

The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism

Its Fundamentals & History



Dudjom Rinpoche
JIKDREL YESHE DORJE

Translated and edited by Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein

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*The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism
Its Fundamentals and History*



HIS HOLINESS DUDJOM RINPOCHE

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Its Fundamentals and History*

Section One: The Translations

Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje

Translated and edited by
Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein



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the continued enlightened activity of
HIS HOLINESS DUDJOM RINPOCHE
and to all those who maintain
the living traditions of
Tibetan Buddhism.

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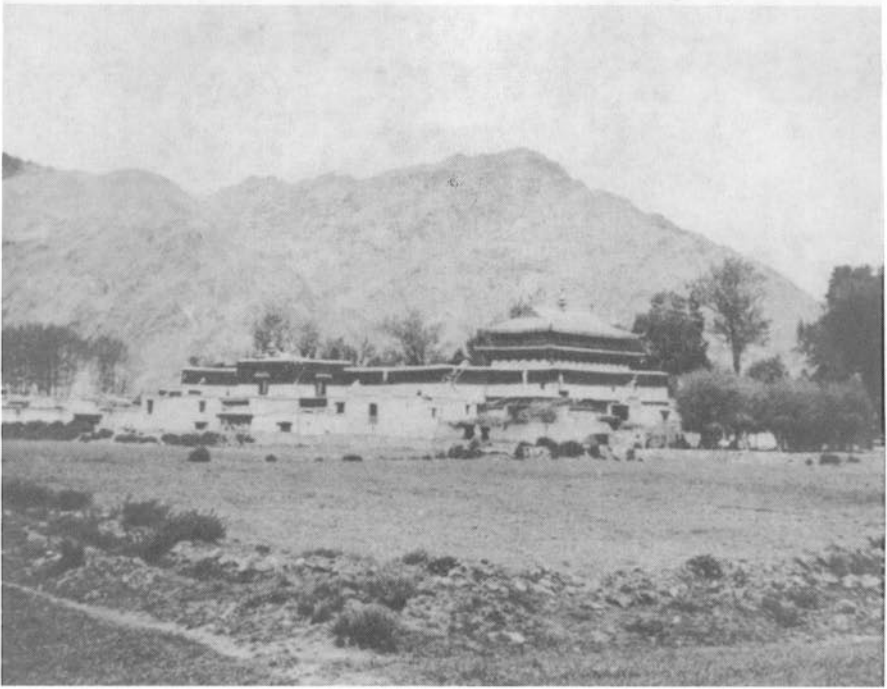
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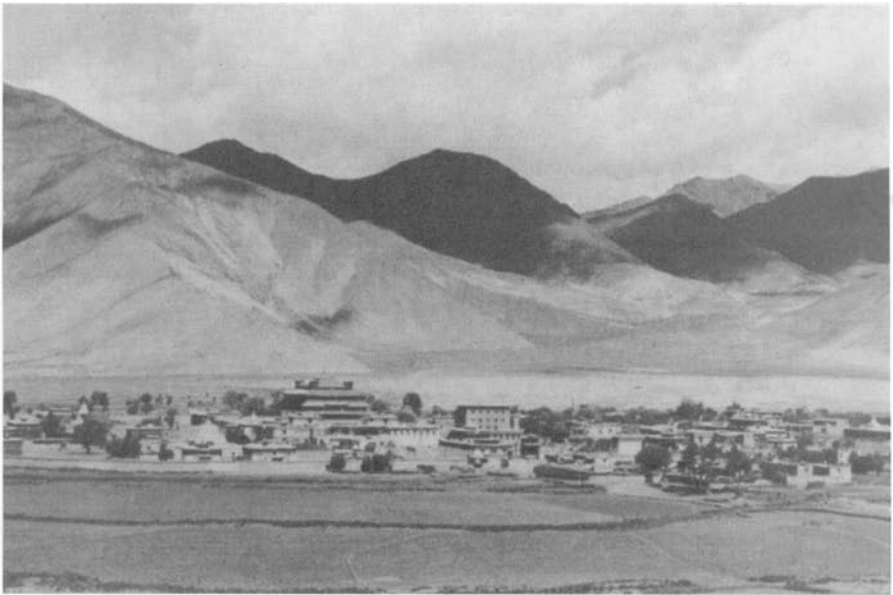
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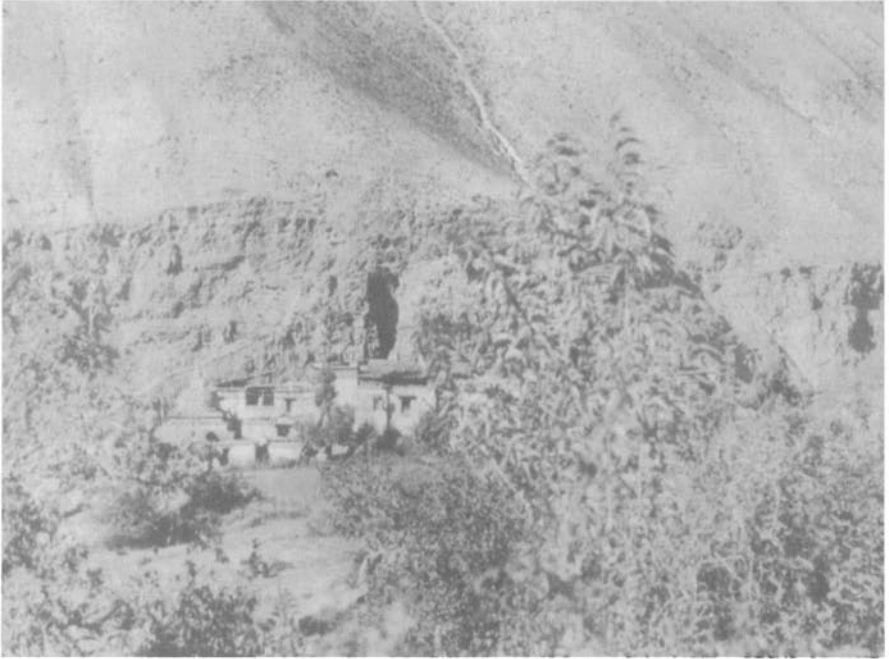
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Trhadruk, possibly Tibet's first Buddhist temple



Samye, general view from Hepori



Lhodrak Khoting, a Border Taming temple



Lhodrak Kharcu, sacred site of Padmasambhava and Namkei Nyingpo



Karcung Temple of the Indestructible Expanse, near Lhasa



*Öncangdo Peme Trashi Gepel Temple,
with Longcenpa's retreat centre on the hillside behind*

Foreword by Shenpen Dawa Rinpoche

His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje, (1904-87) was appointed by His Holiness Dalai Lama XIV as the supreme head of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. He was an enlightened yogin and meditation master, a discoverer of concealed treasure teachings (*gter-ston*) who was inseparable from Guru Rinpoche [Padmasambhava], the most prolific of contemporary Tibetan scholars, and an incarnate lama who had intentionally emanated for the sake of sentient beings through seventeen successive lives. In ancient India these emanations included: Buddha Śākyamuni's foremost disciple Śāriputra; the *mahāsiddha* Saraha; Kṛṣṇadhara, the religious minister of King Indrabhūti; and the ṛṣi Hūṃkara. In Tibet, they included: Khyeucung Lotsāwa, one of Padmasambhava's twenty-five disciples; Smṛtijñānakīrti whose lifetime demarcated the transition from the ancient to the new system of translation; Rongzom Paṅḍita who was among the first to compose major treatises within the Nyingma tradition; Katok Tampa Deshek (1122-92) who founded the monastery of Katok in East Tibet; Chögyel Phakpa (1235-80) who established a Sakya administration in Central Tibet; Rikdzin Dūdül Dorje (1615-72) who is famous for his discovery of concealed treasure teachings (*gter-ma*) in the Puwo region of south-east Tibet; Gyelse Sonam Detsen, responsible for revitalising Katok; and the treasure-finder Dūjom Lingpa (1835-1904) who discovered the "New Treasures" (*gter-gsar*).

Like many of his predecessors, His Holiness was also renowned as a great discoverer of concealed treasure teachings which are now widely practised and propagated. These are primarily the direct "treasures of intention" or "mind treasures" (*dgongs-gter*) of the awareness-holders (*vidyādhara*) concerning the inner tantras of the secret mantra vehicle, which can bring about the unsurpassed enlightenment of the rainbow body in one lifetime.

He took birth in the Pemakö region on the frontier of Tibet, on the twenty-third day of the fourth Tibetan month, 1904. This birth occurred while his predecessor Dūjom Lingpa was still alive. Dūjom Lingpa

himself gave the specific instructions of how to find his authentic emanation. His father was Tülku Jampel Norbu, who was Prince of Kanam, a direct descendant of King Trhisong Detsen, and his mother, Namgyel Drölma.

In his youth His Holiness received the transmissions and direct blessings of Guru Rinpoche, Yeshe Tshogyel and Mañjuśrī in person. He received all the lineages of the Nyingma school from his lamas: Phün-gong Tülku Gyurme Ngedön Wangpo, Jedrung Trhinle Campa Jungne, Gyurme Phendei Özer, Namdröl Gyamtso of Mindröling, Gendün Gyamtso and Khenpo Aten, amongst others. He mastered every tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Astonishingly, at the age of fourteen, he gave the full empowerment and oral transmission of the *Store of Precious Treasure* (*rin-chen gter-mdzod*), which are the collected treasure texts of the Nyingma lineage. From that time on, he gave major empowerments relating to different treasure cycles, and at the same time composed many means for attainment (*sādhana*) which elucidated the profound teachings of the *buddhadharma*. He wrote commentaries both on his predecessor's teachings and on his own revealed treasures. When he was seventeen years old he composed his first celebrated treatise on the Great Perfection (*rdzogs-pa chen-po*). He became widely renowned as a scholar and meditation master, and was followed by many students. Among his students in Tibet and throughout the Himalayan regions, many have shown the signs of full enlightenment.

He maintained the lineage of the Mindröling tradition in Central Tibet, and above all at Pema Chöling [Lamaling] and his other seats in the Kongpo and Puwo areas of south-east Tibet. Subsequently, foreseeing the incipient Chinese invasion, His Holiness and family left Tibet for India in 1958, following the prediction of Dūjom Lingpa that the lineage of his New Treasures would spread to all continents of the world, and especially to the West.

After his arrival in India, Nepal and Sikkim, he established many vital communities of Buddhist practitioners. These include Zangdok Pelri in Kalimpong, Dūdül Raptan Ling in Orissa and the Buddhist monasteries in Tshopema [Rewalsar, Himachal Pradesh] and Bodhnath in Nepal. In addition, he actively encouraged the study of the Nyingma tradition at the Tibetan Institute for Higher Studies in Sarnath. In such locations, he continued to grant the empowerments and literary transmissions for the *Collected Transmitted Precepts of the Nyingmapa* (*rnying-ma'i bka'-ma*), the *Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa* (*rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum*), and the *Store of Precious Treasure*, among others. His prolific scholarship is attested by the recent publication in India of his *Collected Works*, and his edition of the *Collected Transmitted Precepts of the Nyingmapa*, a fifty-five volume work which he began at the age of seventy-four. At the request of the Dalai Lama, he also wrote a *Political History of Tibet* (*bod-kyi rgyal-rabs*).

In the final phase of his teaching activity, His Holiness travelled widely throughout Asia, Europe and North America, where he brought many students to the *dharma*. He continued the buddha-activity of formal teaching, empowerment and personal supervision of meditation practice and retreat, which is the essence of the transmission of Vajrayāna Buddhism. Meditation and retreat centres were also established: the Vajrayāna Esoteric Society of Hong Kong, Dorje Nyingpo and Urgyen Samye Chöling in France, Yeshe Nyingpo and Orgyen Chö Dzong in the United States.

His Holiness passed into *parinirvāṇa*, dissolving his emanational body into the pure space of the buddha-body of reality (*dharmakāya*) on 17 January 1987, the eighteenth day of the eleventh month of the fire tiger year, shortly before the advent of a new Tibetan sixty-year cycle. This was at his residence overlooking the Vezère valley in the Dordogne, France. His passing was accompanied by miraculous signs of his enlightened realisation and buddha-attributes. His passing away in France is of great significance because it enacts the unification of East and West into a single maṇḍala of enlightened mind. His embalmed body was placed in a stūpa, constructed in Bodhnath, Nepal on 5 February 1989, in order to continue the Bodhisattva's activity of benefitting sentient beings. He was a Vajra Guru whose accomplishment is to be seen not so much in the outward form of elaborate monastic establishments, but in the direct, clear awareness of the mind, free from elaboration. This enlightened mind is displayed by many of his monastic and lay disciples. On this basis the purity of his lineage is established and maintained to this day in an unbroken succession.

The publication of this translation was originally conceived as a maṇḍala offering to His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche and to those great teachers who, through their discriminative awareness and skilful method, lead sentient beings to the path of the *dharma* – what is to be abandoned and what is to be adopted. For twenty years Gyurme Dorje devoted painstaking and continuous effort to bring these translations to fruition. He is a modest and unswerving scholar who has accomplished a work of paramount importance for practitioners, scholars and those generally interested in Tibetan Buddhism. Matthew Kapstein has given invaluable assistance for the later stages of these translations. Our joy is that this work has now come to its final form – the seed having been carefully planted and tended throughout, its growth has borne fruit. It will bring inconceivable benefit to all those who come into contact with it through reading, contemplation or meditation. Our regret is that we could not complete the project in time to make an offering of it to His Holiness during his lifetime. It is a work which communicates the highest wisdom of the Nyingma lineage to the English-speaking world.

I dedicate the benefit of this profound work of my father to the long life of His Holiness Dalai Lama XIV, the incarnation of Avalokiteśvara, who is a benefit to the Land of Snows, and to the whole world. May all his actions be spontaneously accomplished. May the Tibetan people, under his lotus feet, never be separated from his enlightened discriminative awareness and compassion. May His Holiness the Gyelwa Karmapa manifest swiftly to raise the victory banner of the *dharma* which liberates sentient beings, and may the heads of the Kagyü schools continue to illuminate the path of those wandering in the six realms. May His Holiness the Sakya Trhizin powerfully safeguard and nourish the faultless tradition of the Sakyapa. May all other lineage-holders flourish, and their *dharma* activities increase like the waxing moon.

May His Majesty King Jikme Senge Wangcuk of Bhutan live long, bringing happiness, prosperity and spiritual growth to his people. May His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal fulfil all the aspirations and wishes of his people. May the government and people of India, the land of the sublime ones, prosper and sustain their spiritual heritage.

May our *dharma* patrons, the Royal Grandmother of Bhutan, HRH Phüntsook Chödrön, M. Gerard Godet, Dr L. Y. Soo, Ms Emily Stevens and Jonathan Altman, enjoy both causal and wisdom merits and may their ability to benefit others never be exhausted. Tülku Pema Wangyel and Tülku Rangdröl selflessly served His Holiness – may their activities in the West be crowned with success.

To you, my physical and spiritual father and root guru, on behalf of my mother Rikzin Wangmo, my sisters Chime Wangmo and Tsering Penzom, my niece Lhanzey Wangmo, and my prophesied wife Sonam Chhuskit; on behalf of my sons Namgyel Dawa and Wangchen Dawa, and on behalf of all your disciples, I bow at your lotus feet and offer homage for your unrepayable kindness and guidance in making our lives wholesome and meaningful. May the victorious sound of the drum of the *dharma* penetrate all the levels of existence, bringing joy and happiness. May all be auspicious.

Taking a humble position, rich with the treasure of
contentment,
Free from the binds of the eight worldly concerns,
firm and strong-hearted in practice,
Receiving the Guru's blessing, realisation becomes
equal to space.
May we attain the kingdom of the All-Good.

HIS EMINENCE SHENPEN DAWA RINPOCHE
Lineage-holder of the New Treasures
Dordogne, 1990

Preface

Two treatises form the present volume, namely, the *Fundamentals of the Nyingma School* (*bstan-pa'i mam-gzhag*) and the *History of the Nyingma School* (*rnying-ma'i chos-'byung*). Among the most widely read of all His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche's works, these treatises were composed during the years immediately following his arrival in India as a refugee. His intention in writing them, as the concluding verses of the *History* state, was to preserve the precise structure of the Nyingma philosophical view within its own historical and cultural context, in a period of great uncertainty and instability.

Since the early sixties, His Holiness had appreciated the growing interest in the meditation practices and philosophical views of the Nyingma tradition, which is now evident both in universities and in the large number of Buddhist meditation centres throughout the world. He knew that, despite the vastness of the Tibetan literature, very few texts had actually been translated into other languages, and he recognised an urgent need for the presentation in English of traditional works which precisely define, stage by stage, the entire range of Buddhist experience and thought, and the authentic history of its transmission from antiquity to the present. Therefore, in 1971, he authorised and encouraged me to translate into English his *History of the Nyingma School*, which constitutes the latter part of this volume. Then, in 1980, he further authorised the translation of his *Fundamentals of the Nyingma School*.

Prior to 1971, partial Chinese and Hindi translations of the *History* had already been published in Hong Kong and Nalanda respectively. Working from the original Tibetan and its Hindi version, I prepared an annotated English translation in manuscript form at the monastery of Orgyen Kunzang Chokhorling in Darjeeling and at the sacred place of the Nyingmapa known as Tshopema, or Rewalsar, in Himachal Pradesh, between 1971 and 1977. The typing of the first draft was completed by Sheona Gunn at Bodhnath, Nepal, during the winter of 1977 to 1978. In the summer of 1979, the Author asked Matthew

Kapstein to edit the manuscript, and consequently in 1981 we met to revise the edited translation and to standardise the English terminology. Then, between 1980 and 1982, I prepared a translation of the *Fundamentals* in the Dordogne region of France and met again with Matthew Kapstein in New York during the summer of 1983, where he helped edit the *Fundamentals*. Both texts were prepared for publication with the assistance of many volunteer typists at Orgyen Chö Dzong, Greenville, New York.

The *Fundamentals* is written in the terse, highly structured style of the *grub-mtha*' genre, and is by no means an easy text to comprehend. A synopsis of the treatise has been included in the Translator's Introduction so that the reader can form an overall view of its structure and become familiar with the English terminology. Those unfamiliar with even the basic categories of Buddhist thought are recommended to start by reading the *History*, Parts One and Two, where these concepts are introduced in the clear narrative context of the origins of Indian Buddhism, as understood in the Nyingma tradition.

The annotations, glossaries and indexes for both texts, which are published here in the second section as a resource for the reader, were compiled after consulting materials at the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, between 1982 and 1983. The bibliographies were initially prepared in the Dordogne and London over the same period, and their sources thoroughly researched and documented at Brown University, Rhode Island, USA, from 1985 to 1986. All of this reference material was revised, updated and expanded into its present form with the help of our editor Sarah Thresher during the final editorial work in London, New York and Boston throughout 1989 and 1990.

The general problems of translation are compounded in the case of the Tibetan language. In the past, Tibetan scholars of the calibre of Vairocana and Kawa Peltsek could translate the Sanskrit Buddhist texts with great accuracy because they had fully realised the essence of enlightened mind. By contrast, in the present circumstances, despite our total absence of inner realisation, we are obliged to translate the great works of Tibetan literature in order to preserve and propagate them for the benefit of posterity. It is therefore hoped that the well informed reader will exercise some restraint in the knowledge that the translator accepts full responsibility for errors which inevitably exist. These in no way reflect on the realisation or scholarship of the Author.

At this juncture Matthew Kapstein and I wish to express our gratitude to all who helped bring about the publication of the English version of these texts. Above all, His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche suggested the task and inspired the work of translation at every stage of its development. Specifically, he gave attention to many textual problems in the

Dordogne, France, during the summer of 1982 and in New York during the summer of 1983. His wife, Lady Rikdzin Wangmo (Sangyum Kusho), and his *dharma* heir, Shenpen Dawa Rinpoche, have also given constant support. The late Kangyur Rinpoche and his family facilitated the project during its formative years in Darjeeling from 1971 to 1976, and gave invaluable subsequent assistance. During this period, the project was also funded and staunchly supported by Eric and Joan McLennan. Then, from 1977 to 1983, Gerard Godet of the Kangyur Rinpoche Foundation sponsored the translation with dedicated generosity. Some financial support was also provided by Tom Stickland in 1978, Georgina and Etienne De Swarte in 1982, and Mr C. T. Chen of the Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions during 1979 and 1980. Moreover, for the past twelve years enormous practical help has been given by Rigzin Dolma, who, keeping in the background, has sustained those working on the project.

Several scholars devoted many concentrated hours to clarify obscure points of *dharma* or translation. In chronological order, these were: Pema Dorje, the artist, and Khenpo Pema Sherab who dedicated themselves to the task at Clement Town during the winter and spring of 1978 to 1979; Khetsun Zangpo Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyel who offered similar assistance during the autumn and winter of 1979 in Nepal; and Lama Sonam Topgyel, Tülku Pema Wangyel, Khenpo Palden Sherap and Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, who applied themselves to the editing problems in France from 1980 to 1982. I also wish to thank Professor David Snellgrove for his interest and support, Mr Hugh Richardson, Dr Michael Aris and Kalon Jikme Taring, who helped clarify specific points; and Mr Michael Farmer, who prepared our new maps with great thoroughness and care. Matthew Kapstein wishes to thank Khenpo Sangye Tenzin of Serlo Gumba, Nepal, for the profound kindness with which he introduced him to the historical and doctrinal traditions of the Nyingmapa.

Finally, we wish to express gratitude to all the staff of Wisdom Publications for their sustained efforts, editorial care and strong commitment to the preservation of the important works of Tibetan Buddhism. The publishers wish to thank Brian Boland for his assistance during the latter stages of production.

GYURME DORJE
London, 1990

Preface to the Second Edition

After H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History* first appeared in English in 1991, many expressed to us the desire for a more moderately priced edition that would be readily available to the broad range of students of Buddhism in the West and in Asia. We are therefore grateful to Wisdom Publications for now undertaking to bring out a new edition that will fulfill this demand. Our thanks are also due to the Venerable Sogyal Rinpoche and to the Rigpa Fellowship, whose encouragements have greatly facilitated these efforts.

The present volume reproduces in full the text of the two volumes of the original publication, the Translations, and Reference Materials. It differs in that it offers a reduced selection of the photographic plates that illustrated the first edition; and it corrects, without comment, a number of errors and infelicities that were found in the text after careful review. A list of addenda to the bibliography of works referred to by the translators has also been added so as to reflect pertinent developments in Tibetan Buddhist Studies during the past decade.

As promised in the original version, an exhaustive Tibetan-English glossary of the material treated in volume two is being prepared, and we are happy to announce that it is nearing completion. Remarks on new researches concerning the identification and availability of primary textual sources, which we have not been able to incorporate here, will be included in that forthcoming work, intended as an aid to Tibetological scholarship.

In concluding our present task, we wish to honour once again the memory of our magnificent teacher, H.H. the late Dudjom Rinpoche. We have been greatly privileged to assist in bringing these treasures of his intention to interested readers throughout the world. *dge legs 'phel! May virtue and goodness increase!*

Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein
June 2002

Credits for Illustrations and Maps

PLATES

The following people and organisations kindly made available colour or monochrome photographs for inclusion in Section One:

Board of Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 5

Dudjom Rinpoche Collection, frontispiece, 6, 24

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We would also like to thank Chris Conlon and all those who helped with the photo research.

LINE DRAWINGS

The series of line drawings in Section One was compiled from a number of sources and redrawn by Chris Conlon. The majority were commissioned and drawn under the guidance of Dudjom Rinpoche for the original publication of the *History* in its Tibetan version in 1962, and later redrawn by Gomchen Oleshey for publication in *Kailash*. We also acknowledge Professor Lokesh Chandra's *Buddhist Iconography of Tibet*, which was an invaluable resource, and thank all those who obtained or commissioned rare drawings, namely, Khenpo Pema Sherap, Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, Tülku Pema Wangyel, Dr Yoshiro Imaeda, Dr Michael Aris, Chris Fynn and the Rigpa Meditation Centre, London. The completed line drawings were shown to Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche in the summer of 1990, who then instructed Tülku Pema Wangyel to review them for accuracy. Several revisions were undertaken on the basis of the latter's valuable advice.

MAPS

The maps in Section Two were compiled by Michael Farmer and extracted from the Tibetan mapping database currently being used to generate the forthcoming Wisdom map of Tibet. He wishes to thank YRM plc for the extensive use of their Intergraph CAD system, without which the project would not have been possible; and also Robbie Barnett, Jeremy Schmidt, John Cannon, Bradley Rowe, Anders Andersen and Ugyen Norbu, who generously provided valuable and rare maps from their own collections.

Technical Note

The two treatises presented here are works of great breadth and complexity. For this reason, extensive annotations, glossaries and indexes have been compiled to assist the reader, and these constitute Section Two. The introduction to the second volume details the reference material at the disposal of the reader – this brief note is intended to introduce only those conventions commonly used within Section One.

Each book is preceded by a detailed list of contents which includes a complete breakdown of all the sections and subsections of the original work. For the benefit of the reader, chapter and section headings have also been inserted within the texts themselves whenever possible even though these do not always appear in the original Tibetan. None of the inserted headings have been enclosed within square brackets or parentheses.

Square brackets have been used in the text where the terse character of the Tibetan language necessitates short explanations by the translators. They are also employed where, at the beginning of each section of the translation, the pagination of the original Tibetan text is given for the convenience of scholars wishing to locate specific passages in the original. Parentheses have been used where technical terms and book titles given in the original text have been retained, either in their Tibetan or Sanskrit versions. In those instances where these conventions would require the running together of square brackets and parentheses only the former have been employed.

Tibetan and Sanskrit book titles have been given in English translation and after their first occurrence are followed by the Tibetan title (in the case of indigenous Tibetan works) or a Sanskrit title (in the case of works of Indic origin). The translated title always represents the form in which it is given in the Tibetan text and so may not always correspond to the known Sanskrit title. Abbreviated bibliographical data for texts occurring in certain well-known collections, such as the *Kangyur*, has also been provided, along with precise identification of the original sources of citations from major Indian Buddhist works

wherever possible. When the readings of the text and Sanskrit original diverge, the translators have remained faithful to the Tibetan. Full bibliographical information for texts cited by the Author or referred to by the translators is provided in Section Two.

Sanskrit has generally been used for the names of persons and places in India, and for the names of many of the deities. Sanskrit equivalents of Tibetan technical terms have also occasionally been given, though this is mostly reserved for the glossaries of Section Two. Where a technical term given in Sanskrit is not documented in the original Sanskrit sources that are presently available, this fact is indicated by the use of an asterisk (*) preceding the term in question. To avoid typographical clutter, however, we have not followed this convention with respect to personal and place names.

Numerical categories are not indicated in the body of the text and seldom in the Notes but are listed in the Glossary of Enumerations in Section Two, which should be directly consulted whenever enumerations occur. Similarly, Tibetan and/or Sanskrit equivalents for all the technical terminology employed in the body of the translations are given in the Index of Technical Terms.

Finally, readers are referred to the Guide to Pronunciation which follows, for an explanation of the system of romanisation and simplified spelling adopted for personal and place names in Section One. In particular, the conventions governing the use of the letters *c* and *e* may seem unnatural to an English speaker and so require special attention. Technical terms and book titles occurring parenthetically have been transcribed according to their proper Tibetan orthography.

Guide to Pronunciation

Readers should familiarise themselves at the outset with the following four rules of pronunciation for Tibetan and Sanskrit:

- (1) A final *e* is never silent, but is always pronounced in the manner of the French *é*. Thus, Sanskrit *vane* is pronounced *vané*, and the Tibetan *Ghare*, *Kore* and *Dorje* are pronounced, respectively, *Gharé*, *Koré* and *Dorjé*.
- (2) *C* is pronounced somewhat like the English *ch*, but without aspiration. Sanskrit *cakra* and *citta* thus resemble *chakra* and *chitta*, and Tibetan *Co-se*, *Campa* and *Koca* are rather like *Cho-sé*, *Champa* and *Kocha*.
- (3) *Ph* is never pronounced like an English *f*, but like a *p* with strong aspiration, for example in Sanskrit *phala* and Tibetan *photrang*.
- (4) *Th* is never pronounced like the English *th* in *think* or *that*, but always resembling a *t* with strong aspiration, for example in Sanskrit *tathāgata* and Tibetan *thuk*.

The following remarks explain the conventions adopted for the transcription of Sanskrit and Tibetan in greater detail:

SANSKRIT

The Sanskrit vowels in actual use here are as follows:

a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, ṛ, e, ai, o, au

A, i, u, e and *o* are pronounced as in Italian. *Ā, ī* and *ū* are not to be pronounced like the so-called “long vowels” in English, but like the *a* in *father*, the *ea* in *seat* and the *oo* in *boot* respectively. *Ai* is similar to the *y*-sound of English *by*, and *au* to the *ow* of *now*. *Ṛ* resembles the *ri*-sound of *brick*. Vowels may be followed by *m̐* and *ḥ*, which respectively

indicate the nasalisation and aspiration of the vowel to which they are affixed.

The transcribed Sanskrit consonants are:

k, kh, g, gh, ṅ
c, ch, j, jh, ñ
ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ
t, th, d, dh, n
p, ph, b, bh, m
y, r, l, v
ś, ṣ, s, h

Of these, *k, ch, j, t, d, n, p, b, m, y, r, l, v, s*, and *h* indicate roughly the same sounds as they do in English, and *c, ph* and *th* have been explained above. The series *t, th, d, dh, n* is distinguished from the series *ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ* in that the latter or “retroflex” series is pronounced with the tongue striking the roof of the mouth, and the former or “dental” series, with the tongue striking the upper incisors. *Kh, gh, jh, dh, ḍh* and *bh* are similar to *k, g, j, d, ḍ* and *b* respectively, but with strong aspiration. *ṅ* resembles the *ng* in English *sing*, and *ñ* the *ny* in *canyon*. *ṣ* and *ś* are both similar to the English *sh*-sound, but the tongue is positioned further back when pronouncing the former.

TIBETAN

The transcription of Tibetan in English introduces special problems owing to the fact that the pronunciation of the spoken language does not closely correspond to the orthography of the literary language. For this reason a transliteration of the Tibetan spellings is of little use to the ordinary reader, who will have no way of knowing that, for example, *bsgrubs* and *dbyings* are currently pronounced as *drup* and *ying* respectively. On the other hand, students of the classical Tibetan language usually prefer the literal transcriptions to simplified phonetic schemes. The solution adopted in the present work has been to give all Tibetan personal and place names occurring in the text in just such a simplified system, relegating the precise transliterations to the indexes. At the same time, book titles, technical terms and peculiarities of language which are given parenthetically or discussed in the annotations have been given in a formal transliteration of the classical Tibetan, the system used being based upon that of the late Turrell V. Wylie, which will be familiar to specialists.

Our simplified phonetic transcription approximates the pronunciation of modern Central Tibetan, but without the subtlety or precision of a formal phonetic transcription, such as that developed by Chang and Shefts. Our intention here is merely to minimise the difficulties with which Tibetan names confront the reader.

In addition to the five vowels *a*, *i*, *u*, *e* and *o*, which have the same values here that they do in Sanskrit, Tibetan introduces two more – *ö* and *ü* – which are pronounced as in German.

The following additional consonants are used, along with those also found in Sanskrit: *ng*, *ny*, *tr*, *trh*, *dr*, *ts*, *tsh*, *dz*, *w*, *sh*, *z*, *zh*. Of these, *ng*, *ny*, *tr*, *dr*, *w*, *sh* and *z* are similar to their English values. *Trh* is like *tr*, but with strong aspiration. *Ts* resembles the *ts*-sound in English *bets*, and *dz* the sound in *adze*. *Tsh* is the strongly aspirated version of *ts*. *Zh* is similar to the *s* in *leisure*, or the *j* of French words such as *jamais*.

Specialists will note that this system does not reflect tone, an important feature of modern spoken Tibetan, and that we have dropped the aspirate in cases where it is not usually pronounced, even if it occurs in the classical orthography. Following a vowel, *l* is often silent, the preceding vowel being lengthened by way of compensation.

Abbreviations for Section One

DZ	<i>Gdams-ngag mdzod. Store of Precious Instructions.</i> 12 vols. Delhi: N. Lungtok and N. Gyaltzan, 1971.
<i>Fundamentals</i>	Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje. <i>The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History</i> , Vol. 1, Bk. 1.
<i>History</i>	Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje. <i>The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History</i> , Vol. 1, Bk. 2.
Mvt.	<i>Mahāvvyutpatti.</i> Ed. R. Sakaki, Kyoto, 1916-25.
NGB	<i>Rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum. Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa.</i> Thimpu: Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, 1973. 36 vols. Catalogue by E. Kaneko, Tokyo, 1982.
NMKMG	<i>Rnying-ma bka'-ma rgyas-pa. Collected Transmitted Precepts of the Nyingmapa.</i> Ed. Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje. 55 vols. Kalimpong, WB: Dubjung Lama, 1982.
NYZ	<i>Snying-thig ya-bzhi. Four-Part Innermost Spirituality.</i> 11 vols. New Delhi: Trulku Tsewang, Jamyang and L. Tashi, 1970.
P	<i>The Tibetan Tripitaka, Peking Edition.</i> 168 vols. Tokyo-Kyoto: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1955-61.
RTD	<i>Rin-chen gter-mdzod. Store of Precious Treasure.</i> 111 vols. Paro: Ngodrup and Sherap Drimey, 1976.
SK	<i>Sa-skya bka'-'bum. The Complete Works of the Great Masters of the Sa Skya Pa Sect of Tibetan Buddhism.</i> 15 vols. Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1968.
Skt.	Sanskrit
SP	<i>Śatapiṭaka Series.</i> Sarasvati Vihar, New Delhi.
T	<i>A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons.</i> Ed. H. Ui et al. Sendai: Tōhoku University, 1934.
Tib.	Tibetan

Book One
Fundamentals of the Nyingma School

Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje

Translated and edited by Gyurme Dorje
Associate editor Matthew Kapstein

Note

This detailed list of contents has been compiled as a resource for the reader showing the entire structure and framework of the teachings as they are presented in Book One. Headings have been added which do not appear in the actual translation to give a more precise and full idea of the subjects mentioned in the text, and these have been included in square brackets. The actual nesting of subject categories within the original Tibetan treatise is indicated by the small figures in square brackets which follow each heading.

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Translator's Introduction

The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism represents the original Buddhist teachings as they were translated, principally from Sanskrit but also from Burushaski and other languages into Tibetan, until the period of the Indian scholar Smṛtijñānakīrti (late tenth or early eleventh century) and prior to that of Locen Rincen Zangpo (958-1055). It is also known as the Ancient Translation School (*snga-'gyur*) in contrast to the other lineages of Indian origin such as the Kagyüpa, the Sakyapa, and the Kadampa, which subsequently arrived in Tibet and became known as the new traditions (*gsar-ma*) or the later translation schools (*phyi-'gyur*).

The original promulgator of the doctrines brought together within the Nyingma tradition is held to be Samantabhadra, who is the primordial buddha-body of reality (*chos-sku*, Skt. *dharmakāya*). However, there are also a considerable number of teachings which derive from Vajradhara and the Buddhas of the Five Families, who are the buddha-body of perfect rapture (*longs-spyod rdzogs-pa'i sku*, Skt. *sambhogakāya*), and from the emanational bodies (*sprul-pa'i sku*, Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*), such as Śākyamuni in the world of men, Munindra in the god realms and so on.

All Buddhist teachings may be presented in accordance with the threefold approach of theoretical view (*lta-ba*), meditational experience (*bsgom-pa*), or conduct (*spyod-pa*). In the *Fundamentals of the Nyingma School*, His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche precisely delineates the entire range of the Buddhist spiritual and philosophical systems from the standpoint of the view. It is traditionally held that once the view has been comprehended, it is then to be experientially cultivated through meditation, and practically applied in all everyday situations which arise during the aftermath of meditation.

The Buddhist spiritual and philosophical systems form what is essentially a dynamic gradation of experience from the most mundane level of cyclical existence (*samsāra*) to that of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs-pa chen-po*). As the text explains (p.80):

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When the transmitted precepts are classified according to their power, they form a vehicle, because it appears that therein higher and higher paths are traversed, in the manner of a “vehicle”.

And again:

Riding on that, which is the best of vehicles,
Manifestly attaining to delightful bliss,
All sentient beings pass into nirvāṇa.

The *Fundamentals* expands upon these systems, which are known in the Nyingma tradition as the nine sequences of the vehicle (*theg-pa'i rim-pa dgu*), in extraordinarily intricate detail. To facilitate the reader's understanding, a summary now follows.

SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

The *Fundamentals* consists of four parts. The first expounds the doctrines of cyclical existence or saṃsāra and the supramundane doctrines of nirvāṇa. The second explains the nature of the teachers who are endowed with the three buddha-bodies of reality, perfect rapture, and emanation. The third is an analysis of the causal vehicles of dialectics. And, finally, there is a detailed account of the resultant vehicles of indestructible reality (*Vajrayāna*) which are held to be supreme by all schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Within these four parts the distinctions of entrance (*'jug-sgo*), empowerment (*dbang-bskur*), view (*lta-ba*), moral discipline (*tshul-khrims*), meditation (*bsgom-pa*), conduct (*spyod-pa*), and result (*'bras-bu*) are clarified as they apply to each stage of the Buddhist experience.

PART ONE: DOCTRINES OF SAṂSĀRA AND NIRVĀṆA

At the outset, the Author differentiates between mundane doctrines which do not transcend the suffering of cyclical existence and the supramundane doctrines which do so by relying on the continuum of enlightenment.

Doctrines of Saṃsāra

The basis of the mundane doctrines is held to be ignorance which, in three interrelated aspects, generates a sense of bewilderment. This, in turn, gives rise to consciousness of the ground-of-all (*kun-gzhi rnam-shes*, Skt. *ālayavijñāna*), the six conflicting emotions of ignorance, delusion, hatred, pride, desire, and envy, and also all sensory perception, the

eighteen psychophysical bases, the five components and the twelve activity fields.¹ All these are said to be compounded internally by the mind, their apparent aspect and support being the five gross elements compounded by external objects. In this way, the three world realms of desire (*kāmadhātu*), form (*rūpadhātu*) and the formless (*ārūpyadhātu*) are nothing but apparitional modes of the bewildered intellect of living beings. They do not appear in the pure vision of the buddhas, and the sufferings sustained within them are prolonged by karma or world-forming deeds.

The Mundane Vehicle and the Brahmā Vehicle

The mundane vehicle which is followed by gods and human beings (*lha-mi 'jig-rten-gyi theg-pa*) is the basis on which the nine specifically Buddhist sequences of the vehicle develop. By regulating world-forming deeds, renouncing the ten non-virtues and observing good deeds with piety and humility, one is said to progress to the status of a god of the desire realm within cyclical existence. As the text says (pp.60-1):

It either forms the foundation of, or is preliminary to, all vehicles, because the vehicle which is not retained by the correct view and which does not observe the deeds and path of the ten virtues as its actual foundation is nowhere to be found.

As an extension of this mundane vehicle, the vehicle of Brahmā (*tshangs-pa'i theg-pa*) generates the experience of all the twenty-one higher realms within cyclical existence. These include seventeen realms of form, which are experienced through the four meditative concentrations of form, and four formless realms at the summit of cyclical existence, which are to be experienced through the four formless absorptions. These meditative techniques employ both tranquillity (*zhi-gnas*, Skt. *śamatha*) and higher insight (*lhag-mthong*, Skt. *vipaśyana*), and are accompanied by the practice of the four immeasurables (loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity). The chart on the following pages indicates the stages and overall structure of the three realms of cyclical existence with their subdivisions and their corresponding meditative states.

Since the vehicles of gods and human beings and the vehicle of Brahmā possess qualities which are basic to any Buddhist experience, they are regarded as a means of entering into the true vehicle of Buddhist experience.

Those of No Understanding and Those of Wrong Understanding

The sentient beings who are considered to be ensnared within cyclical existence and subject to continuous rounds of suffering are traditionally

THE SIX CLASSES OF LIVING BEINGS IN THEIR GRADATION
TO THE SUMMIT OF EXISTENCE IN SAṂSĀRA

1. The Twenty-one Higher Realms (*khams gong-ma nyi-shu rtsa-gcig*)

1A. Four Formless Realms at the Summit of Existence (*gzugs-med khams-pa'i gnas-bzhi*, Skt. *Caturārūpyadhātu*, Mvt. 3110-3113)

4. Activity Field of Neither Perception nor Non-Perception (*'du-shes med 'du-shes med-min skye-mched*, Skt. *Naivasamjñāsamjñāyatana*)
3. Activity Field of Nothing At All (*ci-yang med-pa'i skye-mched*, Skt. *Akimcaryāyatana*)
2. Activity Field of Infinite Consciousness (*mam-shes mtha'-yas skye-mched*, Skt. *Vijñānānantyāyatana*)
1. Activity Field Infinite as the Sky (*nam-mkha' mtha'-yas skye-mched*, Skt. *Ākāśānantyāyatana*)

Class 6:
God Realms

1B. Seventeen Realms of Form (*lha gzugs-khams bcu-bdun*)

1Ba. The Five Pure Abodes (*gtsang-gnas lnga*, Skt. *Pañcaśuddhanivāsa*, Mvt. 3101-3108)

5. Highest (*'og-min*, Skt. *Akanisṭha*)
4. Extreme Insight (*shin-tu mthong*, Skt. *Sudarśana*)
3. Attractive (*gya-nom snang-ba*, Skt. *Sudrśa*)
2. Painless (*mi-gdung-pa*, Skt. *Atapa*)
1. Slightest (*mi-che-ba*, Skt. *Avrha*)

1Bb. The Twelve Ordinary Realms of the Four Concentrations (*so-skye'i gnas bcu-gnyis*, Mvt. 3085-3100)

FOURTH CONCENTRATION

12. Great Fruition (*'bras-bu che*, Skt. *Bṛhatphala*)
11. Increasing Merit (*bsod-nams 'phel*, Skt. *Punyaśrasava*)
10. Cloudless (*sprin-med*, Skt. *Anabhraka*)

THIRD CONCENTRATION

9. Most Extensive Virtue (*dge-rgyas*, Skt. *Śubhakarśna*)
8. Immeasurable Virtue (*tshad-med dge*, Skt. *Apramāṇasubha*)
7. Little Virtue (*dge-chung*, Skt. *Parītaśubha*)

SECOND CONCENTRATION

6. Inner Radiance (*'od-gsal*, Skt. *Ābhāsvara*)
5. Immeasurable Radiance (*tshad-med 'od*, Skt. *Apramāṇābha*)
4. Little Radiance (*'od-chung*, Skt. *Parītābha*)

FIRST CONCENTRATION

3. Great Brahmā (*tshangs-pa chen-po*, Skt. *Mahābrahmā*)
2. Priest Brahmā (*tshangs-pa mdun-na 'don*, Skt. *Brahmapurohita*)
1. Stratum of Brahmā (*tshangs-ris*, Skt. *Brahmakāyika*)

2. The Ten Higher Levels of the Desire Realm (*'dod-khams-kyi mtho-ris gnas-bcu*)

2A. Six Species of Kāma Divinities (*'dod-lha rigs-drug*, Skt. *Kāmadevaṣaṭkula*, Mvt. 3078-3083)

6. Mastery over Transformations (*gghan-'phrul dbang-byed*, Skt. *Paranimitavaśavartin*)
5. Delighting in Emanation (*'phrul-dga'*, Skt. *Nirmānarata*)
4. Joyful (*dga'-ldan*, Skt. *Tuṣita*)
3. Strifeless (*'thab-bral*, Skt. *Yāma*)
2. Heaven of Thirty-three Gods (*sum-cu rtsa-gsum-pa*, Skt. *Trayatrīṃśa*)
1. Four Great Kings (*rgyal-chen bzhi'i ris*, Skt. *Caturmahārājakāyika*)

Class 5:
Antigods (*lha-ma-yin*, Skt. *asura*)²

Class 4:
Human Beings of the Four Continents (*gling-bzhi'i mi*)

4. Surpassing the Body (*lus-'phags*, Skt. *Pūrvaideha* in the East)
3. Rose-Apple Continent (*'dzam-bu gling*, Skt. *Jambudvīpa* in the South)
2. Enjoyer of Cattle (*ba-glang spyod*, Skt. *Aparagodaniya* in the West)
1. Unpleasant Sound (*sgra mi-snyan*, Skt. *Uttarakuru* in the North)

3. The Three Lower Levels of the Desire Realm (*ngan-song gsum*)

Class 3:
Animals (*dud-'gro*, Skt. *tīryak*)

Class 2:
Tormented Spirits (*yi-dvags*, Skt. *preta*)

Class 1:
Hells (*dmyal-ba*, Skt. *naraka*)

divided into those who have no understanding (*ma-rtogs-pa*) and those who have wrong understanding (*log-par rtogs-pa*). The former include the apathetic who lack understanding of deeds and causality, and so fail to respond to any philosophical system, observing neither renunciation nor commitment; and the materialists (*Lokāyata*) who refer only to the present life and set their trust in the mysterious calculations of worldly wisdom.

Those of wrong understanding are traditionally said to comprise four schools of eternalistic extremism and one of nihilistic extremism. The former are the Sāṃkhya, the Aiśvara, the Vaiṣṇava, and Jainism. The Sāṃkhya hold all that is knowable to consist of twenty-five existent categories, which are said to be dissolved when sublimation of the self (*puruṣa*) occurs. The Aiśvara, who include the adherents of Nyāya logic and Vaiśeṣika analysis of substances, hold that an eternally existent lord or Īśvara controls the destiny of all beings regardless of deeds. The Vaiṣṇava uphold the authenticity of the Veda, along with the eternal status of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and other deities. And Jainism holds all the knowable to be divided into nine categories, among which animate substances (*jīva*) are eternally existent. The nihilistic extremists are the Bārhaspatya hedonists of ancient India who negate causality, past and future lives, the existence of invisible beings and the possibility of progress beyond suffering into nirvāṇa.

All these are said to lack a means of achieving liberation from the suffering of cyclical existence – those of no understanding because they are roused by no philosophical view and those of wrong understanding because they either cling to the concept of an eternal self or become totally negative. Even so, the Author maintains, there are certain circumstances when a buddha may teach in the manner of the eternalists for a specific purpose or in that of the nihilists when scepticism may be transmuted into Madhyamaka dialectic.³

Doctrines of Nirvāṇa

The true doctrine of nirvāṇa which transcends the suffering of cyclical existence is said to surpass mundane doctrines because it seeks refuge in the Buddha, the doctrines of Buddhism and the community of practitioners. There are four seals or hallmarks indicative of such transmitted precepts, namely, all that is compounded is impermanent, all that is corrupt is suffering, all things are without self, and nirvāṇa is peace. By the practice of the Buddhist teachings all cyclical existence and rebirth are opposed.

In general, the Buddhist teaching is divided according to realisation (*rtogs-pa*, Skt. *adhiḡama*) and literary transmission (*lung*, Skt. *āḡama*). The former includes the realisation which has been achieved by buddhas, or the truth of cessation, as well as the active or dynamic means

to attain that realisation – the truth of the path which removes obscuration and reveals the intrinsic awareness of buddhahood, bringing about the truth of cessation. The literary transmissions comprise both the transmitted precepts (*legs-bshad bka'*, Skt. *subhāṣitappravacana*) and the treatises (*bstan-bcos*, Skt. *sāstra*).

Transmitted Precepts

Transmitted precepts are the sūtra and tantra texts which originated from buddhas such as Śākyamuni. They comprise those given in the form of oral teaching, those given by the blessing or consecration of the buddha-body, speech and mind, and those given by a buddha's mandate (pp.74-6). They may also be classified according to the three successive promulgations of the doctrinal wheel, the twelve branches of the scriptures, the eighty-four thousand doctrinal components including the Vinayaṭaka, Sūtraṭaka, Abhidharmaṭaka, and Vidyādharmaṭaka,⁴ or according to the nine sequences of the vehicle.

The Author indicates at some length that enumerations such as two vehicles, three vehicles, four vehicles, or five vehicles are merely different ways of categorising the single vehicle. In fact there may be as many vehicles as there are thoughts. As the *Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā* (*Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, T 107)⁵ says:

As long as there is perception
The culmination of vehicles will never be
reached.

In the Nyingma tradition the vehicle is said to have nine sequences, which are differentiated according to the acumen of those who require training through them. Each lower sequence is also included in the higher. Thus the *All-Accomplishing King* (*kun-byed rgyal-po*, T 828) states:

Existentially there is only one
But empirically there are nine vehicles.

These nine sequences are the vehicles of the pious attendants (*nyan-thos*, Skt. *śrāvaka*), self-centred buddhas (*rang-rgyal*, Skt. *pratyekabuddha*) and bodhisattvas (*byang-chub sems-dpa'*); the vehicles of Kriyātantra (*bya-ba*), Ubhayatantra (*gnyis-ka*), and Yogatantra (*rnal-'byor*); and those of Mahāyoga (*rnal-'byor chen-po*), Anuyoga (*rjes-su rnal-'byor*) and Atiyoga, the Great Perfection (*rdzogs-chen shin-tu rnal-'byor*). However, it is emphasised that the transmitted precepts in the form of a vehicle are a means of attaining realisation, and that, in the words of the *Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā*:

When the mind becomes transformed
There is neither vehicle nor mover.

Treatises

Treatises are commentaries composed by sublime beings such as Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga and Longchen Rapjampa to elucidate the intention of the transmitted precepts.

In Buddhist terms, treatises are defined as compositions which are made so as to counteract the three poisons of delusion, desire and hatred, and to protect the mind from the suffering of cyclical existence (pp.88ff.). They require four special attributes, namely, a motivation based on compassion and discriminative awareness, expressive words in verse, an expressed meaning which reveals the means for those who desire liberation, and a purposeful composition. Treatises are then classified in six ways according to: the purpose of the composer, the qualitative standard of the composition, the status of the composer (i.e. buddha, bodhisattva, arhat or paṇḍita), the specific or general manner of their composition, the view, conduct and integration of view and conduct as revealed in each of the three successive promulgations of the transmitted precepts, and finally the meaning they express, which may be quantitative, qualitative or conducive to liberation and omniscience.

The quantitative treatises, in which diverse categories are enumerated, include general treatises on ethics, and specialised treatises on grammar, logic, art, medicine, astrology, poetics, prosody, synonymics and drama. Qualitative treatises include those on Madhyamaka philosophy which establish the selflessness of the individual and of phenomena. Finally, the treatises conducive to liberation and omniscience include esoteric instructions of five kinds, which are condensed in order to generate liberation from cyclical existence in those who require training through them.

PART TWO: BUDDHA NATURE ACCORDING TO THE BUDDHA-BODIES

Having distinguished between the doctrines which cause one to remain in cyclical existence and those which transcend such suffering, what then is the nature of the buddha or the teacher who is said to communicate the means of attaining liberation? This is the subject-matter of Part Two.

Buddha (literally, the “awakened one”) is rendered in Tibetan as *sangs-rgyas*: *sangs* meaning purified of all conflicting emotions and *rgyas* meaning vast in enlightened attributes. Thus a buddha is one who has purified all sufferings of cyclical existence and is endowed with the enlightened attributes of buddha-body and pristine cognition. The buddha-bodies are held to number three or five, although they have many other aspects. Lower sequences of the vehicle speak of the two bodies of reality and form, or

of three or four. Here in the Nyingma tradition there are five, namely, the buddha-bodies of reality, perfect rapture, emanation, awakening and indestructible reality.

The Buddha-body of Reality

The buddha-body of reality (*chos-sku*, Skt. *dharmakāya*), which is also known as Samantabhadra (*kun-tu bzang-po*), is considered to be the prime mover of the highest teachings of the Great Perfection or Atiyoga.

The Nyingmapa hold that buddhahood is attained when intrinsic awareness is liberated just where it is through having recognised the nature of Samantabhadra, the primordially pure body of reality. This buddhahood is endowed with the pristine cognition of the expanse of reality (*chos-dbyings ye-shes*, Skt. *dharmadhātujñāna*), for it is free from all conceptual elaborations, and the pristine cognition of sameness (*mnyam-nyid ye-shes*, Skt. *samatājñāna*) which remains pure through the extent of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.

Reality (*chos-nyid*, Skt. *dharmatā*) in Buddhism refers to the emptiness which is the inherent nature of phenomena. The apparitional aspect of this reality is known as *chos-can* (*dharmīn*), and that which is real (the phenomena themselves) are known as *chos* (*dharma*). Since it is held to be the foundation of all genuine experience, the body of reality is the basis of the buddha-bodies of form. It is also known as the youthful vase body (*gzhon-nu bum-pa'i sku*) because the pristine cognition remains inwardly radiant within it, in the manner of light within a crystal prism, even when it emanates as the buddha-body of form.

Through the blessing of this youthful vase body, the Buddha-field of the Bounteous Array (*Ghanavyūhabuddhakṣetra*) becomes manifest, and therein the Teachers of Five Enlightened Families, including the Buddha Vairocana, assume the body of perfect rapture. This is the great play of undifferentiated buddha-body and pristine cognition, which also acts out of compassion for the sake of sentient beings who are perceived to be bewildered without cause; for they wander in cyclical existence without recognising the nature of the primordial ground.

These teachers emanate all the buddha-fields within and around the body of Vairocana in order to guide beings to liberation. The fields are arrayed in three dimensions, namely, the Indestructible Nucleus of Inner Radiance (*'od-gsal rdo-rje snying-po*), Brahmā's Drumbeat (*tshangs-pa rnga-sgra*) and the Aeon of Great Brahmā (*tshangs-chen-gyi bskal-pa*), which correspond, respectively, to the body of reality, the body of perfect rapture and the emanational body. The last of these comprises all the realms of cyclical existence outlined in the chart above. It is said that in the space of a single atomic particle there are measureless fields of sentient beings being trained by the buddhas, and that on the surface of a single atom there are fields containing atoms of oceanic infinity.

As the *Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas* (*Buddhāvataṃsaka*, T 44) says:

On the surface of a single atom
There are as many buddhas
As there are atoms.

However, as our text emphasises (p.119):

These fields are said to be radiant apparitions, not existing in reality because, in the expanse of reality, relative appearances have not existed from the beginning.

The Buddha-body of Perfect Rapture

The buddha-body of perfect rapture (*longs-spyod rdzogs-pa'i sku*, Skt. *sambhogakāya*) is said to act within all those fields connected with Vairocana. It is endowed with seven attributes of natural expression, and the thirty-two major and eighty minor marks of the buddhas. These marks may appear outwardly, as the external form of the buddha-body; inwardly, as the network of energy channels, currents and seminal points (*rtsa rlung thig-le*) within the buddha-body; secretly, as present in the seed which is enlightened mind, or the nucleus of the tathāgata (*de-gshegs snying-po*, Skt. *tathāgatagarbha*); and, most secretly, as the rapture of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs-pa chen-po*) which is experienced when the energy channels and seminal points are naturally expressed as supreme bliss.

As such, the five components of mundane cyclical existence find their true natural expression in the Teachers of the Five Enlightened Families, namely, Vairocana, Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi; while the five elemental properties of space, cohesion, solidity, warmth and movement find their true natural expression as the five consorts: Dhātviśvarī, Locanā, Māmakī, Pāṇḍaravāsini, and Samayatārā. The four sensations of seeing, hearing, tasting and smelling, as well as the four sense objects, the four sense organs, the four temporal dimensions, the four aspects of sexual contact, and the four extremes of permanence, decay, self and character all find their true natural expression in the deities of the surrounding maṇḍalas. This pure vision, it is emphasised, lies within the perceptual range of the buddhas' pristine cognition alone, and remains invisible even to bodhisattvas of the highest level who are not liberated from all obscurations. It is maintained that all these elements of mundane cyclical existence are transmuted into the pure, divine nature through experiential cultivation of the Buddhist teachings. As the *Extensive Magical Net* (*sgyu-'phrul rgyas-pa*, NGB Vol.14) says:

If there is no understanding of intrinsic awareness or
 genuine perception,
 The field of Sukhāvātī is even seen as a state of evil
 existence.
 If the truth which is equivalent to the supreme of vehicles
 is realised,
 Even states of evil existence are Akaniṣṭha and Tuṣita.

The Emanational Body

The emanational body (*sprul-pa'i sku*, Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*), which disciplines those who require training on the path to liberation, is of three types. First, there are the emanations of natural expression (*rang-bzhin sprul-pa'i sku*) who are the above-mentioned Teachers of the Five Enlightened Families appearing in their lower role before bodhisattvas of the highest level, in the manner of rainbow light. In this situation, when they are compounded by the minds of others, they are said to be endowed with a semi-manifest natural expression, half-way between the true body of perfect rapture and the emanational body.

Secondly, there are the supreme emanational bodies (*mchog-gi sprul-pa'i sku*) or emanations of the body of reality who train living beings through their twelve deeds in myriads of world systems. Within this world system of ours, which is known as the world system of Patient Endurance (*mi-mjed 'jig-rten-gyi khams*, Skt. *Sahalokadhātu*), the supreme emanational body appears as a sage embodying awareness of the true buddha nature in each of the six classes of living beings – gods, antigods, humans, animals, tormented spirits and hells. In the human world, for example, he appears as Śākyamuni Buddha, and, as the text explains (p.131):

In these realms, the supreme emanational body projects the lamp of instruction for those requiring training in as many ways as they have psychophysical bases, sense organs and modes of conduct, and acts on behalf of sentient beings through four kinds of instruction.

These four are instruction by the great merits of the buddha-body's twelve deeds, instruction by the direct perception of the buddha-mind which is endowed with six supernormal cognitive powers (*mngon-shes drug*, Skt. *ṣaḍabhijñā*), instruction by inconceivable miraculous abilities which are the mysteries of the buddha's body, speech and mind, and instruction by knowledge conveyed in speech.

Thirdly, there are the diversified emanations (*sna-tshogs sprul-sku*) appearing as oases, food, and medicine, which are of benefit to living beings, and as the emanations of birth (*skyes-sprul*) and artistry (*bzo-sprul*) assumed, for example, by Śākyamuni Buddha in his previous lives and recorded in the *Jātaka Tales*.

The Nyingma tradition in particular holds that twelve teachers of the emanational body have appeared as the blessing of the body of perfect rapture in this world system to disclose the three emanational teachings of the buddha-body, speech and mind. A hand-sized vajra (*rdo-rje*) is said to be the actuality of the body of reality, a four-inch book is said to be the actuality of the body of perfect rapture, and the physical form, exemplified in those twelve teachers, is the actuality of the emanational body. The emanational body, in the Nyingma view, is endowed with sixty attributes; for each of those twelve teachers is connected with the five excellences of place, teacher, retinue, doctrine and time. A single emanational body also possesses ninety-six doctrines with respect to enlightened activity. Yet this enumeration is not regarded as a limitation because (p.138):

The Sugata, learned in skilful means, manifests the body of form in ways which correspond to the number of atoms in the myriad fields of those requiring training, which are of oceanic extent.

The Buddha-body of Awakening

The buddha-body of awakening (*mngon-par byang-chub-kyi sku*, Skt. *abhisambodhikāya*), which is derived from the distinct apparitional functions of the aforementioned three bodies, possesses the four fearlessnesses, the eighteen distinct attributes of the buddhas, great compassion and the ten powers. These are all enumerated in the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, the great glossary of technical terms composed by the Tibetan translators, probably during the reign of Senalek.

The Buddha-body of Indestructible Reality

Finally, the buddha-body of indestructible reality (*rdo-rje sku*, Skt. *vajrakāya*), which derives from the indivisible essence of the first three bodies, is the original unchanging expanse of reality in which all paths are concluded and all conceptual elaboration transcended. It is the taintless buddha nature pure from the beginning.

The Five Pristine Cognitions

The five pristine cognitions (*ye-shes lnga*, Skt. *pañcājñāna*), which are among the buddhas' attributes, are also discussed here. They are the pristine cognition of the expanse of reality (*chos-dbyings ye-shes*, Skt. *dharmadhātujñāna*), which is the perception of the buddha-body of reality; the mirror-like pristine cognition (*me-long ye-shes*, Skt. *ādarśajñāna*), which is the unbroken causal basis of all pristine cognition; the pristine cognition of sameness (*mnyam-nyid ye-shes*, Skt. *samatājñāna*),

which continuously abides in tranquillity, loving kindness and compassion without falling into the extremes of cyclical existence or nirvāṇa; and the pristine cognition of discernment (*sor-rtogs ye-shes*, Skt. *pratyavekṣaṇajñāna*), which is unimpeded with regard to the knowable, and refers to contemplations, dhāraṇī and other attributes. These last three are the perceptions of the body of perfect rapture. Finally, the pristine cognition of accomplishment (*bya-grub ye-shes*, Skt. *krṭyānu-ṣṭhānajñāna*) is diversified in all realms, within the emanations who act on behalf of living beings. Thus it is the perception of the emanational body.

The Author asserts that the nature of the buddhas who have purified obscurations and become vast in enlightened attributes of buddha-body and pristine cognition is to be experientially cultivated through the Buddhist teachings – both indirectly, through the sūtra texts, and directly through the mantra texts which are respectively a long and a short path to the same goal.

He concludes Part Two by distinguishing between the attributes of the buddha-bodies as they are revealed in the causal vehicles of dialectics, and in the resultant vehicles of secret mantra. The sūtras of the causal vehicles require one to undertake a long path of causal gradation, whereby conflicting emotions are abandoned, and merits and pristine cognition are accumulated. The resultant vehicles of the way of mantras, however, begin from the ultimate view of the buddha nature and insist that the whole of cyclical existence and nirvāṇa conform to the pattern of the three buddha-bodies.

PART THREE: CAUSAL VEHICLES OF DIALECTICS

The causal vehicles of dialectics (*rgyu mtshan-nyid-kyi theg-pa*, Skt. **hetulakṣaṇayāna*)⁶ are classified either according to the three successive promulgations of the doctrinal wheel or according to the philosophical systems included within the lesser vehicle (*theg-pa chung-ba*, Skt. *Hīnayāna*) and the greater vehicle (*theg-pa chen-po*, Skt. *Mahāyāna*).

The Three Promulgations of the Doctrinal Wheel

In the first promulgation the Buddha expounded the four truths of suffering, its origin, the path and the cessation of suffering, with the intention that sentient beings should forsake cyclical existence. In the second promulgation he expounded the teaching on the transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness (*shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pal/ma*, Skt. *prajñāpāramitā*) with the intention that the buddha nature should be comprehended through topics of emptiness, signlessness and

aspirationlessness, and that consequently the ultimate truth which is referred to by synonyms in order to bring about the partial cessation of conceptual elaboration might become the foundation for those who enter the greater vehicle.

Then, in the third promulgation he excellently analysed all things from form to omniscience in accord with the three essential natures, namely, the imaginary (*parikalpita*), the dependent (*paratantra*), and the absolute (*pariniṣpanna*), and disclosed the nucleus of the tathāgata (*tathāgatagarbha*), intending that the ultimate truth for which there is no synonym should become the nucleus of the path of the greater vehicle. Such were the three promulgations delivered by Śākyamuni Buddha.

The Lesser Vehicle

Among the philosophical systems of the causal vehicles of dialectics, those which belong to the lesser vehicle are the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika systems.

Vaibhāṣika

The pious attendants of the Vaibhāṣika school classify the knowable into five categories: perceptual forms, mind, mental events, disjunct conditions unassociated with mental events, and uncompounded entities. They hold that consciousness ultimately exists as a series of time-moments and that the material substances composing the world are an association of indivisible atomic particles unified by vital energy. They claim the subject-object dichotomy to be created through the recognition of objects by consciousness, but that there is no intrinsic awareness apart from this consciousness.

Through the vehicle of the pious attendants (*śrāvaka*), the status of an arhat is realised by meditation on the sixteen aspects of the four truths, so that the obscurations of the three poisons and ignorance are destroyed. As it is said in the *Sequence of the Path* (*Māyājālapathakrama*, P 4736):

If, without realising non-duality,
Everything is viewed to exist substantially
In terms of the four truths,
And one resorts to renunciation and non-renunciation,
This is the level of the pious attendants.

Sautrāntika

The self-centred buddhas and pious attendants of the Sautrāntika school hold ultimate reality to agree with consciousness, which is a series of time moments. They also hold that, although consciousness refers to

objects, external objects are not actually perceived, a single, uncompounded sensum being transmitted in the manner of a reflection on a mirror. The subject-object dichotomy therefore becomes a subjective process, conventionally known as the recognition of objects. They are said to surpass the Vaibhāṣika in holding the conglomerate of atoms to be unknown and in their appreciation of an intrinsic awareness.

Through the vehicle of the self-centred buddhas (*pratyekabuddha*), the twelve modes of dependent origination are meditated on and reversed. Whereas pious attendants hold the individual self to be abandoned in ultimate truth, the self-centred buddhas hold external objects to be ultimately fallacious and subjective consciousness to exist genuinely. They are said to be realised in one and a half parts of what is implied by selflessness. This is because they realise selflessness with reference to the individual and understand that the atomic particles of external phenomena do not independently exist, but still hold time moments of consciousness or internal phenomena to be ultimately real.

The Greater Vehicle

Among the philosophical systems of the greater causal vehicle, there are the Vijñānavāda or proponents of consciousness, and the Mādhyamika or adherents of the middle path.

Vijñānavāda

The Vijñānavāda confirm the Sautrāntika view that objects are not perceived. All things are held to be apparitional aspects of mind, definitively ordered according to three essential natures: the imaginary which includes both phenomena and characteristics such as the concept of selfhood; the dependent which includes the five impure components of mundane existence and the pure attributes of buddha-body and pristine cognition; and the absolute which includes the unchanging abiding nature of reality and the incontrovertible absence of conflicting emotions.

The Mind Only school, which emphasises the ontological aspect of the Vijñānavāda, is divided into those who hold *sensa* to be veridical (*Sākāravāda*), and those holding *sensa* to be false, admitting only consciousness to be genuine (*Nirākāravāda*). These have many subdivisions. While the Vijñānavāda is held to surpass the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika of the lower vehicle, it fails to understand the absolute nature, since it holds consciousness to exist absolutely in the ultimate truth.

Madhyamaka

The Mādhyamika or adherents of the middle path are either those who uphold the coarse outer Madhyamaka or the subtle inner Great Madhyamaka (*dbu-ma chen-po*).

Outer Madhyamaka

The Outer Madhyamaka include the Svātantrika (*rang-rgyud-pa*) who employ independent reasoning, and the Prāsaṅgika (*thal-'gyur-ba*) who employ *reductio ad absurdum*.

The Svātantrika surpass the previous philosophical systems which adhere to substantiality and subjective conceptual elaboration, and they avoid both extremes. All things which appear are said to exist in relative truth, which is either correct or incorrect in conventional terms, but are inherently empty and non-existent in the ultimate truth, which cuts through conceptual elaboration. All relative appearances can be refuted by logical arguments, but it is also proven that no scrutiny or judgement can be made in relation to ultimate truth.

The Prāsaṅgika distinguish between the unbewildered intellect or pristine cognition of the buddhas, in which relative phenomena never appear, and the bewildered intellect of sentient beings. Ultimate truth, the reality of the unbewildered intellect of the buddhas, is vitiated by bewilderment, and so mundane cyclical existence appears and is assigned conventionally to the relative truth, though not really admitted.

The Prāsaṅgika also employ the five kinds of logical axioms used by the Svātantrika, but unlike them do not seek to prove their conclusions positively with reference to relative appearances and conceptual elaboration, having refuted them. Rather they refute all possible views which lie within the range of the four extremes of being, non-being, both being and non-being, and neither being nor non-being. Ultimate truth is thus the pristine cognition of the buddhas, free from all conceptual elaboration of the subject-object dichotomy. It is said that the two truths form the Madhyamaka of the ground; the two provisions of merit and pristine cognition form the Madhyamaka of the path; and that the coalescence of the two buddha-bodies of reality and form is the Madhyamaka of the result.

Great Madhyamaka

The Great Madhyamaka (*dbu-ma chen-po*) is aloof from the reasoning of the Outer Madhyamaka which is based upon dialectics, and instead must be experientially cultivated in meditation. In accord with the analysis of all things made by Śākyamuni in the third promulgation of the doctrinal wheel with respect to the aforementioned essential natures, it holds the imaginary to imply that attributes are without substantiality, the dependent to imply that creation is without substantiality, and the absolute to imply that ultimate reality is without substantiality. Absolute reality is thus empty of all the imaginary objects which are to be refuted and all conceptual elaboration of cyclical existence, but it is not empty of the enlightened attributes of buddha-body and pristine cognition which are spontaneously present from the beginning.

The *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (*Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra*, T 4024) says:

The seed which is empty of suddenly arisen
phenomena,
Endowed with divisive characteristics,
Is not empty of the unsurpassed reality,
Endowed with indivisible characteristics.

The Great Madhyamaka therefore maintains that the conceptual area of the subject-object dichotomy is intrinsically empty (*rang-stong*), while the buddha-body of reality endowed with all enlightened attributes is empty of that extraneous conceptual area which forms the subject-object dichotomy (*gzhan-stong*). If enlightened attributes were themselves intrinsically empty of their own essence, the entire structure of the ground, path and result would be negated and one would be in the position of the nihilistic extremists who deny causality, progress on the path to liberation and so forth.

This expanse of reality, the ultimate truth, is said to pervade all beings without distinction and is known as the nucleus of the tathāgata (*tathāgatagarbha*) or the nucleus of the sugata (*sugatagarbha*). It is held to be only fully developed and qualitatively perceived according to its true nature by buddhas, and yet equally present in ordinary sentient beings and bodhisattvas who are partially purified on the path to liberation. It is when the obscurations covering this seed of the buddha nature are removed that liberation is said to occur. Now, there are two kinds of renunciation of obscurations which have been expounded, one that is a naturally pure, passive *fait accompli*, and another which actively removes the obscurations by applying an appropriate antidote. Although the nucleus of the tathāgata is held to be present from the beginning in all beings, it is not therefore claimed that all beings are buddhas free from all obscuration. Similarly there are two kinds of realisation, one that is naturally present and passive, and another that is dependently produced and active. They are equivalent to the truths of cessation and of the path described above in Part One.

While the second and the third promulgations of the doctrinal wheel give authenticity to the view of Great Madhyamaka, it is the third or final promulgation which extensively reveals the nucleus of the tathāgata. Certain scholars of the past have, as the Author states, erroneously linked the views of Great Madhyamaka and Vijñānavāda. However, the former is concerned with absolute reality, and the latter is directed towards consciousness. There is held to be a great distinction between the pristine cognition of the buddhas and the consciousness of the ground-of-all. The proponents of Mind Only maintain that consciousness is not transcended in ultimate truth, but this is a view which is bound within cyclical existence. According to Great Madhyamaka,

the ultimate truth is the obscurationless pristine cognition, the uncorrupted expanse of reality transcending consciousness. This is because subjective consciousness is only dependently real, and pristine cognition is free from the subject-object dichotomy.

This view of the Great Madhyamaka is revealed in the compositions of Nāgārjuna,⁷ Asaṅga and others, whether they belong to the second or third promulgation of the doctrinal wheel, for both refer to the three essential natures. Once Mind Only has been provisionally taught, the apparitionless Madhyamaka is taught, and when that has been transcended, the apparitional Madhyamaka is revealed. Without reaching that, the profound meaning of the greater vehicle is not perceived.

Those who actually and experientially cultivate the path to liberation do not differentiate the two modes of Madhyamaka (*rang-stong* and *gzhan-stong*), as is attested by the writings of Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga and other paṇḍitas who commented on the intention of the definitive meaning (*nges-don*). While the second promulgation is generally confined to an outright negation of conceptual elaboration, this is merely a step in the experiential cultivation of Madhyamaka, which must subsequently transcend the Prāsaṅgika and Svātantrika reasoning.

When meditational experiences have been established, it is the Great Madhyamaka, as taught in the third promulgation, which is profound and vast; and the vehicles of the secret mantra which are even more extensive. The purposes of the lower sequences of the vehicle are gathered within the higher. Otherwise the buddhas would not have given the three promulgations and nine sequences of the vehicle in that appropriate order.

Provisional and Definitive Meaning

Thus, in the Nyingma view, the first and second promulgations may be allocated provisional meaning (*drang-don*, Skt. *neyārtha*) because they are a basis for debate, respectively rousing the mind from cyclical existence by teaching impermanence and destroying by means of the three approaches to liberation the reductionist view which adheres to the selfhood of phenomena. The third promulgation, however, is allocated definitive meaning (*nges-don*, Skt. *nītārtha*) because it teaches that all relative appearances are intrinsically empty (*rang-stong*) and that all enlightened attributes are empty of those same extraneous appearances (*gzhan-stong*). The range of the buddhas' pristine cognition is thereby revealed and debate is surpassed by experiential cultivation. Yet, as the Author asserts, there is no difference between the transcendental perfection of discriminative awareness (*prajñāpāramitā*) revealed in the second promulgation and the pristine cognition revealed in the third. The distinction merely concerns the extent to which ultimate reality is revealed.

The Enlightened or Buddha Family

Since all beings are endowed with the nucleus of the tathāgata, the seed of the buddha nature, they are all part of the buddha or enlightened family. From the ultimate point of view, this family is one in which the natural expression of enlightenment is said to abide inherently, and from the conventional or dynamic point of view, it is one in which that natural expression is to be attained. The former is the ground of separation from obscuration (*'bral-rgyu*), in which the three resultant buddha-bodies arise. It is also known as the truth of cessation according to the greater vehicle. The latter is the truth of the path on which the provisions of merit and pristine cognition are accumulated in order that the obscurations covering the nucleus may be removed and the result be actualised (*bral-'bras*). The three buddha-bodies are thus said to abide primordially in the nucleus of the enlightened family, and are merely realised by the removal of the obscurations which cover them. They are not themselves compounded by the accumulation of causal provisions.

This indivisible essence of the enlightened family, the nucleus of the tathāgata, is extensively revealed in the writings of Nyingmapa authors such as Longcenpa, Rongzompa, Terdak Lingpa and Mipham Rinpoche, and also in the compositions of the great masters of other Tibetan traditions – Kadampa, Kagyüpa, Sakyapa and Gelukpa, as can be seen in the many quotations cited from their works.

The Two Truths according to Great Madhyamaka

During moments of meditative absorption, the outer and inner Madhyamaka do not differentiate the two truths since one then abides in the expanse of reality, the pristine cognition that is free from all conceptual elaborations of the subject-object dichotomy. During the aftermath of meditative absorption, however, they are distinguished differently by the Outer Madhyamaka, which allocates emptiness to ultimate truth and appearances to the relative truth; and the inner Great Madhyamaka, which determines ultimate truth to be the realities of nirvāṇa, in which the subject or pristine cognition and the object of its perception, as established by conventional logic, are harmonious, and relative truth to be the phenomena of cyclical existence, in which the subjective consciousness and the object of its perception, incapable of being established even in terms of conventional logic, are in a state of dichotomy. Ultimate truth is thus the expanse of reality in which pure appearances and emptiness are coalesced. Although this coalescence is even more elaborately revealed in the resultant vehicles of the secret mantra, it must first be established according to the view of Great Madhyamaka, on which the superior views from Kriyāntara to Atiyoga are all based. The Great Madhyamaka is therefore said to be the

climax of the philosophical systems according to the causal vehicles of dialectics.

Through the vehicle of the bodhisattvas who uphold the Vijñānavāda and Madhyamaka philosophies, the ten levels and five paths are gradually traversed, and liberation is finally attained in the buddha-body of reality on the eleventh level (*Samantaprabhā*). Manifesting the two bodies of form, the bodhisattva then acts on behalf of others until all beings have been liberated from cyclical existence. It is therefore held that the vehicle of the bodhisattvas is the first of the nine sequences of the vehicle which may be conducive to total liberation.

Key to the Appraisal of Causal Vehicle Texts

Texts belonging to the causal vehicles of dialectics are firstly divided between those of the definitive third promulgation and their commentaries which reveal the full extent of the buddha nature, and those of the provisional earlier promulgations and their commentaries which partially reveal the buddha nature. There are also four kinds of intention with which buddhas deliver the teaching, unknown to the listener, and four kinds of covert intention which buddhas are said to employ in order for their precise meaning to be eventually understood by the listener.

Recapitulation of the Causal Vehicles

To facilitate comprehension of the above philosophical systems, Part Three is completed by a recapitulation of the three causal vehicles of dialectics, namely, those of the pious attendants, self-centred buddhas and bodhisattvas, within the context of their respective entrances, views, moral disciplines, meditations, modes of conduct and results.

PART FOUR: RESULTANT VEHICLES OF SECRET MANTRA

Part Four concerns the resultant vehicles of secret mantra, on which subject our text says (p.244):

...in the vehicle of dialectics, mind-as-such [or pristine cognition] is merely perceived as the causal basis of buddhahood. Since it is held that buddhahood is obtained under the condition whereby the two provisions increasingly multiply, and since the purifying doctrines which form the causal basis of nirvāṇa are made into the path, it is called the causal vehicle. Therein a sequence in which cause precedes result is admitted. According to the vehicle of mantras, on the other hand, mind-as-such abides primordially and intrinsically as the

essence of the result, identified as the buddha-bodies and pristine cognitions. Mind-as-such is thereby established as the ground which exists within oneself from the present moment as the object to be attained. It is then established as the path through its functions of bringing about recognition and removing the provisional stains which suddenly arise by means of inducing the perception of just what is, and it is established as the result through its function of actualising this very ground. Since a sequence in which cause precedes result is not really distinguished therein, it is called the resultant vehicle and the vehicle of indestructible reality.

Superiority of Secret Mantra

The resultant vehicles are said to surpass the causal vehicles in many ways. They are held to be unobscured, endowed with many means, without difficulties, and referred to by those of highest acumen; or to be swift, blissful, and endowed with skilful means. The *Tantra of Inconceivable Rali Cakrasaṃvara* (*Śrīcakrasaṃvaraguhyācintyatantra-rāja*, T 385) speaks of fifteen such superior qualities. Above all, the resultant vehicles are said to transcend all conceptual elaboration and logical reasoning, and to establish pristine cognition as the nucleus of the buddha-body of reality, the coalescence of appearance and emptiness, within one lifetime and so forth. Since a sameness with respect to all things is to be experienced, they are capable of making relative appearances into the path, without requiring them to be renounced as in the causal vehicles. Thus one meditates through the outer mantras of Kriyātantra, Ubhayatantra and Yogatantra with reference to the deity's body, speech and mind, and according to the inner mantras all things are realised and experienced as the maṇḍalas of the buddha-body, speech and mind.

Essence and Definition of Secret Mantra

Mantra is defined as an attribute of buddha-body, speech and mind which protects the mind with ease and swiftness. It also includes the deities in which emptiness and appearances are coalesced, symbolised by the seed-syllables E-VAM, because they too protect the mind from rebirth in the three realms of cyclical existence. Those who attain realisation through the mantras are known as awareness-holders (*rig-'dzin*, Skt. *vidyādhara*) and the texts which convey the mantra teaching are known as the Piṭaka of Awareness-holders. There are said to be three kinds of mundane awareness-holder and enumerations of either four or seven kinds of supramundane awareness-holder. The resultant vehicle is also known as the vehicle of indestructible reality (*rdo-rje theg-pa*, Skt. *Vajrayāna*) because pristine cognition or mind-as-such is imperishable

and unchanging, despite the divergent apparitional modes of cyclical existence and nirvāṇa.

The Three Continua

Again, the resultant vehicle is also known as tantra, which is defined both as a means for protecting the mind and as the continuum extending from ignorance to enlightenment. There are said to be three such continua – those of the ground, path and result.

The continuum of the ground is another name for the nucleus of the tathāgata, the buddha-body of reality, the family in which the natural expression of enlightenment abides and the pristine cognition of the ground-of-all – which have previously been explained in the context of Great Madhyamaka. However, the same continuum of the ground is also spoken of in Kriyātantra as one's own real nature (*bdag-gi de-kho-nanyid*), in Ubhayatantra as the blessing of that reality, which is the ultimate truth without symbols (*don-dam mtshan-ma med-pa'i byin-rlabs*), and in Yogatantra as a deity of the expanse of indestructible reality, who relatively appears (*kun-rdzob rdo-rje dbyings-kyi lha*).

Similarly, it is also spoken of in Mahāyoga as the superior and great body of reality in which the two truths are indivisible (*bden-gnyis dbyer-med lhag-pa'i chos-sku chen-po*), in Anuyoga as the fundamental maṇḍala of enlightened mind, the offspring of the non-duality of the expanse and pristine cognition (*dbyings-dang ye-shes gnyis-su med-pa'i sras rtsa-ba byang-chub sems-kyi dkyil-'khor*), and in the Great Perfection of Atiyoga as the ground conventionally known as essence, natural expression and spirituality (*ngo-bo rang-bzhin thugs-rje*).

The continuum of the path refers to the skilful means which purify the obscurations covering the ground, and cause all cyclical existence to be experienced as an array of deities and their fields of rapture. The continuum of the result is actualised when those obscurations have been removed, although it is essentially identical to the continuum of the ground. All accomplishments are therein actualised. It is said that when the ground and result are indivisible, the truth of the origin of cyclical existence appears as the truth of the path to its cessation, and that the truth of suffering appears as the truth of its cessation.

The Four Tantrapīṭaka

The texts in which the teachings of the resultant vehicles of the secret mantra are expressed are divided into four tantrapīṭaka, namely, Kriyātantra, Ubhayatantra (or Caryātantra), Yogatantra, and Unsurpassed Yogatantra (*Anuttarayogatantra*), which are taught as the means respectively for those of lowest, middling, superior and highest acumen who require training. According to the Nyingma tradition, the first three of these are known as the vehicle of austere awareness (*dka'-thub*

rig-pa'i theg-pa) because they all, to a greater or lesser extent, include external observances of body and speech. The last one is known as the vehicle of overpowering means (*dbang-bsgyur thabs-kyi theg-pa*), in which skilful means and discriminative awareness are coalesced.

Kriyātantra

Kriyātantra (*bya-ba'i rgyud*), or the tantra of action, emphasises external observances of body and speech, while continuing the subject-object dichotomy. It holds that meditation is required alternately on an ultimate truth, which is one's own real nature, and on a deity of relative appearance endowed with pristine cognition, distinct from that reality, who externally confers the accomplishments. By aspiring towards accomplishment, regarding the deity as a servant would his master, and by practising ablutions, fasting and other austerities which delight the deity, one may be granted the realisation of a holder of indestructible reality (*rdo-rje 'dzin-pa*) within seven lifetimes.

Ubhayatantra

Ubhayatantra (*gnyis-ka'i rgyud*), or the tantra which gives equal emphasis to the view and conduct, includes both symbolic meditation on the seed-syllables, seals and form of the deity and non-symbolic meditation on ultimate reality, the blessing of which may confer accomplishment as a holder of indestructible reality within five lifetimes.

Yogatantra

Yogatantra (*mal-'byor-gyi rgyud*), or the tantra of union, emphasises meditation. The blessing of ultimate reality relatively appears as a deity of the expanse of indestructible reality. Persevering in the acceptance and rejection of positive and negative attributes in relation to this deity, one may attain the accomplishment of a holder of indestructible reality belonging to the five enlightened families within three lifetimes. Symbolic meditation in this context includes the experiences of the five awakenings (*mngon-byang lnga*), the four yogas (*mal-'byor bzhi*), and the four seals (*phyag-rgya bzhi*) associated with the deity, and non-symbolic contemplation concerns the real nature of the mind. External observances are not, however, rejected.

Unsurpassed Yogatantra

The Unsurpassed Yogatantra (*bla-na med-pa'i rgyud*, Skt. *Anuttara-yogatantra*) emphasises the coalescence of skilful means and discriminative awareness, and is said to surpass the lower tantras which have not abandoned duality. The three poisons are carried on the path – desire as the essence of bliss and emptiness, hatred as the essence of radiance

and emptiness, and delusion as the essence of awareness and emptiness – and the result may be achieved within a single lifetime. In the Nyingma tradition, the Unsurpassed Yogatantra is divided into Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga.

Mahāyoga

Mahāyoga (*mal-'byor chen-po*) unites the mind in the superior body of reality, in which the two truths are indivisible. The continuum of the ground is established as the genuine view to be realised by means of four axioms. The continuum of the path has two stages, among which the path of skilful means (*thabs-lam*) carries the three poisons on to the path by means of practices concerning the network of energy channels, currents and seminal points (*rtsa rlung thig-le*) within the body. The path of liberation (*grol-lam*) comprises a ground of discriminative awareness, a path of contemplation and, as its result, the status of an awareness holder (*rig-'dzin*) is attained. Contemplation chiefly refers to the five contemplative experiences of the divine maṇḍalas in their creation and perfection phases (*bskyed-rim-dang rdzogs-rim*), which purify the rebirth process including the moment of death, the intermediate state after death (*bar-do*), and the three phases of life (*skye-ba rim-gsum*). At the successful conclusion of this practice one is said to become an awareness-holder and to actualise twenty-five resultant realities of the buddha level.

Anuyoga

Anuyoga (*rjes-su mal-'byor*), or subsequent yoga, emphasises the perfection phase, and so forms a bridge between the creation phase of Mahāyoga and the Great Perfection of Atiyoga. The ground or view of Anuyoga is that the expanse of reality, which is the primordial maṇḍala of Samantabhadri, and pristine cognition, which is the spontaneously present maṇḍala of Samantabhadra, are indivisible in the fundamental maṇḍala of enlightened mind.

The path of Anuyoga comprises these three maṇḍalas of the ground, along with all the nine sequences of the vehicle. Among them the specific Anuyoga practices include the definitive path of skilful means (*nges-pa'i thabs-lam*) in which the co-emergent pristine cognition of melting bliss is realised through the perfection of the energy channels, currents and seminal points within the body (see p.286); and the liberating path of discriminative awareness (*shes-rab grol-lam*) which establishes the view that all things are of the nature of the three maṇḍalas, and employs both a non-symbolic contemplation of reality and a contemplation of the symbolic deity. While the divine maṇḍalas of Mahāyoga and the lower sequences are gradually created or generated, those of Anuyoga arise spontaneously in a perfect manner. The result is that the five paths and ten levels known to Anuyoga are traversed, all the

subtle propensities which lead to rebirth in cyclical existence are refined, and the rank of Samantabhadra is realised along with the twenty-five resultant realities of the buddha level.

Key to the Appraisal of Secret Mantra Texts

At this point, Dudjom Rinpoche discusses the criteria by which the texts of the resultant vehicles of secret mantra are to be appraised. The language of the texts is said to observe six limits and their styles of presentation are said to number four. Each line or verse of the teaching of indestructible reality (*vajrapāda*) is to be analysed in terms of these criteria before the meaning can be ascertained.

Atiyoga

According to the Nyingma tradition, the Great Perfection of Atiyoga (*rdzogs-chen shin-tu mal-'byor*) or "highest yoga" is the climax of the nine sequences of the vehicle. The expanse of reality, the naturally present pristine cognition, is herein held to be the ground of great perfection. The eight lower sequences of the vehicle have intellectually contrived and obscured by their persevering activities the pristine cognition which intrinsically abides. Accordingly, the text says (pp.294-5):

In this way the pious attendants and self-centred buddhas among the lower vehicles, with reference to the selflessness which they realise, hold consciousness and atomic matter to be the ultimate realities; and the proponents of consciousness who hold consciousness, self-cognisant and self-radiant in nature, to be the absolute characteristic of ultimate reality, do not transcend [the view of] mind and mental events harboured by mundane beings. The Mādhyamika adhere to a truth of cessation scrutinised by four great axioms and the like, concerning the absence of creation, absence of cessation, absence of being and absence of non-being, which are appraised according to the two truths, and they adhere to an emptiness which is, for example, like the sky, free from extremes and free from conceptual elaboration. The Kriyātantra among the lower ways of mantra hold that accomplishments are attained which delight the deity endowed with the three purities, by means of cleanliness and other such austerities. The Ubhayatantra are attached to superficialities in their equation of the higher view and the lower conduct. The Yogatantra, having regarded the blessing of ultimate reality as a deity, objectively refer to the yoga of the four seals. The Mahāyoga holds that pristine cognition is generated by incisive application of the creation stage, and

[practices associated with] the energy channels, currents and seminal points according to the perfection stage. The Anuyoga regards the expanse of reality and pristine cognition as maṇḍalas of the deity which are either to be created or are in the process of creation.

Since these lower sequences are all drawn together by the intellect, they are said to be points of great deviation (*gol-sa*) from the Great Perfection, as the long quotation from the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King* (pp.295-7) clearly demonstrates. They are said to have been designed and so intended for the differing degrees of acumen in those requiring training through the vehicle, or as stepping-stones to Atiyoga.

The Great Perfection, on the other hand, refers not to consciousness but to pristine cognition. It is the intrinsic awareness of mind-as-such (*sems-nyid-kyi rang-rig*), transcending the mind, and buddhahood is said to emerge not through compounded provisions but through realisation of pristine cognition without activity. Thus the nucleus of all Buddhist teachings, in the Nyingma view, is pristine cognition, and the establishment of it through intrinsic awareness is the path of the Great Perfection. While the structure of the buddha level was revealed in the third promulgation by Śākyamuni, the path or means by which it is actualised was not revealed to the adherents of the causal vehicles. The lower mantras, too, are not considered to be definitive since they persevere with intellectually contrived activities. If the nucleus of pristine cognition is not realised in accordance with the Great Perfection, all aspects of the path, such as the six transcendental perfections (*pha-rol-tu phyin-pa drug*), the creation stage and the perfection stage, will not transcend the ideas and scrutiny of one's own mind. Yet these aspects of the path are not, it is emphasised, to be renounced, since they are spontaneously perfect in the ground. So the text declares (p.307):

...in this abiding nature that is free from all activity, all things belonging to the truth of the path are naturally complete, without effort, in the manner of a hundred rivers converging under a bridge.

Great Perfection is therefore defined as the naturally present pristine cognition, or as a sameness throughout the extent of cyclical existence and nirvāṇa, in which all lower sequences of the vehicle are perfected in a single essence.

The Divisions of Atiyoga

Within the teachings of Atiyoga, there are three modes of experiencing the goal of Great Perfection according to the nature of those who aspire to it. The text explains (p.319):

There is the Mental Class (*sems-sde*), which teaches that all things are liberated from the extreme of renunciation, because they are not separated from mind-as-such. There is the Spatial Class (*klong-sde*), which teaches that all apparitions of reality are free from activity and liberated from the extreme of the antidote, because they are perfectly gathered in Samantabhadrī, the space of reality. And there is the profound Esoteric Instructional Class (*man-ngag-sde*), which teaches that the particular characteristics of truth itself are liberated from both extremes of renunciation and antidote, because they are established according to the modes of reality (*yin-lugs*).

The spiritual and philosophical goal of the Mental Class transcends the subject-object dichotomy. The compounded truth of the path as taught in the causal vehicles and lower mantras is determined in the great expanse of reality to be a pristine cognition of great purity and sameness. When the Mental Class is analysed, there are seven categories or areas of mind (*sems-phyogs*) in which this determination is made.

While the Mental Class holds the apparitions of reality to appear as the expressive power of mind-as-such, the spiritual and philosophical goal of the Spatial Class is the establishment of a great infinity of primordial liberation unscrutinised by mind. All that appears in the vast space of Samantabhadrī is an adornment of that array, free from all activities. The Spatial Class is divided into teachings concerning the Black Space propounded as Absence of Cause (*klong nag-po rgyu-med-du smra-ba*), the Variegated Space propounded as Diversity (*klong khra-ba sna-tshogs-su smra-ba*), the White Space propounded as the Mind (*klong dkar-po sems-su smra-ba*), and the Infinite Space in which Cause and Result are Determined (*klong rab-'byams rgyu-'bras la-bzla-ba*).

While the Mental Class, referring to mind-as-such, mostly achieves profundity rather than radiance, and almost clings to mental scrutiny because it does not recognise the expressive power of radiance to be reality, and while the Spatial Class almost falls into the deviation of emptiness although it achieves both radiance and profundity, the Esoteric Instructional Class is considered to be superior to both because it gathers all apparitions of reality within reality itself. It is classified into the three categories of the Random (*kha-'thor*), in which pristine cognition instantly arises without regard for formal structure, the Oral Tradition (*kha-gtam*), which naturally shatters the source of all conceptualisation and remains indefinite in character, and the Teaching which accords with its own Textual Tradition of Tantras (*rgyud rang-gzhung-du bstan-pa*), that is, the *Seventeen Tantras of the Esoteric Instructional Class* (NGB Vols.9-10), which turn to the origin of all transmitted precepts, without renunciation or acceptance, saṃsāra or nirvāṇa, or disputations

regarding emptiness. These have their various subdivisions, and further subdivisions.

So in Atiyoga the awareness which transcends the mind is said to be a primordial liberation (*ye-grol*), a natural liberation (*rang-grol*), a direct liberation (*cer-grol*), and a liberation from extremes (*mtha'-grol*). Once this intrinsic awareness or pristine cognition has been ascertained to be the distinctive doctrine, there are said to be two means of realising it, which are known as Cutting Through Resistance (*khregs-chod*) and All-Surpassing Realisation (*thod-rgal*).

The former, Cutting Through Resistance, is oriented towards the emptiness-aspect, or primordially pure awareness without conceptual elaboration, and so causes the cessation of inherently empty phenomena. The latter, All-Surpassing Realisation, clarifies the apparitional aspect, which includes material objects, into inner radiance in a spontaneously present manner, and so causes the cessation of apparitional reality. It is said that when firm experience in Cutting Through Resistance has come about, one dissolves finally into a great primordially pure point of liberation. The coarse atoms of the four elements are transformed into pristine cognition and vanish. If, however, activity on behalf of others is resorted to, the dissolving atoms emanate as, and leave behind, relics of four kinds, while the awareness centred in the buddha-body of reality acts on behalf of beings through unceasing emanation.

While it is held that Cutting Through Resistance directly liberates the bewildering appearance of objects in fundamental reality, the All-Surpassing Realisation brings about the liberation of all apparitional aspects of the three world realms of desire, form and the formless (see chart, pp.14-15) in the inner radiance or luminosity of a seminal point of five-coloured light which is the natural tone of awareness. Thus, the expanse of reality and its appearances, which are known as indestructible chains [of light, *rdo-rje lu-gu rgyud*], are the mature awareness itself. At the successful conclusion of this practice, it is held that the outer and inner elements of the three world realms all dissolve into inner radiance through a succession of four visionary appearances (*snang-ba bzhi*), and so all cyclical existence is reversed. The awareness enters a formless disposition, as in Cutting Through Resistance, but the buddha-body of form continues to appear in the manner of rainbow light, and to act on behalf of sentient beings. As such, it is known as the body of supreme transformation (*'pho-ba chen-po'i sku*, Skt. **mahā-saṅkrāntikāya*), and this is recognised to be the buddha level attained by Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, Śīlamañju and others. If, for the while, there is no one requiring to be trained, the buddha-body of supreme transformation is absorbed into the body of reality or the youthful vase body (*gzhon-nu bum-pa'i sku*), the emanational basis of all pristine cognition, and the intrinsic awareness abides radiantly within it.

Furthermore, according to the esoteric instructions (*man-ngag*, Skt. *āmnāya/upadeśā*) of the Great Perfection system, all things belonging to cyclical existence and nirvāṇa are established as a display of four intermediate states (*bar-do*, Skt. *antarābhava*), which are respectively known as the intermediate state of the birthplace, the intermediate state of the moment of death, the intermediate state of reality and the intermediate state of rebirth. Each of these transformations is provided with particular guidance, so that beings may be conveyed to the point of original liberation at any stage or in any circumstance. It is said that through the power of the descent of pristine cognition and the experiential cultivation of it in continuous yoga, the recollection of signs on the path, and the removal of obstacles, the result may be actualised within one lifetime.

Recapitulation of the Vehicles of Secret Mantra

Having detailed the overall meaning of the resultant vehicles of the secret mantra, Dudjom Rinpoche recapitulates them succinctly, categorising each sequence according to its entrance, view, moral discipline, meditation, conduct and result.

This concludes the summary of the contents of the *Fundamentals of the Nyingma School*. The history of their transmission in India by Garap Dorje, Mañjuśrīmitra, Jñānasūtra, King Ja, Kukkurāja, Līlavajra and others, along with an account of their introduction to Tibet by Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, Buddhaguhya and so forth, has been recorded by Dudjom Rinpoche, in his *History of the Nyingma School* (*rnying-ma'i chos-'byung*), which is published here in conjunction with the *Fundamentals*.

The *History* elaborately traces the distant lineage of transmitted precepts (*ring-brgyud bka'-ma*) and the close lineage of concealed teachings or treasures (*nye-brgyud gter-ma*) from their first appearance in Tibet until the present century, and clearly indicates that the Nyingmapa for the most part remained aloof from the sectarianism which has so often been divisive in Tibetan history. Indeed, as the Author demonstrates, the destiny and propagation of all schools of Buddhism in Tibet have been interlinked from the earliest times.

THE LITERARY TRADITION REPRESENTED IN THE *FUNDAMENTALS*

The literary heritage of the Nyingma tradition includes both tantras and sūtras, along with the treatises or commentaries composed upon their intention over the centuries.

The tantras and sūtras which emphasise the particular Nyingma teachings of Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga are found in the canonical transmitted precepts of the *Kangyur* (*bka'-gyur*) and in the *Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa* (*rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum*). Among them, those which focus on Mahāyoga are exemplified by the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* (*rgyud gsang-ba'i snying-po*, T 832, NGB Vol.14), those which focus on Anuyoga are exemplified by the *Sūtra which Gathers All Intentions* (*mdo dgongs-pa 'dus-pa*, T 829, NGB Vol.11), and those which focus on Atiyoga are exemplified by the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King* (*kun-byed rgyal-po*, T 828, NGB Vol.1). However, there are many other texts which elaborate on each of these three categories. Among those which refer to the entire nine sequences of the vehicle there are the *Tantra of the Great Natural Arising of Awareness* (*rig-pa rang-shar chen-po'i rgyud*, NGB Vol.10) and the *Miraculous Key to the Storehouse* (*bang-mdzod 'phrul-lde*, NGB Vol.2).

The treatises composed by Indian scholars of the past on those transmitted precepts include long commentaries on specific texts such as those on the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* by Līlāvajra (*Śrīguhyagarbha-mahātantrarājāṭīkā*, P 4718) and by Sūryaprabhāsiṃha (*Śrīguhyagarbhataitvanimayavyākhyāṇāṭīkā*, P 4719). Yet they also include a tradition of short, pithy explanations of the nine sequences of the vehicle, among which one should note the *Garland of Views: A Collection of Esoteric Instructions* (*Upadeśadarśanamālā*, P 4726) by Padmasambhava, the *Sequence of the Path* (*Māyājālapathakrama*, P 4736) by Buddhaguhya, the *Lock of the Heart* (*Cittatālaka*, P 4758) by Śrī Siṃha, and the *Turquoise Display* (*gYu-thang-ma kras-dgu*, P 4729) attributed to Nāgārjuna.

When the Nyingma tradition was introduced to Tibet, the concise exegetical style was maintained by authors such as Kawa Peltsek who wrote the *Seventeenfold Appearance of the Sequence of the View* (*lta-rim snang-ba bcu-bdun-pa*, T 4356).

During the medieval period of Tibetan history which followed the persecution of the Buddhist doctrine by Langdarma and its subsequent restoration, long treatises were composed concerning these “ancient translations” by Rongzom Paṇḍita (eleventh century), Yungtönpa Dorjepel (1284-1365), Longcen Rapjampa (1308-63) and others. Longcenpa in particular was encouraged by his teacher Kumārādza (1266-1343) to compose the *Seven Treasuries* (*mdzod-bdun*) which definitively structured the entire Buddhist experience from the Nyingma point of view. These include his *Treasury of Spiritual and Philosophical Systems* (*grub-mtha'i mdzod*) which has had a profound influence on later interpretations of the nine sequences of the vehicle. Among his other works, one should note the *General Exposition [of the Secret Nucleus, entitled] Dispelling Mental Darkness* (*spyi-don yid-kyi mun-pa sel-ba*) which is a basic source-book for much of the present treatise.

Subsequently, Pema Trhinle (1641-1717) and Locen Dharmasrī (1654-1717) have commented on the range of the Buddhist teachings in their respective *Collected Works*, and have explored in depth the distant lineage of transmitted precepts (*ring-brgyud bka'-ma*) and the meaning of the Anuyoga *Sūtra which Gathers All Intentions* (*mdo dgongs-pa 'dus-pa*, T 829, NGB Vol.11). The latter's *Oral Teaching of the Lord of Secrets* (*gsang-bdag zhal-lung*) is a primary source for the recapitulations found in Parts Three and Four of the present work.

In the eighteenth century, Jikme Lingpa (1730-98) intricately stated the view of the Nyingmapa tantras and the nine sequences of the vehicle in his nine volumes of *Collected Works*, particularly in the *Treasury of Enlightened Attributes* (*yon-tan mdzod*); and Gyurme Tshewang Chokdrup of Katok catalogued the *Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa* in his *Discourse Resembling a Divine Drum* (*rgyud-'bum dkar-chag lha'i rnga-bo-che lta-bu*), the first part of which corresponds closely to our present text.

During the nineteenth century, under the inspiration of his teacher the great Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, Jamgön Kongtrül (1813-99) compiled five anthologies (*kong-sprül mdzod-nga*) which integrated the most important teachings from all schools of Buddhism.

More recently, Zhecen Gyeltsap and others have followed in this eclectic (*ris-med*) tradition, and Mipham Rinpoche (1846-1912) has composed elaborate exegeses on Madhyamaka, on the mind in its natural state (*gnyugs-sems*), and on the integration of the views of intrinsic emptiness (*rang-stong*) and extrinsic emptiness (*gzhan-stong*)⁸ within the sphere of the causal vehicles of dialectics. These are all included in the four cycles of his *Collected Works*. His *Summary of the Spiritual and Philosophical Systems* from Longcenpa's *Wish-fulfilling Treasury* (*yi-dzhin mdzod-kyi grub-mtha' bsdus-pa*) has been partially translated into English by H.V. Guenther.⁹

These prominent texts and authors serve to illustrate the literary tradition which Dudjom Rinpoche has inherited. Looking back upon the development of the Nyingma exegetical tradition from the Indian period until the eclectic movement, he has produced a treatise, the *Fundamentals*, which conforms to contemporary circumstances and requirements. Many Tibetans who currently practise the doctrine do so in a refugee environment, and so lack the time and resources which were once available for the detailed study of vast commentaries. Capturing the elegance of traditional versification, and the scholarly insights which have gradually been acquired over the centuries, he has condensed the writings of past masters, presenting their reasoning in an immediate, contemporary manner, and at the same time has substantiated this summarisation with copious quotations from the concise exegetical tradition of both Indian and Tibetan origin, which epitomises the Ancient Translation School.

The formal title of this work is *An Abridged Definitive Ordering of the Nyingma Teaching, the Ancient Translation School of Secret Mantra, entitled Feast in which Eloquence Appears* (*gsang-sngags snga-'gyur rnying-ma-ba'i bstan-pa'i rnam-gzhag mdo-tsam brjod-pa legs-bshad snang-ba'i dga'-ston*). Its two hundred and thirty-two Tibetan folios were composed during the summer of 1966. The xylographs for the first edition of the text were prepared in Kalimpong, West Bengal, India, where they are preserved at the monastery of Zangdok Pelri. The text was subsequently reprinted in the *Collected Works of Dudjom Rinpoche* (Kalimpong, 1979).

GYURME DORJE

The Text

An Abridged Definitive Ordering of the Nyingma Teaching,
the Ancient Translation School of Secret Mantra,
entitled Feast in which Eloquence Appears

*gsang-sngags snga-'gyur rnying-ma-ba'i bstan-pa'i mam-gzhag
mdo-tsam brjod-pa legs-bshad snang-ba'i dga 'ston*

Verses of Invocation

May you who are the indestructible reality
Of the speech of all conquerors,
Having attained supreme accomplishment,
A level whose wonder cannot even be grasped,
And arisen embodied as an awareness-holder,
Powerfully transforming the three spheres of existence,
Orgyen Dorje Chang,¹⁰ confer your blessings.

May you who bind the entire network
Of the supreme skilful means,
Which appears as great bliss,
In the seal of discriminative awareness,
Which is emptiness in its natural state,
Heruka, completely present
In mobile and motionless creatures,
All-pervading lord and guru,
Grant protection until enlightenment.

When the brilliant, attractive lotus of eloquent discourse
Born from the taintless ocean of doctrinal tradition
Exudes honey drops of excellent meaning,
The feast of the discerning bee increases in all ways.

Introduction

[2b.3-3a.1] On the basis of the unsurpassed aspiration and enlightened activity of the three ancestral religious kings¹¹ who emanated in the land of snow mountains [Tibet], the field of the sublime and supreme Lokeśvara,¹² the Teaching of the Conqueror [Buddhism] was established. Its foundation was clearly made secure by the preceptors, masters, paṇḍitas, accomplished masters, bodhisattvas and translators who were representatives of the Teacher [Buddha] through their translations, exegeses, teachings, study, meditation, and attainment. Subsequently, an immeasurable number of accomplished awareness-holders manifestly equal to the Conqueror himself emerged, such as Nupcen Sangye Yeshe and his nephew [Nup Khulungpa Yönten Gyamtso], the generations of the Zur family, Nyang-rel Nyima Özer, Rok Sherap-ö, Rongzompa Chöki Zangpo and Longcen Rapjampa.¹³ Therefore, I wish to summarise and briefly explain the fundamentals of that body of teaching renowned as the Nyingma tradition or Ancient Translation School of the secret mantra, the exegesis, attainment and enlightened activity of which continue to be maintained without decline until the present day.

Part One
Doctrines of Saṃsāra and Nirvāṇa

1 *The Essence and Definition of Dharma*

[3a.1-4b.5] At the outset, the doctrines of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa must be recognised in general and their characteristics established. This has three aspects: essence, verbal definition and classification.

The essence is as follows: Mundane doctrines are characterised as those which, when referred to objectively, cause one to wander in the three realms by the power of corrupt deeds, and as those whose nature is flawed in such a way that suffering alone is experienced. Supramundane doctrines are characterised as those which destroy the two obscurations when founded upon the continuum of the mind, and which are endowed with positive attributes affording protection from the suffering of saṃsāra. As it is said [in the *Rational System of Exposition, Vyākhyāyukti*, T 4061]:

The true doctrine (*saddharma*) is that which removes all suffering and every obscuration.

The verbal definition is that the term *dharma*, which is derived from the root *dhr*¹⁴ “to hold”, holds or conveys ten meanings. The *Wish-fulfiller (Amaratīkākāmadhenu*, T 4300) explains:

Because it holds everything
It is the *dharma*.¹⁵

In the *Rational System of Exposition* the ten meanings emerge as follows:

Dharma is that which is knowable, the path, nirvāṇa, an object of mind, merit, life, the scriptures, material objects, regulation, and the doctrinal traditions.

Accordingly, there are quotations from the sūtras illustrating the word *dharma* when it conveys the meaning of that which is knowable, for example:

Some things (*dharma*) are compounded,
Others are un-compounded.

And,

All things (*dharmā*) should be known in that way.

When *dharmā* conveys the meaning of the path, it may be illustrated by the words:

O monks, the wrong view is not the doctrine (*dharmā*), but the correct view is the doctrine.

When it conveys the meaning of nirvāṇa, it may be illustrated by the words:

He took refuge in the doctrine (*dharmā*).

When conveying the meaning of an object of mind, it may be illustrated by the expression “activity field of phenomena” (*dharmāyatana*). When conveying the meaning of merit, it may be illustrated by the words:

He practised the doctrine (*dharmā*) in the company of a retinue of queens and maidens.

When conveying the meaning of life, it may be illustrated by the words:

A childish person dearly holds to the things (*dharmā*) which he sees.

When conveying the meaning of the scriptures, it may be illustrated by the words:

O monks, that which is called the doctrine (*dharmā*) includes for instance the piṭaka of the sūtras and the piṭaka of prose and verse combined.

When conveying the meaning of emergent objects, it may be illustrated by the words:

As for compounded substances, this is their reality (*dharmā*).

and:

Even I have not transcended the phenomenon (*dharmā*) of death and the reality of death.

When conveying the meaning of regulation, it may be illustrated by the term “four doctrines (*dharmā*) of a spiritual ascetic”,¹⁶ and by the words:

O monks, to kill is not the doctrine, but to renounce killing is the doctrine (*dharmā*).

And so forth. When it conveys the meaning of tradition, it may be illustrated by “national traditions” (*dharmā*) and “ethnic traditions” (*dharmā*).

If one then wonders how these [ten definitions] relate to the sense of the term “to hold”, then the things which are knowable hold both

individual and general characteristics. Individual characteristics are held as illustrated, for example, in the following words:

Earth is hard, water wet, fire hot
And wind is light and mobile.

And the manner in which general characteristics are held may be illustrated by the words:

All that is compounded is impermanent.
All that is corrupt is suffering.
All things are devoid of self.
Nirvāṇa is peace.

By the path and nirvāṇa one is held from falling into saṃsāra. By the object of mind the mind is held. By merit one is held from falling into evil existences. By the life-span or life itself one holds the body or its appropriate stations. The scriptures hold the unmistakable truth. Emergent objects hold that which has a transient basis. Regulations hold the precise foundation. Traditions uphold an idiosyncratic conduct; and by awareness [of all these] one is held apart from the area of bewilderment. Such analogies may be inferred by reason.

The classification is twofold, consisting of the doctrine of saṃsāra and the doctrine of nirvāṇa. Concerning the distinction between these two, the *[Long] Mother* [i.e. the *Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in One Hundred Thousand Lines*] says:

Liberality is possessed by both mundane and supramundane beings. What, you may ask, is mundane liberality? That which, by the act of having made some offering, neither moves beyond, nor sublimates, nor transcends the world, is said to be mundane liberality. That which does move beyond, sublimate, or transcend the world, by the act of having made some offering, is called supramundane liberality.

According to such quotations, when one has reached a conclusion through any method, the result is distinguished by having or lacking the power to sublimate the world.

2 Doctrines of Saṃsāra

[4b.5-16a.3] First, the doctrines of saṃsāra are explained under three headings: (1) the characteristics of saṃsāra, (2) the mundane vehicle [and the Brahmā vehicle], and (3) an ensuing discussion of the views held by those of no understanding and by those of wrong understanding.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SAṂSĀRA

The doctrines or phenomena of saṃsāra are originally caused by ignorance which arises in three interrelated aspects. Firstly, the ignorance of individual selfhood (*bdag-nyid gcig-pu'i ma-rig-pa*) arises as consciousness, but it is not recognised as such. Secondly, through the co-emergent ignorance (*lhan-cig skyes-pa'i ma-rig-pa*), the unconsciousness of the true essence and that consciousness emerge together. Yet it is thirdly, through the ignorance of the imaginary (*kun-tu brtag-pa'i ma-rig-pa*), that one's own perceptions are externally discerned. Since these three aspects arise diversely from a single essence, they arise from the ground as the appearance of the ground; and since this is not known to have been self-originated, the threefold ignorance which subjectively discerns objects is the causal condition [of saṃsāra]. The objective appearances, which arise like one's own reflection in a mirror, through clinging to externals apart from oneself, are the referential condition [of saṃsāra]. The consciousness which holds to the [concepts] of "I" and "mine" is the possessive condition, and since these three [conditions] are simultaneous, they form the immediate condition. Bewilderment originates from the impure referential aspect containing these four conditions [of saṃsāra] and is maintained by divisively clinging externally to objective phenomena, and internally to subjective consciousness. As it is said in the *Penetration of Sound* (*sgra thal-'gyur*, NGB Vol.10):

The basis of bewilderment is ignorance.
Ignorance has three forms.

And:

Owing to that root which is the single indivisible¹⁷ cause,
The true essence is not perceived;
This, therefore, is the beginning of saṃsāra.

And in the *Great Array* (*bkod-pa chen-po*):

Spontaneous presence arises as an object,
Which is emptiness.
At that time, from the cycle of bewilderment
Which has four conditions,
The snare of clinging comes into being.

From the very moment of bewilderment, that same bewilderment arises as the ground-of-all (*kun-gzhi*, Skt. *ālaya*) in its role as the ignorance, the naturally obscuring expressive power, which is the unconsciousness of the true essence. Dependent upon that [ground-of-all] is the mind which is the consciousness of the ground-of-all and the six conflicting emotions which originate from it. These are [ignorance, the basis on which bewildering thoughts are grasped];¹⁸ delusion, the bewilderment in the area of discriminative awareness; hatred, the bewilderment in the area of creative phases;¹⁹ pride, the bewilderment in the area of the view; desire, the bewilderment in the area of appearances; and envy, the bewilderment in the area of non-understanding [in relation to these]. Eighty-four thousand phenomena (*dharma*) then emerge through the gradual accumulation of ideas, beginning with the mind which apprehends emotionally conflicted thoughts such as the above, the intellect which apprehends all memories, the ideas which form the ground of connecting propensities and doubts, and that area [of mind] which clings to objects and entities.

In this way then, the five sensory perceptions originate together with the consciousness of the intellect wherein the twenty-one thousand phenomena [in each of four categories], namely, the three poisons and their equal combination, arise dispositionally.

The object which maintains the continuity of any of these six active consciousnesses²⁰ at the moment of objectification, the immediate consciousness which at the same instant apprehends the object and its form, and any of the three subsequent feelings of pleasure, suffering or neutrality, are together called the sensation of contact. So it is that the eighteen psychophysical bases originate, divided into three groups of six.²¹

[Thereupon, the evolution of] the five components, the twelve activity fields, the six sense organs and karma or [world-forming] deeds ensues. The five components are, namely, the component of form, which is an accumulation of atoms and is capable of being destroyed and split; the component of feelings, which are the source of enjoyment

and desire; the component of perceptions, which are dynamic and object-oriented; the component of habitual tendencies which create and accumulate propensities; [and the component of consciousness which is aware and objectifying].²²

As for the twelve activity fields which cause any accumulation of ideas to be sensed, there are six objective modes, such as form, the object apprehended by the eye, which causes both the continuity [of the object of perception] in the subsequent instant and the apprehending consciousness to be sensed; and there are also six subjective modes, such as the consciousness of the eye,²³ which arises in that subsequent instant and perceives as form that form which may be objectively sensed. There are five organs of sense, such as the eye, which have the power to apprehend objects, or six with the inclusion of the sense organ of the intellect, which originates from the possessive condition of the initial apperceptive consciousness.

Deeds may be of three types: virtuous, unvirtuous or neutral. The first includes the ten virtues which produce worldly happiness as their result. The second comprises the contrary deeds which cast [beings] into evil existences. The third refers to those [neutral] deeds²⁴ which cast beings into higher realms.

Although all these phenomena are compounded internally by the mind, their apparitional aspect and supporting foundation are the five gross elements of which external objects are compounded, and which are caused, conditioned, supported and substantiated by the fourfold process of creation, duration, destruction and dissolution. As the number of mental propensities through which they appear as objects expands, the world realm of desire containing the four continents, Mount Sumeru and perimeter appears like a dream, along with the realm of form, like self-radiating rainbow light of five colours, and the formless realm, which originates from the contemplation of the summit of existence, and so on.²⁵ In brief, the entire array of the inanimate container and animate creatures, mobile and motionless, subsumed by the three world realms, does not appear in the ultimate vision of sublime beings. Rather, it is an apparitional mode of the bewildered intellect of sentient beings, which appears by the power of the subject-object dichotomy lapsing into delusion, like water in a mirage, and into erroneous perception, like seeing a multicoloured rope as a snake. As it is said in the *Pearl Necklace* (*mu-tig phreng-ba*, NGB Vol.9):

In this way, the diverse appearances
 Resemble a rope when seen as a snake.
 Though not so, by clinging to them as such
 The outer container and inner essence
 Are established as a duality.
 The rope itself, on further investigation,

Is primordially empty of container and essence.
The ultimate takes form as the relative.
That perception of the snake is visually true,
The perception of the rope is genuinely true.
Enduring, for example, as a bird relates to a scarecrow,
The independent existence of the two truths
Refers only to the relative world.
It has no relation to genuine reality.
Because of the expanse of emptiness
The essence of that [reality] is that all is free.

And in the *Oral Instructions of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrīmukhāgama*, T 1853-4) it says:

All things of saṃsāra are held to be non-existent
Like the multicoloured rope when perceived as a snake.

Moreover, the creator of the happiness and suffering of saṃsāra, the high and the low and all such apparitional modes, is karma or [world-forming] deeds, corrupted by all-conflicting emotions, which are of three types. Without exception these modes are created by deeds, emanated by deeds, matured by deeds, and they appear through the power of deeds. Accordingly, it is said in the *Hundred Parables on Deeds* (*Karmaśatakasūtra*, T 340):

The diversity of the world is developed through deeds.
Happiness and suffering are created by deeds.
Deeds originate from an accumulation of conditions
And by deeds happiness and suffering are made.

And in the *Introduction to the Madhyamaka* (*Madhyamakāvātāra*, T 3861, Ch.6, v.89) it explains:

By mind itself the diverse
Sentient and inanimate worlds
Are allocated their share of deeds.
Living creatures without exception
Are said to be created through deeds.

THE MUNDANE VEHICLE AND THE BRAHMĀ VEHICLE

The Mundane Vehicle

[7b.2-10a.3] The mundane vehicle or the basic vehicle followed by gods and human beings is explained under three headings: essence, verbal definition and classification.

The essence is any method of progressing to the conclusive happiness of gods and human beings which lacks the power to sublimate saṃsāra.

It is verbally defined as a vehicle because it can merely unite with, and progress towards, the result of happiness experienced by gods and human beings. Its classifications are sixfold, namely, entrance, view, moral discipline, meditation, conduct and result.

Firstly, concerning the entrance: After having seen the three evil existences, which are naturally endowed with suffering, one enters by means of renouncing the unvirtuous deeds, which are the cause of birth therein. As it is said in the *Heruka Galpo* (*he-ru-ka gal-po*, NGB Vol.25):

Non-virtue is renounced by the vehicle of gods and humans.

In this context the ten non-virtues consist of three physical deeds – to kill, to steal and to commit sexual misconduct; four verbal deeds – to lie, to slander, to talk irresponsibly and to utter abuse; and three mental deeds – to covet, to be malicious and to hold wrong views.

Secondly, concerning the view: The correct view is the conviction that there are such things as a future world and the cause and fruition of deeds. It says in the *Collection of Meaningful Expressions* (*Udānavarga*, T 326, Ch.4, v.9):

The great one who possesses
The correct view for a mundane being
Even in a thousand lifetimes
Will not turn to evil existences.

Conversely, with a wrong view, even though one may have practised other virtuous deeds, such as abstaining from murder, one will reap the fruit of suffering. As it is said in the *Letter to a Friend* (*Suhrllekha*, T 4182, v.46):

Even though an individual may have practised well,
with a wrong view
All that matures will be unbearable.

Therefore, it is important that the correct view be retained.

Thirdly, moral discipline is nothing but the moral discipline of renouncing the ten non-virtues. It has been said in the above-mentioned [*Letter to a Friend*, v.11]:

The [eight vows of the] purificatory fast
Cause the pleasant body of the gods who act as they desire
To be bestowed upon lay people.

This being the case, is not the moral discipline derived from correct commitment explained to be necessary for one who would progress to the rank of the gods? Though indeed mentioned, it is spoken of only with reference to [the attainment of] the extraordinary [form] realms. For the ordinary [form] realms, its necessity is uncertain.²⁶ Therefore,

these latter realms are held to be attained simply by enacting the deeds and path of the ten virtues, along with their concomitants, which are retained by the correct view.

Furthermore, concepts such as purity of the grasping components are adhered to, and one who has been motivated by the possession of conscience and humility is called a holy or superior being for performing his or her duties of body and speech with propriety. And the converse is true for an evil or inferior being. The *Treatise on Behaviour entitled the Holy Ornament* (*lugs-kyi bstan-bcos dam-pa'i rgyan*) says: ²⁷

To honour well those who are worthy of reverence,
To be especially benevolent to those who are unprotected,
And not to forget to repay kindness
Is the conduct of a holy being.
The holy person actually chooses death,
Rather than a life which has forsaken conscience,
Experiences which are tainted with sin,
And power gained by the deception of friends.

And again:

An evil creature delights in sin,
Shows ingratitude and casts away
Conscience like an enemy.
That one will do anything
To achieve his or her own purpose.

And in the *Short Chapter on Discrimination* (*'byed-pa le'u chung*) sixteen pure human laws (*mi-chos gtsang-ma bcu-drug*) are taught as follows:

Develop faith in the Three Precious Jewels without sorrow or weariness; search ultimately for the true doctrine; skilfully study the excellent sciences; first recollect and then appraise anything that is to be undertaken; do not hanker after unassigned work; look to a higher level and emulate the ancients and those of superior conduct; repay kindness to one's parents of the past, present and future; be broad-minded and hospitable in one's dealings with elder and younger siblings and paternal relatives; ensure that the young respect their elders by degrees; show loving kindness to one's neighbours; arduously assist one's acquaintances who are spiritual benefactors; perfectly fulfil the needs of those nearby who are connected through the worldly round; help others through one's skill in science and the arts; provide a refuge with kindness to those who depend upon it; resist bad advice and establish advice which will increase the happiness of the country; and, entrusting one's deeds to the doctrine, one

should bring one's spouse to obtain the ground of enlightenment in future lives.

Fourth, meditation: There is training until one has the power to bring about the proper result.

Fifth, conduct: One enacts the deeds and path of the ten virtues "endowed with corruption" along with their concomitants, which [virtues] are so named after their function which is [merely] to renounce the ten non-virtues. The positive virtues of such physical actions as prostration, verbal actions as praise and mental actions which benefit others by virtuous thoughts are also included. However, one might object, is it not said in the *Heruka Galpo* that on the vehicle of gods and humans, the ten modes of doctrinal conduct such as writing [scriptures] and making offerings are necessary? Here, as before, there is a distinction between [the attainment of] the extraordinary realms, and the ordinary realms.

Sixth, the result is as follows: By the extent of the power of one's virtuous deeds, one is born in the ten higher levels of the desire realm, namely, among the human beings of the four continents or among the six species of Kāma divinities. Accordingly, the *Tantra of the Extensive Magical Net* says:

The practice of the ten virtues and the renunciation of non-virtues
Are the basis for birth among the gods and humans of the
desire realm.

And in Buddhaghosya's²⁸ *Sequence of the Path* it says:

By emphasising the ten virtues
And not equating virtue with non-virtue,
One is born among the gods and human beings.
Without understanding sameness, one wanders in the
desire realm.

Since this vehicle progresses to the culmination of the happiness desired in this life either as an emperor among men, or as a master of the Paranirmitavaśavartin²⁹ realm of the gods, the *Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā* speaks of it as the divine vehicle, after the name of the highest realm to which it progresses. It has been said of this vehicle in the *Sequence of the Path*:

It is definitively arranged
As the first of the fundamental vehicles.

Accordingly, it either forms the foundation of, or is preliminary to, all the vehicles, because the vehicle which is not retained by the correct view and which does not observe the deeds and path of the ten virtues

as its actual foundation is nowhere to be found. The *Hevajra Tantra* (T 417-18, Pt.2, Ch.2, v.18cd) also states:

Having commenced from the ten virtues
His doctrine is disclosed.

The Brahmā Vehicle

[10a.3-11b.3] The *Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā* also speaks of the vehicle of Brahmā. Here Brahmā does not only apply to the three realms which begin with the Brahmakāyika,³⁰ but the meanings of chaste, clean and pure are also conveyed by the word Brahmā; for the conflicting emotion of desire is cleansed and purified. In this way the above sūtra refers to the whole range of the word Brahmā. All twenty-one higher realms, including the seventeen form realms of the gods and the four formless realms, are expressed by the word Brahmā, and the path, along with its concomitants, which progresses to these realms is called the vehicle of Brahmā.³¹ It also says that one who has renounced the conflicting emotions of the lower level will be born in a higher realm by the power of having meditated with tranquillity, and with higher insight which perceives as coarse the level below one's own and perceives as subtle one's own level. Therefore, one will not be born in the higher realms without obtaining an actual foundation in the four meditative concentrations and the four formless absorptions on the path which removes attachment to the level below one's own. So it is that the meditative concentrations and absorptions are held to be the actual vehicle of Brahmā and the four immeasurables and five mundane supernatural cognitive powers to be the extraordinary path of enlightened attributes in the vehicle of Brahmā.

These attributes also require a view which accepts the [doctrine of] deeds and their result; an entrance and a moral discipline through which the ten non-virtues are renounced; a conduct through which the ten virtues are observed as before, but through which in addition the four immeasurables, namely, loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity are practised; and a meditation which includes both formal and formless absorptions. The formal ones are the four meditative concentrations which are characteristically disillusioned with the sensations of desire. As the *Intermediate Mother* [*Transcendental Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-five Thousand Lines, Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, T 9] says:

That which possesses both ideas and scrutiny is the first concentration. That which possesses no ideas but scrutiny alone is the second concentration. Mental action devoid of both ideas and scrutiny is the third concentration, and mental action united with delight is the fourth concentration.

The latter [i.e. the formless ones] are the four absorptions which are characteristically disillusioned with the cognition of the four concentrations. These are the absorptions into the activity field infinite as the sky, into the activity field of infinite consciousness, into the activity field of nothing at all, and into the activity field where there is neither perception nor non-perception. They are the culmination of the path to the summit of existence.³² Concerning these, the *Tantra of the Extensive Magical Net* also says:

One whose conduct is the four immeasurables
And whose meditation is unwavering
Will be born in the Brahmā realms and so forth.

The result [in this context] refers to both the form and formless realms. As regards the former, one takes birth in the three realms which begin with Brahmakāyika through having meditated respectively on the weak, middling, and strong aspects of the actual foundation of the first concentration, and [by applying the second, third and fourth concentrations] in the same way, altogether there are twelve such ordinary realms in which one revolves. During the fourth concentration the uncorrupted discriminative awareness of the sublime beings increases and one takes birth in the Five Pure Abodes beginning with Avṛha through meditation in five respective stages. Yet, one does not obtain freedom from attachment to form, and one continues to wander in saṃsāra through attachment to the flavour of concentration. As the *Sequence of the Path* says:

Holding to individual selfhood through the stages
Of the four immeasurables and four concentrations,
And imputing self in all forms,
One takes birth successively in the Brahmā realms.

As regards the latter [type of result], one takes birth as a formless god by clinging to [the idea of] self during the contemplation endowed with four nominal components³³ in which the discriminative awareness of higher insight is absent. The same text [*Sequence of the Path*] says:

Without understanding sameness and that which is
formless,
One does not know the four names to be non-existent.
When one abides in the four activity fields,
One is born on the level of the summit of existence.

THOSE OF NO UNDERSTANDING AND THOSE OF WRONG
UNDERSTANDING

[11b.3-16a.3] The ensuing discussion of the views held by those of no understanding and by those of wrong understanding is explained as

follows: on this topic the opinions of past masters slightly differ. The master Sūryaprabhāsiṃha³⁴ claims that those of no understanding are the trio of the apathetic (*phyal-ba*), the materialists (*rgyang-'phen-pa*, Skt. *Lokāyata*) and the nihilistic extremists (*mur stug-pa*), while those of wrong understanding are the eternalistic extremists (*mu stegs-pa*, Skt. *tīrthika*). Master Lilāvajra³⁵ claims that those of no understanding are the apathetic and those of wrong understanding the extremists, both eternalistic and nihilistic. Vimalamitra³⁶ has said:

The apathetic and materialists
Have no understanding,
The nihilistic and eternalistic extremists
Have wrong understanding.

Since a similar account also is found in the great master Padmasambhava's *Garland of Views: A Collection of Esoteric Instructions*, I shall adopt the same approach here.

Those of No Understanding

[12a.1-12a.4] Among those of no understanding and those of wrong understanding, the former are both interpreted and classified as follows. They are interpreted to be ordinary individuals whose attitudes have not been changed by a philosophical system. They are classified into two groups: the actual and the incidental.

The Apathetic

First, those who actually have no understanding, the mundane apathetic, are explained under three headings: essence, verbal definition and classification.

Their essence is that they are totally deluded because from the beginning they have not understood [the relationship] between the causes and results of deeds. The verbal definition is that they are called apathetic because they do not act in response to the existence or non-existence of doctrines concerning interdependent causes and results, and observe neither renunciation nor commitment. As the *Parṇaṣṭi Commentary* [on the *Secret Nucleus, Guhyagarbhamahātantrarājatīkā*, P 4718] says:

He who understands nothing at all
Is a mundane apathetic being.

Their classification is into an inferior type and a dubious type. The inferior type have a debased intellect which does not consider the attainment of positive attributes. The dubious type are both good and evil, and resemble those described below.

The Materialists

[12a.4-12b.4] Secondly, those who are incidentally classed with those of no understanding, the materialists, are also explained under three headings. Their essence is that without understanding the existence or non-existence of previous and future lives, they are inclined to achieve only the slight temporal and spiritual well-being of one lifetime. The verbal definition is that they are called materialists because, rejecting the future as remote, their achievements depend upon the mysterious expressions, oracles, dreams and calculations of mundane beings, such as those who are mighty and powerful in this life. Their classification is into two types: the cut-off and the perceptive. The former includes those cut off by nature and by conditions. Since [the view that there are cut-off beings] is not held by those who uphold the philosophy of the greater vehicle (*Mahāyāna*), they may be known in detail from other sources.³⁷ The perceptive type is fourfold. As a great sūtra (*mdo chen-po*) says:

The four perceptive types,
Known as the attached, the distracted,
The fearful, and the aspiring,
Appear as the field
Capable of retaining the seed [of enlightenment].

Respectively, these four are unable to resist lustful attachment to objects of desire, distracted by the duties of man-made laws in this life, successful in power and wealth through evil means, and the type which aspires to renounce the ten non-virtues and attain liberation.

Those of Wrong Understanding

[12b.4-16a.3] Secondly, those of wrong understanding are interpreted and classified as follows. They are interpreted to be any receptive individuals whose attitudes have been changed by wrong philosophy. They are classified as the five sophistic schools of the extremist masters of the past, who turn outwards rather than inwards.³⁸ Included among them are four schools of the eternalist view, the first being the Sāṃkhya.

Sāṃkhya

[12b.5-13a.3] During the age when living beings had a life-span of twenty thousand years,³⁹ the sage Kapila attained accomplishment through the austerities of the eternalistic extremists and composed many treatises. There were two students who upheld his philosophical system, Bharadvāja and Patañjali. Those who follow the tenet of Bharadvāja, that all that is knowable is divided into twenty-five categories, are the Sāṃkhya. Those based on the tenet of Patañjali, that the abiding nature of the twenty-five categories is empty, are the Followers of Kapila

[Kāpila, the Yoga School]. As the *Compendium of the Nucleus of Pristine Cognition* (*Jñānasārasamuccaya*, T 3851) says:

The Sāṃkhya speak of attributes;
The Followers of Kapila maintain they are empty.

So it is that they are called the Sāṃkhya, the Followers of Kapila and Adherents of the Three Attributes (*Traiguṇya*).

Aiśvara

[13a.3-13b.1] The second school holding an eternalistic view is that of the Followers of Īśvara [Śiva]. The god Īśvara, the teacher of many tantrapīṭhaka, had two students who attained accomplishment, namely, Akṣapāda and Kaṇāda. The adherents of Nyāya (*Naiyāyika*) depend on the *View of Reason* (*Nyāyadarśana*) which was composed by Akṣapāda, while the Vaiśeṣika depend on the *Clear Distinction* (*bye-brag gsal-ba*, Skt. *Vaiśeṣikadarśana*) which was composed by Kaṇāda. This school holds that all the bondage and liberation of sentient beings is created by Īśvara:

Having no consciousness, these living creatures
Lack control over their own happiness and sorrow.
But when dispatched by Īśvara,
They become creatures who exclusively inhabit
The abyss [of evil existences]
Or the higher realms [of gods and humans].⁴⁰

Thus they are called Followers of Īśvara, Followers of the Owl (*Aulūkyā*)⁴¹ and Adherents of the Six Categories (*Ṣaḍpadārthavaiśeṣika*).

Vaiṣṇava

[13b.1-13b.6] The third school holding an eternalist view is the Vaiṣṇava. Viṣṇu composed the *Anthology of Vedic Treatises*. The four-faced Brahmā was born from the lotus of his navel, and, after emanating the entire world and its contents, he recollected the great *Four Veda*, namely, the *R̥gveda*, the *Sāmaveda*, the *Yajurveda* and the *Atharvaveda*. Later his exegeses were compiled by the sages and the following five divisions emerged:⁴² the grammarians (*Vaiyākaraṇa*) who rely on Viṣṇu's treatise entitled *Light Rays of Grammatical Speech* (*brda'-sprod ngag-gi 'od-zer*); the logicians including Aviddhakarṇa⁴³ who rely on the ṛṣi Agni's *Weapons of Expression* (*smra-ba'i mtshon-cha*); the mystics among accomplished meditators who rely on the ṛṣi Satya's *Nine Cycles of the Meditational Sequence* (*bsgom-rim skor-dgu*); those proponents of textual exegesis who emphasise ritual, relying on the ṛṣi Bhṛgu's *Clear Judgement* (*mam-dpyod gsal-ba*); and the followers of Caraka who are physicians relying on the *Anthology of Caraka* (*Carakasamhitā*), which

was composed by the ṛṣi Ātreya and others. All of these uphold the authenticity of the *Four Veda*. When classified, they are known as the Followers of Viṣṇu (*Vaiṣṇava*), the Followers of Brahmā and the Followers of the Veda.

Jainism

[13b.6-14a.2] The fourth school holding an eternalistic view is the Jaina (*rgyal-ba-pa*). In the *Ornamental Mirror of Categories* (*tshig-don rgyan-gyi snang-ba*)⁴⁴ it says:

The great god [Rṣabha], holiest of conquerors
 Ascertain that which is knowable
 In the following nine categories:
 Animate substance (*jīva*), inanimate substance
 (*ajīva*)⁴⁵ and commitments (*saṃvara*),
 Rejuvenation (*nirjara*), bondage (*bandha*) and deeds
 (*karmāsrava*),
 Evil (*pāpa*), virtue (*puṇya*) and liberation (*mokṣa*).

Consequently, it is held that liberation has form and colour, while trees are animate. They are called the Followers of the Conqueror (*Jaina*), Adherents of the Nine Categories and the Naked Ascetics (*Nirgrantha*).

Nihilism

[14a.2-14b.3] The fifth school is the only one which holds a nihilistic view. In Trayatrimśa, the heaven of the Thirty-three Gods, Bṛhaspati, who had become the accomplished guru of the gods, composed the treatise entitled *Essence of the View which Negates Everything* (*thams-cad-la skur-pa 'debs-pa'i lta-ba'i snying-po*)⁴⁶ in order that the gods might develop enthusiasm for their struggle against the antigods. Later it was propagated in the human world by Vālmiki. The treatise negates past and future births, saying [cf. *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*, Ch.1, v.1]:

Act joyously, good lady,
 While you are not dead,
 For nothing is not in death's range.
 Even your body will vanish like powder.
 Where can there be rebirths?

It then negates the existence of invisible beings, saying:

As many creatures as there are,
 They exist solely
 Within the range of the senses.
 Alas, whatever the learned say
 Resembles the tracks of a deceiving wolf.

It goes on to negate buddhahood as the result of progress on the path, saying:

The intellect is the body's soul,
It is the body's fruit and the body's attribute;
Depending on three modes such as these
There is no possibility of progress [to enlightenment].

It negates logic, saying:

Because it exaggerates
There is no logic.

And it also negates causality, with the words [*Summation of the Real, Tattvasaṃgraha*, T 4266, vv.111-12ab]:

Who made the anthers of a lotus?
Who designed the markings of a peacock?
Who sharpened the point of a thorn?
All things emerge substantially without cause.

So it is that they are called the Followers of Br̥haspati (*Bārhaspatya*), the materialists, hedonists,⁴⁷ and those who hold that mind emerges from space.

CONCLUSION

Since these four views of no understanding and wrong understanding exclusively originate from ignorance, they are mundane views. Such has been said in the *Garland of Views: A Collection of Esoteric Instructions* from the passage beginning:

The countless sūtras which gather together the erroneous views of sentient beings in the mundane realm fall within four categories, namely, the apathetic, the materialists, the nihilistic extremists and the eternalistic extremists.

down to:

All these are ignorant views.

Among these, the two which have no understanding represent no philosophical view. However, they are explained to be associated with [such a view] because they are subsumed within the status of the mind: The two which have wrong understanding do represent views which change the attitude through a philosophical system, but by clinging to extremes which exaggerate and depreciate the reality free from extremes, they have become erroneous. Therefore, they are not the means of liberation from saṃsāra. This applies not only to the nihilistic ex-

tremists who are the worst among those professing philosophy, but to the eternalistic extremists as well, because, maintaining a self, they are bound by clinging to a self, which is the root of saṃsāra. Accordingly, the *Exposition of Valid Cognition* (*Pramāṇavārttika*, T 4210, Ch.1, v.193cd) says:

As long as one actually clings to a self,
One will turn to saṃsāra.

And in the *Sequence of the Path*:

Anyone who inclines towards
The duality of eternalism and nihilism
Is said to deviate from the reality
Of the genuine essence.

On this occasion, I have not written about the texts and so forth which they individually uphold. One wishing to know them should look elsewhere. Some may well ask at this point whether it is not most inappropriate to explain the philosophical systems of the Outsiders,⁴⁸ etc., while analysing the Conqueror's transmitted precepts. Yet there is no fault, because having recognised the downfalls and things to be renounced on the path with reference to the eternalistic extremists who follow their own independent course, one has reason not to delay [in following] our own path, which is the supramundane vehicle. It says in the *Heruka Galpo*:

When the vehicle of the eternalistic extremists is well
ascertained,
It is explained to you so that
You will not practise but renounce it.

Furthermore, with reference to those eternalistic extremists who are [the buddhas'] emanations, [there is no fault] because in addition to that aforementioned reason [for pursuing the path of the supramundane vehicle], they are said to represent the enlightened activity of the conquerors who train each in accord with his or her needs. It is said in the *Rite which Ties by the Rope of Compassion of the Gathering of the Sugatas* (*bde-'dus-kyi thugs-rje dpyang-thag gnas-kyi lung*, P 4781), which was composed by the bodhisattva Vajradharma:

By the diverse inroads of compassion,
Training in whatever manner may be suitable,
The Teacher speaks of this [true doctrine]
And whatever appears therein
To the schools of the Outsiders.

In the very same way, one might well wonder how the development of such a negative view as that of the nihilistic extremists could appro-

priately be within the conquerors' skilful means, since it is an extremely terrible wrong view. None the less, it is appropriate because the nihilistic extremists, too, admit much that is reasonable. When one examines the scriptures or meets the arguments of those who established the pure Prāsaṅgika dialectic,⁴⁹ one is first of all sceptical, and subsequently having seen the pure proof to the contrary, one comes to develop the correct logic. Therefore [the nihilists] are nearer to developing the correct view than the fools who have never entertained philosophy.

Again, if one asks how these [views] are explained to form an ensuing discussion that is derived from the vehicle of gods and human beings, they are so called because the receptive individuals who make progress through the vehicle of gods and humans are both Outsiders and Insiders. With reference to the Outsiders, as Śūra says:

The beings who do not side with your teaching are blinded
by ignorance.
Though they have reached the summit of existence,
They will achieve a rebirth in which suffering re-emerges.

And with reference to the Insiders, even though they may hold to the refuge with a will to perform their duties on behalf of the Three Precious Jewels (*dkon-mchog gsum*), they are referred to as remaining only on the mundane path, unless their intellects aspire to liberation. As the *Supreme Continuum of the Greater Vehicle* (Ch.1, v.19) says:

With reference to differing volitions,
The threefold refuge is laid down.