the lotus is purified.
From the syllable *āḥ,* an eight-petal lotus;
by the syllable *hūṃ* it is with vajra.
The cause of movement
of the wisdom lotus with vajra
is one's vajra by the syllable *hūṃ,*
visualized with five points;
in its center an eight-petal lotus
conceived with the syllable *āḥ.*
With the pride of a vajra holder,
the vajra with the lotus enters the lotus.
With the *liṅgam* placed into the *bhaga,*
the yogi performs *hūṃ phaṭ;*
the bodhicitta is not emitted.
The three realms in their entirety [462]
are meditated on as forms of buddhas.[364]

One should practice as these verses instruct. Oneself and the mudrā consort are visualized as Kālacakra father and mother invested with deity pride. At the six places of the forehead and so forth, the seeds of the six families are placed, as is indicated by the lines beginning from "Body, speech, mind, and desire" up to "the secret and crown." The lines from "Next the lotus is purified" up to "conceived with the syllable *āḥ*" teach the blessing of the sexual organs and can be understood from the previous explanation on the wisdom mudrā consort. "With the pride of a vajra holder" indicates that both oneself and the mudrā consort hold the pride of being a deity. "The vajra with the lotus enters the lotus" together with the line "With the *liṅgam* placed into the *bhaga*" teach that a vajra is created from the *hūṃ* of one's secret area and is marked by or "with" a lotus. This *liṅgam* is placed into the *bhaga* lotus of the mother. "The yogi performs *hūṃ phaṭ*" means that the syllable *phaṭ* causes the bodhicitta element to come as far as the tip of the vajra jewel to create the four joys of descent. "The bodhicitta is not emitted" indicates that the bodhicitta is not emitted from the tip of the jewel because the significance of *hūṃ* from the phrase *"hūṃ phaṭ"* is that the drop of com-

bined mind and wind is drawn back up to create the four joys of stable ascent. The clear-light mind develops into the entity of great bliss. If the empty form appearing at the same time in the aspect of Kālacakra mother and father is a just a similitude, the clear-light mind is placed single-pointedly within it. If that empty form is the definitive and actual empty form, the clear-light mind focuses upon the sexual union of oneself established in the form of Kālacakra mother and father, and desire for the mother is created. Furthermore the lines "The three realms in their entirety are meditated on as forms of buddhas" indicate that one also meditates on emanating empty-form buddhas filling the entirety of the three realms.

Regarding one's lifestyle while relying upon an activity mudrā consort, the *Vajragarbha Commentary* says:

> Having discovered such a girl,
> dwell in distant places,
> well prepared with food and drink,
> with songs, cymbals, dance,
> her body adorned with ornaments,
> flowers, and perfumes.
> Live well in this good place [463]
> and emanate the perfect gnosis.[365]

From the same text it says:

> With one's powers
> summon mudrā consorts
> from the gods, asura, humans,
> kiṃnara, and yakṣa,
> and examine them well.[366]

These lines teach that goddesses and so forth should be summoned with special powers and assessed for their suitability to be activity mudrā consorts. A consort should be chosen from among those who are suitable.

The explanation from the tantra of the four mudrā consorts

In verse 74 of the *Gnosis* chapter of the *Condensed Tantra* it says:

> With these four mudrā consorts giving fruits of unchanging bliss, in towns, in isolation, cemeteries, unclean, and clean places.[367]

This line mentions four mudrā consorts. These are activity mudrā consorts, wisdom mudrā consorts, mahāmudrā consorts, and samaya consorts. On the activity mudrā consort, Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations* says:

> The activity mudrā has breasts and hair, a cause for bliss in the realm of desire. The activities are those of *cumbanda,* embracing, touching the secret area, moving the vajra, and so on. Illustrated by these activities, the mudrā is she who creates reliability. Reliability here refers to changing bliss.[368]

Therefore the nature of an activity mudrā consort is a girl who has breasts and hair and a body formed from a collection of atoms. The activities that establish her as an activity mudrā consort include *cumbanda,* or kissing, embracing the yogi, touching the secret area, and moving the vajra. By these activities she is an illustration of reliability."[369] This is the meaning of *mudrā,* and she is known, therefore, as an activity mudrā consort. What does *reliability* mean here? It refers to the mudrā's own ability to grant "changing bliss," or the bliss of emission, which is created or illustrated by the mudrā.

The wisdom mudrā consort is explained in the same commentary from the line "The wisdom mudrā consort is completely imputed by one's mind, goddesses such as Viśvamātā" [464] up to the line "Concerning reliability, here she shows the moving bliss."[370] Wisdom mudrā consorts are mentally imputed objects of meditation in the forms of goddesses such as Viśvamātā. *Reliability* here means that in terms of her own ability, this mudrā consort is able to move the bodhicitta from place to place within the body during meditative union.

On the mahāmudrā consort the same commentary says:

> Because she is great *(mahā)* and is a mudrā, she is known as *mahāmudrā.* Moreover "great" here means that being possessed of supreme characteristics, she is not insignificant. Because she is sealed by the bodhicitta vajra, she is a mudrā. "Reliability" here means being divorced from phenomena conceived by the

> mind and preceded by the signs of smoke and so forth. This will be understood by the yogi in the clarity of his mind, like prognostic images in a clairvoyant's mirror. The resultant mahāmudrā is characterized by *mudaṃ*, the gnosis of supreme and unchanging bliss. When the yogi is filled with *rati*, the mudrā, by the yoga of immobility, will grant this totally and at all times. Her greatness also is of great abandonment and great insight. Great abandonment is an abandonment of all obscurations together with their propensities.[371]

This passage teaches the mahāmudrā consort. It needs a little explanation. The sentence, "Because she is great and is a mudrā, she is known as *mahāmudrā*" explains the term *mahāmudrā*. The next sentence teaches the meaning of "great," which is that the empty-form consort, "being possessed of supreme characteristics, she is not insignificant" and has emanated to pervade the entirety of the three realms. These forms are each in the aspect of mother and father in embrace. To illustrate that "mahāmudrā" refers to the mother, the female gender is used.

Moreover the mother deity of the empty-form Kālacakra mother-and-father embrace that has emanated to pervade the three realms can be confirmed as a "mudrā" because "bodhicitta vajra" here refers to the great unchanging bliss, which is created by this mother, and by not going beyond that, she is therefore "sealed by the bodhicitta vajra." Because of this "she is a mudrā."

In this empty-form Kālacakra of mother-and-father embrace, of great significance, [465] possessed of supreme characteristics, and completely pervading the three realms, what does "reliability" refer to? It is that the yogi's mind is divorced from phenomena conceived by the conceptualizing mind. The yogi, following his experience of the ten signs of smoke and so forth, will understand and experience this like prognostic images in a mirror in the great clarity of his clear-light mind.

Moreover, because this empty-form mahāmudrā consort produces the resultant mahāmudrā consort, she is known as a mudrā. What is the resultant mahāmudrā consort? "The resultant mahāmudrā consort is characterized by *mudaṃ*, the gnosis of supreme and unchanging bliss." How does the mahāmudrā consort grant this bliss? She grants it "totally" or perfectly "and at all times" through this yoga. The effect of *rati*, meaning joy or desire for the mahāmudrā consort, is that the tip of the vajra to the crown

of the head is filled with the bodhicitta element where it is held firm without moving to other places.

The meaning of "great" in the term *resultant mahāmudrā consort* also refers to great abandonment and so on.

In short the empty-form mahāmudrā consort who actually induces the supreme and unchanging bliss is the mother deity of the empty-form Kālacakra in mother-father embrace, as will be described later.

Concerning the samaya mudrā consort the great Nāropa says:

> Activity, wisdom, mahāmudrā, samaya:
> causes and meditations
> for clear-light minds,
> the fourth is the attainment,
> the indestructible.[372]

The fourth or samaya mudrā consort is the resultant attainment or the "indestructible," which here means "unchanging" and refers to the great unchanging bliss. [466]

Valid cognition

Butön Rinpoché says the cognition here is a direct yogic valid cognition.[373] However direct yogic valid cognition is a term usually applied to a direct understanding of no-self. It makes no sense for the cognition here to be the direct perception of the coarse no-self of persons. Moreover, to perceive directly the subtle no-self emptiness, one must be an ārya being, whereas here the yogi who has only completed the yoga of recollection is still an ordinary being. Our own position is that the empty forms appear directly and clearly, and that the cognition is a nondeceiving, direct mental consciousness.

Purification divisions

The *Great Commentary* on verse 115 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter states:

> "Recollection of caṇḍālī fire is Amitābha" refers to the recognition aggregate. The caṇḍālī fire is recollected in the central

> channel. There are ten aspects divided by the ten instances of desire.[374]

The recognition aggregate, the element of water, the tongue, form, the legs, and the activity of taking are the six phenomena purified. Just as there are ten occasions for the experience of worldly desire, likewise, because of the caṇḍālī fire in the central channel, there are the ten aspects of smoke and so forth in the meditations on inner and outer images.

Results

There are immediate and final results. The immediate results are that one sees oneself as the deity, limitless light radiates from one's pores, filling the realms of space, and one's body is bathed in a halo of light. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 119 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "Recollection is excellently pure." Recollection, as spoken of here, refers to a mind embracing the forms and divorced from all conception. Therefore, when they become pure, at that time there are "mandalas of pure light." The word "also" refers to the five rays of light radiating and traveling through the pores. "From the gnosis form" means from the empty forms.[375]

The final results are that the six phenomena of the recognition-aggregate group become freed of obscuration to become the six enlightened phenomena, Amitābha and so forth. [467]

35. The Yoga of Meditative Concentration

The branch of meditative concentration: The final meditative attainment

This section is under six headings:

1. Meaning of the term
2. Time for meditation
3. The meditation
4. Valid cognition
5. Purification divisions
6. Results

Meaning of the term

Unchanging bliss is achieved from desire for the empty-form mahāmudrā consort. The mind is placed single-pointedly in the indivisibility of emptiness endowed with every supreme aspect and unchanging bliss, hence the term *meditative concentration.* The *Great Commentary,* on verse 117 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "In the nature of wisdom and method" means that consciousness and the object of consciousness are mixed as one, and the power that is the unchanging bliss is a meditative concentration upon gnosis form.[376]

The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* also says:

> Concerning meditative concentration, unchanging bliss is achieved from the yearning for the desired goddess. This nondual mind, divorced of consciousness of subject and object, is spoken of by the tathāgatas as meditative concentration.[377]

Time for meditation

When the recollection body has been attained and the four joys of descent and stable ascent are accomplished from reliance on activity mudrā consorts, wisdom mudrā consorts, and the caṇḍālī fire, one has become well trained in the path of recollection, and the mind has been ripened for the ability to create unchanging bliss. Once the yogi has the ability to induce unchanging bliss because of familiarity with desire for the mahāmudrā consort, the meditations of meditative concentration should begin. The *Great Commentary,* on verse 113 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> Next is great accomplishment. When there is union with wisdom, when the unmoving bliss is to be created, this is definitely the time of great accomplishment. "From the subtle yogas" teaches that great accomplishment is achieved definitively from the fluid well joined onto the "woman of excellent mind" channel.[378]

"When there is union with wisdom," or mudrā consort, and when the unchanging bliss is to be created in reliance on the drops not moving to other places, [468] this is definitely the time to meditate on the great accomplishment—the branch of meditative concentration. What is the nature of this great accomplishment? Subtle yoga practice is taught at two levels—the provisional generation-stage practice and the definitive completion-stage practice. In the definitive practice the red and white fluid elements are "well joined onto," or inside, the "woman of excellent mind," or central channel, and do not move to other places. From this arises the great unchanging bliss, explained as being the meditative concentration great accomplishment.

The meditation

This has three outlines:

1. The nature of the branch of meditative concentration
2. Divisions
3. The way to meditate

The nature of the branch of meditative concentration

Meditative concentration is a gnosis that is the indivisibility of an unchanging great-bliss consciousness and the object of that consciousness, an emptiness form endowed with every supreme aspect, which has the power to transform all aggregates, sources, and elements into nonobscured phenomena, as mercury transforms base metal into gold. As the previously quoted passage from the *Great Commentary* says:

> "In the nature of wisdom and method" means that consciousness and the object of consciousness are mixed as one, [469] and the power that is the unchanging bliss is a meditative concentration upon gnosis form.[379]

In the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* it says:

> With wisdom and method in union,
> all phenomena are gathered.
> By the yoga of amassing,
> the image is meditated on in the center.
> An instance of gnosis complete
> is called meditative concentration.[380]

Nāropa in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations* says of this verse:

> The lines beginning "With wisdom" speak of the sixth branch. "With wisdom and method in union" refers to the stages of similar-to-cause and so forth, which rise in the space of the lotuses. By the power of the unchanging bliss, consciousness and object of consciousness are mixed as one. At these uncontaminated times all animate and inanimate phenomena are "gathered," or brought together, as well-illumined forms, and with the yoga of amassing they are consumed by the clear light solely in emptiness form, in its nature of the nonfalling supreme bliss, like the taste of forms when all the elements—iron and so forth—are made into a form of one taste. In the center of the clear light, at one with the nonfalling supreme bliss, is the image whose nature

> is conventional truth and is to be meditated upon. A more detailed explanation of this is found in the lines beginning "An instance." The gnosis is nondual in terms of the two truths, and when an instance of this is complete or perceived, it is known by the name of the branch of meditative concentration.[381]

This passage needs a little explanation. Concerning the line "With wisdom and method in union," the *Root Tantra* says, "The stages of similar-to-cause travel upward." Therefore, by the stages of similar-to-cause and so forth,[382] the bodhicitta element rises up from the tip of the vajra jewel to the crown in the dhūtī space of the cakras from lotus to lotus. At these cakras they do not change or move to other places and therefore produce unchanging bliss. By the power of this unchanging bliss, the emptiness form, endowed with every supreme aspect as an object of consciousness, and unchanging-bliss consciousness merge to become one entity. This acts as an opponent force to destroy portions of the obscurations, and at such uncontaminated times all phenomena, as illustrated by the inanimate environment and the animate living beings in it, are gathered together as illumined empty forms. This is the meaning of the term *gathered.*

The meaning of the line "By the yoga of amassing" is that the "clear light solely in emptiness form, in its nature of the nonfalling," or unchanging supreme bliss, consumes and transforms all the aggregates, elements, and sources into nonobscured phenomena. For example, "like the taste of forms when all elements—iron and so forth—are made into a form of one taste," [470] referring to the process in which elements are consumed by mercury and transformed into gold.

The meaning of the line beginning "In the center of the clear light" is that because of the above reasons, one should meditate upon the image, or empty form, "whose nature is a conventional truth," in the center of, or indivisible from, the clear light that is of "one taste with the supreme nonfalling bliss," or unchanging bliss. The lines beginning "The gnosis is nondual" refer to the two truths. These are: the ultimate truth, which here refers to the unchanging bliss that perceives emptiness and is an example of a consciousness being given the name of its object; and the conventional truth, which is the empty forms. These become nondual, and when "an instance of this is complete or perceived, it is known by the name of the branch of meditative concentration."

Divisions

This has two headings:

1. Division by cause and basis
2. Division by nature

Division by cause and basis

There is meditative concentration in the minds of those of low intelligence and developed by reliance upon an activity mudrā consort, meditative concentration in the minds of those of middling intelligence developed by reliance upon a wisdom mudrā consort, and meditative concentration in the minds of those of high intelligence developed by reliance solely upon a mahāmudrā consort. This division is taught in verse 117 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter of the *Condensed Tantra:*

> As these are divided by being of low intelligence and so forth,
> there are three different and main methods of practice.
> Three consorts and three times by three paths,
> karma and conception become the supreme.[383]

The *Great Commentary* on this verse says:

> "As these are divided by being of low intelligence and so forth, there are three different and main methods of practice" of the Kālacakra. "Three consorts and three times by three paths" refers to the path of the falling bodhicitta during the times of those of low intelligence, the path of moving bodhicitta during the times of those of middling intelligence, and the path of the nonmoving bodhicitta during the times of those of high intelligence. [471] Among these, the activity mudrā consort is the giver of the bliss of falling, the wisdom mudrā consort is the giver of the bliss of movement, and the mahāmudrā consort is the giver of the nonmoving bliss. In this way the Buddha taught the meditations of the three mudrā consorts in the six branches. Therefore the yogi should meditate on the six yogas.[384]

The divisions of meditative concentration are taught in this passage. How are they taught? The words "In this way" refer to the preceding explanation of the words of the tantra. The line "the Buddha taught the meditations of the three mudrā consorts in the six branches" refers to all six branches. The three types of reliance upon the three mudrā consorts, therefore, must be applied in the branch of meditative concentration too. The words of the tantra and corresponding commentary passage require some explanation. As these six branches are divided into meditators "of low intelligence and so forth," meaning those of middling and high intelligence also, "there are three different and main methods of practice of the Kālacakra" in this branch of meditative concentration. "Three times" refers to the three occasions of practice for those of low, middling, and high intelligence, who rely on activity, wisdom, and mahāmudrā consorts respectively. The reason for this reliance is that "by three paths," practitioners develop the unchanging bliss of the branch of meditative concentration. "Those of low intelligence" must rely upon a mudrā consort who grants the "path of falling bodhicitta" in order to induce the unchanging bliss. "Those of middling intelligence" rely upon a mudrā consort who grants "the path of moving bodhicitta" as a way of inducing the unchanging bliss. "Those of high intelligence" rely solely upon a mudrā consort who grants "the path of the nonmoving bodhicitta" in order to induce the unchanging bliss. Therefore, among these three consorts, "the activity mudrā consort is the giver of the bliss of falling" bodhicitta, "the wisdom mudrā consort is the giver of the bliss of movement" of bodhicitta to other places in the body, [472] and "the mahāmudrā consort is the giver of the nonmoving," or unchanging "bliss."

The descriptions of the activity and wisdom mudrā consorts as consorts who grant falling and moving bliss is made on the basis of these mudrā consorts' own abilities. During practices such as the branch of meditative concentration, one can induce bliss by relying upon an activity mudrā consort, but the bodhicitta is withheld from emission.

That these tantra and commentary passages refer to the branch of meditative concentration can be understood by the lines "the path of the nonmoving bodhicitta during the times of those of high intelligence" and "the mahāmudrā consort is the giver of the nonmoving bliss." This is because the granting of unchanging bliss by a mahāmudrā consort can only occur on the branch of meditative concentration.

Furthermore *A Short Teaching on Initiations* states:

By union with an activity mudrā,
visualization of a wisdom mudrā,
becoming one with mahāmudrā consort,
increase the unchanging bliss.[385]

Division by nature

This has two headings:

1. Division into two isolates[386]
2. Division by numbers

Division into two isolates

These are: the supreme unchanging bliss that is single-pointedly engaged in nonaspected emptiness and, secondly, the empty-form Kālacakra, indivisible from that emptiness, in mother-and-father embrace and adorned with the features and marks of an enlightened being.

Division by the numbers

This is in three outlines:

1. The actual division
2. An explanation of the progression
3. An examination of areas of doubt

The actual division

This is a division into 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss. These can be divided into twelve levels. The tip of the vajra jewel to the secret area is divided into two parts. The first part filled with bodhicitta, unchanging and unmoving, produces 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss. This constitutes the first level. [473] Likewise the second part filled with unchanging and unmoving bodhicitta also produces 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss. This is the second level. Similarly the area up to the navel cakra filled with unmoving bodhicitta will produce 3,600 instances of unchanging bliss. The first 1,800 is the third level and the second 1,800 is the fourth. 3,600 instances of unchanging bliss are produced by the bodhicitta filling the area up to the

heart cakra. The first 1,800 belong to the fifth level and the second to the sixth level. 3,600 instances of unchanging bliss are produced from the bodhicitta filling the area up to the throat cakra. The first 1,800 belong to the seventh level and the second to the eighth. 3,600 instances of unchanging bliss are produced by the bodhicitta filling the area up to the forehead cakra. The first 1,800 belong to the ninth level and the second to the tenth level. 3,600 instances of unchanging bliss are produced from the bodhicitta, unmoving and unchanging, that fills the area up to the crown cakra. The first 1,800 belong to the eleventh level and the second to the twelfth level.

An explanation of the progression

One drop within the central channel at the very tip of the vajra jewel, staying in one place and not moving elsewhere, produces the first instance of unchanging bliss. That drop consumes and destroys one of the 21,600 larger portions that the material body is divided into. This first instance of unchanging bliss "kills" or eliminates one breath of the 21,600 breaths that flow in one day. In a similar manner, one instance of unchanging bliss is produced from each of the 21,600 drops. Each drop consumes one part of the material body, and each instance of bliss destroys one breath or wind. The *Great Commentary* on verse 117 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> Next, full and perfect enlightenment by single instances. In the line "The instance at the end and beginning of desire and nondesire," the word "desire" refers to the bright side of the month, and its "end" refers to the sixteenth. [474] "Nondesire" refers to the dark side of the month, and its "beginning" means not having entered the dark side and is the time of full and perfect enlightenment. "Also the instances are the number of breaths" means that they increase to 21,600. From the tip of the secret vajra jewel, the instances are multiplied to 3,600, and that number of winds are killed. Moving to the lotus of the secret area, two levels have been reached. Similarly, at the navel, heart, throat, and forehead, four, six, eight, and ten are reached. At the crown all winds are ended. This is the twelfth.[387]

To explain this passage a little, "Full and perfect enlightenment by single instances" refers to instances of unchanging bliss. How is this attained? In

the outer world the waxing period or bright side of the moon is divided into fifteen sections, and although in reality there is no sixteenth after these fifteen, a sixteenth is mentally created at the point of entry into the first division of the dark side. Therefore "at the end" of the bright side is the sixteenth part. Likewise, internally from the large toe of the left foot to the crown, the increase in the white part of the drops is divided into sixteen, and the last of these "refers to the sixteenth." On the path, the bodhicitta descends from the crown to the tip of the vajra jewel to create the sixteen joys, at the end of which the first instance of unchanging bliss is formed and increases until its last increase, at the end of which full and perfect buddhahood is attained. This is "full and perfect enlightenment by single instances." How these instances increase is taught by the lines beginning "Also, the instances." This has been explained previously.

Although these instances of supreme and unchanging bliss arise from their special cause, which is the empty-form mahāmudrā consort in the aspect of Viśvamātā, each of the 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss is indivisible from oneself as an empty-form Kālacakra in mother-and-father aspect. [475] This is the significance of the nonworldly fourth initiation. The authority for this assertion can be known from a verse from *A Short Teaching on Initiations* beginning "From desire for the mahāmudrā,"[388] which was quoted in the explanation of the fourth initiation from the Initiation chapter, and the detailed explanations given there should be recalled.

An examination of areas of doubt

This is under two headings:

1. How the instances of supreme and unchanging bliss are assigned to the levels
2. How bliss meditates upon emptiness

How the instances of supreme and unchanging bliss are assigned to the levels

This has two outlines:

1. The basis for the examination, the Great Commentary text on the twelve levels
2. An examination of the areas of doubt regarding this text

The basis for the examination, the Great Commentary text on the twelve levels

The relevant text is found in the Supreme and Unchanging Gnosis summary from the Gnosis chapter beginning from the lines,

> From the attainment of the first level comes the perfect seeing that is ultimately the nonseeing of the world realms of the ten directions.

and continues until,

> "Then, the great thousand" refers to the world realms of the great uncountable. The perfect seeing that is the nonseeing of these worlds is the attainment of the twelfth level of perfect enlightenment. This is not attained by the absence of "changing" desire. It is by the instances of unchanging bliss arising from desire for wisdom that these tathāgata levels are achieved. Accomplishing 1,800 nonmoving instances is to attain the first level, and by these numbers the twelve levels are finally attained. By 21,600 unchanging instances, the twelve levels are reached and the links of dependent origination are negated.[389]

An examination of the areas of doubt regarding this text

This has two outlines:

1. The positions of past scholars and their invalidity
2. A statement of our own understanding

The positions of past scholars and their invalidity

The omniscient Butön in his *Sheaves of Definitive Meanings* says: [476]

> On this, some say that the Perfection Vehicle level[390] known as *all light* is an instance of the cause being given the name of the effect and that it is labeled "enlightenment" but actually is not enlightenment.

Here he presents the other's position. In refutation he says:

> That is incorrect. In *Sheaves of Oral Transmission* and the *Hevajra Commentary* by Bhavabhadra, it is stated that the level of all light is the level of buddha. In *Garland of Pearls*[391] also it is stated as being the level of buddha.[392]

Concerning his own position:

> Therefore, in the Perfection Vehicle system, the tenth level consists of the mere, the special, and the uninterrupted path. Of these three the uninterrupted path is the eleventh level of the Kālacakra tradition, and the level of all light is the level of buddha.

The validity of other parts of these passages will be explained later, but to posit all light as the level of buddha and then to say that this is the twelfth level of the Kālacakra tradition is incorrect, because on the twelfth level in this tradition, 1,799 instances of unchanging bliss out of a set of 1,800 belong to the path of practice.[393]

The master Śāntipa[394] and Bhavabhadra say that the twelve levels are made up by the level of practice by belief,[395] the ten bodhisattva levels, and the level *all light.* Other scholars also assert that the first set of 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss is the level of practice by belief and that the second set is the first bodhisattva level, *great joy.* Similarly others maintain that the first level begins with the last moment of the first set of 1,800.

It is incorrect to posit the first of the twelve levels in this tradition as being the level of practice by belief. If the first level with its initial set of 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss is equated with the level of practice by belief, then the tenth set of 1,800 would have to correspond to the ninth level, *excellent mind.* If that were the case, "glorious Vajrapāṇi, the mighty one of the tenth level," would have to be on the ninth level, because the *Great Commentary* states, as will be quoted, that of the 21,600 karmic winds of Vajrapāṇi, 3,600 remain undestroyed [477] and that he has not reached the eleventh level of this tradition.

Sūryaśrī in his *Filled with Good Qualities* says:

> By the process of attaining two levels at each of the cakras, one becomes the mighty one of the twelve levels. In this way, by

> negating 3,600 in-and-out breaths at the secret cakra, the two levels of *great joy* and *purity* are attained. By negating the same at the navel cakra, the two levels of *light* and *blazing light* are attained. Similarly, at the heart lotus, the levels of *hard to overcome* and *manifest* are attained.[396]

Therefore the above assertions contradict the fact that the first ten of the twelve levels of the Kālacakra tradition correspond to the ten levels of great joy and so forth.

In a work called *Opening the Secrets of the Three Tantras* it says:

> When an arhat has exhausted his bodily formation he inhabits a mental body. This body is similar to a bardo body and to a dream body. However it is not an actual bardo body nor is it an actual dream body. Nevertheless, if he enters the Mahayana, he enters it with this mental body. Prior to entering the Mahayana he increases his powers of clairvoyance and so forth. By doing so he moves through the eleven lower levels and only then enters the Mahayana. Are there differences in the qualities of these levels? The *Great Commentary* says, "Counting begins from the perfect seeing, that is the nonseeing of the world realms"[397] Therefore with the attainment of the first level comes the perfect seeing of one ten-direction world realm. With the attainment of the second comes two.[398]

In the *Great Commentary* the 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss are spoken of as the twelve levels,[399] and in the above passage the qualities of these twelve levels are assigned to the qualities of a Hinayana arhat entering the Mahayana with a mental body. This appears to be a very distorted explanation. These passages from the *Great Commentary* are passages at the very heart of the path of the branch of meditative concentration, [478] which is explained by condensing the 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss into twelve levels. Such a core path is for the intended disciples of the Kālacakra who enter the path of mantra from its beginning. How could it be for those of the Hinayana who enter the Mahayana! Furthermore, for those of the Hinayana to enter the Mahayana at the branch of meditative concentration would be like a calf becoming an old bull without the intervening process of growing up.

Moreover it seems that this scholar thinks the following. When the 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss have been achieved and the winds of the twelve *lagna*[400] have been negated, then will the gnosis body be gained and not before. Moreover this gnosis body is attained when the first of the Perfection Vehicle levels is attained. In his work *Opening the Secrets of the Three Tantras,* he says:

> *Bright Lamp* says, "In the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* it says, 'Having attained the level of great joy, he will go to Sukhāvatī.'"[401] Therefore, when explaining the meaning of the master Nāgārjuna's attainment of the level of great joy, the assertion that he gained the form of Vajradhara endowed with every supreme aspect is made on the basis of that union or gnosis body being labeled as *buddha.*

If this were the case, it would have to follow that the ārya Vajrapāṇi, the mighty one of the tenth level, would not have previously attained even the first level of great joy, because it is clearly stated in the *Great Commentary* that the movements of 3,600 karmic winds, or two *lagna,* of Vajrapāṇi have not been negated. The second summary from the Realms chapter of the *Great Commentary* says:

> The master of the great yakṣa dwells in the Place of Corpses[402] like the "master of the beasts of the forests." Internally "corpse" refers to the cessation of 21,600 in-and-out breaths less 3,600. "He dwells here, on the level of the cloud of dharma," means that by dwelling there, he dwells in the Place of Corpses.[403]

Furthermore, if the completion of the 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss explained as being the attainment of the states of Vajrasattva and Vajradhara [479] is equated with the attainment of a gnosis body realized on the first level, then consider these passages from the *Great Commentary:*

> The final signs are those of the Buddha and of Vajradhara. This is the twelfth level attained by 21,600 instances of supreme and unchanging bliss. This attainment is the actual attainment of the great mahāmudrā.[404]

Also:

> In order to teach living beings worldly and nonworldly dharma, the enlightened conqueror, the Buddha, already the mighty one of the twelve levels, wise, master of the great illusion, of the great magical and optical illusion, was born in Lumbini of the Śākya family[405]

If the above assertion were correct, the twelve levels mentioned in these passages would have to be levels attained prior to the attainment of the first level of the Perfection Vehicle tradition. In that case the description "wise, master of the great illusion" and so on would have to be explained as not referring to an actual enlightened being. This is beyond words. There is a lot more to say on this subject, but that is enough for now.

A statement of our own understanding

As the omniscient Butön has said, the first level in the Kālacakra tradition corresponds to the first ārya level, great joy, and the ninth level corresponds to the ninth ārya level, excellent mind. In the Perfection Vehicle tradition the tenth level, the cloud of dharma, is divided into the mere, the special, and the uninterrupted paths. In the Kālacakra tradition the tenth level is the mere tenth, the eleventh is the special path, and the twelfth is the uninterrupted path. The end of the twelfth, after instance 21,600 of unchanging bliss, is established as the level of all light, or the eleventh-level[406] state of Vajradhara.

The qualities gained from these levels are taught in the *Great Commentary* beginning from "From the attainment of the first level comes the perfect seeing that is ultimately the nonseeing of the world realms of the ten directions" up to "From the attainment of the tenth level comes the perfect seeing of 512 world realms of the ten directions."[407] The qualities mentioned here are far fewer than those mentioned in the *Madhyamakāvatāra,* and they especially seem to contradict the verse from the *Madhyamakāvatāra* that runs:

> The qualities here on the tenth [480]
> are far beyond the abilities of speech;
> not within the realms of speech,

Buddha fields gained as many in number
as the number of atoms.[408]

You might say that the qualities of the levels taught in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* come from the *Sutra of the Ten Levels,* so how can the levels as they are taught in the Kālacakra tradition be a valid description of the ten levels of the ārya? Well, what if you were to say that the qualities of the levels taught in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* are wrong because they contradict those of the Kālacakra? I think that just as praising the Buddha by talking of his features and signs of enlightenment is to speak of only a part of Buddha's qualities, so the qualities of the levels as taught in the *Great Commentary* are but a fraction of his qualities, but scholars should examine this.

How bliss meditates upon emptiness

This has two outlines:

1. Examining doubts over the nature of the emptiness to be meditated upon
2. A brief explanation of how bliss meditates upon emptiness

Some say that the emptiness to be meditated on in the glorious Kālacakra refers solely to the emptiness endowed with every supreme aspect, because emptiness as mere negation of the object of refutation as taught in the Perfection Vehicle is explained as having no essence. This, they say, is confirmed by *A Short Teaching on Our Assertions Concerning the View,* which says:

The emptiness of examining the aggregates
is without essence like the plantain tree.
Emptiness endowed with supreme characteristics
is not like that.[409]

In reply to this assertion it has been said:

"The emptiness of examining the aggregates is without essence like the plantain tree." The meaning of these lines is that when examining the aggregates with analysis and nothing is found, it is "without essence" to conclude that nothing therefore exists at all and to fall to a view of nihilism. Synonymous with that is a quote

from the Supreme and Unchanging summary in the Gnosis chapter: [481] "The emptiness that comes from examining phenomena that are a collection of subtle atoms is an emptiness far from a nonexistence emptiness."[410] Therefore you should be ashamed to deprecate the emptiness that is the nature of all phenomena.[411]

However the verses of *A Short Teaching on Assertions Concerning the View* can be understood in the following way:

The emptiness of examining the aggregates
is without essence like the plantain tree.
Emptiness endowed with supreme characteristics
is not like that.

Emptiness seen as phenomena,
without birth, without cessation:
Meditation upon that emptiness
is not investigation of the aggregates.

All phenomena are empty,
said by the Buddha to be without essence.
For practitioners to see emptiness,
he taught this method.

All phenomena of compassion
are said by the Buddha to be without essence.
For practitioners to see compassion,
he taught this method.

Pacification that is without beginning or ending,
the fundamental nature[412] of phenomena and nonphenomena extinct,
the indivisibility of emptiness and compassion,
this is taught to be bodhicitta.[413]

If these verses are explained in detail, the context will be more easily understood. The emptiness taught as an object of meditation in *A Short Teaching on Assertions Concerning the View,* which supplements the Kālacakra, is

of two types: nonaspected emptiness and aspected emptiness. The first type is an emptiness in which the aggregates and so forth are investigated by an analytical mind and, like the plantain tree, their essence is not to be found. Aspected emptiness or empty-form "emptiness endowed with supreme characteristics is not like that." It is not an emptiness that is the mere refutation of the object to be refuted by analysis. So what is it? It refers to forms of "emptiness seen as phenomena" of the three realms, characterized by being devoid of the nature of birth or cessation like images in a prognostic mirror. Meditation upon that emptiness is not like the meditation in which the aggregates and so forth are investigated by an analytical mind. [482]

Therefore when all phenomena, the aggregates and so forth, are investigated with an analytical mind, the result is an emptiness of not finding a single atom. Therefore all phenomena are said by the Buddha to be without essence. He taught this as a method for practitioners of this path to see aspected and nonaspected emptiness. Similarly, when all phenomena of compassion, common or exclusive, are investigated by analysis, not a single atom is found. Therefore the Buddha said that they were without essence like the plantain tree. Nevertheless, for practitioners of this path, he taught this as a method to see the common compassion and exclusive compassion, or unchanging bliss.

In this way, the lack of any inherent beginning or ending is "pacification." Phenomena and nonphenomena extinct since beginningless time is "the fundamental nature." Aspected and nonaspected emptiness and compassion, or unchanging bliss, are indivisible. This is taught to be bodhicitta.

If these verses are explained all together, the meaning of the verse beginning "The emptiness of examining the aggregates" is still as explained above. Similarly the meaning of the line from the Supreme and Unchanging summary in the Gnosis chapter that runs "The emptiness that comes from examining phenomena that are a collection of subtle atoms is an emptiness far from a nonexistence emptiness" must also accord with how I have explained the verse beginning "The emptiness of examining the aggregates." This is because this line is quoted by Anupamarakṣita in his *Six Yogas* and explained by Sūryaśrī in his commentary to this text.[414]

> So as not to fall into the systems of Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, and Yogācāra, "The emptiness that comes from examining phenomena that are a collection of subtle atoms."

After this introduction he continues:

> So as not to enter the systems of the hedonist Cārvāka, so as to cast far away the nihilist, "an emptiness far from nonexistence."

Therefore the verse beginning "The emptiness of examining the aggregates" teaches both aspected and nonaspected emptiness as ultimate meditations of this path. [483] The lack of essence mentioned in the lines "is without essence like the plantain tree" and "All phenomena of compassion, said by the Buddha to be without essence" is explained in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra:*

> For example, the plantain trunk,
> when cut up, is nothing.
> Likewise, when investigated,
> the self too is not genuine.[415]

A sutra also says:

> Just as someone might split the unripe trunk of the plantain tree to seek its essence only to find no essence within or without, so should you know all phenomena.[416]

This lack of essence can be compared to the lack of essence of a plantain tree. Therefore do not misconstrue the meaning of this term.

Furthermore those who say that the emptiness ascertained by a practitioner of the Madhyamaka in the Perfection Vehicle is not the emptiness that is the ultimate object of meditation for the great bliss of highest yoga tantra, because there is an even higher emptiness, are not correct. *Investigation of the Views of Ourselves and Others* summary from the Inner chapter of the *Great Commentary* states:

> It is taught that first the views of the outsiders are refuted. Then the views of the first three of our tenets are refuted. Finally the unchanging great bliss meditates upon the emptiness ascertained by the Mādhyamika.

Just how is this taught?[417] In the same summary it says:

> Similarly the tantra says:

"Space, cessation, uncompounded phenomena,
these three are permanent.
All that is compounded is impermanent.
Self is empty, there is no doer.
Perception born from the senses,
without taking on the aspect,
directly perceives the collection of atoms.
These are the assertions of the Vaibhāṣika
from the ocean of Kashmiri texts."[418]

This is a presentation of Vaibhāṣika tenets. The tantra continues:

Objects creating consciousness with aspect
do not appear to sense organs.
Space is like the barren woman's son,
cessation is like space,
compositional factors have no form,
the three times are not concomitant,
there is no form that does not obstruct,
this is understood by the Sautrāntika.[419]

Having presented the Sautrāntika tenets the tantra continues:

There is no holder of parts,
and subtle atoms do not exist;
like experiences in a dream,
they appear as nonobjects;
ultimate consciousness exists,
freed from subject and object.
These are proclaimed for crossing the ocean [484]
of the Yogācāra doctrine.[420]

After these presentations the exclusive assertions of each of these tenets is refuted. The *Condensed Tantra* states:

Those who say that "person" inhabits the body,
their tenet is weakened by examination of its nature.[421]

This is a refutation of the Vaibhāṣika.

> Those who hold to conventional truth also
> do not know the ultimate, holding it as nonexistent.[422]

This is a refutation of the Sautrāntika.

> Those who hold the three realms to be consciousness
> assert the existence of consciousness.[423]

This presents the assertion of the Vijñāvāda.[424] The *Great Commentary* then continues primarily with a refutation of that assertion and incidentally with a refutation of the first two tenet systems' assertion of truly existing compounded phenomena. This section begins:

> Therefore, analytically searching for a consciousness with a single or manifold nature, it is not found, and so the asserters of consciousness are weakened.[425]

The *Great Commentary* continues with a refutation of the phenomena asserters,[426] who claim that creation, duration, and destruction exist by their own natures, and then proceeds to an ascertainment of the subtle emptiness that is the Madhyamaka view. This passage runs from "Now the faults of momentary birth and destruction are taught" up to "It could not arise from a combination because they would be mutually exclusive and therefore not one."[427]

The commentary continues:

> "Therefore the Mādhyamika say
> that the wise do not assert
> consciousness to exist ultimately.
> Not possessing a nature
> that is one or many
> it is like a lotus in the sky.
> Not existing, not nonexisting,
> not possessing the natures of these two,
> freed from the four extremes.
> This is known by the Mādhyamika."
>
> Those who weaken the extremes are not weakened. Why? "They propound nondual emptiness and compassion" means that here

> compassion, nonapprehending and nonconceptual, together with emptiness supreme in all aspects, will enter the three times for the sake of the knowledge of the three times. They are of the tenet of the buddhas.[428]

To explain this a little: the verses ending with the line "This is known by the Mādhyamika" [485] refer to the way Mādhyamikas ascertain emptiness. Those persons of the Madhyamaka school who "weaken the two extremes" of existence and nonexistence do not fall from reality. How do Mādhyamikas not fall from reality? "They propound nondual emptiness and compassion." This is the main topic, and is explained by the following lines. "Here," at this juncture, when the main themes of Kālacakra are being practiced, the yoga of "compassion" or unchanging bliss, which is "nonapprehending and nonconceptual," one-pointedly dwells in the emptiness ascertained by the Mādhyamika, in union with and indivisible from "emptiness supreme in all aspects. With the Madhyamaka view of reality, it will enter the three times for the sake of gaining "the knowledge of the three times." If a meaningful understanding of this passage is not reached, the foundation for the ultimate great-bliss meditation will not be there. The discerning mind, therefore, needs to exercise great subtlety on this point.

Furthermore it says in the Supreme and Unchanging summary:

> Because of this, by the force of the instincts of the four kinds of Buddhists, the Buddha taught the meditation of the impermanence of self to those who propound the self. Those who propound phenomena are taught the totality meditations on earth, and so forth.[429] Those who propound consciousness are taught the meditative concentration upon mere perception. The Mādhyamika are taught meditations upon the dreamlike, unchanging, and nondual gnosis. In this way there is the nonself of persons and the nonself of phenomena. There is the nirvana with remainder of the Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, and Yogācāra. There is the nirvana without remainder, the nonabiding, of the Mādhyamika in which all cause and effect has ceased.[430]

This passage too states that the Madhyamaka view is the ultimate view of the meditations of highest mantra.

A brief explanation of how bliss meditates upon emptiness

[486] The unchanging bliss consciousness meditates on the very emptiness ascertained by the Mādhyamika through the lines "Not existing, not nonexisting," and so forth. This is the position of the tantra and commentary as has just been explained. As to how that is accomplished, initially the mind is trained in the common path. The *King of Meditative Concentration Sutra* states:

> If phenomena are analyzed for nonself,
> and if that analysis is meditated upon,
> this becomes the cause for the fruit of nirvana;
> other causes will bring no such peace.[431]

As this quote indicates, the subtle emptiness as taught by the protector Nāgārjuna and the glorious Candrakīrti is initially ascertained by study and thought. That is meditatively analyzed again and again to produce an actual or similitude special insight[432] in which deep ascertainment[433] of this subtle emptiness is experienced. Eventually, when the innate bliss is generated, that emptiness is recalled by this bliss, and placement meditation is practiced on that emptiness in a meditative state where no objects are to be analyzed or conceived.

Such a bliss-and-emptiness gnosis is the supreme of all special insights. The reason for using meditative analysis[434] when one first meditates to develop special insight is that it increases the strength of the ascertaining mind's hold on emptiness. When great bliss is nonanalytically and single-pointedly placed on emptiness, the hold of the ascertaining mind also becomes stronger. The reason for this is that for as long as one remains in the meditative concentration on bliss and emptiness, the moving winds of the conceptual minds are stilled and not present, which means that the mode of apprehension will not weaken. Moreover, because great bliss is the best consciousness for meditating upon emptiness, that apprehension will actually become stronger. Furthermore bliss that takes emptiness as its object brings about the descent and stable ascent of the bodhicitta element in the central channel and prevents it from moving elsewhere. This creates a special bliss within the body, which becomes the causal condition for the primordial or clear-light mind to develop into the entity of great bliss. [487]

The way to meditate

This is under two headings:

1. Identifying the mahāmudrā consort, the special cause of unchanging bliss
2. How the meditations of the three types of practitioners rely on the mahāmudrā consort to develop the unchanging bliss

Identifying the mahāmudrā consort, the special cause of unchanging bliss

The mahāmudrā consort is the mother deity of the Kālacakra in the aspect of mother-and-father embrace developed as an actual phenomenon during the branch of recollection. This is the meaning of the previously quoted lines from the seventy-third verse of the Gnosis chapter:

> In a flash of lightning resemblance
> arises a definitive creator of unmoving bliss,
> all features complete.[435]

Also verse 113 says:

> A mere apparition of the mind, born from the mind,
> like a reflection in a mirror,
> upon whom all bodhisattvas and buddhas have relied,
> upon whom the mighty yogis rely.[436]

Using these verses as an authority, the Supreme and Unchanging summary from the *Great Commentary* says:

> Until the finality of enlightenment the yogi meditates on this mahāmudrā, this mere appearance within the mind.[437]

Furthermore, in verse 198 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, it says:

> Mudrā, like an illusion,
> in mind and space like an image in a mirror;
> myriad beams radiate forth like pure lightning,

illuminating the three worlds,
the external inseparable from the body,
a nonobject, a mere appearance,
the mind dwelling in space,
embracing the nature of mind,
the forms of many beings
are solely this mudrā.[438]

And further on:

For the attainment of perfect enlightenment,
the she-creator of supreme buddha,
supreme, unsullied mudrā consort, unchanging in aspect,
all-pervading, dispelling darkness vast as space,
the path traveled by yogis, forever unchanging,
the radiance of gnosis
destroying the impurities of existence,
meditate upon this wisdom of Kālacakra.[439]

[488] The mahāmudrā consort is as described here and in many other verses. She is to be recognized as the form of Viśvamātā embraced by Kālacakra. The Supreme and Unchanging summary from the *Great Commentary* says:

> The mahāmudrā consort is of the noninherent nature of all phenomena, endowed with every feature supreme, the Prajñāpāramitā, the creator of buddha. She is also known as "the source"[440] because from this source all noninherently existing phenomena arise. The noninherently existing phenomena include the ten powers, the non-fears, and so forth of the 84,000 groups of dharmas. The arising of these is from the source, the realm of buddha. The place of the buddhas and the bodhisattvas is a place of joy and a place of birth. That which gives rise to blood, urine, and semen is not the source. Here the realms of desire and nondesire of those of samsara are not those of the tathāgata. Therefore the source has the nature of the dharmadhātu; it is Viśvamātā embraced by Buddha Kālacakra and at all times is divorced from all obscuration.[441]

These and other passages clearly teach that when the yogi arises in the form of Kālacakra in the aspect of mother-and-father embrace, the mahāmudrā consort refers to the mother in the form of Viśvamātā. Therefore, as previously explained, yogis of high intelligence enter union with as many mahāmudrā consorts as there are atoms in Mount Meru, and these mahāmudrā consorts are mostly in the form of Viśvamātā.

How the meditations of the three types of practitioners rely on the mahāmudrā consort to develop the unchanging bliss

Practitioners of high, middling, and low intelligence in the form of Kālacakra mother and father must focus on mother-and-father union and dwell single-pointedly in that desire. The *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Concerning meditative concentration, unchanging bliss is achieved from the yearning for the desired goddess.[442]

[489] Nāropa's commentary to *A Short Teaching on Initiations* repeats these words of the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary*.[443] In the Supreme and Unchanging summary of the *Great Commentary,* an opponent is questioning the thinking of the *Great Commentary:*

> How does the yogi develop desire in his mind for an apparition of the mind, then destroy the obscurations of the mind and enjoy the gnosis of unchanging bliss when this apparition is a body devoid of atoms?[444]

A Short Teaching on Initiations says:

> From desire for the mahāmudrā consort,
> unmoving bliss is born;
> initiated by the great wisdom,
> the unmoving is realized.[445]

In commentary on this, Nāropa says:

> "Mahāmudrā consort" is a form arising from space. The "desire" is one's own meditation, from which the "unmoving" is born.

> This refers to the halting of the emission from the vajra jewel. This is the body innate joy, speech innate joy, and mind innate joy.[446]

These passages clearly teach that with oneself in the form of Kālacakra mother and father, one develops desire for union and generates the unchanging bliss. This is the way the mahāmudrā consort generates unchanging bliss.

The practitioner of low intelligence meditates in this way but is unable to generate unchanging bliss by relying on a mahāmudrā consort from the very beginning, so as a method of developing unchanging bliss, he first relies upon an activity mudrā consort to bring the bodhicitta down to the tip of the vajra jewel. Thereafter this drop is prevented from changing or moving elsewhere by the power of the mahāmudrā consort, from which arises one instance of unchanging bliss. This is the first of the 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss. After this he develops the second and following instances of unchanging bliss by relying on the mahāmudrā consort. In this connection, immediately after quoting the tantra verses beginning "A mere apparition of the mind" as a source for mahāmudrā consort meditation, [490] the Supreme and Unchanging summary says:

> These are the definitive words of the Buddha. The yogi abandons the changing bliss that arises from the union of the two external organs, meditates on the mahāmudrā consort, this mere apparition of mind, until the finality of enlightenment.[447]

Therefore, up to and including the branch of recollection, any or all of the three types of practitioners will generate bliss by the union of the two organs. The practitioner of low intelligence will especially rely on an activity mudrā consort and develop changing bliss through the union of the two organs. However later he will be able to generate unchanging bliss by relying on a mahāmudrā consort, and from that point onward the yogi "abandons the changing bliss that arises from the union of the two external organs and meditates upon the mahāmudrā consort, this mere apparition of mind, until the finality of enlightenment." In the phrase "mere apparition of mind," the word "mere" does not negate the reality of the mahāmudrā consort, but negates atom-created materiality, as in the case of external form.

The practitioner of middling intelligence generates unchanging bliss

through reliance on a wisdom consort, and apart from the difference in consort, his practice is similar to the above. The practices of relying upon these two types of consorts have been explained in the section on recollection.

The practitioner of high intelligence, from the moment he develops the ability to produce unchanging bliss, relies solely on the mahāmudrā consort to generate unchanging bliss. In the form of Kālacakra mother and father, he focuses single-pointedly on union and meditates on desire. This causes the caṇḍālī fire to blaze, and one red speck travels to the crown of his coarse body. When it is stabilized, the white bodhicitta melts and descends through the central channel to the tip of the vajra jewel, where it is held firm by the power of the mahāmudrā consort. From this, one instance of unchanging bliss arises, and this bliss, indivisible from oneself in the form of empty-form Kālacakra mother and father, [491] directly cognizes nonaspected emptiness like water being poured into water. This is the first of the 21,600 instances of bliss, the attainment of the path of seeing—wherein emptiness is newly seen with direct perception—and the attainment of the first level, great joy.

Using the above process as an illustration, the 21,600 white drops are then stacked up in succession inside the central channel from the tip of the vajra jewel to the center of the crown cakra. Similarly 21,600 red specks are stacked from the crown to the tip of the vajra jewel, and 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss, developed in dependence on the drops and arranged in groups of 1,800, will form the twelve levels.

The way that the twelve levels of the Kālacakra tradition are presented as the ten levels of the ārya paths of practice and the reasons for that have already been explained. From the tip of the vajra jewel to the center of the secret-area cakra, 3,600 white drops are stacked inside the central channel. The lower 1,800 drops give rise to 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss. This is the first level. The 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss that arise in dependence on the upper 1,800 drops make up the second level. Likewise the levels from the secret area to the navel and other cakras can be known from the previous section on divisions by numbers.

On the creation of instances of bliss from the drops stacked one after another from the tip of the vajra jewel to the crown, the *Great Commentary* on the seventy-fifth verse of the Gnosis chapter says:

> Whatever [drops] there are of bodhicitta travel from the forehead to the throat, heart, navel, and secret place. They are

> stopped by the power of prāṇāyāma. At the secret place the body drop is halted. Likewise the speech, mind, and gnosis drops are halted at the navel, heart, and throat. "Of these drops, the moving fluid" means that the fluid, which is liquid by nature and different from the body drop at the secret place, which is naturally thick, is spoken of as "moving fluid." This is stopped at the "tip of the victory banner of the vajra jewel," meaning at the opening of the organ. [492] This moving fluid is "wisdom gnosis, if bliss is granted by the cause of the unmoving succession of drops." At this time this is not the gnosis of the activity mudrā consort but the accomplishment of wisdom gnosis. Because it is immobile, "the instances of unmoving bliss are dharmadhātu here" and granted by Prajñāpāramitā. Therefore the bliss of the mahāmudrā is supreme and unchanging.[448]

The meaning of this passage is as follows. The drops, indicated by the word "whatever," reach down from the forehead to the secret area. Those that are coagulated drops are stopped from falling by the power of prāṇāyāma. They are the body, speech, mind, and gnosis drops and are stopped at the secret area, navel, heart, and throat respectively. The molten fluid, which is different from the solid body drop at the secret area, is halted at the opening of the organ at the tip of the vajra jewel. By what is it blocked? By the mahāmudrā consort. Therefore this molten fluid, which is given the name "moving fluid," is halted and made immobile by the mahāmudrā consort. If instances of unchanging bliss are granted with the succession of stacked drops prevented from moving elsewhere as a cause, then at that time this bliss is the bliss of wisdom gnosis and becomes the fourth initiation. It is "not the gnosis of the activity mudrā consort." Because the succession of drops does not move to other places, the instances of unmoving or unchanging bliss are here called dharmadhātu. From what cause are they produced? They are granted or produced by the mahāmudrā consort Prajñāpāramitā. This is the meaning of the above passage.

Similarly the specks or red bodhicitta constituents are stabilized from the crown to the tip of the vajra jewel. The *Later Kālacakra Tantra* says:

> From fluid rising up, specks traveling down,
> the indestructible melody of Brahmā,
> from which, stains upon the vajras

of body, speech, and mind are destroyed,
to become an enlightened buddha.[449]

The root tantra *A Short Teaching on Initiations* also says:

When living beings die, moon nectar falls,
sun specks of Rāhu move up,
and consciousness is of samsara.
Greater than that, moon nectar moves up,
Sun specks of Rāhu move down,
and consciousness is of unchanging bliss.[450]

[493] These verses are saying that the white bodhicitta constituent is stacked up from the tip of the vajra jewel to the crown, and the red speck constituent is stacked downward from the crown to the tip of the vajra jewel. From this the mind turns into the 21,600 instances of bliss and finally into the nonabiding nirvana.

To summarize, the 21,600 drops of the white constituent are stabilized within the central channel from the tip of the vajra jewel up to the center of the crown cakra. One instance of unchanging bliss is generated in dependence upon each drop, and by 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss joining with emptiness, the resulting gnosis of bliss and emptiness destroys the clinging to true existence and its imprints as well as the imprints of falling bliss. Also, by stopping the 21,600 breaths, the winds of the twelve wind movements are halted. Each instance of bliss is divided into a path of noninterruption and a path of freedom. Each instance of bliss as the direct cognition of emptiness on the path of noninterruption is the antidote to clinging to true existence and its imprints. Each instance of bliss in its aspect of unchanging bliss is the antidote to falling bliss and its imprints. The paths of freedom are the states of actual abandonment accomplished by the noninterrupted paths, and they are also accompanied by instances of bliss and so number 21,600.

The way the instances of unchanging bliss halt the wind movements is as follows. Each wind movement consists of approximately 1,800 breaths, and each creation of unchanging bliss halts one breath. In this way, with the completion of 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss, one complete wind movement has been halted. Applying this process to the other wind movements, each level has 1,800 instances of unchanging bliss, and so with the

completion of each level, one wind movement is halted. Finally 21,600 instances of unchanging bliss are generated, [494] the twelve levels are accomplished, clinging to true existence and falling bliss, along with their imprints, are destroyed. The twelve wind movements are halted, and the twelve aspects of truth and the sixteen realities are achieved.[451]

On this the tantra says:

> Meditate on the supreme and unchanging.
> With vajra placed inside lotus,
> bring the winds into the drops,
> the drops into the cakras;
> the movement of drops halted at the vajra,
> always rigid, the yogi continuously raises fluid.
> With the yoga of mahāmudrā,
> the descent to the vajra, and by its blessing,
> the instances of supreme unchanging,
> completed at 21,600,
> will bring the great enlightenment,
> the attainment of Vajrasattva.[452]

The necessity for the practitioner of high intelligence to abandon activity and wisdom mudrā consorts and to rely solely on a mahāmudrā consort once he has developed the ability to generate unchanging bliss, and for practitioners of middling and low intelligence to do the same once they have developed the ability to induce unchanging bliss solely in reliance upon the mahāmudrā consort, is taught in verse 199 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter:

> Mind abandons impure activity mudrā consorts
> and mentally conceived wisdom mudrā consorts.
> For the attainment of perfect enlightenment,
> the she-creator of supreme buddha,
> supreme, unsullied mudrā consort, unchanging in aspect,
> all-pervading, dispelling darkness vast as space,
> the path traveled by yogis, forever unchanging,
> the radiance of gnosis
> destroying the impurities of existence,
> meditate upon this wisdom of Kālacakra.[453]

The verse beginning "Mudrā, like an illusion"[454] quoted in the Supreme and Unchanging summary is prefaced by the words "The characteristics of the mahāmudrā consort are spoken of." Also the *Root Tantra*, quoted in the same summary, says:

> Abandoning activity mudrā consorts
> and conceived wisdom mudrā consorts,
> meditate upon the mahāmudrā
> with the yoga of the supreme and unchanging.[455]

Valid cognition

The *Vajragarbha Commentary* says: [495]

> Apparitions are seen by a nonconceptual mind. A nonconceptualizing and nonmistaken cognition is said to be a direct cognition. This is of four kinds: direct sensory cognition, direct mental cognition, direct yogic cognition, and direct self-knowing cognition. These reveal, engage, attain, and experience.[456]

As this quote makes clear, the way that the six-branched yogas are determined as being direct cognitions is from the point of view of the cognition being nonmistaken and nonconceptual regarding the empty forms. These empty-form apparitions are clear unobstructed appearances, and the cognition therefore is nonconceptual. The cognition is unmistaken and undeceived as regards the appearance of these empty forms and is therefore a valid cognition. It has already been explained what type of valid cognition the first five branches are. This sixth branch can be classified as yogic valid cognition directly perceiving emptiness. However, because it is a nonconceptual, nonmistaken consciousness experiencing supreme and unchanging bliss, Butön Rinpoché has called it a direct self-knowing cognition.[457] Gyaltsap Rinpoché also asserts it to be a direct self-knowing cognition.[458]

Purification divisions

The form aggregate group of six phenomena is purified by this branch. Purification can be divided into the ten types because of the cessation of the five mandala winds of the right and five mandala winds of the left. The

Great Commentary on verse 115 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter states:

> "The glorious meditative concentration is the wheel carrier." This refers to Vairocana. Meditative concentration is of ten kinds because of the cessation of the ten winds.[459]

Results

On the immediate results the *Great Commentary,* on verse 119 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter, says:

> "Then the purification accomplished by meditative concentration": this refers to the apprehending consciousness and objects apprehended becoming as one. The unchanging bliss it produces is spoken of as meditative concentration. Therefore the purification accomplished by meditative concentration is that "in a few days," referring to the days of three years and three fortnights,[460] the "gnosis form will be accomplished." This refers to enlightenment with its attainment of the ten powers and so forth.[461]

[496] Concerning the ultimate results, the aggregate of form, the earth element, the organ of the body, the sensory source of smell, the anus, and the action of speaking are the six phenomena transformed into nonobscuration to become Vairocana and so forth.

> Know how the lotus of the empty-form mudrā consort
> in recollection yoga induces great unchanging bliss.[462]

Therefore, with an extensive explanation of these vajra words, the branches of recollection and meditative concentration, and the completion stage itself, have been explained.

36. The Fruits of the Two Stages

This has two outlines:

1. The immediate results of the generation stage and completion stage
2. Ultimate results

The immediate results of the generation stage and completion stage

This is under two headings:

1. The immediate results of the generation stage
2. The immediate results of the completion stage

The immediate results of the generation stage

Bright Lamp says:

> Activity rituals, pacification and so forth,
> likewise the eight siddhis.[463]

The immediate results of the generation stage are the lower siddhis such as pacification and increase, which are achieved by the twelve or eight great activities, as well as the eight middling siddhis. A more extensive explanation can be known from the tantra and commentary.

The immediate results of the completion stage

These can be known from the sections on each of the branches.

Ultimate results

The ultimate result of the generation and completion stages is the attainment of full and perfect enlightenment:

> Activity rituals, pacification and so forth,
> likewise the eight siddhis;
> enlightenment also, the supreme.[464]

The generation and completion stages produce lower, middling, and supreme results. The lower results are the siddhis of pacification, increase, and so forth, and the middling results are the eight siddhis. These are not the only results, because "enlightenment also" is the supreme result of the two stages.

The generation stage, as previously explained, [497] is completed when the mindstream has been ripened for the actual development of the special completion stage, whose branches from withdrawal to meditative concentration are practiced as has been described. From this arises "full and perfect enlightenment by single instances." This means that after the completion of 21,600 instances of supreme and unchanging bliss comes the initial accomplishment of enlightenment. Then comes the yoga of the great bliss of complete enlightenment, where all instances are without differences of quality, whether one or many, the supreme nonduality of method and wisdom. This is spoken of in the fifth summary of the Realms chapter:

> Here the meditator meditating upon all the instances attains "full and perfect enlightenment by single instances." This means that the practitioner meditating upon the 21,600 instances of supreme unchanging bliss firstly attains full and perfect enlightenment by instances of supreme unchanging bliss. After that comes the yoga of complete enlightenment, the supreme nonduality, where all instances are without difference, whether one or many.[465]

Furthermore verse 162 of the Gnosis chapter says:

> The flow of the moon and sun is weakened,
> the great winds of the two paths also are halted,

the lotus awakens the vajra, the moon melts
and engages with the great form of the sun.

Phenomena and nonphenomena become one,
the indestructible is seen in the three-existence forms.
At that time, as he moves to the supreme level,
there is not the slightest nonduality for such a yogi.

The wrathful, the buddhas, goddesses,
Rasavajrā, Kṣitigarbha, and so forth,
manifest in space minds of great joy to the yogi
at this time of accomplishment.

On a solar day of the moon, at dawn and midnight,
the desired siddhi of the yogi arises.
Because of the moment, rains of jewels or flowers
fall to earth.[466]

To explain these verses a little: the flow of the left and right moon and sun winds is weakened, [498] and in the pathways of the left and right channels the "great wind," or karmic winds, are completely halted. The lotus of the consort awakens and stiffens the vajra of the yogi, causing the moon drops to melt from the forehead and to stabilize from the tip of the vajra jewel to the crown. This "engages with the great form of the sun," which refers to the sun specks of red bodhicitta stabilized from the crown down to the vajra jewel. Because of this, "phenomena," referring to method or unchanging bliss, and "nonphenomena," referring to wisdom or the empty-form mahāmudrā consort, become indivisibly one. All indestructible sounds abiding in the hearts of all beings living in the "three-existence forms," or three realms, are well perceived and seen. At that time for such a yogi there is not the slightest separation between method and wisdom as he moves to the supreme level of ultimate union.

Having arrived at this ultimate level, the yogi possesses minds of supreme and ultimate joy. At this time of accomplishment, the thirty-six phenomena associated with his being, consisting of the aggregates, elements, and so forth, are all freed of obscuration. Wrathful deities such as Yamāntaka, buddhas such as Vajrasattva, goddesses such as Viśvamātā, female vajra bodhisattvas such as Rasavajrā, and male bodhisattvas such as Kṣitigarbha

all manifest in space. This desired siddhi of the yogi, the ultimate level of union, is realized on a "solar day of the moon," meaning on a particular solar day at midnight or at dawn. Due to the power of this moment of supreme and complete enlightenment, a rain of jewels or a rain of flowers falls to earth.

The status of the body, speech, and mind of the yogi who has realized this highest enlightenment is taught in the next verses:

> The body is of clarity, devoid of atoms, like the sky,
> well completed by the signs and so forth.
> The three worlds are clear, free of obscuration,
> and like appearances in a dream.
>
> Speech is completely unbroken, in languages of many,
> entering the hearts of others. [499]
> Mind is full of the highest bliss, unmoving,
> at all times embraced by the innate.[467]

These verses will be explained a little. For the yogi who has achieved the ultimate union, the coarse body composed of atoms has gone. The empty-form Kālacakra in mother-father aspect is of total clarity, devoid of obscuration and obstruction, and is therefore like the sky. It is a body perfected by the thirty-two signs of an enlightened being and by the eighty marks, referred to by the words "and so forth." To the mind of the yogi the three worlds are as clear as crystal, free of obscuration. They are dreamlike appearances, untainted by the contamination of the two types of obscurations.

The speech of the yogi is "completely unbroken," meaning that its continuum is never severed. "In the languages of many," meaning in languages that accord with those of countless living beings, it enters accordingly "the hearts," or minds, of countless other living beings. The mind of the yogi is filled with the highest and supreme bliss one-pointedly focused upon emptiness. It never moves from its meditation for an instant and at all times is embraced by the innate clear-light mind.

These verses teach the four bodies and the four vajras of body, speech, mind, and gnosis. How? The body, speech, and mind vajras are clearly taught. The gnosis vajra is indicated by the line "Mind is full of the highest bliss" because the ultimate bliss is established as being the gnosis vajra. Concerning the four bodies, the two lines beginning "The body is of clarity"

directly teach the saṃbhogakāya enjoyment body adorned with the signs and marks and implies the nirmāṇakāya basic emanation body with its countless emanations. The empty form adorned with signs and marks that is first actualized at the end of the last instance of unchanging bliss is the saṃbhogakāya, whereas the manifestation of empty forms or "manifold saṃbhogakāya forms" adorned with the signs and marks and directly produced by that saṃbhogakāya to pervade the three realms is the basic nirmāṇakāya. [500] Both these are directly taught by the lines beginning "The body is of clarity." These empty-form "manifold saṃbhogakāya forms" pervading the three realms are clearly taught in the *Great Commentary.* On verse 232 of the Methods of Accomplishment chapter it says:

> With the application of direct cognition "manifold saṃbhogakāya forms like stars in the sky," meaning like a host of stars, are seen with the fleshly eye and so forth in the three worlds and the three times like dreams and illusions.[468]

But isn't this how empty forms are seen during withdrawal and the other branches? The *Great Commentary* continues:

> With the attainment of full and perfect enlightened mind, they are seen by the gnosis eye.[469]

This teaches that at the time of enlightenment, these forms are seen by the gnosis eye. Therefore the forms are actual buddha forms adorned with the signs and marks and appearing like a host of stars.

But in this tradition doesn't the saṃbhogakāya enjoyment body refer to the indestructible speech of the buddha? How can there be a saṃbhogakāya adorned with the signs and marks? It is true that the speech of the buddha is known as the saṃbhogakāya, but the tantra also talks of a saṃbhogakāya adorned with the signs and marks. In the third summary of the Realms chapter it says:

> These two, the buddha and the bodhisattva, are related as teacher and requestor by way of nirmāṇakāyas or saṃbhogakāyas. The former and the latter are not contradictory.[470]

Also:

> He displayed the mandalas and magical creations, then entered the saṃbhogakāya, source of the nirmāṇakāya.[471]

This teaches that Sucandra withdrew his emanations and entered his own saṃbhogakāya. The nirmāṇakāya implied by the saṃbhogakāya enjoyment body is spoken of in the third summary of the Realms chapter as being of countless manifestations: [501]

> By the force of previous prayers and with all wisdom and merit accumulations complete, glorious qualities such as fearlessness all perfected, the conquering Buddha in countless emanated illusory and nonobscured forms in the great thousand world realms employs the languages of every living being when various requestors request the Buddha in the limitless tongues of limitless living beings. With omniscient speech he teaches worldly and nonworldly dharma. Yet the Omniscient One is not more than one. For example, someone with great powers of illusion will manifest many forms, and with the forms he has created he will uproot trees and shake mountaintops. In the guises of Mahādeva and Viṣṇu, he will bind Devadatta and others. Yet this great illusionist is not more than one person. In this way, the illusory emanations of buddhas and bodhisattvas work for living beings.[472]

As this passage indicates, by the power of prayers and the completion of the two accumulations, the conquering buddhas do not move even for an instant from the nonconceptual state of unchanging bliss and emptiness united as one taste. At the same time the three realms appear to them as a dream, without obscuration, and as clear as images in a prognostic mirror. By knowing how the three realms appear in impure aspect to the minds of others, they see the complete extent of existent conventional phenomena as clearly as a berry in the palm of the hand. From this omniscience there emerges limitless emanated forms, each of which employs speech that accords with languages of limitless living beings and teaches a dharma that is disposed to the minds of each these beings. In this way the buddhas work solely for the benefit of living beings for as long as space lasts. [502]

The line from the above verses that begins "Speech is completely unbroken" teaches that the continuum of speech of the Buddha is at no time

severed and "in languages of many," meaning in accord with each of the differing languages of limitless living beings, it "enters the hearts of others," meaning that it satisfies the minds of those living beings. This teaches the saṃbhogakāya as the speech of a buddha. The "mind" in the third line, "Mind is full of the highest bliss," is one of unchanging bliss dwelling indivisibly in emptiness. This line, therefore, teaches the svabhāvikakāya nature body, or great bliss body. "Unmoving, at all times embraced by the innate" teaches the innate clear-light mind dwelling indivisibly with emptiness and therefore teaches the dharmakāya.

The ultimate unchanging bliss merged inseparably with emptiness, as signified by the letter *vaṃ*, indivisible from form endowed with supreme characteristics, as signified by the letter *e*, represents the ultimate result. Furthermore the thirty-six phenomena of the aggregates and so forth, free of obscuration, and arranged in five categories are signified by the five parts of the letter *vaṃ*. The thirty-six phenomena of the elements and so forth, free from obscuration and arranged in six categories, are signified by the six parts of the letter *e*. These indivisible method and wisdom phenomena are phenomena of the final result.

This has been a brief presentation of the resultant state. A more extensive description can be known from the *Great Commentary* and the tantra.

> The precious lotus garden of the inner, outer, and other,
> adorned with stamen garlands of two stages and results,
> radiates light of millions of illuminating scripture and reasoning.
> May this mighty sun of excellent explanation shine here now. [503]

> Whatever virtue is to be gained
> from these efforts to explain the path of indivisibility
> of great bliss with form supremely endowed,
> supreme essence of the ocean of tantra and commentary,
> is dedicated for every living being
> to attain the highest enlightenment.

> For me too, when appearances of this life fade,
> may I be reborn in the greatest place of practice,
> the land known as Shambhala,
> there to be taught unerringly the path
> by the Kalkī king Mahipala.[473]

There in a three-dimensional mandala
of the complete body, speech, and mind,
adorned with many precious jewels,
may I receive complete and supreme initiation
and hold vows and pledges as I would hold my life.

With mind ripened by initiation,
a vessel fit for the two stages,
then by the practice of the greatest of all paths,
the stages of completion and generation,
the four levels of approximation and accomplishment,
by the path of 21,600
instances of unchanging bliss,
may I attain the four bodies. [504]

The ocean of this tantra and commentary
is of a depth difficult to fathom,
and I am of little intelligence and lacking in effort.
Therefore all mistakes I have made
I confess to the gurus, deities, and ḍākinīs,
and ask that you correct them.

Willingly acceding to the request of Dorjé Tseten, official of the great dharma king,[474] cherisher of the precious doctrine, this work entitled *Ornament of Stainless Light: An Exposition of the Outer, Inner, and Other Kālacakra* was begun in the dharma palace that is Riwo Dechen Monastery, a Kangyur and Tengyur treasure house, and completed in the hermitage of Tashi Tengka by the ascetic Norsang.

Appendixes

1. Table of Tibetan Transliteration

Phonetic spelling	Wylie transliteration
Butön Rinpoché (Butön Rinchen Drup)	Bu ston Rin po che (Bu ston Rin chen grub)
Chögyal Jangpa	Chos rgyal Byang pa Rnam rgyal grags pa bzang po
Chöjé Choglé Namgyal	Chos rje Phyogs las rnam rgyal
Chomden Rikral	Bcom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri
Desi Sangyé Gyatso	Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho
Dölpopa Sherap Gyaltsen	Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan
Dro Lotsāwa Sherap Drak	Bro Lo tsā ba Shes rab grags
Düpa Chenpo Ngok	'Dus pa chen po Rngog
Geden	Dge ldan
Geluk	Dge lugs
Gendün Drup	Dge 'dun grub
Gendün Gyatso	Dge 'dun rgya mtsho
Geshe Lhündrup	Dge bshes Lhun grub
Gö Lotsāwa Shönu Pal / Yisang Tsewa	Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal / Yid bzang rtse ba
Gojo Tsewang Namgyal	Go 'jo Tshe dbang rnam rgyal
Gyaltsap Darma Rinchen / Gyaltsap Jé	Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen / Rgyal tshab Rje
Gyijo Öser	Gyi jo 'od zer
Jado Rinpoché	Bya do Rin po che
Jamyang Chogön	'Jam dbyang chos kyi mgon po
Jé Tsongkhapa / Losang Drakpa	Je Tsong kha pa/Blo bzang grags pa
Jetsün Sherap Sengé	Je btsun Shes rab seng ge

Phonetic spelling	Wylie transliteration
Karmapa Rangjung Dorjé	Ka rma pa Rang byung rdo rje
Khedrup Jé Gelek Pal Sangpo	Mkhas grub Rje Dge legs dpal bzang po
Khedrup Norsang Gyatso	Mkhas grub Nor bzang rgya mtsho
Khenpo Paltsek	Mkhan po Dpal brtsegs
Lobsang Norbu Shastri	Blo bzang nor bu Sha stri
Ma Lotsāwa Gewai Lodrö	Sma lo tsā ba Dge ba'i blo gros
Minling Lochen Dharma Śri	Smin gling Lo chen Dhar ma shri
Namgyal Dratsang	Rnam rgyal grwa tshang
Nangso Dorjé Tseten	Nang so Rdo rje tshe brtan
Ngawang Dorjé	Nga dbang rdo rje
Palden Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen	Dpal ldan Bla ma dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan
Paldrak	Dpal grags
Palzom	Dpal 'dzoms
Phukpa Lhündrup Gyatso	Phug pa Lhun grub rgya mtsho
Ra Lotsāwa Dorjé Drak	Rwa Lo tsā ba Shes rab grags
Rangtong	Rang stong
Rendawa Shönu Lodrö	Red mda' ba Gzhon nu blo gros
Riwo Dechen / Riwoché	Ri bo bde chen/Ri bo bde che
Rongpa Sherap Sengé	Rong pa Shes rab seng ge
Sakya	Sa skya
Samgyal	Bsam rgyal
Shentong	Gzhan stong
Shong Lotsāwa Dorjé Gyaltsen	Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan
Sonam Rinchen	Bsod nams rin chen
Sumpa Yeshé Paljor	Sum pa Ye shes dpal 'byor
Taksang Lotsāwa Sherap Rinchen	Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen

Phonetic spelling	Wylie transliteration
Tashi Tengkha	Bkra shis steng kha
Trayang	Bkra dbyangs
Trinlepa Choglé Namgyal	'Phrin las pa Phyogs las rnam rgyal
Trisong Detsen	Khri srong sde btsan
Tsalmin Chökyi Drakpa	Mtshal min Chos kyi grags pa
Tsuklak Trengwa	Gtsug lag phreng ba
Tsurpu Jamyang Chenpo Döndrup	Mtshur pu 'Jam dbyang chen po don grub

2. Enumerations Mentioned in the Text

three main channels

1. *left channel:* Above the navel it is white, carrier of seminal fluid, belonging to the water element; also known as *lalanā, iḍā,* moon channel, and method channel. Below the navel it is yellow, reaching to the anus, carrier of excrement, of the earth element, and known as *piṅgalā.*
2. *right channel:* Above the navel it is red, the carrier of blood, belonging to the fire element, known as *piṅgalā, rasanā,* sun channel, wisdom channel, and path of the sun. Below the navel it is black, reaching to the tip of the genitals, carrier of urine, of the air element, and known as *meṣa.*
3. *central channel:* Above the navel it is green (black according to other commentators), belonging to the space element, carrier of the airs, known as *dvayatiga* (*gnyis spangs,* "elimination of the two," referring to the other two channels), Rāhu, neuter, supreme channel, avadhūtī, and woman of excellent mind. Below the navel it is blue, reaching to the tip of the genitals, belonging to the gnosis element, known as *śaṅkhinī,* Kālāgni channel, the channel of falling fluid, and the all-pervading.

three qualities: activity *(rdul ba, raja),* darkness *(mun pa, tama),* and lightness *(snying stobs, sattva).*

four drops of the four periods: The body drop, situated at the center of the forehead and navel cakras, creates the waking period. The speech drop, situated at the center of the throat and secret cakras, creates the dream period. The mind drop, situated at the center of the heart and jewel cakras, creates the deep sleep period. The gnosis drop, situated at the center of the navel cakra and the tip of the jewel cakra, creates the fourth, or bliss, period.

four joys: joy, supreme joy, special (or joyless) joy, and innate joy.

fivefold clairvoyance: celestial sight, celestial hearing, knowing the minds of others, remembering past lives, and knowledge of magical powers.

five eyes: fleshly, celestial, wisdom, dharma, and gnosis.

five buddha families and corresponding wisdoms: Akṣobhya, wisdom of reality; Amoghasiddhi, wisdom of accomplishment; Ratnasambhava, wisdom of equality; Amitābha, wisdom of analysis; and Vairocana, mirrorlike wisdom.

six families

FAMILY	BUDDHA	YOGA	ELEMENT	AGGREGATE
sword	Amoghasiddhi	praṇayāmā	air	volition
jewel	Ratnasambhava	retention	fire	feelings
lotus	Amitābha	recollection	water	recognition
wheel	Vairocana	meditative concentration	earth	form
vajra	Vajrasattva	withdrawal	gnosis	gnosis
vajra	Akṣobhya	meditative absorption	space	consciousness

six families (alternate): vajra family (space), karma family (air), jewel family (fire), lotus family (water), wheel family (earth), and curved-knife family (gnosis).

six groups of six: six elements (space, air, fire, water, earth, and gnosis), six aggregates (consciousness, mental formations, feelings, recognition, form, and gnosis), six organs (ear, nose, eyes, tongue, body, and mind), six sensory source objects (sound, smell, form, taste, touch, and phenomena), six faculties (secret place, voice, hands, legs, anus, and supreme organ), and six activities of these faculties (urinating, speaking, taking, moving, excreting, emitting fluid).

six cakras: crown, heart, throat, mid-eyebrow, navel, and secret place.

six mountain ranges around Meru (from inner to outer): Nilābha, Mandara, Niṣadha, Maṇikara, Droṇa, and Śīta.

six continents circling Meru (from inner to outer): Candra, Sitābha, Kuśa, Kiṃnara, Krauñca, and Rudra.

six phenomena of the gnosis group (withdrawal): gnosis aggregate, gnosis element, mind, sound, the supreme organ, and emission of urine.

six phenomena of consciousness group (meditative absorption): consciousness aggregate, space element, organ of hearing, element of phenomena, secret place, and control of seminal fluid.

six phenomena of mental formation group (prāṇāyāma): mental formations aggregate, air element, nose, touch, anus, and discharge of excrement.

six phenomena of the feeling group (retention): feeling aggregate, fire element, the eye sense power, element of taste, hands, and the activity of going.

six phenomena of the recognition group (recollection): recognition aggregate, water element, tongue, form, legs or voice, and the action of taking.

six phenomena of form group (meditative concentration): form aggregate, earth element, organ of the body, sensory source of smell, anus, and the action of speaking.

colors of the phenomena of the six elements: Space is green, air is black, fire is red, water is white, earth is yellow, and gnosis is blue.

eight siddhi: sword, pills, eye ointment, swift walking, essence pills, sky walking, invisibility, and traveling underground.

eight petals of heart cakra and their positions: *rohinī (snar ma)* east, *hastijihvā (lag ldan lce)* southeast, *piṅgalā (dmar ser)* south, *puṣya (rgyal)* southwest, *jaya (rgyal ba)* west, *alambuśa ('phyang ba)* northwest, *meśa (lug)* north, *kuha (tshul 'chos)* northeast.

ten signs on the yoga of withdrawal: smoke, mirage, fireflies (lights in the sky), butter-lamp flame, blazing, moon, sun, *rāhu,* supreme part, and drop.

ten planets: Sun *(nyi ma, aditya),* Moon *(zla ba, soma),* Mars *(mig dmar, kujalaṅgāraka),* Mercury *(lhag pa, budha),* Jupiter *(phur bu, bṛihaspati),* Venus *(pa sangs, śukra),* Saturn *(spen pa, śanaiścara),* Rahū *(sgra can, rāhu),* Kālāgni *(dus me, kālāgni),* and Ketu *(mjug ring, ketu).*

ten winds and corresponding buddha families and elements: life-sustaining (Akṣobhya, space), coexisting (Amoghasiddhi, air), upwardly moving (Ratnasambhava, fire), pervading (Amitābha, water), *nāga* (Vairocana, earth), turtle (Amoghasiddhi, air), lizard (Ratnasaṃbhava, fire), *devadatta* (Amitābha, water), *dhanaṃjaya* (Vairocana, earth), and downwardly expelling (Vajrasattva, gnosis). Extra winds: joyful air, inborn joyful wind.

twelve houses or signs: Aries *(lug, meṣa)*, Taurus *(glang, vṛiṣaba)*, Gemini *('khrig pa, mithuna)*, Cancer *(karkata, karka)*, Leo *(seng ge, siṃha)*, Virgo *(bu mo, kanyā)*, Libra *(srang, tulā)*, Scorpio *(sdig pa, vṛiśchika)*, Sagittarius *(gzhu, vṛdhanus)*, Capricorn *(chu srin, makara)*, Aquarius *(bum pa, kumbha)*, and Pisces *(nya, mīna)*.

twelve months: Caitra *(nag pa)*, Vaiśākha *(sa ga)*, Jyeṣṭha *(snron)*, Aṣaḍha *(chu stod)*, Śrāvana *(gro bzhin)*, Bhādra *(khrums)*, Aśvinī *(tha skar)*, Kārttikā *(smin drug)*, Mṛigaśira *(mgo)*, Puṣya *(rgyal)*, Maghā *(mchu)*, and Phālguna *(dbo)*.

twenty-seven lunar mansions: *aśvini (tha skar), bharaṇī (bra nye), kṛittikā (smin drug), rohiṇī (snar ma), mṛigaśīrṣa (mgo), ārdrā (lag), punarvasū (nab so), puṣya (rgyal), āśleṣa (skag), maghā (mchu), pūrvaphalgunī (gre), uttaraphalgunī (dbo), hasta (me bzhi), citrā (nag pa), svātī (sa ri), viśakhā (sa ga), anurādhā (lha mtshams), jyeṣṭha (snron), mūla (snrubs), pūrvāṣāḍhā (chu stod), uttarāṣāḍhā (chu smad), śravaṇa (gro bzhin), dhaniṣṭha (mon gre), śatabhiṣak (mon gru), pūrvabhādra (khrums stod), uttarabhādra (khrums smad)*, and *revatī (nam gru)*.

156 cakra petals (Kālacakra): crown 4, forehead 16, throat 32, heart 8, navel 64, and secret place 32.

120 cakra petals (other tantras): crown 32, throat 16, heart 8, and navel 64.

3. Time Measurement

Measurements that apply to most types of sentient beings
21,600 subtle breaths = one breath
six breaths = one minute
sixty minutes = one hour
sixty hours = one day (21,600 breaths)
thirty days = one month
twelve months = one year
100 years = completed life span

For example, 21,600 human subtle breaths make up one human breath; six human breaths make up one human minute, and so on.

Measurements for specific types of beings
one insect breath = one subtle human breath
one ghost breath = thirty human breaths
one breath of the shortest lived desire-realm gods = 360 human breaths
one asura breath = one human day, or 21,600 human breaths
one breath of the gods *(śakti)* of None Higher *(kāniṣṭha)* form realm = one human year
one breath of the gods *(pradhāna)* of the fourth formless realm = 21,600 human years

The four ages of the Buddha's doctrine
The age of completeness/perfection *(caturyuga, rdzogs ldan)*
The age of three *(treatyuga, gsum ldan)*
The age of two *(dvāparayuga, gnyis ldan)*
The age of troubles *(kaliyuga, rtsod ldan)*

These are periods of varying levels of wealth, dharma, pleasures, and well-being during the life span of the Buddha's doctrine. They are applied to the duration of the doctrine in each of the twelve sectors after Rudracakri's final battle. The age of completeness has all four of the above qualities, the age of three lacks one, the age of two lacks two, and the age of troubles lacks three.

Each of the four ages lasts 450 years in each of the twelve sectors. Therefore the four ages last for 1,800 years in each of the twelve sectors and for 21,600 years in all twelve.

The 5,000-year duration of the doctrine according to sutra in ten sets of five hundred years

Three eras of realization (era of the arhat, era of the nonreturner, era of the stream-enterer)
Three eras of practice (era of special insight, era of meditative concentration, era of morality)
Three eras of transmission (era of Abhidharma, era of Sutra, era of Vinaya)
Era of adherence to mere signs

4. Linear Measurement

Kālacakra

8 very subtle particles (ultimate diminution of matter) = 1 subtle particle
8 subtle particles = 1 hair tip
8 hair tips = 1 black mustard seed
8 black mustard seeds = 1 louse
8 lice = 1 barley seed
8 barley seeds = 1 fingerwidth
24 fingerwidths = 1 cubit *(khru, hasta)*. The distance from elbow to fingertips (stretched cubit) or from elbow to base of thumb (contracted cubit)
4 cubits = 1 bow or armspan *(gzhu, dhanus)*
2,000 armspans = 1 krośa *(rgyang grags)*
4 krośa = 1 yojana *(dpag tshad)* (about nine miles)

Abhidharma

7 very subtle particles = 1 subtle particle
7 subtle particles = 1 iron particle
7 iron particles = 1 water particle
7 water particles = 1 rabbit particle
7 rabbit particles = 1 sheep particle
7 sheep particles = 1 ox particle
7 ox particles = 1 louse
7 lice = 1 barley seed
7 barley seeds = 1 fingerwidth (middle finger)
24 fingerwidths = 1 cubit
4 cubits = 1 armspan
500 armspans = one *krośa*
8 krośa = 1 yojana

5. Kālacakra Word-Numerals*

Term	Tibetan	Number	Explanation
space	*nam mkha'*	0	nothingness, lack of form
drop	*thig le*	0	represented as a circle = zero
emptiness	*stong pa*	0	nothingness, lack of matter
form	*gzugs*	1	only one aggregate of form
moon	*zla ba*	1	only one moon
rabbit	*ri bong can*	1	epithet for moon
rhinoceros	*bse ru*	1	lives alone and only has one horn
white light	*'od dkar*	1	epithet for the moon
nature	*rang bzhin*	1	the one nature of phenomena
eyes	*mig*	2	two eyes
hand	*lag pa*	2	two hands
method and wisdom	*thabs shes*	2	the two wings of enlightenment
sex	*'khrig pa*	2	sexual union of a couple
passage or journey	*'grod pa*	2	the northern and southern passages of the sun
union	*zung*	2	a union of two
yama	*gshin rje*	2	yama is both male and female
twins	*mtshe ma*	2	two children born simultaneously
fire	*me*	3	three fires: horse-face fire of the southern ocean, the householder fire, the all-consuming fire
heat	*tsha ba*	3	the three hot medicinal plants: *piper longum, piper nigrum,* and ginger

*Sources: Minling Lochen Dharma Śrī, pp. 18–24; Shawo Tsering and Loyang Gyal, pp. 64–78.

Term	Tibetan	Number	Explanation
points	*rtse*	3	the three points of the trident.
qualities	*yon ten*	3	the three qualities: *raja, tamas,* and *sattva*
world	*'jig rten*	3	the three worlds: above, on, and below earth; or desire, form, and formless realms
māra	*bdud*	4	the four types of māras.
ocean	*rgya mtsho / chu gter*	4	the great ocean reflects the four colors of Meru's sides: white, blue, red, and yellow
river	*chu bo*	4	Ganges, Sindhu, Śīta, and Pakśa, the four rivers
veda	*rig byed*	4	*Sāma, Ṛg, Atharva, Yajur,* the four Vedas
sect	*sde ba*	4	Sarvāstivādin, Sthavira, Saṃītiya, and Mahāsaṃgika, four divisions of the Vaibhāṣika philosophical school
aggregates	*phung po*	5	the five aggregates
arrow	*mda'*	5	Kāma's five arrows: intoxication, lust, stupidity, dryness, and binding. Alternately, arrogance, stupidity, great stupidity, unconsciousness, and mindlessness.
elements	*'byung ba*	5	earth, water, fire, air, space
enjoyments	*nyer spyod*	5	flowers, incense, light, scented water, and food—the five offerings
sensory pleasures	*'dod yon*	5	form, sounds, smell, taste, touch—the five sense offerings
senses	*dbang po*	5	the five sense organs
ornaments	*rgyan*	6	the six masters or ornaments of the world: Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, Dignāga, Vasubandhu, and Dharmakīrti

Term	Tibetan	Number	Explanation
taste	*ro*	6	the six kinds of taste: sweet, bitter, etc.
time	*dus*	6	the six seasons
junction	*mtshams*	6	the six changeover times of the six seasons
horse	*rta*	7	the seven horses of the sun
jewels	*rin chen*	7	the seven kinds of jewels or the seven possessions of a cakravartin king
mighty one	*thub pa*	7	the seven mighty buddhas of this eon
mountains	*ri bo*	7	the seven ranges surrounding Meru
continents	*gling*	7	the seven continents surrounding Meru
planets	*gza'*	7	the seven alternating planets of the week
ṛṣi (sages)	*drang srong*	7	the seven *ṛṣi* who inhabit the "seven constellations of the north"
auspiciousness	*bkra shis*	8	the eight auspicious signs
heart sons	*nye ba' sras*	8	the eight bodhisattvas close to the Buddha
nāga	*glu*	8	the eight great *nāgas*
snake	*brul*	8	*see nāga*
wealth	*nor*	8	the eight wealth gods
channel	*rtsa*	9	the three channels plus six cakras
demon	*(rakṣā) srin po*	9	the nine *rakṣā* who guard the nine treasures
opening	*bu ga*	9	the nine openings of the body
treasure	*gter*	9	*see* demon
direction	*phyogs*	10	the ten directions
finger	*sor mo*	10	the ten fingers

Term	Tibetan	Number	Explanation
power	*stobs*	10	the ten powers of a buddha
virtue	*dge ba*	10	the ten virtues
avatāra	*'jug pa*	10	the ten incarnations or *avatāra* of Viṣṇu
fierce	*khro bo*	10	the ten fierce protectors
endowment	*'byor ba*	10	the ten endowments of a human form
Śiva/Īśvara	*dbang phyug*	11	the eleven names of Īśvara
source or giver of happiness	*bde 'byung/byed*	11	one of the eleven names of Īśvara
wrathful	*drag po*	11	the eleven wrathful protectors
hari	*'phrog byed*	11	one of the eleven names of Īśvara
karaṇa	*byed pa*	11	the eleven astrological *karaṇa*
dependent origination	*rten 'brel*	12	the twelve links
source	*skye mched*	12	the twelve sense sources
sun	*nyi ma*	12	the twelve houses or signs of the sun
house	*khyim*	12	the twelve houses or signs
bodiless	*lus med*	13	epithet for the god *kāma,* who manifests as the thirteen prostitutes
desire	*'dod pa*	13	the thirteen prostitutes of the celestial desire realms
the intoxicator	*myos byed*	13	*see* desire
various	*sna tshogs*	13	thirteen types of gods
stupa level	*gdugs rim*	13	the thirteen levels of a stupa
existence	*srid pa*	14	six celestial desire realms, one form, and one formless realm, four kinds of animals, humans, hells
mind	*yid / shes bu*	14	fourteen types of "those with mind" i.e., living beings. *See* existence

Term	Tibetan	Number	Explanation
lunar day	*tshes*	15	number of lunar days in each half month
solar day	*nyin zhag*	15	approximately the number of days in each half of a lunar month
king	*rgyal po*	16	the sixteen kings of the sixteen regions of Jambudvīpa
lord of men	*mi bdag*	16	see king
part	*cha shas*	16	the sixteen periods between new and full moon
faults	*nyes pa / skyon*	18	the eighteen faults of the body
sphere	*khams*	18	six consciousnesses, six organs, six objects
conqueror	*rgyal ba*	24	the twenty-four buddhas mentioned in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*
principles	*de nyid*	25	the twenty-five principles of the Sāṃkhya
circle	*khor lo*	27	the twenty-seven lunar mansions
stars	*skar ma*	27	the twenty-seven lunar mansions
teeth	*so*	32	number of teeth in an adult
twice born	*gnyis skyes*	32	the thirty-two teeth, each of which is "born" twice

6. Approximation and Accomplishment in the Six-Branched Yoga

withdrawal *(so so sdud pa, pratyāhāra)*	body vajra	virtue in the beginning	shape yoga	approximation *(bsnyen)*	accomplishment of form *(gzugs sgrub)*
meditative absorption *(bsam gtan, dhyāna)*	body vajra	virtue in the beginning	shape yoga	approximation	accomplishment of form
prāṇāyāmā *(srog rtsol)*	speech vajra	virtue in the middle	mantra yoga *(nyer sgrub)*	near accomplishment *(srog sgrub)*	wind accomplishment
retention *('dzin pa, dhāraṇā)*	speech vajra	virtue in the middle	mantra yoga	near accomplishment	wind accomplishment
recollection *(rjes dran, anusmṛti)*	mind vajra	virtue at the end	dharma yoga	accomplishment *(sgrub pa)*	accomplishing bliss *(bde sgrub)*
meditative concentration *(ting nge 'dzin, samādhi)*	gnosis vajra	virtue at the end	purity yoga	great accomplishment *(sgrub chen)*	bliss accomplishment *(bde grub)*

7. The Six Elements and the Inner World

	space	air	fire	water	earth	gnosis
aggregates	consciousness	mental formations	feelings	recognition	form	gnosis
organs	ears	nose	eyes	tongue	body	mind
source objects	phenomena	contact	taste	form	smell	sound
faculties	secret place	voice	hands	legs	anus	supreme organ
activities	excreting	moving	taking	speaking	urinating	
winds (1)	life-sustaining	coexisting	upwardly moving	pervading	*nāga*	downwardly expelling
winds (2)	joyful	turtle	lizard	*devadatta*	*dhanaṃjaya*	inborn
cakras	crown	heart	throat	forehead	navel	secret
fingers (and toes)	pinkie	ring	middle	index	thumb	
channels	central (above navel)	right (below navel)	right (above navel)	left (above navel)	left (below navel)	central (below navel)

8. Kālacakra-Related Chronology

According to Khedrup Norsang Gyatso

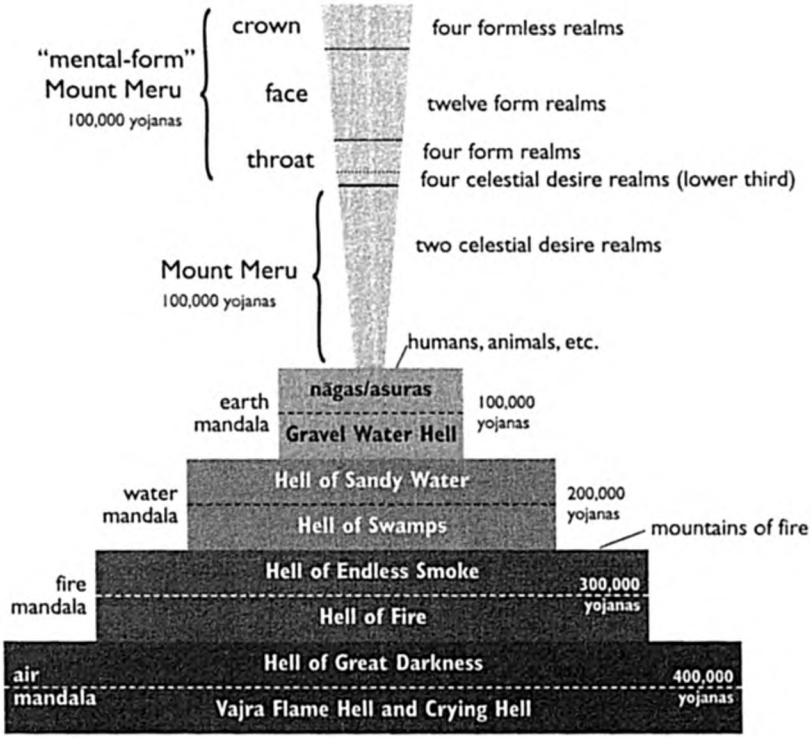
rudra Iron Monkey, 961 B.C.E.	The birth of Buddha
sarvadhari Earth Rat, 933 B.C.E.	Buddha leaves the palace.
Vaiśākha full moon, *jaya* Wood Horse, 927 B.C.E.	Buddha's enlightenment
Caitra full moon, *vikrama* Iron Dragon, 881 B.C.E.	Kālacakra tantra taught. Mañjuśrī Yaśas prophesied to appear in 600 years (604 years precisely).
Last period of Vaiśākha full moon, *vikrama* Iron Dragon, 881 B.C.E.	Buddha passes away.
Water Sheep, 877 B.C.E.	Shambhala king Sucandra, manifestation of Vajrapāṇi, passes away four years after the teaching.
877 B.C.E.	Shambhala king Sureśvara, manifestation of Kṣitigarbha
777 B.C.E.	Shambhala king Tejī, manifestation of Yamāntaka
677 B.C.E.	Shambhala king Somadatta, manifestation of Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhī
577 B.C.E.	Shambhala king Sureśvara, manifestation of Jambhaka
381 B.C.E.	End of the 500-year era of the arhat. Beginning of the 500-year era of the nonreturner
477 B.C.E.	Shambhala king Viśvamūrti, manifestation of Mānaka
377 B.C.E.	Shambhala king Sureśāna, manifestation of Khagarbha

277 B.C.E.	First Kalkī, Mañjuśrī Yaśas, initiates the ṛṣi and compiles the *Condensed Tantra.* Prophesied the arrival of barbarians 800 years after his death.
177 B.C.E.	Second Kalkī, Puṇḍarīka; composed *Vimalaprabhā*
77 B.C.E.	Third Kalkī, Bhadra
24 C.E.	Fourth Kalkī, Vijaya
120 C.E.	Beginning of the 500-year era of the stream-enterer
124 C.E.	Fifth Kalkī, Sumitrabhadra
224 C.E.	Sixth Kalkī, Ratnapāṇi
324 C.E.	Seventh Kalkī, Viṣṇugupta
424 C.E.	Eighth Kalkī, Sūryakīrti
524 C.E.	Ninth Kalkī, Subhadra
620 C.E.	End of the 1,500-year era of realization. Beginning of the 500-year era of special insight
624 C.E.	A Wood Monkey year. Tenth Kalkī, Samudravijaya. "Barbarians" arrive in Makha, their dharma to remain 1,800 years. The 403 "fire, sky, ocean" years begin.
806 C.E.	A Fire Dog year. Eleventh Kalkī, Aja. The 221 *karaṇa* astronomy years begin.
1027 C.E.	Twelfth Kalkī, Sūrya. First sixty-year cycle. 1,907 years since Kālacakra first taught. Kālacakra tantra "arrives" in India.*
1120 C.E.	Start of the 500-year era of meditative concentration
1127 C.E.	Thirteenth Kalkī, Viśvarūpa
1227 C.E.	Fourteenth Kalkī, Śhaśiprabha
1327 C.E.	Fifteenth Kalkī, Ananta

* Some say Kālacakra was at least partially in written form in India before this date. Some Tibetans say Kālacakra was translated into Tibetan in 1027 C.E.

1427 C.E.	Sixteenth Kalkī, Mahīpalā
1483 C.E.	*Ornament of Stainless Light* written.
1527 C.E.	Seventeenth Kalkī, Śrīpala
1620 C.E.	Beginning of the 500-year era of morality
1627 C.E.	Eighteenth Kalkī, Hari
1727 C.E.	Nineteenth Kalkī, Vikrama
1827 C.E.	Twentieth Kalkī, Mahābala
1927 C.E.	Twenty-first Kalkī, Aniruddha
2027 C.E.	Twenty-second Kalkī, Narasiṃha
2127 C.E.	Twenty-third Kalkī, Maheśvara
2120 C.E.	Beginning of the 500-year era of Abhidharma
2227 C.E.	Twenty-fourth Kalkī, Anantavijaya
2327 C.E.	Twenty-fifth Kalkī, Rudracakri
2424 C.E.	Rudracakri defeats barbarians in his ninety-eighth year. The end of the earlier four periods, which began with the passing of the Buddha, and the beginning of the later four periods, which will last 1,800 years.
2427 C.E.	Rudracakri's son, Brahmā, rules Shambhala for 800 years. His other son, Indra, teaches in India.
2620 C.E.	Beginning of the 500-year era of Sutra
3120 C.E.	Beginning of the 500-year era of Vinaya
3620 C.E.	Beginning of the 500-year era of adherence to mere signs
4120 C.E.	End of the Buddha's Perfection Vehicle teachings
4224 C.E.	End of the Vajra Vehicle teachings

9. The Kalacākra World Realm



Mandala measurements refer to diameter. The height of each mandala is 50,000 yojanas.

10. The Sun's Path over the Earth and Water Mandalas

Water mandala

Greater Jambudvīpa (earth mandala)

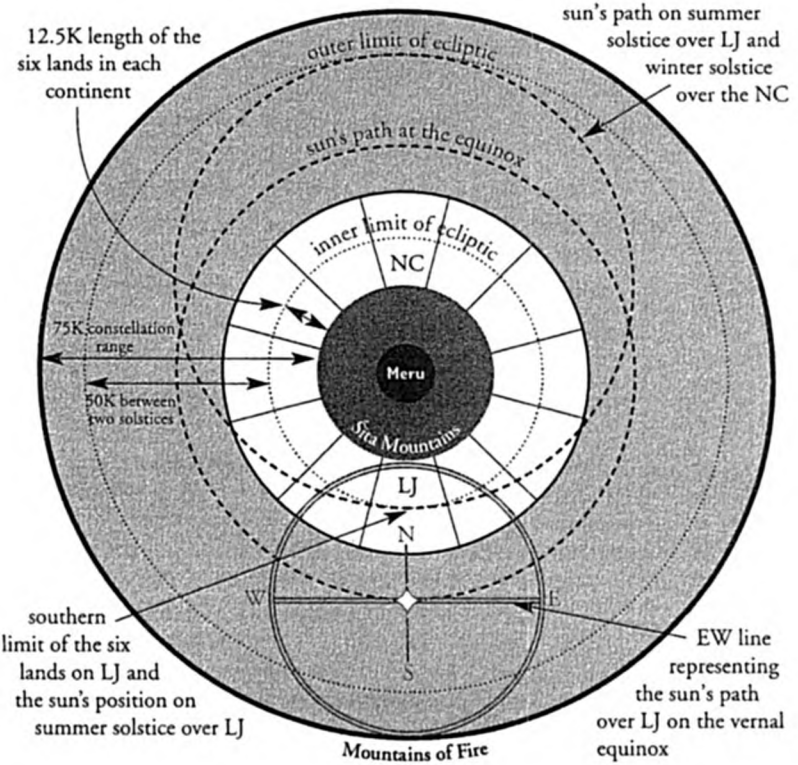
The six seas, mountains, lands, and Meru environs

Abbreviations

NC: Northern continent

LJ: Lesser Jambudvīpa, or southern continent, whose upper half is divided into six lands or regions.

K: 1,000 yojanas



✧ This symbol at the center of the circular gola chart is at the midway point between Mountains of Fire and Śīta Mountains directly opposite the central southern continent. This circle, when segmented into twelve, shows the passage of the houses and the sun over Lesser Jambudvīpa at the vernal equinox. At sunrise on the vernal equinox, the first degree of Aries would be the ascendant *(lagna)*, and marked on the eastern radius of the chart.

Notes

Notes to the Translator's Introduction

1 The Great Vehicle: a Buddhist path directed toward the attainment of buddhahood that is motivated by compassion for all sentient beings.

2 Yogis visualize within their own bodies a psychic body known as a *vajra body,* which is made up of various channels (such as the left, right, and central channels), elemental drops positioned at vital points within the body, channel wheels or *cakras,* and functional winds that move through the channels. This vajra body is the site of practice for the completion stage of tantra.

3 Rāhu and Kālāgnī (or Ketu), although classified as planets, are the ascending and descending nodes of the moon respectively.

4 John Newman discusses Kālacakra's arrival in India in great depth in Sopa et al., p. 65.

5 See Fendall, p. 5; Sopa et al., p. 76.

6 Stearns, pp. 24–27.

7 According to a conversation with Edward Henning.

8 A photo of the mandala appears in Wayman, p. 80.

9 *Cakras,* or channel wheels, are essentially clusters of channels within the vajra body and are usually entwined around the central channel. Likened to a lotus, the channels that run to and from a chakra are called *petals.*

10 *gtum mo, caṇḍālī.* The inner heat developed by sustained concentration and visualization at the navel cakra during completion-stage practices.

11 Abhyākaragupta's attempts to do just this are dealt with in the text.

12 *stong gzugs.* Empty form is central to Kālacakra and is dealt with in detail in *Ornament of Stainless Light.* Briefly, it refers to forms first developed on the completion stage that are devoid of any atomic structure and are not visualized or deliberately projected by the mind but exist of their own volition. These include empty forms of various appearances developed at the beginning of the completion stage, but primarily this term refers to the empty forms of the consort of Kālacakra, known as the *mahāmudrā consort,* and to Kālacakra himself. These empty forms are primary objects of meditation in Kālacakra.

13 As Norsang Gyatso details in this text.

14 Gyaltsap Darma Rinchen (1364–1432), *Abbreviated Explanation of The Six-Branched Yoga of Kālacakra*, Collected Works, vol. *ka.*

15 This simile is used a lot in Kālacakra to illustrate the nature of empty forms. The clairvoyant was usually a young woman who had the power to see prognostic images in a special mirror. These images, like empty forms, would arise of their volition unconstructed by the mind of the clairvoyant.

16 The Sanskrit *praṇāyāmā* is rendered in Tibetan with a term that literally means "wind exertion" *(srog rtsol).* The ending *āyāmā* has several meanings. In the Guhyasamāja tradition it means "lengthening" whereas in Kālacakra it means "stopping." The term *prāṇa* is also multilayered. Therefore, I feel the term is best left in the Sanskrit *praṇāyāmā*, a term familiar to Western devotees of Indian yoga practices.

17 p. 555. >

18 For much of the following discussion on the shentong philosophy of the Jonang, I am indebted to the in-depth analyses found in Ruegg, Stearns, and Fendall.

19 Attempts have been made in the notes to identify and reference many of these critiques, especially those of Rendawa.

20 As explained to me by Sonam Rinchen, student at the Tibetan Medical and Astro College, Dharamsala, India.

21 These paragraphs on the development of traditions of astronomy in Tibet have been mostly drawn from Shawo, pp. 28–32.

Notes to the Introduction

1 *rigs ldan.* Lineage bearer, the lineage being that of the vajra caste.

2 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 15a3.

3 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka*, 141a6.

4 Toh 1395 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī, pha*, 36a7.

5 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 68b6.

6 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 23a2.

7 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 68b7.

8 Fire (3) Sky (0) Ocean (4)—the 403 years from the arising of the barbarians (624 C.E.) to the first sixty-year cycle, *(rab byung, prabhava)* purported to be on the arrival of the *Kālacakra Tantra* in India in 1027 C.E. See Shawo Tsering, chap. 1, p. 48.

9 These begin with the rule of Shambhala king Aja, the eleventh Kalkī (806 C.E.), who reformed *karaṇa* astronomy. See Shawo Tsering, chap. 1, p. 48.

10 First year of the sixty-year cycle.

11 The last year of a sixty-year cycle.

12 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 22b6.

13 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 156, 38b5.

14 A "part" (Tib. *phyogs*) refers to the waxing or waning part of a month. Three parts therefore, is one and a half months.

15 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 23a1.

16 The first of the 1,903 years as calculated previously.

17 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 431b3.

18 Because the *Tantra* prophecy says, "six hundred years from this year," which means, according to the *Great Commentary,* "This is the year the Tathāgata taught the dharma," referring to the *Kālacakra Root Tantra.* The same six hundred years is mentioned in the line "six hundred years after I have passed away." Therefore the year of passing and the year of teaching the *Root Tantra* are the same.

19 Toh 301 Kangyur, mdo sde, *sa,* 42b7.

20 Toh 95 Kangyur, mdo sde, *kha,* 168b1.

21 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 264b3.

22 Forty-six years plus four years: from the time of enlightenment to the first of the (approximately) six hundred years.

23 See glossary.

24 The data obtained or left over at the end of an astronomical period and used for future calculation. I am grateful to Edward Henning for his assitance in this area.

25 Two influential works on astronomical calculation. See bibliography.

26 Beginning with Saturn at zero, seven planets rule the days in turn. The planet ruling this particular day was the sun.

27 According to Edward Henning, normally this means that sixteen mansions have been traversed and the moon is one hour into the seventeenth. The month is usually named after the lunar mansion in which the full moon falls but this is often approximate. The sixteenth lunar mansion is Vaiśākha and the seventeenth is Anurādha. Therefore either the author is using a system of numbering in which "sixteen" means "in the sixteenth mansion" or that the month was named after the sixteenth mansion even though it was actually (although only one hour) into the seventeenth. The hours are hours of "distance" or degrees.

28 A lunar eclipse.

29 Toh 1 Kangyur, 'dul ba, *nga,* 33b7.

30 Toh 301 Kangyur, mdo sde, *sa,* 41a4.

31 Jonang Choglé Namgyal, 1306–86.

32 Because, according to Butön Rinpoché and others, the six hundred years must begin from the year of the enlightenment, which is the Wood Monkey year.

33 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 264b3.

34 Edward Henning says that months are either waxing-led or waning-led depending on which half of Caitra month the sun enters Aries. Entering Aries in the waxing half designates Caitra as a waxing-led month beginning from the first lunar day of the waxing or "bright side." That month becomes the first month of the new year. When the sun enters Aries during the waning or "dark side" of Caitra, Vaiśākha is posited as beginning from that full moon and becomes the first month of the new year. See Lochen, p. 43.

35 The thirtieth lunar day.

36 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 88b2.

37 The twelfth month in the line "Then in the twelfth month on the Caitra full moon" is not twelve months after enlightenment but refers to the twelfth or last month of the year. This could not be accepted if it is asserted that Caitra is always the first month of a Kālacakra year.

38 Dro Lotsāwa Sherab Drak (eleventh century) and Ra Lotsāwa Dorjé Drak (1016–1198), two translators of the Kālacakra through whom the two main lineages passed. Palden Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen (1312–75).

39 Jamyang Chökyi Gönpo: fourteenth-century Sakya lama.

40 These are the 1,682 years up to the 806 C.E. epoch when the 221 years of astronomy began. These years are: the six hundred years of the Yaśas prophecy, the hundred years of his reign, the eight hundred years of the barbarian prophecy, and the 182-year reign of Samudravijaya. Thanks to Edward Henning for his help on this.

41 Chögyal Jangpa Namgyal Drakpa Sangpo (1395–1475).

42 Toh 301 Kangyur, mdo sde, *sa*, 41a4.

43 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 22b6.

44 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 32a6.

45 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 23a2.

46 An epithet of the *Root Tantra.*

47 This is the end of the account beginning at 23a2, in which Khedrup Norsang Gyatso paraphrases between citations.

48 The four types of reliance: not on the person but on the dharma, not on words but on meanings, not on ordinary consciousness but on gnosis, not on interpretable meanings but on definitive meanings. See *The Great Lexicon*, p. 1080.

49 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 22a4.

50 Gyijo Dawa Öser (eleventh century), probably the first translator of the Kālacakra into Tibetan.

51 Ma Lotsāwa Gewai Lodrö. Translator of the Kālacakra (eleventh century).

52 Verses quoted in the *Great Commentary* but not found in the *Condensed Tantra.*

53 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 22a6.

54 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 22a6.

55 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 68b7.

56 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 159, 39a2.

57 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, 22b1.

58 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, 69b7

59 Toh 363 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 142a6

60 Reference not found.

61 *rta mchog ting nge 'dzin, paramāśva samādhi.*

62 Puṇḍarika.

63 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 22b2.

64 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 152, 38a7.

65 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 157, 38b6.

66 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 158, 39a1.

67 Refers to times during the life span of the Buddha's doctrine of varying levels of wealth, dharma, pleasures, and well-being. The age of completeness *(rdzogs ldan, caturyuga)* has all four, the age of three *(gsum ldan, tretāyuga)* lacks one, the age of two (*gnyis ldan, dvāparayuga)* lacks two, while the age of troubles *(rtsod ldan, kaliyuga)* lacks three. See *The Great Lexicon.*

68 *dum bu.* Part, sector. These are the twelve sectors of the outer earth mandala, or Greater Jambuvīpa, which is geometrically divided up into twelve parts. Sometimes called "continents" *(gling).* See chap. 3.

69 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 168, 40a2.

70 The highest realm of the form realms *('og min, akāniṣṭha).*

71 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 23, 24a1. The second line uses word numerals: time = 4, arrow = 5; therefore 54 x 100. See appendix 5.

72 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 164, 39b2.

73 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 152, 38a7.

74 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 165, 39b3.

75 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 14b7.

76 Breaths of karma.

77 *nyan thos, śrāvaka.* Non-Mahayana disciples of the Buddha.

78 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 49a4.

79 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 21a1.

80 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 20b3.

81 Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* 9a5.

82 Quoted in *Bright Lamp;* probably not translated into Tibetan.

83 Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* part 2, 14b4.

84 "Teaching by desire" probably refers to tantric methodology of using desire as the path.

85 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka,* part 2, 84b5.

86 Toh 94 Kangyur, mdo sde, *ka,* chap. 2, 103a2.

87 Toh 3807 Tengyur, sher phyin, chap. 31, 81a5.

88 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *kha,* Realms chapter, 15b4.

89 Arhats are freed from samsara, nonreturners will not take birth again in samsara, stream-enterers have entered the ārya paths.

90 1483/4, the year in which the author was writing.

91 The year 1027 plus 60 x 7 + 37 = 1484.

92 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud; v. 66, 108a3.

93 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 298a6. In the stacked arrangement of the ten-syllable mantra of Kālacakra, the nāda is the squiggle at the very top.

94 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 118a6. The passage as quoted here varies somewhat from the *Vimalaprabhā* passage. *Emptiness* refers to empty form.

95 Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* part 1, 2a7.

96 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 22a3.

97 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka,* chap. 4, 102a2.

98 Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *wi,* 71b3.

99 *spros pa'i mtha' dang bral ba.*

100 Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *wi,* 72b1.

101 Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *wi,* 72b2.

102 Toh 2256 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *wi,* 191b3.

103 The author points out later that in the Kālacakra tantra, one of the main causes of samsara is the loss of semen. Therefore eradication of the predispositions for loss of semen is a particular goal of Kālacakra.

104 As this passage is reproduced in the *Great Commentary,* it would appear to say that the mind *is* the fire at the end of darkness, with "fire" referring to the death

clear light or foundation consciousness. Gyaltsap Darma Rinchen, however, in his *Abbreviated Explanation of The Six Branched Yoga of Kālacakra,* comments on this process using the relevant text from the *Condensed Tantra,* which speaks of the mind coming *after* the fire and the darkness, referring to the two appearances of light and darkness that arise just before the death clear light dawns.

105 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 203b1.

106 *'phen pa.* To cast, throw, project.

107 Sanskritized form of Shönu Lodrö, or Rendawa.

108 See *Lamp Illuminating the Definitive Kālacakra,* pp. 383–428, especially p. 395, line 13.

109 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 4b7.

110 The central channel.

111 Sanskritized form of Gö Lotsāwa Shönu Pal.

112 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *ca,* chap. 18, 150a1.

113 Jado Rinpoché pointed out that the three kinds of tantra are *method tantra,* referring to the two stages of generation and completion; *causal tantra,* referring to emptiness (Abhayākaragupta) or the jewellike disciple (Nāropa); and *resultant tantra,* referring to enlightenment. These three are indicated in the quote by "basis," "suchness," and "the invincible," respectively.

114 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 5a1.

115 Toh 4024 Tengyur, dbu ma, *tsa,* chap. 1, v. 99, 58b7.

116 Notes in the critical edition point out that this assertion refers to Dölpopa.

117 The first of the ten powers of a buddha. It is a wisdom that knows, for example, that from giving comes wealth and not poverty, and that from morality comes happiness and not suffering. According to the tenets quoted above, this wisdom would be an endowment of the buddha essence dwelling within every living being. "Basis" *(gnas)* is the Sanskrit *sthā,* which has the meaning of "correct and proper" as well as its usual connotation of "location." See *The Great Lexicon,* p. 1119.

118 Toh 3824 Tengyur, dbu ma, *tsa,* chap. 13, v. 8, 8a6.

119 Toh 3860 Tengyur, dbu ma, *ah,* chap. 13, 83b6.

120 Toh 3860 Tengyur, dbu ma, *ah,* chap. 13, 84a2.

121 Toh 3862 Tengyur, dbu ma, *ah,* 281a6. Or Toh 107 Kangyur, mdo sde, *ca, Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* chap. 2, 85b7.

122 Toh 107 Kangyur, mdo sde, *ca, Laṅkāvatārasūtra,* chap. 2, 86a4.

123 Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud, *ca,* chap. 59, 265b1.

124 Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud, *ca,* chap. 2, 168a6.

125 *nyer len.* A substantial cause is one whose very entity transforms into the effect, as

a seed becomes a flower, for example.

126 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka,* 5a5.

127 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 17a1.

128 Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* 97a3.

129 Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* chap. 12, 97b3.

130 Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* chap. 7, 58b6.

131 From the Guhyasamāja.

132 The third initiation.

133 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 16a7.

134 *Kālacakra Root Tantra.*

135 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 16b3.

Notes to Part 1

1 *'og min, akaniṣṭha.* The highest of the four form realms.

2 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 9a6.

3 Found in the *Great Commentary,* but probably in the *Root Tantra* also; Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 60a1.

4 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 9b1.

5 Meru widens out to a summit of fifty yojana diameter, which is the diameter of the circle formed by the Śīta Mountains.

6 The lands of Greater Jambudvīpa are called "sectors" *(dum bu),* as it is a land divided into twelve equal sectors, like a giant cake. Greater Jambudvīpa itself and the six lands stretching out from Meru are continents, or islands *(gling).*

7 *rta gdong gi me, vāḍavāgni.*

8 An approximation of the value of pi.

9 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 65a1.

10 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 65b6.

11 This annotation refers to the fact that some translations of the *Vimalaprabhā* and *Condensed Tantra* describe the eastern continent of Pūrvavideha as having the shape of a half moon or semicircle. The same applies to the annotation on Uttarakuru below.

12 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 65b6.

13 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 169, 118b4.

14 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 65a4.

15 *rtse mo*.

16 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 65a4.

17 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 23b6.

18 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku*, gnas 3, v. 11, 7a6. As there is an intervening period of germination in the growth of corn from seed, so there must be an intermediate state or bardo when rebirth is from place to place.

19 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku*, gnas 2, v. 15, 4b2.

20 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku*, gnas 3, 110a1.

21 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 419b1.

22 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 419b4.

23 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 419b4.

24 P2064 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka*-2, 67a3.

25 *mi 'mjed pa*. Epithet for our world meaning fearless or powerful, so called because there is no fear, meaning no fear of dharma practice. See *Great Lexicon*, p. 2068.

26 unreal = southwest, the powerful = northeast, air = northwest, fire = southeast.

27 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 428b4.

28 Thirteenth-century Kadampa master and opponent of the Kālacakra.

29 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka*, khams v. 13, 23b7/23a6.

30 About nine miles, as compared to the Abhidharma yojana of about five miles.

31 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 60b4.

32 There are actually eight hell realms and seven hell locations. The Vajra Flame hell and the Crying hell share the lower half of the air mandala.

33 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka*, khams v. 15, 24a3.

34 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 63a1.

35 *srid rtse*. Another term for the highest formless realm.

36 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 64a2.

37 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 67a1.

38 This amount of human breath is one hundred days for asuras but one hundred years for humans.

39 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 68a4.

40 *Śakti* here refers to the inhabitants of the form realm None Higher, not to be confused with the eight śakti of the mandala.

41 According to Edward Henning, the Sanskrit *dhru* normally means fixed, certain,

or firm, but here refers to thirty human breaths x 21,600 = thirty human solar days = one solar day for a ghost.

42 One hour (twenty-four minutes) = 360 human breaths = one breath of the gods of the desire realm. That multiplied by 21,600 equals one celestial day.

43 One solar day = 21,600 human breaths = one breath of an asura.

44 Here *dhru* refers to one human year, which equals one breath of the inhabitants—the śakti—of the realm None Higher.

45 Four ages = 21,600 human years = one breath of an inhabitant—a prakṛti or pradhāna—of the fourth formless realm.

46 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, khams v. 24, 25a2.

47 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 67a7.

48 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 64a4.

49 Word numerals; read backward it gives 3,145,728,000 hairwidths. To understand this and the following verses, see appendix 5 on word-numerals.

50 The following four versed citations have not been traced.

51 This is the previous number squared, i.e., 9,895,604,649,984,000,000. The following verse below can be worked out likewise.

52 31,128,880,624,384,868,352,000,000,000.

53 The text from "This, in human years, is expressed as" up to "one *mahāsamāpta*" looks like an annotation. It is using the Abhidharma numeration system, whose units increase tenfold. In numerals this comes to 112,063,970,247,785,526,067,200,000,000,000,000 years.

54 *sde.* Group, category.

55 Shong Lotsāwa Dorjé Gyaltsen, translator of the *Kālacakra.*

56 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 445b5.

57 10,000,000,000,000,000.

58 Ratnākaraśāntipa.

59 These nine run from one to a hundred million, increasing tenfold each time. The rest are similar. These and the other Abhidharma units are found in the *Mahāvyutpatti.*

60 Toh 3935 Tengyur, dbu ma, 248a5.

61 *grang med pa.* Beyond number.

62 Specifically the *Buddhāvataṃsaka.* However the units as given here do not match with the units from the same sutra as presented in the ninth-century Tibetan-Sanskrit lexicon the *Mahāvyutpatti,* and I have been unable to find Sanskrit equivalents elsewhere. Therefore these are left in Tibetan.

63 Toh 3935 Tengyur, dbu ma, 250b4.

64 In which case one unit is missing from the list, because from one to *lala* totals 115.

65 Throwing karma ripens at death and determines the realm or status of rebirth by throwing the consciousness into a bardo being of that particular realm. Completing karma determines the quality of life in that particular realm.

66 *bsam gtan, dhyāna.*

67 *nyer sdogs kyi snyoms 'jug, sāmantaka samāpatti.*

68 *dngos gzhi'i snyoms 'jug, maula samāpatti.*

69 These are powerful meditations focused upon each of the five elements, transforming everything into one particular element.

70 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 63b6.

71 Four elements, four colors, limitless space, and limitless consciousness.

72 The commentary explains that the formless realms are without the two syllables *ha* and *hā,* and that this line is there to make it clear that there are not six formless realms.

73 *House (khyim)* refers to the twelve signs of the zodiac—Aries and so on—and not to the usual astrological meaning of "house" as a stationary division of the zodiac.

74 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 454b4.

75 Because Aries overlaps *aśvinī*—the first of the twenty-seven lunar mansions.

76 As the sun and moon were in conjunction.

77 I.e., the calendar year.

78 Spelled *caitra* as a month but *citrā* as a lunar mansion.

79 Sun and moon are regarded as "planets." The Sanskrit term *graha* carries the meaning of "to seize or grab," in the sense of their abilities to influence and rule.

80 Dawn on the southern continent is midday on the eastern continent.

81 *bkra shis.* Another name for Mars. See Lochen, p. 45ff, for synonyms of the planets.

82 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 82b7.

83 The Tibetan translates as "long tail of smoke," hence its alternate translation of "comet."

84 *gola.* Dome, sphere, etc. This term is explained fully later on.

85 Henning explains that steps are incremental or decremental, progressive or regressive, depending on whether a planet is speeding up or slowing down, ahead of its mean or behind its mean.

86 *lag rjes.* A planet will eventually return to its birth sign conjunct with the sun with all increment and decrement canceled out. The intervening time, therefore, provides the basis for the calculation of the fixed motion of that planet.

87 Zodiacal day, lunar day, and solar day are the three kinds of days. (See Gojo, p. 40ff, and Shawo, chap. 6). Therefore the number of, say, lunar days a planet takes to complete its orbit is divided into 1,620 (twenty-seven lunar mansions multiplied by sixty hours or degrees for each lunar mansion = 1,620 hours) to arrive at the fixed motion in terms of degrees.

88 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 82b7.

89 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 82a2.

90 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 84a2.

91 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 84a3.

92 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 84a3.

93 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 84a6.

94 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 85a3.

95 *dus*. Time or season; word-numeral for six, probably referring to either the six seasons of a year or simply to the six houses in the southern half of the gola chart.

96 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 85a7.

97 East as used here refers to a counterclockwise direction or a direction to the right from any point on the circumference while facing the center. West is the opposite.

98 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 85b5. 75,000 yojana is the distance between the Śīta Mountains and the Mountains of Fire, and on the equinox the sun travels overhead on the midway point.

99 *dus sbyor, lagna*. Here refers to the twelve houses or signs of the zodiac. As all twelve houses pass over any given meridian in a day, a new ascendant, or lagna, rises about every two hours. See glossary for other meanings; also Lochen, chap. 15.

100 The twelve houses taught in Kālacakra correspond to the twelve zodiacal signs portrayed in Indian and Western astronomy. The names are virtually the same also. They are called houses rather than signs but do not correspond to the system of fixed houses used in astrology.

101 Using word-numerals, these verses denote how many lunar mansions make up the boundary of each house, as detailed in the previous paragraph. The first figure is the number of lunar mansions passed if *aśvinī*, the first mansion, is counted as one, or the number of the actual lunar mansion if *aśvinī* is counted as zero. The second figure(s) is(are) number(s) of hours. Each position marks the far boundary of each of the houses. For example, Two (eyes) lunar mansions (the first two—*aśvinī* and *bharanī*) and fifteen (lunar-time) hours of the third is the measurement of the house of Aries, which takes up the first two and one quarter lunar mansions. Taurus extends to the fourth *(veda)* lunar mansion and thirty hours (sky = 0, fire = 3) of the fifth.

102 Toh 4322 Tengyur, bzo rig pa, *ngo* chap. 2, 54a6.

103 *zlum po.* Round in the sense of spherical or domelike as well as circular. *Gola* lends itself to a variety of interpretations. To paraphrase the *Great Lexicon,* p. 368, because it holds up the planets and stars above, it is that which "holds up high." Because it rotates the houses above and the seasons on earth, it is that which "rotates." Because it looms over the continents and the mountain ranges like a parasol, it is "domelike." Above Meru it is high, but above the fire mandala it is low. Therefore, it is "uneven in height." Because it possesses the force of the supporting wind, it is heavy, but because it possesses the force of the expelling wind, it is also light. There is the gola of the skies, of the sun, and of the moon traversing the houses and lunar mansions of the earth and so on. This topic is treated to its own chapter in most astronomical treatises. See Lochen, chap. 13, and Gojo, chap. 2.

104 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 85b2.

105 *ri mo.* Drawing, diagram, chart, line.

106 *Sragdhara,* or "garland" meter: four-line verses with twenty-one syllables per line.

107 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 85b4.

108 The Tropic of Cancer runs just below Delhi, India. However the six regions, ending in "India," or *āryadeśa,* finish halfway down the southern continent. Therefore, if the southern continent is regarded as present-day India, the "India" of the six regions would finish halfway down its north-south axis.

109 *'gro lam.* Here refers to the ecliptic but in other contexts better rendered as "path" or "pathway."

110 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 85b5.

111 Thirty hours (space = 0, fire = 3). Sixty hours make one solar day.

112 182 days (eyes = 2, nāga = 8, moon = one) plus half a day completes one 50,000-yojana northward or southward passage of the sun.

113 Unable to trace.

114 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 90a1.

115 Henning explains that in astronomical calculations, figures representing lunar mansions, hours, minutes, etc., are arranged in rows or "places" and are further mathematical configurations. The sun at the spring equinox is at the beginning of the zodiac, and figures such as lunar mansions are at zero.

116 The month is usually named after the lunar mansion in which the full moon appears (Henning).

117 The three months that make up each of the four seasons are graded early, middle, and later.

118 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 88a7.

119 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 88b2.

120 *nyi ldog.* Literally, "sun turning around."

121 "Place" here and further on refers to the position of the sun and to the place in the table of calculations reserved for the position of the sun. When the numbering system for the lunar mansions begins with one and not zero, this quote means that the sun is in the twenty-first mansion (twenty mansions completed) at fifteen degrees, or "hours." Fifteen hours is one quarter of a mansion (sixty "hours of distance," or degrees = one lunar mansion).

122 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 73b7.

123 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 73b7.

124 Jangpa Namgyal Drakpa Sangpo (1395–1475).

125 From the *Condensed Tantra* quoted in the *Great Commentary,* Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* v. 60, 89a4: "For half the path of three hundred thousand, in front of the sun is daytime, behind the sun is night" referring to the circumference of the earth mandala. Therefore, at the equinox, half the circle is night, half is day, and when the sun is directly above the central point of the eastern continent, it must be seen as being on the cusp of nighttime and daytime (i.e., sunrise) from a point halfway around the semicircle south of Meru (i.e., the central point of the southern continent).

126 Abhayākaragupta (Tib. Jikmé Jungné Bepa) (1004–1125), Indian Kālacakra master.

127 The mark "x" or the sign of a cross.

128 This entails the drawing of two further circles, with centers at the two crosses, each with the radius of the distance between the two crosses. Their intersections mark north and south. North, or the tail of the fish, will be larger than the south, or mouth, because the shadow marks are north of the original circle's diameter due to the Tropic of Capricorn being in the south.

129 Toh 1383 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 280b3.

130 1466: 439 years after 1027.

131 Probably a teacher of the author.

132 System of numbering the months, still in use today, dating from the *magha* month in 1227, in which the Mogul king Janghir conquered the region of Minyak. See *The Great Lexicon,* p. 3073.

133 As mentioned previously, this means that eighteen mansions have passed, and the hours and minutes are of the nineteenth lunar mansion of *mūla.* This can be written 18:31:30.

134 The sun moves four and half "hours" a day (approx. one degree). Therefore twenty-three days is 103.5 hours. This is the distance from 18:31:30 to the first point of Capricorn (28.5 hours remaining of *mūla,* the sixty hours of *pūrvāṣāḍhā,* plus fifteen hours of *uttarāṣāḍhā*).

135 This figure is added to the completion of the fourth day.

136 Collected Works, vol. *ka,* 90b1.

137 *nges pa, dhruvaka.*

138 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 69b6.

139 1483/84.

140 The middle place or position in a three-row arrangement multiplied by a constant of eleven or Śiva. (Henning)

141 Reference to a work composed by the author himself: *Lamp Illuminating Summer and Winter Solstices in the Twelve Sectors as Taught in the Astronomical Treatise, the Puṇḍarika Transmission,* pp. 524–36.

142 A note inserted here indicates that the Shong translation has "horns" instead of "peak."

143 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 88a5.

144 On the summer solstice, when the sun is in Cancer, the rays of the sun will reach Meru during the daytime on Jambudvīpa. On the same solar day, when the sun has moved around to the seventh continent directly opposite Jambudvīpa, the rays of the sun will reach the inner limit of the Mountains of Fire.

145 The time taken for the sun to pass from house to house, or approximately thirty days.

146 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 87b5.

147 *gdung byed.* "That which burns or heats." This term refers to the shafts or shoots of light that can be seen radiating from the sun as opposed to the disk of the sun itself.

148 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, khams v. 59, 28b2. Essentially this verse is saying that the rays of the sun at its northern limit, or summer solstice, travel from a height of 86,000 yojana (six and "nāga"). Then it descends eleven thousand yojana on its southern journey. A chart mapping this would have the sun rising and falling 5,500 yojana (space, space, arrows, arrows) from a central meridian placed at a height of 80,500 yojana (arrows hundred = 500).

149 182.5 solar days, or half a year.

150 P2064 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka*-2, 99a1.

151 *'dor ba.* To dispel, leave behind. The sun as an indicator of time dispels or leaves behind the days. "Spender" *('dor ba po)* is an epithet for the sun.

152 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, gnas v. 60, 9a5.

153 The diameter being seen as one third of the circumference.

154 *sgang gshongs.* The sun's daily motion around Meru is in an uneven plane to the Earth. In Western astronomy this is attributed to the tilt of the Earth's meridian. This undulating passage is repeated in the two annual passages. (Henning)

155 Because Meru is 100,000 yojana high and the rays are 86,000 yojana above Earth, leaving 14,000 yojana for the extent of the rays.

156 Toh 1345 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tha,* 193a5.

157 In other words, all twenty-seven lunar mansions.

158 As mentioned previously, this cannot refer to the tip of the subcontinent of India, because the sixth land of "India," or āryadeśa, ends halfway down the earth mandala and the Tropic of Cancer runs roughly across the middle of India.

159 Again, one "minute" equals twenty-four seconds.

160 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 78a5.

161 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 86a2.

162 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 78a4.

163 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 78a4.

164 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 90a7.

165 A house or zodiacal day is the time taken for the sun to traverse a house divided by thirty. As there are twelve houses, so there are 360 house days in a house year. See chapter on the three kinds of days in Gojo, 40ff, and Shawo, chap. 6.

166 *tshad mas ma dmigs pa.* In other words, it cannot exist.

167 Here *lagna* means "ascendant": every two hours or so a different house will rise over the eastern horizon. See appendix 10.

168 Döndrup Künga, fourteenth-century Kālacakra scholar.

169 A work by the author himself.

170 Because they are consistent with the opponent's own views.

171 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 90b2.

172 One hour and fifty-six minutes in modern time.

173 The column totaled and then doubled to incorporate the other six houses comes to 3,600 minutes, which equals sixty hours, or one complete day.

174 As in the diagram above, but placing Taurus as the first house.

175 Totaling the six daytime appearance times from the diagram beginning with Taurus gives a daytime of 1,900 minutes. This is one hundred minutes more than daytime at the spring equinox. This increase is shared between sunrise and sunset at fifty minutes each.

176 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 91a3.

177 Bright and dark sides of the month, i.e., twenty-four fortnights.

178 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 88a4.

179 Therefore, although the seasons can be counted in order counterclockwise through the continents, their movements through the continents is clockwise.

180 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku*, gnas v. 45, 8b4.

181 *Asaṃkhyā*, the last of the sixty numerical units, each increasing successively by

ten. So called because there exists no number higher. See Lochen, chap. 1, on introductory topics of astronomy.

182 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 50, 8b6.

183 This does not include the throat, face, and crown of the Kālacakra Meru, which rise for another hundred thousand yojana. Also, elsewhere in the text, the east face of Meru is described as being blue and of the color of *indranīla* (sapphire).

184 The first three of the seven golden mountains.

185 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 48, 8b5.

186 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 53, 9a1.

187 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 58, 9a4.

188 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 82, 10a2.

189 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 84, 10a3.

190 Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *cha,* chap. 21, 198b7.

191 From a correspondence following on from Rendawa's own *Precious Garland of Letters* on the examination of Kālacakra. These two works and replies by other masters of the time can be found in *Great Compendium of Tibetan Astronomy,* pp. 283–369. Also see Stearns, pp. 56–59, for a description of Rendawa's opposition to Kālacakra and a translation of this particular passage.

192 Toh 1189 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *cha,* chap. 21, 199a2.

193 Varāhamihira, renowned sixth-century Indian astronomer.

194 Toh 1189 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *cha,* chap. 21, 198b6.

195 The winds that flow through the nose are divided among the five elements or mandalas. This is dealt with in the section on the Inner chapter.

196 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 406b5.

197 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 406b7.

198 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 60a6.

199 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 47, 8b5.

200 To arrive at the circumference.

201 *kun rdzob rtsam.*

202 *bdag po'i 'bras bu.* One the three kinds of karmic results as taught in stages of the path *(lam rim)* literature. It refers to the experience "owned" by the individual as opposed to the ripening karma that determines the realm of birth. Therefore environment, wealth, status, etc., are this particular kind of karmic result.

203 Toh 4049 Tengyur, sems tsam, *ri,* 90a4.

204 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 60a1.

205 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 60a2.

206 Toh 391 Kangyur, rgyud, *kha,* 216b6.

207 The previous and following few paragraphs are essentially annotations to the *Great Commentary* that are woven into Norsang Gyatso's text.

208 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 47, 8b5.

209 *bdag rkyen.* One of the three kinds of circumstance, condition, or cause that bring about a result.

210 The Abhidharma mentioned in the *Vimalaprabhā.*

211 In his manifestation as Puṇḍarīka, composer of the *Great Commentary.*

212 Quoted in the *Great Commentary,* Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 60a7.

213 *Śikṣāsamuccaya,* Toh 3940 Tengyur, dbu ma, *khi,* 43a7.

214 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 60b2.

215 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 60b3.

Notes to Part 2

1 Tib. *sngon dus kyi srid pa.* One of the four states of existence, beginning from the second moment of conception until the body is left behind. The other three are death, bardo, and birth. Here it refers to the future existence of the bardo being.

2 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa; gnas v. 13, 7a7, v. 14, 7b7.

3 *gzugs kyi skye mched.* The visual forms of shape and color that act as sources or conditions for the creation of visual consciousness.

4 Toh 4049 Tengyur, sems tsam, *ri,* 78a5.

5 The five elements.

6 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 419a2.

7 *chos kyi skye mched pa'i gzugs.* Form, such as that in a dream, that is primarily the object of mental consciousness.

8 Of the Abhidharma and Kālacakra traditions.

9 *kun gzhi rnam par shes pa, ālayavijñāna.*

10 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 121b3.

11 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 121b5.

12 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 38, 8a7.

13 *lung ma bstan.* Not taught by the Buddha to be either virtuous or nonvirtuous.

14 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 203b3.

15 *stong sang.*

16 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 36b6.

17 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 9, 7a5.

18 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 9, 7a5.

19 Toh 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku,* gnas v. 9, 7a5.

20 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 51a5.

21 *Jewel Garland of Letters,* p. 288.

22 *ro.* Possibly because *ro* is a word-numeral for six, and space is the sixth element.

23 Earth, water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness.

24 *Lotus* refers to the womb and to the female pudenda.

25 *'byung 'gyur.* Arisen; all phenomena arise from the elements.

26 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 119a1.

27 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 118b7.

28 *rtsod ldan, kaliyuga.*

29 Although sometimes rendered as *Yaśas,* in the text the Sanskrit is transliterated as *Kīrti.*

30 The *Bhagavadgītā* or *Song of God,* taken from the epic *Mahābhārata.*

31 A kind of sacred grass.

32 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 430b7. The passage is in the future tense even though the supposed events have already passed. This is because the Great Commentary is presenting the account of the "ninth avatar" as a false prophecy written by Brahmins before the time of the Buddha.

33 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 432b2.

34 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, khams v. 152, 38a6.

35 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 119b5.

36 In keeping with the tantric doctrine of "result as the path," *vajradhara* is used here as a cause labeled as result.

37 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 120a7.

38 Toh 57 Kangyur, dkon btsegs, *ga,* 231b3, quoted by Khedrup Jé in his Collected Works, vol. *ga, Inner Chapter,* 13a4. Totaling the 161 bones up to and including "The upper back has eight bones" is straightforward. The bones of the spine are 32 x 4. In the ribs five pairs are counted as single bones, leaving 26 minus 5. To this is added the 50 bones of the thighs, etc., to make 360.

39 Khenpo Paltsek is identified in the critical edition as an Indian master, but his Sanskrit name is not found in the Dergé index.

40 Toh 4357 Tengyur, sna tshogs, *cho,* 338b4.

41 *Notes on the Inner Chapter,* Collected Works, vol. *kha,* 7a3.

42 Chöje Choklé Namgyal, fourteenth-century Jonang master.

43 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *ga, Inner Chapter,* 14a4.

44 Solar, lunar, and zodiacal.

45 Usually refers to the female sex organ.

46 *dung can ma.* Usually refers to the central channel below the navel.

47 As transliterated.

48 Although dhūtī and avadhūtī are often interchangeable, it seems that avadhūtī is used to indicate the central channel at the point of the cakras.

49 No wind flows through empty channels.

50 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 134b3.

51 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 132b5.

52 In which the major and minor movements, or shifts, of wind take place.

53 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 16a4.

54 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 133b7.

55 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 132b6.

56 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *kha, Inner Chapter,* 40b2 (includes Butön's quote). The seeming contradiction being that twelve and a half fingerwidths exceeds the actual distance from the navel to the heart. Here Khedrup Jé is dismissing Butön's way of resolving this contradiction.

57 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 133a5.

58 The fourth state = the bliss of orgasm.

59 In Kālacakra the *saṃbhogakāya,* or enjoyment body, is also used to describe the speech of the buddha.

60 The highest form of bliss, actualized on the sixth yoga of the completion stage.

61 *Prajñā:* consort or women generally.

62 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 4b1.

63 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 4b3.

64 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 143b6.

65 The month of the sun's occupation of Capricorn.

66 Although *lagna* often refers to the ascending sign of the zodiac, here it refers to months that correlate to the sun's occupation of the twelve houses or signs.

67 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 131b3.

68 Here wind *(rlung)* is best thought of as "inner breath." Any enumeration, therefore, is not of types of wind but of the number of inner breaths.

69 A *wind movement* refers to the duration of wind flow in each of the twelve petals,

and to the changeover period when the winds move to a new petal, which occurs about every two hours. These changeovers correspond to a new sign or house appearing on the horizon every two hours, hence the term *lagna*.

70 Space mandala.

71 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 147b7.

72 One fifth of 1,800 minus one fifth of 56 ¼.

73 This is because the minor element of the sixth channel on the left is earth, which is a repeat of the fifth channel element, and the minor element of the first channel on the right is also earth.

74 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 133a1.

75 360 breaths = 1 hour. See appendix 3.

76 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 134a5.

77 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 134a7.

78 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 135a4.

79 Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga*, part 1, 2b7.

80 Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha*, chap. 68, 276b1.

81 Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha*, chap. 6, 216b1.

82 Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha*, chap. 25, 238b4.

83 Toh 446 Kangyur, rgyud, 278a6.

84 Unable to trace quote.

85 Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha*, chap. 24, 237b5.

86 *Guhyasamāja* explanatory tantra.

87 Toh 1859 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *di*, 49b5.

88 *Ordinary existence/state* is a semitechnical term used for the physical and mental condition of ordinary beings who at a particular time are not actively engaged on the tantric path. According to all tantras except the Kālacakra, winds do not flow in the central channel during this normal existence, except at the time of death.

89 Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *cha*, chap. 21, 197a7.

90 Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ngi*, chap. 3, 69b3 (*Caryāmelāpakapradipa* by Āryadeva).

91 Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud, *ca*, chap. 2, 171a7.

92 This does not necessarily refer to the nose on the face. This is explained later.

93 Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud, *ca*, chap. 18, 223b5.

94 Verse not found.

95 Varahāmihira, renowned sixth-century Indian astronomer.

96 Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *cha* chap. 21, 198b–6.

97 The critical edition notes that Kumāramati is usually identified with Rendawa, but as he was an opponent of Kālacakra it would be difficult to match the following assertion to him.

98 Jé Tsongkhapa, *ja,* 123b6.

99 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 16a7.

100 The Kālacakra root tantra.

101 "Very clearly teaching, explaining, and well explaining" are the three distinct ways in which the Kālacakra was taught.

102 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 16b4.

103 *bdag po'i 'bras bu.*

104 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 143b3.

105 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 140a6.

106 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 141a1.

Notes to Part 3

1 *De nyid, tattva.*

2 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, v. 2, 58a3.

3 *dam tshig.* Pledge or vow. Each of the five buddhas has its own set of pledges.

4 *tshangs spyod.*

5 Or *kāma,* a cupidlike personification of desire who lives in the celestial realms.

6 *Fifty Verses on the Guru,* Toh 3721 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tshu,* 10a6.

7 Toh 451 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 57b7.

8 Jé Tsongkhapa. This text has been translated by Gareth Sparham as *The Fulfillment of All Hopes: Guru Devotion in Tibetan Buddhism* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1999).

9 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 262a3.

10 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 3, 58a4.

11 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 260b3.

12 Toh 1348 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* v. 3, 1a4.

13 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 261a5.

14 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 262a2.

15 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 262a1.

16 Probably from a commentary to *Fifty Verses on the Guru.*

17 Toh 1348 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 4b2.

18 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 263a2.

19 Toh 3721 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tshu,* 10a4.

20 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 260b5.

21 Toh 3721 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tshu,* 10b4.

22 Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud, *kha,* 85a5.

23 Toh 3721 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tshu,* 10b6.

24 Toh 3721 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tshu,* 10b5.

25 *Fifty Verses on the Guru,* Toh 3721 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tshu,* 10a4.

26 A full prostration, touching the ground with feet, hands, and head.

27 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 263a2.

28 Jé Tsongkhapa, *Fulfilling the Hopes of Disciples: Commentary on the Fifty Verses on the Guru, ka,* 5b5.

29 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 116a3.

30 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba* 116a5.

31 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 264a1.

32 *gso sbyong, poṣadha.*

33 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* chap. 8, 27a7.

34 The seven initiations of childhood are the first initiations given in the Kālacakra initiation ceremony. They are discussed in detail below.

35 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 264a1.

36 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 263b7.

37 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, dbang v. 4, 58a5.

38 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 264a7.

39 Literally, generation of the Mahāyāna mind, referring to *bodhicitta,* the entrance to the Mahāyāna.

40 *Śrīcakrasaṃvaraṣekaprakriyopadeśa,* by Ghaṇṭāpāda (Vajraghaṇṭa), Toh 1431 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *wa,* 219b5.

41 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 260a6.

42 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14a3.

43 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 238a1.

44 Toh 1352 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 292a4.

45 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 352b3.

46 *kun spangs.* Those who have given all away.

47 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 23b6.

48 Toh 1343 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba* 8a3.

49 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 211a5.

50 *A Precious Garland: The Ritual of the Thirteen-Deity Mandala,* Jé Tsongkhapa, *tha,* 5b1.

51 *bsyen.* To approach or to come closer.

52 *A Precious Garland: The Ritual of the Thirteen Deity Mandala,* Jé Tsongkhapa, *tha,* 5b1.

53 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 287a7.

54 21,600 breaths in one day times 5.

55 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 371b7.

56 Takstang Lotsāwa Sherap Rinchen (b. 1405), the translator and reputed teacher of Khedrup Norsang Gyatso.

57 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* passage begins from 128a7. Also called *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary.*

58 Toh 419 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 128b1.

59 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14a6.

60 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14b3. "Change, change" refers to "changing bliss" and to the vase and secret initiation. "Fall and then no farther fall" refers to the falling of the elemental bodhicitta and to the wisdom-knowledge and fourth initiation.

61 Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ngi,* 45a6.

62 In ancient India a child was not named until a year after its birth.

63 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka* 39b2.

64 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 260a3.

65 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 238a2.

66 Usually called the vajra-master initiations but the additional "great lord" is relevant to a later discussion.

67 Into the mandala.

68 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328a7.

69 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328b7.

70 Tsalmin Chökyi Drakpa, fourteenth-century master who served under Jonang Chögyal and others. Brief details of his life found in *Great Compendium of Tibetan Astronomy.*

71 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 326a2 to 327b3.

72 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328b7.

73 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328a7.

74 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 326a2 to 327b3.

75 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328b7.

76 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 326b3.

77 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328b1.

78 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 325b6.

79 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328b7.

80 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* dbang v. 119, 69b4. Here *śakti* refers to the ten goddesses of the gnosis mandala.

81 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328a7.

82 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 329a1.

83 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka* ,14a7.

84 As in initiations other than Kālacakra.

85 See appendix 7 for a list of these phenomena.

86 *Kālacakra Mandala Ritual,* Toh 1359 Kangyur, rgyud, *ba,* 122b6.

87 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14a7.

88 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14b1.

89 The ten winds are also known as the ten perfections *(pha rol tu phyin pa, pāramitā).*

90 Love, compassion, joy, and equanimity—the four immeasurables—but here refers to the action faculties and their activities.

91 The gnosis element and aggregate.

92 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14b1.

93 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328a7.

94 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14b3.

95 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14b3.

96 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14b3.

97 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 238a3.

98 Advice to stay with the consort for ten years because the perfection of wisdom is of ten kinds and in each year one type is developed.

99 "That which holds the rabbit" commonly refers to the moon, but here even moon is a metaphor.

100 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* dbang v. 118/9, 69a4.

101 *rdul.* Particles, atoms, but also means menstrual blood.

102 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 327b5.

103 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328a7 to 328b7.

104 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 242b7.

105 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14b3.

106 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 243a1.

107 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 128b3.

108 Here elemental bodhicitta is visualized as being in the nature of tantric samaya.

109 Toh 1359 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 142b6.

110 Toh 1359 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 142b6.

111 Toh 1359 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 143a7.

112 Toh 1359 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 144a3.

113 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 328b7.

114 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 126a1.

115 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 14a2.

116 *las kyi phyag rgya ma, karmamudrā.* An actual consort.

117 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 126b2.

118 From the *Condensed Tantra,* Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, dbang v. 119, 64b4.

119 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 14a3.

120 *rig ma, vidyā.*

121 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, dbang v. 119, 69b4.

122 Hevajra Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 17a3.

123 *kunda,* as transliterated in Tibetan.

124 *g.yon pa'i g.yon gyi rtsa 'dzub mo hrīḥ dmar po bsams la skyod pa ni lce'i shī zhes brjod pas so.* Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoché explains this line provisionally: the casing of the ritual bell is seen as a lotus and mentally divided into eight petals, and the bell's "finger" strikes the left of the left petal. An explanation can also be found in the *Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, p. 375, where he explains the first g.*yon pa* as referring to the consort and the second as meaning "left." There could be a play on words here. The channel is known as the Vajradhātvīśvarī channel and is found to the left of the center of the consort's lotus. The finger is used to stimulate this channel, and the syllable *śī* is uttered before the main mantra. Toh 1359 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 142b1.

125 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 126b3.

126 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 326a2 to 327b3.

127 *'o ma 'dzin pa.* Literally, "holders of milk."

128 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14b1.

129 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 243a6.

130 This is how Tsongkhapa's disciple Gyaltsap Jé explains these lines in his *Abbreviated Explanation of The Six-Branched Yoga of Kālacakra,* but here the author has explained them according to Nāropa's commentary.

131 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14b5.

132 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 126b3.

133 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 126b5.

134 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14a6.

135 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 14b3.

136 *brahmacarya.* Celibacy.

137 Toh 3947 Tengyur, dbu ma, *khi,* 240b7.

138 As transliterated in Tibetan.

139 A possible explanation of this could be that a complete day from dawn to dawn is divided into twelve watches of five "hours" each. From the middle watch of the night until dawn therefore is fifteen hours, with another five hours to sunrise. Therefore two hours are spent with one's wife and two hours with each of the nine mudrās.

140 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 387b4.

141 *rnam kun mchog ldan gyi stong gzugs.*

142 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* ye shes v. 114, 113a1.

143 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388a6.

144 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 4b1.

145 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 4b1.

146 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 243b2.

147 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *na,* 14b6.

148 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 243b6.

149 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud *ka,* ye shes v. 164, 118a3.

150 The eighty signs or major marks and the 112 features or minor marks.

151 *Seven Features,* Toh 1888 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *bi,* 190a4.

152 Fourth of the five stages of the completion stage, as taught in other tantras.

153 *Seven Features,* Toh 1888 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *bi,* chap. 3, 198a7.

154 *Later Guhyasamāja,* Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *ca,* chap. 18, 153a5.

155 Tib. *de ltar de bzhin bzhi pa wang,* or in its more common version as written in the previous line, *bzhi pa de yang de bzhin no.*

156 *Great Exposition of the Path of Secret Mantra,* Jé Tsongkhapa, Collected Works, vol. *kha.*

Notes to Part 4

1 Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *di,* 45a6.

2 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 5a4.

3 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 5a5.

4 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 5a2.

5 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 217a4.

6 *Contrived yoga* and *conceptually created yoga* are synonyms for the generation stage.

7 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* chap. 2, 14a6.

8 *bdag med pa'i rnal 'byor.* Yoga of no-self, but could also refer to Nairātmya *(bdag med ma),* the consort of Hevajra.

9 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka,* 79b4.

10 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 80b3.

11 *Mañjuśrī-nama-saṃgīti.* See bibliography.

12 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 48b4.

13 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 10, 78a7.

14 The four activities of peace, increasing, power, and wrath.

15 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 201b7.

16 *phun sum tshogs pa.*

17 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 203b2.

18 As this passage is written in the *Great Commentary,* it would appear to say that the mind *is* the fire at the end of darkness, with "fire" referring to the death clear light, or foundation consciousness. Gyaltsap Darma Rinchen, however, in his *Practice of the Two Stages of Kālacakra,* comments on this using the root quote from the *Condensed Tantra* that speaks of the mind *after* the fire and the darkness, referring to two appearances of light and darkness that arise just before the death clear light dawns.

19 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 203b2 to 203b5.

20 *nyer thob.* So called because it is close to the dawning of the death clear light.

21 *sdom brtson pa.* One who practices restraint *(saṃvara)*, an ascetic, a monk.

22 By Gyaltsap Darma Rinchen in his *Practice of the Two Stages of Kālacakra.*

23 As "nature" and not as "form."

24 The gist of this discussion is that the *Vimalaprabhā* passage "meditate upon them [the three realms] as empty forms beyond the reality of matter," which follows on from the above passage and is a summary of the section, appears to say that here in the meditations of the four gateways to freedom, the meditation is not one on the ultimate-truth emptiness but on conventional-truth empty form. This would contradict the assertion that this section is a meditation on the accumulation of wisdom. However Gyaltsap Jé says that the translation is at fault and that "form" *(gzugs, rūpa)* in the above sentence should have been translated as "nature." This would make the sentence an instruction to meditate on ultimate or nonaspected emptiness. However not all instances of rūpa can be rendered as "nature," because phrases such as "devoid of all aspects" and "emptiness beyond the nature of matter" are often used as synonyms of conventional-truth empty form.

25 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 203a4.

26 *chos 'byung, dharmabhava.*

27 The 30th or final day of a month.

28 The seed syllable has ten component parts, because the *haṃ* is broken down into four. These are the letter *ha*, the crescent of the moon, the disk of the full moon, and the *nāda* or twist at its very top.

29 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 203b7.

30 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 204a6.

31 Meru tapers toward its base and is half its upper diameter at its midway point.

32 Just as *lagna* refers externally to the twelve zodiacal constellations appearing in a single day over the horizon at a rate of one every two hours, so here it refers to the twelve inner "ascendants" or wind movements that occur about every two hours between the petals of the navel cakra.

33 The 360 zodiacal days it takes for the sun to move once through all twelve houses.

34 The fifteen days of waxing and fifteen of waning, multiplied by twelve.

35 *tsheg drag* (or *rnam bcad*). Echo-like aspiration of preceding vowel, romanized as *ḥ*.

36 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 150a4.

37 *rjes su nga ro* (or *thig kor*). Nasalizing of previous vowel, romanized as *ṃ*.

38 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 150a3.

39 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 152b7.

40 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 152b7.

41 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 150a3.

42 Each of the houses of Aries, Taurus, etc., mentioned above is one house or zodiacal month of thirty days, and each of the months of Caitra, Vaiśākha, etc., is a lunar month of thirty days.

43 They either begin from the new moon (waxing-led) or from the full moon (waning-led).

44 "Completed" means not dying before one's time, which here is one hundred years.

45 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 213a1.

46 Here and in the other mandala placements, right and left mean clockwise and counterclockwise, respectively, or right and left from within the mandala facing out.

47 Also called Indra.

48 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 213a2.

49 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 213a4.

50 Viṣṇu.

51 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 213a7.

52 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 213b5.

53 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 213b7.

54 The entourage lunar-day deities are all female.

55 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 225a4.

56 The ninety deities of ENE, ESE, and SE.

57 *nor sbyin.* Also called *gnod sbyin* (Yakṣa).

58 Rongpa Sherap Sengé, thirteenth-century master in the Ra tradition.

59 Two lotuses of deities minus the consort of the principal figure.

60 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 363a1.

61 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 363a4.

62 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 215b2.

63 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 106b1.

64 Club or staff with skull at one end, often carried by Śiva.

65 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 107a4.

66 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 104a5.

67 Instead of saying that she is *embraced* by Vajrapāṇi.

68 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 275b3.

69 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 275b4.

70 Those who follow Abhayākaragupta in their presentation of the colors.

71 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 275b5.

72 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 105a4.

73 *'phrog byed.* Hari is a title given to different gods. Previously it was listed as epithet of Rudra, and here as an epithet of Viṣṇu.

74 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 225a2.

75 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 275b4.

76 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 275b5.

77 The colors normally assigned to the four directions in Kālacakra are black in the east, white in the north, red in the south, and yellow in the west.

78 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 214b6.

79 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 215b1.

80 Therefore each male and female tathāgata and bodhisattva appears twice.

81 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 223b5.

82 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 221a4.

83 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 224a5.

84 The thirty-six desire goddesses inhabit the speech mandala; the thirty-six non-desire goddesses inhabit the body mandala.

85 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *cha,* 55a2.

86 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 214a3.

87 Not a facial description but a word-numeral for "one," there being one moon, or "that with rabbit."

88 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 109a1.

89 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 215b6.

90 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 216a7.

91 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *cha,* 55a2. Vibhūticandra was a twelfth-century Nepalese master.

92 *gtum mo, caṇḍālī.* Fierce woman. This refers not to the *caṇḍālī,* or inner fire, of the completion stage but rather to wrathful female deities.

93 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 96a3.

94 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* chap 1. (*Deities* subchapter), 37b1.

95 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 396a7.

96 See Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *cha,* 30a5.

97 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 393a2.

98 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 393a3.

99 *Vajragarbha Commentary*, Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka* (*Deities* subchapter), 37b1.

100 The vajra.

101 A section in the sādhana when prostrations are made to the definitive Kālacakra.

102 This verse is from the opening prostrations of the *Vimalaprabhā:*

> Vowels and consonants in union,
> *hūṃ, phaṭ*, and so forth abandoned,
> body born from the unchanging,
> I bow to Kālacakra.

103 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *kha*, quote not traced.

104 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 206a4.

105 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 223b2.

106 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba*, 96a2 to 96b2.

107 Toh 1358 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba*, 96b2.

108 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 206a4 to 206a5.

109 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 206a6.

110 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 206a6.

111 The above text on the generation of the main deity from the mandalas, syllables, and implements is fraught with corruption in the rendering of the Sanskrit syllables. I am grateful to Kirtī Tsenshap Rinpoché for clarification.

112 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 208b5.

113 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 209a2.

114 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 219a6.

115 The arousal by song is the first meditation in the branch of the speech-vajra near-accomplishment, and is presented later.

116 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 209a2.

117 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 220a1.

118 "Together with mudrā, the complete Vajrasattva."

119 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 208a2.

120 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 207a2.

121 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 222a7.

122 Sealing is the fourth part of the branch of the speech-vajra near-accomplishment and will be presented later.

123 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 204a5.

124 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 204b1.

125 The wavy line, or squiggle, rising from the circle that sits upon the crescent atop the syllable.

126 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 52a3.

127 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 52b1.

128 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 204b1.

129 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 3a2.

130 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 13b6.

131 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 35b3.

132 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 201b1.

133 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 204b6.

134 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 205b4.

135 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 206b5.

136 Although the central lotus is multicolored, in the powder mandala it is colored green.

137 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 300a1.

138 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 302a1.

139 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 221b5.

140 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 300a2.

141 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 300a2.

142 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 138a6.

143 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 138a6.

144 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 138a7.

145 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 138b1.

146 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 138b1.

147 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 231b1. This is a partial count consisting of the ten śakti, ten tathāgatas, twelve bodhisattvas, eight speech goddesses, and twelve lunar-day deities. In the previous paragraph the count of seventy-eight is multiplied by two to total 156.

148 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 138b2.

149 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī*, 138b1.

150 The "lap" belongs to the dominant partner of the pair in union. Therefore a deity in the lap of wisdom refers to a "method" deity embraced by a dominant "wisdom" deity.

151 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 139a6.

152 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 139a3. 27 constellations, 60 hours in each = 1620.

153 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 39b7.

154 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 140b3.

155 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 140a5.

156 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 140b4.

157 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 140b7.

158 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 138a5.

159 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 139b2.

160 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 217b3 to 218a5.

161 *yon tan, guṇa; vṛddhi, 'phel ba.* Secondary quality and growth or increment; grades of vowel strength. For example, *guṇa* increases the vowel *i* to *e,* and *vṛddhi* increases it to *ai.*

162 *y, r, l, v, h.*

163 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 217b7.

164 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219a4.

165 The quote has *ho.* Kīrti Tsanshap Rinpoché says that at the crown is the short *ho* and the navel long *hoḥ.*

166 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 218a6.

167 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219a3.

168 Generally a karmic effect will be similar to its cause, for instance, virtue as a cause will bring virtue as an effect.

169 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219b2.

170 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219b2.

171 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219b3.

172 *skyes bu byed pa'i 'bras bu.* One of the so-called five results, referring to a result directly produced by the labors of a person. The harvest produced by the toil of the farmer is an example.

173 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219b3.

174 An eradication result is the negation of a phenomenon and is therefore not created by cause. Strictly speaking, then, it is not a result, as great bliss is, for example. Similarly, of the four bodies of a buddha, the nature body *(ngo bo nyid kyi sku, svabhāvikakāya)* is also noncreated but is included as if it were a product of cause.

175 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219b4.

176 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 219a5.

177 As noted previously, it is likely that Kumāra here refers to Kumāraśrī, or Shönu Pal Gö Lotsāwa (1392–1481), rather than to Rendawa as it has done previously, because the quote was written by a proponent of Kālacakra, and Rendawa opposed the tantra.

178 "Together with mudrā, the complete Vajrasattva."

179 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 221a4.

180 In a previous section, when discussing method and wisdom deities, it says: "It is taught that consciousness-aggregate Akṣobhya, whose nature is the main deity, and the space-element Vajradhātvīśvarī are mother-and-father method and wisdom. Such a statement is made in terms of pervading consciousness and gnosis being fused together within the being of the main deity and are not statements made on the basis of individual method and wisdom."

181 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220a1.

182 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220a3.

183 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220a1.

184 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220a2.

185 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 218b5.

186 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220a3.

187 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220b4.

188 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220b3.

189 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220b1.

190 The text and the new critical edition has *sprul* (emanation), which may be a misspelling of *sbrul* (snake). The *Vimalaprabhā* has *klu (nāga),* and the *Condensed Tantra* has *gdengs chen (nāga).*

191 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 220b6.

192 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 221a3.

193 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 221a1.

194 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 221a4.

195 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 222a7.

196 Or Carcikā.

197 Indra, or Śakra.

198 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* dbang v. 63, 84a6.

199 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 222a7.

200 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 222b3.

201 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 222b6.

202 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *cha,* 57b5.

203 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 222b7.

204 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 222b7.

205 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 227b7.

206 Glorious body-vajra holder,
meditator upon three indivisible vajras,
to become vajra-body holder,
consecrate me in the place of blessing.

207 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 228a5.

208 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 229a1.

209 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 228b3.

210 *mtshams sbyor, saṃdhi.* The Sanskrit grammatical rules of euphony.

211 Toh 4282 Tengyur, sgra mdo, *le,* 3a2.

212 *kaḥ+ahaṃ* becomes *ka + u + ahaṃ*; becomes *ko + ahaṃ*; becomes *ko haṃ.*

213 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 229a3.

214 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 229a3.

215 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 205a3.

216 These are the meditations on the four immeasurables—love, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity—so called because Brahmā is said to reside within them, and their accomplishment results in birth in the Brahmā realms.

217 *dran pa nyer bzhag, smṛityupasthāna.*

218 These are eight transforming meditative concentrations developed in order to reduce mental afflictions: regarding form as form, regarding formlessness as form, freedom from attachment to beauty, the four freedoms of the formless realm, and the freedom of cessation.

219 *rajas, tamas,* and *sattva.*

220 Transliterated in the verse as *bagulī,* but written here as *phakulī.* Identified in Tibetan as *shar bu.* Henning and Jado Rinpoché identify these as ornamented water outlets, drainpipes, or guttering.

221 *mda' yab.* Henning identifies this feature as parapets, battlements, or eaves.

222 Reduced from the twelve branches of scripture. Traditions vary on which of the nine are included.

223 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 101, 88a2.

224 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 102, 88a4 to 88b3.

225 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 229b7.

226 *'phangs pa.* To cast, throw, impel; specifically, by planting a cause in the present, thereby "impelling" it's effect in the future.

227 Toh 3836 Tengyur, dbu ma, *tsa,* v. 3, 146b3.

228 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 113, 34a6

229 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 330a4.

230 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 230b7.

231 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 231a1.

232 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 230b4.

233 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 216b4.

234 Previous Jonang masters have interpreted this "other" as referring to Shentong, or extrinsic emptiness, in the form of an eternal tathāgata essence.

235 Probably Kumāraśrī Shönu Pal Gö Lotsāwa.

236 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b2.

237 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233a6.

238 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b2.

239 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b2.

240 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b2.

241 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b3.

242 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b3.

243 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b4.

244 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b5.

245 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 234a3.

246 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 234b1.

247 Refers to the fact that sixteen joys are expressed as four: half of sixteen is eight, half of that is four.

248 *bsam gtan, dhyāna.* The four absorptions of the four realms of form, but here referring to the four joys.

249 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b6.

250 *Vimalaprabhā* has *shes rab chos 'byung*—wisdom source.

251 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 234b1.

252 Most of these lines have been reproduced above: A qualified consort aged sixteen, / adorned with youth and beauty; / teach her well, / then initiate and begin the practice. / Body, speech, mind, and desire, / placed at the brow and so forth, / *svā, hā,* at the secret and crown. / Then the lotus is purified. / From the syllable *āḥ* an

eight-petal lotus; / by the syllable *hūṃ* it is with vajra; / the cause of movement / of the wisdom lotus with vajra, / one's vajra by the syllable *hūṃ* / visualized with five points; / in its center an eight-petal lotus / conceived with the syllable *āḥ*. / With the pride of the vajra holder, / the vajra with lotus enters the lotus. / With *liṅgam* placed into the *bhaga,* /the yogi performs *hūṃ phaṭ;* / the bodhicitta is not emitted. / The three realms in their entirety / meditated as forms of buddhas. / At the navel the caṇḍālī fire blazes, / the five tathāgatas are burnt, / Locanā, eyes, etc., are burnt, / the *haṃ* moon syllable falls /with the characteristics of nectar fluid, / in the form of a drop it descends. / This is drop yoga. / Sixteen, half and half, / holding the drop / partless beyond parts / held at the peak of the four meditative absorptions. / This is the subtle yoga.

253 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b6.

254 Possibly referring to *Notes on Kālacakra: A Continuation of Khedrup* by Jetsün Sherap Sengé (1383–1445), a student of Khedrup Jé.

255 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *cha,* 56a5.

256 Khedrup Jé, Collected Works, vol. *cha,* 62a3.

257 This is because these *Root Tantra* verses do not actually teach the completion stage as asserted above but teach the generation stage in a literal sense, as if its processes were actually happening. The reason for this is explained in the next paragraph.

258 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b1.

259 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 234a3.

260 *nyon mongs, kleśa.*

261 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 251b2.

262 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 251b3.

263 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 251b3.

264 The vowel *u* added to the first letter of a consonant group will include all consonants of that group.

265 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 251b7.

266 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 251b7.

267 Cerebral or linguals.

268 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252a1.

269 *Vimalaprabhā* has *nypa.*

270 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 251a1.

271 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252a2.

272 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252a7.

273 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252a7.

274 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b1.

275 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b1.

276 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b3.

277 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b3.

278 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b4.

279 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b5.

280 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b5.

281 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b5

282 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b6.

283 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b6.

284 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b6.

285 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b6.

286 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 252b6.

287 *Vimalaprabhā* has *bau ṣa ta.*

288 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 251b7.

289 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 253a1.

290 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 253a2.

291 The element letter *ha* is added on top of or before *ta,* the first letter of Tārā's name mantra, and the *visarga* is added as a suffix.

292 Or *baṣaṭa.*

293 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 253a6.

Notes to Part 5

1 *gnyis spang, dvayatiga.* "An overcoming or elimination of the two," referring to the other two channels.

2 *lug.* Sheep, ram; also Aries.

3 *dmar ser.* Reddish brown, orange, gold-colored, etc. In the Inner chapter *piṅgalā* is one of the names of the right channel above the navel.

4 A minimum distance of twelve fingerwidths and a maximum of sixteen (word numeral "part").

5 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390a4.

6 *gnad du bsnun pa.*

7 Until they dissolve at death.

8 The eight petals plus the two interiors of the avadhūtī above and below the heart.

9 *bem po.* Composed of atoms, inanimate.

10 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390a3.

11 Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *di,* 45a1.

12 One of the empty-form signs that appear at the accomplishment of the yoga of withdrawal.

13 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154a5.

14 In this work *meditative concentration* is a translation of *ting nge 'dzin (samādhi),* while *meditative absorption* is *bsam gtan (dhyāna).*

15 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154a5.

16 Jé Tsongkhapa, *Vajra Verses,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 1a1.

17 Jé Tsongkhapa, Collected Works, vol. *da,* 3b3.

18 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 224a5.

19 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 116, 89b3.

20 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a5.

21 *dran shes.*

22 *zhi gnas, śamatha.*

23 Toh 4210 Tengyur, tshad ma, *che,* v. 1, 111b6.

24 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a6.

25 *sha'i mig.* Does not refer to the physical eye but to one of the five clairvoyant "eyes."

26 The ordinary sense organs produced at birth as a result of ripening karma.

27 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b7.

28 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 235b5.

29 The inner and outer samaya are practices that precede the yoga of withdrawal. Therefore, if they are posited as approximation, withdrawal becomes near accomplishment.

30 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 391a3.

31 Earth, water, fire, air, and space is the dissolution order.

32 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 437b4.

33 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 395a2.

34 Jé Tsongkhapa, Collected Works, vol. *da,* 6a2.

35 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390b5.

36 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390b6.

37 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

38 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390a2.

39 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 8b7.

40 *Six Yogas,* Toh 1375 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 251b6.

41 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 251b6.

42 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a6.

43 Wrathful deity found in the body mandala.

44 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 224b1.

45 The opponents cannot agree with the consequence that the meditations of withdrawal are not meditations that involve practices of mental placement because of scriptural authority that says otherwise.

46 *yid la byed pa.*

47 This refers to the seven main features of the standard meditation posture, cross-legged, hands cupped at navel, and so forth. The consequence hinges on the fact that the Perfection or Sutra Vehicle is a nontantric path and therefore does not involve manipulation of the winds.

48 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b1.

49 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 132b5.

50 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

51 Toh 1371 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 223a6.

52 Toh 1374 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 251b2.

53 Toh 1371 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 223a6.

54 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 224b1.

55 Toh 1374 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 250b2.

56 The cross-legged full-lotus position.

57 Here *mudrā* refers to a symbolic positioning of the hands, in this case clenched fists on the sides of the thighs. Elsewhere in the book it is predominantly used to mean consort.

58 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 344b3.

59 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238b3.

60 Toh 427 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 178b3.

61 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

62 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 224b1.

63 Toh 1374 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 251b3.

64 Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* part 2, 14b3.

65 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 236b3.

66 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 411a6.

67 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 411b2.

68 In *Great Exposition of Secret Mantra,* p. 564, Tsongkhapa suggests that this refers to a sutra of the same name, possibly *Ratnapradīpa, (Rin po che'i sgron ma),* Toh 2318.

69 *bems po'i stong pa nyid.* This phrase occurs a few times in Kālacakra literature. It is often used as a description of Rangtong phenomena in the sense of their being nihilistic and without essence. See Rendawa in Stearns, p. 59. This passage as it appears in the *Great Exposition of Secret Mantra,* p. 564, and in the translator's copy of the *Vimalaprabhā,* has "inanimate and empty" *(bems po dang stong pa nyid). Bem(s) po* can also mean "composed of atoms."

70 Hoshang, or Hvashang, Mahāyāna: Chinese abbot defeated in debate on Tibetan soil by the Indian pandit Kamalaśila during the reign of the Tibetan king Trisong Detsen in the ninth century. See *Great Lexicon,* p. 3,074, and Hopkins, p. 533.

71 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* chap. 2, 80b6.

72 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 14b3.

73 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* chap. 2, 80b4.

74 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 80b6.

75 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 80b7.

76 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 81a1.

77 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 115.

78 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

79 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 250b7.

80 Toh 1374 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 251b3.

81 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 224b2.

82 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 16b4.

83 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 131a7.

84 Toh 1387 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 297b5.

85 *Filled with Good Qualities,* Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 325b5.

86 *Instructions on Praṇāyāmā and Retention,* 3b7; and *Instructions on Withdrawal and Meditative Absorption,* 10a5.

87 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 16b2.

88 Toh 427 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 178b3.

89 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 234a1.

90 *sna.* Tip, end, peak, etc.

91 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b6.

92 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

93 Toh 427 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 178b3.

94 *bgegs mthar byed.* "He who puts an end to obstruction." Also a wrathful protector of the Kālacakra mind mandala.

95 *bdud rtsi 'khyil ba.* Coil of nectar.

96 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238b4.

97 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha* (Guhyasamāja), 154b2.

98 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 133a1.

99 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 250a7.

100 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 224b2.

101 Toh 1373 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 235b4.

102 Jé Tsongkhapa, *Vajra Verses,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 1a1.

103 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Withdrawal and Meditative Absorption,* 12a6.

104 Quote not found.

105 Collected Works, vol. *ga,* 13b4.

106 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 131a7.

107 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* chap. 2, 80b7.

108 *de kho na nyid.* Actual emptiness, reality itself.

109 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 131a7.

110 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 252b5.

111 Toh 1387 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 297b5.

112 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 325b5.

113 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* chap. 2, 80b7.

114 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 15a2.

115 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud *ka,* v. 115, 113a2.

116 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b3.

117 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b5.

118 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 131b3.

119 The Buddha manifest as the tantric Vajradhara.

120 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud *cha,* 154b3.

121 Text not found; possibly, *Short Teachings on the View (Lta ba mdor bsdud pa, Dṛiṣṭisaṃkṣipta),* Toh 2304.

122 See Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 132a3.

123 Toh 360 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 4a7.

124 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 247a4.

125 Toh 1853/54 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *di.*

126 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 131b2.

127 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 323a7.

128 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 323a7.

129 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 323b7.

130 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 323b1.

131 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 323b2.

132 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 323b3.

133 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 323b4.

134 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 165, 89b3.

135 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a5.

136 Toh 445 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *cha,* 241a7.

137 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 132a2.

138 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 320b6.

139 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390b5.

140 Toh 1375 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 251a6.

141 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

142 Śavaripa commentary on the six yogas.

143 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 2, 113a3.

144 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a1.

145 Toh 1371 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 223a7.

146 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b2.

147 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Withdrawal and Meditative Absorption,* 15a6.

148 Toh 466 or 360 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 4a7.

149 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 132a2.

150 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 259b6.

151 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 321a2.

152 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b3.

153 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a4.

154 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b3.

155 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 130a7.

156 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a4.

157 From v. 116 of the Gnosis chapter and corresponding commentary from *Great Commentary.*

158 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 113a3.

159 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a2.

160 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a2.

161 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 132a5.

162 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 322a5.

163 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 241b7.

164 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 314b2.

165 Toh 1388 Tengyur, 'rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 314b3.

166 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

167 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 130b2.

168 P4580, *nu* (supplementary). Attributed to Kālacakra pāda.

169 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 255b2.

170 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 21b1.

171 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b2.

172 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b3.

173 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 394b2.

174 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 131b5.

175 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 132a2.

176 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 253a6.

177 A Jonangpa assertion.

178 Toh 107 Kangyur, mdo sde, *cha,* 94a7.

179 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154b5.

180 Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* 98b2.

181 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 119, 90a1.

182 Toh 1373 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 234b6.

183 According to Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoché and Ven.Tashi Döndrup, "joint" here could refer to either the meditator's lower spine or lower ribs.

184 Toh 1373 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 234a4.

185 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 226b1.

186 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Withdrawal and Meditative Absorption,* 16b1.

187 *Essentials of the Six-Yoga Completion Stage,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 9b3.

188 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 97, 50a1.

189 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* chap. 3, 10b4.

190 Toh 1373 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 244a6.

191 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a4.

192 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 89b6.

193 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b6.

194 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154b6.

195 *bsam gtan, dhyāna.*

196 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b6.

197 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Withdrawal and Meditative Absorption,* 19a1.

198 Chöjé Choglé Namgyal.

199 Collected Works, vol. *da, Essentials of the Six-Yoga Completion Stage,* 7b3; and *Essential Notes on the Kālacakra Six Yogas,* 16b3 and 16a5.

200 In Tibetan "stabilize" is *brtan* and "meditative absorption" is *bsam gtan.* The two words *brtan* and *gtan* are pronounced the same and are similar in meaning, but there are differences. *Gtan* is connected with time, often with the meaning of constant, permanent, and so forth. *Brtan* means firm or stable. The etymology of *bsam gtan,* therefore, is a mind that is constantly held or fixed, hence *meditative absorption.* Tsongkhapa is saying that some have confused these two terms.

201 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 224b6.

202 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, 15a3.

203 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 260a5.

204 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 252b3.

205 Unable to trace the author of this citation.

206 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 38b2.

207 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b7.

208 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 122, 113b4.

209 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 391a5.

210 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 388b6.

211 Collected Works, vol. *da,* 11a3.

212 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 15a3.

213 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 224b6.

214 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 116, 89b3.

215 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a6.

216 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154a7.

217 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154b1.

218 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 246a5.

219 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Withdrawal and Meditative Absorption.*

220 P2064 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka,* 143b2. Not sourced in the critical edition; sourced from translator's Peking edition of the *Vimalaprabhā.*

221 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 118, 89b6.

222 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a1.

223 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud *cha,* 154b6.

224 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Withdrawal and Meditative Absorption,* 21a6.

225 Collected Works, vol. *ka, Notes on Kālacakra,* 96a3.

226 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 196, 97b4.

227 This line is from an enhancement ritual passage of the *Great Commentary* quoted previously, and therefore *nāda* meditation is an enhancement ritual.

228 Collected Works, vol. *da,* 18b7.

229 This whole paragraph appears to be corrupt, particularly with regard to the Sanskrit spellings. With the generous help of Ven. Losang Norbu Shastri of the Tibetan Institute in Saranath, India, and Prof. Gareth Sparham from the University of Michigan in the U.S., I have reconstructed and translated it the best I could.

230 *rkyen, pratyaya.* Affix or suffix added to Sanskrit roots.

231 *khyad par gyi don.* In other words, it marks out other vowels and consonants for particular grammatical functions.

232 *nyer sgyur, uparsarga.* Prefix.

233 *brjod don.* Without the vowel the consonant would remain unarticulated.

234 Transliterated Sanskrit: *upadhā.* Penultimate, or "placed near to."

235 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 252a3.

236 Text untraced.

237 Collected Works, vol. *da,* 17b4.

238 Collected Works, vol. *da,* 12a6.

239 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a5.

240 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 263b1.

241 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a1.

242 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 122, 90a4.

243 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390b3.

244 As transliterated in Tibetan. It is normally spelled *recaka* and refers to the prāṇāyāma practice of expelling wind.

245 Jé Tsongkhapa, Collected Works, vol. *da,* 13a3.

246 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a7.

247 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 130b4.

248 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud *cha,* 155b2.

249 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 133a1.

250 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 130b4.

251 *sdom chen, mahāsaṃvara.*

252 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 375a6.

253 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 337b1.

254 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 130b4.

255 21,600 breaths in one day times five.

256 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Prāṇāyāma and Retention,* 5a2.

257 These have been described in the Inner chapter.

258 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 371b7.

259 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 375b7.

260 From the *Later Guhyasamāja,* quoted previously.

261 *rang gi gdangs.* This is the innate tone of the breath and not sound as perceived by hearing.

262 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Inner Chapter,* 29b4.

263 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud *ka,* v. 27, 42b6.

264 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 126a3.

265 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud *ka,* v. 232, 101a6.

266 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 258a2

267 *Essential Notes on the Kālacakra Six Yogas,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 3a7.

268 *Essentials of the Six Yoga Completion stage,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 14b4.

269 Eleventh-century Indian master.

270 Unable to trace quote.

271 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a5.

272 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud *ka,* v. 194, 97b1.

273 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154b2.

274 *Essentials of the Six-Yoga Completion Stage,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 17a1.

275 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 133a2.

276 *Essentials of the Six-Yoga Completion Stage,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 17a1.

277 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 244b7–246b3.

278 *Essentials of the Six-Yoga Completion Stage,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 16a4.

279 Jé Tsongkhapa, Collected Works, vol. *nya.*

280 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 133a1.

281 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 194, 97b1.

282 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 121, 90a3.

283 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 239a4.

284 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390b4.

285 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 389a5.

286 This passage is quoted and explained in the chapter on the sixth yoga, meditative concentration.

287 As transliterated in Tibetan; presumably a synonym for caṇḍālī fire, but might be a corruption of *iḍa,* an epithet of Agni, the god of fire.

288 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 119, 90a1.

289 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a6.

290 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 196, 97b4.

291 The phrase "meditate on the nāda" from the previous *Great Commentary* passage.

292 *cha shas.* Word numeral for sixteen.

293 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 196, 97b4.

294 Amoghasiddhi.

295 *'du byed, saṃskāra.* Also known as compositional factors or volition, this aggregate is a mental activity responsible for bringing minds and states of mind together with various objects.

296 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a1.

297 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 118, 89b6.

298 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a1.

299 Jé Tsongkhapa, *Vajra Verses,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 1a.

300 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 130b6.

301 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 297a3.

302 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 317b4.

303 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a2.

304 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 254b4.

305 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 317a3.

306 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Prāṇāyāma and Retention,* 14a5.

307 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Prāṇāyāma and Retention,* 14a6.

308 Jé Tsongkhapa, Collected Works, vol. *da, Essentials of the Six-Yoga Completion Stage,* 20a4.

309 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 225a7.

310 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 437b5.

311 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 133a.

312 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Prāṇāyāma and Retention,* 14b6.

313 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 130b4.

314 Vajra recitation involves breathing in the winds from the outside down to the navel.

315 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 325a1.

316 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Prāṇāyāma and Retention,* 14b2.

317 Toh 1372 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 225a5.

318 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud *ka,* v. 193, 97a7.

319 *lce chung.* "Little tongue."

320 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a2.

321 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a2.

322 Jé Tsongkhapa, Collected Works, vol. *da, Vajra Verses,* 1a2.

323 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud. *cha,* 154b5.

324 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 247a7.

325 *dngos gnas la grub pa.* A real or actual phenomenon as opposed to mere appearance.

326 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 131b7.

327 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b2.

328 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a3.

329 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a4.

330 The line from the tantra runs, "Recollection is excellently pure. Mandalas of pure light *also* come from the gnosis form."

331 The flesh-and-blood physical body of the yogi, compared to the nonmaterial empty forms.

332 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 130b7.

333 From the *Later Guhyasamāja.*

334 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, 133b1.

335 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 73, 108b7.

336 *'gyur ba med pa'i bde ba.* Nonchanging bliss, here differentiated from the definitive unchanging bliss *(mi 'gyur ba'i bde ba)* achieved on the sixth branch.

337 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 415a5.

338 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud ; *ka,* v. 224, 100b1.

339 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud *ka,* v. 74, 109a1.

340 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud; *cha,* 155b2.

341 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 17a5.

342 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 133b3.

343 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 133b5.

344 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 73, 108b7.

345 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390b7.

346 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238b5.

347 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 124a4.

348 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 124a7.

349 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 124a7.

350 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 124b4.

351 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 124b5.

352 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 124b6.

353 *'phen pa.* To throw, cast.

354 Unable to trace text.

355 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Six Yogas: Recollection Manual,* 2b4.

356 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 390b7.

357 *Accomplishment of form* here refers to the first two branches of the six yogas, where empty forms are first accomplished. *Wind accomplishment* refers to the next two branches, where the winds are brought under control.

358 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 255a2.

359 Also written *silhaka:* incense, the olibanum tree (per Monier-Williams).

360 Toh 418 Kangyur, rgyud, *nga,* 15a1.

361 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 82a1.

362 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 82a2.

363 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 82a3.

364 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 233b2. Most of this verse has already been explained in the section on subtle and drop yoga.

365 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 82a5.

366 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 82a6.

367 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 74, 109a1.

368 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 273b3.

369 *yid ches, āpta.* Trust, conviction, reliability, guarantee; in the sense that a seal or mudrā is a guarantee of trustworthiness.

370 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 273b5.

371 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 273b6.

372 Source not found.

373 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Recollection,* 12a6.

374 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237a2.

375 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a3.

376 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b2.

377 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 131a1.

378 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 236a1.

379 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b2.

380 Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud, *cha,* 154b5.

381 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 247b3.

382 Similar-to-cause, ripening, personally created, eradication—the four types of results corresponding to the four drops at the navel, heart, throat, and crown lotuses or cakras respectively.

383 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 117, 89b5.

384 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b3.

385 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 17b5.

386 *ldog pa.* An isolate is a particular aspect of a phenomenon that is separated out by conceptualization, often for the purposes of analysis, even though in reality that aspect is not isolated from—and is in fact of the same nature as and inseparable from—the phenomenon itself and other aspects of the phenomenon. For example, the color of coal and the coal itself are actually inseparable, but one can conceive of the blackness of coal separate from its shape and weight. The conventional truth of a phenomenon and its ultimate truth are inseparable, but they can be isolated for the purposes of analysis. Without isolates it would be impossible to conceptually analyze anything.

387 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 398a1.

388 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14b6.

389 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 428a7.

390 In the nontantric Perfection Vehicle, ten bodhisattva levels begin upon the attainment of the path of seeing, the first moment of becoming an ārya, or "noble one." The tenth level immediately precedes enlightenment, and it is generally accepted that the (eleventh) level, known as *all light,* refers to enlightenment itself.

391 A commentary on the difficult points of Hevajra.

392 Collected Works, vol. *nga,* 25a6.

393 The first four paths (of accumulation, preparation, seeing, and meditation) are paths of practice. The fifth is a path of no further practice or no further learning, synonymous with enlightenment.

394 Author of *Garland of Pearls* mentioned above.

395 *mos pas spyod pa'sa.* Usually synonymous with the first two paths of accumulation and preparation, where emptiness has not been directly perceived.

396 Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 326a5.

397 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 428a7.

398 Source not found.

399 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 428b7.

400 Here *lagna* refers to the twelve air movements at the navel cakra.

401 Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* 200a4.

402 *ro ldan, aḍakavatī* (Newman, p. 273). In Tibetan *ro* can mean either "corpse" or "taste." As "taste" the Place of Tastes could be Rasavatī. Externally it is the residence of Vajrapāṇi; internally it refers to the tenth bodhisattva level.

403 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 14b7.

404 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 17a2; and Toh 1346 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *tha,* 122a2.

405 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 21a5.

406 Therefore, although the Kālacakra tradition talks of twelve levels, in other tantras the state of Vajradhara is known as the eleventh level, *all light.*

407 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 428a7.

408 Toh 3861 Tengyur, dbu ma, *ah,* chap. 10, v. 8, 216a3.

409 P 4580 *nu.* Tengyur, sngags skor, *bu,* 23b1.

410 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 395a6.

411 Text not traced.

412 *gtso bo, pradhāna/prakṛiti.* Main, prime, universal principle, fundamental nature.

413 P 4580 Tengyur, sngags skor, *bu,* 23b1.

414 *Filled with Good Qualities,* Toh 1388 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 307b7.

415 Toh 3871 Tengyur, dbu ma, *la,* chap. 9, v. 75, 34b4.

416 *King of Meditative Concentration Sutra,* Toh 127 Kangyur, mdo sde, *da,* chap. 9, 26b5.

417 For more on the "presentation of tenets" of the four Buddhist schools, see Hopkins, "The Tibetan Genre of Doxography: Structuring a Worldview," in Cabezón and Jackson, pp. 170–86.

418 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 196b3. The Kashmiri Vaibhāṣika are one of the three groups of Vaibhāṣika. Their main text was the *Great Ocean of Specific Explanation (Mahāvibhāṣā),* which was not translated into Tibetan.

419 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 196b4.

420 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 197a1.

421 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 167, 57a3.

422 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 167, 57a3.

423 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 167, 57a4.

424 Vijñāvāda, Cittamātra, and Yogācāra are synonymous.

425 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 197a2.

426 Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika.

427 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 197a6.

428 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 197b5.

429 These meditative concentrations are explained in the Inner chapter under the section Causes for the Births of Living Beings.

430 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 422a2.

431 Toh 127 Kangyur, mdo sde, *da,* 27a7.

432 *lhag mthong, vipaśyanā.*

433 *nges shes.* An ascertainment or conviction that is an understanding of emptiness but not a direct perception of it.

434 *so sor rtog pa'i shes rab kyi dpyad pa.*

435 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 73, 108b7.

436 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 113, 112b6.

437 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 416b7.

438 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 178, 97b7.

439 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 199, 98a2.

440 *chos 'byung.*

441 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 409a2.

442 Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ba,* 131a1.

443 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 252a6.

444 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 416a3.

445 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14b6.

446 Toh 1351 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *na,* 243b2.

447 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 416a1.

448 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 381a1.

449 Toh 363 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 132b4.

450 Toh 361 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* 14b1.

451 The twelve aspects of truth *(bden don rnam pa bcu gnyis)* may be the twelve bodhisattva levels of the Kālacakra tradition. If the sixteen realities *(de nyid bcu drug)* are indeed the sixteen emptinesses of the Perfection Vehicle, then the division into sixteen is made on the basis of there being sixteen types of basis of designation and not on the basis of emptiness itself, which has no divisions.

452 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 437b5.

453 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 199, 98a1.

454 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 414a7.

455 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 414b1.

456 Toh 1180 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka,* 300b1.

457 Collected Works, vol. *ga, Instructions on Recollection and Meditative Concentration,* 19a1.

458 Collected Works, vol. *ka, Abbreviated Explanation of The Six Branched Yoga of Kālacakra,* 4b1.

459 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 237b2.

460 "Three years and three sides," where a "side" refers to either the bright or dark side of a lunar month.

461 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 238a5.

462 Jé Tsongkhapa, *Vajra Verses,* Collected Works, vol. *da,* 1a3.

463 Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* chap. 1, 2b2.

464 *Bright Lamp,* Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ha,* chap. 1, 2b2.

465 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 40b1.

466 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* vv. 162–63, 117b7.

467 Toh 362 Kangyur, rgyud, *ka,* v. 164, 118a3.

468 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 258a2.

469 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 258a5.

470 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 21b1.

471 P 2064 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *ka-2,* 24b5.

472 Toh 845 Kangyur, rgyud, *śrī,* 20b7.

473 The sixteenth Kalkī of Shambhala, who reigned from 1427–1527.

474 The actual reading is "Nangso Dorjé Tseten, the great dharma king." Jado Rinpoché suggests *nang so* to mean "an official," in which case a genitive is implied, and the phrase reads, "Dorjé Tseten, official of the great dharma king."

Glossary

activity mudrā consort *(las kyi phyag rgya ma, karmamudrā).* An actual consort. *See also mudrā consort*

affix *(rkyen, pratyaya).* Particles added to roots in Sanskrit.

anuṣṭubh *(rjes su snag).* Sanskrit verse meter with eight syllables per line, four lines per verse; the meter of the 12,000-verse *Root Tantra.*

anusvāra *(rjes su nga ro / thig kor).* Nasalization of the previous contiguous vowel, romanized as *ṃ.*

aspected emptiness *(rnam bcas stong pa nyid).* Emptiness taught in Kālacakra is of two kinds. In a strictly Geluk interpretation, *aspected emptiness* refers to empty forms in general and specifically to the mahāmudrā consort "endowed with every supreme aspect." This is the main "wisdom" meditation of the six yogas, the *kāla* of Kālacakra, and the direct cause of the enlightened body of Kālacakra. *Nonaspected emptiness* is the ultimate truth emptiness taught in the perfection of wisdom sutras and is the object of the bliss consciousness, or clear-light mind, manifested in the completion stage. It is the main "method" meditation, the *cakra* of Kālacakra, and the direct cause of the dharmakāya or enlightened mind of Kālacakra. Alternatively Kīrti Tsenshap Rinpoché says that according to Khedrup Jé, aspected emptiness is specific ultimate-truth emptiness linked to specific phenomena, while nonaspected emptiness is the general phenomenon of emptiness. The Jonang tradition would say that the nonaspected emptiness as taught in the perfection of wisdom sutras, or the second turning of the wheel of dharma, has no essence, is a nihilistic emptiness, and therefore is ineffective in the development of enlightenment. Aspected emptiness, on the other hand, refers to the ultimate-truth buddha essence eternally present in al living beings or, in a tantric sense, to the ultimate-truth māhamudrā consort "endowed with every supreme aspect," whose practice will lead to enlightenment in the form of Kālacakra.

avadhūtī. Central channel.

base mandala *(rten gyi dkyil 'khor).* The celestial mansion and its inner mandalas that house or support the resident deities.

bliss *(bde ba, sukha).* Kālacakra literature mentions different kinds of bliss. They are not mutually exclusive. All are connected with the movements of the white elemental bodhicitta, or seminal fluid. *Innate bliss* is the bliss of withholding the fluid from emission, and is found throughout the completion stage. It is also the term used in tantras other than Kālacakra. *Great innate bliss* is used as a synonym for *unchanging bliss. Falling bliss* is the bliss of emission. *Nonmoving bliss* is the bliss generated from holding the elemental drops at points within the vajra body. In changing bliss, "changing" *('gyur ba)* means emission (Jé Tsongkhapa, *Great Exposition of Secret Mantra,* p. 559), and therefore changing bliss is synonymous with falling bliss. However generation of changing bliss does not always mean emission of seminal fluid. *Definitive unchanging bliss* is first generated on the sixth branch, meditative concentration. Therefore bliss generated on the preceding branches, during which emission is prevented, has to be changing bliss, even though there is no emission. Alternatively bliss developed on the first five branches is also called *unchanging bliss* or *nonchanging bliss* because emission is prevented, but it is not the definitive unchanging bliss. This is because a genuine unchanging bliss refers to the transformation of the material body by that bliss, which only begins on the sixth branch.

caṇḍālī fire *(gtum mo'i me).* "The fire of the fierce or low-caste woman." A fundamental practice of highest yoga tantra completion stage, in which an inner fire is ignited at the navel cakra, through penetrative focusing or the use of a consort, which "burns" off impurities and produces the bliss of the four joys.

clear-light mind *('od gsal, prabhāsvara).* The subtle and primordial state of mind, everpresent in all sentient beings, manifested naturally at death and intentionally in the completion stage, where it is used as a subtle consciousness to focus on emptiness.

ḍākinī *(mkha' 'gro ma).* Yoginīs who possess special siddhis; female deities born in buddha realms; female spirits who assist in tantric rites.

decrement *(bu lon).* Subtraction used in calendrical calculation, usually from the mean position of a planet, to ascertain the true position.

dependent deities/mandala *(brten pa'i lha' / dkyil 'khor).* The deities that inhabit the base mandalas of the celestial mansion.

dhāraṇī *(gzungs)*. Literally, "to hold," in the sense of developing the power to not forget the meaning of dharma words. Often it refers to mantra or spell-like recitations that produce powerful effects. Word, meaning, mantra, and forbearance are the four main types of dhāraṇī.

dhūtī. Central channel.

empty form *(stong gzugs)*. The nonmaterial, atomless forms, developed only on the Kālacakra completion stage, that serve as bases for the development of enlightened forms. Supreme among these empty forms is the mother-father Kālacakra union that replaces the flesh-and-blood body at the time of enlightenment. In other tantras a parallel can be found in the illusory body. Empty forms are created by the winds entering the central channel. Their appearance to the yogi is effortless and without contrivance, like prognostic images that appear in a clairvoyant's mirror.

empty form endowed with every supreme aspect *(kun mchog ldan gyi stong gzugs / rnam kun mchog ldan)*. Predominantly referring to Viśvamātā, the mahāmudrā consort, the highest development of aspected emptiness or empty form.

equinox *(nyin mtshan mnyam pa)*. The time of equal day and night when the mean sun enters the constellation of Aries. This Kālacakra tenet lends weight to the argument that the Kālacakra calendar and zodiac is solar and not lunar.

falling bliss *('dzags pa'i bde ba)*. Refers to the emission or "falling" of semen. *See also bliss*

five eyes *(spyan lnga)*. Fleshly, celestial, wisdom, dharma, and gnosis: the suprasensory perception of empty forms occurring in completion stage meditations, and generated by the winds entering the central channel.

fixed motion *(rtag pa'i longs spyod)*. The averaged or mean orbit of a planet.

freed of obscuration / unobstructed *(sgrib bral)*. The nonmaterial, empty-form nature of phenomena of the three realms at the time of the final attainment of enlightenment.

gnosis *(ye shes, jñāna)*. In tantra gnosis is a primordial phenomenon of the vajra body, usually dwelling within the subtle drop at the heart cakra, and often identified as the primordial mind of clear light. Gnosis is crucial to tantra's total reliance on the human body as possessor of the perfect equipment, in the form of channels, winds, and drops, for the attainment of enlightenment.

guṇa and **vṛddhi** *(yon tan* and *'phel ba)*. Secondary quality and increment.

These refer to grades of vowel strength. For example, *guṇa* increases the vowel *i* to *e,* and *vṛddhi* increases it to *ai.*

increment *(nor).* Calendrical calculation that employs addition to the mean position of a planet to ascertain true planetary position.

innate bliss *(lhan skyes kyi bd ba). See bliss*

karaṇa and siddhānta astronomy *(byed rtsis* and *grub rtsis).* According to most Tibetan traditions, karaṇa and siddhānta are two systems of astronomy. Siddhānta is the astronomy of the *Kālacakra Root Tantra.* This was weakened by the arrival of the barbarians and replaced by the more non-Buddhist karaṇa astronomy. Karaṇa astronomy was used by Kalki Mañjuśrī Yaśas in his compilation, the *Condensed Kālacakra Tantra,* in order to be in accord with the thoughts and beliefs of the non-Buddhist *ṛṣi* he was trying to convert. According to Edward Henning, siddhānta refers to the textbooks of astronomical theory used in ancient India, while karaṇa is the practical methodology of the siddhānta.

lagna *(dus sbyor).* Fixed or tied down; the ascendant; a particular time or period of time determined or fixed by stellar and planetary events. A lagna occurs whenever the sun enters a constellation of the zodiac, and so the sun has twelve lagna in a year. In a single day a new lagna occurs approximately every two hours, whenever a new constellation appears on the horizon.

lalanā. Left channel above the navel.

limiting conceptual elaboration *(spros pa'i mtha').*

liṅgam. Male organ.

lunar day *(tshe zhag).* One thirtieth of the time taken for a complete passage of the moon through the lunar mansions.

lunar mansion *(rgyu skar, nakṣatra).* The zodiac divided into twenty-seven constellations.

mean sun *(nyi bar).* The averaged-out position of the sun on the assumption that its northern and southern passages through the constellations are at a constant speed, without taking into consideration its fast and slow stages.

meditative absorption *(bsam gtan, dhyāna).* Generally, a highly developed meditative concentration, whose power divorces the mind temporarily from afflictions such as desire. It shares essential characteristics with meditative concentration and peaceful abiding. Specifically, in the Sutra Vehicle, it refers to the four meditative absorptions that act as causes for

birth in the form or Brahmā realms. In Kālacakra, meditative absorption is the second of the six yogas.

meditative concentration *(ting nge 'dzin, samādhi).* Generally, an advanced meditative development in which the mind can be effortlessly held to a particular object. Although by its nature it is almost synonymous with meditative absorption and peaceful abiding, a meditative concentration is often used to develop powers or to bring about some magical transformation in inanimate phenomena. Because of this function meditative concentrations are variously named. In Kālacakra, meditative concentration is the sixth of the six yogas.

meditative equipoise *(snyoms 'jug, samāpatti).* Etymologically a meditative absorption in which all mental and bodily elements are evenly balanced. In tantra it often refers to sexual union with a consort.

mental-affliction obscurations *(nyon mongs sgribs pa, kleśāvaraṅa).* The afflictions, chief of which is ignorance, that create karma and perpetuate the circling of samsara.

method of accomplishment *(sgrub thabs, sādhana).* The fourth chapter of the *Condensed Kālacakra* dealing with generation-stage practices, and often used to refer to their written form.

mother-and-father embrace *(yab yum zhal sbyor).* Here referring to empty-form Kālacakra and Viśvamātā in union.

mudrā consort *(phyag rgya ma, mudrā).* A consort is called a mudrā or "seal" because she guarantees or can be relied upon *(yid ches, āpta)* to grant bliss. The three main types of consorts are activity, wisdom, and mahāmudrā consort.

nonapprehended *(mi dmigs pa, anupalabhda).*

nonchanging bliss *('gyur ba med pa'i bde ba).* The bliss of nonemission or the nondefinitive unchanging bliss. *See bliss*

nonworldly *('jig rten las 'das pa).*

obscuration *(sgrib pa).* As well as referring to the afflictions and the corresponding karmicly produced phenomena of the world, in Kālacakra thinking ordinary phenomena, including the body, are "obscured" until they are transformed into nonmaterial empty form, which at its developmental peak is the enlightened form of Kālacakra and his enlightened surroundings.

ordinary state or existence *(gzhi dus).* The ordinary or normal condition of sentient beings, especially with regard to the vajra body, before they enter the tantric paths.

peaceful abiding *(zhi gnas, śamatha).*

penetrative focusing *(gnad du bsnun pa).* The completion-stage practice of meditatively focusing the mind at certain crucial sites along the central channel in order to manipulate the winds.

phenomena obscuration *(shes bya sgribs pa, jñeyāvaraṅa).* The potential for the development of mental afflictions or, in Kālacakra, for the emission of seminal fluid.

piṅgalā. The right channel above the navel.

primordial mind *(gnyug ma sems).*

prognostic image *(pra phab pa).* In Kālacakra literature a simile for empty form wherein forms or images miraculously appear of their own volition in a clairvoyant's mirror.

progressive early steps *(rim pa snga rkang).* When the sun, for example, moves through Cancer, Leo, and Virgo—the first three houses of its southern journey.

progressive later steps *(rim pa phyi rkang).* When, for example, the sun moves through Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius—the last three houses of its southern journey.

quick stage *(myur rkang).* When the planets, commencing from the mean sun, move through the progressive and and regressive early and later steps by way of increment and decrement.

rasanā *(ro ma).* Right channel above the navel.

rati *(rjes su chags pa).* Joy; attraction to the consort.

regressive early steps *(rim min snga rkang).* When, for example, the sun moves through Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces—the first three houses of its northern journey.

regressive later steps *(rim min phyi rkang).* When, for example, the sun moves through Aries, Taurus, and Gemini—the last three houses of its northern journey.

ṛṣi *(drang srong).* Sage, reciter of the vedas. Literally, "straight, upright," often in the sense of their words having "the power of truth," which were used like mantras to bring about desired results.

sensory direct valid cognition *(dbang po'i mngon sum gyi tshad ma).*

śaṅkhinī *(dung can ma).* Central channel below the navel.

slow stage *(dal rkang).* When the planets, commencing from their birth constellations, move through the progressive and regressive early and later steps by way of increment and decrement.

solar day *(nyin zhag).* Usually sunrise to sunrise.

solstice *(nyi ldog)* Literally, "turn-around of the sun."

sragdhara *(phreng 'dzin pa'i tshig bcad).* The "garland meter" of the *Condensed Tantra,* with twenty-one Sanskrit syllables per line.

step index *(rkang 'dzin).* Measurement index of a planet's position; set at zero on the equinox.

three worlds *(khams gsum).* Usually referring to the desire, form, and formless realms.

transient *(glo bur).*

ultimate *(don dam pa).*

unchanging bliss *(mi 'gyur ba'i bde ba).* The consummate development of bliss; definitively achieved for the first time on the branch of meditative concentration; also used sometimes to refer to the nondefinitive bliss of nonemission *See bliss*

unimputed and unconceived by the mind *(blos ma btags ma bcos pa).* An essential characteristic of those empty forms that arise by their own volition.

unmoving *(mi g.yo ba).* The ability to hold the elemental bodhicitta drops at points within the central channel and the resulting bliss. *See bliss*

upasargā *(nyer sgyur).* A particle prefixed to roots in Sanskrit.

vajra recitation *(rdo rje bzlas pa).*

vase yoga *(bum pa can).*

visarga *(tsheg drag / rnam bcad).* Echo-like aspiration of preceding vowel in Sanskrit, romanized as *ḥ.*

waxing-led/waning-led *(yar ngo sngon 'gro / mar ngo sngon 'gro).* Months are either waxing-led or waning-led depending on which half of the lunar month of Caitra the sun enters Aries. Entering Aries in the waxing or "bright" half designates Caitra as a waxing-led month beginning from the first lunar day of the waxing. That month becomes the first month of the new year. When the sun enters Aries during the waning or "dark" half of Caitra, Vaiśākha is posited as beginning from that full moon and becomes the first month of the new year.

wind movements *('pho ba).* The twelve daily shifts or movements of inner wind or breath from petal to petal of the navel channel wheel. These occur approximately every two hours and are correlated with the twelve lagna or ascendants appearing on the horizon approximately every two hours.

winds *(srog/rlung, prāṇa/vāyu).* The "moving air" that flows within the channels of the vajra body, or anatomically the mobility of bodily constituents.

Although *srog (prāṇa)* sometimes refers to the life-sustaining air that flows mainly through the right and left channels above the navel, in Kālacakra it is also a general term for the ten winds. *Rlung* as "wind" has been distinguished from *rlung* meaning the element of air, even though the same word is used in Tibetan.

wisdom-knowledge initiation *(shes rab ye shes kyi dbang).*

wisdom mudrā consort *(ye shes kyi phyag rgya ma, jñānamudrā). See mudrā consort*

world realm *('jig rten gyi khams).*

zodiacal day *(khyim zhag).* The time the sun takes to complete its orbit through the twelve houses or signs divided by 360.

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