

# THE COMPLETE NYINGMA TRADITION

FROM SUTRA TO TANTRA

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BOOKS 15 TO 17

The Essential Tantras of Mahayoga



CHOYING TOBDEN DORJE

TRANSLATED, INTRODUCED, AND ANNOTATED BY

GYURME DORJE

“There is no doubt that the basic techniques of Mahayoga, stressing the nature of the ground and the gradual visualizations of the generation stage, are present in the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*, but the work equally demonstrates the integration of both the generation and perfection stages of meditation and the self-manifesting nature of mind and pristine cognition, which are associated with Atiyoga. Indeed, the text comprises the generation and perfection stages, as well as the seeds of Great Perfection, suggesting that there is no fundamental contradiction between these exegetical approaches.”

—from the Translator’s Introduction

“This monumental treatise, covering both common and esoteric Buddhist lore, was composed by Choying Tobden Dorje, a most illustrious scholar and accomplished sage. Fortunately, among his voluminous books, this, his masterwork, has survived and has been carefully translated true to the original. It will open the eyes of serious readers to the vast spectrum of Buddhist wisdom.”

—Tulku Thondup

“*The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra* represents a rare opportunity for readers to obtain a complete map of the Buddha’s teachings. It contains very detailed descriptions of the profound and vast teachings of the ground, path, and fruition of both the sutra and tantra traditions. It provides particular emphasis on detailed instructions of the inner tantras of mahayoga, anuyoga, and the precious dzokchen tradition. I highly recommend this book for students who wish to gain a deeper understanding of the complete path to enlightenment.”

—Orgyen Chowang Rinpoche

“The translation of this text is a major milestone in bringing Tibetan Buddhist wisdom to the West. One of the legacies of ancient Tibet is the preservation of vast numbers of the Buddhist scriptures in their most complete and authentic forms. This text is a remarkable example of that. It has the power to reveal the rich traditions of Tibetan Buddhism from its surface to its depth, and it will illuminate the minds of those who have the great good fortune to meet with it.”

—Anam Thubten

## ABOUT THE BOOK

In 1838, Choying Tobden Dorje, a yogin and scholar of northeastern Tibet, completed a multivolume masterwork that traces the entire path of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism from beginning to end. Written by a mantra practitioner for the benefit of mantra practitioners living among the lay community, it was intended to be informative, inspirational, and above all, practical. Its twenty-five books, or topical divisions, offer a comprehensive and detailed view of the Buddhist path according to the early translation school of Tibetan Buddhism, spanning the vast range of Buddhist teachings from the initial steps to the highest esoteric teachings of great perfection. Choying Tobden Dorje’s magnum opus appears in English here for the first time.

*Books 15 to 17: The Essential Tantras of Mahayoga* concerns the first of the three classes of highest, or inner, tantras. It presents the entire text of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* in Tibetan and English together with the interlinear sections of one of its most important commentaries, *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*, by the outstanding fourteenth-century master Longchen Rabjam.

Also included is Choying Tobden Dorje's rewriting of Candragomin's inspirational *Extensive Commentary on the Sublime Litany of the Names of Manjushri*.

CHOYING TOBDEN DORJE (1787-1848) was a brilliant Vajrayana master of eastern Tibet. His masterwork, *The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra*, remains the main text studied by Tibet's Ngakpa lineages of lay Buddhist yogi-practitioners.

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# The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra, Books 15 to 17

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## *The Essential Tantras of Mahayoga*

Choying Tobden Dorje

TRANSLATED, INTRODUCED, AND ANNOTATED BY

*Gyurme Dorje*



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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This is a work of reference, not a practice manual. Those wishing to practice according to the tradition should receive the requisite empowerments and guidance from a qualified teacher.

Page numbers cited in the original print edition of this book have been retained for the reader's reference. Links are provided on these page numbers in the eBook edition for quick access to the relevant parts of the text. Please note that, depending on your display settings, the specific topic being discussed may appear a few sentences or paragraphs down from the linked location.

This book contains diacritics and special characters. If you encounter difficulty displaying these characters, please set your e-reader device to publisher defaults (if available) or to an alternate font.

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FIGURE 1. THE AUTHOR, CHOYING TOBDEN DORJE. ARTIST UNKNOWN. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHENAK HÜMCHEN.

## PREFACE TO THE 1986 TIBETAN PUBLICATION OF THE ROOT VERSES AND OUTLINE

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THIS TREATISE ENTITLED *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* [presented in translation here as *The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra*], a work that elucidates all vehicles of spiritual development, not only focuses on the field of Buddhist studies; it also contains a complete and error-free exposition of secular fields of knowledge, including Sanskrit grammar, logic, arts, and medicine. In clear and concise language, this text synthesizes the very vast and extremely profound essence of the five major subjects of Tibetan classical learning. Like a magical tree that grants all wishes, this book provides whatever information one might wish to know concerning those fields of knowledge.

On this occasion of the publication of the root verses and the outline, I will introduce this work in accordance with the widely accepted five-point model for initiating a discussion of treatises:<sup>1</sup> What is the title of this text? For whom was it written? Who is the author? How long is this work? What is its purpose? In keeping with this formula, I will answer these questions with reference to this very treatise that is under discussion.

First, the title of this treatise, *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, denotes the basic text or root verses. The synoptic outline that concisely elucidates the content of this treatise is entitled *Outline of the Text: A Creeping Plant That Brings Forth Wishes*.

Second, for which students or practitioners was this treatise composed? For persons interested in the extraordinary fields of

Buddhist studies, this excellent text elucidates the enlightened intention of the buddhas; the pith instructions of learned and accomplished masters, awareness holders, and genuine spiritual teachers; and the exegeses of the major fields of Tibetan classical learning. It presents the structure of ground, path, and result in respect of the sūtra and mantra vehicles. It differentiates the view, meditation, and conduct in accordance with the path. It outlines the gradation of vows and commitments in accordance with the discipline of individual liberation, the training of bodhisattvas, and the conduct of secret mantra. It is an edifying text, which excellently establishes study, reflection, and meditation, based on the author's own authentic reasoning.

In 1838 (the earth dog year of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle), Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje wrote the root verses and their commentaries. The composition of the words and the meanings contained in his treatise is superb, a treasure resembling a precious gem that elucidates and eloquently explains the entire range of the vehicles of spiritual development, completely and without error. It has the complete three-part classical literary format of an introduction, main text, and conclusion. The content of the main text is elucidated by brief introductions and extensive exegeses, and its headings include main topics and subtopics. The root verses are concise and written in verse to facilitate memorization. The extensive commentary in prose facilitates understanding of the intended meanings. The authority provided by supportive quotations from scripture elicits the reader's confidence beyond any doubt. The concise commentary and the illustrated version render the subject matter of this treatise increasingly clear.

Third, who is the author? The author of the root verses entitled *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* and its commentaries is Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje Mapham Chokle Nampar Gyelwa. He was born in 1785 (the wood snake year of the thirteenth sexagenary cycle) in the region of Repkong, in Amdo. He began writing this treatise in his fifty-first year, in 1836 (the fire monkey year of the fourteenth

sexagenary cycle), and completed it in his fifty-third year, in 1838 (the earth dog year). Apart from this minimal information, which is explicitly stated in the colophon of the text, no other account of his life has come into our hands. That being the case, at the time of this publication [1986], owing to the long distances involved, we have been unable to conduct any detailed research into his birthplace, his engagement in enlightened activities, his responsibilities, or even the place where he lived in Amdo. We are therefore unable to trace the present legacy of his major or minor acts, and we ask those who publish the supplementary portions of this treatise in the future to strive to fill these gaps in our knowledge.

Fourth, what is the extent of the root verses of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*? In terms of its content, this work comprises 100 general topics and 2,179 subtopics, divided into twenty-five books that span the entire gradation of the vehicles of spiritual development, commencing from discipleship and ending with the establishment of the stages of fruitional, conclusive accomplishment. In terms of its words, the root verses of the treatise are ascertained to have three sections: an introduction that is “virtuous at the beginning,” a main part that is “virtuous in the middle,” and a conclusion that is “virtuous at the end.” Among these, the introduction and the conclusion are composed in thirteen-syllable lines of verse, whereas the main part is composed in nine-syllable lines of verse. Altogether it comprises 984 verses. Apart from the root verses, the words of the outline, the concise commentary, the extensive commentary, and the illustrated version are structured in prose. The volumes containing the root verses and the commentaries definitely number thirteen.

Fifth, for what purpose was this work composed? It will prove useful for persons of supreme and inferior acumen; it will accomplish what they desire, both for the short and the long term. Study of this text leads to the resolution of outer misconceptions and the attainment of the rank of a learned person. Meditation on this text resolves inner misconceptions and leads to actualization of the spiritual goals to which each

person aspires. Such is the purpose for which this work was composed.

We will gradually publish *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, its root verses and commentaries, as well as the illustrated version. In doing so our purpose is to provide a comprehensive and multipurpose resource for those who are generally interested in definitive and quantitative knowledge, and more specifically for researchers in Tibetan culture. That said, this is not our only motivating concern: the entirety of the root verses and commentaries of this treatise had been previously carved in woodblocks in Amdo, yet that turned out not to be of great benefit for living beings, since in the midst of various turbulent events that later occurred in the Qinghai area, the woodblocks themselves disappeared without a trace. Therefore, nowadays it is certain that only one or two copies of the original treatise, comprising the root verses and its commentaries, have survived, and the continued existence of these texts is endangered. Thus it seems surely necessary to act swiftly to preserve these texts by publishing books that replicate exactly the content of their original manuscript. In the present case, we now publish the root verses and the outline, with the plan to gradually publish the entire series of texts in this collection. Zenkar Rinpoche Tubten Nyima, with the intention of preserving Tibetan culture, has gladly lent us the original copies of the texts. Further, he has graciously offered suggestions to assure the success of these publications. On this occasion of the first in the series, we must offer him our deepest gratitude.

Nordrang Orgyan, editor  
August 15, 1986

*Nordrang Orgyan is a renowned scholar who now lives in retirement. His magnum opus is the three-volume Compendium of Buddhist Numeric Terms, published in 2008. Formerly he*



*served as director of the Academy of Social Sciences of the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Rare Texts Publishing House.*

## A BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR, CHOYING TOBDEN DORJE

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THE SUPREME UNIVERSAL MONARCH, the learned and accomplished Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje Mapham Chokle Nampar Gyelwa Pelzangpo, was a reincarnation in human form of the lord among conquerors, Saroruhavajra [Guru Rinpoche]. He was born in 1785 (the wood snake year of the thirteenth sexagenary cycle) at Zhopong, in the Sermojong area of Repkong, in Amdo, Tibet, the Land of Snows. His father was named Rinchen and his mother, an emanation of Yeshe Tsogyal, named Jomo Yeshe Dolma, also known by the name of Gyelyum Ngodrub Dolma. Their child was initially known by the name Gongbo Yonten.

From the time of his infancy, he innately displayed the character of a holy person. Many local teachers, incarnate lamas, and spiritual mentors taught him to read and write. As he persevered in his study of the classical sciences and Buddhism, the vault of his talents overflowed.

As Kalden Gyatso, the incarnation of Avalokiteśvara, states:

The illustrious Padmākara of Oḍḍiyāna

Journeyed to the region of Tibet, Land of Snows.

Here, in general, he inaugurated countless sites sacred  
to the *ḍākinīs* And specifically sent forth hundreds of  
emanations simultaneously.

They opened the portals to hundreds of palaces of the  
*ḍākinīs*, Including the major sacred place of Nyagong  
Drakar in the east And the place known as Chuchik  
Shelgyi Gonpa,

Where they bound [mundane] gods and demons under  
oath.

In past times, during the earlier spread of Buddhism in Amdo, The fine names of Repkong's eight sacred sites of spiritual accomplishment Were as well known as the sun and moon.<sup>2</sup>

He again states:

Moreover, one by the name of Kawa Dorje Wang, A supreme mantrin from Katok Monastery in the east, Arrived in this sacred place of Shelgon and attained the rainbow light body.<sup>3</sup>

As these eulogies mention, among Repkong's eight sacred sites of spiritual accomplishment appears one by the name of Shelgon Dechen Chokyi Podrang, generally known as Chuchik Shelgyi Gonpa. Choying Tobden Dorje joined the spiritual community living there, and, after gradually receiving the monastic vows, along with the bodhisattva vows and the commitments of the secret mantra, he studied, pondered, and experientially cultivated the profound and extensive oral teachings (*bka' ma*), spiritual revelations (*gter ma*), and pure visionary teachings (*dag snang*) of the ancient Nyingma tradition. Following this, he traveled to Rabgya Gon Ganden Tashi Jungne Shedrub Dargyeling, a supreme center of Kadampa learning, where he attended upon many spiritual mentors, headed by Shingza Paṇḍita Lobzang Dargye Gyatso. For a period of five years he assumed the lifestyle of an ordinary monk without family ties as he studied and reflected upon the three collections of Buddhist scripture and experientially cultivated the three aspects of training that constitute the spiritual path. At the end of this period, he left to practice meditation in mountain hermitages without settling down in a fixed residence. On one occasion, as he was inspired by a prophetic declaration given by deities and his teachers, there arose within him a firm determination that he should set out to find an extraordinary teacher, the lord of his enlightened

family, in the manner of the bodhisattva Sadāprarudita who had sought Dharmodgata. His purpose above all was to request the profound instruction that would propel him in a single lifetime, in that very rebirth, to the level of Buddha Samantabhadra.

Choying Tobden Dorje traveled southward and arrived at such places as Dzogchen Monastery in Kham, where from Dzogchen Tulku IV Migyur Namkha Dorje and his nephew Pema Kundrol, among others, he received maturational empowerments and liberating guidance, based on the oceanic doctrines of sūtra and tantra.

Then, in particular, Choying Tobden Dorje traveled to the Buddhist encampment (*chos sgar*) of Dodrubchen Rinpoche Jigme Trinle Ozer, where he remained for a long time. It was Dodrubchen Rinpoche on whom he relied as his extraordinary teacher, the lord of his enlightened family, and whom he served with the three ways of pleasing the teacher. In that location, he was given the maturational empowerments, liberating guidance, and supporting transmissions for the profound doctrines of sūtra and mantra in general and the three classes of yoga according to the inner tantras in particular, so that he came to resemble a vase that has been filled to the brim. Consequently, his view of reality became spacious, and he actualized the pristine cognition that arises on the path of no-more-learning. Realizing that Choying Tobden Dorje would become illustrious among disciples of the future and had the good fortune to be associated with certain deities through his past actions, Dodrubchen Rinpoche, the supreme lord of his enlightened family, granted him the profound wrathful mantras of the ancient Nyingma tradition, including the crucial instructions of the four pulverizing rites (*thal 'byin rnam pa bzhi*) of Vajrakumāra, the cycles of Yamāntaka headed by the four wheels of Mañjuśrī (*'jam dpal 'khor lo rnam bzhi*), and the overturning of ominous signs by means of the imprecations of the *mātarah* (*ma mo rbod gtong*), along with many profound instructions through which *mantrins* may attain buddhahood on the basis of burnt offerings, combined with rites of

suppression, incineration, and bombardment. Through his meditation on these, the dichotomy of subject and object and all the thoughts that arose in his mind were infinitely transformed as the display of pristine cognition, meditational deities, and mantras, and he grew confident that he had unimpededly mastered the enlightened activities of wrathful sorcery.

At that point, the venerable teacher Dodrubchen Rinpoche declared, "This dark *mantrin* from the north is the designated inheritor of an ocean of wrathful mantras. I name him Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje, Unvanquished Conqueror of All Directions." Praising him by means of this decree, he added many predictions of future events, saying, "Now the time has come for you to liberate your own mind through realization and compassionately liberate the minds of others. Therefore, you should return to your homeland, nurture students, and tend to the well-being of the Buddhist teachings and sentient beings. Your service to beings will continuously flourish."

As advised, Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje then returned home to Repkong in Amdo, where, through masterly attainments, his resources and entourage increased. In his homeland, he founded Ko'ude Gon Dzogchen Namgyeling, which has since been sustained by his series of reincarnations. At the present day, its ritual practices and so forth appear to follow the tradition of Orgyan Mindroling.

Further, there is a treasure text that makes the following prediction:

In the east, a white conch shell will appear with the resounding voice of Brahmā.

In the south will appear a mound of white rice, like a round fortress.

In the west will appear one like a blossoming orange lotus.

In the north will appear one with force and might like a planted ritual spike.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, among the four main disciples of Dodrubchen Rinpoche with the name Dorje, who were likened to supporting beams (*gdung bzhi*), Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje is

renowned as the “supporting beam in the north,” the thunder of his reputation resounding throughout the heavens. With the activity of a learned scholar in teaching, debate, and composition, and with the enlightened activity of an accomplished master, training each according to need through pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrath, he accepted countless disciples, establishing them on the path of maturational [empowerment] and liberating [guidance].

In general, his prodigious acts sustained the Buddhist teachings impartially, and in particular, he ensured that the precious teachings of the *Innermost Spirituality of Longchenpa* belonging to the Ancient Translation School would continue without deterioration, as far as the limits of time and space. The line of disciples issuing from this master and from Palchen Namkha Jigme are known as the “nineteen hundred dark *mantrins* from Repkong who bear the ritual spike.” The continuity of their doctrine forms an incomparable rampart that manifestly continues to protect the teachings to the present day.

In 1841 (the iron ox year of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle), Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol sent a letter of request to Choying Tobden Dorje on the occasion of the lunar new year celebration. Choying Tobden Dorje sent a letter in reply, and during that year he extensively offered Zhabkar Rinpoche the reading transmission and guidance on *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, its root verses and commentaries. This information is recorded in the *Autobiography of Zhabkar*. At that time, Choying Tobden Dorje was in his fifty-seventh year, and Zhabkar Rinpoche had reached his sixty-first.

The foregoing account, which is merely illustrative, is transcribed from relevant portions of the *Doctrinal History of Amdo* (*mDo smad chos 'byung*), the *Successive Hierarchs of Rongpo Gonchen* (*Rong po dgon chen gyi gdan rabs*), the *Autobiography of Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol* (*Zhabs dkar tshogs drug rang grol gyi rang rnam*), and the *Doctrinal*

*History Derived from the Innermost Spirituality of Luminosity ('Od gsal snying thig gi chos 'byung)*. Furthermore, I traveled to Ko'ude Monastery in Repkong to compile whatever I could see or hear in their records and the like that could be investigated. Nevertheless, I was unable to discover, apart from a mere outline, how long Choying Tobden Dorje lived in the perception of his disciples in this worldly realm, or even the seed of a full, detailed account of how he sustained his enlightened activities in teaching, meditation practice, and altruistic acts.

However, the activities and biography of this supreme individual can be essentially illustrated by the letter that Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol sent to Choying Tobden Dorje in 1841 (the iron ox year of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle). Therefore, I include the letter here in its entirety; the *Autobiography of Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol* states:

Seeing the general eloquence of the composition of Kusho Dzogchen Rinpoche [Choying Tobden Dorje], in whom both learning and accomplishment are gathered, and in particular, his major treatise entitled *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, a steadfast, inviolable faith arose. On New Year's Day, I offered him this letter: May the deities of longevity— Lord Amitāyus, White Tārā, and the rest—

Who confer the supreme accomplishment of long life  
Bestow the spiritual accomplishment of immortal life!

Supreme reincarnation of venerable Orgyan, emanation  
of the mind Of the buddhas of the ten directions and  
three times,

In whom both learning and spiritual accomplishment are  
gathered, Please direct your enlightened intention  
toward me!

Lord protector, in times past you attained buddhahood,  
Yet in later generations for the disciples you accept,  
You demonstrate a life of spiritual liberation  
Solely in order to show them how buddhahood should be

won.

First you cast [the cares of] this life from your mind And  
attended upon the lotus feet of many learned and  
accomplished masters.  
You received pith instructions and guidance concerning  
sūtra and tantra And resolved outer misconceptions  
through study and reflection.

Next, in secluded mountain hermitages,  
You resolved inner misconceptions through meditation.  
The vault of your experience, realization, and talent  
overflowed.

Finally, in accordance with the prophecies of spiritual  
teachers and deities, And at the encouragement of  
your fortunate disciples,  
You increased the spiritual and temporal well-being  
Of the teaching and of living beings, day and night,  
By your empowerments, transmissions, guidance, and so  
on, And by teaching, debate, and composition.

Like a store of gems, this *Precious Treasury of Sūtra and  
Tantra* Holds the content of oceans of vast discourses



And of the profound tantras  
Which are the words of the infinite conquerors of the ten  
directions Headed by Munīndra, lord of the teaching.  
It contains the crucial points of all treatises written by  
many scholars, Commenting on the enlightened  
intention of the Conqueror's words.  
It contains the practical application and experiential  
guidance Of the lineages deriving from all supreme  
individuals  
Who maintain the teaching.  
It contains the teaching styles and exegetical  
transmission of the learned; The ground, path, and  
fruition of the sūtra and mantra vehicles; The trio of  
the view, meditation, and conduct; the three levels of  
vows; The five major and five minor subjects of  
classical learning; And the clear meanings of all the  
vehicles— It is a treasure of complete and error-free  
eloquence.

You have written this for the well-being of the teaching  
and of living beings in general, And especially to help  
fortunate individuals  
Of the present and of times yet to come.  
How very kind you are!  
Spiritual master imbued with great kindness,  
To you I bow in utmost humility.

I present masses of offerings, real and imagined, to you.  
I confess the negativity of faithlessness and wrong view.  
I rejoice in your supreme liberating career.  
I beseech you even now to turn the wheel of the sacred  
doctrine.  
I pray that you live for a hundred years.  
And I dedicate my store of virtuous acts  
To ensure your lotus feet remain firmly upon this earth.

Spiritual master, may your health be excellent,  
splendidly bright.  
May you live long in supreme well-being.  
Spiritual master, may the renown of your goodness  
spread, And especially, may your intended goals meet  
with success.  
May the wealth of your teachings' sponsors flourish,  
And may your doctrine long remain in this world.

When I meet you and all those around you, the event I  
wish for, May the auspicious circumstances arise for  
our repeated meeting.  
In the enjoyment of jubilant happiness,  
May we all encounter auspicious circumstances  
Conducive to the practice of the sacred doctrine!

I offered this letter accompanied by a physical  
representation of my intentions—pills made at the  
conclusion of my practice of longevity—and a gift of  
divine silk embroidered with the deities of longevity  
(*tshe sku can gyi lha rdzas*).

So Zhabkar Rinpoche wrote.

Although it is reported that the collection of treatises written  
by Choying Tobden Dorje includes many texts such as the *Final  
Act of Suppression, the Dark Mount Sumeru (mNan pa'i las  
mtha' ri rab nag po)*, which belongs to his cycle on the practical  
application of wrathful mantra, his magnum opus is the treatise  
entitled *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, elucidating  
all vehicles of spiritual development. This work comprises  
thirteen large volumes. He began its composition in 1836 (the  
fire monkey year of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle) and  
successfully completed it in 1838 (the earth dog year of the  
fourteenth sexagenary cycle) when he was in his fifty-fourth

year.

This treatise has five sections: (i) the root verses (*rtsa ba*); (ii) the outline (*bsdus don*); (iii) the concise commentary (*'bru 'grel*); (iv) the extensive commentary (*rgyas 'grel*); and (v) the illustrated version (*dpe ris*). The root verses are in metrical verse, while the other sections are written in prose or in the form of captions. Among the thirteen volumes, volume 1 (KA) contains the root verses and the outline. Volume 2 (KHA) contains the concise commentary. The next nine volumes from volume 3 (GA) to volume 11 (DA) contain the extensive commentary. Among them, the sūtra section comprises two volumes, the subjects of Indo-Tibetan classical learning comprise two volumes, the tantra section comprises two volumes, and the Dzogchen section comprises three volumes. The last two volumes, 12 (NA) and 13 (PA), both contain the drawings that illustrate the text.

Although woodblocks were prepared for this treatise, they were destroyed by fire in 1938 through the depredations of the warlord Ma [Bufang]. Later, Choktrul Tubten Nyima, who deeply values the classical texts of the Tibetan tradition, and others of like mind searched for, collected, and prepared this edition, which we are now able to publish. Respectfully written by one called Nor-de, an invalid and an ignorant fool from the land of Golok.

May excellent virtue prevail!

*This biography is included in the 2000 edition of The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra (DGD), printed by the Sichuan Nationalities' Publishing House. Its author, Nor-de, is a well-known writer and editor who has served as head of the National People's Congress Bureau of Golok Prefecture, Qinghai Province.*

## FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*

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DZOGCHEN CHOYING TOBDEN DORJE was one of the four spiritual heirs of Dodrubchen Jigme Trinle Ozer who are known as the “four supporting beams with the name Dorje.” He is identified [in that prophetic verse] as the “one from the north who resembled a meteorite spike thrust into the ground.” This great embodiment of splendid renown was born in the Ponru clan in 1785 (the wood snake year of the thirteenth sexagenary cycle) at Zhopong Lakha in the Repkong district of Amdo. His father was named Rinchen and his mother Ngodrub Dolma. From childhood he joined the spiritual community close to his birthplace, at Shelgon Dechen Chokyi Podrang. There, he learned without difficulty to write, read aloud, and spell the Tibetan alphabet (*yi ge'i phyi mo*), and so forth. Under Waka Tsering, secretary to Chogyel Ngagi Wangpo, the local potentate (*sa skyong chen mo*), he perfectly trained in the ordinary subjects of classical learning, exemplified by various scripts and history, and after attending upon Shingza Paṇḍita Lobzang Dargye Gyatso at Rabgya Ganden Tashi Jungne, he applied himself to training in the entire range of the ten fields of classical learning.

Then, after mentally rejecting the excellent phenomenal appearances of this worldly life, Choying Tobden Dorje met Drubwang Pema Rangdrol, who had journeyed to the Repkong area for the benefit of living beings. While Drubwang Pema Rangdrol devoted himself for a number of years to the essence of spiritual practice in retreat at Drakar Tsegjal in Tsanggo Dzong, Choying Tobden Dorje and Drubwang Kalden Rangdrol both acted as his attendants. The supreme Nyangkya Nangdze

Dorje said that this was in accord with the following prediction that had been made [in former times] by the great awareness holder Palden Tashi:

From the hermitage of Drakar Tsegyal,  
A mother bird and two offspring will take flight.

It was in those circumstances that Choying Tobden Dorje received from Drubwang Pema Rangdrol the entire corpus entitled *Further Secret: Wish -Fulfilling Gem of Hayagrīva and Vajravārāhī* (*Yang gsang rta phag yid bzhin nor bu*), a treasure doctrine that had been revealed by Kunzang Dechen Gyelpo. In particular, he perfectly studied, pondered, meditated on, and mastered profound guidance in the Great Perfection, from the initial mind training of the outer and inner preliminary practices to the main practice. In this way the enlightened intention of reality, [union] of awareness and emptiness, was born in Choying Tobden Dorje's mind. This period coincided with the lifetime of the third incarnation of Rigdzin Palden Tashi, king of secret mantra in Repkong; in his next lifetime that master would be reborn as the *mantrin* Dorje Namgyal, father of the learned scholar Gendun Chopel.

Choying Tobden Dorje then traveled to Dzogchen Orgyen Samten Choling in Kham, where, in the presence of many learned and accomplished masters, including Dzogchen Tulku Migyur Namkha Dorje and his nephew Pema Kundrol Namgyal, he studied and trained in the doctrinal traditions of sūtra and mantra in general and insatiably drank from the nectar stream of maturational [empowerment] and liberating [guidance] according to the transmitted precepts and treasures. In particular, at that time, from Dodrub Kunzang Zhenpen [Trinle Ozer] who was staying at the Rudam Shinje meditation cave, he received many tantras, transmissions, and pith instructions pertaining to the vehicle of indestructible reality, including the *Earlier and Later Innermost Spirituality* (*sNying thig gong 'og*). Later also, when Dodrubchen Rinpoche resided at Yarlung Pemako, Choying Tobden Dorje went there to see him

repeatedly and received [instruction on] the *Secret Nucleus from the Net of Magical Emanation* (*sGyu 'phrul gsang ba'i snying po*), the *Trilogy of Rest* (*Ngal gso skor gsum*), *Unsurpassed Pristine Cognition* (*Ye shes bla ma*), and so forth.

In 1828 (the earth male tiger year of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle) at Ko'ude Valley in Repkong, Choying Tobden Dorje founded the monastery of Dzogchen Namgyeling and nurtured an infinite number of students, including those known as the twenty-one teachers of the Great Perfection: Shardakpa Rabjampa, Bongtak Marik Munsel, Rigdzin Hūṃnak Mebar, and so forth. Further, Dodrub Rinpoche had once remarked that the auspicious conditions existed for the preceptor, master, and religious king to converge in the same household. In accordance with that prediction, Choying Tobden Dorje accepted the *ḍākinī* Kunga Chodron as his consort (*rig ma*). To them were born two sons: the omniscient Tenpe Nyima, an emanation of the great preceptor Śāntarakṣita; and Togden Tenpe Gyeltsen, an emanation of the religious king Trisong Detsen. Choying Tobden Dorje himself was unmistakably an emanation of Guru Rinpoche. Likewise, based on the timely ripening of the superb aspirations of three masters—Choying Tobden Dorje, Dola Jigme Kalzang Choying Dorje, and Khamla Namkha Gyatso—the large community of awareness holders known as Repkong Longchen Ngagmang developed.

*The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* [presented here in translation as *The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra*] is the magnum opus among Choying Tobden Dorje's compositions, which were said to have filled almost twenty volumes. These writings included an autobiography (*rang rnam*), a collection of his songs of spiritual realization (*mgur tshogs*), a cycle on the practical application of wrathful mantra (*drag sngags lag len gyi skor*), and a supporting cycle on the profound doctrine (*zab chos yang rgyab skor*). Nevertheless, some of those very important books vanished, with only their titles remaining, in the midst of turbulent times. Apart from *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, his remaining

extant works have been published by the Qinghai Ngagmang Research Institute in two volumes: the *Guide to the Great Perfection according to the Cycle of the Further Secret: Wish-Fulfilling Gem of Hayagrīva and Vajravārāhī* (*Yang gsang rta phag yid bzhin nor bu*) and *An Anthology of the Miscellaneous Writings of Dzogchen Choying Tobden Dorje* (*rDzogs chen chos dbyings stobs ldan rdo rje'i gsung thor phyogs bsgrigs*). These two were printed in 2006 and 2010, respectively, through the Beijing Nationalities' Publishing House.

*The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* contains the essence of the enlightened intention expressed in oceans of discourses and tantras delivered by the conquerors of the ten directions; the commentaries on the enlightened intention of the words of the buddhas written by many learned and accomplished masters of India and Tibet who elucidate the teaching; the practical application and experiential guidance deriving from the lineages of accomplished masters who maintain the teaching; the exegetical traditions of various learned teaching styles; the structure of the ground, path, and result of the sūtra and mantra vehicles; an analysis of view, meditation, and conduct; the gradation of vows and commitments in accordance with [the distinctions between the vows of] individual liberation, bodhisattva, and secret mantra; and an exegesis of the five major fields of classical learning. In this work, nothing is lacking, and it is unprecedented. Concerning its supreme eloquence, the sublime elderly master Dodrub Rinpoche made this timely prophetic declaration:

At first you cast the concerns of this mundane life from your mind and in seclusion applied yourself with intense diligence. Through the trio of study, reflection, and meditation on the sacred doctrine, you excellently refined your own mental continuum. Next, you brought the mental continuum of others to maturation and liberation through the trio of teaching, debate, and composition. Finally, through the trio of understanding, meditative experience, and realization, you have most

extensively enhanced the spiritual and temporal well-being of the doctrine and sentient beings, for your own sake and for the sake of others. Now, for the sake of fortunate persons of the present and the time yet to come, you must prepare an auspicious text with words that describe those experiences, one that establishes by means of the view the abiding nature of all phenomena of cyclic existence, nirvāna, and the spiritual path; that may be experientially cultivated through meditation; that achieves success through conduct; and that is imbued with blessings.

At the time this prediction came true, Tendzin Chogyel Tsering Dondrub Pelzangpo, the Qosot ruler of Kokonor (Qinghai), encouraged Choying Tobden Dorje to compose the work, promising at that time to facilitate its printing and aid the precious Buddhist teaching. Due to this and other auspicious coincidences, Choying Tobden Dorje began writing in 1836 (the fire monkey year of the fourteenth sexagenary cycle), and fortunately completed the task in 1838 (the earth dog year).

The root text is in verse; the synoptic outline explains the framework of the treatise; the concise commentary is written in prose; the extensive commentary is accompanied by supportive citations from the scriptures; and the illustrated version is extremely vivid. Thus, the whole work has these five main sections, which are contained in thirteen precious volumes, with three parts: an introduction, a main text, and a conclusion. These volumes in turn comprise twenty-five books, 2,179 subtopics, and eighty separate chapters, a number equal to the Buddha's minor marks of physical perfection.

Another of the spiritual heirs of Dodrubchen Rinpoche who were known as the "four supporting beams with the name Dorje" was Jigme Kelzang Choying Dorje, who is [described in the aforementioned prophecy] as the "white conch shell of the east who appeared with a resounding Brahmā-like voice." His reincarnation Dzong-ngon Pema Tukchok Dorje, who lived in the Repkong area, later praised *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra*



*and Tantra* with these words:

Its root text in verse facilitates memorization.  
Through its authentic citations from the canon confidence  
undoubtedly arises.  
The clarity of its extensive commentary facilitates  
understanding of the intended meaning.  
Its framework distinguishes main topics and subtopics.

This eloquent composition imbued with these four special  
qualities  
Gathers in their entirety the essential points of the  
commentaries  
On the enlightened intention of oceanic discourses and  
tantras in general.  
And in particular, it articulates the profundity  
Of the six million tantras of the path of Atiyoga, highest of  
the vehicles.  
The content of this precious treasury, with its many  
profundities,  
An unprecedented treatise sealed with the seven  
possessions of a universal monarch,  
Is resplendent, for it lacks nothing; it is error-free and  
unadulterated.

With these words he clearly elucidated the uncommon, special  
qualities of this treatise.

Subsequently [following his completion of this treatise], the  
Qosot ruler of Qinghai, Tsering Dondrub; Choying Tobden  
Dorje's mother, Ngodrub Dolma; his son, the omniscient Tenpe  
Nyima; his disciples Kunpang Gendun Palden, Atsok Lektso  
Gyatso, Lama Marik Munsel, and Lama Dorje Sherab; and,  
likewise, his faithful patrons with their entourage collected the  
funds necessary to sponsor the original carving of the  
woodblocks of the treatise. Over time these individuals fostered  
the continuity of its reading transmission, teaching, and study.  
Apart from that, the carving of the woodblocks for the sections

of the extensive commentary (entitled *A Beauteous Ornament of the Aeon of Mighty Brahmā*) which concern *The Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* and the cycle of the Great Perfection was undertaken much later; for the words of aspiration contained in the colophon of the first imprint clearly indicate that the latter carving was completed in 1903 (the water hare year of the fifteenth sexagenary cycle). The complete set of woodblocks for the thirteen volumes of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* was installed at the seat of Dzogchen Namgyeling. Then, thirty-five years later, in March 1938, through the depredations of the Qinghai warlord [Ma Bufang], those original woodblocks were consumed by the outer element, fire. Further, during the great calamity of the Cultural Revolution, even the transmission of guidance according to this treatise was interrupted in the Repkong area. These are extremely tragic matters.

In the 1980s, in accordance with the hopes of a few scholars, the Institute of Ancient Texts and the Nationalities Research Center, under the Committee of the Nationality Affairs of Sichuan Province, both began the process of searching out, collecting, and editing *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*. The Committee of the Nationality Affairs of China then initiated a nationwide project to restore rare ethnic texts, and they provided funding. Thus, as a result of sixteen years of painstaking labor, the original texts have been found, collected, and minutely collated and proofread. Consequently, in the year 2000, we were able to publish and distribute through the Sichuan Nationalities' Publishing House a modern edition of this treatise. That said, an original copy of the latter volume of the illustrated version, entitled *Garland of the Sun*, still eludes our search.

The great *mantrin* Tsedrub Tharchin, a native of Repkong living in the United States, regarded this unique jewel of sovereign power that is sufficient to gather and elucidate all the sūtras, tantras, and treatises as the beautifying adornment of the

Repkong Ngagmang community. He single-mindedly applied himself to finding and restoring the continuity of its reading transmission and guidance. He kept two projects in mind: the translation of the entire *Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* into English so it could spread throughout the world, and the founding of a college based on *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* within the Repkong Ngagmang community. He felt that this would ensure that the resplendent wealth of his ancestors' heritage would be passed down to future generations. With this pure, insightful intention firmly in mind, his enlightened activity has been significant.

Now, the first of Repkong Lama Tharchin Rinpoche's aspirations has come true: *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* has been translated into English and published under the title *The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra*. Its distribution will spread the precious teachings of the Buddha throughout this wide world. I consider this to be a wholly positive, meaningful event that will prove to be healing and beneficial in every way. To all who participated in this project, headed by Lama Tharchin Rinpoche—translators, editors, benefactors, and others—I offer my humble esteem again and again in great measure, and I send my aspirations for the auspicious success of all your projects.

Offered respectfully by Hūmchen  
March 2014

*Chenak Hūmchen is a yogin with a long family connection to the Repkong Ngagmang community, where he has been actively engaged in publishing their texts and preserving their traditions.*

## IN MEMORIAM

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THE LATE LAMA Tharchin Rinpoche undertook a thorough proofreading of the edition of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* that had previously been published by the Sichuan Nationalities' Publishing House, and he provided a detailed list of errata. Furthermore, he intended to establish both a college and a retreat center based on *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* at the seat of its author, Choying Tobden Dorje. To facilitate studies and experiential cultivation in meditation at those institutions, he oversaw the making of a new electronic version of this text from which a new edition was to be printed. Likewise, in order that *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* might spread throughout the world, he planned for this work to be translated into English and also into Chinese. Indeed, many years ago, he asked the great translator and scholar Lodro Gyatso to translate the synoptic outline and other sections of this work into Chinese. Lama Tharchin Rinpoche's contribution concerning *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* is of the highest order.

In the midst of his activity in 2013, our merit was insufficient to restrain him, and he departed for another realm. Nevertheless, his wife Pema Dechen, his disciple Eric Colombel, and others are now having the entirety of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* printed and distributed in accordance with his wishes. I rejoice in this and offer my heartfelt thanks.

Tubten Nyima  
[Zenkar Rinpoche]  
July 8, 2014

*Zenkar Rinpoche Tubten Nyima is a lineage holder of the Nyingma and Sakya traditions. A preeminent lexicographer, library archivist, writer, editor, and publisher, he has been instrumental in preserving and disseminating the works of Tibetan literature in China and throughout the world. Since 1992 he has held research fellowships at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and at Columbia University. Presently, Zenkar Rinpoche is director of the Paltseg Tibetan Rare Texts Research Center, a standing member of the China Buddhist Association, and board member of the China Association for Preservation and Development of Tibetan Culture.*

## TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

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CHOYING TOBDEN DORJE was born in 1785 at Zho'ong in the Sermojong area of Repkong, within the Ponru clan. During his early, formative years, he joined the nearby spiritual community at Shelgon Dechen Chokyi Podrang (also known as Chuchik Shelgyi Gonpa), which is one of the eight renowned hermitages for spiritual practice in Repkong (*reb kong gi grub pa thob pa'i gnas brgyad*).<sup>5</sup> After gradually receiving monastic vows, along with the bodhisattva vows and the commitments of secret mantra, he studied, pondered, and experientially cultivated the profound and extensive oral teachings (*bka' ma*), spiritual revelations (*gter ma*), and pure visionary teachings (*dag snang*) of the ancient Nyingma tradition.

Then, traveling south into Golok, he studied for some five years as a simple monk at Rabgya Gonpa, on the banks of the Yellow River.<sup>6</sup> In that revered center of Kadampa learning, he attended upon many spiritual masters, headed by Shingza Paṇḍita Lobzang Dargye Gyatso, while studying and reflecting upon the canonical scriptures and cultivating the three trainings (*bslab pa gsum*).<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, he frequented mountain hermitages in unknown locations, where he practiced meditation. On one such occasion, as he was inspired by a prophetic declaration given by deities and his teachers, there arose within him a firm determination to set out to find an extraordinary teacher, in the manner of the proverbial bodhisattva Sadāprarudita who had sought Dharmodgata. His purpose above all was to receive profound instruction associated with the level of the primordial buddha Samantabhadra.

Journeying further south from Golok, he eventually arrived at

Dzogchen Monastery in Dzachuka, where he received maturational empowerments and liberating guidance for the extensive sūtras and tantras from Dzogchen IV Migyur Namkha Dorje and his nephew Pema Kundrol, among others.<sup>8</sup> From there, he proceeded to the teaching encampment (*chos sgar*) of Dodrubchen Rinpoche Jigme Trinle Ozer at Yarlung Pemako in Sertar,<sup>9</sup> where he remained for some years. It was Dodrubchen Rinpoche whom he revered and served as his extraordinary root teacher. In that location, he was given the maturational empowerments, liberating guidance, and supporting transmissions for the profound doctrines of the sūtras and mantras in general, and the inner tantras of the Nyingma tradition in particular, so that he came to resemble a vase that has been filled to the brim. Consequently, his view of reality expanded and he actualized the pristine cognition associated with the path of no-more-learning. Realizing that he would become illustrious among disciples of the future and that he had good fortune, Dodrubchen Rinpoche granted him the profound wrathful mantras of the ancient Nyingma tradition, including the crucial points of the four pulverizing rites (*thal 'byin rnam pa bzhi*) of Vajrakumāra, the cycles of Yamāntaka headed by the four wheels of Mañjuśrī (*'jam dpal 'khor lo rnam bzhi*), and the imprecations of the *mātaraḥ*, along with many profound instructions through which *mantrins* may attain buddhahood on the basis of burnt offerings, combined with rites of suppression, incineration, and bombardment. Consequently, all dualistic thoughts that arose in his mind were infinitely transformed as the display of pristine cognition, meditational deities, and mantra, and he grew confident that he had unimpededly mastered the enlightened activities of wrath.

At that point, Dodrubchen Rinpoche conferred upon him the name Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje, “Unvanquished Conqueror of All Directions, Holding the Descent of the Oceanic Wrathful Mantras,” and made prophetic declarations, adding, “Now the time has come for you to liberate your own mind through realization and compassionately liberate the

minds of others. Therefore, you should return to your native Repkong, nurture students, and care for the well-being of the Buddhist teachings and sentient beings.”

Choying Tobden Dorje then returned home to Repkong in Amdo, where, in recognition of his masterly attainments, his resources and entourage increased. About eight kilometers southwest of Rongpo Gyakhar, near modern Chuku township, he established the monastery of Ko’ude Gon Dzogchen Namgyeling (Ch. Gude Si).<sup>10</sup> This institution had been affiliated with the Kadam lineage since the fourteenth century, but he was instrumental in transforming it into a center of learning for the traditions of Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa and Orgyan Mindroling. In this way, he ensured that the community of *mantrins* there, headed by his successive emanations, would maintain their allegiance to the Nyingma lineage.

Among the four main disciples of Dodrubchen Rinpoche with the name Dorje, who were likened to supporting beams (*gdung bzhi*), transmitting his teachings in the four cardinal directions, Choying Tobden Dorje is renowned as the “supporting beam in the north.” By means of skilled teaching, debate, and composition, and the four rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrath, training each according to need, he took innumerable students into his following and established them on the path of maturational empowerment and liberating guidance. At Ko’ude, he impartially promoted all the Buddhist teachings in general and the *Innermost Spirituality of Longchenpa* in particular, ensuring that these traditions would not decline. His followers became renowned as the “nineteen hundred lineage bearers of the ritual spike,” and they have exerted great influence throughout Repkong. Consequently, following his death in 1848, his transmission has manifestly survived until the present day. Prior to its destruction in 1958, Ko’ude had eight incarnate lamas presiding over a community of 160 *mantrins*. Rebuilding has been taking place since the 1980s.<sup>11</sup>



## THE PRECIOUS TREASURY OF SŪTRA AND TANTRA

Although there are other extant works by Choying Tobden Dorje concerning the application of wrathful mantras, his magnum opus is undoubtedly *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* (*mDo rgyud mdzod*)—presented in translation here as *The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra*—which elucidates the meaning of all the classical sciences and the Buddhist vehicles of spiritual development. He began writing and compiling this treatise in 1836 (fire monkey year) and completed it in 1838 (earth dog year) at the age of fifty-four. The *Autobiography of Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rang-drol* mentions that in 1841, at a festival commemorating the new year of the iron ox, Zhabkar (1781–1851) offered him a letter, along with a gift of long-life pills and sacramental substances. Following an exchange of correspondence, that same year, Choying Tobden Dorje, then aged fifty-seven, was invited to Gartse Monastery,<sup>12</sup> where he extensively bestowed the transmission and guidance of the root verses and commentary of his *Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* upon Zhabkar and others.

*The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* is extant in thirteen large traditional volumes, although the woodblocks from which it was printed were destroyed by fire in 1938. The work is in six sections: (i) the contents entitled *The Golden Key* (*dKar chag gser gyi lde mig*); (ii) the actual root verses (*rtsa ba*) entitled *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*; (iii) the synoptic outline entitled *A Creeping Plant That Brings Forth Wishes* (*bsDus don dpag bsam 'khri shing*); (iv) the concise commentary entitled *A Noble Vase of Nectar* (*'Bru 'grel gter chen bum bzang*); (v) the extensive commentary entitled *A Beauteous Ornament of the Aeon of Mighty Brahmā* (*rGyas 'grel tshangs chen bskal pa'i mdzes rgyan*); and (vi) the illustrated version entitled *Garland of the Moon* (*dPe ris zla ba'i phreng ba*).<sup>13</sup> The golden key and the root verses are in

metrical verse, while the other sections are written in prose or in the form of captions. The root verses themselves number 984, mainly in nine-syllable lines, with their introductory and concluding verses in thirteen-syllable lines. The synoptic outline sets the structure of the text within 100 main topics and 2,179 subtopics. The extensive commentary is drawn principally from the writings of celebrated Nyingma masters, such as Ngari Pañchen and Longchen Rabjam, while the first four sections are Choying Tobden Dorje's particular arrangements and synopses of the same works.

Among the thirteen volumes, volume 1 (KA) contains the golden key, the root verses and the outline. Volume 2 (KHA) contains the concise commentary. The next nine volumes from 3 (GA) to 11 (DA) contain the extensive commentary. Among them, the sūtra section comprises two volumes; the subjects of Indo-Tibetan classical learning (*shes bya*) comprise two volumes; the tantra section comprises two volumes; and the Dzogchen section comprises three volumes. The last two volumes, 12 (NA) and 13 (PA), both contain the drawings that illustrate the text.

The content of each of the six sections is also subdivided according to twenty-five books (*skabs nyi shu lnga*). Of these, the first thirteen fall within the scope of the sūtras, covering topics such as the role of the spiritual teacher; the requisite changes of attitude from mundane to spiritual life; the taking of refuge; the ground, path, and result established through practice of the sūtras; and related themes such as cosmology, Indo-Tibetan classical learning, and the analysis of the Buddhist vehicles. The remaining twelve books concern the tantras—their general framework along with exegeses of the essential tantra texts of Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga.

During the 1990s, Zenkar Rinpoche managed to retrieve the extant printed version from Repkong, which was then published in modern book form by the Sichuan Nationalities' Publishing House in 2000. Subsequently, scans of the original text were obtained and, with the support of the Tsadra Foundation, the late Tharchin Rinpoche in the United States

prepared a digital version of the entire work, which was then edited by Zenkar Rinpoche. It is a long-term objective of the Tsadra Foundation to publish this entire work in traditional *dpe cha* format and in modern book form, alongside its English translation.

The 2000 edition comprises five volumes. Among them, the golden key, the root verses, the outline, and the concise commentary are all contained in volume 1, while the extensive commentary is found in volumes 2 to 4 and the illustrations in volume 5. Within the extensive commentary itself, the sūtra section, the subjects of Indo-Tibetan classical learning, and the section on Buddhist phenomenology are all found in volume 2, while the tantra section including Mahāyoga and Anuyoga is found in volume 3, and Atiyoga in volume 4.

The ordering of these sections is significant in that the author evidently conceived of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* as an unfolding package, commencing with his own pithy golden key and root verses, continuing through the outline and concise commentary, and culminating in the elaborate extensive commentary and the illustrations. For the sake of the modern reader who may find this structure overly repetitive, the present translation series gives precedence to the extensive commentary, with the root verses, outline, and concise commentary placed after it.

The present volume contains an English translation of Books 15 to 17 of the extensive commentary, which concern the essential tantras of Mahāyoga.<sup>14</sup> The reader should note that although the root verses are repeated throughout the extensive commentary as well, their wording most closely matches that of the concise commentary and sometimes varies markedly from that of the extensive commentary. The outline, which presents in detail the framework of the text, was adapted by the author chiefly from Longchen Rabjam's *Synoptic Outline of the Secret Nucleus Entitled Dispelling All Darkness of Fundamental Ignorance*.

## MAHĀYOGA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE THREE INNER CLASSES OF TANTRA

The term “tantra” (*rgyud*) suggests a “thread,” “continuity,” or “continuum,” primarily with reference to the threefold continuum of the ground (*gzhi’i rgyud*), the path (*lam gyi rgyud*), and the result (*’bras bu’i rgyud*), which respectively demarcate the unrealized abiding nature of reality (*gnas lugs*), the means by which it is realized (*thabs*), and the fruitional buddha body (*sku*) and pristine cognition (*ye shes*) resulting from that realization. It is this structure of ground, path, and result around which the scriptures of tantra are developed.

Second, *tantra* implies the requisite inclusion of the ten elements or aspects (*daśatattva, de nyid bcu*) characteristic of tantra scripture. As outlined in the writings of Lochen Dharmaśrī, Mipham Namgyel Gyatso, and indeed Choying Tobden Dorje, these comprise view, conduct, maṇḍala, empowerment, commitment, enlightened activity, spiritual attainment, meditative stability, offering, and mantra recitation combined with gestures of sealing.

Third, *tantra* denotes the four classes of scripture that assume the threefold structure of ground, path, and result. These comprise the literary works of Action Tantra (*kriyātantra, bya ba’i rgyud*), Conduct Tantra (*caryātantra, spyod pa’i rgyud*), Union Tantra (*yogatantra, rnal ’byor gyi rgyud*), and Unsurpassed Union Tantra (*yoganiruttaratantra, bla med rgyud*). According to the Nyingma school, the last of these subdivisions further comprises the tantras of Great Union (*mahāyoga, rnal ’byor chen po*), Subsequent Union (*anuyoga, rjes su rnal ’byor*), and Highest Union (*atiyoga, shin tu rnal ’byor*)—the last of which is also known as the Great Perfection (*rdzogs pa chen po*).<sup>15</sup> The voluminous tantra texts contained in the various editions of the Kangyur and the Ancient Tantra Collection invariably follow this doxography.

When the three classes of the inner tantras are contrasted,

Mahāyoga is said to emphasize the ground or basis of the realization of buddhahood—the abiding nature of reality. Anuyoga emphasizes the path or skillful means that bring about this realization, and Atiyoga emphasizes the result itself, the full-fledged presence of buddha body (*sku*) and pristine cognition (*ye shes*). Alternatively, from the standpoint of meditative stability (*samādhi*), Mahāyoga focuses on the generation stage of meditation (*utpattikrama*, *bskyed rim*), Anuyoga on the perfection stage (*sampannakrama*, *rdzogs rim*), and Atiyoga on the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*).<sup>16</sup> Longchen Rabjam in his *Great Chariot* offers a further elaboration:

The father tantras of Mahāyoga are the natural expression of the skillful means of appearance, intended on behalf of those requiring training who are mostly hostile and possessed by many ideas; the mother tantras of Anuyoga are the discriminative awareness of the perfection stage which is the reality of emptiness, intended for the benefit of those who are mostly desirous and delight in the tranquillity of the mind; and the nondual tantras of Atiyoga are revealed as the natural expression of their nonduality, intended for the benefit of those who are mostly deluded but who are energetic.<sup>17</sup>

Among them the present volume concerns Mahāyoga, which Lochen Dharmasrī has summarized as follows.<sup>18</sup> The essence of Mahāyoga is that liberation is obtained through union with the indivisible superior truth (*lhag pa'i gnyis med bden pa*) by relying emphatically on the generation stage of meditation in which skillful means is employed (*thabs kyi bskyed rim*). The Sanskrit term *mahāyoga* is defined as the “great union” of the mind with nondual truth. The classification includes the following topics of empowerment (*dbang bskur*) and engagement (*'jug pa*), view (*lta ba*), discipline (*tshul khriims*), meditation (*sgom*), conduct (*spyod pa*), and result (*'bras bu*).

Once the empowerments of beneficence, ability, and

profundity have been conferred, the practice of Mahāyoga is engaged through three successive phases of meditative stability, namely, great emptiness (*stong pa chen po*), which purifies death; great compassion (*snying rje chen po*), which purifies the intermediate state after death; and the seals and attainment of the maṇḍala clusters (*phyag rgya dang tshom bu tshogs sgrub*), which purify the three phases of life by establishing the practitioner's true nature to be the assembly of deities. The view maintained by Mahāyoga practitioners holds ultimate truth (*don dam bden pa*) to be spontaneous awareness without conceptual elaboration, relative truth (*kun rdzob bden pa*) to comprise the ideas or mental energy of that awareness manifesting as buddha body and pristine cognition, and the superior indivisible truth to be the unity of these two—emptiness and pure appearance. Discipline in the context of Mahāyoga refers to specific commitments that are upheld in relation to meditative practice, renunciation, and attainment. Meditation comprises both nonsymbolic meditative stability in the nature of ultimate reality and the symbolic meditations of the generation and perfection stages. In the generation stage, the meditational deities are gradually visualized through the aforementioned meditative stabilities, in which deity and thought processes are indivisible. In the perfection stage, the visualization then emphasizes the control of the energy channels, winds, and vital essences, either within the meditator's own subtle body (*rang lus steng sgo*) or else when in union with a yogic partner (*gzhan lus 'og sgo*). The conduct observed by practitioners of Mahāyoga implies that the defilements and afflictive mental states of cyclic existence, as well as the rites of liberation (*sgrol*) and union (*sbyor*), can be engaged without attachment because they are retained as skillful means. Lastly, the result attained by practitioners of Mahāyoga is the actualization of the five buddha bodies in this very lifetime or in the intermediate state after death.

The texts representing the genre of Mahāyoga are voluminous—the Derge woodblock edition of the Ancient Tantra Collection contains almost two hundred works. Most of

these are allocated to the secondary practice section (*sgrub sde*), while eighteen texts and their branches are assigned special status within the primary tantra section (*rgyud sde*).<sup>19</sup> The most prestigious of the latter is the *Net of Magical Emanation* (*māyājāla*, *sgyu 'phrul drva ba*), a cycle containing nineteen distinct texts that are all extant in the various recensions of the Ancient Tantra Collection.<sup>20</sup> It includes three versions of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* (*Guhyagarbha Tantra*) in twenty-two, forty-six, and eighty-two chapters respectively. The shortest and longest of these are also found in the *rNying rgyud* section of the Kangyur. Among them, the shortest version—in twenty-two chapters—is translated in the present volume. The profusion of extant Indic and Tibetan commentaries on this influential tantra text is testament to the importance of its exegetical transmission within the Nyingma school. Another text within the cycle—the *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*—is also presented here as an addendum. It may be justifiably asserted that among all the tantras contained in the Ancient Tantra Collection, for the Nyingmapa, these two essential texts of Mahāyoga uniquely maintain extensive commentarial lineages, whereas many of the others retain only their empowerments and transmissions.<sup>21</sup>

## THE *TANTRA OF THE SECRET NUCLEUS*

The cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation* and especially the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* within it crystallize the dynamic of the tantras, whereby the psychophysical aggregates, the material elements, the modes of consciousness and their sense objects, and so forth are all naturally identified in their pristine state with the assemblage of the forty-two peaceful deities and transformed as such through the agency of the fifty-eight wrathful deities. This maṇḍala of the *Secret Nucleus* is also

well known from later *gter ma* compilations, such as Karma Lingpa's *Peaceful and Wrathful Deities: Natural Liberation of Enlightened Intention*, although there are important iconographical distinctions—the most obvious being that the peaceful buddhas of the *Secret Nucleus* have three faces and six arms, whereas those of Karma Lingpa's tradition have but a single face and two arms.<sup>22</sup> Elsewhere I have made a comparative analysis of the content of the three extant versions of the *Secret Nucleus* and shown how the maṇḍala of the fifty-eight wrathful deities reaches its fullest expression in the longest version, while all three versions differ far less in their presentation of the maṇḍala of peaceful deities.<sup>23</sup> The fact that the short version was most widely disseminated in Tibet may corroborate the assertion made by Longchen Rabjam in *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions* that the fully elaborate wrathful rites were carefully guarded and not considered advantageous for the majority of practitioners.<sup>24</sup>

## THE TIBETAN TRANSLATIONS OF THE *SECRET NUCLEUS*

Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa, in his *Catalog of the Ancient Tantra Collection*,<sup>25</sup> informs us that the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* was definitively translated into Tibetan from Sanskrit by Vimalamitra, Nyak Jñānakumāra, and Ma Rinchen Chok. Previously, it had been translated by Buddhaguhya and Vairocana, and in an intervening period by Padmasambhava and Nyak Jñānakumāra. In *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*, Longchen Rabjam notes that the definitive version contains certain additional passages (*'phyong*) that are conspicuous by their absence in the earlier translations. He attributes these discrepancies to variations in the original Sanskrit manuscripts, while acknowledging that some polemicists have referred to them as the interpolations inserted into the tantra by Ma Rinchen Chok from other works within



the cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation*.<sup>26</sup> Much later, the Sanskrit manuscript was retranslated by Tarlo Nyima Gyeltsen and Go Lotsāwa Zhonupel in the fifteenth century. Their version is styled the “creative translation” (*rtsal ’gyur*) because they had no supervising paṇḍita and it reputedly had an addendum comprising two further chapters.

## THE COMMENTARIAL TRADITION OF THE *SECRET NUCLEUS*

The extensive Indic commentaries on the *Secret Nucleus* and related tantras within the cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation*, which were composed by Indrabhūti, Kukkurāja, Līlāvajra, Buddhaguhya, Padmasambhava, Sūryaprabhasiṃha, and Vimalamitra, are extant in Tibetan translation; the indigenous Tibetan commentarial literature of the Zur and Kham traditions is also abundant. All these texts are contained in the *Extensive Oral Teachings of the Ancient School* (*sNga’ bsgyur rnying ma’i bka’ ma rgyas pa*)—an anthology published in 120 volumes—while most of the Indic commentaries are also found in the Tengyur (*dpe bsdur ma*, vols. 43–44).<sup>27</sup>

Where, one might ask, does the *Secret Nucleus* find itself within the classification of the inner tantras? This is an important matter for discussion within the Nyingma commentarial tradition, because the text has been interpreted from divergent Mahāyoga and Atiyoga perspectives.<sup>28</sup> With this in mind, Mipham Namgyel Gyatso, in his *Overview Entitled Nucleus of Inner Radiance*,<sup>29</sup> remarks that the extensive and common exegetical method of Mahāyoga is associated with the Zur commentarial tradition, culminating in the writings of Lochen Dharmaśrī, whereas the profound and uncommon expository method of Atiyoga follows the tradition of Rongzom Paṇḍita Chokyi Zangpo and Longchen Rabjam. The various Indic and Tibetan commentaries are therefore generally recognized to reflect one or another of these approaches.

However, Mipham concludes that these two exegetical traditions do not uphold contradictory dogmas but rather indicate a subtle difference of emphasis. In the words of Lochen Dharmasrī:

Mahāyoga realizes all things to be the miracle of mind's true nature in which appearance and emptiness are indivisible . . . while Atiyoga realizes all things to be manifest naturally as mind's true nature, the naturally present pristine cognition, which is present atemporally, without creation or cessation.<sup>30</sup>

There is no doubt that the basic techniques of Mahāyoga, stressing the nature of the ground and the gradual visualizations of the generation stage, are present in the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, but the work equally demonstrates the integration of both the generation and perfection stages of meditation and the self-manifesting nature of mind and pristine cognition, which are associated with Atiyoga. Indeed, the text comprises the generation and perfection stages, as well as the seeds of Great Perfection, suggesting that there is no fundamental contradiction between these exegetical approaches.<sup>31</sup> It can therefore be said that the root tantra lends itself to both interpretations—the first tending toward reductionism and classification with emphasis on the structural basis of Mahāyoga, the second elaborating the essential, often covert meanings.

Again, one might ask where Choying Tobden Dorje—the author of our present text—stands in relation to these two commentarial approaches. Here he appears to adopt an integrated approach. For the extensive interlinear commentary closely follows the interpretation of Longchen Rabjam's *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*—almost verbatim—while the introductory remarks concerning the framing narrative, the meaning of the term *tantra*, and the ten aspects of tantra are drawn from both Longchen Rabjam's *Overview of the Secret Nucleus Entitled Dispelling Mental Darkness* and

Lochen Dharmasrī's *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets*. His classification of the twenty-two chapters of the *Secret Nucleus*, on the other hand, accords more with the view of Longchen Rabjam, in contrast to that found in Lochen Dharmasrī's *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention of the Lord of Secrets*.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT

As mentioned above, Choying Tobden Dorje's extensive commentary on the *Secret Nucleus* occupies almost three complete books of *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*.

Specifically, Book 15, entitled *The Inception*, begins with a discussion of the framing narrative and a general analysis of the *Secret Nucleus* based on its title and content, including the three continua of ground, path, and result and the ten aspects of tantra. It then proceeds to the interlinear commentary of the first three chapters of the text, which respectively concern (i) the introductory narrative; (ii) the initiation of the discourse; and (iii) the establishment of all phenomena. Longchen Rabjam refers to these three chapters as the continuum of the ground, which is to say, the natural spontaneous maṇḍala of the ground from which arises the buddhas' compassionate spirituality.<sup>32</sup> Lochen Dharmasrī refers to them as the continuum of the ground pertaining to the maṇḍala of peaceful deities.

Book 16, Part 1, entitled *The Ground of the Peaceful Deities*, includes the interlinear commentary of the next seven chapters of the text (chs. 4-10), which respectively concern (i) the cyclical array of the garland of letters; (ii) the meditative stabilities that attain the *Net of Magical Emanation*; (iii) the diffusion of the maṇḍala; (iv) the absorption of the maṇḍala and the secret mantras; (v) the consecration of all limbs as the maṇḍala and the subsequent diffusion of the sealing hand gestures; (vi) the secret commitment of the indestructible

array; and (vii) the conferral of the empowerments. Longchen Rabjam refers to these seven chapters as the continuum of the ground pertaining to the maṇḍala of peaceful deities, while for Lochen Dharmaśrī they comprise the continuum of the path pertaining to the maṇḍala of peaceful deities.

Book 16, Part 2, is entitled *The Path and Result of the Peaceful Deities*. It includes the interlinear commentary on the next four chapters of the text (chs. 11-14), which respectively concern (i) the maṇḍala of the communion; (ii) the attainment of the communion; (iii) the nucleus of most secret pith instructions; and (iv) the eulogy which pleases. Longchen Rabjam refers to the first three of these chapters as the continuum of the path pertaining to the maṇḍala of peaceful deities and the last as the continuum of the result pertaining to the maṇḍala of peaceful deities. Lochen Dharmaśrī also includes the first three of these along with the earlier [chapters 4 to 10](#) within the continuum of the path, and he designates the last as the continuum of the result.

Book 17, Part 1, entitled *The Wrathful Deities and the Colophon*, includes the interlinear commentary on the last eight chapters of the text (chs. 15-22), along with the colophon. These respectively concern (i) the cloud-like diffusion of the natural maṇḍala of wrathful deities; (ii) the diffusion of the maṇḍala of buddha speech of the great assembly of wrathful deities; (iii) the revelation of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities; (iv) the revelation of genuine offerings and generosity; (v) the commitments; (vi) the consecration of spontaneous enlightened activity; (vii) the eulogies to the wrathful deities; and (viii) that which is pleasing and retained. Longchen Rabjam refers to the first of these chapters as the continuum of the ground pertaining to the maṇḍala of wrathful deities, the second to sixth as the corresponding continuum of the path, the seventh as the corresponding continuum of the result, and the eighth as the overall continuum of the result, that is to say, the methods of teaching and entrusting this entire tantra text for the benefit of posterity. Lochen Dharmaśrī concurs with this classification.

Whichever of these two structures is adopted, it is clear that the relationship between the three continua and the various topics of the peaceful and wrathful maṇḍalas subsumed by them reveals a dynamic momentum, extending from the latent potential for buddhahood inherent in all beings to the proclamation of fully manifest buddhahood that is the conclusive result.

Book 17, Part 2, presents Choying Tobden Dorje's rewriting of Candragomin's inspirational *Extensive Commentary on the Sublime Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*. Among its fourteen chapters, the central eulogies contained in the core [chapters 4](#) to [10](#) correlate diverse aspects of Mañjuśrī to the five pristine cognitions.

## THE SOURCE OF THE EXTENSIVE COMMENTARY

Longchen Rabjam (1308–1363), a native of Nganlam in Dranang, is renowned without doubt as the greatest philosopher within the Nyingmapa tradition. In his youth, he studied the oral teachings of the Ancient Translation School and the Ancient Tantra Collection under four teachers, including Den Phakpa, Zhonu Dondub, and Nyotingmawa Sangye Drakpa.<sup>33</sup> Among his many compositions that firmly established the terminology of the Great Perfection system,<sup>34</sup> there is the *Trilogy Dispelling Darkness (Mun sel skor gsum)*. This corpus comprises the synoptic outline entitled *Dispelling All Darkness of Fundamental Ignorance*, which in 14 folios provides an analysis of the chapter divisions of the *Secret Nucleus*; the *Overview Entitled Dispelling Mental Darkness*, which in 89 folios analyzes the scope and structure of the Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings; and the interlinear commentary *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*, which in 313 folios provides general overviews of each section of the *Guhyagarbha*, interspersed with a detailed interlinear

commentary of its lemmata, or “vajra verses” (*vajrapada*, *rdo rje'i tshig*). The last of these has been translated into English twice.<sup>35</sup>

Although the root verses of the present work and their concise commentary were composed by Choying Tobden Dorje, the extensive commentary—drawing upon the inspiration of *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*—more closely follows the wording of the latter’s interlinear sections (*gzhung don*), with few variations. That said, some of the original citations have been dropped, and the author has also dispensed with most of the general overviews (*spyi don*), which introduce the individual sections of interlinear commentary.

## CITATIONS

The citations that have been retained are all found in *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*. Most of these ultimately derive from other tantras within the cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation* and from renowned classical treatises of Indian origin. The only Tibetan authors cited in this work are Rongzom Paṇḍita and Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, for whose writings Longchen Rabjam shows respect. I have endeavored, with limited success, to identify the citations by chapter and verse, utilizing the texts in my private collection and the online search facilities available at the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center and Asian Classics Input Project. In some cases, the original sources cannot be identified at present, but in many other instances citations are worded slightly differently in the original texts or are found in completely different texts. Most likely this is because some of the manuscript sources to which Longchen Rabjam had access in the fourteenth century are no longer extant and differ from those that have come down to us today, but there are no doubt some instances where scribes in later centuries unwittingly introduced corruptions into the text.

In the endnotes, I frequently consulted the Tibetan edition of *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions* whenever the readings of our 2000 publication require correction; readers are also referred to relevant sections found in the English translations,<sup>36</sup> particularly with regard to those overviews that have been omitted. Some references are also made to the writings of Rongzom Paṇḍita and Lochen Dharmaśrī and to relevant secondary sources.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although the translations contained in the present volume were prepared between 2011 and 2013, I had the advantage of being able to consult my PhD dissertation, which concerns Longchen Rabjam's *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*—the primary source for Choying Tobden Dorje's presentation of Mahāyoga.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, my gratitude to all those who contributed to the original research, undertaken during the early 1980s, can never be forgotten. It was while working on the translation and editing of Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche's *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism* between 1971 and 1991 that I became increasingly aware of the central importance of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* and the esteem in which it is held by the Nyingmapa. Indeed there is a whole section of Dudjom Rinpoche's work that could not have been properly translated without thorough investigation of this primary text. The goal of my dissertation was to establish a critical edition of the root tantra, juxtaposed with a translation of Longchen Rabjam's interlinear commentary and annotations derived from other sources. Before I commenced the project in 1983, Kyabje Rinpoche himself advised that the undertaking would be difficult and that it would be easier to translate, for example, Longchen Rabjam's *Wish-Fulfilling Treasury* (*Yid bzhin mdzod*). While revising the translation, I had the great fortune to

receive precious words of advice from Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche in Dordogne during the summer of 1986. Specific linguistic and technical problems in the text were also addressed by Rahor Khenpo Thubten, Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, Tulku Pema Wangyal, and Dr. Phillip Denwood. Illustrative material was provided by Khenchen Pema Sherab. On that occasion, the dissertation remained unpublished—following heartfelt advice that the appearance of this text in an English translation would be untimely, although His Holiness the Dalai Lama and a number of important Nyingma teachers, in the course of conversation, had suggested various reasons it could be published. I am therefore relieved that, some twenty-seven years later, the dissertation has not vanished pointlessly in the cyberspace of obsolete word-processing formats but instead has contributed significantly to this new derivative publication—Books 15 to 17 of Choying Tobden Dorje’s *Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*.

The translation and publication of this work have been made possible through the generous support of the Tsadra Foundation. I am grateful to those who have offered assistance over the last three years while I was working on this project, particularly to Ngawang Zangpo, who has been meticulously translating other volumes in the series, and Dr. Martin Boord, who carefully read through my translation during the summer of 2013, as well as Eric Colombel at the Tsadra Foundation and Christopher Fynn, who assisted with the conversion of the romanized version of the *Guhyagarbha* and *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti* root tantras to Jomolhari font. Illustrative materials were generously provided by Matthieu Ricard, Gretchen Groth, Chris Banigan, and Gero Garske. Finally, thanks are due to Nikko Odiseos of Shambhala Publications, and to our editors, Susan Kyser and Tracy Davis, who not only worked through the manuscript, prior to publication, but helped establish the guidelines and format for this new series.

Gyurme Dorje  
Crieff



October 2013

THE EXTENSIVE COMMENTARY: BOOKS 15 TO 17

*A Beauteous Ornament of the Aeon of Mighty  
Brahmā*

## BOOK 15

### *Secret Nucleus: The Inception of the Peaceful Deities*

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Herein is contained Book 15 (NYI) from *The Extensive Commentary of the Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra, concerning the Title of the Secret Nucleus, Its Analysis, and Its Inception.*

### THE GOLDEN KEY

In order that the meaning of the *Root Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* may be understood,  
This book contains the exposition of its title,  
An analysis [of its content and words],  
The introductory narrative, the initiation of the discourse,  
And the establishment [of all phenomena].

## VERSES OF HOMAGE

Homage to Vajradhara, lord of the hundred enlightened families,<sup>38</sup>

To Vairocana, head of the [central] enlightened family,<sup>39</sup>

Along with [Ākāśadhātviśvarī]—female buddha of the [central] enlightened family,<sup>40</sup>

Offering sanctuary to the oceanic realms of living beings of the six classes!<sup>41</sup>

## THE CONTENT OF BOOKS 15 TO 17

The exegesis of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, which is the fundamental tantra of Mahāyoga, comprises three books [of this *Treasury*]. Among them, Book 15 concerns the historical narrative [of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*], along with an exposition of its title, an analysis [of its content and words], and the actual inception [of the tantra text, i.e., chs. 1–3]. Book 16 concerns the diffusion of the peaceful deities [chs. 4–14]. Book 17 concerns the diffusion of the wrathful deities [chs. 15–21], along with the conclusion [of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, i.e., ch. 22], and a commentary on the [related] *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*.

## SUMMARY OF BOOK 15

Among them, Book 15, explaining the background narrative of the *Secret Nucleus* and so forth, has four main topics: (i) an exegesis of the historical narrative; (ii) an exegesis of the title alone, which is intended for those of highest acumen; (iii) an exegesis analyzing [the content and words of the tantra], which is intended for those of moderate acumen; and (iv) an exegesis

of the introductory words [of the tantra], along with the introductory narrative [ch. 1], the initiation of the discourse [ch. 2], and the establishment [of all phenomena] [ch. 3], based on the arrangement of the actual verses, which is intended for those of lowest acumen.

These four main topics also encapsulate within them eighty-nine subtopics.<sup>42</sup>

## THE FRAMING NARRATIVE [15.1]

The first main topic concerns the framing narrative. [It comments on the following verses from *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*:]

**Having, in this way, generally presented the four  
classes of tantra,  
Among the tantras of Mahāyoga, the [cycle of the]  
*Net of Magical Emanation*,  
With its one hundred thousand [verses],  
Includes four [primary texts], namely,  
*The Root Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*,  
*The Tantra of Vairocana from the Net of Magical  
Emanation*,  
*The Tantra of the Goddess from the Net of Magical  
Emanation*,  
And the *Tantra of Mañjuśrī from the Net of Magical  
Emanation*,  
Along with eight [ancillary texts], namely,  
*The Tantra in Eight Chapters, the Supreme Spiritual  
Teacher*,  
*The Supplementary Points, the Tantra of the Ocean  
from the Net of Magical Emanation*,  
*The Mirror [of Vajrasattva], the Tantra in Eighty-Two  
Chapters*,  
*The Tantra in Forty-Six Chapters, and the Tantra of  
Penetration*.  
Their lineage descends in succession from King Ja.**

Samantabhadra, the glorious, supreme, and completely perfect buddha, manifested in and of himself, through the blessings of his natural expression and compassionate spirituality, without

moving from the great palace of reality's expanse.<sup>43</sup> As an ornament of the Dense Array of buddha body, speech, and mind, he assumed the forms of the buddhas of the five enlightened families and was empowered through his mighty dominion, which is none other than the natural maṇḍala, where the indestructible reality of the mind of all the buddhas of the ten directions and four times is indivisible.<sup>44</sup>

To bodhisattvas of the fruitional [levels], such as Vajrapāṇi,<sup>45</sup> he then taught the *Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva*, including the [*Tantra of the*] *Secret Nucleus*, which is excellently endowed with profound and extensive doctrines.

## **THE CYCLE OF THE NET OF MAGICAL EMANATION [15.1.1]**

In general, the cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation* includes four primary texts (*rtsa ba sgyu sprul sde bzhi*):<sup>46</sup>

1. The *Glorious Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* in twenty-two chapters, [an extract from] the *Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva*, which is the fundamental tantra text of [the entire cycle of] the *Net of Magical Emanation* in one hundred thousand [verses], reveals all things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa to be indivisible in their appearances. Its earliest translation [from Sanskrit into Tibetan] is attributed to Buddhaguhya and Vairocana, the intermediate translation to the master Padmasambhava and Nyak Jñānakumāra, and the later translation to Vimalamitra and Ma Rinchen Chok, working alongside Nyak Jñānakumāra. These three translations were prepared on the basis of collaboration between [Tibetan] translators and [Indian] scholars.<sup>47</sup>
2. The *Tantra of Vairocana from the Net of Magical*

*Emanation* extensively reveals ritual activities and communion ceremonies.

3. The *Tantra of the Goddess from the Net of Magical Emanation*, in thirteen chapters, intimates the emanational display [of reality].
4. The *Tantra of Mañjuśrī from the Net of Magical Emanation*, otherwise known as the [*Tantra of the*] *Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*, all-pervasively reveals the vehicles [that lead to buddhahood].

There are also eight tantras ancillary to the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*:<sup>48</sup>

1. The *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eight Chapters* perfectly reveals the maṇḍala.
2. The [*Tantra of the*] *Supreme Spiritual Teacher*, in thirteen chapters, clearly reveals the empowerments.
3. The *Tantra of Supplementary Points from the Net of Magical Emanation*, in thirty-three chapters, emphasizes the commitments.
4. The *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*, in twenty-two chapters, clearly reveals the generation stage [of meditation].
5. The [*Tantra of the*] *Mirror of Vajrasattva*, in thirteen chapters, clearly reveals the deities' body colors and symbolic hand-held emblems.
6. The *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters* extensively reveals buddha attributes.
7. The *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Forty-Six Chapters* perfectly reveals buddha activities.
8. The *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, in twenty-six chapters, discloses the path of skillful means.

[Elsewhere] a set of four exegetical tantras (*bshad rgyud sde bzhi*) is also enumerated, among which:<sup>49</sup>

1. The *Tantra of Supreme Emanational Display from the*



*Net of Magical Emanation*, in thirteen chapters, immediately presents the path of liberation (*grol lam cig char du ston pa rgyud sgyu 'phrul rol pa chen po*).

2. The aforementioned [*Tantra of the*] *Mirror of Vajrasattva* gradually presents the path of liberation (*grol lam rim gyis pa me long*).
3. The *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation* immediately presents the path of skillful means (*thabs lam cig char ba thal ba*).
4. The *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation* gradually presents the path of skillful means (*thabs lam rim gyis pa rgya mtsho*).

In addition, there are also the *Tantra of the Attainment of the Mighty Lords of Yoga through the Power of the Precious Wrathful Deities* and the *Kingly Tantra concerning the Power of the Wrathful Deities*.<sup>50</sup> This all refers to the [cycle of] the *Net of Magical Emanation*.

In addition, there are seventeen other tantras [of Mahāyoga] that are in conformity with it.<sup>51</sup>

[In terms of the Derge xylographic edition of the *Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa*:]<sup>52</sup>

Volume 9 (TA) contains the *Root Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* in twenty-two chapters (ff. 1-31b), along with [Lochen Dharmasrī's] *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention of the Lord of Secrets* (ff. 31b-174b) and the first part of his *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets* (ff. 175a-355).<sup>53</sup>

Volume 10 (THA) contains [the second part of the *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets*, ff. 1-113b], the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eight Chapters* (ff. 114a-123a), the [*Tantra of the*] *Litany of the Names [of Mañjuśrī]* (ff. 123a-135a), the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Forty-Six Chapters* (ff. 135a-182b), the *Tantra of Supplementary Points from the Net of Magical Emanation* (ff. 182b-238b), the

*Tantra of Supreme Emanational Display* (ff. 239a-279b), and the *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation* (ff. 279b-313).<sup>54</sup>

Volume 11 (DA) contains the *Tantra of the Goddess from the Net of Magical Emanation* (ff. 1-34b), the *Tantra of the Supreme Spiritual Teacher* (ff. 34b-60a), the [Root *Tantra of the*] *Secret Nucleus* (ff. 60a-82a), the [*Tantra of the*] *Mirror of Vajrasattva* (ff. 82b-148a), the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters* (ff. 148b-248b), the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation* (ff. 249a-294a), the *Attainment of the Mighty Lords of Yoga* (ff. 294a-296a), and the *Kingly Tantra concerning the Power of the Wrathful Deities* (ff. 296a-297b).

## COMPILATION AND PROPHETIC DECLARATION [15.1.2]

Those tantras that were [initially] revealed in the Akaniṣṭha realm were compiled by Vajrapāṇi, who transmitted them to a retinue of ten million in Alakāvatī and then conferred them on five noble beings at Mount Malaya.<sup>55</sup> Consequently, the texts were inscribed by the ogre Matyaupāyika and invisibly sealed in space through the expressive powers of his enlightened intention.<sup>56</sup> Then, when Buddha Śākyamuni was about to pass into nirvāṇa, he intentionally exhorted his followers to cut off their doubts, whereupon the king of awareness holders Kujara asked five questions, the first of which concerned the time when the secret mantras would appear. In reply, [the Buddha] prophetically declared that, in general, doubt could arise concerning the twelve future circumstances (*byung tshul bcu gnyis*) [surrounding the appearance of the secret mantras], one of which in particular would concern [their appearance] in association with great and definitive predictions (*lung che nges*

*par bstan pa*).<sup>57</sup> This prophecy contained the following words:

One hundred twelve years from now,  
When I have vanished from here,  
A quintessential sacred doctrine,  
Renowned in the three divine realms,  
Will be revealed, as presaged,  
To the one named King Ja,  
A fortunate child of enlightened heritage, a member of  
the human race,  
At Jambudvīpa's eastern frontier!<sup>58</sup>

Accordingly, when the one known as King Ja<sup>59</sup>—the son of Indrabhūti the Great, the king who had been liberated along with a mass of beings, one hundred thousand in number, through the Buddha's teachings of the way of secret mantra—was residing at the place called Mount Malaya in the land of Sahor, adorned with many wondrous attributes, he had seven extraordinary dreams.<sup>60</sup>

## **THE SEVEN DREAMS OF KING JA AND THE CONSEQUENT REVELATIONS [15.1.3]**

Among them, he first dreamed that glorious Vajrapāṇi arrived at the summit of that mountain, emanating blue light from his entire body, whereupon the whole world was incinerated and disappeared. The sound of his speech resounded like a thousand peals of thunder, and a fiery vajra arose from his mind, dissolving into the king's heart. He then dreamed that burning sunlight dissolved into the crown of his head, and a dazzling moonbeam shone, dissolving into the soles of his feet, whereupon the whole of phenomenal existence surged up from within his abdomen.

Second, he dreamed that all the tathāgatas were engaged in

a doctrinal discussion and that, riding upon the sun and the moon, they turned the wheel of the [sacred] doctrine, while steering the three planes of existence toward their zenith.

Third, he dreamed that the light of the heavens was obscured by the color of golden clouds (*hiranyagarbha*, *gser gyi snying po can*); that he could easily hear the sound of miraculous thunder, its resonance pleasant and satisfying; that a mist of assorted jewels closed in; that the light of a beryl gemstone descended; that lightning flashed, illuminating phenomenal existence; and that a rain of jewels manifestly fell [from the heavens].

Fourth, he dreamed that the whole of the world was transformed in accordance with the [sacred] treatises; that a burning bejeweled lamp dispelled the darkness of phenomenal existence; that a stream of medicinal nectar flowed, curing the chronic heart ailments of all living beings; and that all beings were indeed proclaimed as yogins of [the vehicle of] indestructible reality.

Fifth, he dreamed that a solar disk, endowed with light rays formed of various jewels, shone forth from within the clouds, and in its midst there was a bejeweled purple [treasure] casket, in the shape of the auspicious knot motif (*dpal gyi be'u*), with an effulgence of light, illuminating it in its entirety—inside and out. From within it, many naturally sealed books, inscribed in ink of molten blue beryl on golden paper, cascaded like shooting stars falling to the ground.

Sixth, he dreamed that many bodhisattvas and limitless awareness holders, gods, and goddesses proclaimed the limitless enlightened attributes of those books, and they engaged in offerings, eulogies, circumambulations, and recitations.

Seventh, he dreamed that the sound of prophetic declaration resonated from the midst of celestial clouds, proclaiming:

O you who are endowed with good fortune  
And an inheritance of excellent past actions,  
Noble being of great merit  
Whose appearance has been prophesied by the

whose appearance has been prophesied by the  
 Conqueror,  
 Your emanation has been accurately predicted!  
 I shall teach you, fortunate one,  
 A sacred quintessential teaching,  
 Through the blessings of my miraculous abilities,  
 In order that it might serve as a quintessential  
 [instruction]  
 To benefit [the beings of] cyclic existence,  
 Manifesting at this present time!  
 In a sacred place—the great wilderness  
 At the summit of Mount Malaya—  
 You should earnestly cultivate the mysteries  
 Of the cycle of the nucleus of pristine cognition,  
 Which have a sanctity that is to be kept secret!  
 Thereupon, the mirror of your mind will attain manifestly  
 clear realization,  
 And immediately thereafter you will become the equal of  
 the buddhas.  
 In the [pure land] known as Sukhāvātī,  
 You will be transformed on [the level of] all-knowing  
 supreme bliss,  
 Where you will be known as King of Light!  
 This repository of sanctity,  
 The mysteries of the most secret [vehicle of] indestructible  
 reality,  
 Should be divulged through lineal succession  
 To one or two awareness holders among the gods and  
 humans!<sup>61</sup>

When [that casket] actually fell upon the roof of the royal  
 palace, the king found a cubit-high image of Vajrapāṇi,  
 fashioned of purple jewels, along with the self-arisen volumes  
 containing the eighteen tantra sections [of Mahāyoga]. After  
 performing extensive communion ceremonies, he practiced for  
 seven months, in consequence of which he perceived the  
 symbolic meanings contained in the chapter entitled “The  
 Vision of the Face of Vajrasattva, from the *Net of Magical*

*Emanation*” (*sGyu ’phrul drva ba rdo rje sems dpa’ zhal mthong gi le’u*). By practicing again in the same manner, he had a vision of Vajrasattva, and he offered supplication that he might understand the volumes in their entirety. Thereupon, Vajrasattva said:

Child of enlightened heritage,  
You should refine your psychophysical aggregates in this  
manner!  
Your teacher is the Lord of Secrets—  
He will reveal all points without exception!<sup>62</sup>

So it was that, when he had refined his psychophysical aggregates through the generation stage [of meditation]<sup>63</sup> in the same manner, a mighty earthquake resounded and he actually beheld the visage of Vajrapāṇi, whereupon he undertook the conduct of ascetic discipline pertaining to Vajrapāṇi.<sup>64</sup> Brandishing his vajra toward the heavens and reciting mantras and paeans that commenced with the words “HŪM HŪM Subduer of Indestructible Reality!” Vajrapāṇi gathered all the arrogant mundane spirits within his retinue, just as a magnet attracts iron. He designated the indestructible mysteries individually and opened the portal of their secret transmission. Extensively explaining three hundred repositories of sacred teachings, he taught the eighteen tantra sections [of Mahāyoga] and so forth. So it was that Vajrapāṇi conferred these teachings on King Ja.

## **THE INDIAN TRANSMISSION [15.1.4]**

King Ja conferred the teachings on Kukkurāja and a mass of one hundred thousand followers, and then attained liberation.<sup>65</sup> Kukkurāja conferred the teachings on Indrabhūti the Younger<sup>66</sup> and his retinue of ten thousand, and then

attained liberation. The latter in turn conferred the teachings on Siṃharāja and his retinue of one thousand, and then attained liberation. He conferred the teachings on Uparāja and his retinue of five hundred, and then attained liberation. He in turn conferred the teachings on Gomadevī, daughter of King Indrabhūti [the Younger], and her retinue of one hundred, and then attained liberation.<sup>67</sup> All of these [lineage holders] practiced the teachings along with their specific retinues, and they attained the level of the awareness holders. The last mentioned conferred the teachings on master Buddhaguhya,<sup>68</sup> and from then on the lineage has continued in succession.

## AN EXEGESIS BASED ON THE TITLE [15.2]

The second main topic [of Book 15] comprises an exegesis of the title [of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*], which is offered in order that those of highest acumen might understand [the content of the tantra] merely through the exposition of its title. [It comments on the verses:]

**There are three points regarding the designation [of this text]:**

**These concern the definition of [the expression] *Vajrasattva, from the Net of Magical Emanation***

**In terms of ground, path, and result,**

**Provisional and definitive meaning, and the two truths,**

**Along with the greatness [of the tantra]**

**And the encapsulation [of its actual meaning].**

It is said in the *Illuminating Lamp of the Fundamental Text*:

For those of highest acumen, the title [of the text]  
Is known to convey the following three concepts:

It denotes the nucleus of the *Net of Magical Emanation*,  
It denotes the universal [tantra] among all the scriptures  
[of Mahāyoga],  
And through it the entire content [of the text] may be  
understood,  
Just as [ailments may be diagnosed] by the pulse  
palpation of the arm.  
It is intended for those of good fortune.<sup>69</sup>

Accordingly, the exposition of the title [of this text] is offered  
on the basis of the following three points:<sup>70</sup>

### **THE MEANING OF “NET OF MAGICAL EMANATION OF VAJRASATTVA” [15.2.1]**

[The first point concerns the meaning of the expression “*Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva*.”] In terms of the ground, *vajra* (*rdo rje*) denotes the continuum of the ground (*gzhi rgyud*)—the primordially unconditioned and spontaneously present seed of buddha nature (*sugatagarbha*)—which is indestructible and imperishable like a vajra. *Sattva* (*sems dpa'*) has three connotations, in that its functions are to demonstrate, to subsume, and to realize. Among these, with regard to the ground, it demonstrates that all the enlightened attributes of buddha body and pristine cognition are naturally perfect and unchanging at all times.

In terms of the path, [*vajra*] denotes the continuum of the path (*lam rgyud*), the realization of the marvelous modality of the vehicle of indestructible reality (*rdo rje*)—the fruitional vehicle resembling the conclusive result that is the enlightened intention of the Conqueror, whereby all things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa attain primordial buddhahood. [*Sattva*] denotes the volition (*sems pa*) through which one qualitatively meditates on the nature of reality, and the heroic steadfastness



(*dpa' ba*) that is maintained in conduct.

In terms of the result, [Vajrasattva] denotes the continuum of the result (*'bras bu rgyud*), implying that all adventitious obscurations have been purified through the profound generation and perfection stages [of meditation]<sup>71</sup> and that the seed of awareness (*rig khams*) has actualized the conclusive, natural, and fruitional buddha bodies, buddha fields, pristine cognitions, buddha attributes, and buddha activities, without fluctuating. Thus the genuine being of indestructible reality [Vajrasattva] refers to this state in which there is actually no difference between the teacher and the oceanic retinue.

Briefly stated, the title is designated as such because it is the pure enlightened intention of this tantra text to reveal that cyclic existence, nirvāṇa, and the path—all three—are primordial buddhahood in the nature of Vajrasattva. It says in the *Exegetical Tantra Entitled Mirror of Vajrasattva*:

All phenomena without exception are the nondual  
intrinsic awareness—

The nature of the mind set on enlightenment.

It is explained that the term “indestructible reality”  
(*vajra*)

Indicates the natural state in which these are not  
differentiated.<sup>72</sup>

As for [the other part of] this expression “*Net of Magical Emanation*” (*sgyu 'phrul drva ba*), it denotes both the *Net of Magical Emanation* of definitive meaning (*nges don gyi sgyu 'phrul drva ba*)—in which the emptiness that is the expanse of discriminative awareness and the naturally present pristine cognition that is the awareness of skillful means are coalesced—and the *Net of Magical Emanation* of symbolic provisional meaning (*drang don brda'i sgyu 'phrul drva ba*), in which the male and female deities indicative of that [coalescence] are themselves coalesced in union. Through the impartial causal basis of the five elements which manifest like a magical display (*sgyu ma*), the five psychophysical aggregates emanate (*'phrul*

*pa*) in all ways. These form a net (*drva ba*) because they combine both causal and fruitional aspects.<sup>73</sup>

Alternatively, “magical display” (*sgyu ma*) denotes the [excellent] provisions of realization (*rtogs tshogs*), while “emanation” (*'phrul pa*) denotes the deities, and “net” (*drva ba*) denotes the nature in which these are integrated without duality. As is said in the *Tantra of Supplementary Points* [from the *Net of Magical Emanation*]:

With regard to the pristine cognitions  
Associated with the fivefold illusory aggregates,  
Intrinsic awareness skillfully emanates as the five  
enlightened families.<sup>74</sup>

In chapter 4 [of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*], it is explained that “magical emanation” (*sgyu 'phrul*) denotes the male buddhas and “net” (*drva ba*) denotes the female buddhas.<sup>75</sup>

Briefly stated, the point is that although all things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, appear as a mere magical emanation (*sgyu ma'i 'phrul pa*), in which the relative and ultimate truths are indivisible and inseparable, without having to adopt positive [actions] and reject negative [actions], they always remain coalesced in the net (*drva ba*) of supreme purity and sameness, which is pristine cognition (*dag mnyam ye shes chen po*). The title is designated in accordance with this definition because all the words and meanings expressed in the entire content of this tantra text entail the realization that all magical emanations, which are expressive appearances of Vajrasattva, in whom all things are primordial buddhahood, are inseparably coalesced in a net of common savor.

## **THE GREATNESS DENOTED BY THE TITLE [15.2.2]**

The second point concerns the greatness that is denoted by the title. In this regard, [the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* is designated as] the universal [tantra] among all the scriptures. As is said in the [*Tantra of the Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*:

The oceanic tantras that present their individual topics  
Are all revealed in this [text], revealed by this [text],  
And revealed on account of this [text].  
Since all their meanings are perfected in this [text],  
This is explained to be the universal [tantra]  
Among all the scriptures.<sup>76</sup>

And in the *Extensive Exegetical Tantra [of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters]*:

Just as all rivers flow into great oceans,  
The Conqueror endowed with intrinsic awareness that  
realizes sameness  
Gathers all the inconceivable vehicles conducive to  
liberation  
In these great skillful means that realize the  
unsurpassed truth.<sup>77</sup>

This passage implies that [the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*] is the universal text among all the scriptures of the vehicle of causal characteristics and the [fruitional] tantras. Since it is endowed with such extraordinary attributes of greatness, the title of the text is designated accordingly.

### **THE ENCAPSULATION OF MEANING DENOTED BY THE TITLE [15.2.3]**

The third point concerns the encapsulation of the actual meaning of the text that is denoted by the title. As is said in the

*Short Commentary:*

Because it has precedence,  
It is important that the title is expressed at the  
beginning.<sup>78</sup>

The title that is displayed at the head of a volume should be designated as such because it is important that the name appears at the beginning, insofar as one who knows the title of any person or thing will gradually come to understand the corresponding meaning, and one who does not know the title cannot communicate it to another.

## **AN ANALYSIS OF THE TANTRA'S CONTENT AND WORDS [15.3]**

The third main topic, which is intended for those of moderate acumen because it merely analyzes [the content and words of the text], comprises (i) an analysis of its content (15.3.1) and (ii) an analysis of the words (15.3.2).

### **AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONTENT OF THE GUHYAGARBHA TANTRA [15.3.1]**

Among them, the former comprises (i) the introductory narrative, which is the causal basis for the emergence of the tantra (15.3.1.1); (ii) the initiation of the discourse, which is the condition [for the emergence of the tantra] (15.3.1.2); (iii) the comprehensible meanings of the term *tantra*, which denotes the result (15.3.1.3); (iv) the interrelated purposes of the tantra

(15.3.1.4); and (v) the instruction of the retinue and the entrustment of the teachings (15.3.1.5).

## CONCERNING THE INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE [15.3.1.1]

The first of these aspects [comments on the verse]:

**The introductory narrative is the uncommon and common causal basis [For the emergence] of the tantra.**

The introductory narrative is endowed with the five excellences (*phun sum tshogs pa lnga*) in order that the meanings of *tantra* might definitively emerge whenever the teachers [or buddhas] and their retinues convene together.<sup>79</sup> What, you may ask, is the purpose of the introductory narrative? It is to “confer”—derived from the Sanskrit term *dāna* (“gift”)—the certainty of conviction upon those who might doubt the canonical authenticity of a text by relating its background narrative, endowed with the five excellences, and to enable the context that is introduced to serve as the causal basis or ground for the emergence of the content of the tantra in question.

When [the introductory narrative of this particular tantra] is analyzed, there are uncommon secretive interpretations, applied in the context of the path of skillful means;<sup>80</sup> and there are also common [interpretations]. The latter comprise (i) the narrative of the buddha body of perfect resource, also known as the extraordinary introductory narrative on the basis of which the tantra emerges; (ii) the supplementary or coincidental narrative of the wrathful deities that is presented for the sake of those to be disciplined; and (iii) the narrative of the buddha body of emanation, which instructs living beings—the last of these is also well known in the introductory narratives of all the teachings in general.<sup>81</sup>

## CONCERNING THE INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE [15.3.1.2]

The second aspect, the initiation of the discourse which is the condition [for the emergence of this tantra, comments on the verse]:

**The initiation of the discourse—  
The actual content of the tantra—**

**Is both uncommon and common.**

Because it takes the form of an interlocution between the teachers [or buddhas] and their retinues, [the initiation of the discourse] does not dependently emerge in accordance with the minds of trainees. What, you may ask, is the purpose of this initiation of the discourse (*gleng bslang*)? It functions as the condition for the emergence of the teaching—the object of the discourse (*gleng bar bya ba*) being the content of tantra, and its initiation (*bslang ba*) taking the form of an exhortation or incitement to engage in discourse.<sup>82</sup>

When analyzed, the uncommon [initiation of the discourse] has three aspects: [two that occur] when the male and female teachers [or buddhas] are welcomed [separately] in front, conferring the profound empowerments on their coemergent retinue, and one that originates from the nonduality of their skillful means and discriminative awareness.<sup>83</sup> The common [initiation of the discourse] refers to the arising of the teacher's compassionate spirituality in consequence of the retinue's request that he explain the tantra for the sake of others, at which point he proceeds to teach [the discourse] either directly or indirectly.<sup>84</sup>

## **THE COMPREHENSIBLE MEANINGS OF THE TERM *TANTRA*** **[15.3.1.3]**

The third aspect, the exegesis of the comprehensible meanings of the term *tantra*, which results [from the foregoing initiation of the discourse], comprises (i) a general exegesis of the framework of the three continua (15.3.1.3.1) and (ii) a detailed exegesis of the ten aspects of tantra, which facilitate the path (15.3.1.3.2).

### **THE FRAMEWORK OF THE THREE CONTINUA [15.3.1.3.1]**

The former [comments on the verse]:

**The term *tantra* denotes the three continua:  
The continuum of the ground or causal basis,  
Which is the goal to be realized;  
The continuum of the path or skillful means,  
Through which [the result] is realized and reached;  
The continuum of the result,**

### **Wherein the goal is perfected.**

It says in the later translation of the *Tantra [of the Secret Nucleus]*:

Tantra is explained to mean “continuity”—  
Through skillful means and from the causal basis the  
result is obtained.<sup>85</sup>

So, generally speaking, the term *tantra* denotes continuity. When analyzed, it comprises (i) the continuum of the ground or causal basis that is to be realized; (ii) the continuum of the path or skillful means through which [the result] is realized and reached; and (iii) the continuum of the result, wherein the goal is perfected.

## THE CONTINUUM OF THE GROUND [15.3.1.3.1.1]

First, as for the continuum of the ground, the ground is the abiding nature free from bondage and liberation, the intrinsic awareness, enlightened mind and inseparable truth which abides primordially, beyond the perceptual range of the senses. This is the very ground implied in the [equivalent] terms “seed of buddha nature” (*khams bde bar gshegs pa*), “seed that naturally abides” (*rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i rigs*), “pristine cognition of the sub-stratum” (*kun gzhi'i ye shes*), “actual truth shrouded in impurity” (*dri bcas de bzhin nyid*), and so forth. It is said to form a continuum (*rgyud*) because its natural expression streams unchanging, from the [unenlightened] state of sentient beings as far as the [enlightened] state of buddhahood.<sup>86</sup>

When this is analyzed, as the master Vimalamitra states in his *Three Sequences*:

The first [continuum] has two aspects:

The essential ground and the imputed ground.<sup>87</sup>

It is said that the actual reality of mind, the naturally pure seed of buddha nature, refers to the ground of the essential abiding nature (*gnas lugs ngo bo'i gzhi*), which is likened to a precious gemstone, in that it is a base purified of stains. However, when shrouded in objects of erroneous attachment, it denotes the imputed ground (*btags pa'i gzhi*) that is subject to



bewilderment, because, though nonexistent, it adventitiously appears, just like the mire of impure stains [covering a gemstone] that are to be purified.

Although attachment itself is a continuum that facilitates the formation of cyclic existence and offers a measure of unbroken continuity to the sensory engagement of consciousness, because it is an artificial and adventitious phenomenon, it is not [identified with] the continuum of the causal basis through which the result [of buddhahood] is acquired, nor even is its explicit negation in logical analysis by means of genuine emptiness a defining characteristic of the continuum of the causal basis.<sup>88</sup> This is because attachment cannot sustain either the causal basis of [fruitful] acquisition or the meaning of continuity.

## **THE CONTINUUM OF THE PATH [15.3.1.3.1.2]**

Second, the continuum of the path implies skillful means because it is the coemergent condition that actualizes the very continuum of the result that is the goal. It is [designated as a] path because it is the support on the basis of which the goal is to be reached.<sup>89</sup>

When analyzed, it comprises both the definitive path of skillful means (*thabs kyi nges pa'i lam*) and the liberating path of discriminative awareness (*shes rab rnam par grol ba'i lam*).<sup>90</sup> It says in the *Three Sequences*:

The path of liberation is presented as skillful means.<sup>91</sup>

First, as for the path of skillful means, the “wondrous skillful means that liberates beings of inferior realms” facilitates the swift attainment of the result, principally by means of the marvelous ascetic discipline that employs special methods, just as iron can be momentarily transformed into gold through the

application of *mākṣika* (*makṣika'i sbyor ba*).<sup>92</sup>

When analyzed, this entails gradual training in the [yoga of] the upper gate (*steng sgo*), where blissful pristine cognition is generated in the four energy centers [of the subtle body] through practices that control the blazing and descending [of generative essences], based on all six energy centers [of the subtle body].<sup>93</sup> It says in the *Tantra of the Ocean* [from the *Net of Magical Emanation*]:

The [yoga of] the upper gate is known as such  
Because the movement of fire and wind through  
The six energy centers  
And three axial [channels of the subtle body]  
Milks the cow of space.<sup>94</sup>

Also included here is the immediate path of skillful means (*thabs lam cig car ba*) pertaining to the [yoga of the] lower gate (*'og sgo*): Through practices that control the descent, retention, reversal, and pervasion [of the flow of generative fluids] based on [the union of] the male and female pudenda, the pristine cognition of nondual bliss and emptiness is generated in an immediate manner.<sup>95</sup> As is said in the *Extensive* [*Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Forty-Six Chapters*]:

These spontaneously present excellences are conferred  
By means of the supreme secret empowerment.<sup>96</sup>

Second, the [definitive] path of liberation facilitates the liberation of the fetters of one's own mind into actual reality by means of the three modes of discriminative awareness (*shes rab rnam pa gsum*), just as stone may be gradually transformed into gold when placed alongside a *kaustubha* catalyst.<sup>97</sup>

When analyzed [this path has three aspects]: (i) the causal basis characterized by [discriminative] awareness is the view; (ii) the condition characterized by actual entry [into the path] is meditative stability; and (iii) the result, brought about through the transformations of the path, denotes the four kinds of

awareness holders.<sup>98</sup>

First, concerning the view, the view to be realized by one who establishes through the axioms (*gtan tshigs*) of appraisal the nature of attachment (*zhan snang nyid*) which is to be appraised concerns the natural continuum of the causal basis, the actual truth of the abiding nature of reality. The direct, naturally radiant, clear, and naked realization of this through intrinsic awareness, without objective appearance, is the philosophical principle [of this text]. Those who hold that the philosophical perspective of the mantras has merely been differentiated on account of the superiority of their skillful means over the Madhyamaka view stare blindly at the uncommon view of the mantras, which establishes the indivisible truth, the great purity and sameness of the inanimate world and its sentient contents.<sup>99</sup>

If one were to think that the unchanging awareness [expounded in the tantras] refers to the actual truth [expounded in the sūtras], and that there would be no difference [between the sūtras and tantras] in their goal of realization because such terms are also found in the profound sūtras of definitive meaning, even though that may be true, even if that is the case, whenever the term “actual truth” (*de bzhin nyid*) is assigned to the continuum of the causal basis in this [vehicle of] the unsurpassed tantras, it refers to the nature of unchanging coemergent, supreme bliss, which is explained to be a distinctive feature of the mantras. As is said in the *Mirror of Vajra[sattva]*:

The naturally present uncontaminated reflection of  
pristine cognition  
Abiding in the hearts of corporeal beings  
Denotes the supreme bliss of the imperishable vital  
essence,  
The natural expression of the nonabiding buddha body  
of actual reality,  
All-pervasive as space itself.<sup>100</sup>

Second, meditative stability, the condition associated with actual entry [into the path], comprises both devotional meditation (*mos bsgom*), which entails meditation merely with respect to the general features [of the path], and the definitively perfect training (*bslab pa nges rdzogs*), which is designed to perfect the meditative stability associated with each distinctive path.<sup>101</sup>

Among them, definitive perfection in this context refers to the fivefold yoga of the path followed by those beings who are still contaminated [by cyclic existence] (*zag pa dang bcas pa'i lam gyi rnal 'byor lnga*). The fivefold yoga comprises (i) great emptiness (*stong pa chen po*), which is the path corresponding to the experience of inner radiance of the time of death; (ii) illusion-like [great] compassion (*snying rje [chen po] sgyu ma*), which similarly corresponds to the experience of the intermediate state [after death]; (iii) the single seal (*phyag rgya gcig pa*); (iv) the elaborate seal (*phyag rgya spros bcas*); and (v) the attainment of the maṇḍala clusters (*tshom bu tshogs sgrub*)—the last three of which respectively correspond to the experiences of three phases of life (*skyes pa'i rim pa gsum*) [namely, conception to the moment of birth, birth to adult maturity, and adult maturity to old age].<sup>102</sup>

Among these, the first four are modes of yoga associated with the path of provisions (*tshogs lam*), on which the contaminated aggregates and spiritual regression are both present. As is said in the *Sequence of the Path*:

So it is that on these four paths  
The contaminated aggregates are present  
And spiritual regression may occur.<sup>103</sup>

The attainment of the maṇḍala clusters, on the other hand, is a yoga associated with the path of connection (*sbyor lam*), and so it is a path on which spiritual regression does not occur, even though the contaminated psychophysical aggregates are present. And since the period in which one engages in the practice [of Mahāyoga] is quantifiable, this is a path through

which freedom from the contaminated aggregates can actually be acquired, devoid of obstacles.

Third, the result that is brought about through the transformations of the path denotes the four kinds of awareness holders, [whose realization is] subsumed in the three [higher] paths of insight (*mthong lam*), meditation (*sgom lam*), and finality (*mthar lam*)—free from contamination and devoid of spiritual regression (*zag ldog gnyis ka med pa*).<sup>104</sup>

In this regard, one who has attained the path of insight, even after seeing the truth of actual reality, may, through greater or lesser power of intelligence, become either an awareness holder of maturation (*rnam smin rig 'dzin*), still unable to fuse the coarse physical body of impure elements with the fire of pristine cognition, or an awareness holder with power over the life span (*tshe dbang rig 'dzin*), with the capacity to make this refinement, who has perfected the supreme path, having transformed [the coarse physical body] into a body of pure essence, free from birth and decay.<sup>105</sup> As is said in the *Lesser Sequence of the Path*:

The path of insight is twofold—

One on which this [transformative] capacity is attained

And one on which it is not attained.<sup>106</sup>

Then [one who has attained] the path of meditation becomes an awareness holder of the great seal (*phyag rgya rig 'dzin*), endowed with pristine cognition and the illusory body (*ye shes sgyu ma'i sku can*), while one who has attained the path of finality becomes an awareness holder of spontaneous presence (*lhun grub rig 'dzin*), assuming the guise of Vajradhara—the spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies.<sup>107</sup>

Among them, the awareness holder of maturation has the same enlightened intention as a bodhisattva who abides on the Joyful level on the path of insight, according to the causal vehicles. The three other types of awareness holder, starting

from the awareness holder with power over the life span, [in general] have the same enlightened intention as a bodhisattva, respectively, of the first level, the eighth level, and the tenth level, according to the causal vehicles. However, there is another distinction made on the basis of their enlightened intention and conduct, according to which it is explained that the awareness holder with power over the life span is the same as a bodhisattva of the eighth level, on the path of meditation, according to the causal vehicles, while the awareness holder of the great seal is the same as a bodhisattva of the tenth level, and the awareness holder of spontaneous presence is the same as [a buddha] on the level of Universal Light, on the path of no-more-learning (*mi slob pa'i lam*).<sup>108</sup>

### **THE CONTINUUM OF THE RESULT [15.3.1.3.1.3]**

Third, the continuum of the result refers to the culminating goal that is definitively present in the ground and actualized once the adventitious stains to be purified, which are indicated in the continuum of the causal basis, the ground of purification, have been correctly refined by means of the purificatory methods [of the continuum of the path]. Why, you may ask, is this termed the “continuum of the result”? In this context, “result” refers to the conclusive goal toward which one strives, and it is [known as] a continuum because its continuity is never interrupted.<sup>109</sup>

When analyzed, [the continuum of the result] comprises (i) the supporting buddha bodies; (ii) the supported pristine cognitions; and (iii) the enlightened activities.<sup>110</sup>

First, the buddha bodies may be three or five in number. The enumeration of three buddha bodies (*trikāya, sku gsum*) is as follows: (i) The buddha body of actual reality (*dharmakāya, chos sku*) is a coalescence in which the pristine cognition that is intrinsic awareness (*rig pa'i ye shes*) is liberated directly in

the expanse [of reality]. (ii) The buddha body of perfect resource (*sambhogakāya, longs sku*) is an illuminating form, replete with the major and minor marks, that appears to bodhisattvas of the tenth level, without straying from that [buddha body of actual reality]. (iii) The buddha body of emanation (*nirmāṇakāya, sprul sku*) is the form of the buddha that assumes diverse appearances according to the volition of individual beings. Alternatively, the enumeration of the five buddha bodies (*pañcakāya, sku lnga*) is obtained by the revelation of two further aspects: (iv) the buddha body of awakening (*abhisambodhikāya, mngon byang gi sku*), which derives from the distinct apparitional functions of the three buddha bodies, and (v) the buddha body of indestructible reality (*vajrakāya, rdo rje'i sku*), which derives from the function of their indivisible essential nature.

Second, the supported pristine cognitions in this context comprise the five pristine cognitions (*pañcajñāna, ye shes lnga*), in which the eight modes of consciousness are inherently pure. These are as follows: (i) the pristine cognition of reality's expanse (*dharmadhātujñāna, chos dbyings ye shes*), which is nonreferential in all respects; (ii) the mirrorlike pristine cognition (*ādarśajñāna, me long lta bu'i ye shes*), which is radiantly clear but without ideation; (iii) the pristine cognition of sameness (*samatājñāna, mnyam nyid ye shes*), which does not abide in the extremes of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa; (iv) the pristine cognition of discernment (*pratyavekṣaṇājñāna, sor rtog pa'i ye shes*), which directly and sharply perceives all attributes; and (v) the pristine cognition of accomplishment (*kṛtyānuṣṭhānajñāna, bya grub ye shes*), which engages in unimpeded enlightened activities for the sake of living beings. These may then be reduced to two pristine cognitions: (i) the pristine cognition that definitively knows the view (*ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes*), which is [identical to] the pristine cognition of reality's expanse, and (ii) the pristine cognition that quantitatively knows phenomena (*ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes*), in which the subsequent four [modes of pristine cognition] are all subsumed.<sup>111</sup>

Third, the enlightened activities in this context refer to the enlightened actions, derived from the power of perfect renunciation and realization, once the entirety of the two obscurations and all their propensities have been renounced, and all that can be known has actually been perceived. These spontaneous accomplishments emerge as long as space itself endures, in conformity with the good fortune of trainees, and never pass beyond time.<sup>112</sup>

## **THE TEN ASPECTS OF TANTRA [15.3.1.3.2]**

The latter [part of the third aspect, the comprehensible meanings of the term *tantra*] is the detailed exegesis of the ten aspects of tantra, which facilitate the path. [This comments on the verse:]

**The ten aspects [of tantra] comprise view, conduct, Maṇḍala, empowerment, commitment, offering, Mantra, meditative stability, enlightened activity, and attainment.**

[The ten aspects of tantra,] each of which will be considered in terms of its essential nature (*ngo bo*), etymology (*nges tshig*), and classification (*dbye ba*), comprise (i) a view of reality (*de kho na nyid lta ba*); (ii) determinate conduct (*la dor ba spyod pa*); (iii) maṇḍala array (*bkod pa dkyil 'khor*); (iv) successive gradation of empowerment (*rim pa brgod pa dbang*); (v) commitment that is not transgressed (*mi 'da' ba dam tshig*); (vi) offerings that are given according to circumstances (*gnas su stob pa mchod pa*); (vii) mantra recitation accompanied by the sealing hand gestures that bind [the practitioner to realization] (*'ching zlos sngags dang phyag rgya*); (viii) unwavering meditative stability (*mi g.yo ba ting nge 'dzin*); (ix) enlightened activity that is displayed (*rol pa 'phrin*



las); and (x) attainment for which one should strive (*don du gnyer pa sgrub pa*).<sup>113</sup>

## **V**<sub>IEW</sub> [15.3.1.3.2.1]

First, the [explanation of] view is threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of the view] is that the superior ultimate truth (*lhag pa don dam bden pa*) denotes the nature of mind (*sems nyid*); it does not come into contact with any extreme [standpoint]; and in its essential nature the seven aspects of spiritual wealth are atemporally and spontaneously present.<sup>114</sup> The superior relative truth (*lhag pa kun rdzob bden pa*) denotes the expressive power of this reality, where the entire apparitional world and its contents manifest in and of themselves as the maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition, so that there is perfection in the sameness of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa. Moreover, these two [truths] abide in sameness, essentially indivisible, without falling into biased [perspectives], and this [indivisibility] genuinely transcends the thoughts and expressions that apprehend it.<sup>115</sup> Therefore it is only in conventional terms that it can be designated as the “superior indivisible truth beyond the perceptual range of the senses” (*lhag pa bden pa dbyer med spyod yul dang bral ba*). It says in the *Sequence of the Path*:

Within the unsurpassed vehicle, there are those  
Holding ultimate reality to be indivisible  
And relative appearances to include everything,  
Both the pure and the impure.  
The great vehicle of skillful means, however,  
Does not divide even relative appearances  
According to purification and affliction.  
Such are the higher and lower views.<sup>116</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *lta ba* (“view”) corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *dṛṣṭi*, which conveys the sense of “true abiding nature” and is so named because the view eradicates all superimpositions (*adhyāropa*, *sgro ’dogs*) by means of discriminative awareness.

(iii) As for the classification of the view, in the case of those of highest acumen, realization [of the view] should be attained by means of the axioms (*gtan tshigs*) [of Mahāyoga]. Those of moderate acumen should attain this realization by relying on the indications of its nature and fruition. Those of lowest acumen should realize it through the transmissions of the lineage, in which case there exist both the close [lineages of the treasures] and the distant [lineages of the oral teachings].<sup>117</sup>

## CONDUCT [15.3.1.3.2.2]

Second, the [explanation of] conduct is threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of conduct] is that it includes all activities of body, speech, and mind maintained by adherents of the spiritual path through the special practices of skillful means and discriminative awareness.

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *spyod pa* (“conduct”) corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *caryā*, which means “that which is to be practiced” and is so named because it implies engagement in conduct that accords with ethical discipline.

(iii) As for the classification of conduct, in general, conduct refers to actions through which body, speech, and mind are to be purified. In particular [in the context of Mahāyoga], it is explained to include both the conduct of ascetic discipline during the path of skillful means (*thabs lam brtul zhugs kyi spyod pa*) and the conduct of careful restraint during the path of liberation (*grol lam bag yod kyi spyod pa*).<sup>118</sup> The latter itself

entails seven modes of conduct that are gradually adopted (*rim gyis pa'i spyod pa bdun*), namely, the conduct of faithful perseverance, the conduct in harmony with discriminative awareness, the conduct in harmony with skillful means, the conduct with a single focus, the conduct with an elaborate focus, the conduct associated with the communion ceremonies, and the conduct associated with miraculous abilities; and in addition there is also one mode of conduct that is immediately adopted (*cig car ba'i spyod pa*), comprising marvelous actions that are free from acceptance and rejection, making eight subdivisions altogether.<sup>119</sup>

### **MANḌALA [15.3.1.3.2.3]**

Third, the [explanation of] the maṇḍala is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of the maṇḍala] is that it denotes the perfect appearance of an array of deities. As is said in the *Innermost Point of Buddha Mind*:

The essential nature [of the maṇḍala]  
Is the array that is perfect,  
Extracting the nucleus in its seven circumstances.<sup>120</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology: the [Tibetan term] *dkyil 'khor* corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *maṇḍala*—*maṇḍa* meaning “nucleus” or “essence” and *la* meaning “holding” or “extracting.” It is glossed as “extracting the nucleus” (*snying po len pa*) because a maṇḍala is the ground in which essential enlightened attributes are apprehended. Also, since the term *maṇḍala* may denote a sphere of sounds, visual imagery, or thoughts, it implies a central figure or focal point surrounded by a retinue or periphery.<sup>121</sup>

(iii) As for the classification of the maṇḍala, there are said to be seven modalities, as stated in the *Extensive [Tantra of the*

*Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*]:<sup>122</sup>

The maṇḍala of intrinsic nature is revealed,  
Along with the three [maṇḍalas] of visual imagery,  
superior among forms;  
The [maṇḍala of] meditative stability, superior among  
meditative stabilities,  
The [maṇḍala of] enlightened mind,  
And [the maṇḍala of] supreme provisions.<sup>123</sup>

## **EMPOWERMENT [15.3.1.3.2.4]**

Fourth, the [explanation of] empowerment is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of empowerment] is that maturation is discernibly conferred, actualizing or generating the sprout of liberation [from cyclic existence] by means of ritual activities that implant the attributes of the [fruitional] level in the mind [of a neophyte], contingent on the two causal bases and four conditions being gathered together.<sup>124</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *dbang* (“empowerment”) corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *abhiṣeka*, which denotes sprinkling or anointing, and it is so called because it washes away the stains of body, speech, and mind while implanting the extraordinary capacity for fruitional pristine cognition.

(iii) As for the classification of empowerment, [in general] five empowerments are distinguished, since the vase empowerment (*bum dbang*) is divided according to the empowerment of beneficence (*phan pa'i dbang*) and the empowerment of ability (*nus pa'i dbang*).<sup>125</sup> Then, with regard to the [assembly of] the peaceful deities, there are eighteen empowerments that are conferred, including the ten empowerments of beneficence (*phan dbang bcu*), the five

empowerments of ability (*nus pa'i dbang lnga*), and the three empowerments of profundity (*zab dbang gsum*).<sup>126</sup> With regard to the [assembly of] the wrathful deities, the empowerments of beneficence are subdivided into twenty-eight categories, including those of the seats (*gdan*), the [subservient] devendra forms (*lha dbang*), the hand emblems (*phyag mtshan*), the ten accoutrements of the charnel ground (*dur khrod chas bcu*), and the fifteen sacraments of attainment (*sgrub rdzas bco lnga*)—making thirty-six [empowerments of the wrathful deities] altogether.<sup>127</sup>

### **COMMITMENT [15.3.1.3.2.5]**

Fifth, the [explanation of] commitment is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of commitment] is the mind, along with its seeds, that vows not to transgress the particular objectives that are to be guarded.

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *dam tshig* (“commitment”) corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *samaya*, which actually denotes an admonition or an oath and its ancillary branches,<sup>128</sup> and it is so called because it indicates the manner in which prescribed laws are not to be transgressed.<sup>129</sup>

(iii) As for the classification of commitments, [here] there are five basic commitments (*rtsa ba'i dam tshig lnga*) and two sets of five ancillary commitments, making fifteen altogether. Extrapolated therefrom, there is also a further enumeration of three hundred sixty [ancillary commitments], and so forth.<sup>130</sup>

### **ENLIGHTENED ACTIVITY [15.3.1.3.2.6]**

Sixth, the [explanation of] enlightened activity is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of enlightened activity] denotes the acts of skillful means, which have as their objective chiefly the well-being of others, which is maintained by means of the enlightened mind and great discriminative awareness, originating from the causal basis of the four immeasurable aspirations.<sup>131</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] [*phrin*] *las* (“enlightened activity”) corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *karma*, which implies having the defining characteristics of physical, verbal, or mental actions, and it is so called because it denotes the motivation of the actor (*byed pa po'i 'dod pa*).<sup>132</sup>

(iii) As for the classification of enlightened activity, these are the four rites of pacification (*zhi ba*), enrichment (*rgyas pa*), subjugation (*dbang*), and wrath (*drag po*). The methodical sequence of ritual activities through which these are implemented includes rituals that are achieved by means of fire [offerings], sacraments, chains (*lu gu rgyud*),<sup>133</sup> stūpas, and gestures of sealing (*phyag rgya*).<sup>134</sup>

## **SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT [15.3.1.3.2.7]**

Seventh, the [explanation of] spiritual attainment is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of spiritual attainment] is indicated in the following verse from the later translation of the *Tantra [of the Secret Nucleus]*:

Mundane accomplishments are obtained  
By practicing according to the generation stage [of  
meditation].  
The supramundane accomplishment is obtained  
By practicing according to the perfection stage [of  
meditation].<sup>135</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *bsgrub bya* (“objective”) is related to the [Sanskrit] term *siddhi*, which conveys the sense of spiritual accomplishment (*dngos grub*), and it is also related to the [Sanskrit] *sādhana* (“means for attainment”), which implies total acquisition (*kun tu len pa*).

(iii) As for the classification of spiritual attainments, these include the [aforementioned] four great rites (*las chen bzhi*) [of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrath] and eight attainments that are classed as common accomplishments (*thun mong gi dngos grub*),<sup>136</sup> along with the supreme spiritual accomplishment (*mchog gi dngos grub*), through which the buddha bodies and pristine cognitions are actualized.<sup>137</sup>

## **MEDITATIVE STABILITY [15.3.1.3.2.8]**

Eighth, the [explanation of] meditative stability is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of meditative stability] denotes the one-pointed mind that abides without straying from its particular objective.<sup>138</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *ting nge 'dzin* (“meditative stability”) corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *samādhi*, which conveys the sense of a balanced or equipoised mental state (*mnyam pa'i blo*) and is so designated because it means that the mind is one-pointedly focused.

(iii) As for the classification of meditative stability, it includes the generation stage of meditation (*bskyed rim*), where there are four methods of purifying propensities associated with the four birthplaces (*skye gnas bzhi'i bag chags sbyong tshul bzhi*), and the perfection stage of meditation (*rdzogs rim*), which includes both the path of skillful means and the path of liberation.<sup>139</sup>

## OFFERINGS [15.3.1.3.2.9]

Ninth, the [explanation of] offerings is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of offerings] pertains to the veneration of all who are worthy recipients of offering, and the wish to make such offerings, in consequence of which [the recipients of offering] are pleased by means of body, speech, and mind and also by the gifts that are offered.<sup>140</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *mchod pa* (“offering”) corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *pūjā*, which conveys the sense of veneration and is so designated because it indicates that offerings are presented to their [appropriate] recipients.

(iii) As for the classification of offerings, in general, there are mundane and supramundane offerings, while in particular, there are other enumerations, such as the outer offerings of everyday resources (*phyi nyer spyod*), the inner offering of nectar which is a sacrament of commitment (*nang dam rdzas bdud rtsi*), and the secret offerings of profound union and liberation (*gsang ba sbyor sgrol zab mo*); or the fourteen offerings appropriate for the peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi khro'i mchod pa bcu bzhi*).<sup>141</sup>

## MANTRA AND SEALING HAND GESTURES [15.3.1.3.2.10]

Tenth, the [explanation of] mantra and sealing hand gestures is also threefold:

(i) The essential nature [of mantra] denotes the combinations of [Sanskrit] syllables indicative of skillful means and discriminative awareness, and the powerful abilities that come



about through their blessing. The essential nature [of sealing hand gestures] is the means by which awareness does not transgress the [authentic] visualization of the deity's body, in which all the four seals are fully perfected.<sup>142</sup>

(ii) As for the etymology, the [Tibetan term] *sngags* ("mantra") corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *mantra* and is so designated because it is a means of protecting (*tra*) mental consciousness (*man*) with ease and swiftness. The [Tibetan term] *phyag rgya* ("sealing hand gesture") corresponds to the [Sanskrit] term *mudrā* and is designated as such because it denotes a symbol that executes, signifies, or securely seals [the visualization] in such a way that it will be hard to transgress.

(iii) As for the classification [of mantra and sealing hand gestures], in general, the former includes secret mantra (*guhyanmantra*, *gsang sngags*), gnostic mantra (*vidyāmantra*, *rigs sngags*), and mnemonic incantation (*dhāraṇīmantra*, *gzungs sngags*),<sup>143</sup> and in particular, it includes the mantras through which these modalities are accessed, that is, the primary [mantras], which are the unerring causal basis [of the deities] (*rgyu ma nor ba rtsa ba*); the secondary mantras, which generate [the visualization of the deities] (*bskyed pa rkyen*); and the mantras associated with recitation and rituals (*bzlas ba las kyi sngags*).<sup>144</sup>

As for the sealing hand gestures, in general, they include the seals of intrinsic nature (*rang bzhin gyi phyag rgya*), the seals of the view (*lta ba'i phyag rgya*), and the fruitional seals (*'bras bu'i phyag rgya*), which derive respectively from three distinct circumstances, namely, the amalgam of realization (*rtogs tshogs*) that abides atemporally in the maṇḍala of the deities, the process of realization, and its actualization.<sup>145</sup> In particular, with reference to the superior meditative stability, it says in the *Clarification of Commitments*:

There are four kinds of seal:  
The commitment seal [of buddha mind],  
The action seal [of buddha activity],  
The doctrinal seal [of buddha speech],

And the great seal of buddha body.<sup>146</sup>

## **THE INTERRELATED PURPOSES OF THE TANTRA [15.3.1.4]**

The fourth aspect [of the third main topic, see above, p. 17] concerns the interrelated purposes of the tantra. [It comments on the verse:]

**There are four interrelated aspects [of tantra]:  
The expressed meaning, the purpose, and the [two]  
innermost purposes.**

In this context, the expressed meaning (*brjod par bya ba*) denotes the continuum of the natural [ground] that is illustrated [in this tantra text], and the expressive words (*rjod par byed pa*) denote the tantra text itself, which is composed of illustrative syllables in order that the meaning might be comprehended.<sup>147</sup>

The purpose (*dgos pa*) is to understand the expressed meanings dependent on the expressive words. The subtle innermost purpose (*nying dgos phra mo*) is to attain the common spiritual accomplishments by experientially cultivating the meanings one has understood in that manner. The supreme innermost purpose (*nying dgos mchog*) is to actualize the supreme spiritual accomplishment of the great seal, in which [the paths of] learning and no-more-learning are integrated.

Now, the expressed meaning and the expressive words are interrelated, respectively as the object of knowledge and the means of knowing. The expressive words and the purpose are interrelated as skillful means arising from skillful means. The purpose and the innermost purpose are interrelated as one arising from the other. The innermost purpose and the expressed meaning are interrelated on the basis of their

essential identity.

Why, you may ask, are these called the interrelated purposes of the tantra (*rgyud kyi dgos 'brel*)? It is because even when there is no actual attainment of the fruitional and culminating goal, [the goal] is not achieved but the relationship [between the expressed meaning and its expressive words] is still established.

When classified, there are two sorts of interrelated purposes: those that pertain to the path of liberation and those that pertain to the path of skillful means. In this work, the latter is left aside.<sup>148</sup>

## **THE INSTRUCTION OF THE RETINUE AND THE ENTRUSTMENT OF THE TEACHINGS [15.3.1.5]**

The fifth aspect [of the third main topic, see above, p. 17] concerns the instruction of the retinue and the entrustment of the teachings. [It comments on the verse:]

**The instruction and entrustment are conferred,  
Without vacillating and without lapsing,  
Upon three [kinds of recipients].**

In order that this nucleus of the teaching might be safeguarded without degeneration, it should be imparted and entrusted to the [appropriate] retinues.<sup>149</sup> Why, you may ask, is this called “instruction and entrustment” (*gdams gtad*)? It is because the instruction is imparted without vacillating from the continuum of the natural [ground] and because it is entrusted with the words “Retain it without lapsing from the continuum of the path!”<sup>150</sup>

## IMPARTING THE INSTRUCTIONS [15.3.1.5.1]

When classified, this topic has two aspects, among which the first concerns the instruction (*gdams pa*). Here, the two verses commencing [ch. 22:2]: “O! O! These natural expressions of the ten directions and four times [are the essential nature of the tathāgatas]” suggest that the entire content of this tantra text is subsumed in four modes of vision (*snang ba bzhi*), namely, (i) the vision of bewilderment that is to be purified (*'khrul snang dag bya*); (ii) the vision of the ground that is to be known (*gzhi snang shes bya*); (iii) the vision of the path that is to be traversed (*lam snang bgrod bya*); and (iv) the vision of the result that is to be attained (*'bras snang thob bya*).<sup>151</sup> In this way, the instruction [of this tantra] is imparted without vacillating from the continuum of the natural [ground].

## ENTRUSTMENT [15.3.1.5.2]

Then, concerning [the second aspect,] the [recipients of] entrustment (*gtad pa*), it says in the [*Illuminating Lamp of the Fundamental Text*]:

These include the [historical] compilers, as well as  
females

And yogins endowed with the eye [of the doctrine].<sup>152</sup>

Accordingly, this tantra is entrusted to its historical compilers, as well as to individuals of the future who will be endowed with the eye of the doctrine, as well as to the *mātaraḥ* and the *ḍākinī*.

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE WORDS OF THE *GUHYAGARBHA TANTRA* [15.3.2]

The second section [of the third main topic, intended for those of moderate acumen] concerns the classification [of the tantra] based on its actual words. [This comments on the verses:]

**Tantras, composed of syllables, words, and phrases,  
Include tantras that manifest [as nonverbalized  
words],**

**Tantras that [verbally] resonate, and tantras that are  
symbolic [in form].**

**[In this case] the root tantra includes the prologue,  
the main text, and the conclusion.**

**The prologue includes the title and [verses of]  
homage.**

**The main text includes the inception and two modes  
of diffusion,**

**Comprising the ground, path, and result of the  
peaceful and wrathful deities.**

**The inception includes the introductory narrative,  
The initiation of the discourse, and the  
establishment [of all phenomena].**

**In the section on the peaceful deities,**

**The ground has seven chapters, the path has three,  
and the result has one.**

**In the section on the wrathful deities,**

**The ground has one chapter, the path has five, and  
the result has one.**

**Together with [the final chapter on] the instruction  
and entrustment,**

**The text altogether has twenty-two chapters.**

Words (*ming*) are formed from the aggregate of syllables (*yi ge 'dus pa*); [syntactically bound] phrases (*tshig*) from the

aggregate of words; and verses, prose, and chapters from the aggregate of phrases. This process continues sequentially until a whole volume [takes shape]. It is on this basis that the literary tantras of textual composition (*gzhung tshogs yi ge'i rgyud*) or the tantras of expressive words (*rjod byed sgra'i rgyud*) which can illustrate the tantras of expressed meaning (*brjod bya don gyi rgyud*) are formed.

On the basis of its expressive words alone, the following are differentiated: (i) the meaning of the tantra that manifests in and of itself in the minds of those forming the actual retinue, who have themselves emanated from the Buddha's pristine cognition; (ii) the tantra that verbally manifests (*sgrar snang ba'i rgyud*), that is to say, the tantra text composed of nouns, phrases, and syllables, through which that same [meaning] arises in the form of [ideal] word universals (*sgra spyi*) in the minds of future trainees; (iii) the tantra, in conformity with that, which resonates as sound (*sgrar grags pa'i rgyud*), and is verbalized phonetically through contact of the articulators with their places of articulation and so forth; and (iv) the symbolic tantra text (*brdar gyur pa'i rgyud gzhung*) functioning as an expressive support for that [verbal tantra], in which letters are externally arranged in book form.

Why, you may ask, is the term "verbal tantra" (*sgra'i rgyud*) so designated? The [Tibetan term] *sgra* ("sound") suggests that the actual expressed meaning manifests and resonates as expressive sound. The [Tibetan term] *rgyud* ("tantra") suggests either that there is a continuity to the textual composition, including its verses, or that the five component parts of the text, commencing with the introductory narrative, are interrelated in the manner of primary causes, secondary conditions, and results. Elsewhere [it is said that] the expressive words are also designated as tantra because it is through them that the expressed [meaning] obtains the name *tantra*.

When classified, [this cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation*] includes both root tantras (*rtsa ba'i rgyud*) and exegetical tantras (*bshad pa'i rgyud*). Among them, the root tantra has

three sections: prologue (*klad kyi don*), main text (*gzhung gi don*), and conclusion (*mjug gi don*). The prologue includes both the title (*mtshan don*) and the translator's verses of homage (*'gyur phyag*). The main text includes both the inception (*'char tshul*) and the diffusion (*'phros tshul*). The diffusion includes both the diffusion of the peaceful deities (*zhi ba'i 'phros tshul*) and the diffusion of the wrathful deities (*khro bo'i 'phros tshul*), and each of these is divided according to the three [continua] of ground, path, and result.

The text altogether has twenty-two chapters: The inception (*'char tshul*) comprises three chapters, including the first, which concerns the introductory narrative (*gleng gzhi*); the second, which concerns the initiation of the discourse (*gleng bslang*); and the third, which concerns the establishment [of all phenomena] (*gtan phab*).

Within the diffusion, the ground of the peaceful deities (*zhi ba'i gzhi*) comprises seven chapters, including the fourth, which concerns the cyclical array of the cloud mass of letters (*yi ge sprin gyi dkyil 'khor dgod pa*); the fifth, which concerns the attainment (*sgrub pa*) [of the *Net of Magical Emanation*]; the sixth, which concerns the maṇḍala of buddha mind or meditative stability (*thugs ting nge 'dzin gyi dkyil 'khor*); the seventh, which concerns the maṇḍala of buddha speech or mantra (*gsung sngags kyi dkyil 'khor*); the eighth, which concerns the maṇḍala of buddha body or gestures of sealing (*sku phyag rgya'i dkyil 'khor*); the ninth, which concerns the maṇḍala of illustrative imagery (*dpe gzugs brnyan gyi dkyil 'khor*); and the tenth, which concerns the conferral of empowerment (*dbang bskur ba*).

The path [of the peaceful deities] (*zhi ba'i lam*) comprises three chapters, including the eleventh, which concerns the generation stage of meditation (*bskyed rim*); the twelfth, which concerns the accumulation of the communion ceremony (*tshogs bsags pa*); and the thirteenth, which concerns the perfection stage (*rdzogs rim*).

The result [of the peaceful deities] (*zhi ba'i 'bras bu*) comprises one chapter, the fourteenth, which concerns the

eulogy (*bstod pa*) [to the peaceful deities].

The ground of the wrathful deities (*khro bo'i gzhi*) comprises one chapter, the fifteenth. The path [of the wrathful deities] comprises five chapters, including the sixteenth, which concerns the mantras (*sngags*); the seventeenth, which concerns the maṇḍala (*dkyil 'khor*); the eighteenth, which concerns offerings (*mchod pa*); the nineteenth, which concerns commitments (*dam tshig*); and the twentieth, which concerns enlightened activities (*phrin las*). The result [of the wrathful deities] (*'bras bu*) comprises one chapter, the twenty-first, which concerns the eulogy (*bstod pa*) [to the wrathful deities].

The twenty-second chapter concerns the perfect entrustment (*yongs gtad*) [of this tantra for the sake of posterity].

## THE INTERLINEAR COMMENTARY [15.4]

The fourth main topic [of Book 15, see above, p. 5] is an extensive exegesis of the content of the tantra, in the form of an interlinear commentary (*'bru 'grel*). This comprises (i) the meaning of the title [of the text] (15.4.1); (ii) the meaning of the verse of homage (15.4.2); and (iii) the meaning of the actual text (15.4.3).

### THE MEANING OF THE TITLE [15.4.1]

First, [the section on] the meaning of the title [comments on the verses]:

**There now follows the extensive interlinear exegesis,  
Which is for the sake of those of lowest acumen.  
As for the meaning of the title,**



***Glorious* refers to all that is perfect;  
*Secret* has two meanings, including *concealed*;  
*Nucleus* has three meanings;  
*The real nature* has three meanings;  
*Definitive* refers to the conclusive [teachings];  
*Tantra* has three meanings;  
And [*kingly* implies that] this is the king among  
vehicles.**

### ***Root Tantra (Title)***

In SaŚrīguhyagarbhatattvaviniścayamahātantrarāja-nāma  
nskrit:

In Tib །། །དཔལ་གསང་བའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་རྣམ་པར་ངེས་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་  
etan: ལྷུང་ཚེན་པོའི་རྒྱལ་པོ། །

In EnThe Great Kingly Tantra of the Glorious Secret  
glish: *Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The introductory part of this lucid interlinear exegesis that expounds the *Root Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* for the sake of individuals of lowest acumen begins with the presentation of the title of the text. This exegesis of the title includes (i) a general explanation of the implied meaning (*dgos pa'i don*) and (ii) a detailed presentation of the actual meaning (*dngos don*).

## **THE IMPLIED MEANING OF THE TITLE [15.4.1.1]**

The former has three aspects:

(i) There are meanings that are understood dependent on names. Just as a bulbous, narrow-based object for pouring water may be understood from the designation *jar*, so one might extrapolate from the title of this text that all things are revealed to be present within the unique maṇḍala of primordial buddhahood. Those of keenest potential need implicitly realize only that.

(ii) There are names that are understood dependent on meanings. Just as a bulbous object may be understood and labeled as a jar, so the meaning of buddhahood in the primordial maṇḍala is itself understood to be expressed in the title [of this text]. Those of moderate potential need implicitly understand all things simply in terms of their designations, as soon as they have been designated.

(iii) There are names and meanings that are consciously understood to be interrelated. Just as the designation *jar* and its bulbous shape are not different, so the title of the text and its meaning can be known without differentiation. Those of dull potential need implicitly comprehend, over a prolonged period, the indivisible nature of words and their meanings.

Moreover, those who can understand meanings from names need implicitly know [from the title of this text] that all things are identified as primordial buddhahood, just as the label on a medicine renders it easy to locate, or as the label on a soldier's arrow renders its provenance identifiable.<sup>153</sup>

## **THE ACTUAL MEANING OF THE TITLE [15.4.1.2]**

The latter—the detailed presentation of the actual meaning [of the title]—has the following seven aspects:

(i) The term glorious refers to the spontaneous presence of the two buddha bodies of form (*gzugs sku gnyis*), which appear without straying from the buddha body of actual reality (*chos kyi sku*), and to all the enlightened attributes that are spontaneously present for the benefit of self and others, abiding with them, in indivisible perfection. It is said in the *Tantra of the Rutting Elephant*:

Without moving from the buddha body of actual reality,  
The fivefold buddha body of form becomes  
spontaneously present,  
And thereby the two kinds of benefit are perfected.  
Thus glory displays spontaneity and perfection  
together.<sup>154</sup>

(ii) The term **secret** refers to the inconceivable mystery of the mind of all the conquerors, where cyclic existence and nirvāṇa abide in sameness because their abiding nature, the actual truth, is naturally pure from the beginning. Because this reality is profound and hard to fathom, it is most difficult to realize. Therefore it is secret.<sup>155</sup>

As for the modalities of secrecy, there are both “hidden” (*gab*) and “concealed” (*sbas*) aspects based on the distinctions between those for whom its realization is not appropriate. Those from whom [this mystery] is hidden include all those individuals whose minds are bewildered. As for the manner in which it remains hidden to them, although the tantra of the natural [ground] that is to be illustrated—the abiding nature and actual truth—abides naturally present, in and of itself, it has been obscured by adventitious obscurations and thoughts and is therefore unperceived, just like a treasure buried underground beneath the house of a pauper. Therefore, it is hidden. As it says in the *Tantra of the Awakening of Vairocana*:

Those who do not know this modality,  
Obscured by puerile ignorance,

Search elsewhere for the buddha,  
But he abides therein, completely perfect!<sup>156</sup>

As for the “concealed” sense of secrecy, that which remains concealed is the perfect view of the unsurpassed way of secret mantra, along with its marvelous modes of meditation and conduct. Those from whom it should be concealed include immature recipients, such as practitioners of the lower vehicles, ordinary persons who are lustful, and so forth. This is because [the mystery of buddha mind] is not appropriate for their perceptual range. If it were not concealed, they would not consequently be able to withstand false superimpositions and deprecations, and so they would fall into inferior realms, and the secret approach would itself be diminished on account of their investigations. As for the manner in which it remains concealed to them, it is presented symbolically, and so forth. As is stated in the *Clarification of Commitments*:

The secret mantras are flawless.  
For the sake of sentient beings they are kept most  
secret.  
When they are kept secret, their spiritual  
accomplishment does not fade.  
Therefore, for the sake of secrecy,  
Various pure symbolic conventions are presented.<sup>157</sup>

(iii) As for the term **nucleus**, the [Tibetan] *snying po* corresponds to three [Sanskrit] terms: *sāra* (“essence”), *hṛdaya* (“heart”), and *garbha* (“nucleus”/ “womb”). Among them, *sāra* conveys the sense of the ground—a single entity from which multiplicity emanates, implying that all things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa emerge from the continuum of the natural [ground] that is to be illustrated, based on whether it is realized or unrealized, and it may be rendered [in Tibetan] as “nucleus” (*snying po*) because this continuum that is being established is also the emanational ground of all teachings. As is said [ch. 3:18]:

[All doctrines] renowned throughout the ten directions  
Emanate from the *Secret Nucleus*.

*Hṛdaya* conveys the sense of something that is to be cherished—like vitality or the heart, because whatever gateway to the [Buddhist] vehicles one enters, one cannot go beyond this unique path that reaches the culminating goal; and it may be rendered [in Tibetan] as “nucleus” (*snying po*) because all beings desirous of liberation depend upon it. As is said [ch. 13:16):

This is the most secret result [gained]  
By those who well abide in excellent refinement,  
Over aeons equal to the number of atoms in the fields,  
And by those who perform the ritual service  
Of all maṇḍalas without exception.

*Garbha* conveys the sense of the pith within bark, and it may be rendered [in Tibetan] as “nucleus” (*snying po*) because the establishment of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa in sameness, owing to the primordial purity of the entire amalgam of ideation in the essential nature of the deities, abides at the center or gathers the essence, inasmuch as it is the natural expression of all things.<sup>158</sup> It says in the *Extensive [Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters]*:

All the inconceivable vehicles that lead to liberation are  
gathered  
In these great skillful means that realize the unsurpassed  
truth.<sup>159</sup>

And in the *Tantra of the Indestructible Garland*:

The seed that abides in the center of all things  
Is pervasive but is not within perceptual range.<sup>160</sup>

(iv) The term **the real** conveys three distinct meanings: [First,] it denotes the real nature of the causal basis (*rgyu'i de*

*kho na nyid*) because the result will unfailingly emerge when one settles into the self-originated pristine cognition, where appearances and emptiness are indivisible, uncontrived by the meditating intellect. [Second,] it denotes the real nature of the result (*'bras bu'i de kho na nyid*) because this reality is naturally present in the fruitional maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition, and there are no erroneous phenomena to be dispelled. [Third,] it denotes the real nature of the common savor of cause and result (*rgyu 'bras ro gcig pa'i de kho na nyid*) because there is no other phenomenon to be known or accomplished that would detract from this natural pristine cognition of the indivisible truth, and it is devoid of superimpositions and deprecations, inasmuch as it lacks the slightest distinction between cause and result.<sup>161</sup>

(v) The term **definitive** here refers not, for example, to the [teachings on] skillful means that are not to be squandered, which merely present the provisional meaning for the sake of trainees of low fortune, but to those that present the meaning, just as it was comprehended by the conquerors, for the sake of those of sharpest acumen.<sup>162</sup> As it is said [ch. 13:20]:

For all the maṇḍalas of the conquerors, without exception,  
Apart from this, there is no secret definitive meaning.

(vi) The term **tantra** refers to the thread interconnecting the seed of buddha nature (*sugatagarbha*), which is the continuum of the ground; the scriptural transmissions and realizations, which form the continuum of the path; and the spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies, which constitutes the continuum of the result.

(vii) The term **kingly** implies that this [tantra text] is the progenitor or apex (*rtse rgyal*) of all the vehicles. As is said in the *Extensive Exegetical Tantra [of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters]*:

As for the king of intrinsic awareness  
Which realizes the truth of sameness,  
Just as all rivers flow into great oceans,

~ All the inconceivable liberating vehicles without  
exception  
Converge in these great skillful means that realize the  
unsurpassed truth.<sup>163</sup>

## **THE MEANING OF THE VERSE OF HOMAGE [15.4.2]**

The second part [of the interlinear commentary that constitutes the fourth main point of Book 15, see above, [p. 38](#)] concerns the meaning of the verse of homage. [This comments on the verse:]

**[Endowed with] renunciation and realization,  
Transcending conceptual elaborations,  
Spontaneously perfect, and positive at all times—  
This homage to supreme [Samantabhadra]**

**Completes the prologue.**

### ***Root Tantra (Homage)***

།བཙེམ་ལྷན་འདས་དཔལ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།

Homage to the Transcendent Lord, glorious  
Samantabhadra!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to this verse of homage [which precedes the text, the term **Transcendent Lord** (*bcom ldan 'das*) is explained as follows]: the excellence of [the buddhas'] renunciation refers to the abandonment of the four demonic forces, the two obscurations and their propensities, which have all been subdued (*bcom*). Among these, the four demonic forces are (i) the lord of death, who interrupts the life span (*mṛtyupatimāra*, *'chi bdag gi bdud*); (ii) the divine prince, who interrupts meditative stability (*devaputramāra*, *lha'i bu'i bdud*); (iii) the psychophysical aggregates, which interrupt the attainment of nonresidual [nirvāṇa] (*skandhamāra*, *phung po'i bdud*); and (iv) the afflictive mental states, which interrupt release [from rebirth in cyclic existence] (*kleśamāra*, *nyon mongs pa'i bdud*).<sup>164</sup> These are designated as having been subdued [by the Transcendent Lord] because he does not possess them from the beginning.

The two obscurations include the obscuration of afflictive mental states (*kleśāvaraṇa*, *nyon mong gi sgrib pa*) and the obscuration of knowledge (*jñeyāvaraṇa*, *shes bya'i sgrib pa*). As such these respectively comprise thoughts arising from the particular characteristics of the five poisons and the mind that clings to purificatory antidotes.<sup>165</sup> It says in the *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*:

Concepts that concern miserliness and so forth  
 Signify the obscuration of afflictive mental states;  
 Concepts that concern the three aspects<sup>166</sup>  
 Signify the obscuration of knowledge.<sup>167</sup>

By contrast, the excellence of realization that is possessed (*ldan*) [by the Transcendent Lord] comprises the [various modalities of] buddha body and pristine cognition, which are present without conjunction or disjunction. Accordingly, the *Tantra of Embrace* says:

The excellence of lordship, noble form,  
 Glory, fame, pristine cognition, and perseverance.



glory, fame, pristine cognition, and perseverance.  
These six are said to be “possessed” [by the  
Transcendent Lord].<sup>168</sup>

“Lordship” (*dbang phyug*) refers to the purity of the essential buddha body of actual reality and its [pristine cognition] of reality’s expanse. “Noble form” (*gzugs bzang*) refers to the buddha body of perfect resource and its mirrorlike [pristine cognition]. “Glory” (*dpal*) refers to the buddha body of awakening and its [pristine cognition] of sameness. “Fame” and “pristine cognition” (*grags dang ye shes*) refer to the buddha body of emanation, which performs acts of benefit through its definitive and quantitative understanding, and so to its [pristine cognition] of discernment. “Perseverance” (*brtson ’grus*) refers to the unchanging buddha body of indestructible reality itself, which manifests limitless enlightened activities without moving from the expanse [of reality], and so to [the pristine cognition] of accomplishment.<sup>169</sup>

The term “excellence” (*phun sum tshogs pa*), which is appended to these five [qualities] beginning with lordship, indicates that they surpass the pristine cognition of even sublime trainees.<sup>170</sup>

There are also some who interpret the Tibetan term *bcom ldan* to indicate only that the [aforementioned negative] objects have been subdued (*bcom pa*).

The term **transcendent** (*’das*) indicates that [the buddhas] have transcended all symbols of elaborate conception—cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, acceptance and rejection, or being and nonbeing. It says in the *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*:

Liberated from existence and quiescence,  
Indivisible from the ocean of enlightened attributes,  
Transcending all elaborate conceptions,  
The Transcendent Lord is spacious quiescence.<sup>171</sup>

The term **glorious** refers to the extraneous glory (*gzhan gyi dpal*), associated with the buddha body of form, which, without

straying from the expanse of the buddha body of actual reality, spontaneously arises from its disposition.

As to the term **Samantabhadra** (Kun tu bzang po; the “all-positive” one), the natural inexhaustible wheels of adornment, the buddha body, speech, and mind, are present at all (*kun tu*) times because they are unchanging in the field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array; and their great resources, which manifest in and of themselves, are positive (*bzang po*) because they are endowed with perfection.<sup>172</sup> As is said in the *Tantra of the Secret of Pristine Cognition*:

This nature is unmoving, spontaneously perfect,  
And all-positive in its perceptual range.<sup>173</sup>

The term **homage** means that those translators who resort to this very object [of refuge, i.e., Samantabhadra] sincerely commit their body, speech, and mind. It is not the case, as some opine, that homage is made to the compiler [of the tantra text], because no such custom is observed in Sanskrit sources. The *Short Commentary* does include an invocation of offering (*mchod brjod*) to its [compiler] but not as a commentary on this specific verse of homage.<sup>174</sup>

## THE MEANING OF THE MAIN TEXT [15.4.3]

The third part [of the interlinear commentary that constitutes the fourth main topic of Book 15, see above, p. 38] concerns the meaning of the main text (*gzhung don*). [It commences with ch. 1 of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*.]

## 1. THE INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE

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The purpose of the first chapter is to present the buddha body of actual reality (*dharmakāya*), manifesting naturally in the Akaniṣṭha Ghanavyūha realm in the form of Samantabhadra, since this is the setting of the introductory narrative, on the basis of which the entire tantra text is expounded. The buddha body of actual reality is endowed with five excellent circumstances that are symbolized by the initial stock phrase (v. 1) “Thus at the time of this explanation” (*’di skad bshad pa’i dus na*), and these are interpreted differently according to the outer tantras, the inner path of skillful means, and the secret inner radiance of the Great Perfection.

Chapter 1 demonstrates the excellence of Samantabhadra, the perfect resource of all the buddhas (v. 2), which is classified according to the excellent circumstance of its location, its expositors, and its audience or retinue of listeners. The excellent location in which this tantra is revealed is none other than the Akaniṣṭha or Ghanavyūha field associated with all three buddha bodies (v. 3) and within it the celestial palace (v. 4) adorned by an excellent array of teaching thrones (v. 5). The excellent expositors of this tantra are endowed with the distinctive marks of buddha body and diverse physical postures, hand emblems, and heads (v. 6); they include the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families who embody diverse aspects of pristine cognition and are the natural purity of the psychophysical aggregates and elements (vv. 7–8). Vajrasattva or Vairocana may be found at the center of this maṇḍala, depending respectively upon the Mahāyoga and Atiyoga perspectives of our text. The excellent retinue, which is the natural retinue of Samantabhadra, comprises

sixteen bodhisattvas who are classified as male and female and as inner and outer (vv. 9-12), along with the eight male and female gatekeepers who guard the four directions of the natural maṇḍala (vv. 13-14).

The chapter concludes with a synopsis of this naturally manifesting array of pristine cognition or buddha mind: its source is the indestructible reality of buddhahood (v. 15), its disposition of compassionate spirituality is the buddha body of perfect resource (v. 16), its pure manifestation occurs in the meditative stabilities of the buddhas (v. 17), and its nature is identified with the five inexhaustible adornments of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities (v. 18).

THIS (15.4.3.1) COMPRISES (i) a brief presentation of the introductory narrative, which is endowed with the [five] excellences (15.4.3.1.1); (ii) an extensive exegesis of its nature (15.4.3.1.2); and (iii) a synopsis of pristine cognition's self-manifesting array (15.4.3.1.3).

## **A BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE [15.4.3.1.1]**

Among them, the first [comments on the verse]:

**The introductory narrative is endowed with the  
excellences  
Of the sacred doctrine, time [and so forth].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:1)***

།འདི་སྐད་བཤད་པའི་དུས་ན།

Thus, at the time of this explanation . . .

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

This [opening] line of the tantra text has outer, inner, and secret explanations.<sup>175</sup>

## **ACCORDING TO THE OUTER TANTRAS [15.4.3.1.1.1]**

Among them, the first is the explanation that accords with the introductory narrative of the outer tantras. This should be understood in terms of the [original corresponding Sanskrit expression] *Evaṃ mayā*. Since the syllables *Evaṃ* are indicative of reality's expanse from which the entire [cloud mass of syllables] arises, [the Tibetan equivalent] *'di skad* [rendered as **thus** in English] heralds the imminent emergence [of this tantra]. *Mayā* is a [Sanskrit] term meaning “intrinsic nature,” “magical display,” “by me” [personal pronoun, instrumental case], “emergence,” and so on.<sup>176</sup> However, in this context, it suggests the sense of “emergence,” indicating **the** [imminent] **time of this** tantra's **explanation**. So, the word **thus** refers to the excellence of the sacred doctrine—the extensive [words of] the tantra text that follows.

The term **explanation** implies the excellence of the teacher, that is, the compiler [of the tantra text]. The excellence of the retinue, or the attendants [of the teacher], is equally implicit in the words **of this explanation**. However, the words “I have heard” (*bdag gis thos pa*) [which commonly appear as a stock phrase of canonicity introducing the sacred scriptures] are not uttered on this occasion because there is no subject-object dichotomy. The words “have heard” (*thos pa*) imply a

distinction between the teacher and the retinue, whereas in the course of compiling this [*Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*], the teacher [the primordial buddha] himself appears as the Lord of Secrets [Vajrapāṇi] and says, “I must explain in this world at the present time the very teaching that I previously gave in Akaniṣṭha.” This circumstance is therefore deemed to surpass those of the ordinary compilers [of the sūtra texts] such as the elder Kāśyapa. On this theme of the compiler being identified with the teacher [Samantabhadra], it says in the *Tantra of the Nondual Victor*:

One should know Vajrapāṇi to be the tathāgata  
Samantabhadra, and the great Vajradhara to be none  
other than he.

Otherwise, who could enunciate [the teachings], having  
comprehended the inconceivable vehicles at any one  
particular moment in time?<sup>177</sup>

The *Verification of Secrets* also says:

The teacher of tantra is the indestructible reality of  
buddha mind.

It is the teacher as well as compiler.<sup>178</sup>

And in the glorious *Tantra of Hevajra*:

I am the teacher, and I am the sacred doctrine.

Endowed with my own assembly, I am even the listener.<sup>179</sup>

The words **at the time of** refer to the excellence of time, the nature of which is the pristine cognition of sameness, [unchanging] throughout the four times, without duality between cyclic existence and nirvāṇa. Similarly, at the time when the teacher appears with his retinue and sacred doctrines, this undoubtedly occurs in a specific spatial location—implicitly Akaniṣṭha [in the case of the outer tantras].

Why, on the other hand, you may ask, are the words “on a certain occasion” (*ekasmin eva samaya, dus gcig na*) [which

also commonly appear within the stock phrase introducing sacred scriptures] not found as they are in [many] other texts? The point is that in this [Akaniṣṭha] field of the buddha body of perfect resource, the sacred doctrines are taught in a perpetual continuous cycle, transcending those [teachings] associated [with one specific point in time], which are identified by the words “[I] have heard on a certain occasion.” This surpasses the doctrines delivered by the buddha body of emanation which were taught at certain times only, in accordance with the rationale that [their occasional timing] “was due to the rare occurrence of the ordinary [teachings].”<sup>180</sup>

## ACCORDING TO THE INNER TANTRAS [15.4.3.1.1.2]

The second is the explanation [of this same introductory line] in accordance with the [teaching on] generative essences (*byang chub sems*) [within the subtle body], as expounded in the inner tantras: Concerning this, it says in the *Tantra of Penetration* [from the *Net of Magical Emanation*]:<sup>181</sup>

[As for the expression *'di skad*, meaning **thus**:  
'*Di* denotes the [excellence of] location,  
Endowed with the shapes of the four syllables,  
Beginning with the syllable ॐ;

The generative essence

Endowed with the shape of the syllable *VAM*,

Named after the consonantal syllable *skad*,

Denotes the [excellence of] the teacher.

The term *MADUMANU* [extrapolated from the syllable *MA*]

Implies the “controlling mental faculty”

[And denotes the excellence of the retinue]—

Those of worthy consciousness by whom

**This explanation** (*bshad*) is maintained with clear understanding;

**Of** (the possessive affix *-pa*) denotes this tantra

Of ultimate definitive meaning,

[The excellence of the sacred doctrine,]

While the term *YANA* [extrapolated from the syllable *YĀ*]

Denotes this supreme vehicle.

**The time** (*dus*) denotes [the excellence of] inconceivable time,

And **at** (*na*) implies [the Sanskrit] *NĀMA*, meaning *name*.<sup>182</sup>

[To explain these verses, the Tibetan] *'di* refers to the [excellence of] the location, symbolized by the syllable *E*, where the secret teacher and retinue abide. This location includes the triangular vaginal entrance (*bha ga sgo gru gsum*) of the female consort, the rectangular vaginal courtyard (*khyams gru bzhi*), the semicircular womb (*skye gnas zla gam*), and the round channel end (*dbyings phyug gi sne rtsa zlum po*), which respectively assume the shapes appropriate for the four rites [of burnt offering], symbolized by [the four letters beginning with] the syllable *E* [i.e., *e vaṃ ma yā*].

[The Tibetan] *skad* refers to the [excellence of] the teacher, symbolized by the syllable *VAM*. The generative essence of the pristine cognition (*ye shes kyi thig le*) of relative appearance, which concentrates the nutrients of thirteen million energy channels at the tip of the glans penis (*rdo rje nor bu*) of the male, assumes the shape of the syllable *VAM* and indicates the teacher because it is identified with the clear demonstration of



bliss in the minds of both male and female.

**This explanation** denotes [the excellence of] the retinue, symbolized by the syllable MA. [The Sanskrit] *mada* implies “controlling,” and *manu* indicates the mental faculty, so this term suggests the retinue because the secret consciousness, endowed with the skillful means that controls [the movement of vital energy], experientially cultivates pristine cognition.

**Of** [the possessive affix *-pa*], symbolized by the syllable YĀ, denotes [the excellence of the sacred doctrine of] the Great Vehicle (*theg pa chen po*), because it is extrapolated from the [Sanskrit] *yāna* (“vehicle”). Why so? you may ask. It is because [*pa*] stands for [Sanskrit] *paramārtha*—the ultimate reality, the natural coemergent pristine cognition of supreme bliss, which is endowed with the four modes of liberation (*rnam thar bzhi*) at the conclusion of the sixteen delights (*dga’ ba bcu drug*), in which the five aspects of the generative essences (*byang sems lnga*) that are to be experientially cultivated are perfected.<sup>183</sup>

As for the [Tibetan expression] *dus na* (“at the time”), here **the time** (*dus*), which is [also] symbolized by the syllable YĀ, refers to [the excellence of] inconceivable time because this time at which that [ultimate reality] is experienced cannot be defined.

**At** (*na*), which is a [locative] termination, indicates the names of these five excellences combined, in that it implies the [Sanskrit] *nāma* (“name”).<sup>184</sup>

## ACCORDING TO THE SECRET INNER RADIANCE [15.4.3.1.1.3]

The third is the explanation [of this same introductory line] that accords with the [teachings on] the secret inner radiance (*gsang ba ’od gsal*): Here, the [excellence of] *location* is the dark blue energy channel of life within the eight-faceted

precious gem of the heart center [within the subtle body]. Separating from it, in the manner of [strands from] a yak-hair tent rope, are the white energy channel of water in the east, the yellow energy channel of earth in the south, the red energy channel of fire in the west, and the green energy channel of wind in the north. And within them, there abides a single discernible vital essence of relative appearance, the size of a mustard seed.

Thereupon, [the excellence of] the *teacher* appears as the naturally present five pristine cognitions in their distinct and respective colors, and as the five afflictive mental states that are the natural energy of buddha mind,<sup>185</sup> endowed with the five pristine cognitions. The essential nature [of the teacher] is emptiness, his natural expression is radiance, and the incandescence of his compassionate spirituality is unimpeded.

The [excellence of] *retinue* refers to the energy channels that permeate the upper and lower [energy centers] of the body, emanating from those [aforementioned] energy channels [of the heart center] and [its] vital essences. In the midst of the five [colored] lights, these naturally radiate as the buddha bodies and pristine cognitions of the enlightened families.

The [excellence of] *time* indicates a time of sameness with respect to all the four times. This is because the provisional, dependently originated circumstances of the physical body and its sense faculties are interrupted<sup>186</sup> and because the nature [of this reality] does not change throughout the past, present, and future.

The [excellence of] the *sacred doctrine* refers to pristine cognition free from conceptual elaboration, [the coalescence of] emptiness and radiance. The vital energy of supreme pristine cognition is retained within the upper [energy centers of the subtle body] and manifests in and of itself when all erratic movements of the vital energy of past actions have been impeded. At the moment of death this [experience] is actualized because the thought [naturally] arises that consciousness is riding on the vital energy. At that time the Akaniṣṭha realm, the maṇḍala of indestructible reality's

expanse, is supported from the heart center. Manifesting in and of itself, it is recognized to be Akaniṣṭha, and so one is liberated.<sup>187</sup> As is said in the *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*:

The location of the sacred doctrine  
Is the *dharmacakra* [i.e., the heart center],  
Where there are four [colored] lights  
In the shapes of the syllables beginning with E.<sup>188</sup>  
The imperishable point of vital essence  
[Which denotes the excellence of the teacher] is in the  
shape  
Of the syllable VAM,  
A consonant embodying bliss in and of itself.  
“This explanation” [which denotes the retinue]  
Refers to the fourfold consciousness,<sup>189</sup>  
Including the mental faculty (*manu*),  
Which compiles [the teachings] through the experience  
of pristine cognition.  
Pristine cognition, arising in the form of space,  
Is the profound “ultimate” truth (*paramārtha*)  
[Which is the excellence of the sacred doctrine],  
And the actual time [of this] blissful experience [Which  
denotes the excellence of time],  
Inasmuch as it is free from extremes,  
Abides as the essential nature of all the three times.<sup>190</sup>

## **AN EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE [15.4.3.1.2]**

The second section [of the interlinear commentary on ch. 1] is the extensive exegesis of the introductory narrative. This comprises (i) a brief introduction to the essential nature of the

teacher [of this tantra], who is intrinsically endowed with perfect resources (15.4.3.1.2.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis of the classification of perfect resources (15.4.3.1.2.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**At the outset there is a brief introduction to the nature of perfect resources.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:2)***

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་བཙུག་ལྷན་  
འདས། ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ཆེན་པོ་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞིའི་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་  
ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་དང་གསུང་དང་བླགས་རྩོམ་མཛད་ཀྱི་དེ། མ་ལུས་མི་ལུས་  
ལུས་པ་མེད་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་སོ་སོ་མ་ཡིན་ཐ་མི་དད་དབྱེར་མེད་པའི་རང་  
བཞིན་ཏེ།

The Tathāgata, genuinely perfect buddha and transcendent lord, was endowed with great resources that are the embodiment of the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas of the ten directions and four times. This is the intrinsic nature in which all [the excellences of buddha body] are indivisible, indistinguishable, and undifferentiated—nothing has been excluded, nothing is excluded, and nothing will be excluded.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The Tathāgata** (*de bzhin gshegs pa*) is so named because once

power has been obtained with respect to the real nature (*de bzhin nyid*) of the buddha body of actual reality, which like space is without extremes of conceptual elaboration, the four other buddha bodies are always spontaneously present and emerge (*gshegs pa*) because the intrinsic nature of space is in conformity with the buddha body of actual reality.<sup>191</sup> As is said in the *Sūtra Revealing the Inconceivable Secrets of the Tathāgata, from the Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

All that is pervaded by space  
Is also pervaded by buddha body.  
All that is pervaded by buddha body  
Is also pervaded by light.  
All that is pervaded by light  
Is also pervaded by buddha speech.  
All that is pervaded by buddha speech  
Is also pervaded by buddha mind.<sup>192</sup>

Elsewhere [the word *tathāgata, de bzhin gshegs pa*] is explained to mean “one who has departed (*gshegs pa*) in the wake of the conquerors of the past,” “one who has departed (*gshegs pa*) having relished the appearance of the desirable attributes [of the senses] through skillful means, just as (*de bzhin*) they appear,” or “one who has emerged (*gshegs pa*) in accordance with (*de bzhin*) womb birth corresponding to the aspirations of sentient beings who partake of four different modes of birth,” and so forth. Although these definitions correspond to the gradual stages of the [sūtra] path that was promulgated by the buddha body of emanation, the term *tathāgata* is not, however, to be interpreted as such in this context.

As for the expression **genuinely perfect buddha** (*sangs rgyas*), one in whom all enlightened attributes, the ornamental wheels of buddha body, speech, and mind, are without exception genuinely perfect is [designated] a teacher or buddha, cleansed (*sangs*) of the sleep of fundamental ignorance and vast (*rgyas*) in the excellence of intelligence with respect

to all deeds. As is said in the *Seventy Verses on Going for Refuge*:

Because the sleep of fundamental ignorance has been  
cleansed  
And because his intelligence is vast with respect to objects  
of knowledge,  
The Buddha is indeed extensive, like the petals of a  
lotus.<sup>193</sup>

And in the *Tantra of Supplementary Points from the Net of Magical Emanation*:

Fundamental ignorance itself radiates as pristine  
cognition.  
Afflictive mental states become enlightenment,  
And suffering becomes supreme [bliss].<sup>194</sup>

As for the term **transcendent lord** (*bhagavān*, *bcom ldan 'das*), the nature of this teacher is such that he primordially subdues (*bcom*) the four demonic forces, possesses (*ldan*) the six attributes of greatness (*che ba'i yon tan drug*),<sup>195</sup> and transcends (*'das*) all sorrow, without abiding [in the extremes of existence and quiescence]. Now, the four demonic forces are subdued in the following manner: The demonic force of afflictive mental states (*nyon mongs pa'i bdud*) is subdued because the nature of the five afflictive mental states (*nyon mongs pa lnga*) is primordially present as the five pristine cognitions (*ye shes lnga*), so that they are neither to be accepted nor rejected. Then the demonic force of the lord of death (*'chi bdag gi bdud*) is subdued because, devoid of afflictive mental states, [a buddha] is not born in cyclic existence, and for one who is not born there is no [possibility of] death. The demonic force of the psychophysical aggregates (*phung po'i bdud*) is subdued because if there is no death, the physical body is not conceived at rebirth. The demonic force of the divine prince (*lha'i bu lta bu'i bdud*) is subdued because the

phenomena that would cause obstruction do him no harm.

The transcendence of sorrow without abiding [in extremes] (*apraṭiṣṭhitanirvāṇa, mi gnas pa'i mya ngan las 'das*) refers to the rank of Samantabhadra, who is spontaneously and naturally present for the sake of living beings because he does not abide in the extremes of existence and quiescence. It is incorrect [as some declare] that the term **transcendent** was suffixed by the Tibetans and is not implicitly understood in the [equivalent] Sanskrit [term *bhagavān*]. For it has been taught that one who has accomplished the sense of the word *bhaga* may take recourse to both cyclic existence and nirvāṇa but does not abide in their extremes.

The expression **endowed with great resources** indicates that, without regard for the extraneous circumstances of [excellent] location, retinue, and so forth, the Teacher becomes spontaneously present, in a magical display of meditative stability, self-manifesting as pristine cognition. This surpasses the quite different excellent circumstances associated with the buddha body of emanation and so on, which are [deemed to be] ordinary and therefore not [classed as] “great” resources.<sup>196</sup>

This enlightened intention of the naturally manifesting buddha body of perfect resource is revealed to be all-pervasive and not different from the nature of all things. It **is the supreme identity of the indestructible body, indestructible speech, and indestructible mind of all the tathāgatas**, such as Akṣobhya and Dīpaṅkara who reside throughout the expanse **of the ten directions** of space, such as Abhirati in the east, **and of the four times**—past, present, future, and indefinite. It is undifferentiated and **indistinguishable** from the enlightened intentions associated with **all** the excellent circumstances of the buddha body of actual reality, from **which nothing has been excluded**; all the excellent circumstances of the buddha body of perfect resource, from which **nothing is excluded**; **and** all the excellent circumstances of the buddha body of emanation, from which **nothing will be excluded**.<sup>197</sup> **Undifferentiated** in essence, this [enlightened intention] **is the intrinsic nature, indivisible** with respect to actual reality

because it is spontaneously present, without conjunction or disjunction from the beginning.

In this context, the “fourth time,” over and above the past, present, and future, is said to denote indefinite time [which has the following three aspects]:

(i) The indefinite time of the ground (*gzhi ma nges pa'i dus*) refers to the originally pure true nature of mind and the actual reality or real nature of all things. As is said in the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

Kāśyapa, the real nature of mind and phenomena is indefinite or inconceivable in time because it does not abide in any past, future, or present dimension.<sup>198</sup>

(ii) The indefinite time of the path (*lam ma nges pa'i dus*) refers to the genuine intelligence of the yogin who realizes during meditative equipoise that all things subsumed by the three [conventional] times are uncreated. The *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* alludes to this when it says:

You who realize that the three times are timeless . . .<sup>199</sup>

(iii) The indefinite time of the result (*'bras bu ma nges pa'i dus*) is present in a perpetual continuous cycle because the fruition is unchanging in the field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array. As is said in the *Tantra of the Awakening of Vairocana*:

The magnificent manifestation of pristine cognition occurs in unwavering time because it is naturally radiant.<sup>200</sup>

So it is that all things are gathered within the essential nature of the four times.<sup>201</sup>

**AN EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF PERFECT**



## **RESOURCES [15.4.3.1.2.2]**

The latter [of the two parts on the extensive exegesis] is the [actual] extensive exegesis of the classification of perfect resources. This has three parts, comprising the detailed exegeses of (i) [the excellence of] the location (15.4.3.1.2.2.1); (ii) [the excellence of] the teacher (15.4.3.1.2.2.2); and (iii) [the excellence of] the retinue (15.4.3.1.2.2.3).

### **THE EXCELLENCE OF THE LOCATION [15.4.3.1.2.2.1]**

Among these, the first [the excellence of the location] comprises (i) the field of the buddha body of perfect resource (15.4.3.1.2.2.1.1); (ii) the celestial palace (15.4.3.1.2.2.1.2); and (iii) the excellent array (15.4.3.1.2.2.1.3).

#### **THE FIELD OF THE BUDDHA BODY OF PERFECT RESOURCE [15.4.3.1.2.2.1.1]**

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**In the limitless buddha field of Akaniṣṭha,  
The ground assumes the form of a wheel.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 1:3a)*

འོག་མིན་གྱི་གནས་མཐའ་དང་དབུས་མེད་པ་ན། གཞི་ཚད་མེད་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་  
གྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་གསལ་བ་ལ།

In the abode of Akaniṣṭha, without extremes or center,  
on the radiant wheel of pristine cognitions that is the  
limitless ground . . .

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**The abode of Akaniṣṭha** where the buddha body of perfect resource resides is inconceivable as space, **without** being limited by **extremes or center**, because there is no other [field] higher than this buddha field of the Bounteous Array, supreme among all phenomenal appearances.<sup>202</sup> It is beyond the ten directions, including zenith and nadir. **In** that **limitless** self-manifesting location, **the ground** below is not a spatial dimension to which one can objectively refer. Yet it is naturally **radiant** as a **wheel**, distinct with four spokes and axle, and fashioned of five [colored] lights, which symbolize that the five afflictive mental states are cut off by the unimpeded energy **of** [the five] **pristine cognitions**, beginning with the mirrorlike [pristine cognition], naturally expressed as blue, white, yellow, red, and green, respectively. Thereupon . . .

### **THE CELESTIAL PALACE [15.4.3.1.2.2.1.2]**

The second, concerning the celestial palace [comments on the verse]:

**The celestial palace is fashioned as a square,  
With buttresses and a bulbous spire.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:3b)***

ཡེ་ཤེས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་འབར་བའི་གནལ་ཡས་ཁང་། རྒྱ་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱུ་ཡོངས་  
སྤུ་མ་ཆད་པ། ཡོན་ཏན་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་རྒྱས་པའི་ཕྱིར་གྱུ་བཞིར་གྱུར་  
པ། ལྷག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་སྒོ་འབྱུང་གྱིས་མཛོས་པ། ཅེ་མོ་ཕྱོགས་  
བརྒྱ་དུས་བཞིའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་དྲུག་ལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད།  
སོ་སོ་མ་ཡིན་རོ་ཉིད་གཅིག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀུན་ཏུ་འཁྱེལ་པ། ཡེ་ཤེས་བསམ་  
གྱིས་མི་བྱུང་པ། ཡེ་ཤེས་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་དབྱིབས་དང་ཁ་དོག་ལ་སོགས་པ་  
རྣམས་པ་ཐ་དད་པའི་བྱེ་བྲག་དང་བྱུང་པར་དུ་གྱུར་པ། འཕགས་པ། ཚད་དཔག་  
ཏུ་མེད་པ།

. . . there is the celestial palace, ablaze with jewels of  
pristine cognition, completely unlimited throughout the  
ten directions of space, fashioned as a square because  
it is vast in measureless enlightened attributes, [its  
walls] adorned with buttresses of precious gems which  
are the superior pristine cognition. Its spire is the  
pristine cognition central to all, in which all maṇḍalas  
of the buddhas of the ten directions and four times  
without exception are not distinct from one another and  
are of a single essential nature. This inconceivable  
pristine cognition is distinguished in its distinctive  
details of shape, color, and so forth, forming the  
precious gems of pristine cognition. The palace is

unsurpassed and immeasurable in extent.



FIGURE 2. THREE-DIMENSIONAL CELESTIAL PALACE OF THE *GUHYAGARBHA* AT KATOK. PHOTO BY GYURME DORJE.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The celestial palace** is great because its essential nature, attributes, dimensions, and so forth cannot be intellectually appraised, **ablaze with** the infinite light and sun-like brilliance of **jewels**, in which all that is desired is spontaneously present because it is materialized from the incandescence **of** the five **pristine cognitions**—natural manifestations of emptiness. The dimensions of this palace are conclusively unchanging **throughout the ten directions of space**, and so equal to space, **completely unlimited** because the buddha body,

speech, and mind, its inexhaustible wheels of adornment, are inconceivable. In shape, it is **fashioned as a square because it is** utterly **vast in measureless enlightened attributes** such as the eighteen distinct attributes of the buddhas, the [ten] consummations of the material elements, and the [eight] masteries [of the material elements].

Now, the eighteen distinct attributes of the buddhas (*aṣṭadaśādvenikadharmā, chos ma 'dres pa bco brgyad*) are that the buddha body, speech, and mind are without clumsiness, noise, false memories, unabsorbed mind, differentiating perceptions, and the indifference that lacks discernment—six; that they do not degenerate in their resolution, perseverance, recollection, meditative stability, discriminative awareness, or liberation—six; that the activities of their body, speech, and mind are preceded by pristine cognition and followed by pristine cognition—three; and that they engage in the perception of pristine cognition which is unobstructed and unimpeded with respect to past, present, and future—three; making eighteen in all.<sup>203</sup>

The ten consummations of the material elements (*daśakṛtsna, zad par bcu*) are those of the earth, water, fire, and wind elements, those of blueness, yellowness, redness, and whiteness, and those of space and consciousness. These ten attributes [of meditative stability], which are impervious to water and so forth, are consummate in their ability because independence is obtained with respect to the inner sensory elements and sense fields.<sup>204</sup>

The eight masteries of the material elements (*aṣṭābhibhava, zil gyis gnon pa brgyad*) comprise the two masteries of all external forms, sentient and insentient, which occur because inner forms are perceived; the two masteries of external forms, sentient and insentient, which occur because inner formlessness is perceived; and the [four] diffusions of light rays which are the masteries of all external colors—blue, yellow, red, and white—which occur because their inner beauty is appreciated; making eight in all. The [perception of] inner form, formlessness, and the appreciation of beauty correspond

respectively to the three approaches to liberation, beginning with emptiness.<sup>205</sup>

The celestial palace on its four sides is **adorned with buttresses of precious gems,**<sup>206</sup> formed of crystal, gold, ruby, and emerald, **which are** to symbolize **the** real nature or **superior pristine cognition**, so called because the four conclusive pristine cognitions, beginning with the mirrorlike pristine cognition, are the doctrines of the buddhas alone and are not found elsewhere.<sup>207</sup>

Now the mirrorlike pristine cognition (*ādarśajñāna, me long lta bu ye shes*) pacifies the signs of the dynamic subject-object dichotomy and is the basis from which the other three pristine cognitions arise. The [pristine cognition of] sameness (*samatājñāna, mnyam nyid ye shes*) is that which does not abide in the extremes of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa. The [pristine cognition of] discernment (*pratyavekṣaṇājñāna, so srotogs pa'i ye shes*) is that which perceives all objects of knowledge distinctly. The [pristine cognition of] accomplishment (*kṛtyānuṣṭhānajñāna, bya ba grub pa'i ye shes*) is that which engages in enlightened activity, corresponding to the fortune of those who require training. Such pristine cognitions are indeed displayed within the maṇḍala as a symbol of the single essential nature. In order to illustrate that there are five [secondary] pristine cognitions that derive from each of the five basic pristine cognitions, the phrase “buttresses on four sides” also [implicitly] denotes the five-layered walls [of the palace], which naturally express the five pristine cognitions and which, from the inside, are respectively colored blue, green, red, yellow, and white.

The **spire** of the celestial palace, bulbous as a vase, illustrates the pristine cognition of reality's expanse (*dharmadhātujñāna, chos dbyings kyi ye shes*). It **is** a symbol of **the great pristine cognition, central to all** throughout the four times, **in which**, as previously explained, **all maṇḍalas** of the indestructible body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities **of all the buddhas of the ten directions and four times without exception are not distinguished from one**

**another** in their natural expression **and are of a single essential nature.**<sup>208</sup>

This celestial palace is also revealed to be something that is not finite but immeasurable. It possesses **this inconceivable pristine cognition** because each [of the five] pristine cognitions is fivefold, and within these twenty-five a further fivefold subdivision is also distinguished. To symbolize this, the colors of the celestial palace also distinctly radiate the colors of all the countless celestial palaces in its four directions and central sector that derive from the basic celestial palace, conforming respectively in **shape and color** and **forming the precious gems of pristine cognition.** Exemplified by the shapes of these [palatial abodes] (square in the center, semicircular in the east, **and so forth**) and their colors (white, yellow, **and so forth**),<sup>209</sup> there are immeasurable **distinctive details**, which are **distinguished** in an inconceivable array.

**The palace is unsurpassed**, in particular, by those enlightened attributes that appear to pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas, **and** it is **immeasurable in the extent** of its field, shapes, colors, and so forth.

## **THE EXCELLENT ARRAY [15.4.3.1.2.2.1.3]**

The third, concerning the excellent array, has two parts, the first of which describes the actual ornaments (15.4.3.1.2.2.1.3.1) [of the celestial palace. It comments on the verse]:

**It has garlands, silken drapes, a balustrade, desirable attributes, And gates with pediments.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:4)***

ཡེ་ཤེས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་སྒྲེང་བ་དང་། རྒྱན་འཕྲང་དང་། ཤར་བུའི་རྒྱན་  
 དང་། གཟུགས་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་དང་། སྒྲ་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་དང་། དྲི་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་དང་། རོ་  
 སྒྲ་ཚོགས་དང་། དེག་བྱ་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱུད་འཁྲིགས་པར་རང་བྱུང་  
 ལ། མི་སྐྱིབ་པར་གསལ་བའི་རྒྱན་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱུང་པར་ལྷུགས་པ། རྣམ་པར་  
 ཐར་པ་བཞིའི་སྐོ་ནས་འཕྲུག་པའི་སྐོ་བྱུང་ཅན། རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པ་བརྒྱད་ཀྱི་ཏྲ་བབས་  
 དང་ལྡན་པ། མྱི་དང་ནང་མེད་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ཡང་ནང་དུ་གྱུར་པ་ན།

Its garlands which are diverse gemstones of pristine cognition, its silken drapes, the ornaments of its balustrade, and diverse visual forms, diverse sounds, diverse fragrances, diverse savors, and diverse tactile sensations that intermingle throughout the ten directions are naturally present. Bedecked in inconceivable ornaments that radiate without obscuration, it has gateways entered through the fourfold approach to liberation, and it has pediments representing the eight aspects of liberation. These [adornments] are indeed contained within [the celestial palace], without outer and inner [distinctions] in all respects. Therein . . .

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Above the five-layered walls, naturally expressed in the forms and colors **of diverse gemstones** materialized from the essential nature, **pristine cognition**, there is the cornice (*pha gu*), and above that are the beams of the roof parapet (*kha bad*) from which the eaves (*mda' yab*) are supported. Suspended therefrom are **garlands** forming a latticework of gems, and at intervals between them are **silken drapes** including wreaths in



the shape of sun and moon, silk swags, and tasseled chowries with bejeweled handles. The spire is also adorned with a [circular] corbeled baluster (*pu shu*), its **ornamental balustrade** inset with lattice windows (*dra mig gseng ma*) of precious gems. Endowed with ornaments that radiate translucently, it shines brightly and is pleasant.

Now, the cornices symbolize the unchanging pristine cognition. The lattices symbolize that the benefit of living beings emerges because the three buddha bodies are present without conjunction or disjunction. The eaves symbolize that living beings are protected by compassionate spirituality, and the spire with its corbeled baluster symbolizes that which is peerless because it is highest of all.



FIGURE 3. MODEL OF THE CELESTIAL PALACE OF THE *GUHYAGARBHA* AT MINDROLING MONASTERY. PHOTO BY GRETCHEN GROTH.

Moreover, upon offering plinths (*'dod snam*) [outside the palace walls], there emanate throughout the ten directions of the celestial palace clouds of the five groups of five goddesses

endowed with the desirable attributes [of the senses]. The offerings they make to the deities within it comprise **diverse visual forms, diverse sounds, diverse fragrances, diverse savors, and diverse tactile sensations that** are all pleasant and **intermingle** as a cloud mass **throughout the ten directions**. Spontaneously and **naturally present**, they symbolize that all desirable attributes of the senses arise as ornaments of this emanational display.

There are some who affirm that [the celestial palace] is neutral—neither pleasant nor unpleasant. However, that is incorrect because in this circumstance the buddhas' own perception is without impurity.

The celestial palace and all its outer and inner ornaments, inasmuch as they are not coarse but clear, are luxuriantly **bedecked** and adorned with a beauteous array, **inconceivable** in detail. [The palace] is endowed with **ornaments that radiate**, penetrating outward and inward to the core, **without obscuring** one another. This illustrates that the nature of mind is primordial inner radiance and immeasurable in enlightened attributes.

**It has gateways** adorned with a triple entrance in each of its four directions in order to illustrate that this spontaneous celestial palace of Samantabhadra is **entered through the fourfold approach to liberation** from obscurations that apprehend entities and signs. These are, namely, emptiness, signlessness, aspirationlessness, and unconditionedness.

Emptiness (*śūnyatā, stong pa nyid*) is the primordial essenceless nature of all things. Signlessness (*animitta, mtshan ma med pa*) is the absence of independent existence in anything from the very moment at which it appears. Aspirationlessness (*apraṇihita, smon pa med pa*) is the absence of proof, refutation, acceptance, and rejection. Unconditionedness (*abhyasa-Mskṛta, mngon par 'dus ma byas pa*) is the effortless nature of mind that is present once the nature of these [three approaches] has been realized. This unconditionedness, when classified, is twofold. It comprises both the primordial inner radiance and the four immeasurable

aspirations that are spontaneously present through the natural momentum of its disposition. The former is the nature of mind, primordially pure and inwardly radiant, on which it says in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines*:

This mind is not the mind. The intrinsic nature of mind is inner radiance.<sup>210</sup>

The Tathāgata, absorbed in meditative equipoise in the Tārāyaṇa Grove,<sup>211</sup> also said of it:

I have found a nectar-like doctrine—  
Profound, calm, simple, radiant, and unconditioned.  
If I teach it, no one will understand.  
I will remain right here in the forest, in silence.<sup>212</sup>

And in the *Ornament of Emergent Realization*:

In it there is nothing to be clarified,  
Nor is there anything at all to be established.  
Correctly regard the genuine reality.  
If one perceives correctly, one will be liberated.<sup>213</sup>

The latter [aspect of unconditionedness refers to the four immeasurable aspirations], namely, loving-kindness (*maitrī, byams pa*) that desires that sentient beings without happiness might encounter happiness, compassion (*karuṇā, snying rje*) that desires that those who are tormented by suffering might be separated therefrom, empathetic joy (*mudita, dga' ba*) that desires that those in possession of happiness might not be separated therefrom, and equanimity (*upekṣā, btang snyoms*) that desires that those who have attachment and hatred might be separated from all attachments and hatred for those far and near, and then abide in even-mindedness.

With regard to these four immeasurable aspirations, which have emerged from the disposition of nonreferential and signless compassionate spirituality, it says in the *Ornament of*

*the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle:*

Endowed with love for sentient beings,  
Intending them to encounter [happiness]  
And be separated [from suffering],  
Intending them not to be separated [from happiness],  
Homage to you, intent on spiritual and temporal well-  
being!<sup>214</sup>

It is explained that the four gates [of the celestial palace] symbolize the four immeasurable aspirations, and that each gate comprises a passageway, adorned with three parallel entrances, in order to symbolize the [first] three approaches to liberation.

**The eight aspects of liberation** (*aṣṭavimokṣa, rnam par thar pa brgyad*) are enumerated as follows:

(i) The liberation that ensues when corporeal beings observe physical forms, disenchanted with the true existence of appearances, because their internal perception of the form realms is unimpeded, and they accordingly observe external forms as a magical display of appearance and emptiness;

(ii) The liberation that ensues when noncorporeal beings observe physical forms, released from attachment to the true existence of outer and inner [phenomena] because they observe external forms without referring objectively to internal forms;

(iii) The liberation that ensues when beings inclined toward pleasant states are released from all subjective grasping because they observe all things as emptiness in a common savor;

(iv) The liberation associated with the sense field of infinite space, which ensues when the nature of mind is perceived as being similar to space;

(v) The liberation associated with the sense field of infinite consciousness, which ensues when all things are realized to be an emanational display of mind and pristine cognition;

(vi) The liberation associated with the sense field of nothing-

at-all, which ensues when the subject-object dichotomy has been transcended in all respects;

(vii) The liberation associated with the sense field of neither perception nor nonperception, which ensues when the entire range of conceptual elaboration and signs has been pacified;

(viii) The liberation associated with cessation, which ensues when there is a perpetual absence of objectification, attachment, and apprehension with respect to all things of cyclic existence, and nirvāṇa, and so forth.<sup>215</sup>

To **represent** the perfect enlightened attributes of these [eight aspects of liberation], outside each of the four gates there are four pillars, two on each side, which support the gate, and above them four indestructible beams, on which there is a **pediment** with four terraced steps (*bang rim*) forming eight bands (*snam phran*). Beneath a parasol of precious gems, [the pediment] is adorned with the motif of a doctrinal wheel and two deer who turn it through their movement, along with embroidered hangings, a victory banner, divine robes, silk swags, and sounds that emerge from the flap-ping of twenty-four pennants (*ba dan*) attached to each of the four corner terraces (*kha khyer*), as well as from golden bells forming chains of tinkling chimes.<sup>216</sup> Furthermore it says in the *Parkhab Commentary*:

The [pediment] is equipped in [ascending] order  
With base (*zhabs*), lotus band (*ma chags*),  
Tassel band (*zar tshags*), ornamental band (*snam  
'phyang*),  
Silken drape band (*chun 'phyong*), garland band  
(*'phreng ba*),  
And a band of varied appearance with *garuḍa*-head  
gargoyles (*sna tshogs khyung mgo*).<sup>217</sup>

The [Sanskrit term] *torāṇa* conveys the meanings of an aerial victory banner, a doorstep, a platform on which a rider dismounts from a horse, and a staircase. However, in this context, it is held above all to refer to the pediment that adorns

the sky [above each of the gates of the celestial palace], each with its four terraced steps and four bands, making eight [sections] in all.<sup>218</sup> There are some who hold this [pediment] to symbolize the entrance into Atiyoga from the eight lower vehicles, and there are some who claim it symbolizes the entrance secured by means of the meditations associated with the [aforementioned] eight aspects of liberation. These interpretations, however, are irrelevant here because [the symbolism] must be applicable to the enlightened attributes of the buddha level alone.<sup>219</sup>

In order to illustrate that the pristine cognition of the buddha body of actual reality free from conceptual elaborations is **without outer and inner** distinctions and that all **these** enlightened attributes of the buddha level **are** not excluded but **indeed contained within** it **in all respects**, this celestial palace, in whose nature the five lights of pristine cognition are brilliantly candescent, appears from the disposition of the Tathāgata's compassionate spirituality. All that appears as the **outer** buddha field and all that appears as the **inner** principal deity and retinue are therefore gathered at all times and **in all respects** in the essential abiding nature. Thus they are **indeed** present, without straying from the disposition of Samantabhadra, the buddha body of actual reality, and **without** existing as distinctly separate phenomena, extraneous to his own nature. Therefore it is said that **these** [adornments] **are contained within** [the celestial palace] primordially, in a state free from conceptual elaborations. **Therein . . .**

## **THE EXCELLENT ARRAY OF THRONES** **[15.4.3.1.2.2.1.3.2]**

The second part of the excellent array concerns the excellent array of thrones (15.4.3.1.2.2.1.3.2) [which comments on the

verse]:

**[The palace contains] lion, elephant, horse, peacock,  
And *cīvaṃcīvaka* [thrones], along with sun, moon,  
and lotus [cushions].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:5)***

མི་འཇིགས་པ་མེད་གཏི་མེད་དང་། ལྷོ་བས་གྲུང་པོ་ཆེའི་མེད་དང་། རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་ཏྲ་  
ཡི་མེད་དང་། དབང་རྩ་བྱའི་མེད་དང་། ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པ་ནམ་མཁའ་སྤྲིང་གི་མེད་  
དང་། རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་འོད་གསལ་བ་ཉི་ཟླའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དང་། གོས་པ་  
མེད་པ་པརྩ་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་གདན་ལ།

. . . on a lion throne of assurance, an elephant throne of spiritual power, a horse throne of miraculous abilities, a peacock throne of absolute control, and a [*cīvaṃcīvaka*] bird throne of unimpeded nature, on seats of precious gems stacked with sun and moon cushions of natural inner radiance, and untainted lotuses . . .

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

In order to illustrate that [Samantabhadra] is not awed by the lower vehicles and possesses the four **assurances**, [the celestial palace] has a precious **lion throne** in the center. The four assurances (*caturvaiśāradya*, *mi 'jigs pa bzhi*) [possessed by the buddhas] are (i) their claim to realization attested in the



words “I, the Buddha”; (ii) their claim to renunciation attested in the words “have renounced all obscurations”; (iii) their claim to cessation attested in the words “have voluntarily cut off the three poisons until obtaining liberation”; and (iv) their claim to the path attested in the words “have been emancipated from cyclic existence by meditating on the profound path.” These are known as the four assurances because it cannot be contested that [the buddhas] abide in these truths.<sup>220</sup> Accordingly, the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle* says:

Homage to you who demonstrate pristine cognition,  
Renunciation, emancipation, and cessation  
For the sake of self and others,  
Unbowed by others, extremist [opponents]!<sup>221</sup>

To symbolize that meanings are contained here that are excluded in the lower vehicles, and that [Samantabhadra] possesses ten kinds **of spiritual power** with respect to the vehicle, the palace has **an elephant throne** in the east. The ten spiritual powers [of a tathāgata] (*daśatathāgatabala, de bzhin gshegs pa'i stobs bcu*) are identified with ten kinds of knowledge, namely, (i) knowledge that things that are possible are indeed possible and that things that are impossible are indeed impossible; (ii) knowledge of the maturation of the deeds of living beings; (iii) knowledge of meditative concentration combined with meditative stability and liberation; (iv) knowledge of the diverse inclinations of those to be trained; (v) knowledge of their diverse dispositions; (vi) knowledge of those who have supreme acumen and those who do not; (vii) knowledge of the path on which the five classes of living beings progress to the three degrees of liberation; (viii) knowledge of the recollection of the past abodes where oneself and others have been born; (ix) knowledge of the transference of consciousness at the death of sentient beings and their consequent rebirth; and (x) knowledge of the cessation of contamination. They are so called because the obscurations covering these ten kinds of knowledge, that is, their ten

respective incompatible conditions, are subdued.<sup>222</sup>  
Accordingly, the same text says:

Homage to you, subduer of those demons  
Who would thoroughly deceive sentient beings  
In matters of skillful means, refuge, purity,  
And the emancipation that accords with the Great  
Vehicle.<sup>223</sup>

To symbolize that all who require training are swiftly liberated and that [Samantabhadra] possesses the four supports for **miraculous abilities**, the palace has a thoroughbred **horse throne** in the south. The four supports [for miraculous abilities] (*caturṛddhipāda*, *rdzu 'phrul rkang bzhi*) are those of (i) resolution; (ii) perseverance; (iii) mentation;<sup>224</sup> and (iv) scrutiny,<sup>225</sup> which are emanated according to the minds of living beings and through which acts of benefit are then performed.<sup>226</sup> On this subject the *Short Commentary* says:

Through the four supports [for miraculous abilities],  
Namely, those that combine the meditative stabilities  
Of resolution, perseverance, mentation, and scrutiny  
With the formative force of exertion . . .<sup>227</sup>

To symbolize that [Samantabhadra] holds sway over all appearances and possesses the ten kinds **of absolute control**, the palace has **a peacock throne** of precious gems in the west. The ten kinds of absolute control are (i) control over the life span because there is no death; (ii) control over knowledge of the minds of living beings; (iii) control over necessities because the celestial treasury is possessed; (iv) control over deeds because the negative deeds of others are transformed into positive ones; (v) control over birth because emanations spontaneously emerge in accordance with the training; (vi) control over aspirations because enlightened intentions are fulfilled during oceans of past and future aeons; (vii) control

over volitions because acts of benefit are performed in accordance with the volitions of those to be trained; (viii) control over miraculous abilities because all world systems may be compressed at will in a mustard seed, demonstrating, for example, that it is unclear whether the world systems are reduced or the mustard seed enlarged; (ix) control over pristine cognition because acts of benefit are performed by those who have mastered the five great pristine cognitions, including the mirrorlike pristine cognition; and (x) control over doctrines because all things are actually known, definitively and quantitatively, without exception.<sup>228</sup> The same text says:

Through absolute control over necessities, birth, and life span,  
And over pristine cognition, doctrines, mind, and deeds,  
Miraculous ability, aspiration, and volition,<sup>229</sup>  
The mighty lord of all three realms is victorious.<sup>230</sup>

To symbolize that living beings are trained by diverse enlightened activities and that acts of benefit are performed through three pristine cognitions **of unimpeded nature** and four kinds of genuine analytic knowledge, the palace has a *cīvaṃcīvaka* or **bird throne**<sup>231</sup> in the north. The three pristine cognitions of unimpeded nature are the three entrances to the vision of pristine cognition (*ye shes kyi gzigs pa la 'jug pa gsum*) which are unattached and unimpeded with reference to past, future, and present time. The four kinds of knowledge denote the four kinds of genuine analytic knowledge (*catuḥpratisaMvid, so so yang dag rig pa bzhi*), namely, (i) knowledge of the doctrine (*chos*), which occurs when the essential nature of all things with all their causes and results is known; (ii) knowledge of meaning (*don*), which occurs when the meaning of that [essential nature] is revealed through many modes of expression; (iii) knowledge of etymology (*skad*), which occurs when knowledge is revealed of the languages of sentient beings including those of the gods; and (iv) knowledge of inspiration, which occurs when there is no fear on explaining

the doctrine to the retinue.<sup>232</sup> The *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle* says:

Homage to you who excellently reveal  
An intelligence that is never impeded,  
Explaining the supporting [doctrine],  
Imbued with the meaning it supports,  
With buddha speech and [inspired] knowledge.<sup>233</sup>

Furthermore there is a definitive description of these seats found in the *Tantra of Precious Empowerment*:

Buddha body has [four] assurances,  
Thoroughly subduing the four demons.  
As a sign of this success, [the buddha] sits on a lion throne.  
Buddha mind has ten powers, disciplining the ten nonvirtuous actions.  
As a sign of this success, [the buddha] sits on an elephant throne.  
Buddha attributes comprise the four supports for miraculous abilities,  
Through which progress is made, without attachment.  
As a sign of this success, [the buddha] sits on a supreme horse throne.  
Buddha speech has ten powers, the way of the perfect conqueror.  
As a sign of this success, [the buddha] sits on a peacock throne.  
Buddha activities comprises the four modes of enlightened activity  
Through which one is liberated from the four birthplaces.  
As a sign of this success, [the buddha] sits on a bird throne.<sup>234</sup>

To symbolize that the nature of mind, the buddha body of

actual reality, is primordially **of natural inner radiance**, and that skillful means and discriminative awareness are without duality, these [thrones] are **stacked with sun and moon cushions; and** to symbolize that they are **untainted** by all defective flaws, they are endowed with multicolored **lotuses**. Thus, [the buddhas] sit **on seats** formed **of precious gems**, in which all these desirable attributes are found.

**Upon** these five thrones are the seats of the principal deities [i.e., the five conquerors], adorned with lotus, sun, and moon cushions, while their retinues each have their own seats in their respective [peripheral] locations, endowed with lotus, sun, and moon cushions.

## **THE EXCELLENCENCE OF THE TEACHER [15.4.3.1.2.2.2]**

The second part [of the detailed exegesis of the excellence of the location, teacher and retinue] concerns the excellence of the teacher. This comprises (i) a common presentation of the posture of the principal deities and their hand-held emblems (15.4.3.1.2.2.2.1) and (ii) an exegesis of the male and female buddhas individually (15.4.3.1.2.2.2.2). The former [comments on the verse]:

**[The principal deities are endowed with] the major  
and minor marks,  
Posture [of the legs], six arms, and three heads.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:6)***

སྐྱེ་མ་དུན་དང་རྒྱབ་མེད་པ། བསམ་ཅད་དུ་ཞལ་ཐལ་ལེ་བར་གསལ་ཞིང་མཚན་  
 དང་དཔེ་བྱད་དུ་ལྡན་པ། བསམ་གྲིས་མི་བྱབ་པ་བསམ་ཅད་དུ། སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས་  
 ལྡོ་ཚོགས་པར་ཀུན་དུ་སྣང་བ། ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་ཞབས་གཉིས་མཉམ་པའི་  
 བརྒྱལ་ཞུགས་ཀྱི་སྐྱིལ་མོ་ཀྱང་དུ་བཞུགས་པ། ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱག་གི་ཕྱག་ཡེ་ཤེས་རིན་  
 པོ་ཆེའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་འབར་བ་ཅན། སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས་བསམ་གྲིས་མི་བྱབ་པའི་དབུ་  
 གསུམ་དང་ལྡན་པ།

. . . the buddha body appears without front or rear. In all directions his visage radiates transparently, and he is endowed with the major and minor marks. In every inconceivable [world system] he appears universally as the diverse buddha body, speech, and mind. His two legs of skillful means and discriminative awareness assume the posture of the ascetic discipline of equanimity. His [six] arms, which are the six pristine cognitions, are endowed with blazing hand emblems of precious pristine cognition, and he has three heads, which are the inconceivable buddha body, speech, and mind.

***Interlinear Commentary***

To illustrate the characteristic nature of the buddhas, whereby they perceive all living beings continuously and are not indifferent, **the buddha body appears**, outwardly and inwardly radiating its nature of clarity and light. Yet this is not a coarse [appearance]. From whichever direction its nature of great compassionate spirituality is beheld, zenith or nadir, the visage [of the buddhas] is revealed. It is **without** description in [delimited] terms such as “This is its **front** or this is its **rear**,”

which are discernibly true in the case of ordinary living beings. Frontally perceived among all retinues of the maṇḍala clusters, the maṇḍala of **his visage radiates transparently in all directions.**<sup>235</sup>

**And** the buddha body **is** also **endowed with the** thirty-two **major marks** and eighty **minor marks** of a great man, to illustrate that it possesses pristine cognition and excellent enlightened attributes.

Now the major and minor marks have both uncommon and common explanations: In the former case, the thirty-two major marks refer to the sixteen male bodhisattvas who represent the energy of the sixteen pristine cognitions, along with the sixteen female bodhisattvas who represent sixteen aspects of reality's expanse—the objective range of those pristine cognitions. The eighty minor marks derive from the sixteen male bodhisattvas, each of whom has five kinds of head ornaments corresponding to the five respective enlightened families and symbolizing the five pristine cognitions. The sixteen female bodhisattvas have no head ornaments because they illustrate the expanse of actual reality. These [bodhisattvas] are established as the major and minor marks in the sense that the nature of the principal deity is beautifully arrayed and finely endowed with the excellence of the retinue, just as the array of a flower is adorned by its anthers and petals.

The latter refers to the common major and minor marks, as they are generally recognized.<sup>236</sup>

Moreover, in the expanse of actual reality, in space, and **in every inconceivable** world system which requires to be trained, **he appears universally as the diverse buddha body, speech, and mind**, which are spontaneously present inexhaustible wheels of adornment.

When he appears as such in the buddha field of reality's expanse free from conceptual elaboration, the inexhaustible wheel of adornment of buddha body is [the unified form of the] male and female Samantabhadra, that is, the buddha body of actual reality transcending conceptual elaboration; the inexhaustible buddha speech is inexpressible, inaudible,<sup>237</sup> and

essenceless; and the inexhaustible buddha mind constantly pacifies all conceptual elaborations and is without partiality or bias.

In the buddha field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array which manifests in and of itself as the infinity of space, the inexhaustible buddha body is equal to space and is adorned with the major and minor marks of perfect resource; the inexhaustible buddha speech comprehends its expressed meaning by diffusing light from the maṇḍala of his visage; and the inexhaustible buddha mind is present as the defining characteristic of the five pristine cognitions.

Then in the world systems of the ten directions, the fields where living beings of the six classes are trained and which are equal to the confines of space, the inexhaustible buddha body trains each in accord with his or her needs, appearing as buddhas, bodhisattvas, pious attendants, hermit buddhas, ordinary persons, the aged, the sick, the dead, gods, *nāgas*, animals, and so forth, in similar forms and similar classes. It also comprises the immeasurable [inanimate] forms that they assume for the sake of sentient beings, such as lotus flowers, wish-granting trees, boats, villages, and meadows. The inexhaustible buddha speech resonates in the various modes of doctrinal speech because sound may emerge from the languages of different living beings, from lotus flowers, wish-granting trees, and so forth. The inexhaustible buddha mind acts on behalf of living beings because it knows things definitively and quantitatively. It is impossible [for mundane beings] to discriminate these acts of benefit intellectually because they are performed by inconceivable emanations of the buddhas.

You may ask, on the other hand, why the inexpressible speech of the buddha body of actual reality and the buddha body of perfect resource is in fact designated as speech. At the limit of sound and verbal expression there is indeed nothing but the inexpressible to be understood, and through that very [buddha speech] the inexpressible is actually comprehended. Similarly, all words are an amalgam of syllables, and these are



subsumed in the uncreated syllable A. Thus the nucleus of buddha speech denotes the syllable A, the most supreme buddha speech of the teacher himself. It says in the *Sūtra [of All-Gathering Awareness]*:

The heirs of the conquerors say nothing at all.  
They speak extensively that which is unspoken.<sup>238</sup>

The sages endowed with the buddha body of emanation, who appear to those requiring training, do speak, as it were, through intonations that have sixty modulations.<sup>239</sup> Their words also appear as buddha speech on account of the convergence of the perceptions of trainees and the compassionate spirituality of the buddhas. However, in the manner of an echo (*pratiśrutkā, sgra brnyan*), nothing is actually spoken. The *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle* says:

Just as the sound emitted by an echo  
Emerges in accordance with the apperception of others  
But is nonconceptual and uncontrived,  
So the speech of the tathāgatas  
Emerges in accordance with the apperception of others  
But abides neither externally nor internally.<sup>240</sup>

And in the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

From the birth of the Tathāgata until he attained nirvāṇa in a full night, he did not utter a single syllable of doctrine that manifested as words and letters, but that is what was understood in the perception of those to be trained.<sup>241</sup>

There are some who disagree that this text [of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*] is associated at all with the buddha body of emanation. However, they contradict the explanation [given in this very text] that buddha body, speech, and mind appear in every inconceivable [world system]. The term “buddha body of

emanation” in this context refers to the six sages (*thub pa drug*) who are mentioned incidentally in the introductory narrative [ch. 1]. The statement that it is incorrect for a single teaching to have two teachers is an argument taken out of context. Here, there are not two teachers because the buddha body of perfect resource is the ground<sup>242</sup> and the six sages are revealed within its retinue.

**His two legs** are to symbolize that he possesses the pristine cognition **of skillful means** or great compassion **and discriminative awareness** or emptiness. Folded together, they are endowed with the nature **of equanimity** to symbolize that he does not abide in the extremes of existence or quiescence. They **assume the posture of** indestructible reality (*vajraparyāṅka*) to symbolize the nature of his **ascetic discipline** (*brtul zhugs*), that is, that all afflictive mental states are disciplined (*brtul*) and that he is present (*shugs*) in the essential nature of great pristine cognition.

There are some who incorrectly hold that the female buddha is excluded from this explanation. However, the Genuine Queen [Dhātviśvarī] is in fact present as the expanse of this apparition.<sup>243</sup>

Then there are **his six arms, which are** to illustrate **the six pristine cognitions**, namely, the five pristine cognitions along with the pristine cognition of the pure expanse (*dbyings rnam par dag pa'i ye shes*). They **are endowed with** limitless **blazing** rays of light that emerge from their **hand emblems**, including the vajra, as a symbol **of** their **precious** nature. This is because various desirable necessities emerge from that **pristine cognition** in which buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities abide without duality. These [hand emblems] respectively symbolize that the six [defects of] miserliness, degenerate morality, agitation, indolence, distraction, and confusion are subdued. It is not the case, as some opine, that only the principal deity has six arms while the others have two arms, because they are said [to have these attributes] in common.<sup>244</sup>

Now, [the hand emblems in question] are the vajra,

gemstone, wheel, lotus, crossed vajra, and bell. [The buddhas of] the different enlightened families all hold their distinguishing hand emblem in the right hand of their basic pair of hands, and in the corresponding left hand they all wield the bell, crossed at the heart, while the other [two pairs of hands], grasping [their respective emblems], are extended in different ways. Buddhaguhya further asserts that the six hands hold six gemstones that are blazing and eight-faceted.<sup>245</sup>

**He has three heads, which are** to illustrate that he possesses **the inconceivable**, inexhaustible adornments of **buddha body, speech, and mind**. In this regard, the main visage [of Vairocana], the principal deity, is dark blue, the right one is white, and the left one is red. The main visage of Akṣobhya is white, the right one is dark blue, and the left one is red. The main visage of Ratnasambhava is yellow, the right one is white, and the left one is red. The main visage of Amitābha is red, the right one is white, and the left one is dark blue; and the main visage of Amoghasiddhi is green, the right one is white, and the left one is red.

## **THE EXEGESIS OF THE MALE AND FEMALE BUDDHAS INDIVIDUALLY [15.4.3.1.2.2.2]**

The latter [the exegesis of the male and female buddhas individually] comprises (i) the principal deities who are of the essential nature of the expanse [of reality] (15.4.3.1.2.2.2.1) and (ii) their retinue of undifferentiated natural expression (15.4.3.1.2.2.2.2).

## **THE PRINCIPAL DEITIES [15.4.3.1.2.2.2.1]**

The first, concerning the principal deities [comments on the verse]:

**The [male buddhas] of the five enlightened families,  
[Who represent] the five psychophysical aggregates,  
Are in union with the five female buddhas,  
[Who represent] the five material elements.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:7)***

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་རྣམ་པར་ཤེས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དང་། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དང་། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཚོར་བའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དང་། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་འདུ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དང་། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་འདུ་བྱིད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དང་། དེ་དག་ཀུན་གྲང་མཐིང་ལ་དང་། དཀར་པོ་དང་། སེར་པོ་དང་། ལེ་བཀན་དང་། ལྗང་ལུའི་མདོག་ཏུ་འཛོར་བ། བཅུན་མོ་དམ་པ་སྣང་བའི་དབྱིངས་དང་། སྲ་བའི་དབྱིངས་དང་། མཉེན་པའི་དབྱིངས་དང་། རྩོ་བའི་དབྱིངས་དང་། བརྗོད་པའི་དབྱིངས་ལ་སོགས་པ་བཅུན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར།

The Transcendent Lord assumes [the form of] the tathāgata who is king of consciousness, the tathāgata who is king of physical forms, the tathāgata who is king of feelings, the tathāgata who is king of perceptions, and the tathāgata who is king of formative predispositions. All these too are resplendent in their [respective] colors—blue, white, yellow, scarlet, and green. [Their consorts comprise] the genuine queen who is the expanse of apparition, the one who is the expanse of solidity, the one who is the expanse of

liquidity, the one who is the expanse of warmth, and the one who is the expanse of motility. Indivisible with the assembled host of queens, including these . . .

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The Transcendent Lord assumes** five distinct forms, namely, **the tathāgata Vairocana who is king of consciousness, the tathāgata Akṣobhya who is king of physical forms, the tathāgata Ratnasambhava who is king of feelings, the tathāgata Amitābha who is king of perceptions, and the tathāgata Amoghasiddhi who is king of formative predispositions.**<sup>246</sup> **All these** buddhas of the five enlightened families **too** have their distinct body colors: Vairocana is **blue** because his mirrorlike pristine cognition is unchanging.<sup>247</sup> Akṣobhya is **white** because the pristine cognition of reality's expanse is free from all stains. Ratnasambhava is **yellow** because his pristine cognition of sameness is endowed with many enlightened attributes of greatness. Amitābha is **scarlet**, that is, red, because his pristine cognition of discernment hankers for the benefit of living beings, **and** Amoghasiddhi is **green** because his pristine cognition of accomplishment performs diverse acts of benefit for sentient beings. Radiant and **resplendent in their** [respective] **colors**, the natural expression of the buddhas of the five enlightened families is clear, dazzling, and majestic. [See plates 1a-1e.]

The aggregate of consciousness (*rnam par shes pa'i phung po*), when classified, has eight aspects: (i) The substratum consciousness (*kun gzhi'i rnam par shes pa*) functions as the basis on which consciousness arises without focusing on its object, as if on the pure surface of a mirror. (ii) The mental consciousness (*yid kyi rnam shes*) is that which refers to generic conceptual objects and experiences them through a subsequent intellectual appreciation. (iii) The afflictive mental consciousness (*nyon mongs can gyi yid*) includes those

cognitions that engage in proof and refutation. (iv–viii) The consciousnesses of the five senses (*sgo lnga'i rnam shes*) are the five types of nonconceptual [cognition] such as the perception of visual forms. The sensation-functions of sight, hearing, [smelling, tasting], and touch are nonconceptual, and the consciousness that differentiates them is the mental [consciousness]. The afflictive mental consciousness is that which engages in refutation and proof in relation to them. The consciousnesses of the five senses and mental consciousness alone do not accumulate deeds, but it is the afflictive mental consciousness that accumulates deeds on the basis of the substratum.<sup>248</sup>

The substratum (*kun gzhi*) that supports all these [aspects of consciousness] is nonconceptual and indeterminate. It is present, for example, in familiar circumstances when consciousness is without ideation or scrutiny and without radiance or clarity in respect of any object. As such it is universal. On the other hand, the substratum consciousness (*kun gzhi'i rnam shes*) is also present in circumstances when consciousness is radiant and clear but does not focus on its object. The five senses clearly perceive their objects; mental consciousness is simply the apprehension by which they may be integrated; and afflictive mental consciousness generates [subsequent notions of] proof and refutation. In this context, the substratum consciousness is recognized as the sublime reality—the mirrorlike [pristine cognition].

The aggregate of physical forms (*gzugs kyi phung po*), when classified, has fifteen aspects, namely, the four primary elements of matter (earth, water, fire, and wind); the five sense objects (visual forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects); the five sense organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body); and the imperceptible form [which is continuously present]. Among these fifteen, imperceptible form (*rnam par rig byed ma yin pa'i gzugs*) is recognized as the pristine cognition of reality's expanse, the particularly sublime reality subsumed in Akṣobhya, while the other fourteen kinds of physical form are subsumed in Buddhālocaṇā.<sup>249</sup>

The aggregate of feelings (*tshor ba'i phung po*) is threefold: Happy feelings may arise in relation to pleasant objects, sorrowful feelings in relation to unpleasant objects, and feelings of equanimity in relation to neutral objects. The aggregate of perceptions (*'du shes kyi phung po*) is also threefold, comprising scopes of objectification that are extensive, limited, and average.<sup>250</sup>

The aggregate of formative predispositions (*'du byed kyi phung po*) comprises the fifty-one mental states (*sems byung lnga bcu rtsa gcig*), which are [classed as] formative predispositions associated with the mind (*cittaprayuktasamskāra*, *sems dang mtshungs ldan pa'i 'du byed*). These comprise (1-5) the five ever-present mental states, namely, contact, attention, feeling, perception, and volition; (6-10) the five object-determining mental states, namely, will, resolution, mindfulness, meditative stability, and discriminative awareness; (11-21) the eleven wholesome mental states, which are the basis of virtuous conduct, namely, faith, conscience, shame, vigilance, equanimity, nonviolence, perseverance, refinement, nonattachment, non-hatred, and nondelusion; (22-27) the six primary afflictive mental states, namely, desire, hostility, pride, fundamental ignorance, mundane views, and doubt; (28-47) the twenty subsidiary afflictive mental states, namely, jealousy, miserliness, pretentiousness, deceit, self-satisfaction, dullness, mental agitation, faithlessness, indolence, distraction, carelessness, forgetfulness, inattentiveness, violence, lack of conscience, shamelessness, anger, enmity, hypocrisy, and annoyance; and (48-51) the four variable mental states, namely, regret, drowsiness, ideation, and scrutiny.

Apart from feelings and perceptions, the other forty-nine of these mental states, along with all the formative predispositions disassociated with the mind (*cittaviprayuktasamskāra*, *mtshungs par mi ldan pa'i 'du byed*), including names and their symbolic representations, which actively create the dichotomy of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, are all recognized to be the essential nature of the pristine

cognition of accomplishment, the sublime reality of Amoghasiddhi.<sup>251</sup>

With regard to their consorts, the female buddhas of these five enlightened families, these are given the title **queen** because they are the foundation of resources, because they are the female consorts of the principal deities, and because they are revered for their royal heritage, endowed with enlightened attributes; they are described as **genuine** because they surpass others. [Among them,] the nature of the celestial expanse refers to Ākāśadhātviśvarī, **who is** mistress of **the expanse** of space and the essential nature **of apparition** because she clarifies without obscuration the vastness of actual reality and the vista of enlightened attributes. Buddhalocanā is **the one who is the expanse of solidity** because, in the manner of earth, which is supported and supportive, she supports the unchanging essential nature and its enlightened attributes. Māmakī is **the one who is the expanse of liquidity** because, in the manner of water, which sustains human beings with its moisture, she mollifies the minds of living beings. Pāṇḍaravāsini is **the one who is the expanse of warmth** because, in the manner of fire, which burns and manifests, she incinerates afflictive mental states and clarifies all that is knowable; **and** Samayatārā is **the one who is the expanse of motility** because, in the manner of wind, which performs acts of movement and lifting, she is unobstructed for the sake of living beings and is the basis of their sustenance. [See plates 1a-1e.]

[The male buddhas] are present in union with **the entire assembled host of queens** of the enlightened families, **including these**. None have been excluded, none are excluded, and none will be excluded, such that they are **indivisible with** respect to skillful means and discriminative awareness.<sup>252</sup>

**THE RETINUE OF UNDIFFERENTIATED NATURAL EXPRESSION**



## [15.4.3.1.2.2.2.2]

The second section [of the exegesis of the male and female buddhas individually], concerning their retinue of [undifferentiated] natural expression [comments on the verse]:

**On account of such natural expression, they are endlessly pervasive.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 1:8)*

ཚོས་གྱི་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་ཏུ་མཐའ་ཡས་པར་བྱུང་བ་ནི། འདི་ལྟ་སྟེ། དཔེར་ན་ཉིལ་  
གྱི་གང་བུ་བཞིན་དུ་གང་ནས་བྱུང་བར་བཞུགས་སོ། །

. . . they entirely and infinitely pervade the expanse of actual reality. Filling it, just like, for example, a pod of sesame seeds, they are pervasively present.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

The nature, presence, number, or enumeration of these [deities], which has been revealed, atemporally permeates all phenomenal existence without conjunction or disjunction. In particular, the appearances of the buddha body of perfect resource **entirely and infinitely pervade** their object, **the expanse of actual reality**, throughout the infinitude of space, with the great luminance of buddha body, speech, and mind, the inexhaustible wheels of adornment. **Filling it** endlessly with the maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition, **just like a full-grown pod of sesame seeds, for example** (*dper*

*na*), **they are pervasively present** everywhere.

Although in general all phenomenal existence is atemporally pervaded [by buddha body, speech, and mind], the present context refers specifically to the luminance of the sugatas. One should know that this elucidation pertains to all maṇḍalas, including those of the aforementioned male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families and those of the male and female bodhisattvas, who are mentioned below, but these [maṇḍalas] should not be explained out of order.<sup>253</sup> Why so? you may ask. It is because for a beginner that would be hard to understand and of little advantage.

## **THE EXCELLENCE OF THE RETINUE [15.4.3.1.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the extensive exegesis of the classification of perfect resources, see above, [p. 58](#)] concerns the excellence of the retinue who embody compassionate spirituality. This comprises (i) the inner male and female bodhisattvas (15.4.3.1.2.2.3.1); (ii) the outer male and female bodhisattvas (15.4.3.1.2.2.3.2); and (iii) the male and female gatekeepers (15.4.3.1.2.2.3.3).

## **THE INNER MALE AND FEMALE BODHISATTVAS [15.4.3.1.2.2.3.1]**

Among them, the first, which concerns the eight male and female bodhisattvas associated with consciousness [comments on the verse]:

**The four [inner male bodhisattvas]  
Represent vision, hearing, fragrance, and savor,**

**And the four [inner female bodhisattvas]  
Represent the corresponding sense objects.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:9-10)***

དེ་ནས་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་མཐོང་བ་དང་། བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་ཐོས་པ་  
དང་། བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་སྒྲུབ་པ་དང་། བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་སྤྱོད་པ་དང་།  
བུའོ་མོ་མཐོང་པར་བྱ་བ་དང་། མཉམ་པར་བྱ་བ་དང་། བསྐྱུལ་པར་བྱ་བ་  
དང་། སྤྱོད་པར་བྱ་བའི་ཚོགས་དང་།

Then [surrounding them] there are the great bodhisattva of indestructible vision, the great bodhisattva of indestructible hearing, the great bodhisattva of indestructible fragrance, the great bodhisattva of indestructible savor, and the assembled host of the queen of visual forms, [the queen of] sounds, the [queen of] fragrances, and [the queen of] savors.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then**, with regard to the four [inner] male [bodhisattvas], the [foregoing] exegesis of the intrinsic nature of the principal deities of the five enlightened families should be followed by an explanation of the retinue of male bodhisattvas: In the manner of the teacher [Śākyamuni] himself, who was a **great bodhisattva**, the retinues that arise from the disposition of that self-manifesting compassionate spirituality are great (*chen po*) because they themselves have attained buddhahood, purified (*byang*) of all obscurations, while in their buddha mind

all enlightened attributes without exception are perfected (*chub*). As such, they are superior to those bodhisattvas who abide on the [ten] levels (*bhūmigatabodhisattva, sar gnas kyi sems dpa'*).

There are four [inner] bodhisattvas embodying aspects of consciousness who are endowed with **indestructible** reality in that they are without duality of expanse and pristine cognition, or of appearance and emptiness, and they are free from disintegration.

[Concerning the term “indestructible reality,”] it says in the *Tantra of the Indestructible Peak*:

Because it is neither solid nor empty at the core,  
Neither to be cut off nor analyzed,  
Neither to be burned nor disintegrated,  
Emptiness should be expressed as “indestructible  
reality.”<sup>254</sup>

The term also implies that [the bodhisattvas] have subdued all obscurations and cannot be further harmed by obscuration. As is said in the *Extensive [Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters]*:

The nature of indestructible reality  
Is that all obscurations are subdued,  
And it cannot be harmed in any respect.  
This naturally present pristine cognition,  
Deity among deities, penetrates all things.<sup>255</sup>

Among them, Kṣitigarbha is [the great bodhisattva of indestructible] **vision**, so called because the buddha eyes engage their five objects and perceive actual reality in a single savor, surpassing the [mundane] visual consciousness through which visual forms are seen. Vajrapāṇi is **the great bodhisattva of indestructible hearing**, so called because the buddha ears engage their five objects and listen to the real nature in a single savor, surpassing the [mundane] auditory consciousness through which sound is heard. Ākāśagarbha is **the great bodhisattva of indestructible fragrance**, so called because the buddha nose engages its five objects and senses the uncreated nature in a single savor, surpassing the [mundane] olfactory consciousness through which odors are smelled, **and** Avalokiteśvara is **the great bodhisattva of indestructible savor**, so called because the buddha tongue engages its five objects and relishes the nondual nature in a single savor, surpassing the [mundane] gustatory consciousness through which merely tastes are experienced.

Their four corresponding female bodhisattvas are respectively **the assembled host of Lāsyā**, **the queen of visual forms**, that is, the forms that are within the perceptual range of pristine cognition; along with Mālyā, [the queen of] **sounds**; Gītā, [the queen of] **fragrances**; and Nartī, [the queen] who delights in the emanational display **of savors**. Although this sequence is somewhat disordered, there is no contradiction because it pertains to their names alone, and there are actually held to be four inner beauties. Etymologically, however, Gītā denotes the sounds that are heard and Dhūpā the fragrances that are smelled.<sup>256</sup> [See plates 2a-2d.]

## **THE OUTER MALE AND FEMALE BODHISATTVAS [15.4.3.1.2.2.3.2]**

The second section, concerning the eight [outer] male and female bodhisattvas associated with the sense organs [comments on the verse]:

**[The four outer male bodhisattvas] represent  
The eyes, the ears, the nose, and the tongue,  
While the [outer] female [bodhisattvas] represent the  
four times.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:11-12)***

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་མཐོང་བྱེད་དང་། བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་ཐོས་བྱེད་དང་། བྱང་  
ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་སྤྲོས་བྱེད་དང་། བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་སྤྱོད་བྱེད་དང་། བཅུན་མོ་  
འདས་པ་དང་། ད་ལྟར་དང་། འབྱུང་བ་དང་། མ་གྲོན་པའི་ཚོགས་དང་།

And there are the great bodhisattva of indestructible eyes, the great bodhisattva of indestructible ears, the great bodhisattva of indestructible nose, and the great bodhisattva of indestructible tongue, the assembled host of the queen of time past, the [queen] of time present, the [queen] of time future, and the [queen] of time indeterminate.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Among the four [outer] male bodhisattvas, Maitreya is [**the great bodhisattva of] indestructible eyes**, whose unobscured and indestructible [buddha] eyes support the apprehension of their five objects, surpassing the [mundane] sense organ of the eye, which resembles a sesame flower; Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin is [**the great bodhisattva of indestructible] ears**, whose unimpaired sense organs of [buddha] ears support their five clear objects, surpassing the [mundane] sense organ of the ear, which resembles knotted birch bark; Samantabhadra is [**the great bodhisattva of indestructible] nose**, whose sense organ of the [buddha] nose supports the engagement with its five objects, surpassing the [mundane] sense organ of the nose, which resembles a straight copper bodkin needle; **and** Mañjuśrī is [**the great bodhisattva of indestructible] tongue**, whose supreme savoring of buddha speech supports the engagement with its five objects, surpassing the [mundane] sense organ of the tongue, which resembles a half moon.<sup>257</sup>

Their four corresponding female bodhisattvas are **the assembled host** [respectively] **of the queen of time past**, who appears as Dhūpā to illustrate that she engages with the vision of pristine cognition, unobstructed and unimpeded with respect to the past, the nature in which phenomena of the past actually radiate as they really are, surpassing those phenomena that were known in the past and are now nonexistent, having disintegrated; **the [queen] of time present**, who appears as Puṣpā to illustrate that she engages with the vision of pristine cognition, unobstructed and unimpeded with respect to the present, in which all phenomena become meaningless in terms of aeons, surpassing those that are merely the actual perception of the sense organs; **the [queen] of time future**, who appears as Ālokā to illustrate that she engages with the vision of pristine cognition, unobstructed and unimpeded with respect to the future because phenomena of the future are seen in the present, just like a gooseberry (*kyu ra ra*) in the palm of the hand, surpassing those objects of the future that have not become manifest; **and the [queen] of time indeterminate**,

indefinite in its moment of emergence, who appears as Gandhā to illustrate that she is present as the pristine cognition of sameness with respect to the four times, the actual reality in which naturally present appearances do not fluctuate from their disposition, as it really is.<sup>258</sup> [See plates 2e-2h.]

As for the way in which past, present, and future are known [in this context], they are all clearly known, just as the signs of past and future arise along with those of the present when they are prognosticated on the surface of an oracular mirror (*prasena*). Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*:

Past, present, and future events,  
As many as there are, become manifest.<sup>259</sup>

## **THE MALE AND FEMALE GATEKEEPERS [15.4.3.1.2.2.3.3]**

The third section, concerning the eight male and female gatekeepers [comments on the verse]:

**[The male gatekeepers represent] sensation of  
contact,  
Contacting subject, contacted object, and  
consciousness of contact,  
While [the female gatekeepers represent] the four  
immeasurable aspirations.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:13-14)***



འཇོམས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་རིག་པ་དང་། འཇོམས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་རིག་བྱེད་དང་།  
 འཇོམས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་རིག་བྱ་དང་། འཇོམས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་རིག་ཤེས་དང་།  
 བརྩམ་མོ་རྟག་པར་མ་ཡིན་པ་དང་། ཆད་པར་མ་ཡིན་པ་དང་། བདག་ཏུ་མ་  
 ཡིན་པ་དང་། མཚན་མར་མ་ཡིན་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ། དེ་ལྟ་བུའི་ཚོགས་བརྗོད་  
 གྱིས་མི་ལང་བ་དང་། གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་བཞུགས་སོ།

[Also present] are the great subjugator indestructible with respect to sensations of contact, the great subjugator indestructible with respect to the contacting subject, the great subjugator indestructible with respect to the contacted object, and the great subjugator indestructible with respect to the consciousness of contact. And there is the queen who is without eternalist views, the [queen] who is without nihilist views, the [queen] who is without egotistical views, and the [queen] who is without substantialist views. The assembly [in maṇḍalas] such as this is inexpressible and present without duality.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the male gatekeepers, it says in the *Subsequent Tantra of the Secret Assembly*:

Bliss will ensue if this pristine cognition, the  
 enlightenment of the buddhas,  
 Is known to be free from disintegration, free from  
 perception,  
 Free from expression, and free from conception.<sup>260</sup>

Explained accordingly, the term **subjugator** denotes skillful

means, and **great** denotes discriminative awareness. **Indestructible** implies that the great emanations who possess these two attributes tame cruel and malign spirits, such as Māra and Yama.

Now, the three aspects of sensory interaction, which occurs when the **sensation of physical contact** arises, comprise the body that is **the contacting subject, the object that is contacted,** and **the consciousness of contact** or consciousness of the body that derives from the encounter [of these two]. Respectively, these four modes are symbolized by Amṛtakunḍalin, Aśvottama, Mahābala, and Yamāntaka, whose buddha bodies engage with their five contacted sense objects, surpassing ordinary [sensations of physical contact]. [See plates 3a-3d.]

Then there is also vocalized, verbal contact. Although in this text it is the four aspects of physical [contact] that are primarily indicated, those of speech and mind are present by implication. When the sensation of verbal contact arises, there is an interaction between the signifying sound, the signified object, and the consciousness of sound which derives from the accumulated conditions inherent in these two aspects of signification. These manifest respectively as the four wrathful deities, beginning with Amṛtakunḍalin, to illustrate that buddha speech free from all obscurations of intonation engages with its five objects, surpassing the [mundane] sounds—euphonious, discordant, and neutral—that [ordinarily] emerge.

Then, when mental [contact] occurs, mental phenomena come into being. When the sense field of mental phenomena arises as an object of the mental faculty, there is an interaction between the mental faculty or subject of perceptual contact, the various generic concepts (*arthasāmānya, don spyi*), which are the objects of perceptual contact, and the consciousness that derives from the encounter of these two, generating bliss, sorrow, refutation, proof, and so forth. Surpassing this [mundane] interaction, the four wrathful deities manifest in and of themselves at the gates [of the maṇḍala] through the energy of pristine cognition to illustrate that the unobscured

pristine cognition of the buddhas is actualized without regard for the apprehension of generic concepts and is free from all desires and hatred.

These [four gatekeepers] are none other than the four pristine cognitions, which realize [respectively] that there is neither production nor disintegration, there is nothing to be expressed, there is nothing to be apperceived, and there is nothing at all [to be conceived].<sup>261</sup>

Their four female consorts are respectively (i) Ankuśā, **[the queen] who essentially is without eternalist views** with respect to all things such as physical form—illustrating that appearances are like reflected imagery, not existing in reality, and illustrating that she draws in sentient beings with loving-kindness and generosity, which are her attributes; (ii) Pāśā, **the [queen] who essentially is without nihilist views** with respect to all things such as sound, because she illustrates that these respective appearances are not abandoned but resemble a mirage and because she draws in sentient beings with compassion and gentle speech, which are her attributes; (iii) Sphoṭā, **the [queen] who essentially is without egotistical views**, in which mental phenomena are subjected to refutation and proof, to symbolize that these are dreamlike, and that she overpowers sentient beings with empathetic joy and sympathy, which are her attributes; **and** (iv) Ghaṇṭā, **the [queen] who essentially is without substantialist views** in respect of the entity of all phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, illustrating that these are like phantoms, lacking independent existence from the beginning, and that she establishes sentient beings in quiescence through purposeful conduct and great equanimity, which are her attributes.<sup>262</sup> [See plates 3a–3d.]

On the buddha level, each of the five modes of sensory consciousness respectively engages with all five types of sense object.<sup>263</sup> Concerning this, it says in the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*:

When the five sense organs focus externally,

They engage with all sense objects.

Altogether there are twelve hundred  
Sensory attributes that emerge.<sup>264</sup>

First, the sense organ of the eye is analyzed according to the six directions [of its vision], namely, the four cardinal directions, the zenith, and the nadir; and each of these six is further analyzed according to its ten subsidiary directions. When, among these for example, the sense organ of the eye focuses on the vision of an easterly form in the eastern direction, there are four [further sensory attributes that arise], namely, sound is heard, odor is smelled, taste is savored, and tangible objects are felt. Each of the remaining nine subsidiary directions also has these four [sensory attributes], making forty in all. Similarly, each of the five remaining directions [in which the eye casts its vision], when analyzed according to their ten respective subsidiary directions, also has forty such [sensory attributes]. Thus there are six sets of forty, making two hundred forty [sensory attributes associated with the sense organ of the eye]. And when the sensory attributes associated respectively with the sense organs of the ear, nose, tongue, and body are similarly estimated, they number twelve hundred. These are the extraordinary sensory attributes of the buddha level.<sup>265</sup>

While these male and female buddhas, male and female bodhisattvas, male and female gatekeepers, and so forth appear in the middle of the basic maṇḍala, they are surrounded by many hundreds of thousands of retainers, who form the respective maṇḍala clusters of the four enlightened families in the four directions. The quantity and aspects of this array of deities forming **the assembly** in basic maṇḍalas **such as this is inexpressible**, pervading the entire celestial expanse, **and** these appearances are naturally **present without duality**. This is crucially because they arise from the disposition [of actual reality] through a unique display of self-manifesting pristine cognition.

## **A SYNOPSIS OF PRISTINE COGNITION'S SELF-MANIFESTING ARRAY [15.4.3.1.3]**

The third section [of the interlinear commentary on ch. 1 of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, see above, p. 48] is the synopsis of pristine cognition's self-manifesting array. This comprises (i) the essential nature in which this array emerges (15.4.3.1.3.1) and (ii) the modality of the array itself (15.4.3.1.3.2).

Among them, the former [comments on the verse]:

**The secret verses expressing these secret maṇḍalas are self-originated.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:15)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་བཙུན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའི་གསང་  
བའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དེ་དག་ཉིད་ཀྱི་གསང་བ་འདི་ཉིད་སྐྱེ་དང་གསུང་དང་བྱུགས་དང་  
ཡོན་ཏན་མིན་ལས་དོ་རྗེ་ལས་ལྷུང་དོ།

Then the following [verses] emerged from their indestructible buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities. This itself is the [most] secret of these secret maṇḍalas, in which the tathāgatas and the assembled host of their queens are [united] without duality.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once [the assembled deities of] the introductory narrative had been extensively revealed, **then the following** secret verses of indestructible reality that reveal the truth of the self-manifesting maṇḍala of the five enlightened families **emerged** inexpressibly and as a naturally arisen enlightened intention **from their indestructible buddha body**, their indestructible buddha **speech**, their indestructible buddha **mind**, their indestructible buddha **attributes**, **and** their indestructible buddha **activities**. **This itself is the most secret of all these** self-manifesting **maṇḍalas**, which are **secret** because their essential nature is not within the perceptual range of others, but is one **in which the tathāgatas** or male buddhas **and the assembled host of their queens** or female buddhas **are without duality**.

### **THE MODALITY OF PRISTINE COGNITION'S SELF-MANIFESTING ARRAY [15.4.3.1.3.2]**

The latter, concerning the modality of this self-manifesting array, comprises (i) the disposition through which this self-manifesting maṇḍala is arrayed (15.4.3.1.3.2.1); (ii) the manner in which it manifests (15.4.3.1.3.2.2); and (iii) the recognition of its abiding nature (15.4.3.1.3.2.3).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**Holding sway over the expanse that is real,  
This [maṇḍala] diversely manifests.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:16)***

།ཨེ་ཨེ་མ་ཨེ་མ་ཧོ།

དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ཉིད་དབང་སྐྱུར་ཡེ་ཤེས་དབྱིལ་འཁོར་གླུགས་རྗེའི་ངང་།

*E, Ema, Emaho!*

Holding sway over the very expanse that is real, the maṇḍala of pristine cognition has a disposition of compassionate spirituality.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Through the disposition of the buddha body of actual reality, [symbolized by] the syllable ***E***, the buddha body of perfect resource [symbolized by] the syllables ***Ema*** becomes manifest, and the wondrous teacher [symbolized by] the syllables ***Emaho*** then diversely manifests in and of himself. **Holding sway over** the essential nature that is the buddha body of actual reality and **the very expanse that is real, the** spontaneous **maṇḍala of** the buddha body of perfect resource along with its fivefold **pristine cognition** emerges through the teacher's own **disposition of** inconceivable **compassionate spirituality**.

### **THE MANNER IN WHICH THIS ARRAY MANIFESTS [15.4.3.1.3.2.2]**

The second, concerning the manner in which this array becomes manifest [comments on the verse]:

**This self-manifestation is a pure and radiant reflection.**



**Root Tantra (Ch. 1:17)**

རང་སྣང་བ་ཉིད་ཉིད་འཛིན་གཟུགས་བརྟན་སྣང་མ་རྣམ་དག་གསལ་བ་ནི།

This self-manifestation, which is a reflection of meditative stability, a magical display, pure and radiant . . .

**Interlinear Commentary**

**This** buddha field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array, **which is a self-manifestation** that appears to the tathāgata himself, is said to be a pure **reflection of** the buddhas' **meditative stability, a magical display** of pristine cognition, **radiant** in its naturally **pure** essential nature.

**THE RECOGNITION OF ITS ABIDING NATURE  
[15.4.3.1.3.2.3]**

The third, concerning the recognition of its abiding nature [comments on the verse]:

**The genuine abiding nature is expressed in these secret words.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 1:18)**

སྐྱུ་གསུང་ཐུགས་དང་ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་སེལ་མེད་པ་ཡི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཡིད་བཞིན་  
 རིན་པོ་ཆེ། མི་བཟང་པར་ལྡན་པ་རྒྱན་གྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་དོ་རྗེ་མཚོག་གི་གནས་ཉིད་  
 དོ། ཞེས་དོ་རྗེ་གསང་བའི་ཚིག་ཏུ་འོ།

. . . is a wish-fulfilling gem of enlightened qualities—the buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities, where there is nothing [impure] to be dispelled. This itself is the abiding nature of supreme indestructible reality, an inexhaustible wheel of adornment.—Such were the secret words of indestructible reality that emerged.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

This identity of **buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities, where there is nothing** [impure] **to be dispelled**, not even the slightest defective blemish, **is** an inconceivably mighty **wish-fulfilling gem of excellent enlightened qualities. This itself is** the essential nature of **supreme indestructible reality**, without conjunction or disjunction, a nature endowed with pristine cognition’s **inexhaustible wheel of adornment**, and **the abiding nature** of the buddha body of perfect resource.

—**Such were the secret words of indestructible reality** of buddha body, speech, and mind **that emerged** concerning the nature of this tantra.

There are some who ascribe this last passage to the compiler [of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*], but incorrectly so because the words “indestructible reality” denote that this belongs to the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*.<sup>266</sup>

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 1 of the *Secret Nucleus*,  
entitled “The Introductory Narrative.”**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 1:19)*

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་སྐྱེས་གཞིའི་ལུ་སྒྲིབ་དང་པོའོ།།

This completes the first chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Introductory Narrative.”

### *Interlinear Commentary*

The foregoing description of the [five] kinds of excellences constitutes the **introductory narrative** from the **Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real** in twenty-two chapters.

The introductory narrative is so called because it sets the background concerning the tantra’s origin, provides authentication, and establishes the basis for the tantra that will [subsequently] unfold. The [Tibetan] word *le’u* [**chapter**] corresponds to [the Sanskrit] *pariccheda* and conveys the sense of “section” or “fragment,” which is what is also implied in this context. **First** denotes that this is the initial chapter, positioned at the beginning of the series [of twenty-two chapters].

## 2. THE INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE

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The purpose of this chapter is to divulge the enlightened intention of Samantabhadra's pristine cognition, in which all things are ultimately expressed as primordial buddhahood and relatively expressed as great compassionate spirituality. The former is the genuine intention behind the discourse of this text, and the latter is the motivation for its appearance in an externally visible form—the arousal of compassionate energy for the sake of those who have not realized ultimate reality.

Two aspects of buddhahood are therefore discussed in this chapter: the genuine enlightened intention that initiates the discourse and the subsequent arousal of compassionate spirituality for the sake of living beings.

First, the genuine enlightened intention is explored through its three successive modalities: Samantabhadra, who embodies awareness, buddha mind itself, through the penetration of Samantabhadrī, reveals his enlightened intention that all the psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, sense fields, and elements are integrated in the nature of the five buddha families and their retinue (vv. 1-2). Samantabhadrī, who embodies the abiding nature of reality which is the object of buddha mind, through indivisible union with Samantabhadra, reveals her enlightened intention that all world systems and their sentient contents and afflictive mental states are inherently empty, abiding in the great sameness of primordial buddhahood (vv. 3-4). Their nondual Supreme Identity (*bdag nyid chen po*), who is the male-female Samantabhadra in union (*kun bzang yab yum*), then reveals the enlightened intention that the reality of buddhahood exists primordially as pristine cognition. Thus, all things are primordially beyond creation,

cessation, abiding, objective reference, and motion, and the awareness that realizes this is identified with pristine cognition or buddha mind (vv. 5-11).

The consequent arousal of compassionate spirituality through which this threefold enlightened intention of Samantabhadra is relatively expressed is then directed in four phases that parallel the four noble truths: for the focus of this spirituality is sentient beings' lack of realization (vv. 12-13); the nature of their bewilderment (vv. 14-15); the atemporal presence of ultimate truth beyond bondage and liberation (v. 16); and the actual diffusion of compassionate energy that removes bewilderment (v. 17).

THE SECOND PART [of the inception of the tantra, see [p. 38](#)] is the description of the actual text of the second chapter, entitled "The Initiation of the Discourse" (15.4.3.2). This comprises (i) the initiation of the discourse through genuine enlightened intention (15.4.3.2.1) and (ii) a description of the dynamic of compassionate spirituality for the sake of sentient beings who have not realized the former (15.4.3.2.2).

## **THE INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE THROUGH GENUINE ENLIGHTENED INTENTION [15.4.3.2.1]**

The former itself comprises (i) the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of the male buddha [Samantabhadra] (15.4.3.2.1.1); (ii) the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of the female buddha [Samantabhadrī] (15.4.3.2.1.2); and (iii) the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of their nondual union (15.4.3.2.1.3).

**THE OF INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE THROUGH THE  
ENLIGHTENED INTENTION OF THE MALE BUDDHA  
[SAMANTABHADRA] [15.4.3.2.1.1]**

First, the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of the male buddha [Samantabhadra] has two aspects: (i) the cause that induces his enlightened intention to initiate the discourse (15.4.3.2.1.1.1) and (ii) his actual initiation of the discourse (15.4.3.2.1.1.2).

The former, the cause [comments on the verse]:

**The active male subject [engaged with] the passive female object, indivisible from all the conquerors, and this is the cause giving rise to the following aphorism:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:1)***

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་བྱེད་པ་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་ཡིད་ཀྱན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ། ཐམས་ཅད་  
མ་ལུས་པའི་རང་བཞིན་གྱི་ཚུལ་དོ་རྗེས། བཅུན་མོ་བྱ་བ་མོ་ཚོས་ཀྱན་ཏུ་བཟང་  
མོ་ལ་འཇུག་པར་གྱུར་ཏོ། ཟུགས་པས་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞིའི་དེ་  
བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་མ་ལུས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་གཅིག་གི་རང་བཞིན་དུ་དབྱེར་མེད་པས་  
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་  
བརྗོད་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, Samantabhadra, the active male subject who represents the indestructible reality of the mental faculty, engaged with his queen

Samantabhadrī, the passive female object, who represents all mental phenomena, by means of his *vajra*, which is the natural modality of all [buddhas] without exception. Through this engagement, all the tathāgatas of the ten directions and four times without exception became indivisible in the nature of the unique [Samantabhadra]. So it was that the tathāgata himself uttered these aphorisms to and for the tathāgata himself.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the introductory narrative had been revealed, **then the Transcendent Lord, the active male subject who represents** and objectifies the naturally present pristine cognition, the buddha mind of the principal deity of the enlightened family, who is named **Samanta** because his **indestructible reality of the mental faculty** engages with multiple sense objects in a nondual manner, and **bhadra** because he does not stray from the essential expanse, intellectually **engaged with his queen, who** is named **Samanta** because, as **the passive female object** to be ascertained, she **represents all the mental phenomena** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa without exception, and **bhadrī** because all things are primordially pure. This he did **by means of his vajra**—the indestructible reality unchanging throughout the three times, **which is the natural modality** of the three buddha bodies without conjunction or disjunction, gathering the enlightened intentions **of all** the buddhas of the ten directions and four times **without exception**, in order that the natural expression of all objects might exhibit primordial buddhahood.<sup>267</sup> **Through this intellectual engagement, all the tathāgatas of the ten directions and four times without exception became essentially indivisible in the nature of the unique** Samantabhadra, the naturally present

pristine cognition of buddha mind. **So it was that**, without perceiving mental phenomena extraneous to his own nature, **the tathāgata himself uttered these following aphorisms to and for the tathāgata himself.** [See plate 4a.]

## **HIS ACTUAL INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE [15.4.3.2.1.1.2]**

The latter, his actual initiation of the discourse [comments on the verse]:

**The psychophysical aggregates, the sensory elements, the five material elements, cyclic existence, and nirvāṇa are primordial buddhahood.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 2:2)*



|ཞེ་མ་ཉི།  
 |རྩོ་རྩེ་ཕུང་པོ་ཡན་ལག་ནི།  
 |རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ལྔ་ཅུ་གྲགས།  
 |སྐྱེ་མཆེད་ཁམས་རྣམས་མང་པོ་ཀུན།  
 |བྱང་རྒྱུ་སེམས་དཔའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཉིད།  
 |ས་རྩ་སྤྱན་དང་ལྷ་མ་གྱི།  
 |མེ་རྩུང་གོས་དཀར་སྒོལ་མ་སྟེ།  
 |ནམ་མཁའ་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག་མ།  
 |སྲིད་གསུམ་ཡེ་ནས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་།  
 |ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་ཚོས་སོ་ཅོག།  
 |སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ལས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན།  
 |སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ལས་གཞན་པའི་ཚོས།  
  
 |སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་མི་བརྟེས་སོ།  
 |ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཉེས་པར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

*Emaho!*

The aspects of the aggregate of indestructible reality  
 Are known as the five perfect buddhas.  
 All the manifold sense fields and sensory elements  
 Are the nature of the maṇḍala of bodhisattvas.  
 Earth and water are Buddhhalocanā and Māmakī.  
 Fire and wind are Pāṇḍaravāsinī and Samayatārā.  
 Space is Dhātvīśvarī.  
 The three planes of existence are primordial buddha  
 fields.

All things that there are without exception  
Are not extraneous to the buddhas themselves.  
Phenomena extraneous to the buddhas themselves  
Have not been found by the buddhas themselves.  
—When he said this, all the tathāgatas rejoiced.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

***Emaho!*** intimates great wonder because all things are originally pure. The term **indestructible reality** denotes the nature of all buddhas and sentient beings, which is the primordial uncreated buddhahood, and **the aggregate of** which it is comprised denotes the natural expression combining actual reality or emptiness and apparitional reality or appearances. Its **aspects** are the five psychophysical aggregates, beginning with consciousness, which [in reality] **are known as the five genuinely perfect buddhas**, beginning with Akṣobhya. Similarly, **all the manifold** aspects of the twelve **sense fields and** the eighteen **sensory elements** abide primordially as **the nature of the maṇḍala** of the retinue of male and female **bodhisattvas**.

The sense fields (*āyatana*, *skye mched*) are so called because they cause the six sense objects such as visual forms and the six modes of sensory consciousness such as visual consciousness to arise (*skye*), while causing the continuity [of their perception] to be sensed (*mched*) in the subsequent instant. When classified, they comprise the six objective [sense fields], namely, those of visual forms, sounds, odors, tastes, tangibles, and mental phenomena; and the six corresponding sense organs [i.e., subjective sense fields], namely, those of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mental faculty; twelve sense fields in all. The eighteen sensory elements comprise the six sense objects such as visual forms, the six sense organs such as the eyes, and the six modes of sensory consciousness, such as visual consciousness.<sup>268</sup>

The five material elements also represent buddhahood in the essential nature of the five female buddhas. As such, **earth and water are** respectively **Buddhalocanā and Māmakī**. **Fire and wind are** respectively **Pāṇḍaravāsini and Samayatārā**, and **space is Dhātvīśvari**.

In the same way, the essential nature of **the three planes of existence**, namely, those of desire, form, and formlessness which **are** subsumed respectively in the outer elements, the inner elements, and the amalgam of ideation (*rtog tshogs*), is ostensibly impure, but it too abides in the nature of the **primordial** or original **buddha fields**. **All things** of cyclic existence and the realities of nirvāṇa **without exception** that appear, that is, all things of phenomenal appearance **that there are, are not extraneous to the buddhas themselves**. The so-called **phenomena** of impure cyclic existence, **extraneous to the buddhas themselves** and endowed with independent characteristics, when searched for **have not been found by the buddhas themselves**, even to the extent of an atomic particle. They are not found, and there is understood to be actually nothing that the buddhas do not find. Accordingly, it says in the [*Tantra of the*] *All-Accomplishing King*:

The disposition of the All-Accomplishing One,  
Where all things are uncreated,  
Is the nucleus of primordial buddhahood.  
The All-Accomplishing One does not refer objectively  
To being or nonbeing;

His disposition of natural sameness  
Is the original ground, the baseless actual reality.<sup>269</sup>  
And in the *Sūtra of the Irreversible Wheel*:

Since all things exhibit primordial buddhahood,  
Enlightenment is the defining characteristic of space.<sup>270</sup>

The actual reality that manifests in these ways is primordial buddhahood.

**When he said this, all the tathāgatas** along with the assembled host of their queens **rejoiced**.

## **THE INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE THROUGH THE ENLIGHTENED INTENTION OF THE FEMALE BUDDHA [SAMANTABHADRĪ] [15.4.3.2.1.2]**

Second, the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of the female buddha [Samantabhadrī], which emphasizes the abiding nature of actual reality or emptiness, has two aspects: (i) the cause that induces her enlightened intention to initiate the discourse (15.4.3.2.1.2.1) and (ii) her actual initiation of the discourse (15.4.3.2.1.2.2).

The former, concerning the cause [comments on the verse]:

**The passive female object united indivisibly with the active male subject and uttered the following aphorisms concerning actual reality:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:3)***

དེ་ནས་བཙུན་མོ་བྱ་བ་མོ་ཚོས་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་མོས། བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་ཡིད་  
[བྱིད་པ་པོ] ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་དང་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་གྱུར་ནས། ཚེད་ཏུ་བཟོད་  
པ་འདི་བཟོད་དོ།

Then the queen Samantabhadrī, who is the passive female object, representing [the inherent purity of] mental phenomena, united indivisibly with the transcendent lord Samantabhadra, representing [the inherent purity of] the mental faculty, and uttered these aphorisms.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Once the abiding nature of the objective polarity had been intellectually expressed [by Samantabhadra], **then** his **queen Samantabhadrī, who is** the naturally pure object that appears to his intellect, **the passive female object** to be ascertained, **representing** [the inherent purity of] self-manifesting **mental phenomena, united indivisibly** in terms of the subject-object dichotomy **with the transcendent lord Samantabhadra, representing** [the inherent purity of] **the mental faculty**, the subjective pristine cognition that is awareness. **And** then she **uttered this** following statement as the essential nature of her **aphorisms** concerning this abiding nature of actual reality, emptiness. [See plate 4b.]

**HER ACTUAL INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE**  
**[15.4.3.2.1.2.2]**

The latter, her actual initiation of the discourse [comments on the verse]:

**The trichiliocosm, the world and its inhabitants,  
Is primordially empty—great enlightenment.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:4)***

། གྲེ་མའོ།  
། རྩོགས་བཅུ་སྟོང་ཁམས་ཡེ་ནས་དབེན།  
། སྲིད་པ་གསུམ་ནི་དག་པའི་ཞིང།  
། ལྷིགས་མ་ལྔ་ཉིད་བདེ་ལྡན་གནས།  
། ལྷུང་པོ་ལྔ་ཉིད་རྫོགས་སངས་རྒྱས།  
། ཐམས་ཅད་མཚོག་གི་སྤྱིང་པོ་བས།  
། གཞན་དུ་རྒྱལ་བས་ཚོས་མི་བཅའ།  
། ཉིད་ལས་གཞན་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཚོས།  
། བཅའ་ཀྱང་རྒྱལ་བས་མི་བརྟེས་སོ།  
། ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡེ་ནས་སངས་རྒྱས་པར་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་  
པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་མཐུན་ཏོ།

O! The chiliocosms of the ten directions are primordially isolated. The three planes of existence are pure fields. The five degenerations are themselves blissful states. The five psychophysical aggregates themselves are perfect buddhas. Apart from the supreme nucleus of all [things], The conquerors do not seek the doctrine elsewhere. Doctrines said to be other than that, Though sought. have not been found by the conquerors.

—When she said this, the tathāgatas themselves knew all things to be primordial buddhahood.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**O!** is exclaimed to indicate the wonder of actual reality. It is wondrous in the sense that all **the great trichiliocosms of the ten directions**, illustrated by this self-manifesting world system, **are** revealed to be **primordially** and originally empty and therefore **isolated** from the senses. This means that the physical environment is emptiness.

Concerning the term *trichiliocosm*, a world system endowed with four continents comprises a single series of four continents encircling Mount Sumeru. This is surrounded by a barrier range equal in height to Mount Yugandhara and adorned with the divine mansions of the world systems of desire and form. The first chiliocosm (*stong dang po'i spyi phud kyi 'jig rten*) delimits one thousand of these world systems and is surrounded by a barrier range equal in height to the abode of Trayastrimśa. The dichiliocosm (*stong gnyis pa bar ma'i 'jig rten*) delimits one thousand of those and is surrounded by a barrier range equal in height to the abode of Paranirmitavaśavartin, and the great trichiliocosm (*stong gsum gyi stong chen po 'jig rten gyi khams*) delimits one thousand of the latter and is surrounded by a barrier range equal in height to [Brahmakāyika,] the abode of the first meditative concentration. In this context, all the fields and world systems, illustrated by this one, are identified with emptiness, and as such they are similar to a reflected image.<sup>271</sup>

All sentient beings inhabiting these [world systems] are also demonstrated to be empty. For their **three planes of existence** abide in the nature of the spontaneous Bounteous Array, the **fields** of the primordially **pure** buddhas.<sup>272</sup>

In addition, **the five degenerations are themselves** essentially nothing other than the naturally present pristine

cognition—supremely **blissful states**. This is because the energy of the five pristine cognitions appears as the five poisons and generates the suffering of cyclic existence when [beings] are bewildered within the subject-object dichotomy. There are some who have mistakenly explained that this passage refers to the degeneration of time and so forth [and not to the five poisons].<sup>273</sup>

**The five psychophysical aggregates** of living beings **themselves are** the primordially and manifestly **[perfect] buddhas**, as has been mentioned above. Therefore, **the supreme nucleus** is the nature of enlightenment or sameness, the abiding nature **of all** phenomena which is neither positive nor negative, and without acceptance or rejection in all respects. **Apart from this, the conquerors do not seek the doctrine elsewhere**. Everything is the natural expression of the buddhas, and any erroneous **doctrines said to be** impure or **other than that buddhahood, though sought, have not been found by the conquerors** elsewhere. They are not found.<sup>274</sup>

**When** the female buddha [Samantabhadrī] **said this, the tathāgatas themselves** along with the assembled host of their queens **knew all things to be primordial buddhahood**.

## **THE INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE THROUGH THE ENLIGHTENED INTENTION OF THEIR NONDUAL UNION [15.4.3.2.1.3]**

Third, [the initiation of the discourse] through the enlightened intention of their nondual union has two aspects: (i) the cause that induces their enlightened intention to initiate the discourse (15.4.3.2.1.3.1) and (ii) their actual initiation of the discourse (15.4.3.2.1.3.2).

The former, the cause [comments on the verse]:

**The mind endowed with primordial buddhahood**



**Is also cultivated as pristine cognition.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:5)***

དེ་ནས་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོས་ཡེ་ནས་སངས་རྒྱས་པའི་སེམས་  
ཡི་ཤེས་སུ་བསྐྱེད་པ་འདི་གསུངས་སོ།

Then their nondual Supreme Identity spoke as follows concerning the mind endowed with primordial buddhahood, which is cultivated as pristine cognition.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the objective reality [identified with Samantabhadri] had been purified in the essential nature of the subject [identified with Samantabhadra], who is the pristine cognition that is awareness, **then the nondual Supreme Identity** of the male buddha or awareness and the female buddha or emptiness **spoke as follows concerning the mind** that exists primordially **as** naturally present **pristine cognition**, facilitating the understanding of the actual reality of buddhahood, and that **is cultivated** as such in beings who already possess it. This is because cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are both endowed with **buddhahood** in **primordial** sameness. Accordingly, it says in the *Tantra of the Marvelous King*:

Myself and the limitless sentient beings

Are primordial buddhas.

In the case of beings who know that this is so,

The mind generates supreme enlightenment!<sup>275</sup>

## THEIR ACTUAL INITIATION OF THE DISCOURSE [15.4.3.2.1.3.2]

The latter, their actual initiation of the discourse [comments on the verse]:

**This [reality] is without creation, cessation, or abiding.**

**It is without reference and without movement.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 2:6-11)*

|ཨ་མ་ཉོ་ལོ་མཚར་མཉམ་གྱི་ཚེས།

|རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་གསང་།

|སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་ལས་ཐམས་ཅད་སྐྱེས།

|སྐྱེས་པ་ཉིད་ན་སྐྱེ་བ་མེད།

|ཨ་མ་ཉོ་ལོ་མཚར་མཉམ་གྱི་ཚེས།

|རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་གསང་།

|འགག་པ་མེད་ལས་ཐམས་ཅད་འགག  
|འགག་པ་ཉིད་ན་འགག་པ་མེད།

|ཨི་མ་ཉོ་ངོ་མཚར་མྱད་གྱི་ཚོས།  
|རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་གསང་།  
|གནས་པ་མེད་ལས་ཐམས་ཅད་གནས།  
|གནས་པ་ཉིད་ན་གནས་པ་མེད།

|ཨི་མ་ཉོ་ངོ་མཚར་མྱད་གྱི་ཚོས།  
|རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་གསང་།  
|དམིགས་པ་མེད་ལས་ཐམས་ཅད་དམིགས།  
|དམིགས་པ་ཉིད་ན་དམིགས་པ་མེད།

|ཨི་མ་ཉོ་ངོ་མཚར་མྱད་གྱི་ཚོས།  
|རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་གསང་།  
|འགྲོ་འོང་མེད་ལས་འགྲོ་དང་འོང་།  
|འགྲོ་འོང་ཉིད་ན་འགྲོ་འོང་མེད།  
ཅེས་བརྗོད་པས། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བཙུན་མོའི་རྫོགས་ཐམས་  
ཅད་ཀྱང་མཉམ་པས་ཁྲབ་པར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

*Emaho!* This wondrous, marvelous reality  
Is the secret of all the perfect buddhas.  
All is created through the uncreated.  
At creation itself, there is no creation.

*Emaho!* This wondrous, marvelous reality  
Is the secret of all the perfect buddhas.  
All ceases through the unceasing.  
At cessation itself, there is no cessation.

*Emaho!* This wondrous, marvelous reality  
Is the secret of all the perfect buddhas.  
All abides through the nonabiding.  
At abiding itself, there is no abiding.

*Emaho!* This wondrous, marvelous reality  
Is the secret of all the perfect buddhas.  
All is referential through the nonreferential.  
At reference itself, there is no reference.

*Emaho!* This wondrous, marvelous reality  
Is the secret of all the perfect buddhas.  
Things move through an absence of movement.  
At movement itself, there is no movement.  
—When they said this, all the tathāgatas and all the  
assembled host of their queens too were filled with joy.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

***Emaho!*** is exclaimed because all things are primordially beyond creation, cessation, and objects of conceptual elaboration, and the intellect that realizes this is indeed revealed as the nature of the five pristine cognitions. **This reality**, which is the **wondrous** abiding nature of all things, more **marvelous** than others, **is the** truth of the profound **secret of all the perfect buddhas**. What, you may ask, is [this secret]? It is that **through** the disposition of **the uncreated** original actual reality, **all** things subsumed within appearance and emptiness, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, appear to be **created** as in a dream or magical display. But **at** the moment when their **creation itself** manifests, actually **there is no creation**. This is the essential nature—the expanse

of actual reality, and the intellect that realizes it is the pristine cognition of reality's expanse.

The first two lines [of this stanza] are similarly combined with the four succeeding stanzas in the following manner: **Through the** primordially **unceasing** actual reality in which diverse incandescence is reflected as on the surface of a mirror, **all** the reflected imagery that appears as the diversity of apparitional reality ostensibly **ceases**. But **at** the moment when their **cessation itself** manifests, **there is no cessation**. This is the mirrorlike abiding nature, and the intellect that realizes this is the mirrorlike pristine cognition.

**Through the** sky-like disposition in which all things are primordially **nonabiding**, **all** the diversity of phenomena which appears in that manner ostensibly **abides**. But **at** the moment when **abiding itself** becomes manifest, actually **there is no abiding**. This is sameness, and the intellect that realizes this is the pristine cognition of sameness.

**Through the** disposition that is similar to space or the mid-reaches of a clear ocean, in which the natural purity of the mind is **nonreferential** and signless, **all** that arises as the diversity of thought in the manner of clouds or reflected imagery **is** ostensibly **referential** in terms of refutation, proof, and so forth. But **at** the moment when objective **reference** to the diversity of thought **itself** occurs, it is groundless and baseless, and in fact **there is no objective reference**. This is discernment, naturally devoid of substantialist thoughts, and the intellect that realizes this is called the pristine cognition of discernment.

**Through** a phantomlike disposition where there is originally **an absence of movement** with respect to all **things**, appearances and awareness seem to **move** diversely. But **at** the moment when **movement itself** occurs, the intrinsic essence abides and **there is no movement**. This is the accomplishment of activity, and the intellect that realizes this is the pristine cognition of accomplishment.<sup>276</sup>

There are some who claim that the meaning of these [stanzas] is connected with the pristine cognitions of the four

delights (*dga' ba bzhi'i ye shes*), but there is evidently no occasion to make this connection here. This is a circumstance in which [not delight but] the abiding nature of all phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, is revealed.<sup>277</sup>

**When they said this** concerning the primordially pure modality of all things, **all the male tathāgatas**, [symbolizing] appearance, **and all the assembled host of their female queens**, [symbolizing] emptiness, **too were filled with joy**, primordially in sameness.

## **THE DYNAMIC OF COMPASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY FOR THE SAKE OF SENTIENT BEINGS WHO HAVE NOT REALIZED REALITY [15.4.3.2.2]**

The latter part [of the second chapter, see above, [p. 98](#)] reveals the dynamic of compassionate spirituality for the sake of sentient beings who have not realized reality. This comprises (i) a teaching on the object in respect of which compassionate spirituality is induced—that is, sentient beings' lack of realization (15.4.3.2.2.1); (ii) the bewilderment in cyclic existence which occurs through the egotistical apprehension of that unrealized nature (15.4.3.2.2.2); (iii) the truth devoid of bondage and liberation that is not bypassed from the very moment when bewilderment manifests (15.4.3.2.2.3); and (iv) a description of the diffusion of the emanational display of compassionate spirituality in order that this reality might be revealed (15.4.3.2.2.4).

## **THE OBJECT IN RESPECT OF WHICH COMPASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY IS INDUCED, THAT IS, SENTIENT BEINGS'**

## LACK OF REALIZATION [15.4.3.2.2.1]

The first of these has two sections: (i) indicating the cause that induces compassionate spirituality (15.4.3.2.2.1.1) and (ii) indicating the object in respect of which it is thereby induced (15.4.3.2.2.1.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**The male [tathāgatas], with the assembled host of their female consorts, then uttered these following aphorisms:**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 2:12)*

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་བཙུན་མོའི་ཚོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བཅས་  
པས་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then all the tathāgatas, with [all] the assembled hosts of their queens, uttered these aphorisms:

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Once the abiding nature of all things had been revealed, **then all the tathāgatas, with all the assembled hosts of their queens, uttered these following aphorisms** in order to reveal that very truth: **THE OBJECT IN RESPECT OF WHICH COMPASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY IS INDUCED [15.4.3.2.2.1.2]**

The latter, concerning the object in respect of which compassionate spirituality is induced [comments on the verse]:

**This primordially secret [reality] remains naturally secret, owing to its essential nature, even though it is not extraneous.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:13)***

ཨེ་མ་ཉི་ཡེ་ནས་གསང་བའི་ཚོས།  
སྣ་ཚོ་གསང་སྣང་ལ་རང་བཞིན་གསང་།  
དེ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་རབ་ཏུ་གསང་།  
གཞན་ཏུ་མིན་ལས་ཤིན་ཏུ་གསང་།  
ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས།

*Emaho!* This primordially secret reality  
Manifests as diversity, but it is naturally secret.  
It is more secret, owing to its essential nature,  
And it is most secret, because it is not extraneous.  
—In accordance with these words . . .

***Interlinear Commentary***

***Emaho!*** is exclaimed out of distress, lamenting the host of sentient beings who have not realized this [reality]. As long as the nature of all things is not realized from the very beginning to be the truth of original buddhahood, **this** remains a **primordially secret reality** for all living beings. It **manifests as** the **diversity** of phenomenal existence, and these [manifestations] primordially abide in the actual reality of the three buddha bodies, without conjunction or disjunction, **but it**



**is naturally secret** because they are perceived as impure bewildering phenomena. This nature of things, unrecognized as the reality where appearance and emptiness are without conjunction or disjunction, **is even more secret, owing to its essential nature**, unlike [lesser truths] which are extraneously hidden. This reality **is not extraneous** to the nature of one's own mind, but **most secret because** it is not seen to be present in oneself.

There are some who hold that [this reality] is kept secret from an unworthy recipient, but [such comments] are inappropriate because the present context is one in which the secret nature of the ground [and not of the path] is revealed.<sup>278</sup>

**In accordance with these words** concerning the primordially secret truth, the compassionate spirituality that reveals it manifests repeatedly.

## **THE BEWILDERMENT IN CYCLIC EXISTENCE THAT OCCURS THROUGH THE EGOTISTICAL APPREHENSION OF THAT UNREALIZED NATURE [15.4.3.2.2.2]**

The second section, concerning the condition of bewilderment, has two aspects: (i) indicating the cause of compassionate spirituality (15.4.3.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the actual modality of bewilderment (15.4.3.2.2.2.2).

The former, indicating the cause [comments on the verse]:

**Fundamental ignorance ripens into cyclic existence,  
And compassionate spirituality is then generated.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:14)***

དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་། ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡི་ནས་སངས་རྒྱས་  
པའི་དོ་བོ་ཉིད་དུ་གཅིག་པའི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཡིན་པས་དབྱེར་མེད་ནའང་། འགྲོ་བའི་  
རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་མ་དེག་པ་ལས། འགྲོ་བ་ལྔའི་རིས་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱབ་པར་  
སྒྲིན་པ་ལ། ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཡི་ཤེས་ཆེན་པོ་སྐྱེས་ནས། ཆེད་  
དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

. . . all the tathāgatas and all things are indivisible because they share one defining characteristic in the essential nature of primordial buddhahood. However, the conceptual thoughts of living beings have ripened through fundamental ignorance into the inconceivable five classes of living beings. Generating great compassionate spirituality in the form of the supreme pristine cognition of the buddhas for their sake, they uttered these aphorisms.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**All** manifestations of the body of actual reality of **the pure tathāgatas**, along with their fields, **and all things** of impure cyclic existence that manifest within the three planes of existence, that is, the [inanimate] environments and their [sentient] inhabitants, **are indivisible because they share one defining characteristic in the essential nature of primordial buddhahood.** In this way they are pure. **However, the conceptual thoughts of living beings have ripened into the inconceivable** modes of happiness and suffering experienced by **the five classes of living beings**, namely, those of the three lower realms along with the gods and human beings.<sup>279</sup> These are outcomes that arise **through** the dualizing **fundamental ignorance** of the bewildering

subject-object dichotomy. **Generating great** naturally present **compassionate spirituality in the form of the supreme spontaneous pristine cognition of the buddhas for their sake**, once again **they uttered these aphorisms**, which follow.

## **THE ACTUAL MODALITY OF BEWILDERMENT [15.4.3.2.2.2]**

The latter, indicating the actual modality of bewilderment [comments on the verse]:

**Through conceptual thoughts, corporeal forms and resources are possessed.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 2:15)*

|ཨ་མ་རྟོ་བདེ་གཤེགས་སྣང་པོ་ལས།  
|རང་གི་རྣམ་རྟོག་ལས་ཀྱིས་སྤྲུལ།  
|སྣ་ཚོགས་ལུས་དང་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་དང་།  
|གནས་དང་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་ལ་སོགས་པ།  
|བདག་དང་བདག་གིར་སོ་སོར་འཛིན།

*Emaho!* From the seed of buddha nature  
Individual conceptual thoughts are emanated by deeds.  
There are diverse corporeal forms, resources,  
Abodes, sufferings, and so forth—  
The possessor and the possessed are differentiated.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Emaho!** is here exclaimed as the natural expression of loving-kindness. Bewilderment has emerged **from** the disposition of **the seed of buddha nature**, the original abiding state, the luminous nature of mind. The seed of buddha nature is that which abides as the essential nature of the luminous nature of mind, the three buddha bodies without conjunction or disjunction. In this regard, it says in the *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*:

Pure, clear, luminous,  
Undisturbed, and nonconditioned  
Is the seed of buddha nature,

The actual reality that primordially abides.<sup>280</sup>

When bewilderment occurs through any conditions, the **conceptual thoughts** of **individual** sentient beings arise of their own accord. Thus, these great bastions of cyclic existence **are emanated** in the manner of self-manifesting dreams **by** causally effective **deeds**. **There are corporeal forms** of **diverse** living beings including the gods, the **resources** that they desire, their **abodes** including the celestial realms (*svarga*), their respective joys and **sufferings, and so forth** which manifoldly appear, and with regard to which living beings apprehend **the** concept “I” as a **possessor and** concepts such as “my things” as being **possessed**. These **are differentiated** as a subject-object dichotomy, so that beings are never liberated from cyclic existence.

**THE TRUTH DEVOID OF BONDAGE AND LIBERATION THAT IS  
NOT BYPASSED FROM THE VERY MOMENT WHEN  
BEWILDERMENT MANIFESTS [15.4.3.2.2.3]**

The third section, concerning the truth that is devoid of bondage and liberation from the very moment when bewilderment manifests [comments on the verse]:

**Though unfettered, conceptual thoughts [tie and] untie knots in the sky.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:16)***

།སྐྱུས་ཀྱང་མ་བཅིངས་བཅིངས་མེད་དེ།  
།བཅིང་བར་བྱ་བ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།  
།རྣམ་རྟོག་བདག་ཏུ་འཛིན་པ་ཡིས།  
།ནན་གྱིས་མཁའ་ལ་མཐུད་པ་འདོར།

[But] unfettered by any agent, fettering is nonexistent.  
There is not an object to be fettered.  
By the egotistical grasping of conceptual thoughts,  
Knots in the sky are persistently tied and untied.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Despite such afflictions caused by the many aspects of happiness and suffering in cyclic existence, in the abiding nature, as in space, living beings are **unfettered by any agent** that would fetter them. Even afflictive mental states that ostensibly appear to be **fettering** are actually **nonexistent** because **there is not** in fact a single living being or even the nature of a living being's mind that is **an object to be fettered**. From where, you may ask, however, has this ostensible fettering emerged? Bewilderment is fabricated, without actually occurring, **by the egotistical grasping of**

**conceptual thoughts**, which suddenly arise. It is as if, for example, someone has **persistently** imagined a rope **in the sky** in front, and then **tied and untied** many **knots** in it. In the same way, the nature of one's own mind is originally pure like the sky, but it appears as the bewilderment of cyclic existence because it has contrived many modes of refutation and proof, or of subject and object. Just as a knot in the sky may also seem more veridical the longer this intellectual effort is sustained and yet nothing is actually tied, this bewildering appearance of cyclic existence is more veridical the longer one does not abandon one's attachment to the subject-object dichotomy, and yet it is actually not veridical at all.

**THE DIFFUSION OF THE EMANATIONAL DISPLAY OF  
COMPASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY IN ORDER THAT THIS REALITY  
MIGHT BE REVEALED [15.4.3.2.2.4]**

The fourth section, concerning the diffusion of compassionate spirituality in order that this reality might be revealed [comments on the verse]:

**To show that there is neither fettering nor liberation, The diffusion of diverse [compassionate spirituality] is emanated.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:17)***

།བཅིངས་མེད་རྣམ་པར་གྲོལ་མེད་པའི།  
།ཡི་ནས་ལྷན་རྒྱུ་གས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཚོས།  
།བསྟན་ཕྱིར་སློབ་སྤྲོད་ཚོགས་མཛད།  
ཅེས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་ཆེད་དུ་གླེང་དོ།

In order to reveal this reality of the buddhas  
Which is primordial, spontaneous, and perfect,  
And where there is neither fettering nor liberation,  
The diffusion of diverse [emanations] is revealed.

—With these words, the tathāgata himself purposefully  
discoursed with the tathāgata himself.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**In order to reveal** to living beings **this** profound and secret **reality of the buddhas**, the nature of **which is spontaneous and** entirely **perfect** in the great field of **primordial** buddha body and pristine cognition, **and** also the nature of mind **where there is neither fettering nor liberation** with respect to all things of phenomenal existence, or of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **the diffusion of diverse** [emanations] **is revealed**. These comprise an inconceivable display of skillful means and inestimable emanations of great compassionate spirituality.

**With these words, the tathāgata himself**, who is of self-manifesting purity, **purposefully discoursed with the tathāgata himself.**<sup>281</sup>

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 2 of the *Secret Nucleus*,  
entitled “The Initiation of the Discourse.”**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:18)***

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་དོན་དམ་པ་དང་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི་བྱང་  
རྒྱུ་སེམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ལེན་སྟེ་གཉིས་པའོ།།

This completes the second chapter from the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Generation of Ultimate and Relative Enlightened Mind as Pristine Cognition.”

***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the second chapter from the Secret Nucleus** of all buddhas **Definitive with Respect to the Real**, entitled **the generation of** both the **ultimate** [enlightened mind] of nirvāṇa, which is pure and free from all conceptual elaboration, **and** the **relative enlightened mind** of cyclic existence **as** the **pristine cognition** of sameness because buddhahood has been attained from the beginning. These [respectively] reveal the indivisible abiding nature and the reason naturally present compassionate spirituality is diffused from the expanse [of reality] for the sake of living beings who have not realized [that reality].<sup>282</sup>



### 3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ALL PHENOMENA

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The purpose of the third chapter is to explore the nature of this compassionate spirituality as it manifests in the world.

On the basis of the aforementioned diffusion of compassionate spirituality, there are six sages embodying awareness who then emerge from the indestructible body, speech, and mind of the tathāgatas in order to teach the six classes of living beings (v. 1). In a lengthy overview, the commentator also provides a detailed explanation of this buddha body of emanation (*nirmāṇakāya*) according to the common and the uncommon vehicles. The former view, referring specifically to Śākyamuni Buddha, concerns his cultivation of enlightened mind, accumulation of provisions, and attainment of buddhahood over many successive lives, emphasizing his celebrated twelve deeds. The latter interpretation focuses on the emergence of all emanations such as the thousand buddhas and six sages of this “auspicious aeon” from Samantabhadra, the buddha body of actual reality.

The buddha body of emanation, represented by these six sages, teaches by means of the following four kinds of instruction (v. 2): by the great merits of the buddha body (v. 3), by supernormal cognitive powers of buddha mind (v. 4), by inconceivable miraculous abilities (v. 5), and by knowledge conveyed in the five vehicles of buddha speech, namely, the vehicle of gods and humans, the vehicle of pious attendants, the vehicle of hermit buddhas, the vehicle of bodhisattvas, and the unsurpassed vehicle of secret mantra (vv. 6–8).

The text then analyzes the nature of the living beings who are to be trained by these instructions and the nature of the sacred teachings through which they are trained. First, the nature of

cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*) is ultimately established to be the pure reality itself. Although it diversely arises on the basis of fundamental ignorance, the underlying reality of buddhahood is present from the moment of its initial appearance as ignorance. The bewildering appearances of cyclic existence are a miraculous display of mind, baseless in nature, and thought itself is actually a display of pristine cognition (vv. 9-14).

Second, the sacred teachings through which beings are trained and through which this apparent bewilderment is removed are, in the final analysis, established to be inexpressible in nature because they refer directly to the unsurpassed result beyond the exoteric teachings of the causal vehicles. Here, all the teachings are regarded as a miraculous display without inherent or independent existence; despite their unchanging basis, they exhibit great flexibility in content and great diversity in their teachers or expositors. In particular, this *Guhyagarbha Tantra* is revered as the emanational basis of all the vehicles that lead to buddhahood and as the all-embracing, universal interpretation of the sūtras and tantras. Although all teachings and all things that can be known are conventionally assigned names and labels, essentially they too are without inherent existence (vv. 15-20).

The chapter concludes with a synopsis that describes the bewildering appearances of cyclic existence and the buddha fields of nirvāṇa as natural manifestations of mind and pristine cognition respectively (vv. 21-23).

THE THIRD [CHAPTER] concerns the establishment of all things through the nature of the compassionate spirituality [of the buddha body of emanation], which is arrayed as the lamp of the world, without moving from actual reality (15.4.3.3). This comprises (i) the context (15.4.3.3.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (15.4.3.3.2); and (iii) the conclusion (15.4.3.3.3).

## THE CONTEXT [15.4.3.3.1]

The first of these, the context [comments on the verse]:

**The six sages, embodiments of awareness,  
compassionate spirituality, then came forth.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:1)*

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལས། ལྷགས་ཇི་ཆེན་པོའི་བྱིན་གྱིས་  
བརྒྱབས་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་རིག་པའི་སྐྱེས་བུ་ལྷག་པ་རྣམས་ དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་  
སྐྱེ་དང་གསུང་དང་ལྷགས་ཇི་ཆེན་ལས་འཕྲོན་ཏེ།

Then the six sages, embodiments of awareness who are said [to arise owing to] the blessing of great compassionate spirituality that emerges from all the tathāgatas, came forth from the indestructible body, speech, and mind of the tathāgatas.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Following the foregoing explanation of the initiation of the discourse, **then the six sages came forth from the indestructible body, speech, and mind of the tathāgatas** of this self-manifesting array. These emanations **are said** to arise naturally owing to **the blessing of great compassionate spirituality that emerges** in and of itself

**from all the tathāgatas** of the self-manifesting array. These are the **embodiments of awareness** because they themselves are the pristine cognition of the buddhas. They are [known as sages] because they have subdued all [world-forming] deeds and afflictive mental states, and they number six, including Śākyamuni, because they grant instruction respectively to the six classes of living beings of the six realms.<sup>283</sup>

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [15.4.3.3.2]**

The second part [the explanation of the verses] comprises (i) a general presentation of the modes of emanation that accord with the four kinds of instruction (15.4.3.3.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the nature of the living beings who are the object of these instructions and of their doctrines (15.4.3.3.2.2); and (iii) a synopsis of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as self-manifestations of mind and pristine cognition (15.4.3.3.2.3).

### **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE MODES OF EMANATION THAT ACCORD WITH THE FOUR KINDS OF INSTRUCTION [15.4.3.3.2.1]**

The first section, the general presentation of the modes of emanation, comprises (i) a general introduction (15.4.3.3.2.1.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis (15.4.3.3.2.1.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**They instruct the trichilocosms of the infinite and  
limitless six worlds.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 3:2)**

འཕོན་ནས་ཀྱང་ལས་གྱི་དབང་གིས་སྤེལ་ཞི་དང་ཡན་མན་གྱི་འཛིག་རྟེན་རྒྱག་གི་  
ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་མཐའ་ཡས་སུ་མེད་པའི་སྟོང་གསུམ་གྱི་སྟོང་ཆེན་པོ་རེ་རེ།  
ཐུབ་པ་ཆེན་པོ་བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་རེ་རེས་འདུལ་བ་རྣམ་པ་བཞིས་འགོ་བ་ལྟའི་  
དོན་མཛད་དེ།

Once they have come forth, each of these great sages or transcendent lords also acts on behalf of the five classes of living beings through four kinds of instruction in each great trichiliocosm of the infinite and limitless ten directions of the six worlds where, by the power of deeds, [beings] move, facing laterally, upward, or downward.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

**Once** the six sages **have come forth** in this way, their [respective] world systems also appear differently **by the power of** the respective **deeds** accumulated by living beings. Briefly, there are **worlds** that are round, square, semicircular, and triangular,<sup>284</sup> along with the bottomless nadir and topless zenith, **where** living beings **move laterally**, indicating that their heads are horizontal, and where they move **upward or downward**, indicating that their heads face up or down.<sup>285</sup> **In each** world system of the **great trichiliocosm**, naturally pervading all **of the ten directions of these six** dissimilar environments, **infinite** in number and parts, **and limitless** in their modes of happiness, sorrow, resources, and so forth, **each of these great sages or transcendent lords**, granting

their respective instructions, **also acts on behalf of the five classes of living beings through** their particular **four kinds of instruction**.

[These four kinds of instruction] are, namely, instruction by merit (*bsod nam* *kyis 'dul ba*), instruction by the direct perception of all meanings (*don thams cad mngon sum du gyur pas 'dul ba*), instruction by great miraculous abilities (*rdzu 'phrul chen pos 'dul ba*), and instruction by knowledge (*rig pas 'dul ba*).<sup>286</sup>

In this regard it says in the *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*:

The distinctions of deeds are inconceivable.

The world of the hells slopes downward.

The world of Yama is lateral.

Animals, gods, and humans face upward.<sup>287</sup>

However, I think that all animals should indeed be included<sup>288</sup> among those who face laterally.

So it is that the world system of a single trichiliocosm, its environment and sentient inhabitants subsumed in the five classes [of living beings] and endowed with three kinds [of motion] (lateral, upward, and downward), forms the field of instruction for the buddha body of emanation.

On this point, there are some who hold that the six worlds comprise those of the four directions that are lateral, along with a nadir that is downward facing and a zenith that faces upward, but they do not even partially discern the meaning of the text.<sup>289</sup>

## **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS [15.4.3.3.2.1.2]**

The latter [the extensive exegesis] comprises (i) instruction by the great merit of buddha body and its excellent activities

(15.4.3.3.2.1.2.1); (ii) instruction by direct perception or the great supernormal cognitive power of buddha mind (15.4.3.3.2.1.2.2); (iii) instruction by great inconceivable miraculous abilities (15.4.3.3.2.1.2.3); and (iv) instruction by knowledge conveyed in the five vehicles of buddha speech (15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4).

## **INSTRUCTION BY THE GREAT MERIT OF BUDDHA BODY [15.4.3.3.2.1.2.1]**

The first of these, instruction by the great merit of buddha body [comments on the verse]:

**They demonstrate the twelve great activities of the buddha body.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:3)***

བལྟམས་པ་དང་། རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བ་དང་། དཀའ་ཐུབ་མཛད་པ་དང་། སངས་  
རྒྱུས་པ་དང་། བདུད་བདུལ་བ་དང་། ཚེས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་བསྐྱོར་བ་དང་། ཚོ་  
འཕྲུལ་ཚེན་པོ་སྟོན་པ་དང་། ལྷ་དན་ལས་འདས་ལ་སོགས་པར་སྟོན་པའི་བྱུང་  
པས།

The sages who demonstrate birth, renunciation, austerity, buddhahood, the subjugation of demonic forces, the turning of the doctrinal wheel, the demonstration of great miracles, the passing into

nirvāṇa, and so forth . . .

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The sages** are those **who demonstrate** the supreme miracles of enlightened activities in order to mature immeasurable living beings through their great emanation of buddha body and instruct inconceivable living beings—that is to say, [they are exemplified by Śākyamuni Buddha who demonstrated] the **birth** of the buddha body, the **renunciation**, the rejection of the household life, the **austerity** on the banks of the Nairāñjana River and elsewhere, the attainment of **buddhahood** and **the subjugation of** the host of **demonic forces** at Vajrāsana, **the turning of the doctrinal wheel** in Vārāṇasī, **the demonstration of great miracles** at Śrāvastī, and **the passing into nirvāṇa** at Kuśinagara.

The words **and so forth** refer to [the other enlightened activities] in addition to these eight, which are universally presented. Included among them are the transference of consciousness from Tuṣita, the proficiency in the arts, the enjoyment with a retinue of queens, the arrival at the Point of Enlightenment, the subjugation of a rutting elephant at Rājagṛha, the teaching of the doctrine to his [deceased] mother in Tuṣita, and the subjugation of a great *yakṣa* in Aṭavī.<sup>290</sup>

There are some who hold that these activities number twelve, but that is not definite because the sage is additionally said to demonstrate miracles and other [activities] that are interspersed with these.<sup>291</sup> The enumeration of twelve activities subsumed in the words **and so forth** is merely illustrative. In short, all acts that instruct living beings by the supreme miracles of buddha body are subsumed therein.

**INSTRUCTION BY THE GREAT SUPERNORMAL COGNITIVE POWER**



## OF BUDDHA MIND [15.4.3.3.2.1.2.2]

The second, instruction by the great supernormal cognitive power of buddha mind [comments on the verse]:

**They instruct by means of the six great supernormal cognitive powers of buddha mind.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:4)*

དུས་བཞི་ཀུན་ཏུ་མཁྱེན་པ་དང་། ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སེམས་ཀྱི་རྒྱད་ཀུན་ཏུ་མཁྱེན་  
པ་དང་། ལྷ་འབྲུལ་གྱི་སྦྱོན་གྱིས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀུན་ཏུ་གཟིགས་པ་དང་། ལྷ་  
འབྲུལ་གྱི་སྦྱོན་གྱིས་ཀུན་ཏུ་གསལ་ན་པ་དང་། ལྷ་འབྲུལ་གྱི་ཚོགས་ཀུན་ཏུ་དོན་  
སྦྱོང་པ་དང་། ཟག་པ་མེད་པས་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་སྦྱོང་པ་རྫོགས་པའི་མདོན་  
པར་ཤེས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱལ་དང་།

. . . are endowed with the six great supernormal cognitive powers, namely, the absolute knowledge of the four times, the absolute knowledge of the continuum of the minds of all beings, the absolute vision of everything through the eye of miraculous ability, the absolute reach of hearing through the ear of miraculous ability, the absolute performance of beneficial acts through the provisions of miraculous ability, and the perfection of the conduct of Samantabhadra, absolutely positive with respect to the uncontaminated.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The sages **are endowed with** the supernormal cognitive power of knowing past abodes (*pūrvanivāsābhijñā, sngon gyi gnas mngon par shes pa*), that is, they have direct perception of all knowable things owing to their **absolute knowledge of the four times**, including the past. Through mastery of recollection in respect of many lifetimes, they instruct living beings. This knowledge of the four times resembles the knowledge of the formation [of past and future events] that arises on the surface of an oracular mirror.

Furthermore, they possess the supernormal cognitive power of knowing the minds of others (*paracittaparyāyābhijñā, pha rol gyi sems kyi rnam grangs kyi mngon par shes pa*). Essentially this refers to their **absolute knowledge** at all times and in all circumstances, without differentiation, **of** the nature of all afflictive mental states and conceptual thoughts associated with **the** respective **minds of all beings** without exception among the five or six classes of living beings who require to be trained, and it also refers to the enlightened intention or **continuum of** pristine cognition, which is the perceptual knowledge of the buddhas.

They also grant instruction through the supernormal cognitive power of clairvoyance (*divyacakṣurabhijñā, lha'i mig gi mngon par shes pa*)—the divine sight that arises owing to [meritorious] conditioning (*abhisamṣkāra, mngon par 'du byed pa*). This is the **absolute vision of everything through the eye of** unobscured **miraculous ability**, the perception of pristine cognition. Its range encompasses the transference of consciousness at death, and the birth and emanation of living beings both in pure buddha fields and in impure world systems.

They instruct sentient beings through the supernormal cognitive power of clairaudience (*divyaśrotrābhijñā, lha'i rna ba'i mngon par shes pa*)—**the absolute reach of hearing** with respect to every sound and language in all world systems, great and small, **through the ear of miraculous ability**.

They instruct through the supernormal cognitive power of miraculous ability (*ṛddhiviṣayābhijñā*, *rdzu 'phrul gyi mngon par shes pa*)—**the absolute performance of beneficial acts** in accordance with the volition of living beings **through the provisions of miraculous ability**, teaching each sentient being according to his or her needs.

**And** they instruct through the supernormal cognitive power of the cessation of contamination (*āśravakṣayābhijñā*, *zag pa zad pa'i mngon par shes pa*)—the nature of which is the complete **perfection of the conduct** associated with the inexhaustible wheels of adornment, that is, the buddha body, speech, and mind **of Samantabhadra—absolutely positive** and conclusive **with respect to the uncontaminated** pristine cognition in which the two obscurations and propensities are, without exception, purified in the expanse [of actual reality] .

In this way they instruct through the buddha mind—**the six great supernormal cognitive powers**, because through these six all knowable things are directly mastered.<sup>292</sup>

## **INSTRUCTION BY GREAT INCONCEIVABLE MIRACULOUS ABILITIES [15.4.3.3.2.1.2.3]**

The third, instruction by great inconceivable miraculous abilities [comments on the verse]:

**Their miraculous abilities comprise the buddha body, buddha mind, buddha visage, and buddha speech, which are inconceivable.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 3:5)*

ཀུན་ཏུ་སྐྱེ་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྲལ་པ་དང་། ཀུན་ཏུ་སྤྱགས་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྲལ་  
པ་དང་། ཀུན་ཏུ་གཞལ་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྲལ་པ་དང་། ཀུན་ཏུ་གསུང་བསམ་  
གྱིས་མི་བྲལ་པ་དང་ལྡན་པ། བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྲལ་པ་གངས་མེད་པ་ཕྱོགས་  
བརྒྱུད་སྣ་དུ་བརྒྱུད་ཏེ།

They are endowed with the buddha body inconceivable to all, the buddha mind inconceivable to all, the buddha visage inconceivable to all, and the buddha speech inconceivable to all. Countless inconceivable forms are manifested in the ten directions.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The sages **are** revealed to be **endowed with inconceivable** forms, manifesting **the buddha body** as Brahmā, Śatakratu, or as a universal monarch and so forth, conforming in their appearance **to all** the infinite beings who require training. They also demonstrate the **inconceivable** beneficial activities of **the buddha mind** that definitively knows [the view] and quantitatively knows [phenomena], **to all** the immeasurable minds of living beings, engaging in conformity with their volitions. They demonstrate **the inconceivable buddha visage** that manifests as manifold diverse deities, peaceful, wrathful, and so forth, with their dissimilar maṇḍalas of body, apparel, and visage, **to all** trainees within range, with their dissimilar sensory elements and volitions, corresponding at each distinct moment to their respective perceptions. This buddha visage is felt to be present before one because it directs the loving-kindness of buddha mind exclusively toward oneself. It says accordingly in the *Great Mother*:

Those sentient beings of Jambudvīpa feel that [the Lord

Buddha] is present exclusively before them, teaching the sacred doctrine owing to the loving-kindness of buddha mind.<sup>293</sup>

It is in this way the teachings are revealed, from the continents of Videha and Aparagodānīya as far as Akaniṣṭha.<sup>294</sup>

Also, it is said in the *Tantra of the Hidden Vital Essence of the Moon*:

Sometimes peaceful, sometimes wrathful,  
And sometimes manifesting as the great spirits who  
cause obstruction,  
[They emanate] in infinite supreme forms such as these,  
And as mountains and all sorts of living creatures.<sup>295</sup>

In this manner, a single buddha body [of emanation] demonstrates the inconceivable modes of buddha visage.

**And** in addition, the sages possess the **inconceivable buddha speech** of the sacred doctrine, which resonates **to all** living beings, whatever their fortune might be, in conformity with the respective languages of sentient beings. **Inconceivable forms** are diversely emanated throughout the infinity of space, so that **countless are manifested in the ten directions**, instructing each in accord with his or her needs.<sup>296</sup>

## **INSTRUCTION BY KNOWLEDGE CONVEYED IN BUDDHA SPEECH [15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4]**

The fourth, instruction by knowledge conveyed in buddha speech, comprises (i) the classification of the vehicles [of the Buddhist teachings] (15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4.1); (ii) the antidotes for which [these vehicles] are taught (15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4.2); and (iii) an exegesis of the meaning of these [vehicles] (15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4.3).

## THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE VEHICLES [15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4.1]

Among them, the first, the classification [comments on the verse]:

**The vehicles of the gods and humans, and those of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas, as well as the unsurpassed vehicle. . .**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:6)*

ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱང་འདི་ལྟ་སྟེ། འདུལ་བའི་དབང་གིས་ལྟ་དང་མིའི་ཐེག་པ་དང་།  
ཉན་ཐོས་ཀྱི་ཐེག་པ་དང་། རང་བྱུང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཐེག་པ་དང་། བྱུང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་  
དཔའི་ཐེག་པ་དང་། ལྷ་ན་མེད་པའི་ཐེག་པ་ས།

Moreover, all [the pronouncements of the emanational sages] comprise according to the power of their instructions: the vehicle of gods along with that of humans, the vehicle of pious attendants, the vehicle of hermit buddhas, the vehicle of bodhisattvas, and the unsurpassed vehicle. Through these vehicles . . .

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Moreover, all** the excellent pronouncements of the buddha body of emanation are presented within the hierarchy of the

five vehicles, **according to the power of their instructions** imparted to sentient beings.<sup>297</sup> As such, these **comprise** (i) **the vehicle of the gods** inhabiting the world systems of formlessness, form, and desire, where the four meditative concentrations, the four formless absorptions, and the ten virtuous actions are presented, **along with** the vehicle of **humans**, which emphasizes the nature of the ten virtuous actions;<sup>298</sup> (ii) **the vehicle of pious attendants**, which actualizes the status of an arhat by means of meditation on doctrines that refer objectively to the nature of the four truths through renunciation and acceptance, and also on the thirty-seven aspects [of enlightenment];<sup>299</sup> (iii) **the vehicle of hermit buddhas**, which progresses, as desired, to the level of supreme bliss by means of meditation on dependent origination and the five paths;<sup>300</sup> (iv) **the vehicle of bodhisattvas**, which actualizes buddhahood through the two kinds of selflessness and the ten transcendent perfections;<sup>301</sup> **and** (v) **the unsurpassed vehicle** of the way of secret mantra, which confers liberation in this lifetime through the knowledge of all things in terms of the three maṇḍalas, and through meditation on the profound path.<sup>302</sup> **Through these vehicles . . .**

## **THE ANTIDOTES FOR WHICH THESE VEHICLES ARE TAUGHT [15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4.2]**

Second, the antidotes for which [these vehicles] are taught [comments on the verse]:

**. . . constitute the sacred doctrine with its eighty-four thousand antidotes.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:7)***

མ་རིག་པའི་རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་ཉོན་མོངས་པ་སྟོང་ཕྲག་བརྒྱད་ཅུ་ཙུ་བཞིའི་གཉེན་  
པོར། ཚོས་སྟོང་ཕྲག་བརྒྱད་ཅུ་ཙུ་བཞི་གསུངས་སོ། གསུང་ངོ། གསུང་བར་  
འགྱུར་ངོ།

. . . they have taught, are teaching, and will teach the eighty-four thousand [approaches of the] doctrine as an antidote for the eighty-four thousand afflictive mental states, which are conceptual thoughts, arising from fundamental ignorance.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**As an antidote for the eighty-four thousand afflictive mental states**, twenty-one thousand of which each comprise the afflictive mental states of desire, hatred, delusion, and their equal combination, and **which are** generated by the **conceptual thoughts arising from fundamental ignorance** in the minds of living beings, those teachers who emanate from the naturally present pristine cognition in conformity with the perception of those to be trained **have taught** previously, **are teaching** even at the present moment in the worlds of the infinite limitless ten directions, **and will teach** in the future **the eighty-four thousand** approaches of the **doctrine** (*chos*)—twenty-one thousand of which belong to each of the three piṭakas of the Vinaya, Sūtra, and Abhidharma, and to the piṭaka of the way of mantra, where [their distinctive features] are in equal combination.<sup>303</sup>



## [15.4.3.3.2.1.2.4.3]

Third, the exegesis of the meaning of these [vehicles comments on the verse]:

**These [vehicles] encompass bewilderment, the fruition of deeds, and that which is never sullied.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:8)*

དེ་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱང་གཟུང་བ་དང་འཛིན་པའི། མྱི་ནང་གི་རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་  
བར་འབྱུང་བ། འཛིན་པ་འབྲུལ་པ་ལས་རྟོགས་པ་དང་། ལས་དང་ལས་ཀྱི་  
འབྲས་བུ་རྒྱུད་མི་བྱ་བ་དང་། ལས་དང་ལས་ཀྱི་འབྲས་བུ་མི་གོས། གོས་  
པར་མི་འགྱུར། གོས་སུ་མེད་པར་སྟོན་པའི་མཐར་ཐུག་གོ།

Also, as far as all their [expressions of the sacred doctrine] are concerned, the vehicles respectively outline objects and subjective apprehension; outer and inner dependent origination; the realization that [the mind] that subjectively apprehends is nothing but bewilderment; [the teaching] that deeds and the fruition of deeds are not squandered; and the conclusive [realization] revealing that which is unsullied, will not be sullied, and cannot be sullied by deeds or the results of deeds.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Also, as far as all** the expressions of the [sacred] doctrine, which are presented within the context of **these** five vehicles, **are concerned**, they may be **respectively outlined** as follows: (i) The vehicle of pious attendants (*nyan thos kyi theg pa*) applies an antidote for the **subjective apprehension** of the psychophysical aggregates as self, because pious attendants understand indivisible atomic particles to be the ultimate truth, and they maintain that **objects** are devoid of self, surpassing the intelligence of ordinary beings who uphold [the existence of] gross external objects, **and** because they also understand that the inner mind forms a series of indivisible moments of time and is therefore also devoid of self.

(ii) The vehicle of hermit buddhas (*rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa*) [additionally] applies an antidote for the subjective apprehension of external objects, comprising half of all phenomena, as self, because hermit buddhas understand **outer** dependent origination to be false, having realized that objects of external appearance do not ultimately exist even as indivisible atomic particles, but relatively resemble a reflected image arising in a pool of water. This is also because they meditate on **inner dependent origination**, understanding that when there is fundamental ignorance, [the cycle of dependent origination] emerges, from formative predispositions as far as aging and death, but that when fundamental ignorance is reversed cyclic existence is also reversed, as far as aging and death. They therefore realize that the [notional] selfhood of the individual and the [notional] selfhood of the externally appearing half of phenomena are nonexistent.

(iii) The vehicle of the bodhisattvas (*byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa*) actualizes the two aspects of selflessness and is held to be superior because the bodhisattva realizes, in addition to the previous one-and-a-half parts of selflessness [understood by hermit buddhas], that the intellect or antidote that is the subject of that foregoing meditation, the very mind **that subjectively apprehends** internal phenomena as self, is itself **nothing but** an objectification of **bewilderment** (*'khrul pa*).

(iv) The vehicle of gods and humans (*lha dang mi'i theg pa*) teaches that causal **deeds**—positive and negative—**and the fruition of deeds**, which individually ripen, **are not squandered**. On this it says in the *Hundred Parables on Deeds*:

Deeds will not be exhausted, even over a hundred aeons. Once the [appropriate] provisions and time have been found, Their [appropriate] results will ripen in all corporeal beings.<sup>304</sup>

This [view] surpasses those prevalent among the non-Buddhists, which hold that deeds have no results.<sup>305</sup>

Further, on the necessity of attaining liberation dependent on the vehicle of gods and humans, the *Hundred Verses on Discriminative Awareness* says:

If the doctrinal tradition of human beings is well practiced,

Progress to the god realms will not be remote;

If the doctrinal tradition of the gods is well practiced,

Liberation will be gradually approached.<sup>306</sup>

(v) The supreme vehicle of the unsurpassed way of secret mantra (*gsang sngags kyi theg pa*) is **the conclusive realization, revealing** the abiding nature, devoid of ordinary appearances because the three media [of body, speech, and mind] are understood to be the three primordial maṇḍalas [of buddha body, speech, and mind], that is to say, the body **is unsullied**, the speech **will not be sullied**, and the mind **cannot be sullied by deeds or the results of deeds**.

## **THE DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE LIVING BEINGS WHO ARE THE OBJECT OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND OF THEIR DOCTRINES [15.4.3.3.2.2]**

The second section [of the explanation of the verses] is the

detailed exegesis of the nature of the living beings who are the object of these instructions and of their doctrines. This comprises (i) a demonstration that the nature of cyclic existence is actual reality (15.4.3.3.2.2.1) and (ii) a demonstration that the nature of the doctrine is inexpressible (15.4.3.3.2.2.2).

## **A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE NATURE OF CYCLIC EXISTENCE IS ACTUAL REALITY [15.4.3.3.2.2.1]**

The former has six sections, among which the first, the context (15.4.3.3.2.2.1.1) [comments on the verse]:

**The tathāgatas then uttered the following aphorisms:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:9)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then all the tathāgatas uttered these following aphorisms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the miracle of the four kinds of instruction had been revealed, **then all the self-manifesting tathāgatas uttered these following aphorisms.**

The second section, the appearance of cyclic existence (15.4.3.3.2.2.1.2) [comments on the verse]:

**Owing to the subject-object dichotomy,  
The phenomena of bewilderment [endure] dependent  
origination  
And experiences of happiness and suffering,**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:10)***

། ཇི་སྟེད་འཇིག་རྟེན་འབྲུལ་བའི་ཚོས།  
། མ་རིག་རྟོག་པའི་གཟུང་འཇོན་གྱིས།  
། བྱི་ནང་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་གཉིས་སུ་འཁོར།  
། མི་མཐུན་བདེ་སྐྱབས་སྤོང་བར་འགྱུར།

The phenomena of mundane bewilderment, as many as they are,  
Cycle through both outer and inner dependent origination  
Owing to the subject-object dichotomy of fundamental ignorance and ideation,  
Giving rise to disharmonious experiences of happiness and suffering.

***Interlinear Commentary***

All **the phenomena of mundane bewilderment** subsumed in the environment and its inhabitants, which appear as the impure outer and inner phenomena, **as many as they are**, are

merely like a dream. However, the essential nature, wherein buddhahood is primordially attained in the abiding state, is oppressed by **fundamental ignorance** with its darkest sleep. Conditioned **owing to the subject-object dichotomy of dualistic ideation**, the diverse and variegated outer objects<sup>307</sup> and the immeasurable inner organisms appear. Sentient beings **cycle** like the wheels of a chariot, coursing **through both outer and inner dependent origination**, as fruitional bewildering appearances emerge from the cause of bewilderment, **giving rise to experiences of diverse happiness and suffering** which are the particular attributes of **disharmonious** objects and appearances, continually projecting from one bastion of cyclic existence into another.<sup>308</sup>

The third section, demonstrating the actual reality [of those appearances] (15.4.3.3.2.2.1.3) [comments on the verse]:

**But from the moment when they manifest,  
They are at one with the pure expanse.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:11)***

།རང་བཞིན་ཉིད་ལས་ཉམས་པ་མེད།  
 །ཡང་དག་སྐྱུ་མའི་ཚུལ་གཉིས་སུ།  
 །བདག་དང་བདག་གི་གཞན་མེད་དེ།  
 །རྣམ་དག་དབྱིངས་ཉིད་ཚུལ་གཅིག་གོ།

But their intrinsic nature itself does not degenerate from  
actual reality—

Genuine reality, dualistic in an illusory manner,

Does not differentiate the possessor and the possessed;

It is a modality at one with the actual pure expanse.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Phenomena appear as such, **but the intrinsic nature** of this cyclic existence **does not degenerate from actual reality**—the sameness or great perfection of primordial liberation. This is because its nature is emptiness. Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*:

The offspring of the conqueror destroys entities.

All rebirth processes that there are, are primordially empty.

Those who uphold the extreme of ephemeral emptiness

And those who are puerile sophists cannot dispute this.<sup>309</sup>

From the very moment when cyclic existence appears, it does not actually exist but is the abiding nature of **genuine reality**. The nature of these relative appearances, **dualistic in a merely illusory manner**, when analyzed **does not differentiate between the possessor** who is subject to cyclic existence **and the possessed** objects of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, just as the appearances in a dream and the dreamer's own mind are not dualistically differentiated. The nature of mind appears as such. It says accordingly in the *Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā*:

The nature of mind that has no object

Mistakenly perceives external objects.

The mind that is deranged by propensities

Objectifies all appearances.<sup>310</sup>

However, when cyclic existence appears, **it is a primordial modality, at one with the pure actual reality**, in the **pure** and self-manifesting **expanse**. Thus, the enlightened intention of the spontaneous perfect buddha body of actual reality is one of unique equilibrium, in its great primordial pervasion of all cyclic existence and nirvāṇa. As is said in the *Ornament of*

*Emergent Realization:*

There is sameness with respect to existence and quiescence.<sup>311</sup>

The fourth section, teaching that bewildering appearances are the miraculous display of mind (15.4.3.3.2.2.1.4) [comments on the verse]:

## **Misconceptions and bewildering appearance**

**Do not stray from actual reality.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:12)***

ཁདག་དང་བདག་གི་གཞན་རྣམས་ནི།  
ལོག་པར་རྟོག་པ་ཅམ་ཉིད་ལས།  
ལྷ་ཞིང་ཟབ་པའང་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།  
ལོག་རྟོག་ཉིད་ལ་ཉིད་སྤྱོད་པས།  
གཞན་དུ་གཡོ་བ་ཅི་ཡང་མེད།

The extraneous phenomena of the possessor and the possessed,

Apart from being mere misconceptions,  
Have neither subtlety nor profundity.

There is an interaction between the nature of  
misconceptions

And [misconceptions] themselves,

But there is no extraneous wavering.



## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The differences between oneself and **extraneous phenomena** that are intellectually appraised through the subjective apprehension **of the possessor and the possessed, apart from being** one's own **mere misconceptions**, do not actually exist. When the nature of these misconceptions is investigated, they **have neither subtlety nor** subtle attributes, and there is no reality endowed with **profundity** that separately exists distinct from them. This is because the nature of misconception abides as actual reality. In conformity with this, the master Padmasambhava accordingly states in his [*Revelation of the Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*]:

If ideation is known to be actual reality,  
There will be nothing on which to meditate,  
Apart from the expanse of actual reality.<sup>312</sup>

These appearances within the subject-object dichotomy of cyclic existence are **an interaction between the object**, which is the dreamlike apparitional **nature of misconceptions, and the subject**—one's own misconceptions **themselves. But**, although these do appear as bewilderment, actually **there is no extraneous wavering** from the nature of mind, the abiding nature of reality, just as the fluctuations of the four material elements do not stray from the [underlying] state of space, or just as thoughts of refutation and proof do not stray from the disposition of the nature of mind. The *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King* says:

Whatever appears is one with the real nature.  
No one should contrive this.  
From this king of uncontrived sameness,  
The enlightened intention of nonconceptual buddha body  
Becomes spontaneously present.<sup>313</sup>

The fifth section, the baseless and groundless nature of bewildering ideation (15.4.3.3.2.2.1.5) [comments on the verse]:

**Misconceptions are the baseless and groundless**

**pure expanse.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:13)***

འཕྲིན་ལྗོངས་རྒྱ་ལྷན་ལྷན་ཉིད་ཀྱང་།  
འགཞི་ཅུ་མེད་དབྱིངས་སྐད་ཅིག་མ།  
རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་དབྱིངས་ཉིད་ཚུལ།

Despite the continuity of misconceptions  
In terms of their causes and results,  
They are the baseless and groundless expanse.  
The indivisible moments of time are a modality  
Of the nature of the pure expanse.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Despite the continuity of** those **misconceptions** that appear as the bewildering subject-object dichotomy, **in terms of their causes and the results** produced thereby, which seem to be related in a temporal succession of past and subsequent moments, this [apparent continuity] is nonexistent when investigated. Rather, the essential nature of awareness abides in the originally pure abiding nature, **the baseless and groundless expanse** of actual reality; but when it arises as the diversity [of ideation], it has no continuity and indeed has the nature of distinct **indivisible moments of time**. Furthermore, there is no past indivisible moment of time that has ceased, no future indivisible moment of time that is found, and, when even a present indivisible moment of time is investigated, it does not exist—either outwardly, inwardly, or in between. Indeed, there are no such things as indivisible moments of time. They **are** awareness—a **modality** that abides as the essential **nature of the** primordially **pure** sky-like **expanse** of actual reality. As is said in the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

Kāśyapa, wherever this mind is sought, it is not considered to be internal. It is not considered to be external, nor is it even considered to be in between.

For it is like the sky.<sup>314</sup>

The sixth section, teaching that conceptual thoughts are the emanational display of pristine cognition (15.4.3.3.2.2.1.6) [comments on the verse]:

**The continuity of ideation is pure**

## In the emanational display of pristine cognition.

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:14)*

ཉིད་ལ་དབང་སྐྱུར་ཉིད་སྐྱོད་ཕྱིར།  
ཁདག་དང་གཞན་དང་རྟོག་པའི་རྒྱན།  
རྣམ་དག་གྲ་མེད་ཐེག་པའི་མཚོག

They are transformations occurring in relation to it.  
Thus, self, others, and the continuity of ideation  
Are the supreme attributes of the pure unsurpassed  
vehicle.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

The emanational display of subjective intelligence diversely arises in relation to this originally pure actual reality, which is the essential nature of all appearance and mind and the object in which primordial buddhahood is attained. All these **transformations** are themselves the self-manifesting pristine cognition **occurring in relation to** pristine cognition itself. **Thus**, the apprehension of **self** and **others and the entire continuity of ideation** that arises as refutation, proof, and the five poisons are an emanational display of pristine cognition. Indeed, **they are supreme attributes of the** primordially **pure unsurpassed vehicle**. As is said in the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*:

It is said that hatred, desire, and delusion too  
Emerge from the path of great enlightenment.  
The five attributes of sensory enjoyment too<sup>315</sup>  
Are the ornaments of reality's expanse.<sup>316</sup>

## **A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE NATURE OF THE DOCTRINE IS INEXPRESSIBLE [15.4.3.3.2.2.2]**

The latter part [of the explanation of the verses] is the demonstration that the nature of the doctrine is inexpressible. This comprises (i) the demonstration that the unsurpassed vehicle is the result of having attained emancipation through the four vehicles (15.4.3.3.2.2.2.1); (ii) the demonstration that all things are a miraculous display without independent existence (15.4.3.3.2.2.2.2); (iii) the demonstration that although the teacher and teaching do not change, they instruct each according to his or her needs for the sake of those to be trained (15.4.3.3.2.2.2.3); (iv) the demonstration that the natural *Secret Nucleus* is the emanational basis of all vehicles (15.4.3.3.2.2.2.4); (v) the demonstration that this itself is the general commentary on all the sūtras and tantras (15.4.3.3.2.2.2.5); and (vi) the demonstration that all these, apart from being mere names, words, and labels, are nonexistent in the abiding nature (15.4.3.3.2.2.2.6).

## **THE DEMONSTRATION THAT THE UNSURPASSED VEHICLE IS THE RESULT OF HAVING ATTAINED EMANCIPATION THROUGH THE FOUR VEHICLES [15.4.3.3.2.2.2.1]**

The first section, demonstrating the unsurpassed vehicle [comments on the verse]:

**Having attained emancipation through the four  
vehicles,  
One is united in the fruition of the single vehicle.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:15)***

།ཐེག་པ་བཞི་ཡི་ངེས་འབྱུང་ལ།

།ཐེག་པ་གཅིག་གི་འབྲས་བུར་གནས།

Having attained emancipation through the four vehicles,  
One abides in the fruition of the single vehicle.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

When one has **attained emancipation** from the respective aspects of dis-harmony, the sufferings of cyclic existence, the lesser vehicles, and so forth **through the four vehicles** that have previously been taught,<sup>317</sup> after attaining emancipation through them, **one abides** on the buddha level, that is to say, **in the fruition of the single** unsurpassed **vehicle**, where the natural Great Perfection is encountered. This is the nature in which actual reality, transcending acceptance, rejection, effort, and attainment, is realized.<sup>318</sup> As is said in the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*:

Nine natural vehicles of the teacher  
Indeed form the path that progresses to natural Great  
Perfection.

But once this actual reality without acceptance or  
rejection has been realized,

Its nature is spontaneously present, just as it is,  
Extending all-pervasively and without coming or  
going.<sup>319</sup>

## THE DEMONSTRATION THAT ALL THINGS ARE A MIRACULOUS DISPLAY WITHOUT INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE [15.4.3.3.2.2.2]

The second section, [demonstrating that all things are] a miraculous display without independent existence [comments on the verse]:

**When investigated by [a yogin of] realization,  
This resembles a magical display, which appears but  
does not exist.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:16)*

ལང་དག་རྟོགས་པས་རབ་བརྟགས་ན།  
རབ་བཞིན་མེད་ལས་ཅིར་ཡང་འགྲུབ།

When well investigated by genuine realization,  
Anything at all may become present from that [disposition]  
Where there is no inherent existence.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**When** the things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, have been **well investigated** with awareness **by** a yogin who has **genuine realization** of the meaning of the abiding nature, one should know that **anything at all may become present**, through the circumstances of their apparitional modes, arising **from that** disposition of the

abiding mode, **where there is no inherent existence.** This resembles, for example, a miraculous apparition in the sky, a magical display, or a reflection, and so forth. As is said in the *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*:

Just as when swirls of cloud instantly appear  
From a sky that has no trace of clouds  
And, having emerged, disintegrate,  
So that the swirls of cloud cease to exist,  
One should examine whence they originate,  
And one should know all things in their entirety to be  
similar.<sup>320</sup>

And in the *Sūtra Requested by Druma*:

Just as the face appears on the surface of a mirror  
But does not independently exist as such,  
So, Druma, one should know all things!<sup>321</sup>

Therefore, one should know that all things appear without independent existence, and from the very moment of their appearance they are a miraculous display, in no way substantially existing.

**THE DEMONSTRATION THAT ALTHOUGH THE TEACHER AND  
TEACHING DO NOT CHANGE, THEY INSTRUCT EACH  
ACCORDING TO HIS OR HER NEEDS FOR THE SAKE OF THOSE  
TO BE TRAINED [15.4.3.3.2.2.3]**

The third section, demonstrating that [although the teacher and teaching do not change] they instruct each according to his or her needs for the sake of those to be trained [comments on the verse]:

**[The buddhas] do not pass into nirvāṇa;  
[Their doctrines] do not decline;**



**But in order to instruct [beings],  
They [demonstrate] the passing into nirvāṇa.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:17)***

།སངས་རྒྱས་ལྷན་ལྷན་ཡོངས་མི་འདུལ།  
།ཚོས་ཀྱང་རྒྱབ་པར་མི་འགྱུར་ཏེ།  
།མ་རིག་སྒྲིན་མཛད་འདུལ་བའི་ཕྱིར།  
།བྱུང་ནས་ལྷན་ལྷན་འདུལ་བར་སྟོན།

The buddhas do not pass into [final] nirvāṇa.  
Their doctrines also do not decline.  
In order to instruct the ignorant  
Through acts of maturation,

They emerge and then demonstrate  
The passing into nirvāṇa.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The buddhas**, such as Samantabhadra, in whom the two kinds of benefit [of self and others] are spontaneously present and who have progressed to the conclusive goal, reside at all times without conjunction or disjunction in respect of the three buddha bodies. Thus, they **do not pass into final nirvāṇa**. All **their doctrines** of excellent teaching **also do not decline** because they abide in a nature that does not change throughout the three times. Accordingly, the *Sūtra of Supreme Golden Light* says:

The buddhas do not pass into final nirvāṇa.

Their doctrines also do not decline.<sup>322</sup>

The nature of the three buddha bodies abides constantly and continuously, as is stated in the *Sūtra Revealing the Three Buddha Bodies*:

The buddha body of actual reality

Is the constancy of the essential nature.

The buddha body of perfect resource

Is the constancy of its continuum,

And the buddha body of emanation

Is the constancy of its noninterruption.<sup>323</sup>

The scriptures commonly hold the buddha body of actual reality and the buddha body of perfect resource to be constant; as for the buddha body of emanation, they hold it to be constant only in terms of its actual reality, transcending the dichotomy of permanence and impermanence. This is because its appearances that manifest before living beings in the manner of the moon reflected in water do not exist with independent characteristics in the presence of those to be trained. In this way, the three buddha bodies are without

conjunction or disjunction and they do not essentially change. However, spontaneously present emanations do come forth from that disposition, in the manner of [Śākyamuni who performed] twelve deeds.

**In order to instruct the** sentient beings who are **ignorant** of the abiding nature, **through acts of maturation** and liberation, the buddha bodies of emanation **emerge** of their own accord, in conformity with individual perception, **and then**, after completing their objectives, they **demonstrate the passing into nirvāṇa**. As is said in the *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*:

The Lord Buddha (*prabhū*) always engages effortlessly  
With regard to the temperaments of those to be trained,  
The skillful means that confer training,  
And the acts of training suited to the temperaments of  
those to be trained—  
Moving in [appropriate] places and at [appropriate]  
times.<sup>324</sup>

## **THE DEMONSTRATION THAT THE NATURAL *SECRET NUCLEUS* IS THE EMANATIONAL BASIS OF ALL VEHICLES [15.4.3.3.2.2.4]**

The fourth section, demonstrating that [the natural *Secret Nucleus*] is the emanational basis [of all vehicles, comments on the verse]:

**All [teachings] renowned within the nine vehicles  
Emanate from this *Secret Nucleus*.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:18)***

|འདུལ་བ་མདོ་སྡེ་ཚོས་མདོན་དང་།  
|དམ་ཚིག་སྐྱབ་དང་གྲུབ་པ་དང་།  
|སྐྱེ་དང་གསུང་དང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱད།  
|ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་རྣམས་སུ་རབ་བྱགས་པ།  
|གསང་བའི་སྡིང་པོ་ལས་འཕྲོས་ཏེ།

The Vinaya, Sūtras, Abhidharma,  
Commitments, attainment, accomplishment,  
And the tantras of buddha body, speech, and mind,  
Renowned throughout the ten directions,  
Emanate from the *Secret Nucleus*.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The Vinaya** emphasizes the training of superior ethical discipline. As is said in the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*:

The Vinaya is so called because it sets forth  
Offenses, their origin, their remission, and absolution,  
As well as the individuals [who would commit them],  
The original context of the transgressions,  
Their interpretation, and [their] determination.<sup>325</sup>

The **Sūtras** emphasize the training of superior mind. The same text says:

The Sūtras are so called because they inform  
Through context, defining characteristics,  
Doctrines, and meanings.<sup>326</sup>

The collection of the **Abhidharma** emphasizes the training of superior discriminative awareness. The same text says:

The Abhidharma is so called  
Because it is comprehensive,  
Because it is repetitive, masterful,  
And conducive to realization.<sup>327</sup>

Kriyātantra emphasizes **the commitments** of body and speech, such as ablutions and cleanliness. Ubhayatantra concerns the **attainment** of buddhahood through the performance of conduct, as in Kriyātantra, and the upholding of view, as in Yogatantra. Yogatantra concerns supreme **accomplishment** because it emphasizes mental meditation, with the mere assistance of physical and verbal conduct. **The tantras of buddha body** such as the *Tantra of the Black Slayer of Death* emphasize the generation stage of skillful means. The tantras of buddha **speech** such as the *Tantra of the Emanational Display of the Supreme Horse* emphasize the perfection stage of discriminative awareness, **and** the tantras of buddha **mind** such as the *Secret Assembly* and the *Glorious Heruka* emphasize the nondual nature. All these, which are **renowned** as genuine doctrines **throughout** the immeasurable buddha fields of **the ten directions, emanate from the Secret Nucleus**, the abiding mode [of reality], the nature of the Great Perfection. This is because the conclusion of all philosophical systems and essential meanings is gathered in the Great Perfection.<sup>328</sup> The *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King* accordingly says:

Generalities are gathered,  
Particulars are gathered,  
Everything is gathered.  
They are gathered in the natural Great Perfection.  
This is the very nucleus of all [teachings],  
In which there is nothing that is not gathered.<sup>329</sup>

**THE DEMONSTRATION THAT THIS ITSELF IS THE GENERAL  
COMMENTARY ON ALL THE SŪTRAS AND TANTRAS**

## [15.4.3.3.2.2.5]

The fifth section, demonstrating [that this text itself is the general commentary on all the sūtras and tantras, comments on the verse]:

**This is the source of the sūtras and tantras— The supreme [vehicle] that establishes [all others].**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:19)*

།རང་བཞིན་གསུང་བའི་སྣང་པོ་འདི།  
།སྡེ་སྣོད་ཀུན་དང་རྒྱུད་ཀུན་གྱི།  
།འབྲུང་གནས་གཏན་ལ་ངེས་པར་འབེབས།

This natural *Secret Nucleus*  
Is definitively established as the source  
Of all piṭakas and of all tantras.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**This natural *Secret Nucleus***, the abiding nature of all things, is itself the emanational basis and therefore indeed **the source of all** the three **piṭakas and of all** the six classes of **tantras**. Because it subsumes the essential meanings, this [*Secret Nucleus*] abides as the ground that **is definitively established** and as the object that is to be established, and it itself establishes all [other vehicles]. As is said in the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*:

The nature of all piṭakas and all tantras is gathered in this nucleus. It is the general commentary of all the

sūtras and tantras.<sup>330</sup>

**THE DEMONSTRATION THAT ALL THESE, APART FROM BEING  
MERE NAMES, WORDS, AND LABELS, ARE NONEXISTENT IN  
THE ABIDING NATURE [15.4.3.3.2.2.6]**

The sixth section, demonstrating that all these [apart from being mere names, words, and labels] are nonexistent in the abiding nature [comments on the verse]:

**All phenomena are merely names and words  
That have been applied, but they have no entity.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:20)***

ཚོས་རྣམས་མིང་དུ་བཏགས་བ་ཅམ།

སྟོན་པས་དོན་དང་མཐུན་ཕྱོགས་སུ།

མིང་དང་ཚིག་ཏུ་བཏགས་ནས་བསྟན།

སྟོན་མིང་ཚིག་ལ་དངོས་པོ་མེད།

ཅེས་བརྗོད་དོ།

Phenomena are merely names that have been designated.  
The teachers designate names and words  
Corresponding to their meaning, and then give teaching,  
But the names and words that are taught have no entity.  
—So they said.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

All the teachings that bring about this establishment in the context of these five vehicles, and the **phenomena** subsumed within phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, which are the objects to be established, are actually nonexistent. Thus, they **are merely names that have been designated**. There is a sūtra that says:

Subhūti, all things are mere symbols, mere labels.

They are absolutely without inherent existence.<sup>331</sup>

Who then designates these labels? **The teachers** of the gods and human beings—the buddhas—invent them, **corresponding** provisionally **to the meaning** of relative truth with its mere unimpeded appearances. They **designate names and words** such as cyclic existence, nirvāṇa, psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields, **and then give teaching**. Their purpose is that the real abiding nature should be comprehended. In this way, names and words are designated, but at the very time at which they **are taught, the names and words have no entity**. When [for example] they describe “space,” this designation is nonexistent in the space element. The designation *space* is even nonexistent in the body and mind. Indeed, the designation *space* cannot be found anywhere, for which reason it is not recognized as an entity. One should know that although all things are designated by the intellect, they are themselves indivisible from space, and therefore names and concepts are in all respects naturally nonexistent. The *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability* accordingly says:

Just as someone, having given birth to a child,  
Gives it a name that is different from the child,  
And when one searches for this [name]  
It does not exist at all—inside or outside—  
All things should be similarly known.<sup>332</sup>



**So they** meaningfully **said** that all things are inexpressible.

**A SYNOPSIS OF CYCLIC EXISTENCE AND NIRVĀṆA AS SELF-MANIFESTATIONS OF MIND AND PRISTINE COGNITION  
[15.4.3.3.2.3]**

The third section [of the explanation of the verses] is a synopsis of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as self-manifestations of mind and pristine cognition. This comprises (i) a description of the causal basis that revealed this self-manifestation (15.4.3.3.2.3.1) and (ii) the actual manner in which it was revealed (15.4.3.3.2.3.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**There then came forth the teaching that mind and pristine cognition are self-manifesting:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:21)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དེ་དག་ཉིད་ཀྱི་  
གསང་བ་འདི་ཉིད། སྐྱེ་དང་གསུང་དང་སྤྱུགས་དང་ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་རོ་རྗེ་  
ལས་སྤུང་ངོ།

Then this secret description of these nondual maṇḍalas of the tathāgata came forth from the indestructible buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the nature of all things had been described, **then this secret description of these maṇḍalas of the tathāgata**, where skillful means and discriminative awareness are **nondual**, revealing mind and pristine cognition to be self-manifesting, **came forth** as follows **from the indestructible buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities**.

The latter has two parts: (i) demonstrating the bewildering appearances of sentient beings to be the self-manifest nature of the mind (15.4.3.3.2.3.2.1) and (ii) demonstrating the appearances of the buddha fields to be the self-manifest nature of pristine cognition (15.4.3.3.2.3.2.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**The abodes, corporeal forms, and sufferings of the six classes of beings are of the nature of misconception.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:22)***

|ཨ་ཏོ།

|སྲིད་ཅུའི་ཉེས་དམིགས་བདག་ཏུ་རྟོག་ལས་འབྲོས།

|རྒྱད་རྒྱུག་སྐྱེ་འགག་ལུས་དང་ལོངས་སྦྱོང་དང་།

|གནས་དང་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱེད་འབྱུང་འཁོར་ལ་སོགས་པ།

|ལོག་རྟོག་ཉིད་ལས་གཞན་དུ་ཅི་ཡང་མེད།

O! The disadvantages that form the basis of existence

Have issued from possessive ideation.  
With respect to the six classes [of sentient beings]:  
Birth, cessation, corporeal forms, resources, abodes,  
The cycle of bewilderment that generates suffering,  
And so forth are nothing but misconceptions.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**O!** is an exclamation indicating astonishment at the self-manifesting nature of all things. The five psychophysical aggregates and all **the disadvantages that form the basis** of the three planes **of existence**—the diverse bewildering appearances within the circumstances of cyclic existence—**have issued from** egotistical and **possessive ideation**. **With respect to** the different perceptions of **the six classes** of living beings such as the gods, during bewilderment in cyclic existence, they experience **birth**, death resulting from the **cessation** of the life force, diverse and distinct **corporeal forms**, diverse **resources** such as nectar and sugar cane, the diverse appearances of different lands including the **abodes** of the gods, and **the cycle of bewilderment that generates** the **suffering** of change and decay at death, and so forth.

The words **and so forth** here suggest the perceptions of happiness and indifference that [additionally] appear, diversely and in various hues.

All these **are nothing** resembling distinct external objects, **but** rather, they are **misconceptions**, created by the fundamental ignorance of these living beings and their propensities, which are dreamlike self-manifestations of the bewildered mind. Accordingly, it also says in the *Sūtra of the Applications of Mindfulness*:

The diverse corporeal forms, resources, and perceptions

Of happiness and suffering  
Are diffused by mind and made by mind.  
They are not extraneous at all, apart from mind,  
Just as, for example, dreams.<sup>333</sup>  
The latter [comments on the verse]:

**Without dualizing, intrinsic awareness is present  
through pristine cognition, in the self-manifesting  
nature.  
It itself appears as the buddha fields.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:23)***

། ལྷོན་ཉིད་བདག་མེད་ཡེ་མ་བྱེན་རང་རིག་བྱུགས།  
། དམིགས་བྱ་དམིགས་བྱེད་མེད་པར་བྱན་དབང་བསྐྱུར།  
། རོ་མཚར་སྐྱ་གསུང་ཡོན་ཏན་ཞིང་ཁམས་ལས།  
། གཞན་ན་མེད་དེ་དེ་ཉིད་དེ་ལྟར་ཡིན།  
། ཞེས་རྣམས་གསུང་བའི་ཚིག་ཏུ་འོ།

Buddha mind, endowed with emptiness, selflessness,  
Primordial knowledge, and intrinsic awareness,  
Overpowers [phenomena] through recollection,  
Without referenced and referencer.  
This itself is none other than the wondrous buddha bodies,  
Speech, attributes, and fields, which appear in that  
manner.  
—Such were the secret words of indestructible reality  
that emerged.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The **buddha mind** is the naturally present pristine cognition, **endowed with emptiness** in all its finest aspects (*sarvākāraguṇopetaśūnyatā, rnam pa mchog dang ldan pa'i stong pa nyid*),<sup>334</sup> the nature of the primordial buddhahood of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, the **selflessness** of the individual and phenomena, **primordial knowledge, and individual intrinsic awareness**. It **overpowers** the phenomena that appear to it **through** the **recollection** of pristine cognition, **without** dualizing between **the** externally apprehended objects that are **referenced** as extraneous **and** the internal apprehending mind that is their **referencer**, acting in the manner of a self. Since **this** is superior to other phenomena that are overpowered in that manner, [buddha mind] is devoid of individual characteristics and **is** present in **none other than** the self-manifest nature of the pristine cognition of buddhahood, including **the wondrous** and marvelous three **buddha bodies**, their buddha **speech** of great pristine cognition which manifests as the vehicles, the buddha mind with its two kinds of knowledge,<sup>335</sup> the immeasurable buddha **attributes**, the spontaneously accomplished buddha activities, **and** the inconceivable buddha **fields**.

Pristine cognition **itself** constitutes the inconceivable array of buddha bodies, fields, activities, and so forth, which **appears in that manner**. As is said in the *Tantra of the Marvelous King*:

Pristine cognition itself appears  
As the buddha bodies, pristine cognition, buddha fields,  
Attributes, and activities of pristine cognition,  
As many as they are.

It is not extraneous but spontaneously present.<sup>336</sup>

All things are therefore not extraneous, apart from being  
arrayed in this great self-manifesting nature.

**Such were the words of the secret tantra of natural  
indestructible reality that emerged.**

### CONCLUSION [15.4.3.3.3]

The third part [of ch. 3] is the conclusion [which comments on  
the verse]:

**All the teachings are gathered in this inexpressible  
nature.**

#### *Root Tantra (Ch. 3:24)*

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། ཐུབ་པ་རྒྱལ་གི་སྐུལ་པ་གངས་མེད་པ་དང་། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་  
པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་གསུངས་པ་ཡང་དེ་དག་ཏུ་འདུས་པར་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་  
ཉིད་ཀྱིས་མཁྱེན་ཏོ།

Through these words, the tathāgata himself knew that  
the teachings spoken by countless emanations of the  
six sages and by all the tathāgatas are indeed gathered  
in these [verses].

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Through these words** uttered by the conqueror himself, the principal deity [Samantabhadra], **the original tathāgata himself, knew that the teachings** given in many vehicles **by countless emanations of the six sages**, who emanate from this great compassionate spirituality, **and** the teachings **spoken by all the tathāgatas** of the self-manifesting array, **are indeed gathered in these** verses [of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*], which reveal the inexpressible nature, the self-manifestation of mind and pristine cognition.

## **CHAPTER ENDING**

**This completes chapter 3 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
entitled “The Establishment of All Phenomena.”**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:25)***

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་གཏན་ལ་བབ་  
པའི་ལེབ་སྒྲིབ་གསུམ་པའོ།།

This completes the third chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Establishment of All Phenomena.”

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the third chapter from** the natural ***Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the*** inexpressible ***Real***, which **establishes all phenomena** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa to appear but to be the originally pure actual reality, essentially without independent existence.

## **EPILOGUE TO BOOK 15**

Consolidating a great pledge through the power of  
maturation,  
Possessing commitments that enhance the power of  
meditative stability and mantra,  
The pristine cognition of the perfection stage arises  
dependent on supreme meditative stability,  
And the supreme accomplishment of coemergent  
pristine cognition is attained.<sup>337</sup>

Through the compassionate spirituality of Padma,  
There flourished the [Buddhist] teachings in the Land of  
Snows.  
Through the doctrines of the meditation hermitages,  
There flourished the experiential realization of King  
[Trisong Detsen] and his subjects.  
Through the teaching of oral transmissions and spiritual  
revelations,  
There flourished an excellent gathering of trainees.  
Through the teaching of the tantras of means for  
attainment,  
There flourished the spiritual and temporal well-being of  
living creatures.<sup>338</sup>



This [text] elucidates the meanings of all the vehicles:  
The sūtras which engender this consolidation in great  
enlightenment,  
Or the vehicle of indestructible reality of the most secret  
tantras—  
Those teachings absent in the ordinary causal vehicles,  
Which are designed to carry on the short path  
The five poisons of the sensory attributes, without  
renouncing them. <sup>339</sup>

This completes Book 15 of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra (mDo rgyud rin po che'i mdzod)*, which is a commentary on the exegesis of the title of the *Secret Nucleus*, along with an analysis [of the content and words of the tantra], and its actual inception, from which [the first three chapters]—respectively entitled “The Introductory Narrative,” “The Initiation of the Discourse,” and “The Establishment of All Phenomena”—all derive.

In order that the continuity of the precious exegesis of the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva*, the emanational basis of all the vehicles of the sūtras and tantras, including the eighteen tantras [of Mahāyoga], the supreme tantra establishing the meaning of all the piṭakas of the root tantras and of all tantras, might spread and flourish, Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje compiled this text, in accordance with the commentaries entitled *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions (Phyogs bcu mun sel)* and the *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention of the Lord of Secrets (gSang bdag dgongs rgyan)*. <sup>340</sup>

It was produced for the sake of the Buddhist teaching and living beings by one named Kunpangpa Pel.

## BOOK 16, PART 1

### *Secret Nucleus: The Ground of the Peaceful Deities*

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Herein is contained Book 16, Part 1 (TI), from *The Extensive Commentary of the Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra, concerning the Ground of the Peaceful Deities*.

### THE GOLDEN KEY

In order to establish the seven aspects of the ground of the  
peaceful deities,  
This book presents the cloud mass of letters,  
The maṇḍalas of buddha mind, speech, body, and reflected  
imagery,  
Along with the conferral of empowerment.

## **VERSES OF HOMAGE**

Respectful homage to the transcendent lords Vajrasattva and  
Ratnasambhava, along with their queens,<sup>341</sup>  
Who uproot the causes and results of suffering  
Simply when their names are heard!<sup>342</sup>

## **CONTENT OF BOOKS 16 AND 17**

Commencing from this sixteenth [book], there follows a presentation of the diffusion of the maṇḍalas of both the peaceful and wrathful deities. This has two parts: (i) a presentation of the spontaneously present maṇḍala of the peaceful deities [Book 16, chs. 4-14] and (ii) an exegesis of the emergent maṇḍala of the wrathful deities [Book 17, chs. 15-21].

## **SUMMARY OF BOOK 16**

The former [the spontaneously present maṇḍala of the peaceful deities, which is the subject matter of Book 16] has three main topics: (i) the generation of and empowerment in the maṇḍala of the ground [chs. 4-10, 16.1]; (ii) a presentation of the generation and perfection stages of the path [chs. 11-13, 16.2]; and (iii) a eulogy to the fruitional buddha bodies and pristine cognitions [ch. 14, 16.3]. These three main topics also encapsulate within them three hundred forty-seven<sup>343</sup> subtopics, of which two hundred fifty<sup>344</sup> are contained in the first part, eighty-seven<sup>345</sup> in the second part, and ten in the third part. [These subtopics are all numbered in parentheses in

the relevant sections of the synoptic outline. See below, [pp. 1104-34.](#)]

## **THE GENERATION OF AND EMPOWERMENT IN THE MAṄḌALA OF THE GROUND [16.1]**

The first main topic comprises (i) a general presentation of the nature of the three maṅḍalas [chs. 4-9, 16.1.1] and (ii) a detailed exegesis of the skillful means through which the empowerments are conferred [ch. 10, 16.1.2].

The former comprises (i) a presentation of the maṅḍala of the cloud mass of letters, which is the causal basis [chs. 4-5, 16.1.1.1]; (ii) a presentation of the maṅḍala of meditative stability that derives therefrom [chs. 6-8, 16.1.1.2]; and (iii) a presentation of the maṅḍala of reflected imagery that elucidates that [ch. 9, 16.1.1.3].

The first of these in turn has two parts: (i) the establishment of the maṅḍala of the cloud mass of letters [ch. 4, 16.1.1.1.1] and (ii) the sequence of attainment in relation to it [ch. 5, 16.1.1.1.2].

## 4. THE CYCLICAL ARRAY OF THE GARLAND OF LETTERS

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The purpose of this and the following chapter is to show how the compassionate spirituality of the buddha body of emanation manifests externally, out of emptiness, in the form of letters or seed syllables, the significance being that it is from these vibrant seed syllables that the fully manifest visualizations of buddha mind, mantra sounds of buddha speech, and sealing hand emblems indicative of buddha body all subsequently emerge.

Through the enlightened intention of all the tathāgatas, a cyclical garland of letters emerges from the indestructible buddha body, speech, and mind in order to reveal the sameness and great perfection of actual reality (v. 1).

The commentator at this point elucidates the general significance of the garland of letters. The Sanskrit *akṣara* (syllable) is defined as the “unchanging essential nature” or the “true nature of mind,” which sustains the buddha body, speech, and mind within the energy channels of the subtle body. The basic Sanskrit letters comprise sixteen vowels and thirty-four consonants. However, in the context of the present maṇḍala, one hundred three letters or seed syllables are enumerated, namely, those of the forty-two peaceful deities located in the heart, those of the fifty-eight wrathful deities located in the skull, and the seed syllables OM, ĀḤ, HŪM, which are respectively located in the crown, throat, and heart centers and have the function of purifying the six mundane seed syllables that generate birth among the six classes of living beings. All one hundred three letters forming this garland emanate from the uncreated syllable A and emerge as a cloud mass from which the maṇḍala is visually generated. Yet they abide naturally

within all sentient beings.

Apart from their natural occurrence within the subtle body, these letters are also associated with the diverse meditational deities of the maṇḍala, visualized within their celestial palaces, because it is from these seed syllables that the fully manifest forms of the deities emerge during the generation and perfection stages of meditation. Then, from another perspective, the letters are considered to be miraculous emanations in the maṇḍalas of the buddha body of perfect resource (*sambhogakāya*), purposefully acting on behalf of sentient beings, and also phonic syllables that are intoned in the course of mantra recitation, which purposefully effects the spiritual accomplishment of the secret mantras.

The cyclical garland of letters is presented initially as an object of meditation from the standpoint of both the generation and perfection stages, as well as from that of the ensuing four rites of enlightened activity. All spiritual accomplishments are said to derive from this cyclical garland of letters because they are the causal basis of the pristine cognition of buddha mind (vv. 2-3). At this point, the actual emanation of the garland of letters occurs, beginning with the syllable A, and it visibly resonates throughout the world systems of living beings (vv. 4-5).

The tathāgatas then expound the inner meaning of the letters, referring to the uncreated syllable A on the level of the buddha body of actual reality, to the forty-two syllables that emerge in conjunction with it on the level of the buddha body of perfect resource, and to the words and letters they form on the level of the buddha body of emanation (vv. 6-10). The maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind are all gathered in the forty-five letters, that is, the forty-two letters of the peaceful deities combined with their three punctuation marks (v. 11). The true nature of mind is successively identified with the uncreated syllable A, with the spontaneously present forty-two syllables, and with their symbolic written forms in which there is no duality of appearance and emptiness, corresponding respectively to the three buddha bodies (vv. 12-14).

Then there follows a detailed analysis of each letter in turn, preceded by the three punctuation symbols that demarcate them (v. 15). The forty-two letters in this context actually become manifest in the following sequence: that of Samantabhadrī (v. 16); those of the five male buddhas beginning with Vairocana (v. 17); those of the five female buddhas beginning with Ākāśadhātviśvarī (v. 18); those of the inner male bodhisattvas, beginning with Kṣitigarbha and ending with the gatekeeper Yamāntaka (v. 19); those of the inner female bodhisattvas beginning with Lāsyā and ending with the gatekeeper Mahābala (v. 20); those of the outer male bodhisattvas beginning with Maitreya and ending with the gatekeeper Hayagrīva (v. 21); those of the outer female bodhisattvas and female gatekeepers beginning with Dhūpā (v. 22); those of Samantabhadra and the six sages (v. 23); and finally those of Amṛtakunḍalin and the incandescence of the wrathful deities (v. 24). However, it is emphasized that this cyclical mass of letters abides primordially as the essential nature of buddha body and pristine cognition (v. 25).

Finally, there is a summary that interprets the emergence of the wheel of letters as an expression of the buddhas' emanational nature, as a presence within the subtle body, where they are the causal basis for the attainment of buddhahood, and as objects of meditation according to the paths of liberation and skillful means (vv. 26–27).

THE FORMER (16.1.1.1.1) comprises (i) the context (16.1.1.1.1.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (16.1.1.1.1.2); and (iii) the conclusion (16.1.1.1.1.3).

## **THE CONTEXT [16.1.1.1.1]**

First, the context [comments on the verse]:

**Having presented the inception [of this tantra],  
There follows the ground, path, and result of the  
peaceful deities:  
The garland [of letters], whereby all things manifest  
buddhahood  
In [the essential nature of] the letters, then  
emerged.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:1)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དགོངས་པ་གཅིག་ཏུ་གྱུར་ནས། མཉམ་  
པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཚུལ་དོ་རྗེའི་དགྱིངས་སུ། ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡི་ནས་སངས་རྒྱས་  
པའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛོན་ལས་མི་གཡོ་བར། ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་མིང་ཚམ་དུ་གནས་  
པའི་ཡི་གེ་འབྲེང་བའི་འཁོར་ལོ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་འདི། རྐྱེད་དང་གསུང་དང་བླགས་དོ་  
རྗེའལས་སྤུང་དོ།

Then all the tathāgatas became of a single enlightened intention, and, in the expanse of indestructible reality that is a modality of great sameness, without straying from the meditative stability that all things manifest primordial buddhahood, the so-called cyclical garland of letters, in which all things abide simply as nominal syllables, emerged from the indestructible buddha body, speech, and mind.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once compassionate spirituality had been diffused from the disposition of the spontaneously present ground and the



establishment of all things had been enunciated, **then all the tathāgatas** of the ten directions and four times **became of a single enlightened intention** with regard to the meaning of primordial buddhahood, naturally expressed as a magical display of letters. **And, in the expanse of indestructible reality that is** the nature of great buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities—a **modality of great sameness** where all things are indivisible—the **so-called natural cyclical garland of letters in which all things** originally **abide simply as nominal syllables**, without actually existing, **emerged from the indestructible buddha body, speech, and mind** of the tathāgata himself. This occurred in order that the truth of the sameness and great perfection of actual reality might be demonstrated, **without straying from the meditative stability that all things** of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **manifest primordial buddhahood** in the essential nature of the letters.<sup>346</sup>

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [16.1.1.1.1.2]**

The second part [of this chapter, the explanation of the verses] comprises (i) a general presentation of the nature of the wheel of letters (16.1.1.1.1.2.1); (ii) a detailed and distinct exegesis of them in conjunction with their respective deities (16.1.1.1.1.2.2); and (iii) a summary of these two sections (16.1.1.1.1.2.3).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE NATURE OF THE WHEEL OF LETTERS [16.1.1.1.1.2.1]**

The first [the general presentation of the nature of the wheel of syllables] comprises (i) the meditation on the letters (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.1); (ii) the diffusion of the cloud mass of letters (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.2); and (iii) an exegesis of the nature of the letters (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3).

## **THE MEDITATION ON THE LETTERS [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.1]**

The first of these [the meditation on the letters] includes both (i) the actual meditation (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.1.1) and (ii) a demonstration of its advantages (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.1.2).

## **THE ACTUAL MEDITATION [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.1.1]**

The former, the actual meditation, which may be interpreted according to (i) the generation stage (*utpattikrama*, *bskyed rim*); (ii) the perfection stage (*sampannakrama*, *rdzogs rim*); and (iii) the application of integrated ritual activities (*las tshogs dang sbyar ba*) [comments on the verse]:

**From the letter AH, the letters A are diffused and reabsorbed,  
Along with the [consonantal and vocalic] letters.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:2)***

།ཨེ རབ་ཏུ་བརྟན་གྱུར་ཨ་དཀར་ལས།  
 །ཤིན་ཏུ་མ་བའི་ཨ་རྣམས་སྣོ།  
 །ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་གང་བར་གསལ་གྱུར་ནས།  
 །བསྐྱུས་ཀྱང་འཕེལ་འགྲིབ་མེད་པར་བརྟན།  
 །དེ་ལས་མིང་ཚོགས་གསལ་འབར་གུན།  
 །སྣོ་ཞིང་བསྐྱུ་བའང་དེ་བཞིན་ནོ།

AH The extremely static white letter A  
 Diffuses tiny letters A,  
 Which radiate, filling the ten directions.  
 It reabsorbs them and yet remains static,  
 Without increase or decrease.  
 From that, the cluster of consonants  
 Radiates and blazes forth.  
 Then they are all diffused and reabsorbed in the same  
 manner.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

[First there is the interpretation of these verses according to the generation stage of meditation:] Contingent on the experiences of one who has gone for refuge, cultivated the mind set on enlightenment, and contemplated emptiness, one should momentarily be equipoised in a disposition where the letter AH appears **extremely static** and unmoving on a lotus and moon cushion. In its natural expression, **the immaculate white letter A** is clear and resplendent. It **diffuses** countless **tiny letters A**, white in color and one hundredth of a mustard seed in size, **which radiate** the form of the letter A throughout phenomenal existence with their light rays, completely **filling**

all world systems of **the ten directions**. It then **reabsorbs** all of **them**, causing them to vanish into the original letter a itself; **and yet** this letter a itself **remains static**, unchanged, **without increase or decrease**.

**From that** original syllable A, **the cluster of** thirty-four **consonants** beginning with KA and the vowels **then radiates** in the form of letters, [illuminating] all sentient beings with light that diffuses throughout the ten directions, **and it blazes forth** as a single mass of light rays. Thereafter, these are reabsorbed and vanish into the letter A; then, issuing forth again, **they are all diffused and reabsorbed** as before, **in the same manner**. Then, once again on sun and moon cushions at the center of a lotus flower, the seed syllables from A to KṢA are sequentially arrayed and visually generated as the deities. This is the cloud mass of letters that forms the causal basis of the generation stage [of meditation].<sup>347</sup>

Second, [there is the interpretation of these same verses] according to the perfection stage of meditation: One is equipoised in a disposition where, in the heart center of the radiant visualized deity, on a lotus and moon cushion, **the static white letter A diffuses** countless **letters A, filling** all world systems of **the ten directions**. After transforming all sentient beings into the form of the letter a, **these are reabsorbed** and vanish into the letter a of the heart center, which is **without increase or decrease**. **Then, from that** letter A, the encircling letters (*mtha' skor gyi yi ge*) forming **the cluster of consonants are diffused and reabsorbed in the same manner**. Thereby, one should be equipoised in the disposition of actual reality, where cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are without duality, without increase or decrease. This is the cloud mass of letters according to the perfection stage [of meditation].

Third, [there is the interpretation of these same verses] according to the application of integrated ritual activities: During the rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrath, **the syllable A and the cluster of consonants are diffused** [respectively] in the colors white, yellow, red, and

dark blue. Disease and elemental spirits are pacified. The life span and merit are enriched. Targets are summoned and subjugated. Venomous forces are eradicated. Then, one finally should become equipoised in a disposition that is **without increase or decrease**, as is [explained] in detail in chapter 5. That is the cloud mass of letters through which the integrated ritual activities are attained.<sup>348</sup>

## **A DEMONSTRATION OF ITS ADVANTAGES [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.1.2]**

The latter, a demonstration of the advantages [of this meditation, comments on the verse]:

**This is the causal basis through which spiritual accomplishments firmly emerge.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:3)***

།འདི་ནི་དོ་རྗེ་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཀྱི།  
།བརྟན་འགྲུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱ་ཡིན་ནོ།

This is the causal basis of pristine cognition  
Through which the accomplishments  
Of indestructible reality firmly emerge.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**This** modality of meditation **is the causal basis of pristine cognition, through which** the nature of all **the excellent accomplishments of** Samantabhadra, the **indestructible reality** of the body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities of all the buddhas, **firmly emerge,**<sup>349</sup> just as they are desired. So it is that all excellent accomplishments, supreme and common, are attained.

There are some who hold that the training in the single syllable which persists from [the time when] the letter A is static, as long as it remains static without increase or decrease, and the training in the multitude [of syllables] formed by the cluster of consonants that derive from it, are respectively the auspicious coincidences whereby the buddha body of actual reality and the buddha body of form are made into the path. This, however, is but a part of the correct view because the cloud mass of letters should be explained as the ground of everything.<sup>350</sup>

## **THE DIFFUSION OF THE CLOUD MASS OF LETTERS [16.1.1.1.2.1.2]**

The second part [of the general presentation of the nature of the wheel of letters], concerning the diffusion of the cloud mass of letters, comprises (i) the diffusion of the letters (16.1.1.1.2.1.2.1) and (ii) the wondrous extraordinary signs that appear (16.1.1.1.2.1.2.2).

The former, concerning the diffusion of the letters [comments on the verse]:

**A, the vowels, and the consonants all have their distinct places of articulation.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 4:4)**

ཨེ ཀ་ཁ་ག་ལྷ་ང་། ཅ་ཆ་ཇ་ཉ་  
ཐ་ཕ་ཎ་ཏ་ཉ་ཐ་ཊ་  
མ་མ་བ་ལྷ་མ། ཡ་མ་ར་ལ།  
ཤ་ལ་ས་ཏ། ལྷ།  
ཞི་ཞུ། ཞུ་ཞུ།  
ཞི་ཞི། ཞི་ཞུ།

AḤ KA KHA GA GHA ṄA CA CHA JA JHA ṄA  
ṬA ṬHA ḌA ḌHA ṆA

**TA THA DA DHA NA**

**PA PHA BA BHA MA**

**YA VA RA LA**

ŚA ŚA SA HA KṢA  
I Ī U Ū

**E AI O AU**

**Interlinear Commentary**

A is the source of all the letters and their emanational basis. Therefore, it comes forth as the natural expression [of sound], emerging from the chest. Just as all elemental forms arise as

attributes of the primary elements,<sup>351</sup> all letters indeed arise as attributes of the syllable A. Thus, the ground of speech is the syllable A.

However, through the formative conditioning of speech, there are three basic syllables that emerge: the syllable A itself, I which is flat (*bkug pa*), and U which is low (*smad pa*). These interact with one another, so that E is formed by the phonetic conjunction of A and I, and O is formed by the phonetic conjunction of A and U. The syllable R is formed by tension [of A], and the syllable L is formed by relaxation [of A]. Each of these [seven] vowels has long (*dīrgha*) and short (*hrasva*) forms, so that there are fourteen vowels; or sixteen with the addition of the nasalized AM (*anusvāra, sna dang ldan pa*), and the aspirated AH (*visarga, rnam gcad*).

[The velar consonants (*kaṅṭhavarga*)] emerge from the vase-like buddha throat: Among them, [the unvoiced and nonaspirate] KA derives from the contact (*sprṣṭa, phrad pa*) of this same syllable A with its place of articulation in the velum. [The unvoiced and aspirate] KHA derives from that same [place of articulation], but it is slightly lower pitched (*zhum*) and has partial contact with the roof of the palate. [The voiced and nonaspirate] GA is slightly lower pitched than that. [The voiced and aspirate] GHA has contact with the chest, and [the nasalized] ÑA has contact with the nose.

One should know that the other [consonantal phonetic sets] are also appraised in this sequence. The [palatal (*tālavyavarga*)] syllables CA, CHA, JA, JHA, and ÑA emerge from the buddha tongue through the contact of this syllable A with the hard palate and the blade of the tongue. The [retroflex (*mūrdhanyavarga*)] syllables ṬA, ṬHA, ḌA, ḌHA, and ṆA emerge from the tip of the buddha tongue because they are cerebral (*mūrdhānya*) sounds derived from the contact of the syllable A with the edge of the palate, close to the tip of the tongue. The [dental (*dantyavarga*)] syllables TA, THA, DA, DHA, and NA emerge from the tip of the buddha tongue and the buddha teeth because they derive from the contact of the syllable A with the tip of the tongue and the teeth. And the [labial (*oṣṭhyavarga*)]



syllables **PA**, **PHA**, **BA**, **BHA**, and **MA** emerge from the buddha lips because they derive from the contact of the syllable A with the lips. The particular [modulations of pitch] within these classes are similar to those [of the velars], beginning with **KA**.

As to the remaining nine [consonants]: [The semivowel] **YA** and [the sibilant] **ŚA** are classified as palatals according to their place of articulation. [The semivowel] **VA** is classified as labial. [The semivowel] **RA** and [the sibilant] **ṢA** are classified as cerebral [or retroflex]. [The semivowel] **LA** and [the sibilant] **SA** are classified as dentals. The syllable **HA** is classified as velar, and the syllable **KṢA** is included within the velars and the cerebrals. Although these emerge [phonetically] from these [places of articulation], with reference to their diffusion on behalf of those to be trained, **ya** emerges from the buddha eyebrows, **va** from the buddha abdomen, **ra** from the buddha hips, **la** from the buddha shoulders, **śa** from the buddha heart, **ṣa** from the wheel-marked buddha hands, **sa** from the buddha navel, **ha** from the wheel-marked buddha feet, and **kṣa** from the pudendum (*mkha' gsang*). In all these syllables the sound of A is pervasive, just as the melodious timbre of a lute pervades all the sounds of a lute—high and low, strong and weak.

Furthermore, the syllables **I** and **Ī** emerge from the two buddha eyes, **U** and **Ū** from the two buddha ears, **E** and **AI** from the two buddha nostrils, and **AUM**, that is, **O** and **AU**, from the crown protuberance of the buddha head.<sup>352</sup>

## **THE WONDROUS EXTRAORDINARY SIGNS THAT APPEAR [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.2.2]**

The latter, concerning the wondrous extraordinary signs that appear [comments on the verse]:

**Through their emergence, the six realms vibrated.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 4:5)**

འདི་དག་ལྷུང་བས། འཛིག་རྟེན་སྲུག་གི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་མཐའ་ཡས་པ། རྣམ་  
པ་སྲུག་ཏུ་གཡོས། རབ་ཏུ་གཡོས། ཀུན་ཏུ་གཡོས་ནས། ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་  
མིང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཅམ་དུ་གྱུར་ཏོ། །ཏོ།

By the emergence of these [letters], the infinite ten directions of the six realms vibrated in six ways, further vibrated, and absolutely vibrated, whereupon all things were transformed into mere nominal characteristics. Ho!

## **Interlinear Commentary**

**By the emergence of these** syllables from the buddha body, speech, and mind, a great apparitional cloud mass of letters **vibrated** slightly throughout all **the infinite ten directions of the six realms**. This may occur **in six ways** or modalities of transformation. That is to say, when the eastern side [of the letters] is ascendant, the western side is low; when the western side is ascendant, the eastern side is low; when the southern side is ascendant, the northern side is low; when the northern side is ascendant, the southern side is low; when their extremes are ascendant, their center is low; and when the center is ascendant, the extremes are low. Thereby, all phenomenal appearances were refined into the nature of reflected imagery.

Then they **further vibrated** with moderate strength, so that all things that are empty became radiant in the nature of pristine cognition; **and** then they **absolutely vibrated** in a most intense manner, **whereupon all things** of cyclic

existence and nirvāṇa became **mere** designations—**nominal characteristics**—in the disposition of the nondual natural Great Perfection, without existing independently in any respect.

Because the tathāgata himself supremely rejoiced in these [signs], **Ho!** was exclaimed to indicate that he rests in the disposition of sameness.

## **AN EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE LETTERS [16.1.1.1.2.1.3]**

The third part [of the general presentation of the nature of the wheel of letters, see above, [p. 164](#)], concerning the exegesis of the nature of the letters, has six sections: (i) describing the causal basis for the enunciation of the syllables (16.1.1.1.2.1.3.1); (ii) demonstrating that the wheel of the uncreated letters denotes the buddha body of actual reality because all enlightened intentions of the buddhas are gathered therein (16.1.1.1.2.1.3.2); (iii) demonstrating that the manifestly perfect letters are the buddha body of perfect resource because the forty-two syllables are gathered in the nature of that syllable A (16.1.1.1.2.1.3.3); (iv) demonstrating that the letters are themselves the buddha body of emanation because they are the source of everything, arising as a diverse emanational display (16.1.1.1.2.1.3.4); (v) demonstrating the expression of the perfect nature of the forty-five maṇḍalas because the enlightened intention of the conquerors is gathered in these [letters] (16.1.1.1.2.1.3.5); and (vi) an exegesis of the etymological definitions of the letters, through which the nature of mind is without duality of appearance and emptiness (16.1.1.1.2.1.3.6).

## **THE CAUSAL BASIS FOR THE ENUNCIATION OF THE SYLLABLES [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.1]**

The first of these, the description of the causal basis [for the enunciation of the syllables, comments on the verse]:

**The tathāgatas then uttered these following aphorisms concerning the cloud mass of letters:**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 4:6)*

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then all the tathāgatas uttered these following aphorisms.

*Interlinear Commentary*

Once the cloud mass of letters had been diffused, **then all the tathāgatas uttered these following aphorisms** concerning the cloud mass of letters.

## **A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE WHEEL OF THE UNCREATED LETTERS DENOTES THE BUDDHA BODY OF ACTUAL REALITY [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.2]**

The second, demonstrating [that the wheel of the uncreated letters denotes] the buddha body of actual reality [comments on the verse]:

**The syllable [A], unexpressed as extremes or their middle ground, denotes the disposition of the buddha body of reality.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:7)***

།ཨ་ནི་སྟོང་དང་མི་སྟོང་གི།  
།དབུ་མའང་དམིགས་སུ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་མིང་ཅམ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན།  
།ཡི་གེ་འབྲེང་བ་ཉིད་ལ་གནས།

The syllable A does not objectively refer  
To emptiness, nonemptiness, or even to their middle  
ground.

All things are merely names.

All the buddhas abide in the garland of letters itself.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The syllable A** does not exist as an extreme **emptiness** because, as the source of the letters, its mere apparitional modality is not abandoned. Nor does it even refer **to nonemptiness** because it is without entity or sign. Indeed, it **does not objectively refer even to their middle ground**, which in this context is said to be the nonduality of these two natures. This is because its perspective transcends both

appearance and the nature of emptiness. So it is that **all things are merely names** and are otherwise without the independent existence that has been postulated, thought, or expressed. This is the enlightened intention of **all the buddhas**—the reality that **abides in** the disposition of **the garland of letters itself**. For the abiding nature of this [wheel of letters] is the nature of the spontaneously present buddha body of actual reality.

## **A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE MANIFESTLY PERFECT LETTERS ARE THE BUDDHA BODY OF PERFECT RESOURCE [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.3]**

The third, demonstrating [that the manifestly perfect letters are] the buddha body of perfect resource [comments on the verse]:

**The syllable A manifests and [the consonants],  
starting with KA, denote the buddha body of perfect  
resource.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:8)***

།ཨ་ཉིད་སྣ་ཚོ་གས་པར་སྣང་བའི།  
།ཀ་ལ་སོགས་པ་བཞི་བརྒྱ་གཉིས།  
།སྐ་ཡི་མིང་གིས་ཐམས་ཅད་བསྐྱུས།  
།མདོན་ཚོགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་དེ་ཉིད་དེས།

The syllable A itself, which diversely manifests,  
Subsumes all things that can be nominally [expressed]  
In forty-two syllables, starting with the velar set.  
These are ascertained to be the manifestly perfect king.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The syllable A itself**, the source of all syllables, has a nature that **diversely manifests** through conditions in the forms of the letters. As previously explained, there are three basic syllables: [A itself]; along with the syllable I, which is a flat pitch derived from A; and U, which is a low pitch derived from A. From these three [basic syllables], E emerges through the conjunction of A and I, and O emerges through the conjunction of A and U, making five vowels in all. Then there is the syllable R, which emerges through the tension [of the syllable A], and the syllable L, which emerges through its relaxation. These [seven] vowels also come to number fourteen through their differentiation of skillful means and discriminative awareness [i.e., long and short forms]. Collectively, they are known as *āli* (the “vowels”), with the addition of the [nasalized] syllable AṂ, which is clearly indicative of skillful means, and the [aspirate] syllable AḤ, which is clearly indicative of discriminative awareness.

The syllable A may itself be articulated dependent on the velum, the palate, the tip of the tongue, the teeth, and the lips, giving rise respectively to the syllables KA, CA, ṬA, TA, and PA. When these sounds are then hardened [or aspirated, *drag tu bos pa*], they emerge respectively as KHA, CHA, ṬHA, THA, and PHA. When softened [or voiced, *zhan du bos pa*], they emerge respectively as GA, JA, ḌA, DA, and BA; and when these are voiced with aspiration (*cher bos pa*), they emerge respectively as GHA, JHA, ḌHA, DHA, and BHA. Then, when nasalized, they emerge respectively as ṆA, ÑA, ṅA, NA, and MA—making five phonetic categories in all. In conformity with these, YA and ŚA are

palatal, RA and ṢA are retroflex, LA and SA are dental, VA is labial, HA is velar, and KṢA is cerebral.

The sound of the syllable A **subsumes all things that can be nominally** expressed in terms of vowels (*āli*) and consonants (*kāli*) **in these forty-two syllables, starting with the velar set**, which derives from the contact [of that syllable A] with the velum. **The king** of primordial **manifestly perfect** enlightenment attains buddhahood in the buddha body of actual reality, which is this uncreated syllable A. Just as the syllable A represents the attainment of buddhahood, **these** forty-two letters that are diffused from the disposition of the syllable A too **are all ascertained** to represent the attainment of buddhahood. For they are an emanational display of that single essential nature.

Actually, the syllable A is the expanse of Samantabhadrī, and the forty-two letters are the forty-two buddhas who emanate from the disposition of that [expanse]. It is their natural expression that demonstrates that the letters are the buddha body of perfect resource.

## **A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE LETTERS ARE THEMSELVES THE BUDDHA BODY OF EMANATION [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.4]**

The fourth, demonstrating that [the letters are themselves] the buddha body of emanation, has two sections: (i) demonstrating that the letters are the source of words (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.4.1) and (ii) demonstrating the proliferation of the emanational display of the letters (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.4.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**They demonstrate names, words, and diverse supreme meanings.**



## Root Tantra (Ch. 4:9)

།ཨ་མ་ཉོ་འཚར་ཡ་མཚན་གྱི།  
།འབྲུལ་ཚེན་བཞི་བཅུ་ཚ་ལྷའི་མིང་།  
།ཚོག་རྣམས་མ་ལུས་འཛིན་པའི་གནས།  
།སྣ་ཚོགས་དོན་ཚེན་སྣ་ཞིང་སྟོན།

Astonishing, wondrous, and amazing  
Is this great miraculous display, the forty-five [symbols]—  
The basis upon which all names and words,  
Without exception, are apprehended.  
They propound and demonstrate diverse supreme  
meanings.

## Interlinear Commentary

The wheel of the cloud mass of letters is **astonishing** because it abides as the essential nature—the buddha body of actual reality. It is **wondrous** because it appears as natural expression—the buddha body of perfect resource; **and** it is **amazing** because it actually proliferates as compassionate spirituality—the buddha body of emanation. **This is the great miraculous display**, inconceivable in nature, comprising the cluster of **the forty-five** [symbols], where the three diacritics, namely, the initial punctuation mark (ཨ *mgo*), the medial punctuation circles (། *tsheg*), and the final punctuation stroke (། *shad*), supplement the forty-two letters; and it is **the basis upon which all names and words are apprehended without exception.**<sup>353</sup>

If one were to wonder how this apprehension occurs, just as

a mass is composed of atomic particles, which are the ultimate components of physical forms, and the atomic particles are the basis upon which that mass is apprehended, in the same way, the letters are the ultimate components of names. A syllable, defined by a single vowel, is formed through the aggregation of letters (*yi ge 'dus pa*). A name, representing an entity such as “pillar” or “vase,” is formed through the combination of these [letters]. All phrases or strings of syntactically bound words are then formed, without exception, through the combination of these [names]. So it is that the letters are the basis of names and words. Furthermore, the letters are formed primordially as the source of all words and meanings, without exception, because **they propound and demonstrate** to others the **supreme meanings** of **diverse** doctrines, associated with the [diverse] vehicles.<sup>354</sup>

**A DEMONSTRATION OF THE PROLIFERATION OF THE  
EMANATIONAL DISPLAY OF THE LETTERS  
[16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.4.2]**

The latter, [demonstrating] the proliferation [of the letters, comments on the verse]:

**The red vowels and white consonants abide within  
the buddha body and the subtle body [of sentient  
beings] and demonstrate the sacred doctrine.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:10)***

།དངོས་མེད་ཡི་གཉི་རང་བཞིན་སེམས།  
 །བདག་མེད་མཐའ་བྲལ་མི་དམིགས་ཀྱང་།  
 །དབྱིབས་དང་ཁ་དོག་མིང་ཚོགས་གྱིས།  
 །རོལ་བ་ཅིང་ཡང་སྤྲུལ་ཅིང་སྟོན།

Without entity, the natural expression of the syllables—  
 The mind—is selflessness and free from extremes,  
 And it cannot be objectified.  
 Yet through a proliferation of shapes, colors, and names,  
 It emanates and demonstrates its emanational display in  
 all ways.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Without** existing as a coarse **entity**, **the natural expression of the syllables** is **the** inwardly radiant, nature of **mind**. This **is** the **selflessness** of individual persons **and** of phenomena, the actual reality **free from** all **extremes** of conceptual elaboration, **and**, from the very beginning, **it cannot be objectified** as an entity or sign. **Yet** on account of its apparitional nature, which is without duality, in the manner of the moon’s reflection in water, the shapes of the letters appear and abide, without inherent existence, within the buddha body and the energy centers of the [central] energy channel (*rtsa gnas ’khor lo*) of sentient beings. The letter A (ཨ) is shaped like a stretching lion, the letter KA (ཀ) is shaped like a battlement flag, and so forth. With respect to their colors also, the vowels are naturally red and the consonants are naturally white. The action of these internal syllables is such that, by meditation on them, the path of the yogin and the fruitional goal are indeed perfected.<sup>355</sup>

In the context of the buddhas, the cloud mass of letters, **through a proliferation of shapes, colors, names, and words, emanates its emanational display in all ways and demonstrates** immeasurable enumerations of the sacred doctrine, corresponding to the fortune of living beings. This action of the wheel of letters is also one that correspondingly acts on behalf of living beings through the mass of its shapes, colors, names, and words that are represented as letters in books. Furthermore, the secret mantras formed from these letters during meditation on the seed syllables of the deities are also emanations of this wheel of letters. So, the cloud mass of letters indeed abides in this emanational nature.

**A DEMONSTRATION OF THE EXPRESSION OF THE PERFECT  
NATURE OF THE FORTY-FIVE MAṄDALAS  
[16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.5]**

The fifth, demonstrating that the forty-five maṅḍalas are perfect [comments on the verse]:

**Forty-five maṅḍalas are perfectly present in the  
[letters] from A to KṢA and o.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:11)***

།ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞིར་གཤེགས་པ་ཡི།  
 །ཡི་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའི་སྐྱུ་གསུང་བྱགས།  
 །དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་བཞི་བཅུ་ཙ་ལྔ་ཉིད།  
 །ཡི་གེ་མགོ་ནས་ཀླ་ལ་ཇོགས།

Emerging in the ten directions and four times,  
 The body, speech, and mind of the being of pristine  
 cognition,  
 Comprising forty-five maṇḍalas,  
 Are themselves perfectly present in the letters—  
 From the initial [A] to KṢA.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Emerging** for the sake of living beings of the past, future, and present **in the ten directions and four times, the body maṇḍala of the** naturally present **being of pristine cognition**, which is the mystery of all the buddhas, comprises the body aspect of buddha body, the speech aspect of buddha body, and the mind aspect of buddha body, and with the addition of the attribute aspect and the activity aspect, these [buddha body, speech, and mind] each have five aspects, making fifteen aspects [of the body maṇḍala] in all. Similarly, the **speech and mind** [maṇḍalas] each have their fifteen aspects. Altogether, these **comprise the forty-five maṇḍalas** of the five enlightened families, which **are themselves perfectly present in the letters**—commencing **from the initial** syllable A **to** the final syllable KṢA. However many aspects there are of the maṇḍala of the enlightened families, they are all complete and gathered in the wheel of the letters itself. This is the basis of all maṇḍalas. <sup>356</sup>

In this respect, there are some who expound merely the forty-five letters, and who have not even partially seen this exposition that the enlightened families of the maṇḍala are gathered in the wheel of letters.<sup>357</sup>

**THE EXEGESIS OF THE ETYMOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS OF THE LETTERS, THROUGH WHICH THE NATURE OF MIND IS WITHOUT DUALITY OF APPEARANCE AND EMPTINESS  
[16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.6]**

The sixth, the exegesis of the etymological definitions, associated with the appearance of the nature of mind as the letters, has three sections: (i) demonstrating the meaning of the uncreated letter, which represents the nature of mind (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.6.1); (ii) the spontaneous presence of buddha attributes consequent on their appearance as letters, arising from the disposition of that uncreated nature (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.6.2); and (iii) the manner in which those letters, without duality of appearance and emptiness, are written and arranged (16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.6.3).

**A DEMONSTRATION OF THE MEANING OF THE UNCREATED LETTER, WHICH REPRESENTS THE NATURE OF MIND  
[16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.6.1]**

The first of these sections, demonstrating the uncreated letter [comments on the verse]:

**The nature of mind is the intrinsic nature of the**

**letter, without entity,**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:12)***

།སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ཡི་གེ་སྟེ།  
།ཡི་གེ་དངོས་པོ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།

The intrinsic nature of mind is the letter.  
The letter is without entity.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**The intrinsic nature of mind**, inner radiance itself, **is the letter**, spontaneously present in nature. **The letter itself is without** existence, either as an **entity** or as a sign. As is said in a sūtra:

Subhūti, the letters are ultimately uncreated. They are the essential nature of A. That which is the essential nature of A is the nature of mind. It genuinely transcends all entities and nonentities.<sup>358</sup>

**THE SPONTANEOUS PRESENCE OF BUDDHA ATTRIBUTES  
CONSEQUENT ON THEIR APPEARANCE AS LETTERS, ARISING  
FROM THE DISPOSITION OF THAT UNCREATED NATURE  
[16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.6.2]**

The second, concerning the spontaneous presence of buddha attributes [comments on the verse]:

**Which summons forth the wondrous maṇḍala of  
supreme buddha body, speech, and mind.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:13)***

། དམིགས་མེད་དེ་ཉིད་སྣ་ཚོགས་པའི།  
། རྒྱ་གསུང་བླགས་གྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་ཆེ།  
། རྒྱ་གསུང་བླགས་ནི་དོ་མཚར་གྱི།  
། མཚན་འཕྲུལ་ཆེན་རབ་འགྲུགས་པའོ།

Without objective referent, and owing to its  
proliferation,  
It itself manifests as the great wheels  
Of buddha body, speech, and mind.  
Body, speech, and mind summon forth this supreme  
miraculous display,  
Which is wondrous and amazing.

***Interlinear Commentary***

The ultimate syllable, which is the nature of mind, **without objective referent, owing to the proliferation of** the elements of inner radiance, **itself manifests as the great wheel of** supportive **buddha body**, the great wheel of communicative buddha **speech, and** the great wheel of equipoised buddha **mind**, along with the wheel of omniscient buddha attributes and the great wheel of unimpeded buddha



activities. These natural inexhaustible wheels of adornment—the **body, speech, and mind** of all the buddhas, manifesting in and of themselves—**summon forth this supreme miraculous display, which is wondrous** because the excellent buddha attributes are primordially and spontaneously present, **and amazing** because it is the enlightened intention of supreme buddha body and pristine cognition, without conjunction or disjunction. The point is that through meditation the three buddha bodies intrinsically arise.

**THE MANNER IN WHICH THOSE LETTERS, WITHOUT DUALITY OF APPEARANCE AND EMPTINESS, ARE WRITTEN AND ARRANGED [16.1.1.1.1.2.1.3.6.3]**

The third, concerning the manner in which those letters are written and arranged [comments on the verse]:

**These [letters] are effortlessly abiding, written in the expanse by the expanse.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:14)***

།དབྱིངས་ལ་དབྱིངས་ཀྱིས་བྲིས་པ་སྟེ།  
།ཡི་གེ་ཞེས་ནི་དེ་ཕྱིར་བཟོད།

Written in the expanse by the expanse,  
The designation “letter” is expressed on this basis.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The actual letters that manifest as such are **written** primordially **in the** disposition of the nature of mind, the unchanging **expanse** of primordially pure reality **by the expanse** of pristine cognition, spontaneously present and effortless. **The designation “letter,”** which refers to the never-changing naturally radiant actual reality, has not been and will not be newly fabricated. **On this basis,** the cyclical cloud mass of spontaneous letters **is expressed** as abiding primordially and effortlessly in the entirety of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.

## **A DETAILED AND DISTINCT EXEGESIS OF THE LETTERS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE DEITIES [16.1.1.1.1.2.2]**

The second part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter] is the detailed and distinct exegesis of the letters, in conjunction with their respective deities [see above, [p. 164](#)]. This comprises (i) a general presentation of the meaning of the three punctuation marks (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the meaning of the forty-two syllables (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2); and (iii) a synopsis of these (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.3).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE MEANING OF THE THREE PUNCTUATION MARKS [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.1]**

The first, concerning the meaning of the three punctuation marks [comments on the verse]:

**The initial punctuation mark, the medial punctuation circles,  
And final punctuation stroke respectively denote the  
dispositions  
Of buddha mind, buddha speech, and buddha body.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:15)***

།མགོ་ནི་མ་ཞོར་ལམ་ཡིན་ཏེ།  
།ཏིག་ནི་ཤེས་རབ་མིང་དུ་སྒྲི།  
།ཤད་ནི་ཐབས་ཆེན་ཚོགས་སུ་གཙོད།

The initial punctuation mark represents the unerring lines.  
The medial punctuation circles represent discriminative awareness,  
Through which nouns are expressed.  
The final punctuation stroke represents great skillful means,  
Through which phrases are demarcated.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The initial punctuation mark**, which precedes the syllables, is drawn in the shape of a crook (འཇུག་ཀའ་རིས་). Like the letter །,<sup>359</sup> it resembles the trunk of an elephant. It **represents the unerring** indestructible reality of buddha mind that reveals the meaning of skillful means and discriminative awareness

without duality. In the manner of a wagon driver<sup>360</sup> [about to steer a wagon along a track], it renders the **lines** functional, because it is the initial or head symbol, preceding all the letters of a text, and so forth.

**The medial punctuation circles**, [rendered in Tibetan as] *tsheg*, which follow each syllable, as in the letter AḤ (ཨ), resemble the eyes of Maheś vara. This **represents** the nature of quiescent nirvāṇa, the **discriminative awareness** indicative of the indestructible reality of inexpressible buddha speech which does not abide in the two extremes. Indeed, the form of the letter A (ཨ) conveys the perfection of discriminative awareness, and it has a function, **through which** entities **are** differentiated and **expressed as nouns**. If each syllable A were not demarcated [by the punctuation dots], then the consonantal syllables, demarcated by a single vowel, would not form nouns; if these were not formed, the names of entities such as “pillar” and “vase” would not be formed. Therefore, in this context, the function [of the punctuation circles] is to establish the names of different entities.<sup>361</sup>

**The final punctuation stroke**, which follows [a string of] syllables, is shaped like the straight line of the letter A (ཨ) and resembles an arrow (↓).

It **represents** the **great** miracle of **skillful means**, the indestructible reality of buddha body which indicates that living beings are protected by great compassionate spirituality. Its function is one **through which phrases are demarcated** out of distinct syllables.<sup>362</sup>

## **A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE MEANING OF THE FORTY-TWO LETTERS [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2]**

The second section of the detailed and distinct exegesis of the letters, in conjunction with their respective deities, is the

detailed exegesis of the meaning of the forty-two letters. This includes (i) a digression (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1)<sup>363</sup> and (ii) the interlinear commentary (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2).

## **A DIGRESSION [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1]**

The former comprises (i) the implication of [the letters] being out of order (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.1); (ii) an explanation of the symbolic meaning of their names (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.2); and (iii) a teaching concerning the inception of their incandescence (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.3).

### **THE IMPLICATION OF [THE LETTERS] BEING OUT OF ORDER [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.1]**

As to the first, although in this chapter of the text the sequence of the letters appears to be somewhat out of order, this refers to the abiding nature of the respective deities. The initial syllable A is the nature of emptiness, the expanse of actual reality—Samantabhadrī; and the final syllable KṢA, which follows those of the four female gatekeepers, is the essential nature of appearances, the pristine cognition—Samantabhadra. These two are the incandescent male and female buddhas Samantabhadra (*gdangs kyi kun bzang yab yum*). Here, they are not mentioned together, but they are explained to be the first and the last [of the deities in the maṇḍala], with the exception of the six sages.<sup>364</sup> The purpose here is to demonstrate that the self-manifesting buddha bodies of perfect resource are an emanational display that arises from the disposition of Samantabhadra, the very ground where

appearance and emptiness are without duality. The nature of mind, the inner radiance of the ground, is the original Samantabhadra, the conclusive level of liberation, while its apparitional and emptiness aspects are combined as the incandescent male-female Samantabhadra. In this way, the buddha body of perfect resource is revealed to arise, manifest in and of itself, from the disposition of inner radiance, the buddha body of actual reality.

Thereafter, the seed syllables of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families are revealed because, manifesting in and of themselves from the disposition of actual reality, the pure male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families abide within the maṇḍala, resembling the colors of the rainbow.

Then the seed syllables of the four inner male bodhisattvas are revealed in order to show that the four male bodhisattvas, indicative of buddha mind, arise from the mental energy of these deities. Then the seed syllable of Yamāntaka is revealed, arising from the incandescence of these four male bodhisattvas of buddha mind, in order to illustrate that, through their apparition, they subdue the obscuration of knowable phenomena, which clings to the mind, defiled by afflictive mental states.

Then the seed syllables of the female consorts who are within the objective range of the [aforementioned] bodhisattvas are revealed, illustrating that they manifest as their respective sensory objects. Then the seed syllable of Mahābala appears from the energy of these [female bodhisattvas] in order to illustrate that they subdue the obscuration of afflictive mental states, which clings to the four sensory objects that so manifest.

Furthermore, from the energy of the buddha speech of the five basic enlightened families, the four bodhisattvas of buddha speech then appear and reveal their seed syllables. Then, Hayagrīva arises and reveals his seed syllable to illustrate that obscurations of speech are subdued by this buddha speech.

Then the seed syllables of the four female bodhisattvas,

indicative of time, who are the apparitional objects appraised by these [male bodhisattvas], are revealed, indicating that unobscured buddha speech appears throughout the four times. Then the seed syllables of the four female gatekeepers are revealed to show that the four female gatekeepers also appear, illustrating that the nature of these [female bodhisattvas] transcends the stains of the four extremes.<sup>365</sup>

Then, as previously indicated, there is the syllable *ḲṢA*, which reveals that all the foregoing apparitional images arise from the disposition of Samantabhadra.

Thereafter, from the energy of the buddha body of these deities, the six sages appear in their respective world systems and their seed syllables are revealed, illustrating that their emanational nature is endowed with excellent buddha activities. The seed syllable of Amṛtakunḍalin is then revealed because he manifests from the incandescence of the buddha activity of the principal deity, even though the [sages] also partake of buddha activities that arise from the nature of their buddha body. Then, in order that the buddha field of the wrathful deities might manifest in and of itself from the incandescence of all these [peaceful deities], the seed syllable of Buddha Heruka is finally revealed in its essential nature, illustrated by the syllable *OM*.

## **AN EXPLANATION OF THE SYMBOLIC MEANING OF THEIR NAMES [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.2]**

As to the second, the explanation of the symbolic meaning of the syllables, the combined male-female Samantabhadra are symbolically expressed by the respective terms “uncreated nature” (*skye med*) and “buddha mind” (*thugs*) This symbolic description implies that all maṇḍalas have these as the basis of their inception, since they manifest from the disposition of both

the expanse or uncreated nature of mind, and the pristine cognition that reveals naturally present unimpeded compassionate spirituality.

The male buddhas of the five enlightened families are [symbolically] expressed by the term “magical emanation” (*sgyu 'phrul*), for they reveal the magical nature of skillful means according to which the five self-manifesting aggregates are inherently pure (*gnas su dag pa*). The five female buddhas are [symbolically] expressed by the term “net” (*dra ba*), illustrating that they are associated with nondual discriminative awareness and revealing the five elements to be pure in the expanse (*dbyings su dag pa*).

The four inner male bodhisattvas are [symbolically] expressed by the term “buddha mind” (*thugs*), illustrating that the nature of consciousness is purity. The four female bodhisattvas who are their objects are [symbolically] expressed by the term “buddha body” (*sku*), illustrating that the apparitional objects that arise to the sense organs and coarsely appear are inherently pure. The four outer male bodhisattvas are [symbolically] expressed by the term “buddha speech” (*gsung*), illustrating that the sense organs are clear and the self that comprehends [objects] is inherently pure. The four female bodhisattvas, indicative of time, are [symbolically] expressed by the term “pure” (*dag pa*), illustrating that all the four times are inherently pure—transcending existence, nonexistence, eternalism, and nihilism.

The four male gatekeepers are denoted by the term “destroyer” (*'jig pa*). They symbolize the subjugation and inherent purity of the four demonic forces and adversaries, that is, the nature of afflictive mental states that apprehend entities and signs. The four female gatekeepers are denoted by the term “actual reality” (*chos nyid*), illustrating that the benefit of living beings is spontaneously accomplished through the primordially pure [four] immeasurable aspirations and that the apprehensions of self, possessed entities, signs, and dualism are inherently pure.

The six sages are denoted by the expression “numerous as



atomic particles” (*rdul snyed*), illustrating that they accomplish spontaneous acts of benefit in limitless worlds through countless emanations, and that the propensities of the six classes of living beings are inherently pure.

Then the nature of the wrathful deities is [symbolically] expressed by the term “destroyer of all” (*thams cad zhig pa*), illustrating that arrogant beings to be trained are disciplined and objective appearances are pure in pristine cognition.

## **A TEACHING CONCERNING THE INCEPTION OF THEIR INCANDESCENCE [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.1.3]**

As to the third, the teaching concerning the inception of the incandescence [of the deities]: In the self-manifesting spontaneous Bounteous Array of the buddhas, the principal deity’s visage is beheld from whatever direction [of the maṇḍala] it is perceived. In the eastern direction there are the male and female buddhas Akṣobhya [and Buddhālocanā] with their six-deity maṇḍala that comprises the four encircling [bodhisattvas] Kṣitigarbha, Maitreya, Lāsyā, and Dhūpā, with the gatekeepers Yamāntaka and Aṅkuśā further to the east. In the southern direction there are the male and female buddhas Ratnasambhava [and Māmakī] with their six-deity maṇḍala that comprises the four encircling [bodhisattvas] Avalokiteśvara, Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, Mālyā, and Puṣpā, with [the gatekeepers] Mahābala and Pāśā further to the south. In the western direction there are the male and female buddhas Amitābha [and Pāṇḍaravāsini] with their six-deity maṇḍala that comprises the four encircling [bodhisattvas] Ākāśagarbha, Samantabhadra, Gītā, and Ālokā, with [the gatekeepers] Hayagrīva and Sphoṭā further to the west. In the northern direction there are the male and female buddhas Amoghasiddhi [and Samayatārā] with their six-deity maṇḍala that comprises the four encircling [bodhisattvas] Vajrapāṇi, Mañjuśrī, Nartī

and Gandhā, with [the gatekeepers] Amṛtakuṇḍalin and Ghaṇṭā further to the north.

From the naturally radiant incandescence in these sixfold maṇḍalas it is held that the exalted buddha fields of the wrathful deities of the ground and the countless emanations of the six sages become present in a continuous perpetual cycle, emanating in a self-manifesting manner in all world systems. As is said in the *Tantra of the Precious Gems of Pristine Cognition*:

In the buddha field of the Bounteous Array,  
The self-manifesting buddha bodies of perfect resource  
Are surrounded by their respective sixfold retinues.  
The maṇḍala of wrathful deities and the countless sages,  
Who are their incandescence, are continuously diffused,  
And in the same manner, they constantly abide within  
living beings.<sup>366</sup>

Within sentient beings also, [these deities] are held to be sustained—[the peaceful deities] in the heart center and their [wrathful] incandescence in the crown center. The *Tantra of the Coalescence of Sun and Moon* says:

In the precious celestial palace of the heart center,  
The bodies of the peaceful deities are perfectly present,  
And in the crown center they each radiate  
As the corresponding bodies of the wrathful deities—  
The forms that arise from this incandescence are  
inconceivable.<sup>367</sup>

Subsequently, during the intermediate state (*bar do*) [of actual reality, which follows the time of death], these buddha bodies arise sequentially in their respective maṇḍala clusters over five days of meditative concentration.<sup>368</sup> It is said in the *Enlightened Intention of the Nucleus of Esoteric Instructions*:

During the intermediate state [after death],  
The forms of the buddhas arise,  
Along with their sixfold [maṇḍala clusters].<sup>369</sup>

The present tantra text [the *Secret Nucleus*] is said to belong to the secret Great Perfection which reveals mind and pristine cognition to be self-manifesting. Because the higher teachings are gathered together within it, one may appropriately consider it in accordance with the cycle of the vital essence (*thig le'i skor*) that belongs to the Great Perfection.<sup>370</sup> The present account set forth herein has been compiled from the great writings of the pith instructions that were composed by the great master Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra as the means for attaining the peaceful and wrathful deities.<sup>371</sup> This overview is most secret and precious. It concerns the conclusive enlightened intention of this tantra text.

## **THE INTERLINEAR COMMENTARY ON THE MEANING OF THE FORTY-TWO LETTERS [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2]**

The latter part [of the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the forty-two letters, see above, [p. 183](#)], is the interlinear commentary: Although there is no contradiction when [the syllables] are classified as before according to their respective phonetic sets, [here] they are actually explained out of order with the result that it is not easy for the expositor to explain them and it is hard for the listener to understand them. The sequence of the syllables should therefore be demonstrated in five stages: (i) the syllable indicative of the expanse along with those of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.1); (ii) the syllables of the inner bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.2); (iii) the syllables of the outer bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.3); (iv) the syllable of pristine cognition along with those of the sages (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.4); and (v) the syllables of the protectors of the gates, along with that of the

wrathful deities (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.5).

**THE SYLLABLE INDICATIVE OF THE EXPANSE ALONG WITH THOSE  
OF THE MALE AND FEMALE BUDDHAS OF THE FIVE  
ENLIGHTENED FAMILIES [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1]**

The first of these comprises (i) the syllable of Samantabhadrī, who is the expanse [of actual reality] (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.1); (ii) the syllables of the male buddhas of the five enlightened families (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.2); and (iii) the syllables of the female buddhas (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.3).

The first of these, concerning the syllable of Samantabhadrī [comments on the verse]:

**A is the nature of the expanse—the great Samantabhadrī.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:16)***

།ཨ་ནི་སྐྱེ་མེད་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།

The syllable A is the uncreated real nature.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**The syllable A is the real nature** in which all things are **uncreated**. It is the essential nature of Samantabhadrī, who represents the transcendent perfection of discriminative

awareness. As is said in the *Intermediate Mother*:

In this respect, the syllable A represents the approach to all things because they are uncreated from the beginning.<sup>372</sup>

Texts such as the latter are identical in their explanation of the forty-two letters.

The second, concerning the syllables of the male buddhas of the five enlightened families [comments on the verse]:

**The retroflex set beginning with ṬA represents the conquerors  
Of magical emanation, the male buddhas of the five enlightened families.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:17)***

།ཐ་མི་སྐྱ་འཕྲུལ་རྗེ་ཇེ་ཉིད།  
།ཏ་མི་སྐྱ་བའི་སྐྱ་འཕྲུལ་ཉིད།  
།ཌ་མི་སྐྱ་འཕྲུལ་ཡིད་བཞིན་ཉིད།  
།ཎ་མི་སྐྱ་འཕྲུལ་རྣམ་དག་ཉིད།  
།ཏ་མི་ཀུན་ཏུ་སྐྱ་འཕྲུལ་ཉིད།

ṬHA is the actual indestructible magical emanation.  
ṬA is the actual apparitional magical emanation.  
ḌA is the actual wish-fulfilling magical emanation.  
ḌHA is the actual pure magical emanation.  
ṄA is the actual omnipresent magical emanation.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**ṬHA is the actual** seed syllable of Vairocana, he who is the real nature, **the indestructible** reality of consciousness or buddha mind—he whose essential nature of diversified **magical emanation**, without arising from the expanse [of actual reality], represents the skillful means that comprehends the real nature of consciousness.

**ṬA is the actual** seed syllable of Akṣobhya, he whose diversified **magical emanation** is **apparitional** [and who represents] the skillful means that comprehends the real nature of physical forms.

**ḌA is the actual** seed syllable of Ratnasambhava, he whose **wish-fulfilling** diversified **magical emanation** represents the skillful means that comprehends the real nature of feelings.

**ḌHA is the actual pure** seed syllable of Amitābha, he whose diversified **magical emanation** [represents] the skillful means that comprehends the real nature of perceptions.

**ṆA is the actual** seed syllable of Amoghasiddhi, he whose **magical emanation, omnipresent** with respect to time, naturally represents the skillful means that comprehends the real nature of formative predispositions.

The third, concerning the syllables of the female buddhas [comments on the verse]:

**The dental set beginning with TA represents the five female buddhas, including the Queen of the Expanse.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:18)***

མ་ནི་ཨ་བས་མཛོན་རྫོགས་ཉིད།

ཏ་ནི་ཨ་བས་བརྟན་པ་ཉིད།

ད་ནི་ཨ་བས་ལྷམ་མེ་ཉིད།

ལྷ་ནི་ཨ་བས་འཁྲིལ་བ་ཉིད།

ན་ནི་ཨ་བས་ཀུན་ཏུ་འགྱུར།

THA is the actual net that manifests perfect [enlightenment].

TA is the actual net that manifests stability.

DA is the actual net that manifests illuminating [rays of light].

DHA is the actual net that is embracing.

NA is the net that is [beautiful] in all respects.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**THA is the actual** seed syllable of Ākāśadhātviśvarī (Queen of the Expanse of Space), she whose **net**, representing the union of skillful means and discriminative awareness without duality, in the nature of space, **manifests perfect** enlightenment.

**TA is the actual** seed syllable of Buddhalocanā, she whose **net** representing discriminative awareness **manifests stability**.

**DA is the actual** seed syllable of Pāṇḍaravāsini, she whose **net** representing pristine cognition **manifests illuminating** light rays.

**DHA is the actual** seed syllable of Māmakī, she whose **net** representing actual reality is **embracing**.

**NA is the** actual seed syllable of Samayatārā, she whose **net** representing the real nature is beautiful **in all respects**.

## THE SYLLABLES OF THE INNER BODHISATTVAS ALONG WITH THEIR GATEKEEPERS [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2]

The second stage [of the sequence of the syllables, see above, p. 188], concerning the syllables of the inner bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers, comprises (i) the syllables of the four male bodhisattvas who represent the senses, along with that of the gatekeeper of buddha mind (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the syllables of the four female bodhisattvas who represent the corresponding sense objects, along with that of the gatekeeper of buddha body (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.2).

The former, concerning the male bodhisattvas [comments on the verse]:

**The velar set beginning with KA represents the inner male bodhisattvas, and Yamāntaka, [gatekeeper] of buddha mind.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 4:19)*

ཀཀ་ནི་སྤྱན་གྱི་སྤྱགས་གྱི་མཚོག  
ཀཀ་ནི་སྤྱན་གྱི་སྤྱགས་གྱི་མཚོག  
ཀཀ་ནི་ཤངས་གྱི་སྤྱགས་གྱི་མཚོག  
ཀཀ་ནི་ལྷགས་གྱི་སྤྱགས་གྱི་མཚོག  
ཀཀ་ནི་སྤྱགས་ཀྱང་འཛིག་བྱེད་པའོ།

KA is the supreme buddha mind of buddha eye.  
KHA is the supreme buddha mind of buddha ear.



GA is the supreme buddha mind of buddha nose.  
GHA is the supreme buddha mind of buddha tongue.  
NA is the buddha mind, yet also the destroyer.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**KA is** the syllable of **the supreme** Kṣitigarbha, the **buddha mind of buddha eye**, who represents the purity of visual consciousness in the expanse [of actual reality].

**KHA is** the syllable of **the supreme** Vajrapāṇi, the **buddha mind of buddha ear**, who represents the purity of auditory consciousness.

**GA is** the syllable of **the supreme** Ākāśagarbha, the **buddha mind of buddha nose**, who represents the purity of olfactory consciousness.

**GHA is** the syllable of **the supreme** Avalokiteśvara, the **buddha mind of buddha tongue**, who represents the purity of gustatory consciousness.

**NA is** [the syllable of] the gatekeeper Yamāntaka, **the buddha mind** who apprehends those sensory modes of consciousness and **yet also is their destroyer**, representing the purity of attachment to body, speech, and mind.

The latter, concerning the female bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense objects [comments on the verse]:

**The palatal set beginning with CA represents the [inner] female bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense objects, and Mahābala, [gatekeeper] of buddha body.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:20)***

།ཙ་ནི་སྐུན་གྱི་སྐུ་ཡི་མཚོག  
 །ཙ་ནི་སྐུན་གྱི་སྐུ་ཡི་མཚོག  
 །ཙ་ནི་ཤངས་གྱི་སྐུ་ཡི་མཚོག  
 །ཙ་ནི་ལྷགས་གྱི་སྐུ་ཡི་མཚོག  
 །ཙ་ནི་སྐུ་ཡང་འཛིག་བྱེད་པའོ།

CA is the supreme buddha body of buddha eye.  
 CHA is the supreme buddha body of buddha ear.  
 JA is the supreme buddha body of buddha nose.  
 JHA is the supreme buddha body of buddha tongue.  
 ÑA is the buddha body, yet also the destroyer.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

CA is [the syllable of] **the supreme** Lāsyā, the **buddha body of buddha eye**, who represents the purity of visual forms.

CHA is [the syllable of] **the supreme** Gītā, the **buddha body of buddha ear**, who represents the purity of sounds.

JA is [the syllable of] **the supreme** Mālyā, the **buddha body of buddha nose**, who represents the purity of odors.

JHA is [the syllable of] **the supreme** Nartī, the **buddha body of buddha tongue**, who represents the purity of tastes.

ÑA is revealed as [the syllable of] Mahābala, the wrathful deity of buddha body who **is the buddha body**, and **yet also the destroyer**, representing the purity of grasping apprehension with respect to these sense objects, along with body, speech, and mind.

**THE SYLLABLES OF THE OUTER BODHISATTVAS ALONG WITH**

## THEIR GATEKEEPERS [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.3]

The third stage [of the sequence of the syllables, see above, p. 188], concerning the syllables of the outer bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers, comprises (i) the syllables of the four male bodhisattvas indicative of the sense organs, with their gatekeeper [of buddha speech] (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.1); (ii) the syllables of the four female bodhisattvas, indicative of time (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.2); and (iii) the syllables of the four female gatekeepers (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.3).

The first of these, concerning the male bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense organs [comments on the verse]:

**The labial set beginning with PA represents the [outer] male bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense organs, and Hayagrīva, [gatekeeper] of buddha speech.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 4:21)*

པ་ཀི་སྐྱུན་གྱི་གསུང་གི་མཚོག  
པ་ཀི་སྐྱུན་གྱི་གསུང་གི་མཚོག  
པ་ཀི་ཤངས་གྱི་གསུང་གི་མཚོག  
པ་ཀི་ལྷགས་གྱི་གསུང་གི་མཚོག  
པ་ཀི་གསུང་ཡང་འཇིག་བར་བྱེད།

PA is the supreme buddha speech of buddha eye.

PHA is the supreme buddha speech of buddha ear.

BA is the supreme buddha speech of buddha nose.

BHA is the supreme buddha speech of buddha tongue.  
MA is the buddha speech, yet also the destroyer.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**PA is** the syllable of **the supreme** Maitreya, the **buddha speech of buddha eye**, who represents the inherent purity of the sense organ of the eyes.

**PHA is** [the syllable of] **the supreme** Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, the **buddha speech of buddha ear**, who represents the purity of the sense organ of the ears.

**BA is** [the syllable of] **the supreme** Samantabhadra, the **buddha speech of buddha nose**, who represents the purity of the sense organ of the nose.

**BHA is** [the syllable of] **the supreme** Mañjuśrī, the **buddha speech of buddha tongue**, who represents the purity of the sense organ of the tongue.

**MA is** [the syllable of] Hayagrīva, who is **the buddha speech**, and **yet also the destroyer**, representing the purity of egotism and attachment to body, speech, and mind.

The second of these, concerning the female bodhisattvas, indicative of time [comments on the verse]:

**The semivowel set beginning with YA represents the four [outer] female bodhisattvas, indicative of the purity of the four times.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:22a)***

ལ་ནི་སྐྱེ་བ་རྣམ་པར་དག  
ལ་ནི་གནས་པ་རྣམ་པར་དག  
ར་ནི་འཇིག་པ་དག་པ་སྟེ།  
ལ་ནི་སྟོང་པ་དག་པ་འོ།

YA is pure with respect to creation.  
VA is pure with respect to abiding.  
RA is pure with respect to destruction.  
LA is pure with respect to emptiness.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**YA is** [the syllable of] Dhūpā, who represents the actual reality that is **pure with respect to the creation** of things past.

**VA is** [the syllable of] Puṣpā, who represents the actual reality that is **pure with respect to the abiding** of things present.

**RA is** [the syllable of] Ālokā, who represents the actual reality that is **pure with respect to the destruction** of things future.

**LA is** [the syllable of] Gandhā, who represents the actual reality that is **pure with respect to emptiness**, manifesting in and of itself as the pristine cognition of sameness, throughout the four times.

The third of these, concerning the four female gatekeepers [comments on the verse]:

**The spirant set beginning with śA represents the four female gatekeepers, indicative of the purity of the four extremes.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 4:22b)**

།ཨ་ནི་རྟག་པ་དག་པ་སྟེ།  
།ཤ་ནི་ཆད་པ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།  
།ས་ནི་མཐའ་བྲལ་བདག་མེད་པ།  
།ཉ་ནི་མཚན་མ་མེད་པ་ཉིད།

śA is purity with respect to eternalism.

ṣA is devoid of nihilism.

SA is devoid of extremes and without self.

HA is actually without signs.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

śA **is** [the syllable of] Aṅkuśā, who represents **purity** because, **with respect to eternalism**, all things are without inherent existence.

ṣA **is** [the syllable of] Pāśā, who represents [purity] because all things are **devoid of nihilism**.

SA **is** [the syllable of] Sphoṭā, who represents [purity] because all things are **devoid of the extremes** of eternalism and nihilism **and** are **without self**.

HA **is** [the syllable of] Ghaṇṭā, who represents [purity] because all things are **actually without** entity and **sign**.

**THE SYLLABLE OF PRISTINE COGNITION ALONG WITH THOSE OF  
THE SAGES [16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.4]**

The fourth stage [of the sequence of the syllables, see above, [p. 189](#)], concerning the syllable of pristine cognition, along with those of the six sages [comments on the verse]:

**KṢA represents Samantabhadra, while I, U, and E represent the six sages.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:23)***

ཀྲ་ཀི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ཐུགས།  
ཀྱི་ཀི་རུལ་སྟེང་ལྷ་རྣམས་སུ།  
ཀྱི་ཀི་རུལ་སྟེང་ལྷ་མ་ཡིན།  
ཀྱུ་ཀི་རུལ་སྟེང་མི་རྣམས་སུ།  
ཀྱུ་ཀི་རུལ་སྟེང་བྱོལ་སོང་རྣམས།  
ཀྱི་ཀི་རུལ་སྟེང་ཡི་དྲགས་སུ།  
ཀྱི་ཀི་རུལ་སྟེང་དཔྱལ་བ་རྣམས།

KṢA is the compassionate spirituality of pristine cognition, buddha mind.

I is for gods, numerous as atomic particles.

Ī is for demigods, numerous as atomic particles.

U is for human beings, numerous as atomic particles.

Ū is for animals, numerous as atomic particles.

E is for anguished spirits, numerous as atomic particles.

AI is for denizens of hell, numerous as atomic particles.

## *Interlinear Commentary*

**KṢA is** the syllable of the male buddha Samantabhadra, who represents **the compassionate spirituality**<sup>373</sup> **of** naturally present **pristine cognition**—the pure self-manifesting pristine cognition, the **buddha mind** that is the gateway to the cessation [of cyclic existence] in actual reality.<sup>374</sup>

As to the six sages, **Ṛ is** [the syllable of] Śakra, who grants instruction **for** the benefit of all **gods** by emanating as the sage of the gods, **numerous as the atomic particles** of oceanic world systems, in as many heavens of the gods as there are.

Similarly, **ī is** [the syllable of] Vemacitra, the sage **for** the benefit of **demigods, numerous as atomic particles.**

**u is** [the syllable of] Śākyamuni, [the sage] **for** the benefit of **human beings, numerous as atomic particles.**

**ū is** [the syllable of] Sthirasimha, [the sage] **for** the benefit of **animals, numerous as atomic particles.**

**E is** [the syllable of] Jvālamukha, [the sage] **for** the benefit of **anguished spirits, numerous as atomic particles.**

**AI is** the syllable of the ox-headed Yama, who grants instruction **for** the benefit of **denizens of hell, numerous as atomic particles.** These six syllables indeed release great compassionate spirituality, which is the gateway to the voice of Brahmā.

## **THE SYLLABLES OF THE PROTECTORS OF THE GATES, ALONG WITH THAT OF THE WRATHFUL DEITIES [16.1.1.1.2.2.2.5]**

The fifth stage [of the sequence of the syllables, see above, [p. 189](#)], concerning the syllable of the [final] protector of the gates, along with that of the wrathful deities, comprises (i) the



syllable of the [final] gatekeeper (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.5.1) and (ii) the syllable of the wrathful deities (16.1.1.1.1.2.2.2.2.5.2).

The former, concerning the gatekeeper [comments on the verse]:

**o represents the wrathful [gatekeeper],  
Amṛtakuṇḍalin.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:24a)***

།ཨོ་ནི་ཐམས་ཅད་འཇིག་པར་བྱེད།

o is the destroyer of all.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**o is** [the syllable of] Amṛtakuṇḍalin, the wrathful deity of the northern gate, who reveals great miracles and is **the destroyer of all** signs and all conceptual elaborations of body, speech, and mind.

The latter, concerning the syllable of the wrathful deities [comments on the verse]:

**From AUM, the main and peripheral wrathful deities  
sequentially emanate.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:24b)***

།ཨོ་ནི་ཐམས་ཅད་ཞིག་པ་ཡིན།

AUM is the destruction of all.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

AU is [the syllable] through which the incandescence of the peaceful deities, the nature of the five pristine cognitions, manifests as the wrathful deities. As such, it represents the **destruction of all** subject-object dichotomies. [When written as aum̐ (ཨོ)] its superscript point [or circle] represents the pristine cognition of reality's expanse, its superscript crescent represents the mirrorlike pristine cognition, its central form represents the pristine cognition of sameness, its vibration represents the pristine cognition of discernment, and its natural expression represents the pristine cognition of accomplishment.<sup>375</sup>

Those who consider the final [syllable] to be the vital heart [mantra] of Amṛtakunḍalin do not perceive exactly where the maṇḍalas of peaceful and wrathful deities emanate from the cloud mass of letters. The cloud mass of letters abides as the seeds of **all** the maṇḍalas of deities, for which reason the maṇḍala of the wrathful deities emanates from AUM, the seed syllable of Buddha Heruka, endowed with the five pristine cognitions.

The third section [of the detailed and distinct exegesis of the letters, in conjunction with their respective deities, see above, [p. 182](#)] is the synopsis of these [letters, which comments on the verse]:

**[This wheel of] letters subsumes the buddha body  
and pristine cognition, without conjunction or**

**disjunction.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:25)***

ལི་གེ་འཁོར་ལོ་ཚོགས་ཆེན་འདིས།  
སྐྱུ་གསུང་བླགས་ཀྱི་བྲེང་བ་བསྐྱུས།  
ཞེས་བརྗོད་དོ། །ཨོ་ཧྲོ།

This great [cloud] mass, the wheel of letters  
Subsumes the garlands of body, speech, and mind.  
—Thus they said. Aho!

***Interlinear Commentary***

So it is that **this great** cloud **mass, the wheel of letters,** spontaneously present in nature, **subsumes** all **the garlands** of pristine cognition **of the body, speech, and mind** of all buddhas without exception. **Thus** the tathāgatas themselves meaningfully **said**.

**Aho!** is exclaimed [at the end] with great delight, indicating the wonder that this cloud mass of letters actually abides primordially as the essential nature of buddha body and pristine cognition, without conjunction or disjunction.

**A SUMMARY OF THE TWO PRECEDING SECTIONS  
[16.1.1.1.1.2.3]**

The third section [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter, see above, [p. 164](#)] is the synopsis of the preceding two sections [the general presentation and detailed exegesis of the wheel of letters]. It comprises (i) the manner of its emergence (16.1.1.1.1.2.3.1) and (ii) the actual synopsis (16.1.1.1.1.2.3.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**The following most secret description of the cloud of letters then emerged:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:26)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་བཙུན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའི་དགྲིལ་  
འཁོར་དེ་དག་ཉིད་ཀྱི་གསང་བ་འདི་ཉིད། སྐྱུ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་  
དོ་ཇི་ལས་ལྷུང་དོ།

Then this secret description of these very maṇḍalas, where the assembled host of tathāgatas and their queens are without duality, itself emerged from the indestructible body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the syllables had been explained in detail, **then this** most **secret description** of the cloud mass of letters, forming the nucleus **of these very maṇḍalas where the assembled host of the self-manifesting tathāgatas and their queens are naturally without duality, itself emerged from the indestructible body, speech, mind, attributes, and**

activities of all the tathāgatas.

## THE ACTUAL SYNOPSIS [16.1.1.1.1.2.3.2]

The latter, the actual synopsis [comments on the verse]:

**This [wheel of] accumulated causes and conditions abides within the [subtle] body and is cultivated through the path, comprising skillful means and liberation.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 4:27)*

།ཨ་ཉི།  
།ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་དགུས་སྒྲིན་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ཚོགས་རྒྱ་འཁོར་ལོ།  
།འབྲས་བུ་རྒྱལ་བ་སྒྲིན་གྲུབ་དོ་མཚར་མིང་ཚོགས་བཞི་བཅུ་གཉིས།  
།འདུས་མ་བྱས་ཉིད་འདུས་བྱས་དོ་རྗེ་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་འབྱིན་པའི་དམ།  
།འདའ་བར་མི་མཚན་དབང་མེད་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་ཚོགས་པའི་མཐུ་ཆེན་ཡིན།  
།ཉི། དོ་རྗེ་གསང་བའི་ཚོག་ཏུ་འོ།

Aho! This wheel [of letters] is a joyous cloud of Skillful means and discriminative awareness.

It is the causal basis of the provision of enlightened mind.

Its result is the maturation and accomplishment of the conquerors.

These wondrous forty-two letters,  
Which are actually not compounded

which are actually not compounded,  
Never transgress their commitment to disclose the  
maṇḍalas  
That constitute the compounded indestructible reality.  
Powerless are they, owing to the mighty force  
Of accumulated causes and conditions!  
Ho! Such are the words of secret indestructible reality  
that emerged.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Aho!** is exclaimed in praise of the nondual nature. Arising from a disposition **of skillful means** or naturally present great compassionate spirituality **and** natural **discriminative awareness** beyond the two extremes, the teacher [the male-female Samantabhadra] is primordially endowed with **this** wheel of letters, the inexhaustible **wheel** of adornment. This **is** the superior pristine cognition, forming **a joyous cloud** mass of compassionate spirituality for the sake of those to be trained. **It is the causal basis of the excellent provision of enlightened mind,** and **its result is the maturation** of the great maṇḍalas, including those **of the forty-two conquerors.** From this apparition, the buddha body of emanation comes forth as a spontaneous **accomplishment** for the sake of living beings.

In this way, the causal basis comprising **these wondrous** syllables—the **forty-two letters,** including the consonants, and so forth—becomes manifest. Their essential nature is the spontaneously present reality that primordially abides and is **not** newly **compounded** from causes and conditions. From its disposition, self-arisen compassionate spirituality appears for the sake of living beings. Thus, the wheel of [the letters] **constitutes the indestructible reality** which is arrayed in a **compounded** manner and yet lacks duality because it is essentially unchanging.

This reality is the absolutely definitive nature which

**discloses** the forty-five **maṇḍalas** of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, activities, and so forth.<sup>376</sup> Its supreme **commitment** to emanate and manifest the maṇḍalas **is never transgressed**, just as the light rays of the sun never transgress their commitment to shine. The apparitional nature of these maṇḍalas indeed resembles the images that **powerlessly** arise when forms are reflected in a mirror. For, when the naturally present pristine cognition arises from the wheel of letters, both the self-manifesting maṇḍala [of the buddha body of perfect resource] and the maṇḍala [of the buddha body of emanation] that trains living beings powerlessly arise in all their emanational forms throughout the ten directions. Such manifestations **are owing to the mighty force of accumulated causes**, that is, the cloud mass of letters, **and conditions**, that is, the appearances of pristine cognition and of beings to be trained. **Ho!** (*ho*) is therefore an exclamation of wonder. This is the explanation that accords with the buddhas' emanational nature.

Furthermore, this wheel of letters is elsewhere explained in accordance with its presence in the [subtle] body and its meditation on the path. As to the former, inside the bodies of all corporeal beings, the seed or **provision of enlightened mind, a joyous cloud** of white and red generative essences without duality, which respectively indicate **skillful means and discriminative awareness, is the causal basis** of a relative nature, like oil and a wick. Abiding on the spokes and at the center of **the four wheels** within the energy channels [of the subtle body], this seed appears in the form of letters of pure essence, radiant in the manner of a butter lamp, and the **result** [that they bring forth] **is the maturation and accomplishment of the conquerors**. In this way, **the forty-two wondrous letters** are present—naturally and primordially abiding [within the subtle body]. They constitute the reality or inner radiance, which is **actually not compounded** and from whose disposition emerges **the indestructible reality**, uniting the **compounded** skillful means experienced on the path with discriminative awareness. These letters **never transgress**

**their** supreme **commitment to** manifestly **disclose the maṇḍalas** of buddha body and pristine cognition because the ground—the syllables themselves—dependently and **powerlessly** emerges, radiating as the maṇḍala of deities through the conditions of the path. The expression of wonderment [Ho!] accordingly indicates that this [result] is present in the ground right now, as a potential **force** comprising **accumulated causes and conditions**.<sup>377</sup>

The latter comprises two further explanations [of this same passage] connected with the meditational modalities of the path, among which [the first] refers to the generation and perfection stages of the path of liberation (*grol lam bskyed rdzogs*):<sup>378</sup> When one has cultivated the enlightened mind of **skillful means**, experienced the meditative stability of the actual truth or **discriminative awareness**, and cultivated the meditative stabilities associated with the universal appearance of the **joyous cloud** mass [of letters] and **the causal basis or provision of enlightened mind**, then one meditates, as previously indicated, on **the wheel** or cloud mass of letters. This has as **its result the maturation and accomplishment** of the maṇḍalas **of the conquerors. The wondrous forty-two letters never transgress their commitment to disclose** the genuine **maṇḍalas that constitute indestructible reality**, in which **the noncompounded** buddha body of actual reality and **the compounded** buddha body of form are without duality. This is because **the force of their accumulated causes and conditions** dependently and **powerlessly** arises. **Ho!** is an exclamation of great wonder [at the result] that emerges in the manner of a reflection or a magical apparition.

According to the path of skillful means (*thabs lam*), there is a **joyous cloud**, the essential nature of the four delights, in which are mingled without duality the “moon fluid” [semen], indicative of the male or **skillful means**, and the “sun fluid” [vaginal fluid], indicative of the female or **discriminative awareness**.<sup>379</sup> This is the seed, **the provision of enlightened mind** [or generative fluids], the descent of which into the four wheels (*cakra*) [of the central energy channel] gives rise to



meditation on bliss and emptiness without duality. **Its result is the maturation and accomplishment of the conquerors, the wondrous forty-two letters.** The essential nature of these [letters] abides as **the** [subtle body of] **indestructible reality** where skillful means and discriminative awareness are nondual because the four **noncompounded** pristine cognitions **are compounded** by the blending, filling, extension, and so forth [of the generative fluids].<sup>380</sup> These [syllables] **never transgress their commitment to disclose the genuine mandalas,** the five spontaneously present buddha bodies, because, through meditation on this pristine cognition, [the result] **powerlessly** emerges and is achieved through **the mighty force of accumulated causes and conditions**—the auspicious coincidence of the male and female. The expression **Ho!** indicates great wonder.

Although this part of the text [the synopsis] is profound and difficult to fathom, it has been revealed here in some detail.

**Such are the words** that disclose this **secret indestructible reality** and whose meaning is without duality in respect of the identity of pristine cognition.

## **THE CONCLUSION [16.1.1.1.1.3]**

The third [and final] section [of ch. 4 of the *Secret Nucleus*], is the conclusion [which comments on the verse]:

**All phenomena then were transformed in a single savor, where buddhahood is manifested in [the wheel of] letters.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:28)***

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡི་གེའི་འཁོར་ལོར་  
གྱུར་ཏེ།

At these words, all the tathāgatas were transformed into the wheel of letters.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

So it is that all things manifest primordial buddhahood in the cloud mass of letters.

**At these words, all the** self-manifesting **tathāgatas** of the maṇḍala of the five enlightened families **were transformed** in a single savor into the expanse where they are primordially undifferentiated from the actual reality of **the wheel of letters**, naturally pure in essence, and where they are without conjunction or disjunction with reference to the nondual essential nature.

This is simply a dynamic that ensues from their nature, free from conceptual elaboration, and apart from that, no transformation or extraneous emanation is required. As is said in the chapter on iconometric rites from the *Purification of All Lower Realms*:

All doctrines may be differently followed  
And all doctrines may be mutually followed.  
But all the doctrines that are followed  
Are pursued without limitations.<sup>381</sup>

Similarly, when it says [in the root tantra] that the maṇḍala “became radiant,”<sup>382</sup> it does not extraneously deviate from the self-manifesting maṇḍala. One should know that it is equivalent to the actual reality. There are some who say that it does appear to change in the perception of those who require training. While one would not contradict that such perceptions

accord with the intelligence of those present when [the buddhas] array the lamp [of the teaching] in the world and so forth, in this context [of the self-manifesting maṇḍala] there is no such connotation because this maṇḍala of the field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array is the actual reality that never changes.<sup>383</sup>

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 4 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The [Cyclical] Array of the Garland of Letters.”**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 4:29)*

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་རེས་པ་ལས་ཡི་གེ་འབྲེང་བའི་འཁོར་ལོ་བཀོད་  
པའི་ལེ་བྱ་སྟེ་བཞི་པའོ།།

This completes the fourth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Cyclical Array of the Garland of Letters.”

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**This completes** and establishes the exegesis of **the fourth chapter from the** primordial ***Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real***, the actual reality of the garland of

letters, **entitled “The Cyclical Array of the great Garland of spontaneously present Letters.”**

## 5. THE MEDITATIVE STABILITIES THAT ATTAIN THE NET OF MAGICAL EMANATION

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The purpose of this chapter is to disclose how spiritual attainments emerge from the cyclical garland of letters. At this juncture, the maṇḍala of meditational deities inherent in the seed syllables is described as a magical emanation (*sgyu 'phrul*), in which skillful means and discriminative awareness are without duality, and the sequence of meditative attainments corresponding to this cloud mass of letters is then presented (v. 1).

Spiritual accomplishments are to be attained in the following sequence: The true nature of mind is revealed as the basis of spiritual accomplishment (v. 2); the supreme accomplishment of buddhahood is perfectly present in all maṇḍalas because they unite the maṇḍala of magical emanation (*sgyu 'phrul*) or seed syllables in the maṇḍala of the net (*drva ba*) of discriminative awareness (v. 3); the ordinary spiritual attainments are associated with the four rites of enlightened activity (v. 4); the attainment known as the consummation of the five elements then ensues (v. 5), along with the eight lesser rituals, including exorcism and attraction (v. 6). All these meditative attainments are said to emerge in the manner of light from darkness, like the alchemical transmutation of iron into gold or like the cure of an efficacious medication (v. 7).

There are five prerequisites for yogins seeking this spiritual attainment that accords with the cloud mass of letters: They are required to make offerings to their spiritual teacher, to clearly realize the meditations pertaining to the deities and their seed syllables, to undertake the corresponding commitments, to recite the corresponding mantras correctly,

and to securely seal the practice by enacting the corresponding hand gestures (v. 8). Thereby the essential nature of spiritual accomplishment will be attained (v. 9).

As far as the actual meditative stability or skillful means that brings about such attainments is concerned, initially there is the meditative stability in the cyclical garland of letters (v. 10). This entails meditation on discriminative awareness that cultivates the nonreferential ultimate truth and nondual pristine cognition associated with the buddha body of actual reality (vv. 11-12) and meditation on skillful means that cultivates the generation and perfection stages associated with the buddha body of form, securely sealing the display of pristine cognition in the seal of primordial buddhahood (v. 13). By way of a synopsis, the text emphasizes that supreme accomplishment, the nature of Samantabhadra, is attained through these meditative stabilities and through their ancillary applications of mantra recitation and sealing hand gestures (v. 14).

THE LATTER [part of the maṇḍala of the cloud mass of letters, which is the causal basis, on which see above, [p. 160](#)] concerns the sequence of attainment in relation to [the maṇḍala of] the cloud mass of letters (16.1.1.1.2). This [the subject of ch. 5 of the *Secret Nucleus*] comprises (i) the context (16.1.1.1.2.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (16.1.1.1.2.2); and (iii) the conclusion (16.1.1.1.2.3).

## **THE CONTEXT [16.1.1.1.2.1]**

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**The tathāgatas then uttered these following  
aphorisms concerning attainment in which skillful**

**means and discriminative awareness are without duality:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:1)***

དེ་ནས་ཡི་གེ་འཁོར་ལོའི་སྒྲིན་བཀོད་པ་ལས་སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་རྣམ་པར་འགྲོ་བ་འདི་  
ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then, manifesting the Magical Emanation from the array of the cloud mass which is the wheel of letters, they uttered these following aphorisms.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the nature of buddha body, speech, and mind had been explained dependent on the [foregoing] display of the letters, **then they uttered these following aphorisms, manifesting from the array of the cloud mass which is the wheel of letters,** the sequence of attainment associated with **the Magical Emanation** in whom skillful means and discriminative awareness are without duality.

**THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [16.1.1.1.2.2]**

Second, [the explanation of the verses of ch. 5] comprises (i) the sequence of spiritual accomplishments that are to be attained (16.1.1.1.2.2.1); (ii) the nature of the cloud mass of letters through which these are attained (16.1.1.1.2.2.2); and

(iii) a demonstration of the actual skillful means in accordance with which these are attained (16.1.1.1.2.2.3).

## **THE SEQUENCE OF SPIRITUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO BE ATTAINED [16.1.1.1.2.2.1]**

The first of these comprises (i) a demonstration of the primordially pure nature of mind, which is the basis of spiritual accomplishment (16.1.1.1.2.2.1.1); (ii) the supreme spiritual accomplishment that derives from it (16.1.1.1.2.2.1.2); (iii) the common spiritual accomplishments that are its branches (16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3); and (iv) the similes that illustrate these attainments (16.1.1.1.2.2.1.4).

## **THE BASIS OF SPIRITUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT [16.1.1.1.2.2.1.1]**

The first, concerning the basis of spiritual accomplishment [comments on the verse]:

**The nature of mind, the basis of all things, is the cloud mass of letters.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:2)***



།ཕྱ་བ་མེད་པའི་སེམས་ཉིད་ནི།  
།ཚོས་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཕྱ་བ་ཡིན།  
།སེམས་ཉིད་ཡི་གེའི་རང་བཞིན་ཏེ།  
།ཡི་གེ་ཡིད་བཞིན་རིན་ཆེན་སྲིན།

The nature of mind, without basis,  
Is the basis of all things.  
The nature of mind is the intrinsic nature of the letters.  
The letters are a cloud mass of wish-fulfilling gems.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

It is said in the *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*:

Earth is based upon water,  
Water on wind, and wind on space,  
But space is not based on anything.  
Similarly, the aggregates and sensory sense fields  
Are based on deeds and afflictive mental states.  
Deeds and afflictive mental states are always based on  
mistaken attention.  
Mistaken attention is based on the purity of mind.  
But the nature of mind is not itself based on any of these  
things.<sup>384</sup>

Accordingly, all things depend on mind, and mind depends on naturally pure inner radiance. Therefore, **the nature of mind**, like space, **without** ground or **basis** in any respect, **is** itself **the basis of all things** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, in all their diversity, pure and impure. As is said in the [*Treasury of Songs*]:

The nature of mind alone is the seed of all,

From which the rebirth process and nirvāṇa are diffused.  
Homage to mind, which is like a wish-fulfilling gem,  
Granting the fruit that is desired.<sup>385</sup>

Just as fire and water emerge under different conditions from a single lump of crystal, the unique nature of mind appears as cyclic existence and nirvāṇa respectively through the activation and nonactivation of the subject-object dichotomy, and respectively through fundamental ignorance and awareness. But actually there is no dichotomy. The primordially pure **nature of mind** therefore primordially arises as the **intrinsic nature of the letters** indicative of inner radiance, and its appearance is without inherent existence. If the nature of mind, comprising **the letters** that appear as such, is realized, a continuous cascade [of blessings] will manifestly fall, adorned with the wealth of the twofold benefit [of self and others], but even when it is unrealized, this [nature of mind] is primordially present as the ground from which all that is desirable will emerge. Therefore [the letters] **are a cloud mass of precious wish-fulfilling gems.**

## **THE SUPREME SPIRITUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT** **[16.1.1.1.2.2.1.2]**

The second, concerning the supreme spiritual accomplishment [comments on the verse]:

**The buddhas of the four times will be accomplished through having experientially cultivated the letters.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:3)***

།སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བཞི་བཅུ་གཉིས།  
།འབྲི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མདོན་རྫོགས་པས།  
།ལྷོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞི་རྫོགས་པ་ཡི།  
།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་འགྲུབ་པར་འགྱུར།

By the manifest perfection of  
The forty-two-deity maṇḍala of Magical Emanation  
In the maṇḍala of the Net,  
All maṇḍalas perfect throughout the ten directions  
And four times will be accomplished.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

In the disposition of the inner radiant nature of mind, the essential nature **of the forty-two-deity maṇḍala of Magical Emanation**, which appears in the form of the letters, naturally and spontaneously present, has primordially attained the actual reality of **manifest perfection in the maṇḍala of the Net**, the discriminative awareness free from extremes of conceptual elaboration. **By** virtue of this, when the [inner radiant nature of mind] is experientially cultivated according to the stages of meditative stability, **all maṇḍalas perfect** in the enlightened heritage and unique enlightened intention of all the buddhas **throughout the ten directions and four times will be completely accomplished**. This is because the basis of the maṇḍalas, the cloud mass of letters, will itself have been experientially cultivated without error.

### **THE COMMON SPIRITUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS [16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3]**

The third, concerning the common spiritual accomplishments, comprises (i) a demonstration of the spontaneous accomplishment of the four rites, which is a sign that the pristine cognitions have been accomplished (16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.1); (ii) an exegesis of the means of attaining

the consummation of the five elements, which is a sign that the five psychophysical aggregates are inherently pure (16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2); and (iii) a description of the attainment of the eight [lesser] rites, which is a sign that the eight modes of consciousness are pure in the expanse (16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.3).<sup>386</sup>

## **THE SPONTANEOUS ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE FOUR RITES [16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.1]**

The first of these, concerning the accomplishment of the four rites [comments on the verse]:

**The four rites will be spontaneously accomplished  
through having accomplished the pristine  
cognitions.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:4)***

།བདུད་ཅིར་འགྱུར་ཞིང་འབྱུང་བ་དང་།  
།བཞི་བརྒྱ་ཙ་བཞིའི་ནད་སེལ་ཞིང་།  
།ལོངས་སྤྱོད་འབྱུང་ཞིང་དན་སོང་སྤྱོད་།  
།ཅི་ཡང་གཞན་དུ་འགྱུར་བ་འགྲུབ།

All things will turn into and come forth as nectar,  
Alleviating the four hundred four ailments.  
Resources will emerge, lower realms of existence will be  
purified,  
And the metamorphosis of all things whatever will be  
accomplished.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

When the mirrorlike pristine cognition has been accomplished, **all things** that are poisonous **will turn into nectar**, which is a medication for the relief of living beings, **and** it will **come forth** for the benefit of oneself and others, thereby **alleviating** all **the four hundred four ailments** and enhancing well-being.

Concerning the four hundred four ailments, Caraka says [in the *Carakasamhitā*]:

One hundred one are imaginary ailments caused by spirits,

One hundred one are ailments caused by immediate conditions,

One hundred one are the basic [treatable] ailments

Caused by the elements and humoral combinations,

And one hundred one are naturally caused by past deeds.<sup>387</sup>

Alternatively, it is explained that each of the four categories of wind, bile, phlegm, and their combination possesses one hundred one disorders.<sup>388</sup>

When the pristine cognition of sameness has been accomplished, the **resources** of the celestial treasure store, which is inexhaustible because anything that is desirable may be extracted from space, **will** spontaneously **emerge** and fulfill hopes, surpassing the [meager] resources of gods and humans. When the pristine cognition of reality's expanse has been accomplished, the obscurations covering the minds of all living beings within the **lower realms of existence will be purified**, and they will be established in the bliss of the higher realms. When the pristine cognition of discernment and the pristine cognition of accomplishment have been accomplished, the miracle of **the metamorphosis of all things will be accomplished, whatever** their appearance. This is because there are miraculous abilities to make the visible invisible and the invisible visible, to transpose the actual appearance

assumed by an entity—as when fire is turned into water, and earth revealed as space—to subjugate others, bringing them under one’s sway, and to resurrect the dead, and so forth. The *Pagoda of Precious Gems* accordingly says:

The perpetual range and also the miraculous abilities of  
mind

That are accomplished in meditative stability are  
inconceivable;

The attributes of sacramental substances, medicines,  
Mantras, and gemstones too are inconceivable;

The scrutiny of transits (*’phyugs dpyad*) and coincidental  
power

Associated with the planets, stars, and time are also  
inconceivable;

And the perceptual range of empowered bodhisattvas<sup>389</sup>

And the tathāgatas is also inconceivable.<sup>390</sup>

## **THE CONSUMMATION OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS** **[16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2]**

The second, concerning the consummation [of the five elements, comments on the verse]:

**The consummation of the five elements will be  
accomplished through having purified the five  
psychophysical aggregates.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:5)***

།ནམ་མཁའ་རྫོ་རྗེ་སྣ་འགྲུང་ཞིང་།  
།འབར་ནས་མེ་ཡང་འཚོག་པ་དང་།  
།རྒྱུ་འགྲུར་འབབ་པའང་དེ་བཞིན་ཏེ།  
།འཇིག་རྟེན་ཁམས་ནི་འཐོར་བ་དང་།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་སྤོངས་ཤིང་ལྷུང་བར་འགྲུར།

Space will emerge solid as indestructible reality.  
[The body] will blaze with fire,  
And then even the inferno will be incinerated.  
[Appearances] will turn to water and even cascade in  
the same manner.  
This world system will be dispersed.  
All will be emptied and collapse.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

When the meditative stability of the consummation of the earth element has been acquired owing to the inherent purity of the aggregate of physical forms, **space** will be consecrated and it **will** accordingly **emerge** in a **solid** state, **as** the terrain of **indestructible reality**.

By acquiring power over the meditative stability of the consummation of the fire element owing to the inherent purity of the aggregate of feelings, the body **will blaze with fire and then** turn all appearances into a mass of fire, so that **even the hottest inferno** of the sentient denizens of hell **will be incinerated**, releasing them from that suffering.

When power has been acquired over the meditative stability of the consummation of the water element owing to the [inherent] purity of [the aggregate of] perceptions, all



appearances **will turn to water**, sink into the ground, **and** demonstrably everything will **even cascade** in a single flow of water, removing the sufferings of others, **in the same manner** as the action of the fire element. This is because these will have been conjured through meditative stability in which there are no afflictive mental states.

When the meditative stability of the consummation of the wind element has been mastered owing to the [inherent] purity of [the aggregate of] formative predispositions, **this world system** of coarse and subtle appearances **will be dispersed** into atomic particles, diffusing miracles and benefiting sentient beings.

Then, when the meditative stability of the space element has been acquired owing to the [inherent] purity of consciousness, **all** world systems **will be emptied and** miraculous abilities will be acquired, so that even the sun and moon will **collapse** to earth.

In this context, there are some who would meditate that the five elements emerge in this manner from the heart centers of the deities of the five enlightened families, but that is unconnected with the textual exegesis of the present [chapter]. The former refers to a particular means of attainment, whereas the present description is more general.<sup>391</sup>

## **THE ATTAINMENT OF THE EIGHT LESSER RITES [16.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.3]**

The third, concerning the attainment of the eight lesser rites, which is a sign that the eight modes of consciousness are pure [in the expanse, comments on the verse]:

**Summoning, expulsion, bondage, liberation,  
alleviation, killing, vanquishing, and conquering  
will [also] be accomplished.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 5:6)**

།དགུག་དང་བཏང་དང་བཅིང་དང་དགོལ།  
།གསོ་དང་བསད་དང་འཕམ་དང་རྒྱལ།  
།ཉིང་འཛིན་འདི་ཡིས་བྱེད་པར་འགྱུར།

Summoning, expulsion, bondage, liberation,  
Alleviation, killing, vanquishing, and conquering  
May be activated by means of this meditative stability.

### **Interlinear Commentary**

When power has been acquired over awareness or pristine cognition, owing to the [inherent] purity of the eight [modes of consciousness], including the substratum consciousness (*kun gzhi'i rnam shes*), all [the lesser] rites **may be activated by means of this meditative stability** of the cloud mass of letters. These include the rites of **summoning**, which draws a target into one's presence; **expulsion**, which exorcises [negative forces]; **bondage**, which fetters enemies, thieves, and so forth; **liberation**, which offers release from all imprecations and harmful forces; **alleviation**, which dispels plague, poison, and so forth; **killing**, which eliminates opposing foes and obstructors; **vanquishing**, which defeats hostile factions; **and conquering**, through which one's own faction triumphs.

**THE SIMILES THAT ILLUSTRATE THESE ATTAINMENTS**  
**[16.1.1.1.2.2.1.4]**

The fourth part [of the sequence of spiritual accomplishments to be attained, see above, p. 211], concerning the similes [that illustrate these attainments, comments on the verse]:

**[These accomplishments] resemble light, nectar, alchemical transmutation into gold, and medication.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:7)***

།དེ་ཉིད་ཡི་ཤེས་རང་སྣང་བའི།  
།མིང་ཚིག་གཟུགས་སོགས་ཡིད་བཞིན་གྱི།  
།སྲོན་ལ་སྣང་བྱུང་ཇི་བཞིན་དུ།  
།འགྱུར་བ་གསེར་འགྱུར་སྲོན་གྱི་ཚུལ།

These [accomplishments] whereby the names, words,  
forms, and so forth  
Of the self-manifesting pristine cognition  
May [be achieved] at will  
Are likened to a light that shines in the dark.  
They will transform [poison into nectar]  
In the manner of alchemical transmutation into gold  
Or [act] in the manner of an efficacious medication.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

As for the similes illustrative of these accomplishments, there are outwardly visible miraculous reflections **of this**

accomplishment attained through meditative stability, which arise as the originally pure **self-manifesting pristine cognition**. In this regard, **the** distinctive **forms** of each garland of letters, comprising vowels and consonants represented by **names and words**, along with the [appropriate] colors and light rays that conform to [specific] enlightened activities, as implied in the words **and so forth**, are experienced. One should therefore know that this wheel of letters, **whereby** the result of this meditative stability **may** be achieved **at will**, is **likened to a light that shines in the dark**, rendering visible all that is desired.

[This accomplishment] **will transform** the outer and inner poisons into nectar, without renouncing them, and thus it also resembles the catalyst in **the alchemical transmutation** [of base metals] **into gold**, or else it will act **in the manner of an efficacious medication** that pacifies and alleviates distempers, right where they are.

## **THE NATURE OF THE CLOUD MASS OF LETTERS THROUGH WHICH THESE ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE ATTAINED [16.1.1.1.2.2.2]**

The second part [of the explanation of the verses of ch. 5], concerning the nature of the cloud mass of letters through which these accomplishments are attained, comprises (i) the individuals by whom these are attained (16.1.1.1.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the essential nature that is attained (16.1.1.1.2.2.2.2). The former [comments on the verse]:

**Those who maintain the six branches will become accomplished,  
And those who lack them will be lost.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 5:8)**

།སྟོན་པ་མཚོད་བརྩོན་རྟོགས་པ་གསལ།  
།དམ་ཚིག་སྲུགས་དང་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་རྣམས།  
།མ་ཉམས་ཤེས་ཤིང་ཡོ་བྱད་ལྡན།  
།འགྲུབ་འགྲུར་མི་ལྡན་དོན་མེད་བརྒྱག།

To persevere in making offerings to those who reveal  
[the path],  
To have clear realization,  
To keep the commitments, to [recite] the mantras,  
And to understand the seals without defect—  
Those who possess the requisites will become  
accomplished.  
Those who lack them will be unsuccessful and lost.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

The first branch for attaining the accomplishment of the [cloud mass of] letters is **to persevere in making offerings** with reliance on an extraordinary object [of refuge], **to** the masters of indestructible reality (*rdo rje slob dpon*) **who reveal** the path to liberation and to the deities of the maṇḍala. In this regard, the spiritual teacher (*bla ma*) is identified with the most sacred and supreme focal point of the field [of refuge], as is said in the *Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*:

One should know the spiritual teacher to be more  
awesome

Than the buddhas of a hundred thousand aeons;

For the buddhas of those aeons emerge  
Dependent on their own spiritual teachers.  
I have not explained that a buddha emerges  
Who has previously not had a spiritual teacher.<sup>392</sup>

And:

Even though one is ignorant and unrealized  
With respect to all things,  
When one has greatly served a genuine spiritual teacher  
with veneration,  
The ocean of cyclic existence will be traversed.  
For seeds vastly multiply when planted in fertile fields,  
And even a sesame seed in an excellent field of genuine  
merit  
Will not be wasted but will multiply and ripen.<sup>393</sup>

And in the [chapter on] vows, from the *Net of Magical Emanation*:

The spiritual teacher is identified with the principal  
deity of all maṇḍalas.  
When offerings have been made with veneration,  
All maṇḍalas will be delighted—  
Not to mention the maṇḍala that is at hand!<sup>394</sup>

The second [branch for attaining the accomplishment of the letters] is **to have clear**, unwavering **realization** of the meditation associated with the deities and the syllables. Accordingly, the *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva* says:

The All-Knowing One has said that all the recitations and austerities Of one whose mind has been distracted are pointless, [Even though they may have been practiced for a long time].<sup>395</sup>

The third [branch for attaining the accomplishment of the letters] is **to keep the** basic and ancillary **commitments**. Accordingly, the *Supreme Wheel* says:

Keeping the commitments, all mantras will be accomplished.<sup>396</sup>

The fourth branch [for attaining the accomplishment of the letters] is **to recite the secret mantras** purely—not too swiftly or slowly, without omissions or additions, and not too loudly or too quietly.<sup>397</sup> Accordingly, it says in the *Supreme Commitment*:

Mantras too will be pure in sound and word.

One endowed with all the six branches will be accomplished.<sup>398</sup>

The fifth branch [for attaining the accomplishment of the letters] is **to understand the seals**, namely, the doctrinal seal, the action seal, the commitment seal, and the great seal, and to understand and execute them, along with their aspects, precisely and **without defect**. Accordingly, it says in the *Supreme Conqueror*:

Accomplishment will be attained  
By one who has mastered the four seals.<sup>399</sup>

**Those who possess the five requisites** for attainment,<sup>400</sup> along with [appropriate] place and time, which comprise their subsidiary branches, **will become accomplished** in the aforementioned [attainments]. Conversely, it is said that the individuals **who lack them will be lost** because, even though they would attain the accomplishment of these [letters], they would not only be **unsuccessful**, but also end up being roasted in the lower realms of existence. Accordingly, the *Tantra of the Secret Vital Essence* says:

One who does not venerate a spiritual master,  
Who has not obtained the empowerments,  
Who is without commitments and devoid of mantras,  
And whose supreme branches of attainment are defective  
Will assuredly have no accomplishment in this world  
And end up being roasted in future lives  
Within the lower realms of existence.<sup>401</sup>

## **THE ESSENTIAL NATURE THAT IS ATTAINED [16.1.1.1.2.2.2.2]**

The latter, the essential nature that is attained [comments on the verse]:

**The nucleus [of all accomplishments] is the [wheel of] letters,  
The inexhaustible treasury of the three buddha bodies.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:9)***



།དུས་གསུམ་རྒྱལ་བས་ཐུགས་རྒྱུད་པའི།  
 །དངོས་གྲུབ་མཚོག་གི་སླིང་པོ་ནི།  
 །ཟད་པའི་དུས་མེད་ཡིད་བཞིན་མཛོད།  
 །འཕེལ་འགྲིབ་མེད་པར་འབྱུང་བ་སྟེ།  
 །དངོས་པོ་མེད་ལས་དངོས་པོའི་སླིན།  
 །སྣ་ཚོགས་རྣམ་པར་འབྱུང་ཞིང་འབྱུང།

The supreme nucleus of all accomplishments  
 Comprehended by the conquerors of the three times  
 Is a wish-fulfilling treasury, inexhaustible in time.  
 [This essential nature] emerges without increase or  
 decrease.  
 From the immaterial there is a material cloud  
 That proliferates and transforms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The supreme** fruit and the **nucleus of** supreme and common **accomplishments, comprehended by the conquerors of the three times**, past, future, and present, is the wheel of letters. Therefore its essential nature **is a genuine wish-fulfilling treasury, inexhaustible in time**, because all that is desirable emerges spontaneously, in the manner of precious gemstones. This essential nature is naturally pure, for the buddha body of actual reality is **without increase** in the manner of space; the buddha body of perfect resource is **without decrease** in the manner of rainbow colors; and, from this disposition, there **emerges** the proliferating display of the buddha body of emanation. So it is that, **from the** disposition of the **immaterial** buddha body of actual reality, **there is a**

**material cloud** of appearances, comprising the two apparitional buddha bodies of form, **that proliferates** enlightened activity for the sake of living beings, corresponding to the intelligence of those to be trained, **and then transforms** into a spontaneously present emanational display. This is the essential nature of the cloud mass of letters.

### **A DEMONSTRATION OF THE ACTUAL SKILLFUL MEANS IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHICH THESE ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE ATTAINED [16.1.1.1.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the textual exegesis of ch. 5, see above, [p. 211](#)], demonstrating the actual skillful means in accordance with which these accomplishments are attained, comprises (i) a brief introduction to meditative stability (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.1); (ii) an extensive demonstration of its nature (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2); and (iii) a synopsis of the unique meditative equipoise (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.3).

### **A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATIVE STABILITY [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.1]**

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**This entails refinement and mastery with regard to the diffusion and absorption of nonentities.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 5:10)*

།དངོས་རྣམས་ཉིད་ན་དངོས་མེད་པར།  
།རྟོགས་པའི་དབང་བསྐྱར་ཉིད་འཛོལ་ཡིན།

Once entities are in reality [known to be] nonentities,  
There ensues meditative stability—the mastery of  
realization.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

While all things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, appear as **entities**, exemplified by the appearance of the cloud mass of letters during the generation stage [of meditation], at that very moment, the **reality** of all these things is naturally uncreated. This nature, **in** which things **are nonentities**, is known in the context of the primordially pure perfection stage [of meditation].

**Once** the [techniques of] diffusion and absorption have been refined, without attachment to true existence, from within the disposition of the generation stage in which [the maṇḍala] appears but is not recognized [to exist inherently], **there** then **ensues** the **meditative stability** of the wheel of letters. This entails the repeated refinement of meditative stability—consisting **of** the **realization** of the diffusion and absorption of letters in conformity with a specific ritual activity, and the emanational display of its **mastery** in awareness.<sup>402</sup>

## **A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF MEDITATIVE STABILITY [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2]**

The second [the detailed exegesis of meditative stability] comprises (i) the meditative stability that is a meditation on discriminative awareness, the buddha body of actual reality or emptiness (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.1) and (ii) the meditative stability that is a meditation on skillful means, the buddha body of form or appearance (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.2).

## **THE MEDITATIVE STABILITY THAT IS A MEDITATION ON DISCRIMINATIVE AWARENESS [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.1]**

The former comprises (i) a general presentation of the instruction on the nonreferential truth (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.1.1) and (ii) a detailed exegesis of nondual pristine cognition (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.1.2).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE INSTRUCTION ON THE NONREFERENTIAL TRUTH [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.1.1]**

The first [comments on the verse]:

**Since the ignorant do [not] know this, they should  
know appearances and mind through investigation.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:11)***

།གང་གིས་དམིགས་མེད་མི་ཤེས་པ།

།དེ་ཡིས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་མི་ཤེས།

།དེ་ཕྱིར་དངོས་དང་དངོས་མེད་པ།

།འཇིག་པས་དམིགས་མེད་ཤེས་པར་གྱིས།

Whoever knows not the nonreferential  
Does not know the expanse of actual reality.  
For this reason, one should know the nonreferential  
By destroying entities and nonentities.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Whoever** as an individual **knows not the** nature of all things to be **nonreferential** and signless **does not know** the abiding nature of **the expanse of actual reality**, free from conceptual elaboration. As is said in the *Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*:

Without seeing the inconceivable,  
The child who sets its intellect  
On the inconceivable is foolish.

That will become a veritable sense field of darkness.<sup>403</sup>

**For this reason** it is taught that **one should know the nonreferential** reality, the nature of all things, **by** analyzing and **destroying** the deluded ideation that apprehends the subject-object dichotomy. For, when the dreamlike and diverse **entities** that appear to the mind are investigated and analyzed, they do not exist, either externally or internally, and are similar to space; **and** when the **nonentity**—colorless consciousness that makes that realization—is analyzed, the subject, too, is essenceless because it is not found anywhere, externally or internally. At this juncture there is no reference to anything apart from the mind and mental appearances. The *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva* accordingly says:

When entities and nonentities both  
Are absent from before the intellect,  
There is nothing else to do  
But rest in tranquillity, without objective reference.<sup>404</sup>

## **A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF NONDUAL PRISTINE COGNITION [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.1.2]**

The second, the detailed exegesis of nondual [pristine cognition, comments on the verse]:

**The nature of mind is the actual expanse [of reality],  
without class, color, or shape.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:12)***

|གཞི་ཅུ་མེད་པའི་སེམས་ཉིད་ནི།  
|མོ་མོ་མ་ཡིན་མ་ནིང་མིན།  
|མཚན་མེད་མ་ཡིན་རིགས་རྒྱད་མིན།  
|ལ་དོག་མ་ཡིན་དབྱིབས་མ་ཡིན།  
|གནས་སུ་མ་ཡིན་གང་ཡང་མིན།  
|དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་དབྱིངས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏེ།  
|ཐབས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཀུན་གྱི་རྒྱ།

The nature of mind, groundless and baseless,  
Is neither male nor female nor neuter.

It is not signless, nor is it classified according to families.  
It is colorless and shapeless.  
It is not an abode, nor is it anything at all.  
This pristine cognition of the real expanse  
Is the causal basis giving rise to all seals of skillful means.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The nature of mind**, primordially **groundless and baseless** like space, does not exist as any substantial entity or sign. This is the case because it **is neither** designated as **male nor as female, nor** is it referred to, in terms of color and shape, as **neuter**. The nature of mind exists from the present moment without cyclic existence or nirvāṇa, good or evil. This nature **is not** even referred to as **signless** because it transcends extremes of being and nonbeing. **Nor**, in this respect, **is** the nature of mind **classified according to** the different spiritual **families**, comprising buddhas, sentient beings, and so forth, or according to the different social classes, such as the ruling classes (*kṣatriya*), the outcastes (*caṇḍāla*), and so forth. **It is colorless** in terms of white and so forth, **and shapeless** in terms of square and so forth, because it is essentially empty and signless. Furthermore, the nature of mind **is not** existent as a buddha field or as **an abode** of sentient beings. **Nor is it** existent as **anything at all** that can be specifically identified. The *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability* accordingly says:

Mind is nonreferential and not conceivable.

Naturally pure and essentially empty,

It is the primordial, selfless, profound reality,

Profound, quiescent, and unelaborated, as space.<sup>405</sup>

**This** nature of mind is actual reality, the pure **pristine cognition of the real expanse**. Owing to this, its abiding nature, it acts as **the causal basis for** executing all the **seals of skillful means**, and it acts as the causal basis **giving rise to all** discriminative awareness. It is the expanse [of actual



reality] wherein all excellences are accomplished, bringing about auspicious connections and all genuine results. This is because there are no divergent phenomena that have a ground, path, and result extraneous to the truth of the naturally pure nature of mind.

## **THE MEDITATIVE STABILITY THAT IS A MEDITATION ON SKILLFUL MEANS [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.2]**

The latter [part of the detailed exegesis of meditative stability, see [p. 225](#)], concerning the meditative stability that is a meditation on skillful means, the buddha body of form or appearance, comprises (i) a presentation of the meditative stability of the deities according to the generation and perfection stages [of meditation] (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.2.1) and (ii) an exegesis of phenomenal existence as the seal of Samantabhadra (16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.2.2).

## **THE MEDITATIVE STABILITY OF THE DEITIES ACCORDING TO THE GENERATION AND PERFECTION STAGES [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.2.1]**

The former [comments on the verse]:

**It is the mind through which the undifferentiated deities and mantras are diffused and absorbed.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:13)***

|ཐབས་ལས་ཐབས་བྱུང་ཐབས་བསམ་ཡས།  
 |ཐ་དད་མིན་ལས་ཐ་དད་པའི།  
 |ནང་དང་ནང་གི་བྱི་རོལ་གྱི།  
 |དྱིལ་འཁོར་བསམ་ཡས་ཡེ་ཤེས་རོལ།  
 |འཇིགས་མེད་ཀུན་བཟང་ཕྱག་རྒྱའི་མཚོག།

From skillful means emerges skillful means.  
 This skillful means is inconceivable.  
 The inconceivable internal and externalized maṇḍalas,  
 Which are not differentiated but become differentiated,  
 Constitute the emanational display of pristine cognition.  
 This is the supreme seal of fearless Samantabhadra.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**From** this natural appearance of **skillful means**, which is one's own nature of mind manifesting as the letters endowed with inner radiance, **the** [secondary] **skillful means** then **emerges**—comprising the letters that issue from the tips of the rays of light. **This skillful means** then **becomes inconceivable** and inestimable owing to countless diffusions. There **are not** any extraneous existents that are actually **differentiated** through this transformation, **but** rather, in the mind one meditates on oneself as an emanational display of male and female deities, from which the emanational display of mind then **becomes differentiated** in the visualization of the containing celestial palace and buddha field. During meditation therefore, there is an **internal** diffusion and absorption [of light rays] through which oneself becomes manifest as the deities and the letters, **and** there is an **externalized** diffusion and absorption that entails meditation on the celestial palace

and buddha field, generated by the mind, as well as on the countless, **inconceivable maṇḍalas** arrayed by the mind among buddhas and sentient beings, which are the basis of this diffusion and absorption. However, all these **constitute the emanational display** in which self-manifesting **pristine cognition** is itself arrayed. **This** nature of buddhahood is **fearless** in all respects, inasmuch as it is the nature of mind, pure from the beginning, and it is secured by **the supreme authentic seal of Samantabhadra**, the abiding nature, primordially without deeds and afflictive mental states.<sup>406</sup>

Since the generation stage [of meditation] is also spontaneously present in the perfection stage [of meditation], wherein there is no inherent existence, one should become meditatively equipoised in this disposition and abide in it, without conceptual elaboration.<sup>407</sup>

## **AN EXEGESIS OF PHENOMENAL EXISTENCE AS THE SEAL OF SAMANTABHADRA [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.2.2.2]**

The latter, the exegesis of how phenomenal existence is secured by the seal of Samantabhadra [interprets the same passage, commenting on the verse]:

**This diffusion and absorption of the letters is none other than the nature of mind.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:13)***

།ཐབས་ལས་ཐབས་བྱུང་ཐབས་བསམ་ཡས།  
 །ཐ་དད་མིན་ལས་ཐ་དད་པའི།  
 །ནང་དང་ནང་གི་བྱི་རོལ་གྱི།  
 །དྲིལ་འཁོར་བསམ་ཡས་ཡེ་ཤེས་རོལ།  
 །འཇིགས་མེད་ཀུན་བབྱང་ཕྱག་རྒྱའི་མཚོག

From skillful means emerges skillful means.  
 This skillful means is inconceivable.  
 The inconceivable internal and externalized maṇḍalas,  
 Which are not differentiated but become differentiated,  
 Constitute the emanational display of pristine cognition.  
 This is the supreme seal of fearless Samantabhadra.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**From** the **skillful means** of the luminous nature of mind, which manifests as the letters, there **emerges** the [secondary] **skillful means** through which one’s own real nature manifests to the mind as an object. This **skillful means** then arises **inconceivably**, proliferating as phenomenal existence. And yet, all these skillful means are **not differentiated** objectively **but** rather the proliferation of appearances that **become differentiated** arises as **the emanational display of pristine cognition—the inconceivable maṇḍalas**, namely, those of **internal** mind **and** of **externalized** phenomena of diverse flesh-colored appearance. Therefore, it is said to have been “secured by **the supreme seal of** primordial buddhahood, the **fearless Samantabhadra.**”

Furthermore, [the following interpretation] may also be applied, in the context of meditation on the letters: **From** the wheel of letters which is **skillful means**, [the secondary]

**skillful means** is diffused and absorbed, so that **this skillful means**, associated with the letters, **becomes inconceivable**. **But** these are **not differentiated** from the mind. Rather, it is the intellect that **differentiates** the source and object of their diffusion. When one meditates on **the emanational display of pristine cognition—the inconceivable maṇḍalas** wherein one’s own **internal** mind and all the **externalized** things that appear to the mind are controlled by diffusion and absorption, transforming them into letters—**this is called the supreme seal of fearless Samantabhadra.**<sup>408</sup>

## **A SYNOPSIS OF THE UNIQUE MEDITATIVE EQUIPOISE [16.1.1.1.2.2.3.3]**

The third section [of the demonstration of the actual skillful means in accordance with which these accomplishments are attained, see [p. 224](#)], comprising a synopsis [of unique meditative equipoise, comments on the verse]:

**Those whose minds have been tamed and who have  
relied on the mantras will, without exception,  
attain this accomplishment.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:14)***

|གང་གིས་གྲུང་ཆེན་ལྷོས་འདྲའི་སེམས།

|མཉམ་པར་བཞགས་པས་བརྟུལ་ནས་སྟུ།

|སྟུགས་དང་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་རབ་བརྟེན་ན།

|དཔོན་གྲུབ་ཡ་མཚན་ཆེན་པོར་འགྱུར།

Once those whose minds resemble an inebriated  
elephant's  
Have been tamed by means of meditative equipoise  
And have resolutely relied on the mantras and the seals,  
They will obtain the amazing great accomplishment.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The yogins who would realize this garland of letters have **minds that resemble that of an elephant inebriated** by wine. They move about and suffer in cyclic existence, intoxicated by the wine of reliance on unworthy egotistical views and the apprehension of signs. **Once** their minds which apprehend entities and signs **have been tamed by means of meditative equipoise** in the truth of the abiding nature, combining calm abiding and higher insight, and if they have then meditated on the extraordinary generation and perfection stages [of meditation], associated with nondual pristine cognition, and **have resolutely relied on** and experienced their branches, namely, the reality of **the mantras and the intrinsic nature of the seals, they will obtain the amazing great accomplishment**, the nature of Samantabhadra.

The five branches of mantra comprise the realities of (i) self [generation]; (ii) deity [generation]; (iii) the secret mantra; (iv) recitation; and (v) the diffusion and absorption [of light rays]. Calm abiding is the quiescence of mental elaboration, and higher insight is the discriminative awareness that realizes that objects are radiant and without inherent existence. In this context according to the generation stage [of meditation], calm abiding should be known as the mind not digressing elsewhere, and higher insight should be known as the focusing on the nature [of mind], without conceptual elaboration.<sup>409</sup> As is said in the *Analysis of the Middle and Extremes*:

Discursiveness does not occur and discernment is

indeed present.<sup>410</sup>

And:

With respect to any single object of reference whatever,  
The mind should be focused in meditative stability.<sup>411</sup>

Therefore, in this context, the meditative stability of the letters is the skillful means that gives rise to calm abiding, and from its disposition the uncreated nonconceptual discriminative awareness and meditative stability are both dispositionally accomplished. Hence its profundity!

The *Lamp [for the Eye] of Meditative Concentration* says:  
Whoever relies on an object of reference  
Thoroughly generates the nonreferential.

Whoever relies on the nonreferential  
Attains the realization called nothing-at-all.<sup>412</sup>  
Whoever experiences that called nothing-at-all  
Subsequently abandons that as well.<sup>413</sup>

## THE CONCLUSION [16.1.1.1.2.3]

The third section [of ch. 5] is the conclusion of the chapter  
[which comments on the verse]:

**Saying that all things abide in the cloud mass of  
letters, [the tathāgata] was delighted.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 5:15)*

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་གཟིགས་མོས་མཉེས་པར་གྱུར་ཏེ།

So saying, the tathāgata himself was delighted by that  
vision.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**So saying** that the nature of all things abides in the cloud mass  
of letters, **the tathāgata** Samantabhadra **himself was  
delighted by that vision** in which the excellent  
accomplishments emerged spontaneously from the wheel of  
letters.



## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 5 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning “The Attainment of the Letters.”**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 5:16)*

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་[བ་བ་]བསྐྱབ་པའི་ཉིང་  
དེ་འཛིན་གྱི་ལེན་སྟེ་ལྷ་པའོ།།

This completes the fifth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Meditative Stabilities That Attain the Net of Magical Emanation.”

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**This completes** and establishes the exegesis of **the fifth chapter from the** primordial *Secret Nucleus*, concerning the wheel of the cloud mass of letters, ***Definitive with Respect to the Real***, where excellent accomplishments emerge, **entitled** “Enumerating **the Meditative Stabilities** of the Letters **That Attain the Net of Magical Emanation.**”

## 6. THE DIFFUSION OF THE MAṄḌALA

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The purpose of this and the following two chapters is to project the maṅḍala of buddha mind that is visualized through meditative stability as emerging from the cyclical garland of letters, along with its aspects—the maṅḍalas of buddha speech and buddha body, which are symbolized respectively by mantra recitation and sealing hand gestures.

The focus here is on the emergence of the maṅḍala of meditational deities who are to be visualized by means of meditative stability that accords with the volition of the tathāgatas (v. 1).

The commentator at this point omits Longchen Rabjam's extensive overview concerning the term *maṅḍala*. The Sanskrit *maṅḍala* is generally defined as a principal deity encircled by a retinue, but more specifically classified according to the maṅḍalas of the ground, path, and result. The maṅḍala of the ground is the atemporal presence of the mundane world and its inhabitants as primordial buddhahood. The maṅḍala of the path includes those symbolic maṅḍalas that are drawn on cotton or with colored powders, or laid out schematically with focal points and flower clusters prominent. Yet it also refers to the maṅḍalas of genuine buddha body, speech, and mind, which are to be attained through meditative stability, as well as those of the supporting celestial palace, the meditational deities supported within it, and their nondual pristine cognition. The maṅḍala of the result comprises the effortless, spontaneous presence of the five maṅḍalas of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities.

The maṅḍalas of ground, path, and result all emanate from the cyclical garland of letters. Among them, the natural and

spontaneous maṇḍala of the ground is that in which the elements, psychophysical aggregates, and afflictive mental states of unenlightened beings are primordially present as the female buddhas, the male buddhas, and the pristine cognitions, respectively (v. 2).

The maṇḍala of the path, which is the focus of the yogin's meditative stability, comprises the actual maṇḍala with its celestial palace (v. 3), ornaments (v. 4), teaching thrones (v. 5), and meditational deities (vv. 6-7), along with their symbolic hand-held emblems (v. 8), body colors (v. 9), and general appearance (v. 10), as well as the effulgence of light rays that they emit (v. 11). Yet it also refers to the fruitional result that is achieved through this attainment, namely, the fruitional buddha body of form (*rūpakāya*), which arises from the body of actual reality (v. 12) and the consequent illusion-like enlightened activity (v. 13) that it performs on behalf of ordinary beings, pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas (vv. 14-17). Consequently, living beings are liberated, either through the causal paths that gradually refine obscurations (v. 18) or through the fruitional paths and levels associated with the indivisibility and spontaneity of the five buddha bodies (vv. 19-22). In this way, the maṇḍala of the path radiantly emanates throughout all world systems (v. 23).

The maṇḍala of the result is then described as the nondual pristine cognition without objective or subjective referent, which emerges fully manifest and radiant in the context of this maṇḍala of meditative stability (vv. 24-25). The final verse may also be interpreted from the standpoints of ground, path, or result individually.

THE SECOND SECTION [of the general presentation of the nature of the three maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind, 16.1.1, see above, [pp. 159-60](#)] is the presentation of the maṇḍala of meditative stability [that derives from the cloud mass of letters] (16.1.1.2). It comprises (i) a general presentation of the maṇḍala of meditative stability within the expanse [of actual

reality] (16.1.1.2.1) [which is the content of ch. 6] and (ii) a detailed exegesis of its branches, namely, the maṇḍalas of the mantras and seals (16.1.1.2.2) [which constitute chs. 7 and 8].

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE MAṆḌALA OF MEDITATIVE STABILITY WITHIN THE EXPANSE OF ACTUAL REALITY [16.1.1.2.1]**

The first of these [i.e., ch. 6] includes (i) a description of the causal basis for the diffusion of the maṇḍala (16.1.1.2.1.1) and (ii) an exegesis of the actual maṇḍala that is diffused therefrom (16.1.1.2.1.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**Willing the maṇḍala of meditative stability to emerge, [the tathāgata] then uttered these following aphorisms:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:1)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་གཅིག་དང་དུ་མ་མེད་པའི་  
བདག་ཉིད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས། འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། ཉིད་  
ཀྱི་ཆེ་བའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་དབྱུང་བར་བཞེད་ནས། ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then all [the deities], embodying this intrinsic nature of all the tathāgatas—neither single nor multiple, throughout the entire ten directions of the six realms—willed the maṇḍala of their own greatness to emerge and uttered

these following aphorisms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of the cloud mass of letters had been arrayed, **then all** [the deities] who appear as the maṇḍala of Samantabhadra, **embodying the intrinsic nature of all the self-manifesting tathāgatas, neither single nor multiple—gazing throughout the entire ten directions of the six realms** inhabited by those to be trained—**willed the maṇḍala of the tathāgatas' own greatness to emerge and uttered these following aphorisms.**

### **An EXEGESIS OF THE ACTUAL MAṆḌALA THAT IS DIFFUSED THEREFROM [16.1.1.2.1.2]**

The latter comprises (i) a general presentation of the natural and spontaneous maṇḍala of the ground (16.1.1.2.1.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of meditative stability that forms the path (16.1.1.2.1.2.2); and (iii) a synopsis of the maṇḍala of the fruitional great pristine cognition (16.1.1.2.1.2.3).<sup>414</sup>

### **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE NATURAL AND SPONTANEOUS MAṆḌALA OF THE GROUND [16.1.1.2.1.2.1]**

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**The five material elements, aggregates, and poisons are respectively the five female buddhas, male buddhas, and pristine cognitions.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:2)***

ལེ་ཤེས་ཕྱོགས་བཞི་དབུས་བརྟགས་ཏེ།  
དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བསམ་ཡས་ལྷན་གྱུ་བ་ནི།  
རྫོགས་ཆེན་རྫོགས་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པས།  
ཀླན་འབྱུང་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཆེན་པོར་སྦྱོད།

Pristine cognition is designated according to its four directions and also its center.

This inconceivable, spontaneous maṇḍala constitutes the Great Perfection.

May the yogins who realize this conduct themselves  
In that great maṇḍala—the origin of all [things]!

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Pristine cognition is designated according to its four directions** because the [four] outer elements of earth, water, fire, and wind; the [four] inner aggregates of physical forms, feelings, perceptions, and formative predispositions; and the four secret [poisons of] delusion, pride, desire, and envy are primordially and spontaneously present, respectively as the pristine cognition of reality's expanse, the pristine cognition of sameness, the pristine cognition of discernment, and the pristine cognition of accomplishment. **And** [pristine cognition]

is **also** designated according to **its center** because hatred, space, and consciousness, these three, [naturally] abide as the mirrorlike pristine cognition.<sup>415</sup> **This maṇḍala** wherein the five material elements essentially abide as the five female buddhas, the five psychophysical aggregates as the five male buddhas, and the five poisons as the five pristine cognitions is **inconceivable**. It **constitutes the natural Great Perfection** inasmuch as all things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, are **spontaneously present** within it from the beginning. **May the yogins who realize this conduct themselves in the great maṇḍala** of pristine cognition, natural in **origin**, where **all things of** phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, are neither renounced nor accepted, neither refuted nor proven. Actually, whatever appears and whatever arises, all things are revealed as the emanational display of this maṇḍala, without being renounced or accepted.

## **A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE MAṆḌALA OF MEDITATIVE STABILITY THAT FORMS THE PATH [16.1.1.2.1.2.2]**

The second comprises (i) the actual maṇḍala of meditative stability (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1) and (ii) an exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala accomplished thereby (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2).

### **THE ACTUAL MAṆḌALA OF MEDITATIVE STABILITY [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1]**

The former also has two sections: (i) the maṇḍala of the supporting celestial palace (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1) and (ii) the

maṇḍala of the supported deities (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2).

## **THE MAṆḌALA OF THE SUPPORTING CELESTIAL PALACE [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1]**

The first of these, in turn, comprises (i) the celestial palace (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.1); (ii) its ornaments (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.2); and (iii) its thrones (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.3).

## **THE CELESTIAL PALACE [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.1]**

First [the section on the celestial palace comments on the verse]:

**[The celestial palace comprises an inner] wheel and square walls with four corners and four entrance gateways.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:3)***

།འཁོར་ལོ་རྩྱེབས་བཞི་ལྷ་ལྷུང་བཅས།  
།ལྷ་ཆད་བཞིས་བརྒྱན་བར་བྱམས་དང་།  
།ལྷ་ཏུ་ལྷ་བཞི་རྣོ་ལྷུང་ལྷ།

[The palace comprises] a four-spoked [inner] circle,



Along with its perimeter rim  
And a [surrounding] courtyard, adorned with four corners.  
[Its outer walls] are entirely square, with entrance  
gateways.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The celestial palace (*gzhal yas khang*) comprises **an** [inner] **four-spoked** wheel symbolizing that fundamental ignorance has been severed by the four pristine cognitions, **along with its perimeter rim**, which is white and circular, symbolizing that it itself is the pristine cognition free from conceptual elaborations. **And** outside that, there is **a courtyard** surrounding it on all sides, which symbolizes that pristine cognition is not limited or biased, and it is **adorned with four corners** to symbolize the four immeasurable aspirations. The shape of [the outer walls] of the celestial palace is **entirely square** to indicate the extensive enlightened attributes of its greatness. These are endowed **with** [four] **entrance gateways**, which symbolize the four modes of liberation, their eight pedimental steps (*rta babs*) symbolizing the eight aspects of liberation.<sup>416</sup>

In this context, the maṇḍala of the peaceful deities is visualized with two-story gateways. The outer and inner walls and their shape are indicated in the [above-cited root verses, which conclude]:

And a [surrounding] courtyard, adorned with four corners.  
[Its outer walls] are entirely square, with entrance  
gateways.

Strictly speaking, the buddha body of perfect resource appears within the inner gates while the buddha body of emanation appears in the courtyard outside. It is therefore essential that these maṇḍalas remain distinct. Otherwise the maṇḍala of the buddha body of perfect resource that manifests in and of itself,

and that of the buddha body of emanation that appears to others would be confused, and the class of the maṇḍala could not be determined. Such flaws would occur.<sup>417</sup>

## THE ORNAMENTS [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.2]

The second section, concerning the ornaments [of the celestial palace, comments on the verse]:

**It has billowing clouds of offerings and forty-two individual seats.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 6:4)*

།འོ་མོ་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་སྤྱན་ཕུང་བཞིན།  
།དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་བཞི་བཅུ་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་བརྒྱན།

[The palace has] a diverse display of trappings, like billowing clouds, And it is adorned with forty-two maṇḍalas.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

In order to symbolize the thirty-seven aspects of enlightenment and so forth, [the palace has] **a diverse display of trappings**—parasols, victory banners, and so forth, densely arrayed **like billowing clouds**. **And it is adorned with the forty-two maṇḍalas**—the individual seats that beautify it, equal in

number to the locations of the deities. There is no occasion for the deities themselves to be included here, among the ornaments of the celestial palace.

## **THE THRONES [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.3]**

The third section, concerning the thrones [of the celestial palace, comments on the verse]:

**[The great thrones, resting upon animal figurines of] the lion, the elephant, the horse, the bird, and the *cīvaṃcīvaka*, have sun, moon, and lotus [cushions].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:5)***

ལེང་གི་གླང་ཆེན་ཉ་དང་བྱུང་།  
ནམ་མཁའ་ལྗིང་གི་བྲི་ཆེན་ལ།  
ཉི་ཟླ་པད་མ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

The great thrones of the lion, the elephant,  
The horse, the *garuḍa*, and the *cīvaṃcīvaka*  
Have sun, moon, and lotus [cushions]  
And gemstone [throne legs].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

In order to symbolize the four assurances and so forth, these

seats include **the great thrones** that are supported respectively by [animal figurines] **of the lion, the elephant, the horse, the garuḍa, and the cīvaṃcīvaka**. These also **have** [stacked cushions representing] the **sun** of discriminative awareness, the **moon** of skillful means, **and** the **lotus** untainted by flaws, **and** they are supported by throne legs (*khri rkang*) fashioned of **gemstones** because all that is desirable emerges from these [cushions].

It is explained that [the thrones of the buddhas of] the five enlightened families have all of those five stacked components; those of the male and female buddhas Samantabhadra, who are their incandescence, have four stacked components; those of the bodhisattvas have three stacked components; while the six sages each have a lotus base, and the gatekeepers each have a single sun cushion. As is said in the *Sequence of Light*:

At the center, in the middle of the palace,  
[The throne motif] depicts the eight lions, symbolizing  
assurance.

At the center, in the east [of the palace],  
[The throne motif] depicts the elephant, symbolizing  
great power.

[At the center,] in the south [of the palace],  
[The throne motif] depicts the eight horses, symbolizing  
miraculous ability.

[At the center,] in the west of the palace,  
[The throne motif] depicts the peacock, [symbolizing  
powers,]

And [at the center,] in the north [of the palace]  
Are the eight *cīvaṃcīvaka*, symbolizing buddha activity.

The throne legs are also embellished,  
[And so these thrones all] have five stacked components,  
Including sun and moon [cushions].

[The thrones of] the bodhisattvas  
Have three stacked components: sun, moon, and lotus  
[cushions],

While [those of] the wrathful [gatekeepers] have a single  
sun cushion,

And [those of] the sages have a single lotus base

And [those of] the sages have a single lotus base.  
The male and female buddhas Samantabhadra,  
Who respectively represent the active subjective polarity  
And the passive objective polarity,  
Have sun, moon, and lotus [cushions], with elaborate  
gemstone [legs].

As such they are seated in meditative equipoise.<sup>418</sup>

There is no contradiction [between these two descriptions]  
because the peacock and the *garuḍa* are said to have the same  
function, symbolizing that the poisons have been pacified.<sup>419</sup>

## THE MAṄḌALA OF THE SUPPORTED DEITIES [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2]

The second section [of the actual maṅḍala of meditative  
stability, see above, p. 239] concerns the maṅḍala of the  
supported deities. This has six aspects, the first of which,  
concerning the postures [of the forty-two peaceful deities]  
(16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1) [comments on the verse]:

**Seated in the manner of kings, ministers, and  
generals . . .**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:6)***

།གདན་ལ་ཇོགས་དང་སེམས་དཔའི་རྒྱལ།

On these seats, [seated] in the manner of the perfect  
[buddhas]  
And of the bodhisattvas,

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**On these seats the** twelve **perfect** male and female buddhas, comprising the male and female buddhas Samantabhadra and the [five] tathāgatas [with their consorts], are seated in the posture of indestructible reality (*vajraparyāṅka, rdo rje skyil krung*), in the manner of kings, spontaneously accomplished in the two kinds of benefit. The male and female bodhisattvas, arrayed in their retinue **in the manner** of ministers, are seated in the posture **of the bodhisattvas** (*sattvaparyāṅka, sems dpa'i skyil krung*), with the right leg extended and the left leg contracted. Along with these, the gatekeepers, in the manner of generals, assume an outward gaze (*phyir gzigs*) and a vigorous gait (*gyad kyi dor thabs*) because they eradicate obstructing and misguiding forces. The sages assume a standing posture because, in the manner of chieftains, they appear as leaders among their respective classes of living beings.

The second aspect, concerning which deities are present in which locations (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2) [comments on the verse]:

**There are the [five] enlightened families [of male and female buddhas], the [eight] bodhisattvas, Samantabhadra [and Samantabhadri], the six sages, and the eight gatekeepers.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:7)***

|འཁོར་ལོ་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྒྱལ་མོ་དང་།  
 |གཡས་ནས་མཐོང་ཐོས་སྣོམ་པ་དང་།  
 |སྲོང་དང་བུའྱ་མོའི་ཚྲིགས་སུ་བཅས།  
 |གྲུ་ཆད་ལ་ནི་མཐོང་བྱེད་དང་།  
 |ཐོས་བྱེད་སྣོམ་བྱེད་སྲོང་བྱེད་རྣམས།  
 |བུའྱ་མོའི་ཚྲིགས་དང་བཅས་པར་གནས།  
 |བར་བྱམས་ལ་ནི་སྤྱབ་རྒྱལ་དང་།  
 |མདུན་དང་རྒྱབ་ཏུ་བྱེད་པ་དང་།  
 |བྱ་བ་དག་ནི་གནས་པར་བསྟན།  
 |སྒྲོ་བྱེད་བཞི་ལ་འཛོམས་པ་ནི།  
 |བུའྱ་མོའི་ཚྲིགས་དང་ལྡན་པར་གནས།

There are the kings and queens on the wheel,  
 Then, starting from the right, there are respectively  
 Those of [indestructible] vision, hearing, fragrance, and  
 savor,  
 Along with the assembled host of their queens;  
 And in the corners between these are respectively  
 Those of [indestructible] eyes, ears, nose, and tongue,  
 Along with the assembled host of their queens.  
 In the courtyard are the six sages,  
 While present to the front and rear are the pair  
 Who represent the active subject and the passive object.  
 At the four gateways stand the subjugators,  
 Along with the assembled host of their queens.

***Interlinear Commentary***

At the hub and on the four spokes **of the central wheel, there are the kings** or five male buddhas, beginning with Vairocana, **and the queens** or five female buddhas. **Then, starting from the right** or the southeastern direction of the principal deity [Vairocana] and at the four intermediate spokes (*rtsibs mchan bzhi*), **there are respectively** Kṣitigarbha, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **vision**; Vajrapāṇi, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **hearing**; Ākāśagarbha, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **fragrance**; **and** Avalokiteśvara, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **savor, along with the assembled host of their queens**, namely, Lāsyā, Mālyā, Gītā, and Nartī.

Similarly, **in the four corners between these**, starting from the southeast, there **are respectively** Maitreya, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **eyes**; Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **ears**; Samantabhadra, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **nose**; **and** Mañjuśrī, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] **tongue, along with the assembled host of their queens**, namely, Dhūpā, Puṣpā, Ālokā, and Gandhā. [All of these] are seated in union. [See plates 1a-2h.]

**In the outer courtyard are the six sages** of the gods and so forth, whose respective positions accord with the following description from the *Sequence of Light*:

In the southeast are the gods.

In the south are the human beings.

In the southwest and northwest respectively

Are the anguished spirits and animals,

And in the north and northeast respectively

Are the demigods and the denizens of hell.<sup>420</sup>

**While present to the front and rear** of the principal deity, in the eastern and western directions of the inner courtyard **are the pair representing the active male subject and the passive female object**, namely, Samantabhadra who activates the incandescence that arises (*mdangs kyi 'char byed*), and Samantabhadrī who is the basis for the incandescence that



arises (*mdangs kyi 'char gzhi*). This is to symbolize that all maṇḍalas arise from these two. [See plates 4a and 4b.]

There are some who hold that these two are present to the rear and front of the principal deity, some who hold that they lie to the east and west of the courtyard, and some who hold that they are within the heart center of the principal deity. However, these statements do not arrive at the definitive essence, which is as follows: In this context, the male-female Samantabhadra, who are the basis for the incandescence that arises, are explained to be in the courtyard. The male-female Samantabhadra who are associated with the principal deity of the maṇḍala are not differentiated [in this context] because they are themselves [the buddhas of] the five enlightened families. Also, when they are explained to be among the forty-two [deities], this refers to the description of the peaceful deities of the buddha body of perfect resource in their apparitional mode, and not to the teaching concerning the principal deities who are the active subject and passive object. Then, when the male-female Samantabhadra are visualized in the heart center of the principal deity during meditative stability, at that time when the mind apprehends the inner radiance of the nucleus, the inner radiance is sustained by visualizing the buddha body of actual reality, the male-female Samantabhadra, an inch in size (*tshon gang ba*).<sup>421</sup> So this refers to the apparitional aspect of the perfection stage.

As has previously been indicated, the male-female Samantabhadra are present in the field of the buddha body of actual reality because they are free from conceptual elaboration. Thence, in the spontaneous Bounteous Array which is the pristine cognition of sameness throughout the four times, the male and female buddhas of the buddha body of perfect resource are present, forming the five enlightened families. And thence, in the world systems of those to be trained, the intrinsic natures of Vajrapāṇi, Vajrasattva, the six sages, and so forth are present. For example, in this buddha field the transcendent lord known as Śākyamuni was seen as the buddha body of emanation by pious attendants, hermit

buddhas, ordinary folk, and those who were on the paths of provision and connection, but he was seen as the buddha body of perfect resource by sublime bodhisattvas; and so forth.

**At the four entrance gateways**, starting from the east, in a display of the nine dramatic airs, **stand the subjugators** of the four demonic forces, namely, the four wrathful deities Yamāntaka, Mahābala, Hayagrīva, and Amṛtakuṇḍalin, **along with the assembled host of their queens**, namely, Aṅkuśā, Pāśā, Sphoṭā, and Ghaṇṭā. [See plates 3a–3d.]

These nine dramatic airs (*gar dgu'i nyams*) are described as follows in the *Garland of Lightning*:

Sensual, heroic, and ugly,

Jovial, fierce, and fearsome,

Compassionate, awesome, and peaceful—

These nine dramatic airs are possessed. <sup>422</sup>

At this juncture, there are some agitated by the mirage of wrong view whose excellent resources have been depleted and who are stranded in the desert sands of error, hard to traverse, saying that the principal deity and the retinue are erroneous because Samantabhadra the teacher of this tantra has been ejected to the periphery of the maṇḍala, while Akṣobhya has been installed at the center. In response to this, there are some who say that [Samantabhadra] brings out the greatness of the retinue, just as a father promotes his own child, and there are some who say that this resembles a fortune-teller casting lots, with the object of the prognosis arrayed at the center and the subject who makes the prognosis at the periphery. And there are yet others who say that Akṣobhya is depicted in the center because in the situation of the ground, the principal deity is mirrorlike; in the situation of the path, the substratum becomes the basis of buddha body and pristine cognition; and in the situation of the result, the mirrorlike pristine cognition is revealed as the principal deity. However, the excellent points made in all these statements have not been properly understood.

It is not even certain that [a deity] will emerge at the center because he is the expositor [of a particular tantra]. Otherwise,

Śākyamuni would implicitly appear at the center [of the maṇḍala] in the *Net of Magical Emanation of Mañjuśrī* and in the *Purification of All Lower Realms*, whereas it is Vairocana and Jñānasattva who respectively appear. That would be defective because the principal deity and the retinues of these [tantras] would be reversed. In some maṇḍalas of the Kriyātantras too, it is implicit that the sage [Śākyamuni] and Vajrapāṇi appear at the center, but [in that scenario], Vairocana or Akṣobhya would appear [in their place] because they are the expositors. One could not deny the implications that would follow if these [tantras] also had their principal deities and their retinues reversed.

Rather, it is the case that the male-female Samantabhadra arrayed in the courtyard is revealed as the basis for the incandescence that arises, but is never depicted as the principal deity. Nor is Akṣobhya positioned at the center, because it is Vairocana, the deity of buddha mind, who is so depicted. Indeed, this very defect [of an erroneous principal deity] does not arise because he himself is the teacher, the male-female Samantabhadra. You [sophists] are extremely deluded with regard to the fruitional vehicle of indestructible reality. Since your intellects do not focus even on the merest descriptions of [Samantabhadra] as the principal deity and as the basis for [the incandescence] that arises, how can you contradict the meaning of these secret mantras? You are instead suited to pursue paths revealed by cowherds!<sup>423</sup>

The third aspect [of the maṇḍala of the supported deities], concerning the symbolic hand emblems that they hold (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3) [comments on the verse]:

**[These classes of deity respectively hold hand emblems, beginning with] the vajra, the blue lotus, the mirror, the lute, and the club.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:8)***

།རྡོ་རྗེ་འཁོར་ལོ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།  
།པརྣ་རལ་གྲི་རྒྱལ་བུ་འབར།  
།ལྷུངས་ལྷུ་ཤིང་ལ་སོགས་མཚན།  
།མཛེས་ཚུལ་མཉེས་པའི་ཡོ་བྱད་འཛིན།

[The male buddhas hold] a vajra, wheel, gemstone,  
lotus, and sword,  
[While the female buddhas hold] a blazing bell.  
[The male bodhisattvas hold] symbols  
Such as the lily, the orange bush, and so on,  
[While the female bodhisattvas] hold delightful  
implements, in a beautiful manner.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

As for the hand emblems that they hold, Vairocana, representing the buddha mind, holds a **vajra** in his main right hand to symbolize that emptiness and compassion are without duality. Akṣobhya similarly holds a **wheel** to symbolize that he has cut through the net of afflictive mental states and turns the doctrinal wheel. Ratnasambhava holds a **gemstone** to symbolize that he fulfills the hopes of living beings and is spontaneously accomplished in enlightened attributes. Amitābha holds a **lotus** to symbolize that he has purified desire in the expanse [of actual reality] and that his enlightened intention is directed toward living beings who discriminate, and Amoghasiddhi holds a **sword** to symbolize that he has cut through the afflictive mental states of living beings by means of the four rites of enlightened activity. In their main left hand they each hold the bell, embracing their consort with hands

crossed at the heart. Their other [two pairs of hands] hold the hand emblems that have previously been indicated [in ch. 1, p. 77].<sup>424</sup>

The female buddhas, in their right hand, hold the same hand emblems as the male buddhas, and in their left hand they also hold **a bell, blazing** forth the light of pristine cognition's gems and embracing their respective male consorts. There are some who maintain that there are no symbolic hand emblems in the right hand of the female buddhas, but they have not examined the great means for attainment (*mahāsādhana, sgrub thabs chen po*).

The symbolic hand emblems of the principal deity [in this case, Vairocana] are also described as follows in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*:

The vajra, the wheel, and the fiery sword,  
The bell, the lotus, and the gemstone—  
That is the sequence of [the central] Vajradhara's  
[emblems].

[The hands] in which the others are placed  
May be known in relation to the vajra,  
Which [is held] at the heart in the first [or main right  
hand],

While the [main] left hand embraces [his female  
consort].<sup>425</sup>

Accordingly, [Vairocana's] main pair of hands embrace his female consort while holding the vajra and bell, his middle pair of hands hold the wheel and the lotus, while his last pair [of hands] hold the sword and the gemstone. The hand emblems of the other four [male buddhas], such as Akṣobhya, should be similarly known.<sup>426</sup>

In general, there are four sequences according to which those symbolic hand emblems may be described: commencing on the right side (*g.yas 'gyed*), commencing on the left side (*g.yon 'gyed*), alternating [in left and right pairs] (*mnyam 'gyed*), and clockwise (*'khor 'gyed*). This is a general description of the sequence of the main hand emblems.<sup>427</sup>

The male buddhas have three faces and six hands, while the

female buddhas have one face and two hands. Some say that during ritual service [the male buddhas] may also have one face and two hands, but that is an inappropriate observation, clearly not taught in this tantra [of the *Secret Nucleus*].<sup>428</sup> [See plates 1a-1e.]

Concerning the symbolic hand emblems of the bodhisattvas, our text states:

[The bodhisattvas hold] **symbols**

Such as a blue lotus, an orange bush, **and so on.**

Specifically, Mañjuśrī holds a blue lotus because he has renounced afflictive mental states. Maitreya holds **an orange bush** because he has dispelled the fever of afflictive mental states. Kṣitigarbha holds a seedling of gemstone because he has brought forth the shoots of pristine cognition. Vajrapāṇi holds a vajra because he has subjugated suffering. Ākāśagarbha holds a sword because he has severed the continuity of afflictive mental states. Avalokiteśvara holds a lotus because he is untainted by defects. Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin holds a gemstone chest [of books] because he teaches the doctrine to sentient beings, and Samantabhadra holds a gemstone grain sheath because he fulfills the hopes of sentient beings.

**And** as for the female bodhisattvas, they **hold delightful implements in a beautiful manner:** Vajralāsyā rests her hands on her hips, forming the gesture of the indestructible fist (*rdo rje khu tshur*), or else she holds a mirror, because she reveals all visual forms to be the essential nature of the real. Mālyā holds a garland of gems because she symbolizes that skillful means and discriminative awareness are unseparated. Gītā holds a lute because she plays aloud the melody of the doctrine. Nartī holds a vajra and rings a bell in her hands, while dancing, because she delights those to be trained. Dhūpā holds a censer because her scent of ethical discipline satisfies [living beings]. Puṣpā holds a basket of flowers because she symbolizes the branches of enlightenment. Ālokā holds a butter

lamp because she dispels the darkness of fundamental ignorance, and Gandhā holds a doctrinal conch filled with scented water because she washes the stains of propensities. [See plates 2a-2h.]

As for the six sages, Śatakratu holds a lute because he teaches the four affirmations of doctrine<sup>429</sup> to the gods. Vemacitra bears armor and a sword because he disciplines the demigods through fighting and disputation. Śākyamuni holds a monk's staff and a begging bowl because he teaches the ten virtuous actions to human beings. Sthirasimha holds a book because he liberates the knot of foolishness and dumbness in animals. Jvālamukha holds a gemstone chest because he dispels the hunger and thirst of anguished spirits. And the ox-headed Yama (*a va glang mgo*) holds fire and water because he discloses the misfortunes of the denizens of hell. [See plates 5a-5f.]

The male and female Samantabhadra hold no symbolic hand emblems because they symbolize that the expanse [of reality] and the buddha body of actual reality are free from conceptual elaboration. There are some who claim that they hold the vajra and the lotus, but they have not understood the pure nature of these deities. [See plates 4a and 4b.]

As for the four male gatekeepers, Yamāntaka holds a skull-topped club because he subjugates the demonic force that is the lord of death. Mahābala holds a vajra because he subjugates the demonic force of the psychophysical aggregates. Hayagrīva holds a skull and snake because he subjugates the demonic force of afflictive mental states, and Amṛtakunḍalin holds a crossed vajra because he subjugates the demonic force of the divine prince [of egotism]. The four female gatekeepers [Aṅkuśā, Pāśā, Sphoṭā, and Ghaṇṭā] respectively hold an iron hook, a lasso, an iron chain, and a bell in order to symbolize the four attractive qualities of a bodhisattva and the four immeasurable aspirations.<sup>430</sup> [See plates 3a-3d.]

The fourth aspect [of the maṇḍala of the supported deities],

concerning the body colors [of the peaceful deities] (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4) [comments on the verse]:

**There are twenty-five [deities] who partake of the five body colors [of the five enlightened families], and seventeen [of diversified color].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:9)***

མཐོང་ག་དཀར་པོ་སེར་ལེ་བརྟན།  
ལྗང་གུ་ལ་སོགས་སྣ་ཚོགས་པའི།

Their [body colors] are blue, white, yellow, scarlet, green, And diversified combinations, including these.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

There are twenty-five [deities] who have body colors corresponding to those of [the buddhas of] the enlightened families, and seventeen who have diversified body colors. The former include five deities, namely, the male buddha Vairocana, along with his female consort, the male and female Samantabhadra, and [Vemacitra], the sage of the demigods, who **are blue** in color to symbolize the unchanging actual reality of the enlightened family of buddha mind.

The male buddha Akṣobhya along with his female consort, the male bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha along with his female consort, and [Śatakratu] the sage of the gods are **white** in color to symbolize that the enlightened family of buddha body is unmarred by defects.

The male buddha Ratnasambhava along with his female consort, the male bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha along with his female consort, and [Śākyamuni] the sage of human beings are



**yellow** in color to symbolize the qualities of greatness belonging to the family of buddha attributes.

The male buddha Amitābha along with his female consort, the male bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara along with his female consort, and [Jvālamukha] the sage of the anguished spirits are **scarlet** or red in color to symbolize that the enlightened family of buddha speech is attracted through compassionate spirituality to living beings.

The male buddha Amoghasiddhi along with his female consort, the male bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi along with his female consort, and [Sthirasimha] the sage of the animals are **green** in color because the family of buddha activity grants instruction through diverse rites.

The latter are [those deities] whose body colors are **diversified combinations, including these**, because they train living beings by means of many diverse buddha activities and attributes: The male bodhisattva Maitreya and his female consort are whitish-yellow. The male bodhisattva Nivaraṇaviṣkambhin and his female consort are reddish-yellow. The male bodhisattva Samantabhadra and his female consort are reddish-green. The male bodhisattva Mañjuḥṣa and his female consort are whitish-green. The male gatekeeper Yamāntaka and his female consort are dark brown. The male gatekeeper Mahābala and his female consort are dark yellow. The male gatekeeper Hayagrīva and his female consort are dark red. The male gatekeeper Amṛtakuṇḍalin and his female consort are dark green, and [Yama] the sage of the hells is smoke-colored.

In this context, there are some who hold that the sage of the animals is either dark yellow or red, but they have not analyzed the color of the light within the energy centers [of the subtle body].<sup>431</sup>

The fifth aspect [of the maṇḍala of the supported deities], concerning the demeanor [of the peaceful deities] (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.5) [comments on the verse]:

**[Their demeanor exhibits] five essential attributes  
and four subsidiary attributes.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:10)***

མཉེན་ལྷག་འཁྲིལ་ལྗེམ་གཞོན་ཚུལ་ཅན།  
གསལ་འཚོར་ལྷན་སྤྱག་གཟི་བྱིན་ལྷན།

[These deities] are supple, slender, handsome, upright,  
and youthful;  
Radiant, lustrous, resplendent, and brilliant.

***Interlinear Commentary***

These deities have a demeanor that is **supple** in body and physically attractive because they have inherently purified birth. Their bodies **are** at ease because they have inherently purified sickness, and **slender** because they are well proportioned. Their bodies are **handsome**, without laxity, and quite **upright** or erect because they have inherently purified death. Their bodies are soft, **youthful**, and physically attractive because they have inherently purified old age. These five are the essential attributes [of the buddha body]. As for the [four] attributes of their appearance, the buddha body has a most **radiant** hue because it is immaculately adorned with major and minor marks. The buddha body is bright and has a **lustrous** incandescence because it has perfected the consummation of the elements. The buddha body is **resplendent** because it is majestic and pleasant, **and**

extremely **brilliant** because it overwhelms living beings.

There are also some who claim that these [two sets of attributes] refer respectively to the five demeanors of the male deities and the four demeanors of the female deities.<sup>432</sup>

The sixth aspect [of the maṇḍala of the supported deities], concerning their diffusion of light rays (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.6) [comments on the verse]:

**Lights of six colors [are diffused from] their six energy centers, and the light from their pores is limitless.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:11)***

།འོད་ཟེར་འཕྲོ་བའི་ཚོགས་ཆེན་པོ།  
།འབར་བའི་སྒྲིབ་བས་འབྲིགས་པ་སྟེ།  
།མཐའ་དབུས་མེད་པར་བྱབ་པ་ཡི།  
།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བསམ་ཡས་ལྷན་གྲིས་གྲུབ།

This great assemblage, which diffuses light rays,  
Is enveloped by a blazing ring [of fire].  
Pervasive without extremes or center,  
It is an inconceivable, spontaneously present maṇḍala.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This great assemblage** of light rays, **which diffuses** countless billion-billions of **light rays** in the ten directions from the six great energy centers within the bodies of these deities

and also from all their pores, is manifest without limitation. The six centers are those of the crown protuberance, the point between the eyebrows, the throat, the heart, the navel, and the soles of the feet; and the light rays that are diffused therefrom are respectively colored blue, yellow, red, white, madder, and crystal. Madder is scarlet or light red, while crystal is bluish-white in color and translucent. The nature of the buddha body's inner radiance is such that it diffuses these six [colors from] its six respective [energy centers] throughout the ten directions, along with a billion-billion concomitant rays of light.<sup>433</sup>

The male and female gatekeepers are present in an awesome guise in the midst of this throng, which **is** encircled and **enveloped** in the ten directions **by a blazing ring** of fire, within a blazing aureole, like the conflagration at the end of an aeon.

Manifesting in this way, **pervasive** in the expanse of space, **without extremes or center**, this **maṇḍala** of meditative stability is beyond number and measure, **inconceivable** and **spontaneously present** in nature. Meditating on [this maṇḍala], one becomes expansive, in the manner of reality's expanse, and arrives at the essential nature of genuine pristine cognition.

## **AN EXEGESIS OF THE FRUITIONAL MAṆḌALA ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE MAṆḌALA OF MEDITATIVE STABILITY [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2]**

The second section [of the detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of meditative stability that forms the path, see above, p. 239, is the exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala accomplished through the maṇḍala of meditative stability]. This itself comprises (i) the arising of the fruitional buddha body (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.1); (ii) the consequent performance of buddha activities

(16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.2); (iii) the consequent liberation of living beings (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3); and (iv) the manifestation of wondrous indications (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.4).<sup>434</sup>

## **THE ARISING OF THE FRUITIONAL BUDDHA BODY [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.1]**

The first [comments on the verse]:

**The buddha body of actual reality reveals the buddha body of perfect resource and the diversified buddha bodies of emanation.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 6:12)*

།སྐྱུ་ཡི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེ་མཚོག་ནི།  
།དེ་བཞིན་དབྱིངས་ལས་མ་གཡོས་ཀྱང་།  
།ཡང་དག་ཐར་བའི་གཟུགས་སྐྱུ་དང་།  
།འགོ་བ་མ་ལུས་གདུལ་བའི་ཕྱིར།  
།མཐུན་བྱས་སྐྱུ་ནི་སྣ་ཚོགས་སྟོན།

The supreme great seal of buddha body,  
Without straying from the real expanse,  
[Emerges as] the buddha body of form  
That confers genuine release,  
And proliferates as the buddha bodies,  
Which act in conformity with living beings,

In order to instruct them all, without exception.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The supreme great seal** is the natural expression **of** the **buddha body** of reality's expanse since this buddha body of actual reality is the essential nature of all buddha bodies—the buddhahood that is manifestly attained in the nature of space, free from all extremes of conceptual elaboration. Its conclusive accomplishment is that, **without straying from** actual reality—**the real expanse**—it acts as the ground from which the other buddha bodies arise. [Emerging] from its disposition, **the buddha body of form that confers genuine release** from the two obscurations and their propensities includes the buddha body of perfect resource adorned by excellent major and minor marks, **and the buddha bodies** [of emanation], **which act in conformity with** the aspirations of the individual minds of **living beings, in order to instruct them all, without exception**, through its diffusion of compassionate spirituality. To that end, [the buddha body of emanation] **proliferates** in the forms of universal monarchs, whores, pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and even inanimate objects, and so forth.

### **THE CONSEQUENT PERFORMANCE OF BUDDHA ACTIVITIES [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.2]**

The second comprises (i) the similes that suggest the manifestation of buddha activities, without straying from the expanse [of actual reality] (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the actual manifestations of buddha activities for the sake of trainees (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**Without wavering, [the buddha body of] emanation,  
training each according to need, resembles the  
moon reflected in water.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:13)***

།སྟོན་ཉིད་སྐྱུ་མ་མིག་ཡོར་ཚུལ།  
།ཚུལ་ཉིད་དབྱིངས་ལས་གཡོས་པ་མེད།  
།མ་གཡོས་བཞིན་དུ་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་པའི།  
།དེ་ཚོ་མི་མཐུན་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་ལ།

།སོ་སོ་འབྲ་བར་སྐྱར་བ་ནི།  
།དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་ལས་མ་གཡོས་<sup>435</sup>ཀྱང་།  
།ལས་འབྲེའི་དབང་གིས་སོ་སོར་སྐྱར།  
།དཔེར་ན་མེ་ལོང་ཚུ་སྐྱ་བཞིན།

This teacher [the buddha body] resembles a magical display or optical illusion—

A modality that essentially does not waver from the expanse.

When, without wavering, [the buddha body] proliferates, It assumes various dissimilar [forms]

Corresponding to the distinct [classes of beings].

Although it does not waver from the real,

It appears distinctly through the residual inheritance of

deeds,  
As, for example, [reflections] in a mirror,  
Or the moon [reflected] in water.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

For the sake of those to be trained, **this teacher**, [the buddha body endowed with] diverse emanations, in relative terms, **resembles a magical display or optical illusion**, which in the manner of a shadow is not truly recognized from the moment it manifests. Ultimately, however, it partakes of an uncreated and primordially pure **modality that does not waver from the expanse** of actual reality because it is **essentially** without conceptual elaborations. But **when, without wavering**, the buddha body of emanation **proliferates** its distinct forms in the perception of living beings, **it assumes various dissimilar** forms, including kings and brahman priests, and including peaceful and wrathful guises, **corresponding to the distinct** classes of beings to be trained. **Although** [this buddha body of emanation] **does not waver from** the expanse of **the real**—the buddha body of actual reality—even so, **it appears distinctly through the** respective fortunes of living beings and their **residual inheritance of past deeds**. To those abiding on the [bodhisattva] levels, it appears as the emanations of natural expression (*rang bzhin sprul sku*), to some living beings as emanations that train living beings, to some as impure emanations, to some as the diversified emanations (*sna tshogs sprul pa'i sku*), and so forth.<sup>436</sup> It is **as, for example**, when the reflection of one's face appears on the surface of **a mirror**, although the face itself is not transferred therein, **or** when the moon in the sky appears in a pool of water as **the moon reflected in water**, although the moon itself is not transferred therein. Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*:



Just as the moon, without being transferred from the  
firmament,  
Appears in a pool of water,

Without wavering from the real  
There are inconceivable billions of emanations.  
To some the buddhas are revealed to be few,  
To some they are manifold and extensive,  
And to some all fields are revealed as emptiness.<sup>437</sup>

**THE ACTUAL MANIFESTATIONS OF BUDDHA ACTIVITIES FOR  
THE SAKE OF TRAINEES [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.2]**

The latter has four parts [which comment on the verse]:

**Its manifestations include the six sages, arhats,  
hermit buddhas, and Vairocana.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:14-17)***

།དེ་ཚོ་འགྲོ་བྱུག་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ།  
 །སྤྲིག་སྲོང་ག་ཟུགས་སུ་རྣམ་པར་བསྟན།  
 །ཉན་ཐོས་རྣམས་ལ་དག་བཅོམ་ག་ཟུགས།  
 །རང་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་ལ་བསེ་རུའི་ཚུལ།  
 །གཞན་ཡང་ཐེག་མཚེག་རིམ་པ་བཞིན།  
 །འོག་མིན་གྲ་མེད་གནས་མཚེག་ཏུ།  
 །སྐྱ་ནི་རྣམ་པར་སྐྱང་མཛད་ཚུལ།  
 །བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་འཁོར་རྣམས་ལ།  
 །དེ་བཞིན་གསུང་མཚེག་མི་སྐྱ་ཏེ།  
 །སྐྱ་ཡིས་ཚོས་རྣམས་མཇལ་བར་སྟོན།

At this same time, [the buddha body also] reveals itself  
 To all six classes of living beings  
 In forms that bring them to renounce negativity;  
 To pious attendants appearing in the form of an arhat;  
 And to hermit buddhas in the solitary manner of a rhino.  
 Moreover, according to the degree of the supreme vehicle,  
 In the supreme unsurpassed abode of Akaniṣṭha,  
 The buddha body [is present] as Vairocana,  
 Who, to retinues of bodhisattvas, does not divulge  
 The supreme buddha speech in that [aforementioned]  
 way.  
 Rather, he discloses through this buddha body  
 The sacred doctrines that are encountered.

***Interlinear Commentary***

[The first part concerns the manifestation of buddha activities for the sake of the six ordinary classes of living beings:] **At this same time** when buddhahood is attained in the spontaneous Bounteous Array without conjunction or disjunction in respect of the three buddha bodies, [the buddha body] also **reveals itself to all** the ordinary **six classes of living beings**, including the gods, as the different sages such as Śatakratu, that is, **in forms that bring them to renounce**<sup>438</sup> the **negativity** of their minds; then it teaches the sacred doctrines that purify the obscurations of gods, humans, and so forth.

[The second part concerns] the manifestation [of buddha activities] for the sake of pious attendants: The buddha body may also appear in the guise of a virtuous ascetic and, **to** those living beings who are to be trained and who belong to the family of **pious attendants**, it reveals itself **in the form of an arhat**, foremost among pious attendants, who then establishes them in the realization of the four truths.<sup>439</sup> As is said in the *Sūtra Requested by the Emanational King*:

To those who are to be trained by pious attendants, he becomes present and teaches the sacred doctrine in the form of a pious attendant.<sup>440</sup>

[The third part concerns] the manifestation [of buddha activities] for the sake of hermit buddhas: In order to grant instruction by assuming the form of a hermit buddha, **to** adherents of the vehicle of the **hermit buddhas**, the buddha body teaches the sacred doctrine of dependent origination by means of symbols, [enabling them to attain realization] **in the solitary manner of a rhino**. As the same text says:

To those who are to be trained by the form of a hermit buddha, he becomes present in the form of a hermit buddha and genuinely teaches by means of symbols the sacred doctrine of dependent origination.

[The fourth part concerns] the manifestation [of buddha activities] for the sake of [adherents of] the Great Vehicle: **Moreover**, in addition to these, he appears differently to bodhisattvas of the tenth level whose **degree** of acumen **accords with the supreme vehicle**. **In the supreme**

**unsurpassed abode of Akaniṣṭha**, the excellent abode of the mighty lord, which is superior among the form realms, the teacher himself, **the buddha body**, is present **as Vairocana, who, to retinues of bodhisattvas** of the tenth level, forming the excellent retinue, teaches the Great Vehicle, which is the excellent doctrine, during [the time of] unchanging sameness, which is the excellent time.

The teacher who is actually the buddha body of perfect resource **does not divulge** the sacred doctrines as **[supreme] buddha speech in that** aforementioned way in which the buddha body of emanation appears to different living beings and verbally teaches the doctrine. **Rather, he discloses through** the essential nature of **this** apparitional **buddha body the sacred doctrines** of the Great Vehicle **that are encountered** in the minds of the retinue.<sup>441</sup>

## **THE CONSEQUENT LIBERATION OF LIVING BEINGS [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala accomplished through the maṇḍala of meditative stability] is the consequent liberation of living beings, which comprises (i) the refinement of obscurations according to the causal path (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.1) and (ii) the supreme attainment of the fruitional buddha bodies and levels (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**When [the retinue] beholds the buddha body, once obscurations become visible and have been refined, enlightenment will be attained.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:18)***

།མེ་ལོང་བསྟན་པའི་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དུ།  
 །དངོས་གྱི་མདོག་ངན་ཐམས་ཅད་སེལ།  
 །འཁོར་གྱིས་དེ་བཞིན་སྐྱབ་ལྟས་ན།  
 །བྱང་ཚུབ་སྐྱིབ་པ་གཏིང་དཔག་མེད།  
 །མེ་ལོང་བཞིན་དུ་སྐྱེ་ལ་སྣང།  
 །དེ་ནས་ས་བཅུ་རིམ་གྱིས་འབྱང།  
 །ལྷ་མེད་བྱང་ཚུབ་ཡང་དག་འཕྲོབ།

Reminiscent of the way in which all the sallowness of  
 one's actual [face]  
 Can be removed when exposed in a mirror,  
 When the retinue beholds the buddha body in this  
 manner,  
 The inestimable depth of their obscurations to  
 enlightenment  
 Becomes visible on the buddha body, as in a mirror.  
 Then the ten levels are sequentially purified,  
 And unsurpassed enlightenment is genuinely obtained.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

This is in two parts, the first of which is illustrative: This [refinement of obscurations] is **reminiscent of the way in which** stains can be seen **when** one's face is **exposed in a mirror**, so that **all the sallowness of one's actual** complexion, tainted by blemishes, **can be** cleansed and **removed**.

[The second] is meaningful: **When the retinue** of

bodhisattvas of the tenth level **beholds the buddha body** of the teacher, that is, the buddha body of perfect resource, **in this same manner, the depth of their obscurations to enlightenment** along with their gross, mediocre, and subtle blemishes, which are difficult to estimate and cannot be measured, **becomes visible on the buddha body** of perfect resource, just **as** blemishes are visible **in a mirror**.

**Then** these bodhisattvas persevere in order to purify the blemishes of their respective levels: On the first level miserliness is purified. On the second level degenerate morality is purified. On the third level anger is purified, on the fourth idleness, on the fifth instability, on the sixth confusion, on the seventh the lack of skillful means, on the eighth obscuration with respect to power whereby the benefit of sentient beings is not accomplished, on the ninth the failure to achieve one's aspirations, and on the tenth level ignorance and its subtle seeds are purified.<sup>442</sup> Once the ten transcendent perfections and the levels have been completely refined by that purification, the blemishes of **the ten levels are sequentially purified, and unsurpassed enlightenment is genuinely obtained.**<sup>443</sup>

At the end of the continuum of the ten levels, the empowerment of great light rays (*'od zer chen po'i dbang bskur*) is conferred,<sup>444</sup> as is said in the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*:

Having reached the finality of meditation,

The empowerment of great light rays is conferred.<sup>445</sup>

Accordingly, when such a bodhisattva makes offerings to all the buddhas, great rays of light emerge from between the eyebrows of the tathāgatas of the ten directions and then vanish into the crown center of that bodhisattva, whereby the adamantite meditative stability is obtained and buddhahood is achieved.

**THE SUPREME ATTAINMENT OF THE FRUITIONAL BUDDHA**

## **BODIES AND LEVELS [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2]**

The latter comprises (i) a general presentation of the perfection of the buddha bodies and pristine cognition in the spontaneous Bounteous Array (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the perfection of the levels (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.2); and (iii) a synopsis of the spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.3).

### **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE PERFECTION OF THE BUDDHA BODIES AND PRISTINE COGNITION IN THE SPONTANEOUS BOUNTEOUS ARRAY [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.1]**

The first of these has two sections, of which the first concerns the attainment of the three buddha bodies without conjunction or disjunction (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The three buddha bodies are respectively  
inexpressible, inexhaustible, and inconceivable.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:19)***

འཚོས་སྐྱུ་དཔག་མེད་བརྗོད་དུ་མེད།  
འཕྲོད་ས་སྐྱུ་བཟད་མེད་ཡིད་བཞིན་གཏེས།  
སྐྱུ་ལ་བ་བྱེ་བ་བསམ་མི་བྱེད།



The buddha body of actual reality is inestimable and inexpressible.

The buddha body of perfect resource is an inexhaustible wish-fulfilling treasure.

The buddha body of emanation [diffuses] ten million inconceivable forms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The buddha body of actual reality**, wherein the expanse [of reality] and pristine cognition are without duality, **is** the essential nature, intellectually **inestimable and** verbally **inexpressible**. From its very disposition, **the buddha body of perfect resource is** always spontaneously present as **an inexhaustible treasure** of precious **wish-fulfilling** gems. From its disposition, **the buddha body of emanation** diffuses **inconceivable forms—ten million** times one hundred billion in number, for the sake of those to be trained.

The second, concerning the presence [of the three buddha bodies] as great self-manifesting spontaneity (16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.1.2) [comments on the verse]:

**Perfect in the major marks, the maṇḍala within perceptual range perfectly [displays] the two provisions [of merit and pristine cognition].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:20)***

མཚན་དང་དཔེ་བྱད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཚོགས།  
སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་ཀུན་ཏུ་མཐུ་ལ།  
ཚོགས་ཆེན་གཉིས་ཀྱང་ཚོགས་པར་རོལ།

Perfect in all the major and minor marks,  
The maṇḍala present throughout the perceptual range  
Also perfectly displays the two great provisions.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

The buddha body of perfect resource that appears as such is indeed **perfect in all the major and minor marks**, and it appears as **the maṇḍala** of buddha body and pristine cognition, **present throughout the perceptual range** of self-manifesting pristine cognition, where there is sameness with respect to the four times. As such, it is spontaneously present in a nature without good or ill, and it **also displays, perfectly** and with great spontaneity in that self-manifesting nature, **the two great provisions**, namely, the provision of merit whereby all excellent attributes are self-manifest and the provision of pristine cognition whereby there is no subjective apprehension in any respect whatsoever.

## **A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE PERFECTION OF THE LEVELS [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.2]**

The second aspect [of the supreme attainment of the fruitional buddha bodies and levels], concerning the [detailed exegesis of the] perfection of the [buddha] levels [see above, [p. 262](#),

comments on the verse]:

**The three buddha bodies are associated with the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth levels.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:21)***

།ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ས་ཡི་མཚོག  
།དེ་ལ་སོགས་པ་བསམ་ཡས་མཚོག

The supreme level and those of skillful means and discriminative awareness—  
[Levels and attributes] such as these are inconceivably supreme.

***Interlinear Commentary***

The level of the buddha body of actual reality, [known as] the Great Cyclical Mass [of Letters] ([*yi ge*]’*khor lo tshogs chen*) is **supreme** among the [buddha] **levels, and** it subsumes, without duality, Universal Light, that is, the level of **skillful means** associated with the buddha body of emanation, **and** [Unattached] Lotus Endowed ([*ma chags*] *padma can*), that is, the level of **discriminative awareness** associated with the self-manifesting pure buddha body of perfect resource. The enumeration of the levels and the enlightened attributes **such as these are** immeasurable. These **inconceivably supreme** attributes are entirely perfect.

In this context, there are some ignorant of the essential nature of the [buddha] levels who hold the level of Universal Light to refer to the buddha body of actual reality,

[Unattached] Lotus Endowed to refer to the buddha body of perfect resource, and the Great Cyclical Mass of Letters to refer to the buddha body of emanation. But that is a misunderstanding of the expanse [of reality], which does not discern them to be hierarchically designated enlightened attributes. Rather, it is explained that Universal Light is so named because emanations are universally immeasurable; [Unattached] Lotus Endowed is so named because apparitions are immeasurable; and Great Cyclical Mass is so named because pristine cognition is immeasurable. The last mentioned is also called the Great Cyclical Mass of Letters because, in the uncreated expanse [of reality], it abides as the emanational basis, naturally present and unimpeded in the manner of the seed syllables. This does not refer to the [above-mentioned] cloud mass of letters but to the nondual buddha body of actual reality. There are others who have confused this term “Cyclical Mass of Letters” with the [above-mentioned] cloud mass of letters, which does have the nature of emanation.<sup>446</sup> On this, it is said in the *Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful Means*:

Transcending the level of Universal Light,  
When one resorts to the [Unattached] Lotus Endowed  
...<sup>447</sup>

Is this not, one might ask, establishing a hierarchical distinction with regard to the levels? It is explained, however, that these [levels] are actually identical and are simply designated according to a hierarchical distinction of enlightened attributes and appearances that arises.<sup>448</sup>

## **A SYNOPSIS OF THE SPONTANEOUS PRESENCE OF THE FIVE BUDDHA BODIES [16.1.1.2.1.2.2.2.3.2.3]**

The third aspect [of the supreme attainment of the fruitional buddha bodies and levels], concerning the synopsis of the

spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies [comments on the verse]:

**[More specifically,] there are the buddha body of actual reality, the buddha body of perfect resource, the buddha body of emanation, the buddha body of indestructible reality, and the buddha body of awakening.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:22)***

།སྐྱེ་ཤི་མེད་པའི་གཡུང་རླུང་སྐྱེ།  
།ཉོན་མོངས་ཀུན་གྱི་ཞིང་དུ་གནས།  
།ཟད་མི་ཤེས་པའི་གཏེར་དུ་འགྱུར།  
།རྩོ་རྩེ་རིག་པ་འཛིན་པའི་སྐྱེ།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་དབྱེར་མེད་མཉམ་པའི་སྐྱེ།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྐྱེ།  
།དེ་ཚོ་སྐྱེ་ལྔ་ཀུན་གྱི་ཉམས་ལྡན།

The eternal buddha body, without birth or death,  
The one that abides in the fields of all afflictive mental states,  
The one that turns into an inexhaustible treasure,  
The awareness-holding buddha body of indestructible reality,  
The buddha body of sameness indivisible in all respects,  
And the buddha body of pristine cognition that knows all things—  
At this time all five buddha bodies are also perfectly [attained].

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

When these levels have been obtained, the five buddha bodies are also spontaneously attained:

(i) First of all, the buddha body of actual reality, free from extremes of conceptual elaboration, is the unchanging consummate [nature], the spontaneously present **eternal buddha body**, the actual reality that is **without birth or death**.

(ii) From its disposition, blessings arise as the buddha body of perfect resource, and thence the buddha body of emanation naturally emerges. The latter is **the one that abides** and performs acts of benefit **in the fields** of instruction, on behalf of **all** sentient beings endowed with **afflictive mental states**, satisfying each according to their needs.

(iii) The buddha body of perfect resource itself, the basis from which the buddha body of emanation arises, is **the one that turns into a treasure** replete with all the resources of the spontaneous Bounteous Array, **inexhaustible** in its provisions of enlightened attributes.

(iv) The nature in which these three buddha bodies are present without conjunction or disjunction is **the buddha body of unchanging indestructible reality, holding** the nondual indestructible reality and the great pristine cognition of **awareness**.

(v) Lastly, there is the buddha body of awakening, which has two aspects: The former refers to **the buddha body of awakening in sameness, indivisible in respect of all things**, in the nature of primordial Great Perfection, and to the pristine cognition that definitively knows [the view]; while the latter refers to **the buddha body of awakening and the pristine cognition that** quantitatively and distinctly **knows all things**.<sup>449</sup>

These [five] are also the buddha bodies associated with the five enlightened families and the five pristine cognitions: Respectively, (i) the eternal body is the buddha body associated

with the Buddha family and the pristine cognition of reality's expanse. (ii) The buddha body of perfect resource with its inexhaustible reality and the awareness-holding buddha body of indestructible reality are the buddha bodies associated with the Vajra family and the mirrorlike pristine cognition. (iii) The buddha body of sameness wherein all things are indivisible is the buddha body associated with the Ratna family and the pristine cognition of sameness. (iv) The body of pristine cognition that knows all things is the buddha body associated with the Padma family and the pristine cognition of discernment. (v) The buddha body of emanation, or the one that abides in the field of all afflictive mental states, is the buddha body associated with the Karma family and the pristine cognition of accomplishment.

**At this time** when the [buddha] levels are attained, **all five buddha bodies are also perfectly** attained.

Apart from classifying the fruitional levels, buddha bodies, and pristine cognitions, this has no temporal sequence. The levels are designated as such because they assume the repository of enlightened attributes; the buddha bodies are designated as such because they assume the bodies of the buddhas; the pristine cognitions are designated as such because they abide in naturally present awareness; and the buddha activities are designated as such because they benefit living beings. Although these are differently named, their essential nature is identical, just as the same thing may be called an entity because it arises from causes and conditions, impermanent because it is created, and a vase because it pours water, while these names have one essential point of reference.

## **THE MANIFESTATION OF WONDROUS INDICATIONS** **[16.1.1.2.1.2.2.4]**

The fourth part [of the exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala

accomplished through the maṇḍala of meditative stability, see above, p. 255], is the manifestation of wondrous indications. [It comments on the verse:]

**The emanating maṇḍala then became radiant in as many fields as there are atoms.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:23)***

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། འཛིག་རྟེན་རྣམས་གི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་མཐའ་ཡས་སུ་མེད་པ་ཐམས་  
ཅད་རྩ་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་བརྗོད་ཀྱིས་མི་ལང་བ། ཞིང་གི་རྩལ་སྟེད་རྩ་གསལ་བར་  
གྱུར་ཏོ།

So saying, the inexpressible maṇḍala in all the infinite, limitless ten directions of the six realms became radiant in as many fields as there are atoms.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**So saying** these verses, **the** inconceivable, **inexpressible maṇḍala**, emanating **in all the infinite, limitless** fields in each of the **ten directions of the six realms** inhabited by those to be trained, **became radiant** and manifested **in the fields** of all the buddhas of the ten directions, which equal in number all the **atoms, as many as there are.**

**A SYNOPSIS OF THE MAṆḌALA OF THE FRUITIONAL GREAT PRISTINE COGNITION [16.1.1.2.1.2.3]**



The third part [of the exegesis of the actual maṇḍala that is diffused from the cloud mass of letters, see above, [p. 237](#)] is the synopsis of the maṇḍala of the fruitional great pristine cognition. This comprises (i) the manner in which it is enunciated (16.1.1.2.1.2.3.1) and (ii) the essential nature [of the verses] that are enunciated (16.1.1.2.1.2.3.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**Then the following supreme and secret [synopsis] emerged, without duality:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:24)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་བཙུན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའི་དགྲིལ་  
འཁོར་དེ་དག་ཉིད་ཀྱི་གསང་བ་འདི་ཉིད་སྐྱེ་གསུང་བྱུགས་ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་  
དོ་ཇི་ལས་སྤང་དོ།

Then this secret description of these very maṇḍalas wherein the tathāgatas and the assembled host of their queens are without duality emerged from the indestructible reality of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once all things had become radiant as the maṇḍala, **then this secret description of the very tathāgata, emanating from these maṇḍalas wherein the self-manifesting tathāgatas and the assembled host of their queens are naturally**

**without duality, emerged as follows from the indestructible reality of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities.**

The latter [the essential nature of the verses that are enunciated (16.1.1.2.1.2.3.2) comments on the verse]:

**Ground, path, and result are the ground through which the maṇḍala of the buddha body of emanation is diffused from the buddha body of perfect resource.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:25)***

|ཨ་ཧྲོ།  
|དམིགས་བྱ་དམིགས་བྱེད་མི་དམིགས་དཔག་མེད་བསམ་མི་བྱབ།  
|ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་རིག་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་སྣ་ཚོགས་བརྗོད་མི་ལང།  
|མཉམ་དང་མི་མཉམ་ཀུན་བྱབ་བྱབ་མེད་བྱབ་པའི་དབྱིངས།  
|ཡེ་ནས་ཀུན་གསལ་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་རྣམ་འཕྲོ་སྣོས་པ་མེད།  
|ཧྲོ།  
|ཞེས་རྗེ་རྗེ་གསང་བའི་ཚིག་ཏུ་འོ།

Aho!  
Inestimable, inconceivable, and without reference  
To the referenced [object] and the referencing [subject],  
The maṇḍalas of pristine cognition—intrinsic awareness  
—  
Are diverse and inexpressible.  
The expanse [of actual reality] entirely pervades  
sameness and dissimilarity,  
Without the dichotomy of pervader and pervaded.

The maṇḍalas, primordially and universally radiant,  
Are diffused but not conceptually elaborated.

Ho!

Such were the secret words of indestructible reality that  
emerged.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Aho!** is exclaimed because the wondrous emanational display of this self-manifesting maṇḍala of meditative stability is revealed without straying from the expanse [of actual reality]. Here, **the referenced** object is the naturally pure phenomena, **and the referencing** subject is the intelligence purified of adventitious imagination. The ultimate nature, **inestimable** by the intellect, the **inconceivable** maṇḍala of the natural ground, is that which is **without reference** even **to** the nondual pristine cognition that is the essential nature of these two.

**The maṇḍalas of pristine cognition—intrinsic awareness**—through which, preceded by the three modes of meditative stability, one meditates on the nature of visualized deities in the manner of the moon's reflection in water, **are diverse** in form **and inexpressible**. After this meditation, one becomes equipoised in **the expanse** [of reality], the actual truth, without apprehending even the generation and perfection stages. Its essential nature is characterized by **sameness** because the nature of cyclic existence abides in actual reality **and** by **dissimilarity** because nirvāṇa is quiescent of references. This **is** the reality that the Great Perfection **pervades**—the natural expression of the actual truth **entirely** pure from the beginning, **without the dichotomy of pervader and pervaded**. Such is the maṇḍala of the path in which the generation and perfection stages are attained.

Finally, after this experiential cultivation, when one arrives directly at the fruitional ground, **the maṇḍalas** of the

diversified buddha body of emanation **are diffused** from the maṇḍala of the unimpeded buddha body of perfect resource that **primordially** appears **and** is **universally radiant**. Consequently, the two kinds of benefit are spontaneously performed for the sake of living beings. **But** whether these two buddha bodies [of form] are diffused or not, from the moment they appear, they are as they abide—their intrinsic nature is the buddha body of actual reality which is **not conceptually elaborated**. **Ho!** is exclaimed because the sky-like actual reality is wondrously revealed.

**Such were the secret words of indestructible reality that emerged.**<sup>450</sup>

This same synopsis may also be interpreted according to the ground, path, and result individually. [With respect to the ground,] the nature of mind, primordially **without reference to** the dualistic nature of **the referenced** phenomena **and the referencing** intelligence, is **inestimable and inconceivable**. In its disposition of inner radiance, **the maṇḍalas of pristine cognition—intrinsic awareness**—primordially abide, **diverse and inexpressible**. However, its natural sameness that **entirely pervades** the **sameness** of actual reality **and** the **dissimilarity** of its apparent phenomena is an **expanse** of great pervasion, **without** [the dichotomy of] **the pervader and pervaded**. **The maṇḍalas, primordially and universally radiant, are diffused** in great spontaneity for the sake of all living beings, **but** they are **not conceptually elaborated**. **Ho!** is exclaimed on account of this wondrous nature. The actual truth here refers to the all-pervasive essential nature, as is said in the *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*:

All the infinite entities of the spacious expanse  
Constitute the sameness and dissimilarity of reality's  
expanse.

Glorious in the expanse of total space,

Vajrasattva is ever present.<sup>451</sup>

With respect to the path [the same synopsis may be interpreted as follows]: The essential nature that is **without reference to** either **the referenced** meditative stability **or the referencing**

intelligence is the **inconceivable** nature of mind that emerges through the meditative stability of the actual truth, the meditative stability of universal appearances, which is **inestimable** compassion, and the meditative stability of the causal basis, which has compassion as its disposition, in the natural expression of the letters, the essential nature of [the syllable] a and so forth. Therefrom **the maṇḍalas of pristine cognition—intrinsic awareness—**arise, **diverse and inexpressible**. When one has meditated in this way, **the expanse** [of reality] becomes **entirely pervasive, without the dichotomy of pervader and pervaded**, because it is empty owing to the **sameness** of all things in the intrinsic nature of mind, apparitional owing to the **dissimilarity** of different [visualized] forms, and its essential nature is not produced. From that disposition, **primordially and universally radiant**, many **maṇḍalas are diffused** through the process of diffusion and absorption, **but** they are actually known in a disposition that is **not conceptually elaborated**. It says in the *Tantra of the Hidden Vital Essence of the Moon*:

The essential nature of all beings  
Is Vajrasattva, bliss supreme.

The facets of this reality

Are present in all things and in all respects.<sup>452</sup>

Then, when [this synopsis] is explained according to the result, the expanse [of reality] is the buddha body of actual reality, **without reference to the referenced** [object] **and referencing** [subject], **inestimable and inconceivable**. From its disposition, **the maṇḍalas of self-manifesting pristine cognition—intrinsic awareness—are diverse, inexpressible**, and radiant. Their reality **entirely pervades** the **sameness** of their essential nature **and** the **dissimilarity** of their array and forms. This expanse, **without the dichotomy of pervader and pervaded**, is the buddha body of perfect resource, **primordially and universally radiant**, from which **the maṇḍalas** of the buddha body of emanation **are diffused**. **But** they are **not conceptually elaborated** from the expanse itself, and they do not change, in the manner of the moon when reflected in water. Thus, the actual reality in which the three buddha bodies are without conjunction or disjunction is wondrously revealed. Here, there is sameness with respect to the buddhas who appear as such and sentient beings, who are actually nonarising. As is said in the *Sūtra of the Arrayed Bouquet*:

Those who well abide in natural sameness  
With respect to themselves and the buddhas  
Are nonabiding and nonacquisitive.  
They will become a tathāgata.<sup>453</sup>

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 6 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
entitled “The Maṇḍala of Meditative Stability.”**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 6:26)**

།གསང་བའི་སློང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ད་གྱི་ལ་འཁོར་སློབ་པའི་ལེ་བུ་སྟེ་  
རྒྱག་པའོ།།

This completes the sixth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Diffusion of the Maṇḍala.”

**Interlinear Commentary**

**This completes the exegesis of the sixth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus*, concerning meditative stability, *Definitive with Respect to the* self-manifesting *Real*, entitled “The Diffusion of the Maṇḍala” of natural meditative stability.**

## 7. THE ABSORPTION OF THE MAṄḌALA AND THE SECRET MANTRAS

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The purpose of this chapter is to present the maṅḍala of the secret mantras of buddha speech, which is an aspect of the aforementioned maṅḍala of meditative stability. Once the visualized maṅḍala has been emanated through meditative stability, the secret mantras then emerge from the indestructible buddha body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas in order to disclose the maṅḍala of buddha speech (v. 1).

First, there is a description of the actual syllables and words forming the secret mantras of the forty-two peaceful deities in the order in which they emerge, followed by the mantras that confer empowerment and blessing.

The actual mantras are enunciated in the following sequence: Those that visually generate the maṅḍala palace (v. 2) and the meditational deities within it (vv. 3-8), followed by those that invite and absorb the genuine deities into the visualization (v. 9) and make offerings to them (v. 10). A prayer for spiritual accomplishment ensues (v. 11). Consequently, the mantra syllables resonate throughout the world systems (v. 12).

Next, there are the mantras that confer empowerment through the five pristine cognitions and the five enlightened families (vv. 13-15). These, in turn, give rise to a blessing that dissolves indivisibly with the mundane body, speech, and mind of trainee practitioners, transforming the mundane world and its inhabitants into the maṅḍala of deities (v. 16).

More generally, the inner significance of buddha speech is then clarified and established through an exposition of its inexpressible essential nature (v. 17), its inconceivability (v. 18), its originally pure abiding nature (v. 19), its apparitional



nature (v. 20), and its nondeviation from the expanse of actual reality despite its diverse manifestations as the teachings of the nine vehicles (v. 21). In fact, the indestructible buddha speech discernibly manifests through its disposition of compassionate spirituality for the sake of living beings (v. 22), but there is a paradox: it remains essentially unspoken while being ostensibly spoken (v. 23).

SECOND [see above, [p. 236](#)], the detailed exegesis of the branches [of the maṇḍala of meditative stability] (16.1.1.2.2) comprises (i) the maṇḍala of the mantras of buddha speech (16.1.1.2.2.1) and (ii) the maṇḍala of the seals or hand emblems of buddha body (16.1.1.2.2.2).

The former [which is the subject matter of ch. 7] comprises (i) a description of the causal basis for the emergence of the maṇḍala of buddha speech (16.1.1.2.2.1.1); (ii) the revelation of the actual maṇḍala of secret mantras (16.1.1.2.2.1.2); and (iii) the establishing of its nature (16.1.1.2.2.1.3). The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**The following maṇḍala of the secret mantras then emerged:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:1)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་བཙུན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་བཅས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་  
དང་གསུང་དང་སྤྱུགས་རྩི་ལས་འདི་དག་ལྷུང་དོ།

Then these [mantras] emerged from the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas, along with the assembled host of their queens.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of meditative stability had been revealed, **then** in order that its ancillary maṇḍala of mantras might be revealed, **these** following secret mantras **emerged from the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas, along with the assembled host of their queens.**

### **THE REVELATION OF THE ACTUAL MAṆḌALA OF SECRET MANTRAS [16.1.1.2.2.1.2]**

The second part comprises (i) the mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1) and (ii) the mantras that confer empowerment (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.2).

### **THE MANTRAS THAT VISUALLY GENERATE THE MAṆḌALA [16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1]**

The former has four aspects: (i) the mantra that visually generates the supporting celestial palace (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.1); (ii) the mantras that visually generate the deities supported [within it] (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2); (iii) the mantras that completely perfect buddha activities (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3); and (iv) the appearance of wondrous indications (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.4).

### **THE MANTRA THAT VISUALLY GENERATES THE SUPPORTING**

## CELESTIAL PALACE [16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.1]

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**BHRUM and so forth is the mantra that visually generates the supporting celestial palace.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 7:2)*

ॐ ब्रुं विष्णुं सुद्धे

BHRUM VISVAVISUDDHE

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Concerning the recitation of BHRUM VISVAVISUDDHE, **BHRUM** is a seed syllable associated with Vairocana, the [ritual] vase, the celestial palace, the wheel, and [the Buddha] Uṣṇīṣacakravartin. Among these, in this context, it visually generates the celestial palace upon the circle of pristine cognition, which is the immeasurable ground. It is because the celestial palace is the essential nature of Vairocana and because a [ritual] vase may also take the form of a celestial palace that these too may be visually generated from the syllable BHRUM. This same [syllable BHRUM] is also indicative of the Buddha Uṣṇīṣacakravartin because he was the one who formerly made an aspirational prayer for the sake of buddhas and sentient beings to the effect that it would become the celestial palace. As is said in the *Short Commentary*:

It is the mantra of Uṣṇīṣacakravartin's own aspiration. <sup>454</sup>

And in the *Sequence of Light*:

The diverse maṇḍalas are diffused in BHRUṀ.  
Fully transformed, it becomes the palace of pristine  
cognition.<sup>455</sup>

This syllable is also said to refer outwardly to the palace of the deities, inwardly to the seed syllables of the deities, and secretly to the womb (*bhaga*) of the female consort. As is said in the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*:

The expanse of BHRUṀ gathers diversity in the womb.

Pure in its activity and essential nature

Is this bejeweled basket of the buddhas.<sup>456</sup>

VIŚVA means “diversity,” indicating all that appears as the phenomena of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, and VIŚUDDHE means “naturally pure.” The expanse of actual reality free from conceptual elaboration, which is itself revealed to be the residence of the buddhas, is in this context illustratively referred to as the celestial palace.

## **THE MANTRAS THAT VISUALLY GENERATE THE SUPPORTED DEITIES [16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2]**

The second comprises six categories, among which the first, concerning the mantras of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.1) [comments on the verse]:

**There are ten seed syllables and ten essential mantras [indicative of the male and female buddhas].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:3)***

།ཧཱུཾ་བརྗེ་རྣམ་ཐོག་། །ཨོཾ་རྩི་ལྷན་ལྷན་། །སྣཱ་ར་ལྷན་ལྷན་། །ཨཱཾ་ཨ་རོ་ལི་། །ཧཱཾ་བརྗེ་རྣམ་ཐོག་།  
 །ཧཱུཾ་ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན་། །ཨཱཾ་བུ་ལྷན་ལྷན་། །ཨཱཾ་ལོ་ལྷན་ལྷན་། །ཧཱུཾ་ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན་། །ཧཱུཾ་བརྗེ་རྣམ་ཐོག་།

HŪṂ VAJRADHṚK  
 OM JINAJIK  
 SVĀ RATNADHṚK  
 ĀM ĀROLIK  
 HĀ PRAJÑĀDHṚK  
 MŪṂ DHĀTVĪSVARĪ  
 LĀṂ DVEṢARATI  
 MĀM MOHARATI  
 PHYĀM RĀGARATI  
 TĀM VAJRARATI

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The mantras of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families are in two groups of five, beginning with **HŪṂ VAJRADHṚK**.

The initial syllables of the mantras of the male buddhas are respectively **HŪṂ**, **OM**, **SVĀ**, **ĀM**, and **HĀ**. These are their generative seed syllables—the root mantras of unerring basis.

They themselves are the intrinsic nature of the five buddha bodies, the five pristine cognitions, and so forth. As is said in the *Tantra of the Secret Assembly*:

They respectively designate  
 The Holder of Indestructible Reality (Vajradhṛk),  
 The Conqueror among Conquerors (Jinajik),  
 The Holder of the Gemstone (Ratnadhṛk),  
 The Indicator of Great Desire (Ārolik),  
 And the Holder of Discriminative Awareness  
 (Prajñādhṛk).<sup>457</sup>

And in the *Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*:

The syllable **OM** is designated to symbolize buddha body

**VAJRADHṚK** and so forth are the essential mantras that symbolize the nature of these [male buddhas]: The first [**VAJRADHṚK**] is the essential mantra of Akṣobhya, **VAJRA** indicating the indestructible reality where appearance and emptiness are without duality, and **DHṚK** indicating that Akṣobhya is the holder of that reality. **JINAJIK**, meaning “conqueror among conquerors,” is the essential mantra of Vairocana, indicating that the expanse [of actual reality] free from conceptual elaboration conquers the mass of nonvirtuous actions and that the present and future physical forms that arise from it are also [inherently] pure in the body of the Conqueror [Vairocana].<sup>459</sup> Similarly, **RATNADHṚK** is the essential mantra of Ratnasambhava, **ratna** meaning “precious gemstone” and **dhṛk** meaning that Ratnasambhava holds it because he grants all that is desirable to living beings. **ĀROLIK** is the essential mantra of Amitābha, indicating that he is attracted toward those who are to be trained, and **PRAJÑĀDHṚK** is the essential mantra of Amoghasiddhi, indicating that he holds or maintains diverse modes of discriminative awareness for the sake of those to be trained.

The initial syllables of the mantras of the corresponding female buddhas are respectively **MŪṂ**, **LĀṂ**, **MĀṂ**, **PHYĀṂ**, and **TĀṂ**. These are their generative seed syllables—the root mantras of unerring basis.

As for the essential [mantras], indicative of their respective natures, **MŪṂ DHĀTVĪŚVARĪ** is the essential mantra of Dhātvīśvarī, who is naturally pure. **LĀṂ DVEṢARATI** is the essential mantra of Buddhālocanā who is the female councillor of all the buddhas. **MĀṂ MOHARATI** is the essential mantra of Māmakī, who is the caretaker of sentient beings. **PHYĀṂ RĀGARATI** is the essential mantra of Pāṇḍaravāsīnī, indicating that she is not covered by defective blemishes; and **TĀṂ VAJRARATI** is the essential mantra of Tārā, indicating that she liberates sentient beings from cyclic existence.

The second category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities supported within the celestial palace] comprises the mantras of the male and female bodhisattvas of buddha mind (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.2). [This comments on the verse:]

**The seed syllables beginning with KṢIṂ and HŪM, along with their mantras, are indicative of the eight bodhisattvas of buddha mind.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 7:4)**

ཁྱིའི་རྩ་རྩེ་ཡེ། ཁྱིའི་ལྷ་གསུམ་ཡེ། ཁྱིའི་ཉ་རྩེ་བསྐྱེད་ལེ་ལེ། ཁྱིའི་རྩ་རྩེ་ལྷ་ལྷེ།  
 ཁྱིའི་ལྷ་གྱི་ས་མ་ཡ་ལྷེ། ཁྱིའི་ལྷ་ལྷེ་ས་མ་ཡ་ལྷེ། ཁྱིའི་གྱི་ཉི་རྩེ་གོ་ཉི་ལྷེ། ཁྱིའི་  
 ཁྱིའི་རྩ་ག་ལྷེ་ལྷེ།

KṢIṂ HI RĀJĀYAḤ  
 TRĀM Ā GARBHAYAḤ  
 HRĪḤ HA HŪM PADMĀBHATAMAḤ  
 JIṂ KURUPĀṆA HRĪḤ  
 HŪM LĀSYE SAMAYAS TVAM  
 TRĀṂ MĀLYE SAMAYA HOḤ  
 HRĪḤ GĪTI RĀGO’HAM  
 ĀḤ NṚTI RĀGAYĀMI

**Interlinear Commentary**

The four [initial syllables] of the male bodhisattvas are respectively **KṢIṂ**, **TRĀM**, **HRĪḤ**, and **JIṂ**. These are their generative seed syllables—their root mantras.

**HI RĀJĀYAḤ** is [the essential mantra of Kṣitigarbha], the king who acts on behalf of sentient beings, nurturing them like the earth and the eyes.<sup>460</sup> **Ā GARBHAYAḤ** is [the essential mantra of

Ākāśagarbha,] the nucleus from which all desirable necessities emerge. HA HŪṂ PADMĀBHATAMAḤ is [the essential mantra of Avalokiteśvara,] who has a lotus-like face because he is without attachment and captivates the minds of those to be trained; and KURUPĀṆA HRĪḤ is [the essential mantra of Vajrapāṇi,] who acts on behalf of sentient beings in an indestructible [or vajra-wielding] manner.

The initial syllables of the four corresponding female bodhisattvas are respectively HŪṂ, TRĀṂ, HRĪḤ, and ĀḤ. These are their root mantras and seed syllables.

LĀSYE SAMAYAS TVAM is [the essential mantra of Lāsyā,] meaning “may I, endowed with a sensual demeanor, receive the commitments of all buddhas.” MĀLYE SAMAYA HOḤ is [the essential mantra of Mālyā,] meaning “I should maintain the commitments of all the buddhas through mnemonic incantation and meditative stability.” GĪTI RĀGO’HAM is [the essential mantra of Gītā,] meaning “I am attracted toward sentient beings, like a sweet melody”; and NṚTI RĀGAYĀMI is [the essential mantra of Nartī,] meaning “I must attract sentient beings through enlightened activities such as dance.”

The third category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities supported within the celestial palace] comprises the mantras of the male and female bodhisattvas of buddha speech (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3). [This comments on the verse:]

**The seed syllables beginning with MAI and JAḤ,<sup>461</sup> along with their mantras, are indicative of the eight bodhisattvas of buddha speech.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:5)***



|མི་ཏྲ་ར་ཁྱི་སྐྱ་ཏྲ། |སྐྱི་ཉི་སྐྱ་རྩེ་ཡ་སྐྱ་ཏྲ། |ཏྲེ་ས་རྩེ་ཡ་སྐྱ་ཏྲ།  
 |སྐྱེ་ལྷི་ལྷི་རྩེ་ག་ཡ་སྐྱ་ཏྲ།  
 |རྩེ་ཏྲེ་པེ་ལ་པེ་ལ། |ཏྲེ་པེ་ལ་པེ་ལ། |པེ་ལ་པེ་ལ།  
 |ཏྲེ་ག་ཏྲེ་ཏྲེ་ཏྲེ་

MAI DHARAṆĪ SVĀHĀ  
 THLHĪṀ NISSĀRAMBHĀYA SVĀHĀ  
 HŪṀ SARĀJĀYA SVĀHĀ  
 MŪṀ ŚRĪ ĀṀ RĀGĀYA SVĀHĀ  
 JAḤ DHŪPE PRAVEŚĀ  
 HŪṀ PUṢPE ĀVEŚĀ  
 VAM DĪPASUKHINĪ  
 HOḤ GANDHE CITTA HOḤ

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The root mantras or seed syllables of the four male bodhisattvas are respectively **MAI**, **THLHĪṀ**, **HŪṀ**, and **MŪṀ**.

**DHARAṆĪ** is [the essential mantra of Maitreya,] who accepts sentient beings with loving-kindness. **SVĀHĀ** means “may the ground be established.” **NISSĀRAMBHĀYA SVĀHĀ** is [the essential mantra of Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin,] who dispels obscurations that are obdurate or hard to purify. **SARĀJĀYA SVĀHĀ** is [the essential mantra of Samantabhadra,] the all-positive king whose intrinsic nature does not abide in the duality of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, and **ŚRĪ ĀṀ RĀGĀYA SVĀHĀ** is [the essential mantra of Mañjuśrī,] the glorious one who is attracted toward sentient beings, without abiding in duality.

The root mantras or seed syllables of the four corresponding female bodhisattvas are respectively **JAḤ**, **HŪṀ**, **VAM**, and **HOḤ**.

**DHŪPE PRAVEŚĀ** is [the essential mantra of Dhūpā,] the fragrance of ethical discipline that permeates the minds of those to be trained. **PUṢPE ĀVEŚĀ** is [the essential mantra of

Puṣpā,] the extensive cascade of the flowers of enlightenment into the minds of those to be trained. DĪPASUKHINĪ is [the essential mantra of Ālokā,] who dispels the darkness of fundamental ignorance with the lamp of pristine cognition, and GANDHE CITTA HOḤ is [the essential mantra of Gandhā,] who satisfies the minds of those to be trained with her flowing stream of nectar.

The fourth category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities supported within the celestial palace] comprises the mantras of the male and female gatekeepers (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.4). [This comments on the verse:]

**The seed syllables beginning with HŪṂ and OM, along with their mantras, are indicative of the eight gatekeepers.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 7:6)**

ॐ॑ य॒म॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ वि॒घ्न॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒  
 ॐ॑ प॒द्म॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ प्र॒ज्ज्ञ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒  
 ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒  
 ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒  
 ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒  
 ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒ ॐ॑ अ॒न्त॒क॒र्त॒प॒हा॒

HŪṂ YAMĀNTAKṚT PHAT  
 HŪṂ VIGHNĀNTAKṚT PHAT  
 HŪṂ PADMĀNTAKṚT PHAT  
 HŪṂ PRAJÑĀNTAKṚT PHAT

OM MAHĀVAJRADHARO MAHĀKRODHĪŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪM PHAṬ  
OM MAHĀRATNADHARO MAHĀKRODHĪŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪM PHAṬ  
OM MAHĀPADMADHARO MAHĀKRODHĪŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪM PHAṬ  
OM MAHĀKARMADHARO MAHĀKRODHĪŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪM PHAṬ

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The seed syllables of the four male gatekeepers are respectively **HŪM**, **HŪM**, **HŪM**, and **HŪM**. Through the sound of these syllables there comes about a convergence (*saṃharaṇa*), whereby cruel and malign beings are overpowered, or the enlightened attributes of greatness are established in the minds of those to be trained. Also, through the sound of their final syllable **PHAṬ**, there comes about a diffusion or dispersal (*āspharaṇa*), in which the cruel and malign beings are dispersed.

**YAMĀNTAKṚT** is [the essential mantra of Yamāntaka,] who apprehends and puts an end to the form of Yama, lord of death. **VIGHNĀNTAKṚT** is [the essential mantra of Mahābala,] who subdues or puts an end to obstructive impediments. **PADMĀNTAKṚT** is [the essential mantra of Hayagrīva,] who is not covered by the mire of cyclic existence; and **PRAJÑĀNTAKṚT** is [the essential mantra of Amṛtakunḍalin,] who subjugates the demonic force of afflictive mental states.

The corresponding female gatekeepers have **OM** as their initial syllable and **PHAṬ** as their final syllable, as above.

**MAHĀVAJRADHARO MAHĀKRODHĪŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪM** is [the essential mantra of Aṅkuśā,] the great retainer of indestructible reality, the mighty and fiery wrathful mistress. Similarly, the same mantra substituting **RATNA** [for vajra] is [the essential mantra of Pāśā,] the wrathful mistress who is [the retainer of] gemstones. With the substitution of **PADMA**, it becomes [the essential mantra of Sphoṭā,] the wrathful mistress [who is the retainer] of the lotus, or *padma* in the original Sanskrit; and with the substitution of **KARMA**, it becomes [the essential mantra of Ghaṇṭā,] the wrathful

mistress who is [the retainer of] buddha activity.

The fifth category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities supported within the celestial palace] comprises the mantras of the male and female Samantabhadra (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.5). [This comments on the verse:]

**The seed syllables beginning with HŪṂ and A, along with their mantras, are indicative of the male and female Samantabhadra.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:7)***

ॐॐॐ वज्रचित्तं ॐ  
अअअ वज्रिभद्रसमन्तां अः

HŪṂ HŪṂ HŪṂ VAJRACITTA OM  
A A A VAJRĪBHADRASAMANTĀ AḤ

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The mantra of the male aspect, Samantabhadra, has three initial syllables **HŪṂ, HŪṂ, HŪṂ**, indicating the three pristine cognitions or purities in the minds of sentient beings within the three world systems. **VAJRACITTA OM** is [the essential mantra of Samantabhadra,] whose nature embodies the compassionate spirituality of all the buddhas.

The mantra of the female aspect, Samantabhadrī, has the three initial syllables **A, A, A**, indicating that the three media of body, speech, and mind, the three times, and the three expanses respectively are uncreated. **VAJRĪBHADRASAMANTĀ AḤ**

is [the essential mantra of Samantabhadrī,] indicating that this reality is the pure nature of Samantabhadrī.

The sixth category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities supported within the celestial palace] comprises the mantras of the six sages (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.6). [This comments on the verse:]

**MUNE KRIM and so forth are the six heart mantras of the [sages of] the six classes of beings.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:8)***

ॐ मुने क्रिं सुह ॥ ॐ मुने त्रुं सुह ॥ ॐ मुने स्रुं सुह ॥  
ॐ मुने प्रुं सुह ॥ ॐ मुने क्षुं सुह ॥ ॐ मुने ये सुह ॥

OM MUNE KRIM SVĀHĀ  
OM MUNE TRUM SVĀHĀ  
OM MUNE SRUM SVĀHĀ  
OM MUNE PRAM SVĀHĀ  
OM MUNE KṢAM SVĀHĀ  
OM MUNE YE SVĀHĀ

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

OM indicates that the consecrated cluster of mantra syllables is the natural expression of the five pristine cognitions. MUNE means “sage” [literally, one who has capability].

KRIM, meaning “creator,” is the seed syllable of the [sage of] the exalted gods, because he creates the desirable attributes of the senses. TRUM, meaning “array of armor,” is the seed syllable of [the sage of] the demigods. SRUM, meaning

“essence” (*sāra*, *'khyil ba*) or great focal point, is the seed syllable of [the sage of] human beings. **PRAM**, meaning “stooping” (*prahva*), is the seed syllable of [the sage of] the animals. **KṢAM**, meaning “affliction” (*kṣara*), is the seed syllable of [the sage of] the anguished spirits, who are afflicted by the transformation of actual appearances. **YE** is the seed syllable of [the sage of] the denizens of hell, which is transformed in all respects into a state of redness owing to its dullness.<sup>462</sup>

**SVĀHĀ** means “may the ground be established!”—so that this class of living beings and their propensities might be pacified.

## **THE MANTRAS THAT COMPLETELY PERFECT BUDDHA ACTIVITIES [16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3]**

The third aspect [of the mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala, see p. 277], concerns the mantras that completely perfect buddha activities. These form three groups, the first of which comprises the mantras of invitation and absorption (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.1). [This comments on the verse:]

**The mantras of invitation and absorption are EHY EHI and so forth.**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 7:9)**

།ཨོ།ཨི།ཨཱི།ཨཱཱི།ཨཱཱཱི།ཨཱཱཱཱི།ཨཱཱཱཱཱི།ཨཱཱཱཱཱཱི།ཨཱཱཱཱཱཱཱི། ཨོ། ཨཱི།ཨཱཱི།

OM EHY EHI BHAGAVĀN MAHĀKARUṆIKA DṚŚYA HOḤ  
SAMAYAS TVAM JAḤ HŪM VAM HOḤ

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

OM EHY EHI BHAGAVĀN MAHĀKĀRUṆIKA DRŚYA HOḤ SAMAYAS TVAM means “Come here! Come here, transcendent lord endowed with great compassionate spirituality! Look [upon us] with compassion! May we receive the commitments!” JAḤ HŪM VAM HOḤ are the mantras that respectively summon with the iron hook [of Aṅkuśā], bind with the lasso [of Pāśā], tie with the iron chain [of Sphoṭā], and overpower with the bell [of Ghaṇṭā].

The second group [of the mantras that completely perfect buddha activities] comprises the mantras that scatter the [offering] flowers of one’s own awareness (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2). [This comments on the verse:]

**Five seed syllables and five SAMAYA [mantras scatter the flowers of awareness].**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:10)***

ॐ ञ्जुः ह्रूं सुं ह्रूं । व व व व व । ह्रं ह्रं ह्रं ह्रं ह्रं । स स स स स ।  
स स स स स । य य य य य । ॐ ञ्जुः ह्रूं सुं ह्रूं ।

OM ĀḤ HŪM SVĀHĀ

**VA VA VA VA VA**

**JRA JRA JRA JRA JRA**

**SA SA SA SA SA**

**MA MA MA MA MA**

**YA YA YA YA YA**

OM ĀḤ HŪṂ SVĀHĀ

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

OM, ĀḤ, HŪṂ, and SVĀHĀ [are the seed syllables that] indicate the five enlightened families and the five pristine cognitions. The [five] syllables VA, JRA, SA, MA, and YA, which are recited separately here, should be combined with the five [aforementioned] seed syllables preceding and following them, in this way: OM VAJRA SAMAYA OM indicates that buddha body is attained through the commitments of buddha body. ĀḤ VAJRA SAMAYA ĀḤ indicates that buddha speech is attained through the commitments of buddha speech. HŪṂ VAJRA SAMAYA HŪṂ indicates that buddha mind is attained through the commitments of buddha mind. SVĀ VAJRA SAMAYA SVĀ indicates that buddha attributes are attained through the commitments of buddha attributes, and HĀ VAJRA SAMAYA HĀ indicates that buddha activity is attained through the commitments of buddha activity.

The third group [of the mantras that completely perfect buddha activities] comprises a prayer for spiritual accomplishment (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.3). [This comments on the verse:]

**The commitments of buddha body, speech, and mind  
summon spiritual accomplishment.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:11)***



།ཨོྲྀ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྐྱེ་གསུང་བུགས།  
 །ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་མད་པོ་ཚེ།  
 །ད་ཉིད་དུ་ནི་མཉམ་སྦྱར་བས།  
 །ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཚེན་པོར་བདག་སྦྱོར་ཅིག།  
 །ཨོྲྀ་བརྗོད་ས་མ་ཡ་རྩྱི། །ཨོྲྀ་བརྗོད་ས་མ་ཡ་རྩྱི།  
 །ཨོྲྀ་བརྗོད་ས་མ་ཡ་རྩྱི། །ཨོྲྀ་བརྗོད་ས་མ་ཡ་རྩྱི།

OM King of pristine cognition,  
 Equipoised now in the most wondrous buddha body,  
 Speech, mind, attributes, and activities,  
 May I unite with the great seal!  
 OM VAJRA SAMAYA HŪM  
 OM VAJRA SAMAYAS TVAM  
 OM VAJRA SAMAYA HOḤ  
 JAḤ HŪM VAḤ HOḤ

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The expression **OM King of pristine cognition** constitutes an appeal to the Transcendent Lord, saying, “**Equipoised now in** the accomplishment of the **most wondrous buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities** of all the tathāgatas, **may I unite**, right here and now, **with the great seal** of the deities’ body, speech, and mind!”

**OM VAJRA SAMAYA HŪM** timely summons the commitments of buddha body. **OM VAJRA SAMAYAS TVAM** [timely] summons the commitments of buddha speech, and **OM VAJRA SAMAYA HOḤ** [timely] summons the commitments of buddha mind. **JAḤ HŪM VAḤ HOḤ** brings about integration and stability in the nondual nature.

## THE APPEARANCE OF WONDROUS INDICATIONS [16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.4]

The fourth aspect [of the mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala, see above, [p. 277](#)] concerns the appearance of wondrous indications. [This comments on the verse:]

**The sound of mantra [resounded] pervasively, conferred maturation and liberation, and resounded absolutely.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 7:12)*

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། གསུང་གི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་འདི་དག་གིས། འཛིག་རྟེན་རྒྱག་  
གི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་ཐངས་ཅད་ལྷབ་པར་གྲགས་སོ། རབ་ཏུ་གྲགས་སོ། ཀུན་ཏུ་  
གྲགས་སོ།

With these mantras, the maṇḍalas of buddha speech resounded pervasively in all the ten directions of the six realms. They further resounded and they absolutely resounded.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**With these words, the maṇḍalas of the secret mantras of buddha speech resounded pervasively** with the great sound of mantra **in all the ten directions of the six realms. They further resounded** by conferring maturation on all the minds

of sentient beings, **and they absolutely resounded** by conferring liberation on them.

One should know that these [three resonances] also refer respectively to (i) the secret mantras of buddha body, speech, and mind, along with their sound; (ii) the rays [of light] that are emitted from them; and (iii) the great apparition that is diffused in all the rays.

## **THE MANTRAS THAT CONFER EMPOWERMENT [16.1.1.2.2.1.2.2]**

The latter part [of the teaching on the actual maṇḍala of secret mantras, on which see above [p. 276](#)] concerns the mantras that confer empowerment. This has two aspects, of which the first, concerning the manner of their enunciation (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.1) [comments on the verse]:

**Vanishing [into that maṇḍala, the Supreme Identity]  
then brought forth the following mantras [of  
empowerment], which subsume its splendor:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:13)***

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་བྱེད་པ་པོ་དོ་ཇེ་དང་། བྱ་བ་མོ་དོ་ཇེ་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་  
པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལ་ཐིམ་པར་མཛད་དོ། དེ་ནས་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་དུས་བཞིའི་དེ་  
བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོས་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་དང་  
བྱིན་བསྐྱུ་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་འདི་རྒྱ་དང་གསུང་དང་ཐུགས་དོ་ཇེ་རྒྱ་འཕྲུལ་བྲ་བ་ལས་  
ཐུང་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord vanished into that maṇḍala where the indestructible active male subject and the indestructible female passive object are nondual.

Then the Supreme Identity of the tathāgatas of the ten directions and four times brought forth from the *Net of Magical Emanation*, the indestructible reality of buddha body, speech, and mind, these [following mantras], which are said to subsume the pristine cognition and splendor of the Supreme Identity.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the [aforementioned] mantras that visually generate [the deities] had been revealed, **then the Transcendent Lord vanished into that maṇḍala** of buddha speech **where Samantabhadra, the indestructible active male subject** indicative of the mental faculty, **and Samantabhadrī, the indestructible passive female object** indicative of mental phenomena, **are nondual**. And once he had vanished therein, **then Samantabhadra, the Supreme Identity of all the tathāgatas of the ten directions and four times, brought forth these** following secret mantras, **which are said to subsume all the excellent pristine cognition and splendor of** their great accomplishment, that is, **the identity** of the body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities of all the buddhas. This emerged, naturally arisen through blessings, **from the *Net of Magical Emanation*, the nature of indestructible reality** where the **buddha body, speech, and mind** of the male and female teachers [Samantabhadra and Samantabhadrī] are nondual, and where skillful means and discriminative awareness are coalesced.

## THE ACTUAL MANTRAS THAT CONFER EMPOWERMENT [16.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2]

The second aspect concerns the actual mantras [that confer empowerment]. These fall into three groups, the first of which concerns the conferral of empowerment through the five pristine cognitions that cleanse defilements (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The mantras by which empowerment is to be conferred through the five pristine cognitions.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 7:14)*

ॐ॑ अ॒नु॒पु॒त्र॒नु॒ह॒न्व॒न्व॒व॒ह॒न्व॒सु॒हृ॒म॒शु॒भ्र॒गो॒र॒न्मि॑ ।  
ॐ॑ अ॒नु॒द॒न्व॒न्व॒व॒ह॒न्व॒सु॒हृ॒म॒शु॒भ्र॒गो॒र॒न्मि॑ ।  
ॐ॑ अ॒नु॒प्र॒त॒ये॒रा॒न्व॒ह॒न्व॒सु॒हृ॒म॒शु॒भ्र॒गो॒र॒न्मि॑ ।  
ॐ॑ अ॒नु॒स॒म॒त॒न्व॒न्व॒व॒ह॒न्व॒सु॒हृ॒म॒शु॒भ्र॒गो॒र॒न्मि॑ ।  
ॐ॑ अ॒नु॒क्रि॒त॒नु॒ह॒न्व॒न्व॒व॒ह॒न्व॒सु॒हृ॒म॒शु॒भ्र॒गो॒र॒न्मि॑ ।

OM MAHĀSŪNYATĀJÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM  
OM MAHĀDARŚAJÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM  
OM MAHĀPRATYAVEKṢAÑĀJÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM  
OM MAHĀSAMATĀJÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM  
OM MAHĀKRṬYĀNUṢṬHĀNAJÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**OM MAHĀŚŪNYATĀJÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAṀ** means “I am the identity that is the essential nature of indestructible reality, the great pristine cognition of emptiness.”<sup>463</sup> When [the words of this mantra] are similarly correlated with the other pristine cognitions, **ĀDARŚA** indicates the mirrorlike pristine cognition, **PRATYAVEKṢAṆĀ** indicates the pristine cognition of discernment, **SAMATĀ** indicates the pristine cognition of sameness, and **KṚTYĀNUṢṬHĀNA** indicates the pristine cognition of assiduous accomplishment. **JÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAṀ** means “I am the identity that is the essential nature of the indestructible reality or pristine cognition.”

The significance of this empowerment is that, at this juncture, [the deities] are crowned by the lord of their own particular enlightened family, a full inch in size. In that regard, the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation* accordingly says:

The conferrer Akṣobhya and his consort  
Display the seal of the vajra holder,  
As do Maitreya and Kṣitigarbha.

The other [deities of this enlightened family] have their  
own seals.

Yamāntaka is explained to symbolize permanence,  
While the great sage [Śatakratu], who is a vajra holder,  
Being without consort, is a [solitary] hero.<sup>464</sup>

At this point, you may ask, should the principal deity not represent the crowning enlightened family of Vairocana? Here Akṣobhya is acceptable because he symbolizes the buddha mind of the Buddha family. However, when in the context [of our tradition] Vairocana assumes that role, Akṣobhya symbolizes the buddha body. Here all the deities are crowned by the five tathāgatas.<sup>465</sup>

The second group [of the actual mantras that confer

empowerment] concerns the mantras through which power is introduced and blessing conferred by the five enlightened families (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**And the mantras through which the five tathāgatas are visualized in the five centers [of the deities' bodies] and blessings then conferred.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 7:15)**

ॐ॑ सर॒व॑त्त॒थ॒ग॒ता॒ म॒हा॒क॒य॒वा॒ज॒रा॒ स्व॒भ॒व॒ा॒त्म॒को॒ह॒म॑ ।  
 ॐ॑ सर॒व॑त्त॒थ॒ग॒ता॒ म॒हा॒व॒ा॒ग॒वा॒ज॒रा॒ स्व॒भ॒व॒ा॒त्म॒को॒ह॒म॑ ।  
 ॐ॑ सर॒व॑त्त॒थ॒ग॒ता॒ म॒हा॒चि॒त्ता॒वा॒ज॒रा॒ स्व॒भ॒व॒ा॒त्म॒को॒ह॒म॑ ।  
 ॐ॑ सर॒व॑त्त॒थ॒ग॒ता॒ म॒हा॒न॒र॒ा॒गा॒ण॒वा॒ज॒रा॒ स्व॒भ॒व॒ा॒त्म॒को॒ह॒म॑ ।  
 ॐ॑ सर॒व॑त्त॒थ॒ग॒ता॒ म॒हा॒प॒ु॒ज॒ा॒वा॒ज॒रा॒ स्व॒भ॒व॒ा॒त्म॒को॒ह॒म॑ ।

OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀKĀYAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO’HAM  
 OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀVĀGVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO’HAM  
 OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀCITTAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO’HAM  
 OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀNURĀGAṆAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO’HAM  
 OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀPŪJĀVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO’HAM

**Interlinear Commentary**

OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀKĀYAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO’HAM means “I am the great natural expression of indestructible reality, the buddha body of all the tathāgatas.” Similarly, VĀGVAJRA indicates the indestructible reality of buddha speech, CITTAVAJRA indicates the indestructible reality of buddha mind,

**ANURĀGAṆAVAJRA** indicates the indestructible reality of buddha attributes, and **PŪJĀVAJRA** indicates the indestructible reality of enlightened activity.

Through these [mantras], the five tathāgatas are visually generated in the five energy centers of all the deities. More than twenty-one thousand buddhas abide in this illuminating meditative stability because they are visualized within the five centers [of the deities]. The number twenty-one thousand refers to the blessings of the buddha body, speech, and mind.<sup>466</sup>

As is said in the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*:<sup>467</sup>

The great assembled host, diffusing light rays  
From the syllables which fill their three energy centers,  
Consecrates the three world systems and absorbs their  
brilliance.

The three energy centers of natural indestructible  
reality then manifest

In and of themselves, by way of two causes.<sup>468</sup>

In addition to these [three syllables], buddha attributes and activities are diffused from the syllables svĀ and hĀ in the navel and pudendum, respectively. As the same text says:

In the lunar disks of the two centers— The navel and the  
one associated with it<sup>469</sup>— The two pale green  
syllables svā and hā

Diffuse and absorb their respective light rays,  
Whereby buddha attributes are perfected

And brilliance is consequently acquired.<sup>470</sup>

In this way, [the deities] are adorned by the five enlightened families of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities.

The third group [of the actual mantras that confer empowerment] concerns the appearance of the blessings that



originated from those [mantras] (16.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**By this empowerment and blessing, the psychophysical aggregates and sensory elements blazed forth light.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:16)***

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། ཐིམ་པར་གྱུར་གསལ་བར་གྱུར་འབར་བར་གྱུར་ཏེ།

Through the recitation [of these mantras, the blessings] dissolved, radiated, and blazed forth.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Through the recitation** of these mantras that confer empowerment and blessing, the blessings granted through the power of those deities **dissolved** indivisibly in the body, speech, and mind of those to be trained, whereby the five poisons of afflictive mental states **radiated** as the essential nature of the [five] pristine cognitions, **and** whereby all the psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields **blazed forth** light as the maṇḍala of the deities.

**ESTABLISHING THE NATURE OF THE ACTUAL MAṆḌALA OF SECRET MANTRAS [16.1.1.2.2.1.3]**

The third part [of this chapter] is the establishing of the nature [of the secret mantras, see p. 276]. It comprises (i) the inexpressible essential nature of buddha speech (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.1); (ii) its inconceivable natural expression (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.2); (iii) its originally pure abiding nature (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.3); (iv) its supreme apparitional nature (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.4); and (v) its mode of being, which does not deviate from the expanse [of actual reality] (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.5).

Among these, the first [concerning the inexpressible essential nature of buddha speech] (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.1) [comments on the verse]:

**[Buddha speech] transcends language and words but emerges as diverse languages.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7: 17)***

ཨེ་མ་ཉོ་འཚར་མཛད་གྱི་ཚེས།  
 རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱིས་གསུང་།  
 ལྷན་དང་མིང་ཚིག་ཀུན་ལས་འདས།  
 ལྷོ་ཚིགས་སྐྱེ་ནམས་གསལ་བར་འབྱུང་།

*Emaho!* This wondrous, marvelous reality—  
 The buddha speech of all perfect buddhas—  
 Transcends all language, names, and words,  
 But clearly emerges as diverse languages.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

***Emaho!*** is an exclamation of wonder at the mystery of the tathāgatas’ speech, an inconceivable topic, which is

particularly sublime.

**This reality, wondrous and marvelous** in nature, is **the buddha speech of all** genuinely **perfect buddhas**, a sacred wheel of inexhaustible adornment. This essential nature of buddha speech is wondrous in that it **transcends all** expressive **language** and the **names and words** that are applied to phenomena, **but**, at the same time, it is wondrous because it **clearly emerges** in immeasurable **languages**, comprising the **diverse** excellent intonations of speech, corresponding to the perception of living beings.

The second [concerning the inconceivable natural expression of buddha speech] (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.2) [comments on the verse]:

**Though known in conformity with its sixty modulations, [buddha speech] is inexpressible.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:18)***

|གསུང་གཅིག་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་ཡན་ལག་ནི།  
|བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱུང་ཏུ་བྱུང།  
|སྐྱ་དང་མིང་ཚིག་སོ་སོར་གྲགས།  
|ཐམས་ཅད་གསུང་གི་ཕྱག་རྒྱའི་མཚོག

The modulations of the maṇḍala of unique buddha speech  
Are inconceivable and all-pervasive—  
All languages, names, and words that may be distinctly known  
Are actually the supreme seal of buddha speech.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The **unique buddha speech** forms an authentic **maṇḍala** because it is adorned with sixty modulations of tone. As such, its sixty **modulations** include six primary qualities, namely, a range that is like the voice of Brahmā, a resonance like the rolling of cymbals, a musicality reminiscent of opera, a high modulation like the song of the *kalaviṅka* bird, a deep bass tone like the crash of thunder, and a pleasant rhythm like the sound of a lute. Each of these qualities in turn has ten subsidiary modulations, in that they are perceptible, apperceptive, worthy of hearing, harmonious, utterly profound, coherent, unassailable, euphonious, orderly, and distinctly clear, making sixty modulations in all.

Alternatively, [buddha speech] is said to have ten qualities, in that it is melodious, penetrative, swiftly understood, unhesitating, specifically intended, momentary, accessible, inspirational, distinguished, and instructive, each of which has six subsidiary aspects, making sixty in all.<sup>471</sup>

When the [former sixty modulations] are combined with [the latter ten qualities], there are six hundred aspects of intonation. These multiply to six thousand and then to twenty-four thousand when each is subdivided according to the ten directions and the four times. Then, when further subdivided according to the six realms, the aspects [of buddha speech] **are inconceivable** in number, **and** they are **pervasive** in **all** world systems.

These [aspects] are **known** and understood in conformity with the **languages** of distinct sentient beings and their manifestation as **distinct names and words**. However, **all these** languages **are actually** shown to converge in the nature of **the** inexpressible **supreme seal of buddha speech**.

The third [concerning the originally pure abiding nature of buddha speech] (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.3) [comments on the verse]:

**Positive and negative language are [subsumed in] buddha speech, the uncreated indestructible reality.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:19)***

|རྒྱུད་མཚོག་སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་དྲ་བ་ལས།  
|བདེ་ལྡན་གསུང་གི་དོན་འབྱུང་བའང་།  
|ཐམས་ཅད་པདྨའི་དང་གྱུར་ན།  
|གྲོལ་ཐར་ལས་དང་འཁོར་བའི་སྐྱེ།  
|ཇི་སྐད་བརྗོད་ཀྱང་གསུང་མཚོག་སྟེ།  
|ཐེག་པ་མཐོ་དམན་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་།

|ལོག་འགྲོ་མ་ལུས་ཐམས་ཅད་སྐད།  
|བྱང་ཆུབ་དོ་ཇི་གསུང་དུ་བསྐྱུས།

From the *Net of Magical Emanation*, supreme among  
tantras,  
Emerge the meanings of buddha speech, endowed with  
bliss,  
And yet all these are present in the lotus-like disposition  
[of actual reality].  
Thus, the language associated with the path of liberation  
or release  
And the language of cyclic existence, as much as they  
are expressed,  
Constitute the supreme buddha speech.  
All higher and lower vehicles, and the languages  
Of all errant realms, without exception,  
Are subsumed in buddha speech.

Are subsumed in bodhana speech—  
The indestructible reality of enlightenment.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**From the** hundred thousand chapters of the *Net of Magical Emanation*, **supreme among all tantras, the meanings of buddha speech emerge** because it is the actual melodious sound of the doctrine—a causal basis **endowed with** inestimable [interim] benefits and [ultimate] **bliss** for the sake of living beings. **And yet, all these things are** primordially **present in the lotus-like disposition** of actual reality, untainted by blemishes from the beginning. **Thus** the essence of language is indeed demonstrated to be the empty essential nature of naturally pure actual reality. For this reason, **the language associated with** the vehicles that indicate **the path of liberation or release** [from cyclic existence] **and the diversified languages of cyclic existence**, which are conducive to rebirth in [the world system of] desire and so forth, **as much as they are expressed**, all of these do not transcend this actual reality but are in fact the uncreated emptiness of sound. They **constitute the** inexpressible nature of **supreme buddha speech**, the primordially pure essential nature.

**All** language associated with the **higher and lower vehicles** of the path to release [from cyclic existence] **and the languages of all** sentient beings **without exception**, including those of the three **errant inferior realms**, are actually **subsumed in** the inexpressible **buddha speech, the indestructible reality** or abiding nature **of** primordial **enlightenment**, the essential nature of the uncreated emptiness of sound, where positive and negative are without duality.

The fourth [concerning the supreme apparitional nature of

buddha speech] (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.4) [comments on the verse]:

**A single expression of buddha speech, being inexpressible, resonates to all, but its nuances are differently appraised.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 7:20)**

|བསྐྱུས་ཉིད་ཕྱོགས་བཅུར་རྣམ་པར་གྲགས།  
|སྐྱེ་ཉིད་མ་ཆགས་ངང་དུ་གསུངས།  
|གསུངས་པ་ཉིད་དུ་བརྗོད་དུ་མེད།  
|བརྗོད་མེད་དེ་ཉིད་སྣ་ཚོགས་སྐྱེ།  
|ཀུན་ལ་གྲགས་ཤིང་སོ་སོར་འཇུག།  
|དཔེར་ན་དེ་བཞིན་སྲིད་སངས་བཞིན།  
|གསུང་གཅིག་སྐྱེ་ཡིས་སོ་སོར་གོ  
|དེ་ནི་གསུང་མཚོག་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཡིན།

From this summation, [doctrines] are proclaimed in the ten directions.

Language itself is enunciated in its unborn disposition,  
But when it is enunciated, it abides as the inexpressible.  
This very inexpressible nature becomes the [source of]  
diverse language

That resonates to all but is differently appraised.

The actual truth may be differently interpreted,  
Owing to the language employed in a single expression  
of buddha speech,

As, for example, in the expression “removal of

AS, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE EXPRESSION “REMOVAL OF numbness.”

This is the king—the supreme buddha speech.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**From** the disposition of **this summation** in the inexpressible essential nature of buddha speech, an inestimable number of doctrines **are proclaimed** by manifold emanations and understood **in the ten directions**. This doctrinal **language is itself enunciated in its unborn primordial disposition**, in conformity with the perception of those to be trained; **but** at those times **when it is enunciated, it abides as the inexpressible** essential nature of buddha speech.

**This very inexpressible abiding nature**, on being expressed, **becomes** the source of **diverse languages**, so **that** a single term **resonates** in common **to all** those who require training, **but** its meanings are **differently appraised**. **The actual truth** of a single expression [may be differently understood], **as, for example, in the expression “removal of numbness,”**<sup>472</sup> which is understood by some to mean the removal of numbness caused by poison, by some to mean the removal of numbness caused by pins and needles, and by others to mean the removal of numbness caused by gnostic mantras. So, **owing to the language employed in a single expression of the tathāgatas’ buddha speech**, all things corresponding to the thoughts of different sentient beings may be **differently interpreted**. **This is** the intrinsic nature of **the genuine supreme buddha speech—the king** of all languages that appear. Accordingly, it says in the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

Depending on the merits and deeds of living beings,  
A single melodious sound of the conquerors’ speech  
May be heard differently, owing to the power of volition.

This indeed is the mystery of buddha speech.<sup>473</sup>

It is a profound coincidence of natural blessing that [buddha



speech] manifests in this way through the power of compassionate spirituality, even though it may be unspoken by the buddhas.

Concerning this passage of the text, there are some who claim that the Tathāgata had sneezed (*sbrid pa sangs*) at the entrance to his citadel, and that this was heard differently by an invalid, a nurse, and a doctor. Such persons, however, have not learned to appraise diction and meaning!<sup>474</sup>

The fifth [concerning the mode of being of buddha speech that does not deviate from the expanse of actual reality] (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.5) itself has three parts, the first of which demonstrates that although [buddha speech] manifests as the different vehicles, its essential nature remains unspoken (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.5.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Though differently heard, [the vehicles] are not enunciated in isolation from the actual truth.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:21)***

།ཐེག་པ་མཐོ་དམན་བསམ་ཡས་ཀྱང་།  
།དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་ལས་མ་གསུངས་ཏེ།  
།གདུལ་བྱའི་ཐབས་སུ་སོ་སོར་བོས།  
།ཇི་ལྟར་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱན་བརྗོད་ཀྱང་།  
།དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གསུངས་པ་མེད།

Although there are inconceivable higher and lower vehicles,  
They are not enunciated in isolation from the actual  
truth

८१८८१.

Although they are heard differently according to skillful means  
For the sake of those to be trained,  
And although all scriptures are expressed according to [the five vehicles],  
They are unspoken, according to the actual truth.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Although there are inconceivable higher and lower vehicles** that appear to be enunciated, **they are not enunciated** at all **in isolation from** actual reality, **the actual truth**. The *Pagoda of Precious Gems* concurs:

From the time when I attained perfect buddhahood until my final nirvāṇa, I did not teach any doctrine, but, derived from the actual truth, it appeared differently, in accordance with the volition of living beings. This indeed is the inconceivable mystery of the Buddha's speech.<sup>475</sup>

**Although** the words of buddha speech are not actually spoken, **they are heard differently** by sentient beings **according to** the enumerations of doctrine, owing to his **skillful means** that grants instruction **for the sake of those to be trained**. **Although all scriptures** of the tathāgata included in the twelve branches **are** ostensibly **expressed according to** the manner in which the lamp of the five aforementioned vehicles is arrayed,<sup>476</sup> if appraised **according to** the abiding mode of actual reality or **the actual truth, they are** the conclusive buddha body of actual reality, and therefore **unspoken** even minutely as a doctrinal discourse. As is said in the *Diamond Cutter*:

Those who see me as visual forms,  
Those who perceive me as sounds,  
Those persons, who remain on the false path,  
Do not perceive me—

For the buddhas should be seen as actual reality,  
The Guides are the buddha body of actual reality,  
And actual reality is not a knowable phenomenon.  
As such, it cannot be known.<sup>477</sup>

The second part [of the mode of being of buddha speech that does not deviate from the expanse of actual reality] concerns the appearance of the indestructible buddha speech for the sake of living beings through its disposition of compassionate spirituality (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.5.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Though [buddha speech] does not resonate from the buddha tongue, [words and meanings] are distinguished for the sake of living beings owing to compassionate spirituality.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:22)***

|ཡི་གེ་མེད་དང་རིག་པའི་གསུང་།  
|ལྷགས་ཀྱི་ཚེ་མོར་མ་ལུང་ཡང་།  
|ལྷགས་ཇི་གསུང་གི་བྱིན་ལྷགས་ཀྱིས།  
|འགྲོ་དོན་སྣ་ཚོགས་སོ་སོར་གསལ།

The unwritten [meaning] and the buddha speech that is awareness  
Do not resonate at the tip of the buddha tongue.  
Yet, by the blessing of the buddha speech of  
compassionate spirituality,  
Diverse meanings are individually distinguished  
For the sake of living beings.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The meaning [of the scriptures] comprises **the unwritten** abiding nature **and** the words that express it manifest as **the buddha speech**. Though buddha speech, which **is** the **awareness** of the sugatas, is heard by living beings, from the moment when it is heard it **does not resonate at the tip of the buddha tongue** as sounds and words with individual characteristics. **Yet, by the blessing of** naturally present pristine cognition, **the buddha speech of** the conquerors' **compassionate spirituality, diverse words and meanings are individually distinguished** and heard **for the sake of living beings** who are to be trained, corresponding to their volition. This is the indestructible reality of buddha speech.

The third part [of the mode of being of buddha speech that does not deviate from the expanse of actual reality] exemplifies [the buddha speech] that appears to be spoken although it is not spoken (16.1.1.2.2.1.3.5.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Buddha speech, which [becomes manifest through] the provisions of compassionate spirituality and volition, is like an echo.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:23)***

།གསལ་ཉིད་གསུང་གི་དོ་རྗེའི་མཚོག  
།དེ་བཞིན་གསུང་གི་འགྲོ་དོན་རྣམས།  
།དེ་བཞིན་ངང་ལས་མ་གཡོས་ཀྱང་།  
།དཔེར་ན་བྲག་ཅའི་སྒྲ་བཞིན་ནོ།

This clarity is the supreme indestructible buddha  
speech.  
The actual truth is such that the meanings of buddha  
speech  
[That emerge] for the sake of living beings  
Indeed do not waver from the disposition of the actual  
truth,  
Just, for example, like the sound of an echo.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This clarity** of words and the meanings of the doctrine that appear in that manner through the compassionate spirituality of the buddhas and the volition of sentient beings, in the hearing of those to be trained, **is the genuine supreme indestructible buddha speech**, uncreated from the beginning. **The actual truth** of the doctrine that is inexpressible but appears to trainees **is such that the meanings of buddha speech** that emerge **for the sake of living beings** become manifest in and of themselves and **indeed do not waver from the disposition** of the expanse [of reality], **the actual truth. Just as, for example, the sound of an echo** does not exist at all—either in the person [who makes the echo], in the cliff [that reverberates it], or in the intervening space between the person and the cliff—but rather it emerges as it is expressed, through certain conditions, so it is through the condition of the pure deeds of trainees and the primary cause of the buddhas' compassionate spirituality that [buddha speech] appears in the form of the doctrine. It is also said in the *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*:

Just as the sound of an echo  
Emerges in accordance with the apperception of others  
[But is nonconceptual and uncontrived],  
So the speech of the tathāgatas  
[Emerges in accordance with the apperception of others

But] abides neither externally nor internally.<sup>478</sup>

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 7 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
concerning the mantras of the different [deities].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:24)***

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བསྐྱུས་བ་དང་གསང་  
སྐྱབས་ཀྱི་ལེན་སྟེ་བདུན་པའོ།།

This completes the seventh chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Absorption of the Maṇḍala and the Secret Mantras.”

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the seventh chapter from the *Secret Nucleus***, concerning buddha speech, *Definitive with Respect to the Real*, which manifests from the inexpressible [reality], in conformity with volition, **entitled “The Absorption of the Maṇḍala and the revelation of the nature of the Secret Mantras”** of the different deities.

## 8. THE CONSECRATION OF ALL LIMBS AS THE MAṄḌALA AND THE SUBSEQUENT DIFFUSION OF THE SEALING HAND GESTURES

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The purpose of this chapter is to disclose the maṅḍala of the hand gestures of sealing and their symbolic hand-held emblems, which are indicative of buddha body. This, like the previous chapter, is considered to be an aspect of the aforementioned maṅḍala of meditative stability. At the outset then, the tathāgatas, having divulged the maṅḍala of secret mantras and its blessings, consecrate the limbs of the body as a maṅḍala of meditational deities (v. 1).

The maṅḍala of sealing hand gestures comprises those of the ground, path, and result. The first indicates that all phenomena, manifestly perfect in the *Net of Magical Emanation* (*sGyu 'phrul drva ba*), are sealed primordially and spontaneously by Samantabhadra, in the seal of supreme enlightenment (v. 2).

The sealing hand gestures of the path are then said to emerge in three successive phases: First, the causal basis for their emergence is the hand gesture known as the “indestructible palms” (*rdo rje thal mo*), according to which the seed syllables of the male and female buddhas located respectively on the fingertips of the right and left hands are joined together, giving rise to the sealing hand emblems of the various deities (v. 3). Second, the all-embracing hand gesture (*spyi'i phyag rgya*) is executed by joining the index finger of the right hand with the middle finger of the left hand, and the remaining fingers are also joined together in pairs, indicating that the central male and female deities of the maṅḍala are united, along with their surrounding deities, and giving rise to the supreme bliss of spiritual accomplishment (v. 4). Third, the

various hand-held emblems (*phyag mtshan*) indicative of the diverse deities of the maṇḍala then become manifest from their respective seed syllables through the hand gesture of the “indestructible fist” (*rdo rje khu tshur*) (vv. 5–19).

The sealing hand gestures of the result refer to the natural seal, which is the true nature of mind, the abiding nature of reality (v. 20), and to those seals associated with provisional and conclusive results. In the course of meditative experience and in communion ceremonies, provisional hand gestures of sealing are made whereby the limbs of the principal deity are emanated as the forty-two peaceful deities (v. 21), and subsequently as the thousand buddhas (v. 22), twenty-one thousand buddhas (v. 23), and even inconceivable buddhas (v. 24). By contrast, the conclusive seal of buddha body securely acts on behalf of living beings through its diverse manifestations (v. 25) and the diverse teachings of the nine vehicles (v. 26). Though unified in the nature of the body of pristine cognition (v. 27), the conclusive seal assumes indefinite appearances for the sake of trainee practitioners (v. 28), and it gathers within the abiding nature of reality all physical movements (v. 29).

THE LATTER [part of the detailed exegesis of the branches of the maṇḍala of meditative stability, see [p. 276](#), which is the subject matter of ch. 8] concerns the array of the maṇḍala of the seals or hand emblems of buddha body (16.1.1.2.2.2). This comprises (i) a brief introduction to the diffusion of this maṇḍala (16.1.1.2.2.2.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis of its nature (16.1.1.2.2.2.2).

## **A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE DIFFUSION OF THIS MAṆḌALA [16.1.1.2.2.2.1]**



The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**[The tathāgatas then] uttered these following aphorisms, which consecrated the limbs of the body:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:1)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱིས། ཡན་ལག་ཐམས་ཅད་དགྱིལ་  
འཁོར་དུ་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་འདི་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་  
དོ།

Then all the tathāgatas uttered these following aphorisms called “the spontaneous consecration of all the limbs as the maṇḍala.”

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of the secret mantras had been revealed, **then all the tathāgatas uttered these following aphorisms called the natural and spontaneous consecration of all the limbs**, head, and other parts of the body **as the maṇḍala** of deities.

**THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE MAṆḌALA OF SEALS [16.1.1.2.2.2]**

The second part comprises (i) a general presentation of the maṇḍala of seals which forms the spontaneously present ground (16.1.1.2.2.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of sealing hand gestures through which the path is attained (16.1.1.2.2.2.2); and (iii) a synopsis of the maṇḍala of seals which is the fruitional supreme pristine cognition (16.1.1.2.2.2.3).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE MAṆḌALA OF SEALS WHICH FORMS THE SPONTANEOUSLY PRESENT GROUND [16.1.1.2.2.2.1]**

The first [of these comments on the verse]:

**All things are primordially secured by the seal of  
Samantabhadra.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:2)***

།སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་བྲ་བས་མངོན་རྫོགས་པ།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་བྱང་རྒྱུ་མཚོག་གི་རྒྱ།  
།གསང་བ་དེ་ཉིད་ངེས་པ་ཡི།  
།སྒྲིང་པོའི་བྱུག་རྒྱ་འདུང་ལོ།

Manifestly perfect, owing to the *Net of Magical  
Emanation*,  
All things [are secured by] the seal of supreme  
enlightenment.

This seal of the *Secret Nucleus Definitive With Respect to the Real* is hard to transcend.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

All things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, subsumed in the psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields are identified with the essential nature of **the Net of Magical Emanation**, where buddha body and pristine cognition are without conjunction or disjunction, and in which **manifestly perfect** buddhahood is primordially attained. Therefore, **owing to** the fact that they abide [therein], in the manner of fire and the heat that is its natural expression, **all things are** said to be primordially secured by **the seal of** Samantabhadra, the **supreme enlightenment**.

When the naturally pure abiding nature is secured by **this seal of the** nucleus of unchanging reality, the kingly **Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real**,<sup>479</sup> it **is** said to be **hard to transcend**. This is because nothing transcends the Great Perfection of natural sameness, and nothing ever extraneously deviates from this invariably unchanging disposition. The *Intermediate Mother* accordingly says:

Subhūti, just as for example the sky neither increases when praised by anyone nor decreases when disparaged by anyone, similarly this reality, the actual truth of all things, neither increases nor decreases, whether the tathāgatas come into the world or whether they do not.<sup>480</sup>

**A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE MAṄḌALA OF SEALING HAND GESTURES THROUGH WHICH THE PATH IS ATTAINED**

## [16.1.1.2.2.2.2]

The second comprises (i) the causal basis for the emergence of the sealing hand gestures (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.1); (ii) the general sealing hand gesture that thence emerges (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.2); and (iii) the sealing hand gestures [and hand emblems] of the different deities that are diffused from it (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**Ten [seed] syllables representing skillful means and discriminative awareness are [arrayed] on the ten fingers.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 8:3)*

།མི་བསྐྱོད་ཉི་མའི་དགྲིལ་ཡི་གེ།  
།རིན་ཆེན་རྣམ་བའི་དགྲིལ་ཡི་གེ།  
།ལྷ་གཉིས་ཟུང་དུ་སྦྲོས་པ་ལས།  
།སྐྱུང་བས་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་འབྱུང་བའི་རྒྱ།

The union [that comes about] through the joining  
Of two sets of five, namely,  
The syllables on the solar disks of Akṣobhya  
And the syllables on the lunar disks of Ratnasambhava,  
Is the causal basis for the emergence of the sealing hand  
gestures.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

In general, the head [of the body] is described as the essential nature of the tathāgata [Vairocana], the right hand as that of Akṣobhya,<sup>481</sup> the left hand as that of Ratnasambhava, the left leg as that of Amitābha, and the right leg as that of Amoghasiddhi. Then, among the fingers that are the appendages [of those hands], the middle one represents the Vajra family, the index finger represents the Buddha family, the thumb represents the Ratna family, the ring finger represents the Padma family, and the little finger represents the Karma family.

In this context, the sealing hand gesture known as the “indestructible palms” (*vajrāñjali*, *rdo rje thal mo*) is the causal basis of all the sealing hand gestures. It is described as follows: On the tips of **the** five fingers **of** the right hand, [symbolizing] **Akṣobhya**, **on** five **solar disks**, [each] the size of a round pea, are arrayed respectively **the syllables** HŪṂ, OM, SVĀ, ĀṂ, and HĀ, which are the five [seed] syllables of the male buddhas, representing skillful means. **And** **on** **the** five fingers of the left hand, [symbolizing] **Ratnasambhava**, **on** five **lunar disks**, [each] the size of an amulet-shaped pea, there **are** respectively arrayed **the** five **syllables** MŪṂ, LĀṂ, MĀṂ, PĀṂ, and TĀṂ, which are those of the female buddhas, representing discriminative awareness. **The union** in the sealing hand gesture of the indestructible palms, which comes about **through** the respective **joining of** those **two sets of five, namely**, the five fingers of the right hand and those of the left hand, **is the causal basis for the subsequent emergence of the sealing hand gestures** [and emblems] associated with the different deities.<sup>482</sup>

The second, the general sealing hand gesture that thence emerges (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.2.2) [comments on the verse]:

**[The general sealing hand gesture is made when] the two syllables OM and MŪṂ are conjoined at their fingertips and the [remaining] eight seed syllables**

**touch.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:4)***

།ཨོྲྀ་དང་མུྌ་གཉིས་ཅེ་སྐྱར་ཏེ།  
།འབྲུ་བརྒྱད་བསྐྱོལ་ནས་ཅེ་སྐྱར་པ།  
།སྐྱལ་བ་ཀུན་དང་མཉམ་སྦྱོར་བའི།  
།བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་སྐྱིན་པའི་སྐྱ།

The two syllables OM and MŪM are then conjoined at their [finger]tips, While the [remaining] eight seed syllables are crossed, so that their tips touch. As such, they form the sealing hand gesture that grants supreme bliss, In which all conquerors are equipoised.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then the two syllables**—the OM that is visualized on the index finger of the right hand **and** the MŪM that is visualized on the middle finger of the left hand—**are conjoined** directly **at their [finger]tips**, and **the** remaining **eight seed syllables** of the right and left hands, namely, HŪM AND LĀM, SVĀ and MĀM, ĀM and PĀM, and HĀ AND TĀM, respectively, **are crossed, so that their tips touch. As such, they form the sealing hand gesture that grants** in this very lifetime the **supreme bliss** of spiritual accomplishment **in which all conquerors** of the five enlightened families **are essentially equipoised.**

On this, it also says in the *Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful Means*:

The fingers are crossed inwardly and press downward:  
The middle fingers, index fingers, thumbs, and little  
fingers  
Are made to touch outwardly at their respective tips,  
While the ring fingers are raised, side by side—  
This is the commitment seal.<sup>483</sup>

Buddhaghya holds that the seal of one-pointed pristine cognition or buddha mind, with the two middle fingers extended, side by side, which derives from the “securing of the vajra emblem” (*rdo rje bsdam pa*),<sup>484</sup> denotes the general commitment seal (*sāmānyasamayamudrā*, *spyi'i dam tshig gi rgya*) of the five enlightened families.

There are also some who hold that this derives from the sealing hand gesture of the indestructible palms, but with the index finger of the right hand in the gesture of menace and the middle finger of the left hand both meeting at their tips, while the remainder are intertwined.

The form that the gesture assumes in this context should be observed in accordance with the aforementioned passage from the *Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful Means*, but this in no way contradicts the latter two [interpretations], according to which the fingers may be crossed as described, because they may assume [varying] appearances as the five enlightened families [in particular contexts].<sup>485</sup>

## **THE SEALING HAND GESTURES OF THE DIFFERENT DEITIES [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3]**

The third, the sealing hand gestures of the different deities that are diffused from that [general sealing hand gesture,

comments on the verses]:

**The great seal refers to the visualization [of oneself] as the deities; the doctrinal [seal] refers to the seed syllables upon the fingers; the commitment seal refers to the hand emblems [of the deities]; and the action seal refers to the movements of the hands.**

In this context, the great seal (*mahāmudrā*, *phyag rgya chen po*) refers to the illusion-like or rainbowlike meditation on oneself as the deity; the doctrinal seal (*dharmamudrā*, *chos kyi phyag rgya*) refers to the meditation on the seed syllables upon the fingers of the hands; the commitment seal (*samayamudrā*, *dam tshig phyag rgya*) refers to meditation on the symbolic hand emblems (*hastacihna*, *phyag mtshan*) such as the vajra, which emerge from those [seed syllables]; and the action seal (*karmamudrā*, *las kyi phyag rgya*) refers to the movement and embrace of the right and left hands. So it is that all the four seals are fully present in all the deities. Although these four seals are not separately established in the root [tantra], they are to be applied as such in accordance with the words of this text.<sup>486</sup>

## **THE SEALING HAND GESTURES OF THE MALE AND FEMALE BUDDHAS OF THE FIVE ENLIGHTENED FAMILIES [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.1]**

This section on the sealing hand gestures of the different [deities] has five parts, of which the first concerns [the sealing hand gestures of] the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families.

Among these, [first] are [the sealing hand gestures of] the principal male buddha [Vairocana] and the female buddha Dhātviśvarī: *Root Tantra (Ch. 8:5-6)*



།འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐྱེས་ནས་ཐུགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 །ལྷོ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་དོ་རྗེ་འབར།  
 །ཟླ་བརྒྱལ་འབྲུ་སྐྱེས་དྲིལ་གསེལ་ཞིང།  
 །འཁྲིལ་བའི་རྩྱལ་གྱིས་ཚོས་ལ་བརྟེན།  
 །འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐྱེས་ནས་ཐུགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 །ལྷོ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་དྲིལ་གསེལ་འབར།  
 །ཉི་མ་འབྲུ་ལྷ་ལས་སུ་འཁྲིལ།  
 །བརྟེན་དེ་འཇུག་པའི་མདངས་གྱིས་བཟླ།

Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward his heart.  
 On the tip of his raised [middle finger] with the syllable  
 HŪM, a vajra blazes.  
 Drawn together on their lunar disks are the concealed  
 Seed syllables, which ring a bell  
 And, with an embrace, support it on “reality.”  
 Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward her heart.  
 On the tip of her raised [middle finger] with the syllable  
 MŪM, a ringing bell blazes forth.  
 On solar disks five seed syllables embrace “activity,”  
 And bowing, she looks on with a smiling demeanor.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

- (i) The great seal is applied when one meditates, visualizing oneself as the body of the principal deity [Vairocana].
- (ii) From this disposition, the binding commitment seal (*bcings pa dam tshig gi phyag rgya*) is applied when the **four**

other **seed syllables** apart from the syllable HŪṂ **are concealed** on [the respective fingers of] his right hand, which is clenched in the sealing hand gesture of the indestructible fist (*vajramuṣṭi, rdo rje khu tshur*), **and** the raised middle finger **extends upward**, its back **toward his heart**.

(iii) The doctrinal seal is then applied when HŪṂ is visualized at the center of a solar disk<sup>487</sup> **on the tip of his raised** middle finger, which is essentially identified **with the syllable HŪṂ**.

(iv) The visualized commitment seal (*bsam pa dam tshig gi phyag rgya*) is applied when this syllable HŪṂ melts into light, which then transforms into **a five-pronged vajra** that **blazes** forth light.

(v) The action seal is applied when his left hand forms the sealing hand gesture of the indestructible fist. **Drawn together** within it are the syllables **on their lunar disks—the five concealed seed syllables** representing the heroines, **which** hold and **ring a bell** with their indestructible fist **and** clasp his female consort [Dhātviśvarī]. **With an embrace**, they rest the bell **on** Amitābha, that is, on the left thigh of his female consort, who represents “**reality**,” and they **support it** upon her hip.<sup>488</sup> This is the seal of the male buddha through which the male buddha [Vairocana] makes offerings to the female buddha [Dhātviśvarī].

(vi) Then after the release of that gesture of sealing on his left side, the visualized [doctrinal seal] (*bsam pa chos kyi phyag rgya*) is applied when his symbolic hand emblem [the vajra] dissolves into the heart of his female consort, giving rise to delight.

(vii) The expressed doctrinal seal (*brjod pa chos kyi phyag rgya*) is then applied, uttering HŪṂ VAJRADHRK.

These seven steps may also be subsumed within the four seals: Both the visualized commitment seal and the binding commitment seal are included in the commitment seal. Both the visualized doctrinal seal and the expressed doctrinal seal are included in the doctrinal seal. The other [seals] should be known as they have been described here.

As for the sealing hand gesture of the female buddha

[Dhātviśvarī], the great seal is applied when one meditates on oneself as Vajradhātviśvarī.

The commitment seal is applied when, from this disposition, the other **four seed syllables** apart from the syllable MŪṂ are **concealed** within the lunar disks of her left hand, clenched in the “indestructible fist,” **and** the middle finger **extends upward**, its back **toward her heart**.

The visualized commitment seal is applied when, **on the** [raised] **tip** of the middle finger, which is designated as MŪṂ, one visualizes **her syllable MŪṂ**, upon its lunar disk, and **a ringing bell blazes forth**.

The action seal is applied when, **on the solar disks** of her right hand, the **five seed syllables** representing the heroes are placed upon the right thigh of the male consort and **embrace “activity”** [i.e., the right thigh of the male consort].<sup>489</sup> In this embrace, with her head slightly **bowing** toward her male consort, **she looks** upon his face **with a smiling demeanor**.

Then, after the release of that gesture of sealing on her right side, the expressed doctrinal seal is applied, uttering MŪṂ DHĀTVIŚVARĪ, and her symbolic hand emblem [the bell] is then visualized dissolving into the heart of her male consort.

The meaningful symbols, such as the vajra and the wheel, illustrate the five pristine cognitions.

The same procedure that has been outlined [above] solely in the context [of the principal male and female buddhas] is also then applied extensively to the other [conquerors] as well. Among them, [the sealing hand gestures of] the male buddha Akṣobhya and the female buddha [Buddhalocanā] are as follows: *Root Tantra (Ch. 8:7-8)*

།འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐས་ནས་ལྷགས་ཀར་བཀའ།  
།ཨྀ་བསྐྱེད་རྩེ་མོར་འཁོར་ལོ་འབར།  
།ཟླ་བརྒྱལ་འབྲུ་སྐས་རྗེལ་གསེལ་ཞིང།

།འཁྲིལ་བའི་ཚུལ་གྱིས་ཚོས་ལ་བརྟེན།  
 །འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐས་ནས་སྤྱགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 །ལྷོ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་དྲིལ་གསེལ་འབར།  
 །ཉི་མ་འབྲུ་ལྷ་ལས་སུ་འཁྲིལ།  
 །བརྟེན་དེ་འཚུམ་པའི་མདངས་གྱིས་བཟླ།

Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward his heart.  
 On the tip of his raised [index finger] with the syllable  
 om, a wheel blazes.  
 Drawn together on their lunar disks are the concealed  
 Seed syllables, which ring a bell  
 And, with an embrace, support it on “reality.”  
 Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward her heart.  
 On the tip of her raised [index finger] with the syllable  
 lām, a ringing bell blazes forth.  
 On solar disks five seed syllables embrace “activity,”  
 And bowing, she looks on with a smiling demeanor.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Visualizing oneself as [the male buddha Akṣobhya], within that  
 disposition, there **are four other seed syllables** apart from the  
 syllable om, on lunar disks, upon [the respective fingers of] his  
 right hand, which is clenched in the sealing hand gesture of the  
 indestructible fist. These are **concealed** within it, **and** the  
**raised** index finger **extends upward**, its back **toward his**  
**heart. On the tip of his index finger with the syllable om**,  
 the om melts and is visualized transforming into **a** four-spoked

**wheel** that **blazes** forth light. Meanwhile, the left hand forms [the sealing hand gesture of] the indestructible fist. **Drawn together** within it are the syllables **on their lunar disks—the five concealed seed syllables** representing the heroines, **which** hold and **ring a bell** with their “indestructible fist” and clasp his female consort [Buddhalocanā]. **With an embrace**, they rest [the bell] on her left thigh, that is, they **support it on “reality.”**

Moreover [as for the sealing hand gesture of Buddhalocanā], there **are four seed syllables concealed** within her left hand, and the index finger **extends upward**, its back **toward her heart**. **On the tip of her raised** index finger **with the syllable LĀṂ**, the LĀṂ melts and is transformed into **a ringing bell** that **blazes forth** light, extending upward at her heart. Meanwhile, the **five seed syllables on the solar disks** of her right hand are drawn in and, when placed upon the right thigh of her male consort, they **embrace “activity”** [i.e., his right thigh]. With her head slightly **bowing** toward her male consort, **she looks** upon him **with a smiling demeanor**.

[The sealing hand gestures of] the male buddha Ratnasambhava and the female buddha [Māmakī] are as follows:

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:9-10)***

|འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐྱེས་ནས་སྤྱགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 |སྐྱེ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་རིན་ཆེན་འབར།  
 |ཟླ་བའུ་ལ་འབྲུ་སྐྱེས་དྲིལ་གསེལ་ཞིང་།  
 |འཁྲིལ་བའི་ཚུལ་གྱིས་ཚོས་ལ་བརྟེན།  
 |འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐྱེས་ནས་སྤྱགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 |སྐྱེ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་དྲིལ་གསེལ་འབར།  
 |ཉི་མ་འབྲུ་ལྷ་ལས་སུ་འཁྲིལ།  
 |བཏུད་དེ་འཛུམ་བའི་མདངས་གྱིས་བཟླ།

Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward his heart.  
 On the tip of his raised [thumb] with the syllable svĀ, a  
 gemstone blazes.  
 Drawn together on their lunar disks are the concealed  
 Seed syllables, which ring a bell  
 And, with an embrace, support it on “reality.”  
 Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward her heart.  
 On the tip of her raised [thumb] with the syllable mĀṂ, a  
 ringing bell blazes forth.  
 On solar disks five seed syllables embrace “activity,”  
 And bowing, she looks on with a smiling demeanor.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Visualizing oneself [as Ratnasambhava], within [that disposition], there **are four seed syllables concealed** within

the right hand of the male consort, **and** the thumb **extends upward**, [its back] **toward his heart**. **On the tip of his** [raised] thumb with **the syllable svā**, the svā melts and is visualized transforming into a precious **gemstone** that **blazes forth** light and is held at the heart. Meanwhile, the left hand forms the [sealing hand gesture of the indestructible] fist, with the five **seed syllables on their lunar disks drawn together** and **concealed** within it. They hold and **ring a bell and** clasp the female consort [Māmakī]. **With an embrace**, in which the male and female deities are indivisibly united, they **support** the bell upon her hip, [resting it] on her left thigh, which is Amitābha or **“reality.”**

Moreover [as for the sealing hand gesture of Māmakī], there **are four seed syllables concealed** within her left hand, **and** the thumb **extends upward**, [its back] **toward her heart**. **On the tip of** her **raised** thumb **with the syllable māṃ**, one visualizes that the syllable māṃ is transformed into a **ringing bell** that **blazes forth** light, and it is held at the heart. Meanwhile, the **five seed syllables on the solar disks** of her right hand are drawn in, and, when placed upon the right thigh of her male consort, they **embrace “activity”** [i.e., his right thigh]. With her head [slightly] **bowing** toward her male consort, in this guise, **she looks** upon him **with a smiling demeanor**. This is the sealing hand gesture of the female consort.

[The sealing hand gestures of] the male buddha Amitābha and the female buddha [Pāṇḍaravāsini] are as follows:

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:11-12)***

|འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐས་ནས་ཐུགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 |ལྷོ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་བརྒྱ་འབར།  
 |རྒྱ་བརྒྱལ་འབྲུ་སྐས་དེལ་གསེལ་ཞིང།  
 |འཁྲིལ་བའི་རྩལ་གྱིས་ཚོས་ལ་བརྟེན།

|འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐས་ནས་ཐུགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 |ལྷོ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་དེལ་གསེལ་འབར།  
 |ཉི་མ་འབྲུ་ལྷ་ལས་སུ་འཁྲིལ།  
 |བརྟེན་དེ་འཛུམ་པའི་མདངས་གྱིས་བཟླ།

Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward his heart.  
 On the tip of his raised [ring finger] with the syllable ĀṂ,  
 a lotus blazes.  
 Drawn together on their lunar disks are the concealed  
 Seed syllables, which ring a bell  
 And, with an embrace, support it on “reality.”  
 Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward her heart.  
 On the tip of her raised [ring finger] with the syllable  
 PHYĀṂ, a ringing bell blazes forth.  
 On solar disks five seed syllables embrace “activity,”  
 And bowing, she looks on with a smiling demeanor.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Visualizing oneself [as Amitābha], within that disposition, there



**are four seed syllables concealed** within the right hand of the male consort, **and** the raised ring finger **extends upward**, its back **toward his heart**. **On the tip of his raised** ring finger **with the syllable** ĀṂ, the ĀṂ melts and is visualized transforming into **a lotus** that **blazes** forth light. This hand emblem is held at his heart. Meanwhile, the syllables of his left hand **on their lunar disks** are **drawn together** [in the sealing hand gesture of the indestructible fist], and the five **seed syllables are concealed** within it. They hold and **ring a bell and, with an embrace** of the female consort [Pāṇḍaravāsīnī], they **support** the bell upon her hip, [resting it] **on** her left thigh, which is Amitābha, or **“reality.”**

Moreover [as for the sealing hand gesture of Pāṇḍaravāsīnī], there **are four seed syllables concealed** within her left hand, **and** the ring finger **extends upward**, its back **toward her heart**. **On the tip of her raised** ring finger, **with the syllable** PHYĀṂ, one visualizes that the PHYĀṂ is transformed into **a ringing bell** that **blazes forth** and is held at her heart. Meanwhile, the **five seed syllables on the solar disks** of her right hand are drawn in and, when placed upon the right thigh of her male consort, they **embrace “activity”** [i.e., his right thigh]. With her head [slightly] **bowing** toward her male consort, **she looks** upon him **with a smiling demeanor**.

[The sealing hand gestures of] the male buddha Amoghasiddhi and the female buddha [Samayatārā] are as follows:

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:13-14)***

།འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐྱེས་ནས་སྐྱགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 །རྒྱ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་རལ་གྱི་འབར།  
 །རྒྱ་བརྒྱལ་འབྲུ་སྐྱེས་དྲིལ་གསེལ་ཞིང།  
 །འཁྲིལ་བའི་རྩྭ་ལ་གྱིས་ཚོས་ལ་བརྟེན།  
 །འབྲུ་བཞི་སྐྱེས་ནས་སྐྱགས་ཀར་བཀམ།  
 །རྒྱ་བསྐྱེད་ཅེ་མོར་དྲིལ་གསེལ་འབར།  
 །ཉི་མ་འབྲུ་ལྷ་ལས་སུ་འཁྲིལ།  
 །བརྟེན་དེ་འཛུམ་པའི་མདངས་གྱིས་བལྟ།

Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward his heart.  
 On the tip of his raised [little finger] with the syllable HĀ,  
 a sword blazes.  
 Drawn together on their lunar disks are the concealed  
 Seed syllables, which ring a bell  
 And, with an embrace, support it on “reality.”  
 Four seed syllables are concealed, and one extends  
 upward toward her heart.  
 On the tip of her raised [little finger] with the syllable  
 TĀM, a ringing bell blazes forth.  
 On solar disks five seed syllables embrace “activity,”  
 And bowing, she looks on with a smiling demeanor.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Visualizing oneself [as Amoghasiddhi], there **are four seed syllables concealed** within his right hand, **and** the little finger **extends upward**, its back **toward his heart**. **On the tip of his raised** little finger with **the syllable HĀ**, the HĀ [melts and]

is visualized transforming into a **sword** that **blazes** forth [light] and is held at his heart. Meanwhile, the syllables [on the fingers of] his left hand are **drawn together on their lunar disks**, and these five **seed syllables are concealed** within [this sealing hand gesture of the indestructible fist]. They **ring a bell, and with an embrace** of the female consort [Samayatārā], they rest the bell upon her left thigh, that is, they **support it on “reality.”**

Moreover [as for the sealing hand gesture of Samayatārā], there **are four seed syllables concealed** within her left hand, **and the little finger extends upward**, [its back] **toward her heart. On the tip of her raised little finger with the syllable TĀṂ**, [one visualizes that] the TĀṂ is transformed into a **ringing bell** that **blazes forth** and is held at her heart. Meanwhile, the **five seed syllables on the solar disks** of her right hand are drawn in, and, when placed upon the right thigh of her male consort, they **embrace “activity”** [i.e., his right thigh]. With her head [slightly] **bowing** toward her male consort, **she looks** upon him **with a smiling demeanor.**

## **THE SEALING HAND GESTURES OF THE MALE AND FEMALE BODHISATTVAS [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.2]**

The second [part of the sealing hand gestures of the different deities] concerns the hand gestures of the male and female bodhisattvas: *Root Tantra (Ch. 8:15)*

| །ལྷ་ལྷུ་ལྷུ་ཤིང་ལ་སོགས་མཚན།  
 | རིན་ཆེན་ལྷུ་གུ་རལ་གྱི་འབར།  
 | སལ་དཀར་པོ་དོ་རྩི་འབར།  
 | ཚོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་རིན་ཅེན་སྟེ།  
 | ལཱུ་གས་མཛོས་རིན་ཅེན་སྟེ་བ་དང་།

| སི་ཕང་གར་མཁན་མཚན་ཉིད་དེ།  
 | མེ་ཏོག་འབྲེང་དང་སྟོས་མཚན་མ།  
 | མར་མེ་བླུ་ག་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའི།  
 | ལས་ལ་འཁྲིལ་ཞིང་ཚོས་ལ་བརྟེན།  
 | དབུ་རྣམས་འགྲོ་ཞིང་འདུད་པའི་ཚུལ།  
 | ལོང་གི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞིན།  
 | ལཱུ་གས་མཛོས་རིན་ཅེན་སྟེ་བ་དང་།

Then there are the symbolic hand emblems [of the male bodhisattvas],  
 Which begin with the blue lotus and the orange bush  
 And include the bejeweled seedling, the blazing sword,  
 The white lotus, the blazing vajra,  
 The doctrinal wheel, and the bejeweled grain sheath.  
 And there are [those of the female bodhisattvas],  
 Namely, the beautiful form, the bejeweled garland,  
 The lute and the supreme dancer,  
 The flower garland, the supreme incense,  
 The butter lamp, and the scented water and so forth.  
 [The female bodhisattvas] embrace “activity”

And [the male bodhisattvas] support [a bell] on “reality.”  
Their heads are tilted and bowing.  
As in the case of the aforementioned great seal,  
They embrace in the disposition of the nondual expanse.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The procedures here are similar to the aforementioned [visualizations of the sealing hand gestures of the conquerors]. In particular, the male bodhisattvas hold the symbolic hand emblems, which are transformed from their respective seed syllables at the heart in their right hands, and the female bodhisattvas hold theirs at the heart in their left hands. The left hand of the male bodhisattvas in addition support [a bell] on the left thigh of the corresponding female consort, which represents “reality,” and the right hand of the female consorts should embrace the right thigh of the corresponding male consort.

**Then there are** the symbolic hand emblems of the male bodhisattvas, that is, **the symbolic hand emblems, which begin with the blue lotus** that is transformed from the syllable MŪṂ [of Mañjuśrī] **and the orange bush** that is transformed from the syllable MAI [of Maitreya]. These **include the bejeweled seedling**, which is transformed from the syllable KṢIṂ [of Kṣitigarbha]; **the sword of blazing light**, which is transformed from the syllable TRĀṂ [of Ākāśagarbha]; **the white lotus**, which is transformed from the syllable HRĪḤ [of Avalokiteśvara]; **the blazing vajra**, which is transformed from the syllable JIṂ [of Vajrapāṇi]; **the doctrinal wheel**, which is transformed from the syllable THLHĪṂ [of Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin]; **and the bejeweled grain sheath**, which is transformed from the syllable HŪṂ [of Samantabhadra].

Then **there are** the symbolic hand emblems of the female consorts, **namely, the mirror** indicative of **beautiful form**,

which is transformed from the syllable HŪṂ [of Lāsyā]; **the bejeweled garland**, which is transformed from the syllable TRĀṂ [of Mālyā]; **the lute**, which is transformed from the syllable HRĪḤ [of Gītā]; **and the supreme** [movement of a] **dancer**, which is transformed from the syllable ĀḤ [of Nartī]. This is indicated by the three-pronged vajra that she carries above her head in a dancing movement. Also included alongside these are **the flower garland**, which is transformed from the syllable HŪṂ [of Puṣpā], **and the censer containing supreme incense**, which is transformed from the syllable JAḤ [of Dhūpā]; **the butter lamp**, which is transformed from the syllable VAṂ [of Ālokā]; **and the doctrinal conch with its scented water and so forth**, which is transformed from the syllable HOḤ [of Gandhā].

In the case of the female bodhisattvas, the right hand of the female consort **embraces** the right thigh of the corresponding male consort, which represents “**activity**,” **and** in the case of the male bodhisattvas, the left hand **supports** [a bell] **on** or clasps the left thigh of the female consort, representing “**reality**.” **The heads** of the male bodhisattvas **are** slightly **tilted** toward their corresponding female consort, **and** the female bodhisattvas **are bowing** in the presence of their corresponding male consort. **As in the case of the aforementioned great seal**, the male and female bodhisattvas **embrace in the disposition of the expanse** of actual reality, the nature of supreme bliss without conceptual elaboration, which is **nondual** in terms of skillful means and discriminative awareness.

## **THE SEALING HAND GESTURES OF THE MALE AND FEMALE GATEKEEPERS [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.3]**

The third [part of the sealing hand gestures of the different deities] concerns the sealing hand gestures of the male and

female gatekeepers.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:16)**

།སྒོ་བཞིའི་ཁོ་བོའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ནི།  
།རྩི་མགོ་གདེངས་དང་རྩི་མགོ་ན།  
།ཐོད་སྐྱུལ་ཆེན་པོ་གཞོན་པ་དང་།  
།རྩི་མགོ་རྒྱ་གམ་ལས་ཀྱིས་གཞོན།  
།ལྷགས་ཀྱི་ཞགས་པ་སྣོ་འ་ཉོ།  
།སྒོ་བཞིར་གནས་པ་དེ་དག་ཀྱང་།  
།འདུད་ཚུལ་འབྲིལ་བ་གོང་མ་བཞིན།

The seals of the wrathful deities at the four gates  
comprise  
The cudgel surmounted by a human skull which is  
brandished,  
The vajra which subjugates,  
The large snake-skull which subjugates,  
The crossed vajra which subjugates through ritual  
activities,  
The iron hook, the lasso, the iron chain, and the bell.  
Abiding at the four gates, these [gatekeepers] are  
bowing and in embrace, as above.

**Interlinear Commentary**

Among the eight male and female **wrathful deities at the four gates** of the maṇḍala, **the seals** or hand emblems **of the**

four male gatekeepers **comprise the cudgel surmounted by a human skull which is brandished, the five-pronged vajra which subjugates, the skull which subjugates,** encoiled with a **large snake,** and **the crossed vajra which subjugates through ritual activities.** These are transformed from the respective syllables HŪM [of Yamāntaka, Mahābala, Hayagrīva, and Amṛtakuṇḍalin]. The four [gatekeepers] raise these emblems in their right hands and embrace their respective female consorts with their left hands, while their index fingers are poised in the gesture of menace (*sdig mdzub kyi tshul*).

The seals or hand emblems of the female gatekeepers, which are transformed from the four syllables PHAṬ [of Aṅkuśā, Pāsā, Sphoṭā, and Ghaṇṭā], are respectively **the iron hook, the lasso, the iron chain, and the bell,** which they grasp with their left hands, while their right hands, clenched in [the sealing gesture of] the indestructible fist, embrace their corresponding male consort.

**These** male and female gatekeepers, **abiding at the four gates,** are such that [the heads of] the female gatekeepers **are bowing** toward their corresponding male consort, **and** [those of] the male gatekeepers are slightly tilted toward their corresponding female consort, while they are **in embrace,** in a disposition of nondual reality, **as** indicated **above.**

## **THE SEALING HAND GESTURES OF THE SIX SAGES [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.4]**

The fourth [part of the sealing hand gestures of the different deities] concerns the sealing hand gestures of the six sages.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:17)***



ལྷུང་ལྷུག་ལྷུག་རྒྱ་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཏེ།  
ལམ་དོར་བསྐྱུས་ལྷུག་རྒྱ་ལྷུག་ཏུ་བསྐྱེད།  
ལྷུང་ནི་དམིགས་མེད་ཚོས་གྱི་དབྱིངས།

The six sages may assume diverse seals,  
And when these are subsumed, their seals are revealed  
to number six.  
Their female consort is the nonreferential expanse of  
actual reality.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Contingent on those to be trained, **the six sages may assume diverse seals, and** although they are not specifically determined, enumerated, or quantified, **when these are subsumed** according to their respective classes [of living beings to whom they grant the teachings], **their seals are revealed to number six.** What, one might ask, are these? According to the [*Tantra of the Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*, they are as follows:

They are known to comprise  
Lute, armor, and begging bowl,  
Casket, book, and fire with water.<sup>490</sup>

[The six sages] hold these seals or hand emblems, transformed from their respective seed syllables [OM], at their heart.<sup>491</sup>

One might think that because the sages have no female consorts they conform to the path in which skillful means and discriminative awareness are not coalesced. Although they do lack a female consort who appears as a visualized object of reference, they are in fact revealed to have the nonreferential expanse [of emptiness] as their female consort. Therefore, **their female consort is the expanse of actual reality, nonreferential** in all respects and free from extremes of conceptual elaboration.

There are some who hold that on the left side of the six sages there are six Samantabhadrīs, but that would contradict the precise overall number of deities [i.e., the forty-two peaceful deities]. There are also those who say their [consorts] are subsumed in Samantabhadrī, but that is incorrect because during meditation one would confuse the visualized deities and their correct number.

Again, there are some who hold that the six sages have no female consort, citing the verse:

In order to benefit eternalistic extremists,  
The buddhas' queen is most secret.<sup>492</sup>

The latter observation, however, refers to the circumstances of the Yogatantras, and in this context [of Unsurpassed Yogatantra] it is not relevant. Although the sage of the human beings [Śākyamuni] did renounce the desirable attributes of the senses, he did not say that other [buddhas] should renounce them because the buddha body of emanation appears to each in accord with his or her needs. Therefore, the actual absence of a female consort will depend on both [the type of] emanation and the number of deities [in the maṇḍala].<sup>493</sup>

# THE SEALING HAND GESTURES OF THE MALE AND FEMALE SAMANTABHADRA [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.5]

The fifth [part of the sealing hand gestures of the different deities] concerns the sealing hand gestures of the male and female Samantabhadra.

## *Root Tantra (Ch. 8:18-19)*

། །ཀུན་བཟང་མཉམ་བཞག་ཡེ་ཤེས་འཕྲོ།  
། །ཡུམ་འགྲུར་མཉམ་རྫོགས་བརྒྱའི་སྐྱེལ།  
། །གཞན་ཡང་ཕུག་རྒྱ་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་ཏེ།  
། །ཡང་ན་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་ཉིད་དམ།  
། །ཡང་ན་དོ་རྗེ་ཐལ་མོ་ཉིད།

Samantabhadra is meditatively equipoised,  
His pristine cognitions diffused.  
Transformed into his female consort,  
[Samantabhadrī] is perfect in equilibrium  
And seated in the lotus posture.  
There are also other diverse sealing hand gestures [that  
may be applied],  
Or alternatively, the actual [sealing gestures] of the  
tathāgatas,  
Or else the simple gesture of the “indestructible palms.”

## *Interlinear Commentary*

The two hands of **Samantabhadra** are **meditatively equipoised**. From his palms he displays the basis that arises as the incandescence [of the maṇḍala] so that **his five pristine cognitions** become **diffused** throughout the ten directions as light rays of five distinctly radiant colors. Meanwhile, his feet assume the posture of indestructible reality (*vajraparyāṅka, rdo rje'i skyil krung*).

The sealing hand gesture of Samantabhadrī, who is **transformed into his female consort, is perfect in its equilibrium**, like that of the male consort, **and** her feet are **seated in the lotus posture** (*padmaparyāṅka, padma'i skyil krung*).

Now I will explain how all these enumerations of [the different sealing hand gestures] are reduced: Apart from those different gestures of sealing that have just been revealed, **there are also other diverse sealing hand gestures**. When each enlightened family is attained individually, the sealing hand gestures of these deities may be depicted identically with the hand emblem symbolic of that particular enlightened family, such as the vajra. **Or alternatively, either the actual sealing gestures of the five tathāgatas** may be applied, as indicated above, **or at least the simple gesture of the “indestructible palms”** should be applied.

There are some who teach that these three steps indicate that the male and female consorts Samantabhadra may assume diverse gestures of sealing. This is the point expressed in the following passage from the [*Tantra of the Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*, which says:

The male and female Samantabhadra, sky-like in color,  
Have diverse and indeterminate gestures of sealing.  
In addition to the gesture of meditative equipoise  
Which diffuses pristine cognition,

They are also depicted with the vajra and bell. <sup>494</sup>

This passage, however, concerns the context in which the principal deity is arrayed with the body color and symbolic hand emblems of Samantabhadra, whereas it is said that the sealing gesture of the male and female Samantabhadra through

whom the incandescence [of the maṇḍala] arises (*gdangs 'char ba'i kun bzang yab yum*) is exclusively one of meditative equipoise, because they do not lapse into partiality.<sup>495</sup>

## **A SYNOPSIS OF THE MAṆḌALA OF SEALS, WHICH IS THE FRUITIONAL SUPREME PRISTINE COGNITION [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the detailed exegesis of the nature of the maṇḍala of seals, see [p. 309](#)] is the synopsis of the [maṇḍala of] seals, which is the fruitional pristine cognition. This comprises (i) a general presentation of the natural seal of the abiding nature (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the seals that provisionally appear (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.2); and (iii) action on behalf of living beings through the seal that is the conclusive result (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.3).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE NATURAL SEAL OF THE ABIDING NATURE [16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.1]**

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**If the abiding nature [of the great seal] is realized,  
all physical conduct [is gathered within] this seal.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:20)***

འཕག་རྒྱ་ཚེན་པོའི་ཚོགས་མཚོག་ནི།  
མཐས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ལྡན་འབྱོར་ན།  
མ་བརྗོད་མ་བསྐྱལ་མཐས་ཅད་ཀུན།  
འཕག་རྒྱ་ཚེན་པོའི་དང་དུ་གནས།

If the supreme provision of the great seal

Is encountered in one endowed  
With skillful means and discriminative awareness,  
There will be neither stirring nor movement.

All things in their entirety  
Abide in the disposition of the great seal.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The essential nature of the originally pure nature of mind is the disposition **of the great seal**, a genuine presence whereby the entire amalgam of ideation that arises primordially abides as **the supreme provision** of pristine cognition. **If**, realized through the kindness of the spiritual teacher, this [great seal] **is encountered in** a mind that is partial to the naturally liberated awareness, where the objective attributes of apparitional **skillful means and discriminative awareness** arise without grasping, **there will be neither stirring** of the body **nor movement** of the limbs. Indeed, **all** physical movement and conduct **in their entirety abide** and are gathered **in the disposition of the great seal**, so that no artificial seals need be applied.

### **A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE SEALS THAT PROVISIONALLY APPEAR [16.1.1.2.2.2.3.2]**

The second part [of the synopsis of the maṇḍala of seals, which is the fruitional pristine cognition] is the detailed exegesis of the seals that provisionally appear. This has four steps, the first of which concerns the seals of the forty-two limbs (16.1.1.2.2.2.3.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The limbs partake of] the forty-two deities,  
including twenty-three male deities and seventeen  
female deities.**



## **Root Tantra (Ch. 8:21)**

ལམ་ལག་བཞི་བཅུ་ཚ་གཉིས་ལྔ་ན།

The limbs [of the principal deity]  
Partake of the forty-two [deities].

### **Interlinear Commentary**

With regard to the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the forty-two [peaceful] buddhas, the energy of this [maṇḍala] is increasingly acquired by one's experiencing the meditative stability in which the hand gestures of sealing are diffused in the above manner. In this way, **the limbs** of the body [of the principal deity] **partake of the forty-two** deities, and the benefit of realization will then emerge.<sup>496</sup>

In this regard, after one visualizes oneself as the male and female buddhas Vairocana [and Dhātvīśvarī], the five male buddhas—Akṣobhya, Amitābha, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, and Amoghasiddhi—are located respectively in the crown, throat, heart, navel, and secret center of the [principal] male deity. The four bodhisattvas indicative of buddha mind—Kṣitigarbha, Vajrapāṇi, Ākāśagarbha, and Avalokiteśvara—are respectively located in the right eye, the right ear, the right nostril, and the right side of the tongue; similarly, the four bodhisattvas indicative of buddha speech—Maitreya, Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, Samantabhadra, and Mañjuśrī—are located in the four corresponding organs on the left side of his body. [Yamāntaka,] the liberator of Yama, is located in his right hand, and [Mahābala,] the liberator of discriminative awareness, is located in his left hand. [Hayagrīva,] the liberator

of the lotus, is located in his left foot, and [Amṛtakunḍalin,] the liberator of impediments, is located in his right foot. These are the four male gatekeepers. The six sages are respectively located in the crown, throat, heart, navel, secret center, and soles of the feet. Thus, there are twenty-three male deities [within the body of Vairocana].

Meanwhile, the five female buddhas—Buddhalocanā, Pāṇḍaravāsini, Dhātvīśvarī, Māmakī, and Samayatārā—are located respectively in the crown, throat, heart, navel, and secret center of the principal female buddha [Dhātvīśvarī]. The four female deities indicative of the sense objects—Lāsyā, Mālyā, Gītā, and Nartī—are respectively located in her left eye, left ear, left nostril, and left side of the tongue; similarly, the four female deities indicative of time—Dhūpā, Puṣpā, Ālokā, and Gandhā—are respectively located in the four corresponding organs of her right side. Ankuśā is located in her left hand, Pāśā in her right hand, Sphoṭā in her right foot, and Ghaṇṭā in her left foot. These are the four female gatekeepers. Thus, there are seventeen female deities within [the body of] the female consort [Dhātvīśvarī].

Combined together, these forty are designated as the “deities of skillful means” because they coarsely and outwardly abide. With the addition of the two basic deities, the male and female buddhas [Vairocana and Dhātvīśvarī], there are altogether forty-two deities refined [within the body]. The number of male and female deities is unequal because the [six] sages have no female consorts. The male and female aspects of Samantabhadra are [in this context] subsumed within the nature of the basic deities.

Once this excellent visualization has become radiant, there follows the second step [of the detailed exegesis of the seals that provisionally appear], concerning the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the thousand buddhas (16.1.1.2.2.2.3.2.2). [This comments on the verse:]

### **The forty deities of skillful means and discriminative**

awareness, [multiplied by] those of buddha body, speech, and mind, constitute one thousand.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:22)**

།དེ་ཉིད་ཡན་ལག་སྣེས་བདག་སྟེ།  
།བཞི་བཅུ་ཅུ་གཉིས་གསུམ་འཕྲོར་འགྱུར།

[Within] these [deities] are the identities that diffuse  
The [aforementioned deities of the] limbs.  
These forty-two are multiplied through a threefold  
diffusion.

**Interlinear Commentary**

In the hearts of **these** forty [deities], there **are** located the corresponding beings of pristine cognition (*jñānasattva*) similar to the [visualized] deities in appearance. These are designated as the “deities of discriminative awareness” because they abide subtly and internally as **the actual identities that diffuse** [the aforementioned deities of] **the limbs**. They are also forty in number, so that there are eighty deities [in all].

Although **forty-two** deities of skillful means are mentioned [here in the *Root Tantra*], they actually number forty with the exclusion of the two basic deities—the male and female consorts [Vairocana and Dhātviśvarī]. These [forty] **are** then **multiplied through a threefold diffusion** into one hundred twenty deities, who are consecrated respectively by buddha body, speech, and mind. Each of these [one hundred twenty] also has the five male buddhas as their crown ornament, making six hundred, and they also number a further three

hundred sixty because those deities consecrated by buddha body, speech, and mind are themselves multiplied by three. Then, with the addition of the forty deities of discriminative awareness, this altogether constitutes a maṇḍala of one thousand buddhas who are to be refined [on this path].

In the opinion of some, there are forty deities of skillful means, forty deities of discriminative awareness, forty deities of buddha body, forty deities of buddha speech, and forty deities of buddha mind, that is, two hundred, each of which has the five crown ornaments, so that these are said to constitute the maṇḍala of a thousand [buddhas]. The point is identical.<sup>497</sup>

When these [thousand deities] have been excellently visualized, there follows the third step [of the detailed exegesis of the seals that provisionally appear], concerning the visualization of the maṇḍala of the twenty-one thousand buddhas (16.1.1.2.2.2.3.2.3). [This comments on the verse:]

**[More elaborately, the maṇḍala constitutes] twenty-one thousand three hundred twelve deities.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:23)***

།དེ་ལྟར་ལྡན་པའི་གཙོ་མཚན་གཉིས།  
།སྐུ་ལ་བ་སྐུ་ལ་མཚན་དེ་བཞིན་དུ།  
།བཙུ་གཉིས་དུག་གི་འོད་འཕྲོ་འབར།

[Exemplified] by the supreme [pair of] principal deities  
Who are endowed in this manner,  
The conquerors and the supreme conqueror [of the  
enlightened families]  
Are similarly endowed,

As are the twelve [surrounding pairs of bodhisattvas].  
There is also a further sixfold diffusion of blazing light.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Exemplified **by the supreme** [pair of] **principal deities**, the male and female Vairocana [and Dhātviśvarī], **who are endowed in this manner** with the thousand buddhas, **the four** [other] enlightened families of **conquerors and Samantabhadra the supreme conqueror** are also estimated to be **similarly endowed**, so that each [enlightened family] has a thousand [buddhas], making six thousand. Similarly, **the twelve** [surrounding pairs]—namely, the eight pairs of male and female bodhisattvas and the four pairs of male and female gatekeepers—are also endowed in the same manner, so that these number twelve thousand. **There is also a further sixfold diffusion of blazing light**, which denotes the six sages, who have no female consorts. So, altogether, the maṇḍala to be refined [on this path] constitutes an enumeration of twenty-one thousand three hundred twelve [deities]. Those holding that this maṇḍala constitutes twenty-four thousand [deities]<sup>498</sup> make the assumption that the six sages do have female consorts.<sup>499</sup>

Once this [maṇḍala] has been experientially cultivated, there follows the fourth step [of the detailed exegesis of the seals that provisionally appear], concerning the refinement of the maṇḍala of inconceivable buddhas (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.2.4). [This comments on the verse:]

**[When these are each multiplied by] twenty-one thousand, the number of buddhas becomes inconceivable.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:24)***

།དེ་ལ་སོགས་ཏེ་བསམ་མི་བྱུང།

[When each buddha] partakes of such [diffusion], [The maṇḍala] becomes inconceivable.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Inasmuch as each buddha **partakes of such** [diffusion], and is in turn visualized as constituting twenty-one thousand buddhas, the maṇḍala [of deities] that is to be refined **becomes inconceivable**.

Lama Rong[zom]pa interprets [this passage of the text] as follows: A single buddha body of the deity [such as Vairocana] **partakes of forty-two limbs**, and each of these also is endowed with three deities consecrated respectively by buddha body, speech, and mind. Hence the [above] verses [ch. 8:22, which read]: **these** [deities] **are the actual identities that diffuse the** [aforementioned deities of the] **limbs. These forty-two are multiplied through a threefold diffusion.**<sup>500</sup>

Also, he explains that **the twelve** [surrounding pairs] **and the six** [sages] **have a diffusion of blazing light** because the deities of the limbs are also estimated to have the same [number of internal deities] as the central pair themselves, so that one hundred twenty [deities] emerge in each.<sup>501</sup>

These apparitional deities are fruitionally established through previous experiences of yoga, and they are also established as the path because they are the causal basis for attaining power over the life span during the performance of communion ceremonies.<sup>502</sup>

**ACTION ON BEHALF OF LIVING BEINGS THROUGH THE SEAL  
THAT IS THE CONCLUSIVE RESULT  
[16.1.1.2.2.2.3.3]**

The third part [of the synopsis of the maṇḍala of seals] concerns actions undertaken on behalf of living beings by means of the conclusive seals. This has five sections, the first of which reveals their diversity for the sake of those to be trained (16.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**In the ten directions and four times, [these seals]  
that train each according to need are differently  
revealed.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:25)***

འཇིགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞི་བསམ་ཡས་སུ།  
འདུལ་བའི་དོན་རྣམས་སོ་སོར་སྟོན།

In the inconceivable ten directions and four times,  
The purposes of the training are differently revealed.

***Interlinear Commentary***

When conclusive buddhahood has been attained through meditation in that manner during the circumstances of the path, **in the inconceivable** buddha fields subsumed within the **ten directions and four times, the purposes of the seals**

that bring about **the training** of inestimable trainees **are differently revealed**, acting on behalf of living beings in the form of a buddha, a universal monarch, and so forth, corresponding to the perception of different sentient beings.

The second section [of actions undertaken on behalf of living beings by means of the conclusive seals] concerns the modalities of appearance that accord with the [Buddhist] teaching (16.1.1.2.2.2.3.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**These [seals] manifest in conformity with the volitions of non-Buddhists and Buddhists.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:26)***

། ཐེག་པ་མཐོ་དམན་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་།  
། ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་རྣམས་བསམ་ཡས་དང་།  
། ཞི་ལྷོ་འོ་ཚོགས་ཆེན་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ།  
། སོ་སོར་མཐུན་བྱས་ཀྱན་ཏུ་སྒྲུང་།

[These seals] are everywhere perceived differently,  
In conformity with [distinctive volitions],  
In all the vehicles—high and low—  
In the erroneous and the inconceivably [numerous  
beings],  
And in all great assemblies of peaceful and wrathful  
deities.

***Interlinear Commentary***



[These seals] manifest **differently**, training each according to their needs, and **are everywhere perceived, in conformity with** their [distinctive] volitions, **in all the vehicles**—including the **high** ones, from mantra to transcendent perfection, **and** the **low** ones of the pious attendants and hermit buddhas, **and** in [the teachings of] the eternalistic extremists with their **erroneous** view and conduct, **and** in **inconceivably** numerous ordinary beings, **and in all the great assemblies**, including those **of deities** who are **peaceful** for the sake of trainees **and wrathful**—such as Māra and Yama.

The third section [of actions undertaken on behalf of living beings by means of the conclusive seals] illustrates that although the seals diversely manifest, they do not deviate from their unitary state (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.3.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**As in the case of a dancer, diverse emanations are revealed.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:27)***

།དཔེར་ན་གར་མཁན་ཉིད་འདྲ་བ།  
།ལུས་ལས་མ་བཞོད་སྣ་ཚོགས་སྟོན།

As, for example, in the case of a dancer,  
This diverse [movement] is revealed  
But not predetermined apart from the body [of pristine  
cognition].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**As in the case, for example, of a single theatrical dancer** whose right leg is extended and left leg is drawn in, and who assumes the guise of the manifold peaceful and wrathful deities, **this diverse** movement of the peaceful and wrathful deities and so forth **is** indeed **revealed** spontaneously and through compassionate spirituality, in conformity with the perception of living beings, **but** it is **not** conceptually **predetermined** as something specific, **apart from** being the unique nature of **the** primordially pure **body** of pristine cognition.

The fourth section [of actions undertaken on behalf of living beings by means of the conclusive seals] teaches that on account of those to be trained, the seals are indefinite in number (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.3.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**Owing to those who are to be trained, the number of seals is indeterminate.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:28)***

མདོར་ན་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི།  
འདི་ཞེས་གཅིག་ཅེས་བརྗོད་དུ་མིད།  
གཉིས་དང་གསུམ་དུ་རྣམ་པར་འགྲོ།  
བརྗོད་དང་སྟོ་བའང་དེ་བཞིན་ཏེ།

In brief, all gestures of sealing  
Cannot be described as “such and such” or as “merely  
one,”  
But they are diffused twice and thrice—

[Physical] movements and extensions are indeed the actuality [of the seals].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**In brief, all gestures of sealing**, including those of supreme enlightenment and those that discipline demonic forces, **cannot be described** exclusively as “**such and such**” or finitely as “**merely one,**” **but** they are multiplied **twice** owing to skillful means and discriminative awareness, **and thrice** owing to buddha body, speech, and mind. **They are** moreover **diffused** in the four rites of enlightened activity and so forth because **movements** of the body **and** all **extensions** of its limbs in the guise of the gestures of sealing **are indeed** inherent in **the actuality** of the deities’ seals.

The fifth section [of actions undertaken on behalf of living beings by means of the conclusive seals] concerns the gathering of all [physical movements in the great seal of the abiding nature (16.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.3.5)]. [It comments on the verse:]

**In brief, all movements and dynamics are the great seal.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:29)***

།མདོར་ན་བསྐྱེལ་བསྐྱོད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀུན།  
 །ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཚེན་པོའི་ངང་དུ་གནས།  
 །གནས་ཉིད་མི་གནས་གནས་པའང་མིན།  
 །དེ་སྐད་དག་མཚོག་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་བཤད།

In brief, all movements and dynamics in their entirety  
 Abide in the disposition of the great seal,  
 But their inherent nature does not abide [in anything].  
 Indeed there is no abiding.  
 —Such was explained by the pure supreme [buddha]  
 himself.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**In brief, all movements of the limbs and dynamics of the body in their entirety abide in the disposition of the great seal. Their nature is inherent** in actual reality, wherein all things attain primordial buddhahood, **but it does not abide** even minutely as the impure hand gestures of sealing or as phenomena. **Indeed there is no such abiding** because one’s body abides as the seal or maṇḍala of the deity, one’s speech as the seal or maṇḍala of mantra, and one’s mind as the seal or maṇḍala of actual reality.

**Such** verses as these were **explained by** Samantabhadra **himself, the supreme** buddha endowed with the excellence of discriminative awareness, in whom the two obscurations are without exception **pure**.

This indeed is a basis for conviction, as is said in the *Tantra of Genuine Pristine Cognition*:

This is because one whose defects have ceased  
 Never has any reason to tell lies.<sup>503</sup>

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 8 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the diffusion of the sealing hand gestures.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:30)***

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ཡན་ལག་ཐམས་ཅད་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་  
དུ་བྱིན་གྲིས་བརྒྱབས་ནས་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་སྐྱོས་པའི་ལེུ་སྟེ་བརྒྱད་པའོ།།

This completes the eighth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Consecration of All Limbs as the Maṇḍala and the Subsequent Diffusion of the Sealing Hand Gestures.”

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes the exegesis of the eighth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus*, the supreme seal of pristine cognition, *Definitive with Respect to the Real*, which is the abiding nature of actual reality, entitled “The Consecration of All Limbs of the body and ideation as the primordially pure Maṇḍala and the Subsequent Diffusion of the natural Sealing Hand Gestures.”**

## COLOR PLATES

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*Tsa ka li* icons belonging to the *sGyu 'phrul bka' ma* cycle, held at Gemang Monastery in Eastern Tibet.

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*Left to right, top to bottom:* 1. THE TEN PEACEFUL BUDDHAS: (1a) Vairocana and Ākāśadhātviśvarī.

(1b) Akṣobhya and Buddhhalocanā.

(1c) Ratnasambhava and Māmakī.

(1d) Amitābha and Pāṇḍaravāsini.



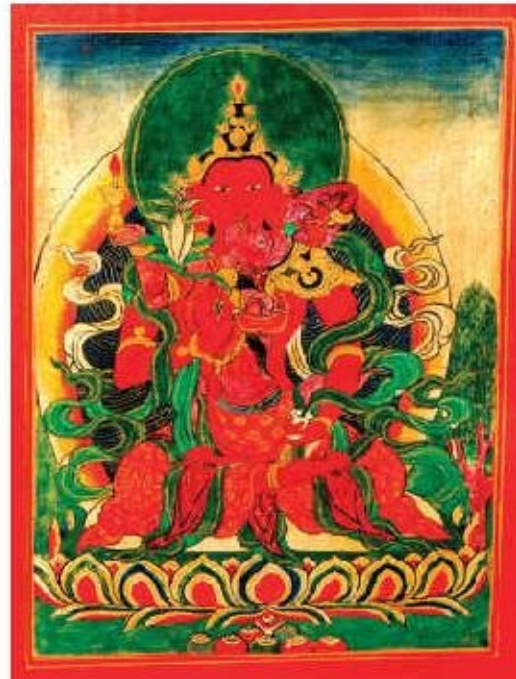
*Left to right, top to bottom:* (1e) Amoghasiddhi and Samayatārā.

2. THE SIXTEEN BODHISATTVAS: (2a) Kṣitigarbha and Lāsyā.



(2b) Ākāśagarbha and Mālyā.

(2c) Avalokiteśvara and Gītā.

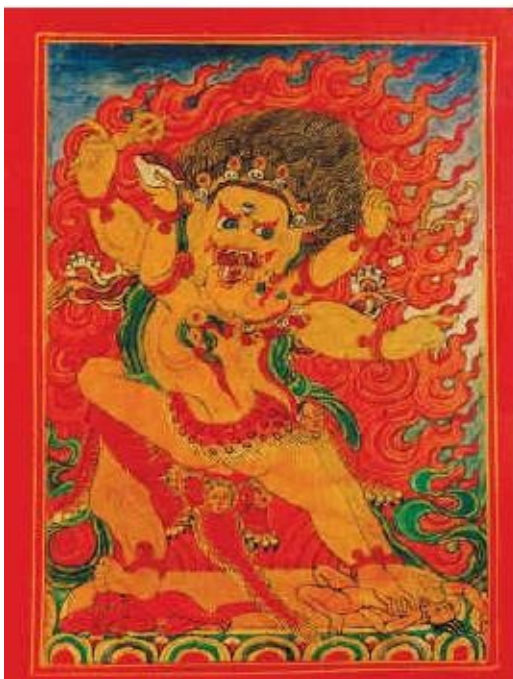
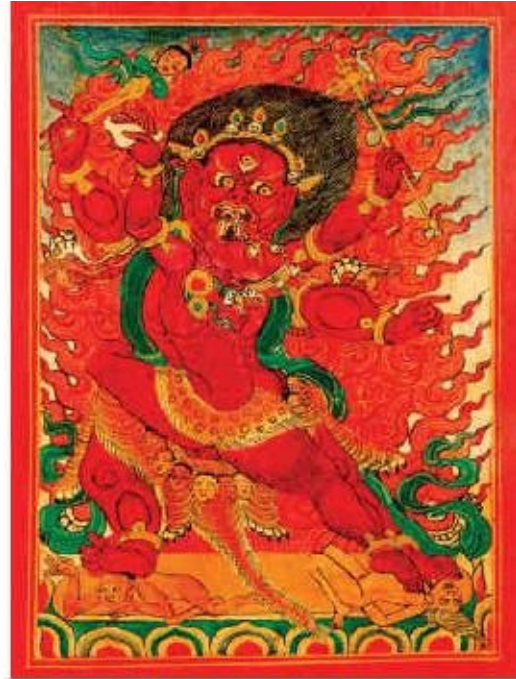


*Left to right, top to bottom: (2d) Vajrapāṇi and Nartī.*

(2e) Maitreya and Dhūpā.

(2f) Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin and Puṣpā.

(2g) Samantabhadra and Ālokā.

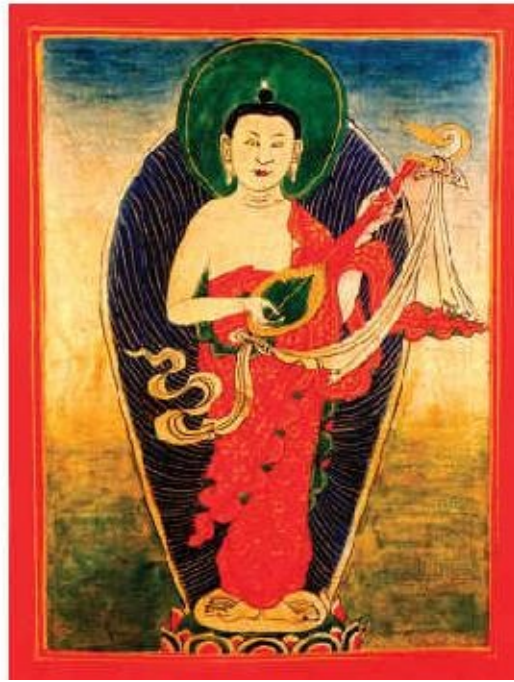


*Left to right, top to bottom: (2h) Mañjuśrī and Gandhā.*

3. THE EIGHT GATEKEEPERS: (3a) Yamāntaka and Aṅkuśā.

(3b) Mahābala and Pāśā.

(3c) Aśvottama/Hayagrīva and Sphoṭā.

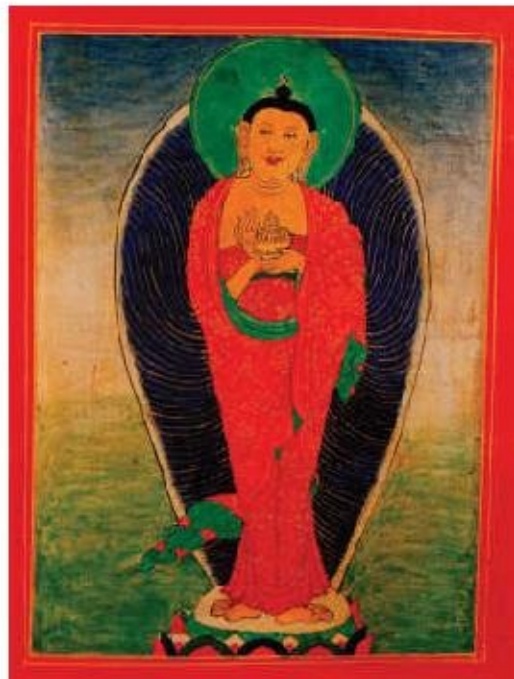
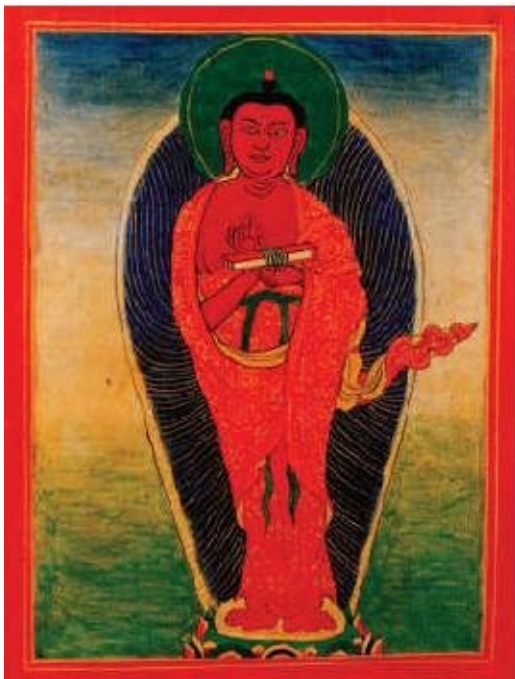


*Left to right, top to bottom: (3d) Amṛtakuṇḍalin and Ghaṇṭā.*

4. THE TWO PRIMORDIAL BUDDHAS: (4a) Samantabhadra.

(4b) Samantabhadri.

5. THE SIX SAGES: (5a) Śatakratu.

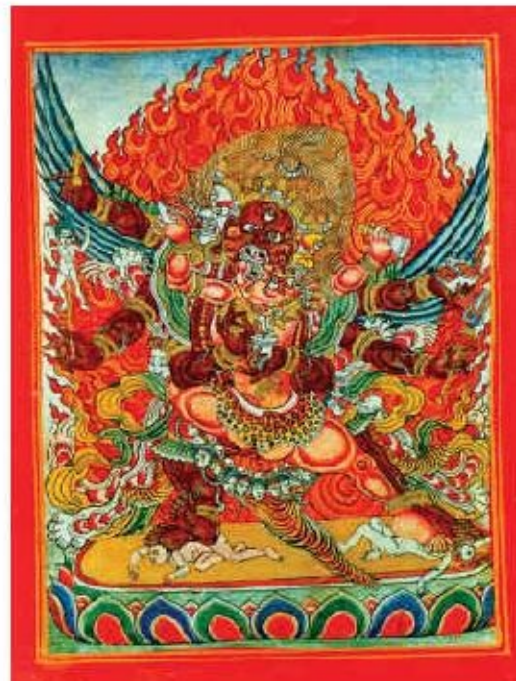
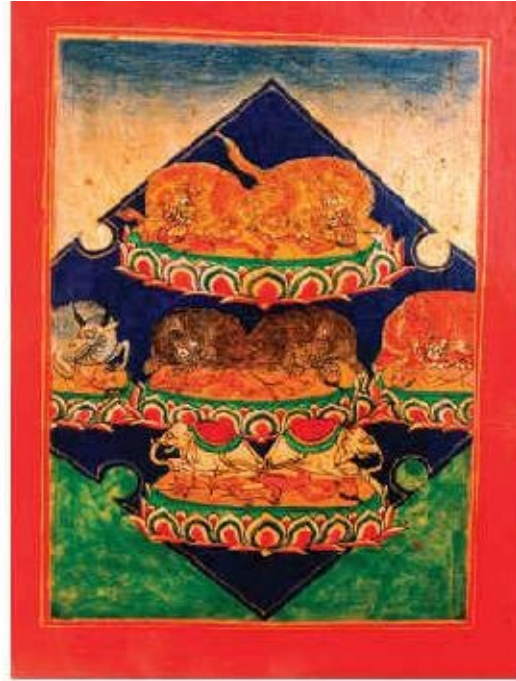
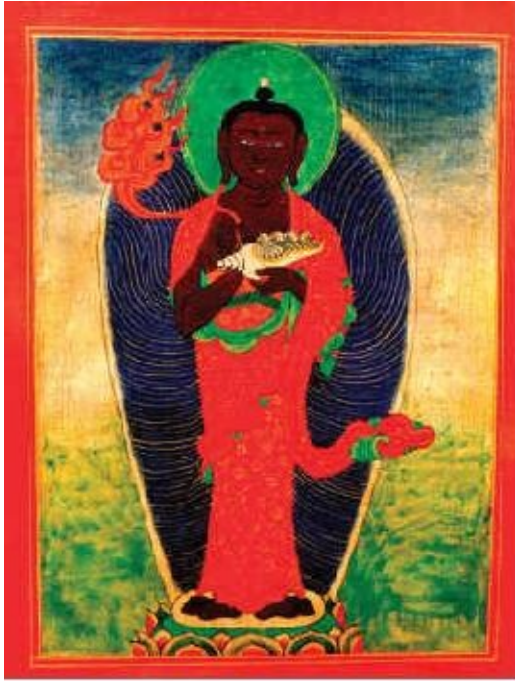


*Left to right, top to bottom:* (5b) Vemacitra.

(5c) Śākyamuni.

(5d) Sthirasimha.

(5e) Jvālamukha.



*Left to right, top to bottom: (5f) Yama.*

6. SEATS OF THE HERUKAS.

7. THE TEN HERUKAS AND KRODHEŚVARĪ: (7a) Vajra Heruka and Vajra Krodheśvarī.

(7b) Buddha Heruka and Buddha Krodheśvarī.



*Left to right, top to bottom: (7c) Ratna Heruka and Ratna Krodheśvarī.*

(7d) Padma Heruka and Padma Krodheśvarī.

(7e) Karma Heruka and Karma Krodheśvarī.

8. THE EIGHT GAURĪ: (8a) Gaurī.



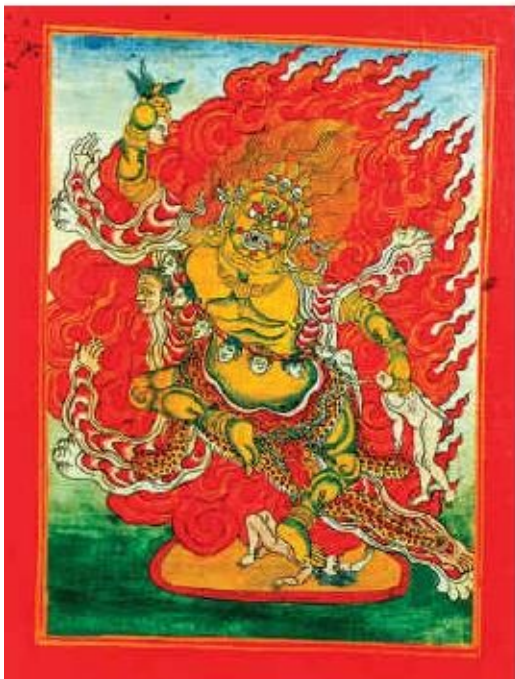


*Left to right, top to bottom: (8b) Caurī.*

(8c) Pramohā.

(8d) Vetālī.

(8e) Pukkasī.

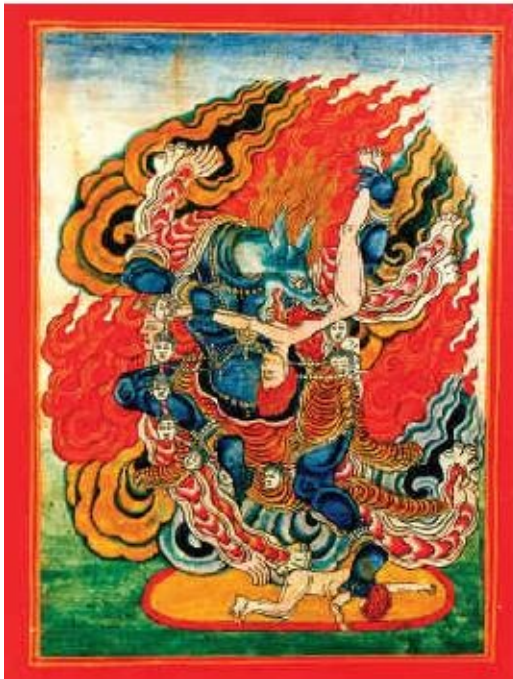


*Left to right, top to bottom:* (8f) Ghasmarī.

(8g) Śmaśānī.

(8h) Caṇḍālī.

9. THE EIGHT PISĀCĪ: (9a) Siṃhamukhī.

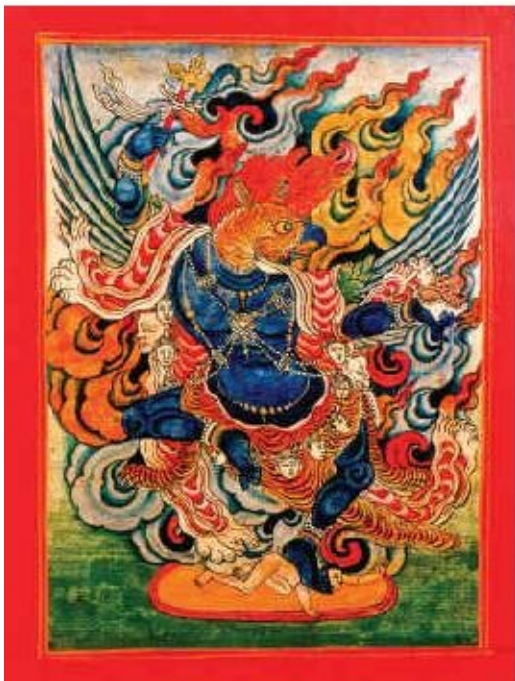
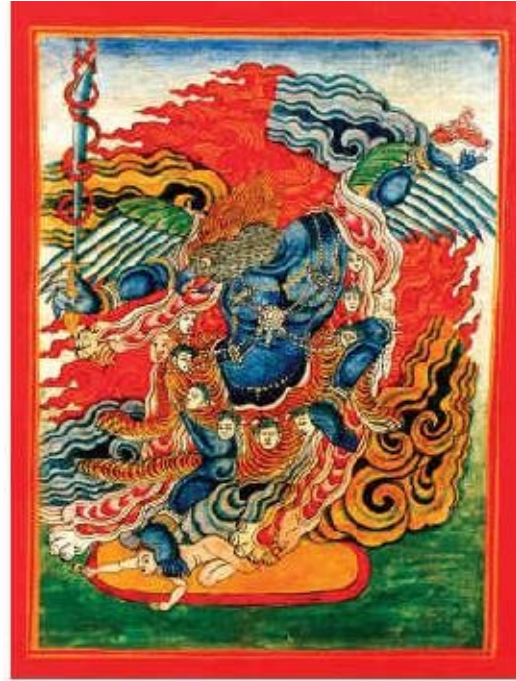


*Left to right, top to bottom:* (9b) Vyāghramukhī.

(9c) Śṛgālamukhī.

(9d) Śvānamukhī.

(9e) Gṛdhramukhī.



*Left to right, top to bottom:* (9f) Kaṅkamukhī.

(9g) Kākamukhī.

(9h) Ulūkamukhī.

10. THE FOUR FEMALE GATEKEEPERS: (10a) Vajratejasī.



*Left to right, top to bottom: (10b) Vajrāmoghā.*

(10c) Vajrālokā.

(10d) Vajravetālī.

11. THE TWENTY-EIGHT ĪSVARĪ: (11a) The six Īsvari of the east.



*Left to right, top to bottom:* (11b) The six Īsvari of the south.

(11c) The six Īsvari of the west.

(11d) The six *īśvarī* of the north.

(11e) The four guardian *īśvarī*.



## 9. THE SECRET COMMITMENT OF THE INDESTRUCTIBLE ARRAY

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The purpose of this chapter is to show how the aforementioned maṇḍala of meditative stability and its aspects of mantra recitation and sealing hand gestures are made manifest by means of the symbolic maṇḍala of reflected imagery, enabling empowerments to be conferred.

Having revealed the maṇḍala of meditative stability and its aspects, Samantabhadra then reveals the various maṇḍalas in which empowerments are to be conferred for the sake of trainee practitioners (v. 1). This unified form of Samantabhadra with Samantabhadrī is known as the Supreme Identity (*bdag nyid chen po*) or the Great Joyous One (*dgyes pa chen po*), although the latter epithet may also sometimes be rendered adverbially (“with great joy”).

This chapter presents the natural maṇḍala of the body of the female and male, in which those of highest potential are empowered, and the symbolic maṇḍala constructed of colored powders, in which those of lower potential are empowered.

As far as the maṇḍala of the female consort is concerned, its location is revealed to be the pudendum of the female (v. 2), and this is considered in terms of its dimensions (v. 3), the pitching of the maṇḍala lines that purify her mental continuum (v. 4), and the celestial palace and symbolic seal, which are visualized to be drawn within this maṇḍala (vv. 5–6). Offerings are prepared, especially those associated with the female deities of the maṇḍala, which generate bliss (v. 7). Burnt offerings are made as a preliminary purification (vv. 8–9), followed by the relative and ultimate offerings of meditative stability (vv. 10–12), and the secret offerings of skillful means and discriminative awareness, which generate supreme bliss.

Thereby, all the buddhas and sentient beings are provisionally delighted by the display of inner radiance free from conceptual elaboration, and buddhahood is conclusively attained (vv. 13-16).

Once the master who confers empowerment has entered the maṇḍala (v. 17), the student is urged to enter and receive empowerment with an attitude of total renunciation, which purifies broken commitments (vv. 18-19). The actual empowerments are then conferred in the following order: the ten empowerments of beneficence (*phan pa'i dbang bcu*), followed by the five empowerments of ability (*nus pa'i dbang lnga*), while the three higher empowerments of profundity (*zab dbang gsum*) are implicit in the disclosure of this very maṇḍala (v. 20).

There is also, however, another tradition according to which the higher empowerments are received in the maṇḍala of the pudendum of the male (v. 21).

The symbolic maṇḍala of color powders, in which those of lower potential are empowered, is materially constructed on a small, intermediate, or large scale (vv. 22-24). It is then consecrated by visualizing the form of the deity, known as the "being of meditative commitment" (*samayasattva*), after which an invitation is made to the actual deity, known as the "being of pristine cognition" (*jñānasattva*) to enter, and these two are then indivisibly absorbed (vv. 25-27). Consequently, provisional accomplishments such as the four rites of enlightened activity and the complete array of supreme accomplishments associated with buddha body, speech, and mind are attained in order that all beings may benefit (vv. 28-30).

Having received empowerment, the trainee will swiftly become accomplished by persevering through skillful means in the five aspects of meditative stability, the five prerequisites for meditation practice, and the five aspects of attainment advocated by the mantra texts (vv. 30-31). In these ways he or she will then achieve the provisional results as an awareness holder (v. 32) and the conclusive result of buddhahood (vv. 33-36).

The chapter ends with a brief synopsis concerning the nature of the faith or devotion required if those on whom empowerments are conferred are to become accomplished. Conversely, if empowerments are conferred on those lacking faith or those who are degenerate in their commitments, the outcome will be negative (v. 37).

THE THIRD SECTION [of the general presentation of the nature of the three maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind (16.1.1), see above, p. 160] is the presentation of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery that elucidates that [aforementioned maṇḍala of meditative stability] (16.1.1.3).

This comprises (i) a brief introduction to the enunciation of this maṇḍala (16.1.1.3.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis of its nature (16.1.1.3.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**[Then the tathāgata] uttered these following aphorisms concerning the maṇḍala of secret commitment:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:1)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོས། རྗེ་མཆོག་སངས་བུ་འཇིགས་མེད་ཀྱིས་  
བཀོད་པ་ལ་སྦྱོམས་པར་བྱས་ནས། ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then the Tathāgata, the Great Joyous One, became equipoised in the array of the secret commitment of indestructible reality and uttered these following aphorisms.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of meditative stability had been revealed, **then the Tathāgata, the Great Joyous One**, Samantabhadra himself, for the sake of living beings, **became equipoised** through his inconceivable pristine cognition **in** the sequence of empowerments—**the maṇḍala array of the secret commitment of indestructible reality—and** then, in conjunction with his female consort [Samantabhadrī], he **uttered these following aphorisms.**

### **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE MAṆḌALA OF REFLECTED IMAGERY [16.1.1.3.2]**

The latter comprises (i) the empowerment into the supreme maṇḍala for those of highest acumen (16.1.1.3.2.1); (ii) the empowerment into the maṇḍala of colored sand for those of lower acumen (16.1.1.3.2.2); and (iii) a synopsis concerning those on whom empowerment is conferred (16.1.1.3.2.3).

### **THE EMPOWERMENT INTO THE SUPREME MAṆḌALA FOR THOSE OF HIGHEST ACUMEN [16.1.1.3.2.1]**

The first part comprises (i) the empowerment into the female maṇḍala (16.1.1.3.2.1.1) and (ii) the empowerment into the male maṇḍala (16.1.1.3.2.1.2).<sup>504</sup>

## **THE EMPOWERMENT INTO THE FEMALE MAṄḌALA [16.1.1.3.2.1.1]**

The former has three aspects: (i) the projection of the maṅḌala and the rites of burnt offering (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1); (ii) the making of offerings that appear but lack inherent existence (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2); and (iii) the actual entrance [into the maṅḌala] and conferral of empowerment (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3).

The first of these aspects includes (i) the projection of the maṅḌala (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.1) and (ii) the rites of burnt offering (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.2).

Among these, the former [the projection of the maṅḌala] comprises (i) the revelation of the maṅḌala (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.1.1) and (ii) the exhibition of the offerings (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.1.2).

The revelation of the [female] maṅḌala has five sections, among which the first concerns the location in which the maṅḌala is projected (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.1.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**This maṅḌala in which empowerment is conferred is  
located in the pudendum of the female medium.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:2)***

འགྲོ་ཏུ་སྤྲོ་བའི་དམ་ཚིག་མཚོག  
ལྷག་རྒྱ་ཚེན་པོའི་ལྷག་མཐིལ་དུ།

Located in the “palm” of the great female medium,  
The most subtle and supreme commitment . . .

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The** supremely secret great bliss is a **most subtle** topic because it is hard to know and understand, **and** it is the **supreme commitment**, inappropriate for those who would not attain supreme [spiritual accomplishment] in this very lifetime. Accordingly, owing to its **great** bliss, the maṇḍala for the conferral of this empowerment is located **in** the pure pudendum of the female consort (*yum mkha'*) endowed with the appropriate signs of a **female medium** from whom [that accomplishment] arises and through whom it is retained,<sup>505</sup> and whose body is fully developed (*puṣṭa, rgyas pa*). This location is [indicated by the symbolic term] **palm** (*phyag mthil*).

The second, concerning the circumference of this maṇḍala (16.1.1.3.2.1 .1.1.1.1.2) [comments on the verse]:

**This maṇḍala, indicative of buddha mind, should be four finger-widths in its circumference, naturally expressing the four delights.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:3)***

། ལྷགས་ཀྱི་དྭཱི་ལ་འཁོར་དམ་པ་དེ།  
། སོར་ནི་བཞི་ཡི་ཚད་དུ་བྱ།

. . . Is the genuine maṇḍala of buddha mind.  
It should be four finger-widths in its circumference.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

This **is the genuine maṇḍala**, indicative **of the buddha mind** of all buddhas, where pristine cognition and great bliss are indivisible. **It should be four finger-widths in its circumference**, indicative of the four delights, namely, delight, supreme delight, the delight that is free from delight, and the coemergent delight. Accordingly, it says in the *Tantra of Radiant Expanse*:

The womb of the female consort

Is the secret and profound maṇḍala of all the buddhas.

Empowerment is indivisibly conferred  
In the intrinsic nature of the four pristine cognitions.<sup>506</sup>  
The third, concerning the pitching of the lines [of this maṇḍala]  
(16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.1.3) [comments on the verse]:

**It is endowed with the five poisons, the [five] pristine cognitions, the [five] aggregates, the [five] buddha bodies, the [five] enlightened families, and inner radiance.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:4)***

།འབྲུ་ལྔ་སྒོ་ས་ལྔ་རིན་ཅེན་ལྔ།  
།སྒྲིང་པོ་ལྔ་དང་སྒྲུན་ལྔ་དང་།

།བདུད་ཚི་ལྔ་ཉིད་རབ་མཉམ་ལ།  
།རིག་པས་ཐིག་ནི་གདབ་པར་བྱ།

Endowed with five seeds, five incenses, five gems,  
Five essences, five medicines, and five nectars,  
It is exceedingly level.  
Knowing this, one should pitch its lines.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

This refers to the purification of the mental continuum [of the female medium] possessing that location. [This maṇḍala] is **endowed with five seeds**, namely, the seeds of birth or the five poisons, which [inherently] abide as the [five] pristine



cognitions; the **five incenses**, namely, the five pristine cognitions, which are their inherently pure nature; the **five gems**, namely, the five psychophysical aggregates; the **five essences**, namely, the five buddha bodies; the **five medicines**, namely, the five enlightened families; **and** the **five nectars**, namely, the nature of mind wherein the fivefold buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities are indivisible, and which is pure inner radiance.

This [maṇḍala] **is** also said to be **exceedingly level** in that all those attributes that are revealed to be present and known to be present (*de ltar yin pa la yin par shes par byed pa*) are identical in buddhahood. **Knowing this**, while the mental continuum of the female consort is visualized as great pristine cognition, **one should** clearly **pitch** the supreme and pure Brahmā **lines**.

If the female medium is one whose mind has not previously been purified in accordance with the secret mantras, the lines should be pitched once the master [supervising the empowerment] has gradually made her mental continuum pure and radiant according to the lay vows and so forth. Once her mind has been purified, the ritual activities associated with the generation and perfection stages [of meditation] and so forth, and with the exploration of the energy channels and so forth,<sup>507</sup> may also be expressed as the “[pitching of the] lines.”

The fourth, concerning the drawing [of this maṇḍala] (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.1.4) [comments on the verse]:

**The pudendum of the female consort assumes the form of the celestial palace.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:5)***

།ལྷོ་བ་རྩིབས་དང་ལྷན་པ་ཡི།  
།རྩིབས་བཞི་འཁོར་ལོ་སྤྱ་བྱུང་བཅས།  
།གྲུ་ཆད་བཞི་དང་གྲུ་བཞི་པ།  
།བར་བྱམས་སྒོ་བྱུང་ལྷན་པར་བྱ།

Endowed with a central axis and radial lines,  
It should have a four-spoked wheel and perimeter  
And a courtyard, fashioned as a square,  
With four corners and entrance gateways.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The intrinsic nature of the pudendum of the female consort is visualized as assuming the form of the celestial palace. In the middle, it is **endowed with a central axis and radial lines**, the essential nature of which comprises the four channel branches (*rtsa 'dab bzhi*) within the pudendum. Outside this **four-spoked wheel and perimeter**, there **should** be visualized a lotus in the form of **a courtyard, fashioned as a square, with four** right-angled **corners and entrance gateways**.

The fifth, concerning the array of its symbols (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.1.5) [comments on the verse]:

**[In that location] the disks of sun and moon, the lotus seat, the syllable HŪM, and the vajra are visualized.**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 9:6)**

།སེན་རྒྱུམ་ཙམ་གྱི་ཉི་ཟླ་ལ།  
།ཙམ་ཉི་ཟླ་ཙམ་པདྨ་ཉི་གདན།

།ཡུངས་ཉི་ཟླ་ཙམ་གྱི་ཡི་གེ་ལས།  
།ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཉི་ཟླ་ཙམ་དུ་བྲི།

Upon disks of sun and moon the size of a round fingernail,  
Upon a lotus seat the size of a split pea,  
There is the syllable, the size of a mustard seed,  
And emerging therefrom, the emblem is drawn,  
The size of a sesame seed.

### **Interlinear Commentary**

In that location [i.e., the pudendum] of the deity, there is visualized a cushion composed of the **disks of sun and moon the size of a round fingernail**, illustrating the essential nature of the white and red residual impurities (*snyigs ma dkar dmar*), upon which there is a **lotus seat the size of a split pea**, upon which, in turn, **there is** the form of **the syllable HŪM, the size of a mustard seed**, exceedingly clear in its essential nature. **And emerging therefrom, the vajra emblem** symbolic of this nondual nature, **the size of a sesame seed, is** visualized to be **drawn**.

## [16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.2]

Second [the exhibition of the offerings, see [p. 344](#), comments on the verse]:

**Offerings should then be made, comprising ornaments, garlands, foods, beverages, songs, dance, music, and sensory contact.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 9:7)*

|བཅོས་བུའི་རས་ནི་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་དང་།  
|བརྒྱན་འབྲེང་བརྟུང་དང་བྲོ་བས་བསྐྱོར།  
|ལྷ་ཚོག་བྲོ་གར་རོལ་མོ་ཡི།  
|སྤྱིན་སྲུང་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས་རབ་ཏུ་མཚོད།  
|ཡུམ་དང་འཛོལ་སེམས་མ་ཡིས།  
  
|ཇི་ལྟར་འདོད་པའི་ལས་བཞིན་མཚོད།

Surrounded by diverse kinds of manufactured cotton  
And by ornaments, garlands, beverages, and savories,  
Offerings should be excellently made with provisions—  
Songs, verses, dance steps and gestures,  
And a cloud mass of musical trappings.  
Worthy offerings are also made of the female consort,  
Maids, and female bodhisattvas, just as they are desired.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

On the left side of the female medium, [the maṇḍala] should be adorned with provisions and offerings, with or without visual support.<sup>508</sup> **Surrounded by diverse kinds of** dyed garments, **manufactured** silk and **cotton and by** diverse **ornaments** including tiaras and necklaces, by diverse **garlands** including pendants and half-length pendants, by diverse **beverages** including tea and ale, **and savories** such as meat, cheesecake (*thud*), and cheese (*da phrum*), crowds of people should be manifested, singing the sweetest of **songs** and beautiful **verses** of praise, executing **dance** steps and **gestures** of the hands. **Offerings should be excellently made with provisions** forming **an** inconceivable **cloud mass of musical trappings**, such as conch shells, cymbals, lutes, flutes, parasols, and victory banners. Moreover, [the maṇḍala] should be adorned with **the female consort** on whom these offerings are conditional, delightful **maids** who grant what is wished, **and** youthful **female bodhisattvas**, who respectively generate delight in this blissful union, generate delight in the objects of sensory contact, and generate delight in the vision [of these offerings]. **Worthy offerings** of these three kinds **are made, just as they are desired.** It is claimed that the foremost objects of offering presented in this context are those associated with the outer, inner, and secret consorts who confer bliss.<sup>509</sup>

## **THE RITES OF BURNT OFFERING** **[16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.2]**

The latter [see [p. 344](#)], concerning the rites of burnt offering [associated with empowerment in the female maṇḍala], has two sections, of which the first is a general presentation of the burnt offerings of the four rites (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The sacraments of burnt offering associated with the four rites, including pacification, [should be presented] in conjunction with their [respective] mantras.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:8)***

།དབྱིབས་དང་ལ་དོག་མཚན་ལྡན་པར།  
།ཞལ་དུ་གུར་པའི་མེ་བོས་ལ།  
།བཟའ་བདུང་གོ་བའི་ཚོགས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས།  
།ལས་བཞིའི་མཚན་པ་རབ་དུ་སྤྱོན།

Transformed into the mouth [of Agni],  
In [a fire pit] endowed with characteristics of shape and color,  
The fire is summoned, and offerings of the four rites  
Should be excellently presented,  
Along with provisions of food, drink, and savories.

***Interlinear Commentary***

According to the sequence of the four rites, the hearth is **endowed with** fully distinct **characteristics of shape**, round and so forth, **and** also **color**, such as white. The intrinsic element of Agni, the god of fire, is **transformed** therein **into** a **mouth** in order to consume the offerings, and **the** supramundane deity of **fire is summoned and** invited into his stomach.<sup>510</sup> Offerings should then be made **with provisions of food, drink, and savories** including curd, barley dough balls,

and melted butter; **and, along with** these, **offerings of the four rites**, such as sesame oil for pacification and gemstones for enrichment, **should be excellently presented** in conjunction with their respective mantras and meditative stabilities.

The second is a detailed exegesis of the burnt offerings that are presented to wrathful deities (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.1.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Similarly, these [rites] should [also] be assessed in respect of other wrathful deities.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:9)***

། ལྷོ་བོའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དེ་བཞིན་ཏེ།  
། ཞིན་ཏུ་སྤྲ་ལ་སྦྱངས་པ་ཡིས།  
། བསམ་ཡས་དག་ལའང་དེ་བཞིན་བྱ།  
། རིག་པས་དཔག་པ་ཅོམ་དུ་འོ།

Similarly, in respect of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities,  
[The yogin] who has refined the subtlest [meditative  
stability]  
Should indeed please inconceivable [maṇḍalas].  
[These rites] should simply be assessed by means of  
intelligence.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

In the manner of the [aforementioned] burnt offerings, which are presented to the peaceful deities, these rites should **similarly** be applied, with the corresponding characteristics of the hearth, [fire] deity, and so forth, **in respect of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities**. The yogin **who has** excellently **refined the subtlest** and most profound essentials of meditative stability and so forth **should indeed please inconceivable** maṇḍalas of deities with burnt offerings, just as indicated in the appropriate ritual sequence.

The ways in which these rites of burnt offering are performed in the case of the maṇḍala of any given deity through any given rite **should be simply assessed by means of** [the yogin's] own **intelligence**, which takes into account the provisional circumstances.

## **THE MAKING OF OFFERINGS THAT APPEAR BUT LACK INHERENT EXISTENCE [16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2]**

The second aspect [of the conferral of empowerment in the female maṇḍala, see [pp. 343-44](#)] concerns the making of offerings that appear but lack inherent existence (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2). This comprises (i) mental offerings of meditative stability (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.1) and (ii) secret offerings of supreme bliss (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2).

## **MENTAL OFFERINGS OF MEDITATIVE STABILITY [16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.1]**

Among these, the former comprises (i) offerings of relative appearance, which are illusory (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.1.1) and (ii)



offerings of ultimate pristine cognition, which pertain to the perfection stage (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.1.2).<sup>511</sup>

The first of these also has two aspects, of which the former concerns the array of the cloud mass of the offerings of meditative stability (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.1.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**A cloud mass of offerings, [generated through] meditative stability, is then presented to the three mandalas.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:10)***

|མཚོད་པའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་ནི།  
|སེམས་ཀྱི་ཡིད་བཞིན་སྲིན་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས།  
|ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་ཐམས་ཅད་སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་།  
|མཉེན་འཇམ་རེག་ན་བདེ་བ་ཡི།  
|སྣ་ཚོགས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཡི་གཞི།  
|མཇོས་པར་གྱིས་ཤིང་སྐྱས་པ་དང་།  
|ཀུན་འབྱུང་རིན་ཅེན་ཕུང་པོར་འབར།  
|དབྱིབས་ལེགས་རྗེད་བྱ་བྱོ་མཚོག་བསིལ།  
|རིན་ཅེན་ཁང་པ་སྣ་ཚོགས་དང་།  
|རྒྱན་དང་དཔག་བསམ་ལྗོན་པའི་ཚལ།  
|ལྷ་དབྱུངས་ཚོགས་སུ་བཅད་པའི་སྐྱ།  
|ལྷ་གེས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ན་བཟའ་གདུགས།  
|དོ་ཤལ་དཔུང་རྒྱན་སེ་མོ་དོ།

|བཟའ་དང་བདུང་བའི་མཚོག་རྣམས་དང་།  
|རང་ལ་མཛེས་པར་བརྒྱན་པ་ཡི།  
|ལྷ་དང་ལྷ་མོ་རྩལ་སྟེད་ཀྱིས།  
|བློ་གར་ལ་སོགས་བསམ་ཡས་ཀྱིས།  
|སྟོགས་བཅུ་ནམ་མཁའི་ཁམས་བཀའ་ནས།  
|དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཀུན་ལ་རྒྱས་པར་དབུལ།

The great seal through which offerings are made  
Comprises the buddha fields of all ten directions  
With their provisions, which form a wish-fulfilling  
Cloud mass of the mind—  
Their ground, composed of diverse gemstones,  
Is pliant, soft, and pleasant to touch,  
Beautifully designed and bedecked.  
It [has a mountain that] blazes forth as a mass of  
precious things,  
Which are the source of all [that is desired].  
It has shapely pools, most delicious to taste and cool;  
It has diverse gemstone mansions, ornaments, groves of  
wish-granting trees;  
It has melodious songs, the resonance of poetic verses;  
It has canopies, victory banners, divine robes, parasols;  
It has midlength necklaces, shoulder straps, long  
necklaces;  
It has supreme kinds of food and drink;  
And it has male and female deities,

Themselves ornamented beautifully and  
Numerous as atomic particles,  
Who fill the space of the ten directions  
With their inconceivable dance steps, gestures, and so  
on,  
And then make offerings extensively to all maṇḍalas.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**The great seal through which offerings are made** to the maṇḍalas by means of mental emanation **comprises the buddha fields of all** world systems of the **ten directions, with their provisions, which form a dense cloud mass of wish-fulfilling** gems, the projection of one's own **mind**. These are visualized in conjunction with the syllable BHRUM to become like the buddha field of the Bounteous Array, which is composed of diverse and pure gemstones. **Their ground, composed of gemstones diverse** in substance, which is ornately bedecked with inconceivable and agreeable details of ornament and array, **is** an entirely level surface, **pliant, soft, and pleasant to touch, beautifully designed** with diverse gems in the manner of a checkerboard, **and bedecked** throughout the ten directions with the diverse gems of the gods, adorned in clusters. **It** has, derived from the syllable trāṃ, a massive mountain that **blazes forth as** a network of light rays—a **mass of** the seven **precious things, which are the source of all** that is desired. **It has**, derived from the syllable khaṃ, beautifully colored and **shapely** lotus **pools**, including lakes and ponds, filled to the brim with water possessed of eight excellent qualities—**most delicious to taste, cool**, and so forth. These are carpeted with flowers and resound with the pleasant chirping of birds. Concerning these eight qualities [of water], it says in the transmissions of the Vinaya:

Light, delicious, and soft,

Clear, cool, and unsullied,  
Not harmful to the stomach when drunk,  
And not harmful either to the throat—

These are the eight attributes

With which water is endowed.<sup>512</sup>

**It has**, derived from the syllable BHRUM, a multitude of **gemstone mansions**, adorned with **diverse** details of shape, color, and array; derived from the syllable OM, it has, in its parklands, garlands in the form of gemstone **ornaments** and **groves of divine wish-granting trees**, from which a lattice-work of diverse brocades and gems is suspended.

**It has**, derived from the syllable hrīḥ, sweet sounds, pleasant **melodious songs**, and **the resonance of poetic verses**, including praises and benedictions, which are all naturally arisen. **It has**, derived from the syllable OM, types of clothing and offering utensils, **canopies, victory banners, parasols**, and diverse **divine robes** including both upper and lower garments. **It has**, derived from the syllable TRĀM, inconceivable details of ornamentation such as tiaras, neck bands, **midlength necklaces, shoulder straps, and long necklaces**. **It has**, derived from the OM, diverse **kinds of food** endowed with a hundred supreme savors, delicious nectarous **drinks**, and **supreme**<sup>513</sup> silken garments (*gos zungs*) studded with diverse gems. **And**, derived from the syllable HŪM, **it has** the bodies of all sentient beings naturally appearing as **male and female deities, ornamented beautifully** with raiment, ornaments, and so forth, which are appropriate to **themselves**, equal in number to **and as numerous as atomic particles**. All of these are pleasing, **with their inconceivable dance steps** of the feet, **gestures** of the hands, the melodious songs of their music, **and so on**. It is they **who** completely **fill the entire space of the ten directions** with this cloud of offerings, **and then make offerings** individually and **extensively** with their clouds of offerings **to all maṇḍalas** of ground, path, and result, subsumed in cyclic existence and the expanse of nirvāṇa.

The latter aspect [of the offerings of relative appearance, which are illusory] concerns the ways in which these are to be

presented (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.1.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Owing to nonclarity and clarity, [these offerings]  
should be presented either in a gradual or in an  
immediate manner.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:11)***

།སྐལ་ལྷན་གསལ་བའི་ཁྱད་པར་གྱིས།  
།རིམ་གྱིས་ཡང་ན་ཅིག་ཅར་དུ།  
།ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་དང་མཉམ་སྦྱོར་ཞིང་།

According to distinctions in the clarity of fortunate  
[yogins],  
One is either gradually or immediately  
United in the expanse of reality.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**According to distinctions** of nonclarity and **clarity** in the meditative stability **of fortunate** yogins, **one is** vividly **united either gradually or immediately in the** vast **expanse of actual reality**, and then the offerings should be presented.

The latter aspect [of the mental offerings of meditative stability, see above, [p. 352](#)], concerns the offerings of pristine cognition, which is the ultimate reality of the perfection stage [of meditation] (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.1.2). [This comments on the verse:]

**Then the great seal should be cultivated, through which offerings are made with purity in respect of the three spheres [of subject, object, and their interaction].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:12)***

ཁཚོད་པའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོར་བསྐྱོམ།

And one should meditate on the great seal  
Through which these offerings are made.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**And**, in order to renounce material attachment to these offerings of meditative stability, **one should meditate on the great seal through which these offerings are made.** This accords with the modality in which these offering clouds do not exist anywhere apart from one's own mind, that the mind too is of a sky-like nature, without abiding anywhere, and that the threefold interaction of the object of offering, the subject of offering, and the act of offering is without inherent existence in that disposition, free from all extremes of conceptual elaboration.

One of highest intelligence meditates in this way from the very moment when the offerings are made, and is without grasping or attachment, whereas one of lower intelligence is established subsequently in that nonreferential disposition.<sup>514</sup>

It says in the *Sūtra of the Lamp of Precious Gems*:

Know the object to which offerings are made to be sky-like

And the subject who makes them to be nonreferential,  
Without grasping anything whatsoever.  
This is the most genuine of all offerings,  
Which will excellently obtain the inestimable,  
Inconceivable pristine cognition.<sup>515</sup>

## **THE SECRET OFFERINGS OF SUPREME BLISS [16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2]**

The latter aspect [of the making of offerings that appear but lack inherent existence, see [p. 352](#)] concerns the secret offerings of supreme bliss. This comprises (i) the offerings of skillful means comprising supreme bliss (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1) and (ii) the offerings of discriminative awareness that does not abide in the two extremes (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.2).

Among them, the offerings of skillful means comprising supreme bliss include (i) the actual offerings (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.1) and (ii) a presentation of their beneficial attributes (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**The maṇḍalas should be invited into her pudendum,  
and once they have been pleased with offerings,  
accomplishment will be attained.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:13)***



|གསལ་ལྡན་མཉམ་གྱིན་བརྒྱབས་ལ།  
 |སྟོང་གསུམ་ཡུངས་འབྲུ་གཞུག་ཚུལ་དུ།  
 |དབྱིངས་ནས་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་སྐྱན་བྲངས་མཚོད།  
 |མཉེས་ནས་གྲུབ་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་མཚོག

When she [the female medium] is endowed with clarity,  
 or is consecrated,  
 In the manner of the trichiliocosm absorbed in a  
 mustard seed,  
 The maṇḍalas should be invited from the expanse,  
 And then offerings should be made.  
 Once they have been pleased,  
 The supreme commitment of accomplishment [will be  
 obtained].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**When she**, the female medium representing the action seal, **is endowed with** the **clarity** of discriminative awareness and meditative stability, **or**, if lacking that, with the yogin visualizing the deity, there ensues the consecration that accords with the ritual<sup>516</sup>—the pudendum **is consecrated** and so forth. Then the white and red pure essences on the tip of her lotus, the size of mustard seeds, are visualized as the maṇḍala. Just as the miraculous ability of sublime beings can consecrate all world systems **of the trichiliocosm** so that they are **absorbed** and concentrated **in a mustard seed**, with the result that the trichiliocosm is not diminished and the mustard seed does not increase, **in the same manner**, [the yogin] should visualize that **the** inestimable **maṇḍalas** of the conquerors **should be invited** and absorbed into her “lotus

courtyard” (*padma’i khyams*) **from the expanse** of actual reality, without the supporting maṇḍala of her lotus courtyard increasing or the being of pristine cognition (*jñānasattva*) decreasing. **And then**, when [the yogin is] aroused by the signs of this union, **offerings should be made** through the bliss that is displayed. **Once** the deities of the maṇḍala **have been pleased** thereby, the rank of **the supreme commitment of** inconceivable great **accomplishment** will be obtained.

This [visualization] clearly reveals the sequence of ritual service and attainment that precedes the entrance of the being of pristine cognition and the conferral of empowerment in the aforementioned maṇḍala array [of the female pudendum], which is four finger-widths in its circumference.

The latter, describing the beneficial attributes of these [offerings of the supreme bliss of skillful means] (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.2), comprises both provisional benefits (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.1) and conclusive benefits (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.2).

Among them, the provisional benefits are of two sorts, the first of which is that all the buddhas are pleased (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.1) [and the second, that all living beings are satisfied (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2)]. [This comments on the verse:]

**All the buddhas, in whom outer and inner  
[phenomena are present], will without exception be  
pleased.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:14)***

།བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོ་མཚན་པ་ཡིས།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་མཉེས།

།སྲིད་གསུམ་འགྲོ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ།  
།དགའ་བ་ཆེན་པོས་བྱུང་པར་འགྱུར།

All maṇḍalas of the buddhas without exception will be pleased  
With the offerings that the Supreme Identity makes.  
All living beings within the three realms of existence  
Will be filled with supreme delight.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**All maṇḍalas of the buddhas** of the ten directions and four times **without exception will be pleased with the offerings that the Supreme Identity**, endowed with bliss, **makes** in the maṇḍala of the female pudendum. Also, the deities of the forty-two maṇḍalas and so forth in which the sensory elements and sense fields are present as primordial buddhahood will be pleased with the offerings of bliss that are made when the male, the Supreme Identity, is in union with the pristine cognition of intrinsic awareness. Furthermore, the deities of skillful means and discriminative awareness will be pleased with the offering sacraments of the Supreme Identity, which the male confers on the female and the female confers on the male. So one should know [this offering] to be threefold: outer, inner, and secret.<sup>517</sup>

All living beings, too, will be satisfied in the following manner: **All living beings** possessed of feelings and the amalgam of ideation are subsumed **within the three possible realms of existence**, namely, rebirth in the desire realm, the citadel where beings have physical bodies that manifest through this blissful union; rebirth in the form realm, the citadel where beings have speech<sup>518</sup> that is semimanifest; and

rebirth in the formless realm,<sup>519</sup> the citadel where beings have a mental faculty but are invisible. They **will all be filled with the supreme** inner radiance free from conceptual elaboration and the four actual realities, which are indivisible from the four **delights** of great pristine cognition.

The four actual realities (*chos nyid bzhi*) comprise (i) the actual reality of nondual body (*lus gnyis su med pa'i chos nyid*), liberated from the entire subject-object dichotomy because there is no grasping of the male and female consorts; (ii) the actual reality of nondual speech (*ngag gnyis su med pa'i chos nyid*), liberated from all conceptual elaboration and attachment because it is inexpressible; (iii) the actual reality of nondual mind (*gid gnyis su med pa'i chos nyid*), liberated from the amalgam of ideation in supreme bliss, which thus perceives the essence of the natural buddha body of actual reality; and (iv) the actual reality of nondual pristine cognition (*ye shes gnyis su med pa'i chos nyid*), which is an uninterrupted cycle of inner radiance, abiding in the disposition of bliss that is great owing to its lack of subjective apprehension.

The four kinds of inner radiance (*'od gsal bzhi*) occurring at that time comprise (i) the inner radiance of bliss (*bde ba'i 'od gsal*) through which body, speech, and mind are filled with delight, causing phenomenal existence to arise as delightful bliss; (ii) the inner radiance of luminosity (*gsal ba'i 'od gsal*) through which the naturally radiant essential nature of mind unimpededly appears from that disposition of bliss as skillful means and discriminative awareness; (iii) the inner radiance of nonconceptualization (*mi rtog pa'i 'od gsal*) through which sensations of attachment to subtle and coarse phenomena subside, so that one abides in a nonconceptual state without digression in any respect; and (iv) the inner radiance of the inconceivable (*bsam gyis mi khyab pa'i 'od gsal*), through which the apparition of ten signs arises from the disposition of actual reality.

These ten signs are the indications of the single savor of the expanse [of actual reality] and the pristine cognition [of buddha mind], which emerge through the entry of vital energy and

mind into the central channel [of the subtle body]. They comprise signs that respectively resemble smoke, mirage, clouds, fireflies, sun, moon, blazing gemstones, eclipse, stars, and the appearance of light rays. A slightly different enumeration of the ten signs is also explained in other classes of tantra.<sup>520</sup>

Second, the conclusive [benefit or] result, which is the attainment of buddhahood (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.2) [comments on the verse]:

**The aggregates, the sensory elements, body, speech, and mind, will become manifest as deities.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:15)***

།སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་དྲ་བ་བརྟན་པ་ཡིས།  
 །ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་དུས་བཞིར་གཤེགས་པ་ཡི།  
 །སངས་རྒྱལ་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་དང།  
 །ཁམས་གསུམ་འགོ་རྣམས་མངོན་དུ་འགྱུར།

Through stability in the *Net of Magical Emanation*,  
 All maṇḍalas of the buddhas without exception  
 Who emerge in the ten directions and four times  
 And [the beings of pristine cognition] will become  
 manifest  
 To living beings of the three world systems.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Through** [attributes] that emerge from **stability in** the experience of this [offering of skillful means], illustrated by the ten signs of meditative stability of skillful means and discriminative awareness associated with **the Net of Magical Emanation**, the result is that the nature of **all maṇḍalas of the buddhas without exception who emerge in the ten directions and four times and** the genuine pristine cognition that perceives with compassionate spirituality **will become manifest to the living beings of the three world systems.**

Alternatively, it is said that the maṇḍalas of all the buddhas conclusively cause the aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields to be visualized as the deities and the mundane body, speech, and mind to become manifest as wheels [of adornment], the essential nature of buddha body, speech, and mind.

Second, [see [p. 357](#)] there are the offerings of discriminative awareness that does not abide in the two extremes (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.2.2.2). [This comments on the verse:]

**They [the master and consort] should meditate,  
united in the manner of an optical illusion, which  
is nonexistent.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:16)***

ལྷུས་དག་སེམས་དང་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད།

ལག་ལའང་མི་གནས་མི་དམིགས་པ།

མིག་ཡོར་རྩལ་དུ་སྐྱོར་བ་ཡིས།

ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་ནི་ནམ་མཁའ་བསྐྱོམ།

Body, speech, mind, and all phenomena  
Do not abide in any respect and are nonreferential.  
They should unite in the manner of an optical illusion  
And thereby meditate on the space within space.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The apprehension of and attachment to afflictive mental states, and ordinary conceptual notions with respect to the male and female practitioners who are equipoised in nonduality, should be purified right where they are. Therefore, the [yogin's] own **body, speech, and mind** and those of the female consort, along with the intrinsic nature of **all** outer and inner **phenomena** indicative of bliss, **do not abide in any objective respect and are nonreferential** also in terms of a subjective mind. In that disposition, **in the manner of an optical illusion**, which is nonexistent but apparitional, the male and female are indivisibly **united, and thereby they should meditate on the space** of the unimpeded pristine cognition, the nature of mind **within** the **space** of the uncreated expanse, where skillful means and discriminative awareness are without duality. They should become equipoised and revel in the essential nature of this indivisible reality.

### **THE ACTUAL ENTRANCE INTO THE MAṄḌALA AND THE CONFERRAL OF EMPOWERMENT [16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3]**

The third aspect [of the empowerment into the female maṅḍala, see above, [p. 344](#)] comprises (i) the actual entrance [into the maṅḍala] (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.1) and (ii) the conferral of empowerment (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.2).

The former, concerning the entrance of the master and the disciples [comments on the verse]:

**The master should enter into the maṇḍala, and then the disciples should be ushered in.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:17)***

།ཀུན་བྱས་དབང་ཕྱུག་རིག་པས་འཇུག།  
།དེ་ནས་སློབ་མ་གཞུག་པར་བྱ།

Having performed all these [requisites],  
The mighty lord should enter [the maṇḍala] through  
awareness.  
Then the disciples should be ushered in.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Having performed all these** requisites that precede the ritual, beginning with the meditation on the meditative stability of actual truth (*de bzhin nyid kyi ting nge 'dzin*), **the mighty lord** of yoga, presiding over the assembly, the actual master of indestructible reality (*rdo rje slob dpon*), **should enter** first into the maṇḍala **through** the **awareness** of meditative stability.

Then there is the entrance of the disciples: Once the master has entered, **then the disciples should be ushered in** to the maṇḍala, in accordance with the seventeen procedures for entering (*'jug pa'i chos bcu bdun*).<sup>521</sup>



## THE CONFERRAL OF EMPOWERMENT [16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.2]

The latter, concerning the conferral of empowerment, comprises (i) the presentation of the offerings [for empowerment] (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.2.1) and (ii) the actual empowerments commensurate with the degrees of [the disciples'] acumen (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.2.2).

The first has two sections, of which the former concerns the actual presentation of the offerings (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The disciples then] should offer their children,  
spouse, and riches, Which are cherished and  
pleasing.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 9:18)*

།དེ་ནས་རིགས་གྱི་སྲུ་མཚོག་དེས།

།སྐྱུ་ལ་སྲིད་དང་ནི་རང་གི་ལུས།

།སྲུ་དང་རྒྱུ་མ་ལོར་གྱི་དབྱིག་

།རབ་ཏུ་གཅེས་དང་ཡིད་འཐད་དཔུལ།

Then these supreme children of enlightened heritage  
Should offer the kingdom and their own bodies,  
Their children, spouse, and prized possessions,  
Which are most cherished and pleasing to their minds.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

After the procedures for entering have been concluded, **then these children of enlightened heritage**, endowed with **supreme** fortune, should make offerings to the spiritual teacher with all their possessions. They **should offer the kingdom** with its provinces, **and their own bodies, children, spouse, and prized possessions**, which include diverse precious things such as gold and silver. If they have two of each of these, they should offer those **which are most cherished and**, in brief, the things that are agreeable and **pleasing to their own minds.**<sup>522</sup>

The latter concerns the beneficial consequences [of this presentation] (16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.2.1.2) [which comments on the verse]:

**By the making of offerings to the spiritual teacher,  
the deities will be pleased and all defects will be  
purified.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:19)***

།དབང་ཕྱག་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ལྡས་མཚོད་ན།  
།དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་མཚོད་པ་ཡིན།  
།ཉེ་བའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་སྣེས་ཅི་དགོས།  
།ཉེས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དག་པར་འགྱུར།

If offerings of the five resources are made to the mighty  
lord,

Offerings are made to all maṇḍalas.  
It is therefore needless to say that [offerings are made]  
To the present maṇḍala!  
All defects will be purified.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**If offerings of the five** kinds of desirable **resources are made to the** master of indestructible reality who is a **mighty lord** of yoga, **offerings are made to all maṇḍalas** of the buddhas of the ten directions and four times. If so, **it is therefore needless to say that** offerings are made to the meditational deities in **the present maṇḍala!** The *Tantra of the Array of Commitments* accordingly says:

If offerings are made to the spiritual teacher,  
The holder of indestructible reality,  
Offerings are made to all maṇḍalas.

It therefore goes without saying  
That [offerings are made] to the maṇḍala at hand!  
When defects have ceased, supreme accomplishment  
will be obtained.<sup>523</sup>

So it is that **all defects** pertaining to the commitments and  
vows **will be** thoroughly **purified**.

## **THE ACTUAL EMPOWERMENTS COMMENSURATE WITH THE DEGREES OF [THE DISCIPLES'] ACUMEN [16.1.1.3.2.1.1.3.2.2]**

The second section [see p. 363] concerns the actual  
empowerments commensurate with the degrees of [the  
disciples'] acumen. [It comments on the verse:]

**Then the ten empowerments of beneficence and the  
five empowerments of ability should be conferred.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:20)***

།དད་བཙོན་བརྟུལ་ལྷགས་རབ་རྟོགས་ན།  
།ཕན་པའི་དབང་སྦྱིན་ལུས་པའི་དབང་།

།ཇིམ་པ་བཞིན་དུ་སྦྱིན་པར་བྱ།  
།སྦྱིང་ཇིས་ཚུད་མ་ཟོས་པར་གཟུང་།

If faith and the ascetic discipline of diligence are well  
understood

and  
The empowerments of beneficence are given,

And the empowerments of ability  
Should then be conferred sequentially, with compassion,  
And these should be retained—  
Such that they are not unproductive.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

If [the disciples] are known to have the good fortune whereby **faith and the ascetic discipline of diligence are well understood, the ten empowerments of beneficence and the five empowerments of ability should be given sequentially and conferred with unsurpassed compassion** by the master; **and these should be retained** in the minds of the disciples, **such that they are not unproductive.**<sup>524</sup>

If one is without good fortune, [the empowerments] should not be given, or else only the empowerments of beneficence are to be conferred. The empowerments of ability should not be given because there would be a consequential serious offense. Such is also said in the following passage from the *Tantra of the Supreme Commitment: The Great Array of Pristine Cognition*:

If empowerment has been given to a student  
Who is an unworthy recipient,  
Both [master and student] will be ruined.<sup>525</sup>

## **THE EMPOWERMENT INTO THE MALE MAṄḌALA [16.1.1.3.2.1.2]**

The second part [of the conferral of empowerment into the supreme maṅḍala for those of highest acumen, see [p. 343](#)] is the empowerment into the male maṅḍala. [It comments on the

verse:]

**Empowerment may also be received dependent on  
the maṇḍala of skillful means.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:21)***

|ཡང་ན་ཐལ་མོ་རབ་བསྐྱེལ་ནས།  
|ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོའི་དཔངས་ཏུ་ནི།  
|དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་མཚུབ་གང་ཚད་ཏུ་ཡང་།  
|མཁས་པས་ཚོག་ཇི་བཞིན་གྱ།

Alternatively, one who is skilled should fold his palms  
together  
And upon the lap of the great seal,  
In the maṇḍala that is a full finger span in length,  
He should indeed confer [empowerment]  
In accordance with the ritual.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Then, with regard to the alternative method [of conferring the supreme empowerment], after the conferral of the secret empowerment and the empowerment of discriminating pristine cognition in the maṇḍala of the female, it is taught that the empowerment may also be received from the tip of the vajra of the male: **Alternatively**, the male **should fold his palms together** in the manner of meditative equipoise, **and then**, visualizing the body of the deity as **the great seal, upon its lap**, between the index fingers, there is **the maṇḍala** of the

“secret vajra” (*guhyavajra, gsang rdor*), a **full finger span** in length.<sup>526</sup> Therein, **one who is skilled** in the means of bliss **should indeed confer** empowerment on the disciples, by means of the pure essence (*dvangs ma*), **in accordance with the empowerment ritual**. Thereafter, the [remaining] empowerments should be completely conferred.

## **THE METHOD OF CONFERRING EMPOWERMENT IN THE MANḌALA OF COLORED SAND FOR THOSE OF LOW ACUMEN [16.1.1.3.2.2]**

The second part [of the detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery, on which see [p. 343](#)] is the method of conferring empowerment in the maṇḍala of colored sand for those of low acumen. This comprises (i) the drawing of the maṇḍala (16.1.1.3.2.2.1); (ii) the attainment of the maṇḍala (16.1.1.3.2.2.2); and (iii) the result of this attainment (16.1.1.3.2.2.3).<sup>527</sup>

### **THE DRAWING OF THE MANḌALA [16.1.1.3.2.2.1]**

The first of these [the drawing of the maṇḍala] also has three sections, namely, (i) the rituals appropriate for the drawing of small maṇḍalas (16.1.1.3.2.2.1.1); (ii) intermediate maṇḍalas (16.1.1.3.2.2.1.2); and (iii) large maṇḍalas (16.1.1.3.2.2.1.3).

### **THE DRAWING OF SMALL MANḌALAS**



## [16.1.1.3.2.2.1.1]

The first of these [the drawing of small maṇḍalas] has two parts, of which the first concerns the geomantic ritual (16.1.1.3.2.2.1.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[Alternatively, with regard to the maṇḍala of colored sand] one should purify the surface by visualizing that it has already been purified.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 9:22a)*

།ཡང་ན་ས་གནི་རབ་མཉམ་ལ།

Alternatively, on an extremely level surface . . .

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Distinct from those [aforementioned] empowerments in the supreme maṇḍala [of the body], there is **alternatively** another method according to which [the maṇḍala] should be drawn **on an extremely level surface**, in accordance with the geomantic ritual (*sa'i cho ga*). A surface that has not formerly been purified does not subsequently become pure. But one who knows that

Earth and water are respectively Buddhalocanā and Māmaki<sup>528</sup>

and so forth, subsequently purifies the surface by visualizing that it has been pure from the beginning.

The second part concerns the actual drawing [of small maṇḍalas] (16.1.1.3.2.2.1.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**An expert should perform the ritual whereby the lines are pitched in [small] maṇḍalas, measuring one cubit, one body length, or three body lengths.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:22b)***

།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལྷ་གང་ཚད་དུ་བྱ།  
།ཡང་ན་ལུས་གང་ཚད་དུ་སྟེ།  
།ཡང་ན་ལུས་ནི་གསུམ་གྱི་ཚད།  
།ལུར་བུ་སྟངས་ལྷོན་བྱེ་དང་།  
།གོས་རྒྱན་མཛེས་པའི་ཡིད་འོང་གོགས།  
།ཐིག་གང་ཚེ་ག་ལུན་སུམ་ཚོགས།  
།མཁས་ལཱ་ཆེན་པོས་བསྐྱིམས་ཏེ་བྱ།

The maṇḍala should measure a full cubit,  
Or alternatively a full body length,  
Or alternatively three body lengths.  
It should have ritual spikes, threads, colored sand,  
And an attractive assistant,  
Beautified with robes and ornaments.  
The excellent ritual whereby the lines are pitched  
Should be performed, with concentration, by a supreme  
expert.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The smallest form of **the** small **maṇḍala** of reflected imagery **should measure a full cubit. Alternatively,** the intermediate form of the small [maṇḍala] should measure **a full body length**, that is, a fully extended double arm span (*'dom gang*). **Alternatively,** the large form of the small [maṇḍala] should measure approximately **three body lengths**.

As for the **ritual spikes** fashioned of human bone and so forth, these include the Awesome Kīla (*'gying phur*) of four finger-widths, which is positioned in the middle of the maṇḍala, and one of eighteen finger-widths, which is utilized for guarding [the maṇḍala] from impediments.<sup>529</sup> To distinguish its sectors, the maṇḍala should be adorned with **threads** of cotton, wool, lotus fiber, hair from a charnel ground, and so forth, double the length of the maṇḍala.<sup>530</sup> To symbolize the different enlightened families, it should have **colored sand** of five distinct hues, and so forth; **and** in order that the ritual activity might be carried out, there should be a sixteen-year-old female medium representing the action seal (*karmamudrā*)—**an attractive assistant beautified with robes and fine ornaments**.<sup>531</sup>

Then the assistant should hold one end of the threads while **the excellent ritual, whereby both the line** of pristine cognition and **the line** of action **are pitched, should be performed by** the master of indestructible reality, **a supreme expert** in the rites of the maṇḍala, **with concentration** and without wavering in body or mind.<sup>532</sup>

## **THE DRAWING OF INTERMEDIATE MAṆḌALAS [16.1.1.3.2.2.1.2]**

The second section [of the drawing of the maṇḍala] concerns the drawing of intermediate [maṇḍalas], which may also be of three sizes. [This comments on the verse:]

**The intermediate maṇḍalas should measure sixteen, twenty, or twenty-five cubits.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:23)***

ལང་ན་ལུ་ནི་བཅུ་རྒྱལ་དང་།  
ཉི་ཤུ་འཇ་ཉི་ཤུ་ཚ་ལྔ་ར་བྱ།  
རིགས་ཀྱི་ད་ཀྱི་ལ་འཁོར་ལྔ་རྣམས་བསྐྱོམ།  
སྐྱུ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ལྔ་ན་གཟུགས་ཀྱང་དགོད།

Alternatively, it should measure sixteen, twenty, or twenty-five cubits.  
Meditate on the five maṇḍalas of enlightened families,  
And [the appropriate] forms  
Endowed with buddha body, speech, and mind  
Should also be arrayed.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Alternatively,** the small form of the intermediate [maṇḍala] **should measure sixteen cubits,** and the intermediate form of the intermediate [maṇḍala] **twenty, or** the large form of the intermediate [maṇḍala] **twenty-five cubits.** In this [maṇḍala], the lines should be pitched in the previous manner.

**Meditate on** the colored lines as **the five maṇḍalas of the enlightened families**, visualizing that these dissolve and that the five pristine cognitions that emerge therefrom become the colored lines. **And**, once the lines have been pitched and the colors have been applied, the appropriate **forms** indicative of buddha body, speech, and mind **should also be arrayed** in the locations of the respective deities. These include pictures (*tsa ka li*), relief images, or mold engravings symbolic of **buddha body** which mark the different locations of the deities; the seed syllables or heart mantras symbolic of **buddha speech**; and the hand emblems symbolic of **buddha mind**, including the vajra and wheel with which the deities are **endowed** to represent their intrinsic nature.

## **THE DRAWING OF LARGE MAṆḌALAS [16.1.1.3.2.2.1.3]**

The third section [of the drawing of the maṇḍala] concerns the drawing of large [maṇḍalas], which may also be of three sizes. [This comments on the verse:]

**The [large] maṇḍalas should measure one reach of hearing, one *yojana*, or the expanse of space.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:24)***

ལང་ན་རྒྱུ་གྲགས་དཔག་ཚད་དམ།  
ནམ་མཁའི་དབྱིངས་ནི་བསམ་ཡས་པར།  
སངས་རྒྱལ་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་སྣ་ཚོགས་བསྐྱེམ།  
མ་མཐོང་སྣོད་ལ་བསྟན་ཕྱིར་མཚོན།

ཁ་དོག་ཉི་ཤུ་ཅུ་ལྗེའམ།  
ལྗེ་ཡི་ཚོན་གྱིས་བྲི་བར་བྱ།  
འདུལ་བའི་ཚོག་བཞིན་དུ་དབྱེས།

Alternatively, they should measure one reach of hearing,  
One *yojana*, or the inconceivable expanse of space.  
Meditate therein on the diverse maṇḍalas of the  
buddhas.

In order that they might be disclosed  
To deluded, unseeing beings,  
These should be drawn with colored sand  
Of twenty-five hues or alternatively of five hues,  
And they are to be applied according to the specific  
ritual  
In which instruction is given.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Alternatively**, the small form of the large [maṇḍala] **should measure one reach of hearing.**<sup>533</sup> This is the point expressed in the following passage from the *Treasury of Phenomenology*:

There are twenty-four finger-widths (*aṅgulī*) in one cubit  
(*hasta*),

Four cubits in one bow length (*dhanuḥ*),

And five hundred bow lengths in one reach of hearing  
(*kroṣa*),  
Which is held to be the distance a hermitage should be  
located.

The term *yojana* designates eight of the latter.<sup>534</sup>  
Then there is the intermediate form of the large [maṇḍala]  
measuring **one *yojana***, or the large form of the large  
[maṇḍala] equal to **the inconceivable expanse of space**.

**Therein**, the empowerments should be conferred while the  
maṇḍala of the awareness holders is actually emanated, or else  
one should **meditate on the diverse** enlightened families of  
the **maṇḍalas of the buddhas**. This implies that  
empowerment is conferred on the disciples while the maṇḍala  
that pervades the entire expanse of space is actually emanated.  
It may be exemplified in the past by the master Buddhaguhya  
who, [seated] by the shore of Lake Manasarovar, pitched the  
lines on the lake and then actually revealed and granted the  
empowerment of the maṇḍala of the indestructible expanse  
(*vajradhātumaṇḍala*) to Mañjuśrīkīrti; and also by the great  
master Padmasambhava, who revealed the maṇḍala of  
Vajrakumāra, equal to the dimensions of space, in the Lion  
Cave of Taktsang, and then conferred empowerment on Yeshe  
Tsogyal.<sup>535</sup>

Although the nature of the five buddha bodies and five  
pristine cognitions abides primordially in the mental continuum  
of sentient beings, they have been obscured by fundamental  
ignorance. **In order that they might be disclosed to  
deluded, unseeing beings, these should be drawn with  
colored sand of twenty-five hues**, which are compounded by  
dividing [a basic color] such as white into its five respective  
shades—yellowish white, reddish white, greenish white, bluish  
white, and white itself—while the other four [basic colors] are  
similarly divided. These colors symbolize the twenty-five facets  
of pristine cognition, the bodhisattvas in the intermediate  
directions [of the maṇḍala], and so forth. **Alternatively**, if all  
these [twenty-five colors] are lacking, the maṇḍala should be  
drawn with colored sand **of five hues**, namely, white, yellow,

red, green, and blue. As is said in the *Extensive [Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters]*:



All sentient beings without exception  
Are totally pervaded by the five pristine cognitions,  
But they have been obscured by their own conceptual  
notions,  
And thus they do not see the meaning of the five pristine  
cognitions.

In order to disclose the defining characteristics of  
pristine cognition

To all such deluded beings,

There are revealed the colors dark [blue] and so forth—  
White, red, yellow, and green.<sup>536</sup>

As to the drawing of [this maṇḍala], the practical method  
adopted by a perceptive lineage holder requires the positioning  
of elaborate, moderately complex, or simplified tokens and so  
forth, which **are to be applied according to** the tradition of  
**the specific ritual context in which instruction is given.** As  
is said in the *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*:

The imagery is indeed to be drawn

Corresponding to the maṇḍala of one's meditative  
stability.<sup>537</sup>

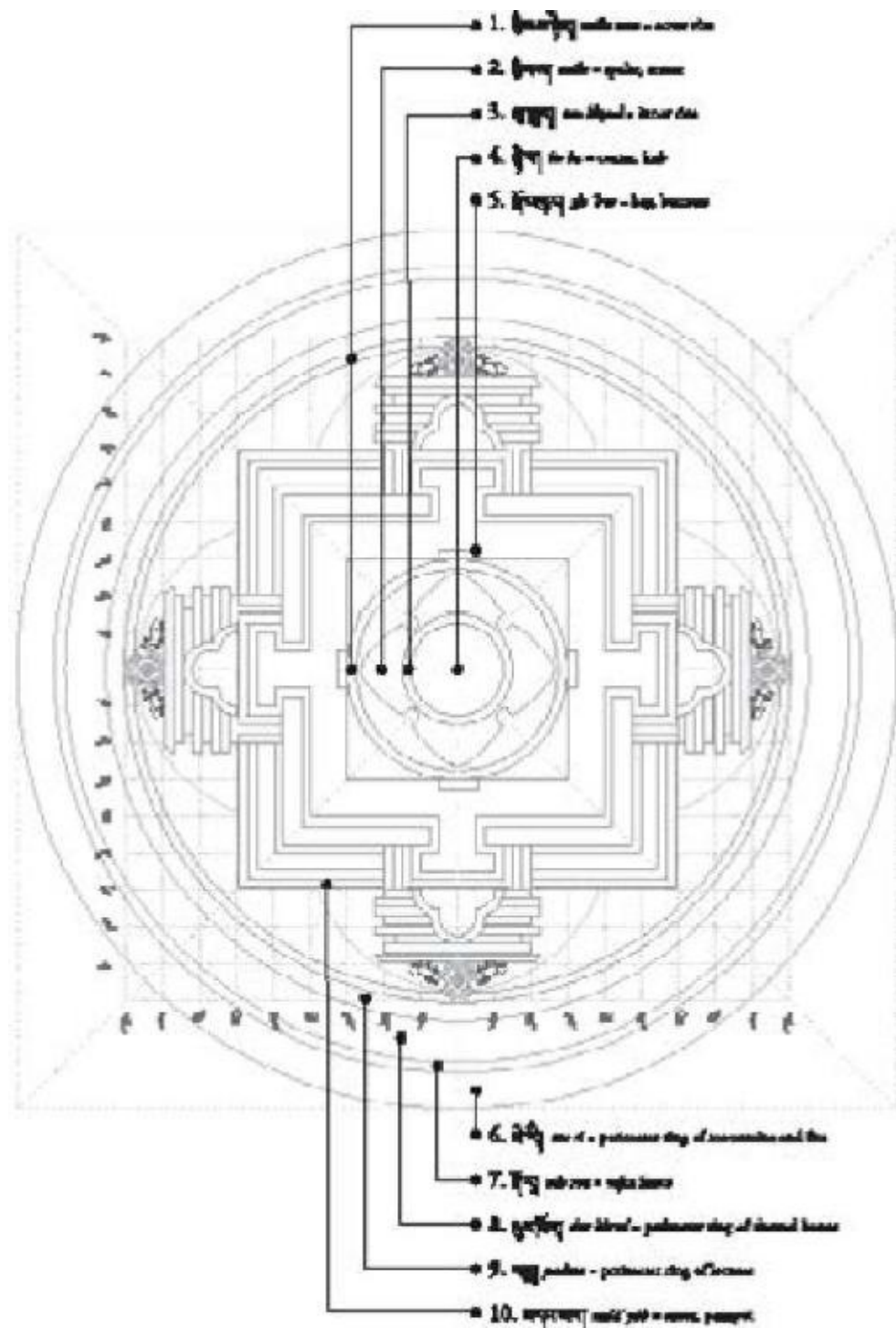


FIGURE 4. SCHEMATIC DRAWING OF THE MANDALA.



Caryātantras, and there are some who understand this passage to mean that they instruct those to be trained [according to their needs]. Such persons, however, seem to misunderstand that the elaborate, intermediate, and simplified maṇḍalas of reflected imagery are actually distinguished according to the intelligence and resources of individuals. It is said that for universal monarchs and so on there are [large maṇḍalas] of one *yojana* and so forth; for ordinary persons who are nobly endowed, there are intermediate [maṇḍalas]; and for those of meager resources there are [simplified maṇḍalas] of small dimension. The large form of the large maṇḍala is that in which empowerment is conferred by a sublime spiritual teacher on a supreme student. So these are also distinguished according to the degree of acumen.

To explain these three traditions [of maṇḍala construction] without confusion, the text speaks of the sequence of the lines during [the preparation of] small [maṇḍalas]. It speaks of the consecration and drawing of the colored lines and the means of arraying the symbols during [the preparation of] intermediate maṇḍalas, and it speaks of the perfect method of draftsmanship according to the sequence in which the colors are to be applied during [the preparation of] elaborate maṇḍalas.

## **THE ATTAINMENT OF THE MAṆḌALA [16.1.1.3.2.2.2]**

The second section [of the method of conferring empowerment in the maṇḍala of colored sand] concerns the attainment of the maṇḍala. It comprises (i) the generation of the maṇḍala (16.1.1.3.2.2.2.1); (ii) the invitation [to the beings of pristine cognition] (16.1.1.3.2.2.2.2); and (iii) their dissolving in a nondual manner (16.1.1.3.2.2.2.3).<sup>538</sup>

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**Through meditative stability, colored sand is**

**generated and consecrated as the maṇḍala.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:25)***

ཏྲིང་འཛིན་རོལ་མོ་མཐའ་ཡས་མཚོག  
ཡི་གེའམ་བདམའ་<sup>539</sup> སླིང་པོའམ།

ལྷག་རྒྱའམ་སྐྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ལྡན་པར།  
བྱིན་རྒྱལ་ཡ་མཚན་མད་པོ་ཆེ།  
འགྲུབ་འགྲུར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་དམ།  
ས་ལ་སོགས་ལས་ལྷག་རྒྱར་བཅས།  
རྣམ་གྲོལ་རིམ་པ་ཐོབ་འགྲུར་ན།  
དག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་གྱིས་སྐྱུངས་པས།  
སྣོས་ཅི་དགོས་ཏེ་འདི་ཉིད་ཡིན།

The supreme infinite display of meditative stability  
Is endowed with syllables, symbols,  
Heart mantras, and hand emblems  
Or [other representations of] buddha body, speech, and  
mind.

This consecration will achieve amazing and wondrous  
accomplishments.

This is the commitment of all the buddhas.

If the sequence of liberation will be obtained

Even when hand emblems have been fashioned from  
clay and so forth,

It is needless to say that [mind] which has been purified  
By pure pristine cognition is itself [buddhahood]!

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

Following the generation of the mind set on enlightenment, **the supreme infinite display of the meditative stability** of the actual truth and so forth generates the maṇḍala, reaching the limits of the expanse of space. Within it, in the locations of the respective deities there are the corresponding seed **syllables**, beginning with ṬHA, or drops of colored sand corresponding to their body colors, which are heaped up as **symbols** to indicate the deities, or else **heart mantras** such as HŪṂ and MŪṂ, or **hand emblems** including the vajra and the wheel, **or** [any other representations], as appropriate, through which [the maṇḍala] is visualized to be **endowed with the** fully perfect **buddha body, speech, and mind** of the different deities. This is designated as **the consecration** of the maṇḍala of colored sand in the maṇḍala of meditative stability or pristine cognition.

As to the goals achieved thereby, the common four rites, which are **amazing** but provisional, and the **wondrous** conclusive **accomplishments** of the maṇḍala of deities **will be achieved. This is the supreme commitment** that **all the buddhas** have pledged. **If, even when** the forms of **the hand emblems** of buddha body, speech, and mind **have been fashioned from** crude external materials including **clay, wood, stone, and so forth**, the three degrees of enlightenment (*byang chub gsum*)<sup>540</sup>—**the sequence of liberation** corresponding to the fortune of respective trainees—**will be** individually **obtained, it is needless to say that** the face of mind **which has been purified by** the meditative stability of **pure pristine cognition** will encounter buddhahood in primordial inner radiance. This mind **itself is** primordial buddhahood, and accomplishment will take effect merely by one's visualizing it as such. Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra of Pristine Cognition at the Moment of Decease*:

If the mind is realized, buddhahood is attained.

Therefore, one should meditate well on the perception that buddhahood is not elsewhere attained.<sup>541</sup>  
And in the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*:

The nature of mind is perfect buddhahood.<sup>542</sup>

Second, the invitation [to the beings of pristine cognition] (16.1.1.3.2.2.2) [comments on the verse]:

**[The actual maṇḍalas] should then be invited as desired, from the disposition of the buddha body of reality.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:26)***

འཕྲོགས་དུས་དགེལ་འཁོར་བདག་ཉིད་ཚེ།  
འཕྲོགས་ལྷན་གྱི་དགེལ་འཁོར་ལས།  
དགེལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་སྐྱེན་བྲལ་དོ།

The supreme identity of the maṇḍalas  
Of the directions and times is nonreferential.  
All maṇḍalas should be invited from this maṇḍala of  
buddha mind.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The supreme identity of all the maṇḍalas of the ten directions and four times is** the fundamental abiding nature, **nonreferential** in any respect, and free from conceptual elaboration. **All maṇḍalas** of the beings of pristine cognition, as desired, **should be invited from this** disposition of the

buddha body of actual reality—the **maṇḍala of buddha mind**.

These [beings of pristine cognition] are said to be invited simply when the intellect wills them to come, and they also confer consecration through the compassionate spirituality of the omniscient [buddhas]. This is chiefly because they are experienced as an emanation of one's own mind. It is logical that since the mind is itself buddhahood, the maṇḍala will be attained through its experiences and visualizations.

Third, the dissolving [of the beings of pristine cognition] in a nondual manner (16.1.1.3.2.2.2.3) [comments on the verse]:

**The maṇḍala of the beings of pristine cognition  
dissolves indivisibly into the maṇḍala of the beings  
of commitment.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:27)***

།རང་སྣང་དབྱེར་མེད་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ལ།  
།འཇུག་པའི་མཚན་ཉིད་མཉམ་སྦྱར་བས།  
།སྤྱོད་ས་དུས་ཀྱན་ནས་གཤེགས་པ་ཡི།  
།བསྐྱེད་པའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་རབ་དུ་རྫོགས།  
།ཉེ་བར་གྱུར་བའི་དམ་ཚིག་མཚོག

[The maṇḍala of the beings of pristine cognition] enters  
indivisibly into the self-manifesting maṇḍala,  
And owing to this characteristic, they become united.  
[The buddhas] who emerge from all directions and at all  
times



Recited [an aspiration prayer],  
Whereby the maṇḍala could be perfected.  
This is the supreme commitment of those who become  
close [heirs].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The visualized maṇḍala of meditative stability and the natural spontaneous maṇḍala of the ground both abide **indivisibly** as the **self-manifesting** essential nature. This maṇḍala of the beings of pristine cognition, which has been invited **into the natural maṇḍala** of the visualized [beings of] commitment, **enters** and dissolves therein. **Owing to this characteristic**, the two maṇḍalas **become united** and thereby they dissolve, in the manner of water being poured into water. All the buddhas **who emerge from all the ten directions and four times** for the sake of living beings, when they formerly engaged in practice, **recited** the aspiration prayer “May the tathāgatas themselves be present before those who are attentive to them!” Once this [prayer] had been brought to fruition, **the maṇḍala** of enlightened activity that performs acts of benefit in that very manner **could** manifest through compassionate spirituality and **be perfected**, entering into the maṇḍala of the beings of commitment. **This** invitation and absorption **is the supreme commitment of those who** intend to **become** the **close heirs** [of the buddhas].

### **THE RESULT ATTAINED THROUGH THE MAṆḌALA OF COLORED SAND [16.1.1.3.2.2.3]**

The third section [of the method of conferring empowerment in the maṇḍala of colored sand, see [p. 367](#)] concerns the result

that is attained through the maṇḍala. This comprises (i) an establishment of the acceptance that spiritual accomplishments emerge from the mind (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.1); (ii) a demonstration of the skillful means through which these are attained (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.2); and (iii) a description of the result accomplished by that skillful means (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3).

The first of these also has three parts, among which the first concerns the examples illustrative [of this establishment] (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**All desirable things that emerge from the wish-granting tree and the wish-fulfilling gemstone are illustrative.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:28)***

།དཔག་བསམ་ཤིང་དང་ཡིད་བཞིན་གྱི།  
།རིན་པོ་ཆེ་དང་འབྲུང་བ་ཀུན།  
།དེ་དག་རྗེས་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ།  
།རང་སེམས་བསོད་ནམས་བརྟན་པ་ཡིན།

The wish-granting tree,  
The wish-fulfilling gemstones,

And all things that emerge  
Are not substantial existents,  
But they are the steadfast merit  
Of one's own mind.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The wish-granting tree** of the gods, **the wish-fulfilling gemstones**, and moreover **all** desirable **things that emerge** from entities of external appearance seem wondrous and to have distinct attributes. However, these **are not substantial existents**—entities with true, external existence. The youthful Jyotiṣka exchanged his mansion of gemstones for the house of Ajātaśatru, and yet it followed after him. Udāgata stretched out his own hands and brought forth food, clothing, and so forth from his well, but others did not. When the gemstone and the wish-granting tree were taken by the gods and the inhabitants of Uttarakuru, they experienced all that they desired, while others did not.<sup>543</sup> **But**, if you ask from what primary cause these appearances come about, they ripen in this way as **the steadfast** and mature result of the **merit of one's own mind**, the seed of propensities of one's past generosity, which abides in the substratum [consciousness] (*kun gzhi*). Through its encounter with those [distinctive] conditions, they appear as the source of all things that **are** desirable. In the same way, the distinctive material forms that give rise to the world manifoldly appear through the propensities for perceiving objects (*yul du snang ba'i bag chags*) that are present within the substratum from beginningless time. One's own aggregates emerge through the propensities for perceiving corporeal forms (*lus su snang ba'i bag chags*), and the outer and inner phenomena comprising the sensory elements of sentient beings along with the amalgam of one's own consciousness emerge through the propensities for perceiving concepts (*don du snang ba'i bag*

*chags*). However, these do not exist as discrete objects and are similar to dreams.

The second concerns the actual meaning [of the establishment of the emergence of spiritual accomplishments from the mind, to which those illustrations refer] (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The supreme and common accomplishments are attained through cultivation of the generation and perfection stages [of meditation].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:29)***

། རོ་སཚར་ཚོ་འཕྲུལ་སྤྲད་ཀྱི་ཚོས།  
། གཞན་ན་ཡོད་འོངས་ས་ཡིན་ཏེ།  
། ཐབས་ལ་བརྟན་པའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཉིད།  
། དེ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡི་ངང་དུ་འབྱུང།  
། ཤེས་རབ་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།  
། ཐབས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱར་གྱུར་པའི་བྱིར།  
། ཡེ་ཤེས་ལ་ནི་ཡེ་ཤེས་རོལ།  
། ཡེ་ཤེས་རོལ་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱང་གསོག།

This wondrous, marvelous, amazing reality  
Does not come forth, nor does it exist elsewhere,  
But it emerges in the dispositions of such persons who  
have mastered  
The nature of discriminative awareness,  
Steadfast in skillful means

STEADFAST IN SKILLFUL MEANS.

The actual truth of the expanse of discriminative  
awareness

Becomes the seals of skillful means.

Thus pristine cognition revels in pristine cognition,  
And the play of pristine cognition is itself accrued.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Similarly, **this** [ultimate] maṇḍala of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities—the **wondrous, marvelous, astonishing, and amazing reality**—and the provisional accomplishments such as the four rites are obtained in the genuine abiding nature, which is the nature of mind. However [this fruition] **does not come forth** after one has gone away and found it, **nor does it exist elsewhere** in space, such that it can be summoned into one's presence. **But** rather, **it** naturally **emerges** and appears as a spontaneous maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition **in the dispositions of such persons who have mastered** the generation and perfection stages [of meditation]. For they have become thoroughly **steadfast in** the mental cultivation of great compassion through the generation stage of **skillful means**, beginning with the visualization of the external environment as the celestial palace, its inhabitants as the male and female deities, and themselves as the body of the conqueror; and they have thence become purified in **the nature** of nondual coalescence through the cultivation of the perfection stage **of discriminative awareness**, free from all extremes of conceptual elaboration.

**The actual truth of the expanse of** reality or **discriminative awareness**, a nature free from conceptual elaboration, is the disposition of the buddha body of actual reality. This **becomes** transformed into **the seals of skillful means**, a display of spontaneous pristine cognition that is arrayed as the self-manifesting maṇḍala of the buddha body of

form within the spontaneous Bounteous Array. **Thus**, the **pristine cognition** of the buddha body of form **revels in** the **pristine cognition** of the buddha body of actual reality; **and** it is from this disposition that **the play of the pristine cognition** of the buddha body of emanation **is itself** said to be **accrued**—replicated in the manner of the moon’s reflection in water, without straying from its [source] and corresponding to the perception of those to be trained in the world. It says accordingly in the *Intermediate Mother*:

The all-knowing one is like a dream, an illusory display,  
the moon’s reflection in water, and an optical illusion.

The pristine  
cognition of the all-knowing one too is like a dream, an  
illusory  
display, the moon’s reflection in water, and an optical  
illusion.<sup>544</sup>

Some interpret this verse to mean that the buddha and his pristine cognition are both gradually accrued, but their view is irrelevant in the context of the actual truth of the buddha body of perfect resource.<sup>545</sup>

The third concerns the benefit for the sake of others which emerges through this [establishment] (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Through compassionate spirituality and merit, the  
[buddha body of] natural [emanation] then  
emerges, instructing living beings.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:30)***

།སྐྱུ་ལ་བ་མཛོན་བྱུང་སྐྱོབ་པ་དང་།  
།ཕྱིན་རྒྱབས་སྟོན་པའང་དེ་བཞིན་ཏེ།  
།བྱ་བྱེད་རུས་པའི་གཟི་ཕྱིན་གྱིས།  
།སྐྱུ་མ་དོ་རྗེ་བཙན་པོའི་མཚོག

The conquerors actually emerge and grant protection.  
They confer blessing and also become visible  
In the same [aforementioned] manner.  
Endowed with brilliance capable of performing acts [of  
benefit],  
This indestructible reality of magical display  
Is the best of potentates.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

One might think that if the display of pristine cognition is accrued and replicated, it would not match the [aforementioned] illustrations in benefiting others. However, it is said that:

Owing to its being accrued and replicated,  
Acts of benefit are indeed performed.<sup>546</sup>

**The conquerors actually emerge** in the guise of the six sages and so forth corresponding to the volition of sentient beings, **and** they perform acts of benefit through their twelve deeds and so forth, which **grant protection** from the suffering of living beings. **They confer blessing** whereby they appear from the disposition of the buddha body of actual reality as the self-manifesting buddha body of perfect resource in the spontaneous Bounteous Array; **and** thence the buddha bodies

of natural emanation **also become visible** to bodhisattvas of the tenth level as the buddha body of perfect resource endowed with the five enlightened families. Indeed, they appear **in the same manner** as the [aforementioned] illustrative gemstone and the wish-granting tree, manifesting through the compassionate spirituality of the Teacher, and through the power of the merits experienced by the individual minds of living beings. The *Introduction to the Middle Way* accordingly says:

The peaceful buddha bodies are radiant like the wishing tree.

They are nonconceptualizing like the wish-fulfilling gem. Ever remaining to guide the world until beings are liberated,

They appear to those who are free from elaboration.<sup>547</sup>

Thereupon, the buddha body of emanation, without independent existence, arises of its own accord as a display of enlightened activity, **endowed with the brilliance** of spontaneous compassionate spirituality, **capable of performing acts** of benefit for the sake of living beings. This is reminiscent of the illumination of the four continents by the brilliant light of the sun and moon, and of the reflection of an open lotus flower in a pool. The **magical display** of pristine cognition, endowed with the nature of **this indestructible reality of** buddha body, speech, and mind, **is the best of** all genuine mighty **potentates** because it holds sway over all things. As is said in the [*Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*:

The self-manifesting magical display of pristine cognition

Is supreme among commitments—the indestructible king;

It is the great accomplishment of buddha body, speech, and mind,

Which illuminates all living beings.<sup>548</sup>

The second part [of the result that is attained through the maṇḍala] is the demonstration of the skillful means through which it is attained (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.2). [It comments on the



verse:]

**When the five rituals, the five requisites, and the five aspects [of attainment] have been perfected . . .**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:31)***

།ཚོག་ལུ་ནི་ཚོགས་བྱས་ཤིང་།  
།ཡོ་བྱད་ལུ་ནི་ཚོགས་པར་ལྡན།  
།སྲགས་ཀྱི་ཡན་ལག་ལུ་ཚོགས་པས།  
།མ་ཉམས་འཇུག་ལ་རབ་བརྩོན་ན།

Having perfected the five rituals,  
If one perfectly endowed with the five requisites  
And perfect in the five aspects of mantra  
Perseveres to undertake [this practice] without  
degeneration . . .

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Having** mentally **perfected the five rituals** through which accomplishments are attained, **one** who is **perfectly endowed with the five requisites** appropriate for attaining accomplishment, **and** who is **perfect in the five aspects of attainment** according to the way of secret **mantra**, will swiftly become accomplished.

In this context, the five rituals (*cho ga lnga*) comprise (i) acceptance by a spiritual adviser or teacher who reveals the unerring path; (ii) receiving the profound empowerments from that teacher; (iii) the keeping of commitments and vows; (iv)

skill in the pith instructions of spiritual attainment; and (v) the capacity to reach the goal by excelling in perseverance.

The five requisites (*yo byad lnga*) are (i) to have a pleasant hermitage, free from obstacles; (ii) to have an assistant with complete attributes and good fortune; (iii) not to fall into the two extremes regarding the necessities of life and to be without wrong livelihood; (iv) to maintain without degeneration the complete sacraments of accomplishment; and (v) to accumulate and have as a support the sacraments of commitment. The five aspects of attainment (*sgrub pa'i yan lag lnga*) according to the way of secret mantra concern the actual truth respectively of (i) oneself; (ii) the deity; (iii) secret mantra; (iv) recitation; and (v) the diffusion and absorption [of light].<sup>549</sup>

This accomplishment will swiftly occur **if one perseveres to undertake** and maintain one's practice **without degeneration** in the general view and commitments and without degeneration in the particular provisions that are appropriate conditions for attainment, and provided that one has, by day and night, renounced lethargy and fatigue with respect to attainment. It is also said that if one does not persevere, there will be no accomplishment.

In some versions of the text, the words "by persevering" (*brtson pas*) are found [instead of "if one perseveres" (*brtson na*)], in which case that would explain the general tenor [of this means for attainment], but [the opposite condition under which] there will be no accomplishment would not be implied.

There are also some who hold the five rituals to comprise (i) the actual truth; (ii) its universal appearance; (iii) its seed syllables of buddha speech; (iv) its hand emblems symbolic of buddha mind; and (v) the perfect buddha body. They also hold the five requisites to comprise (i) [the sacraments of] food and drink; (ii) dance steps and [hand] gestures; (iii) songs and lyrics; (iv) clothing and ornaments; and (v) [the rites of the] "vowels and consonants," and they hold the five aspects of mantra to comprise (i) the generation of the maṇḍala of fifty deities in the limbs; (ii) the knowledge that their corresponding conceptual aspects are the forty-two deities; (iii) the further

subdivision of each of these deities into forty-two; (iv) the consecration of their buddha body, speech, and mind; and (v) their empowerment, which is conferred by the five enlightened families. However, that opinion is inappropriate [in this context] because it is exclusively slanted toward the generation stage [of meditation], and the actual truth of the perfection stage with the requisites of its locations and sacraments is incomplete.<sup>550</sup>

The third part [of the result that is attained through the maṇḍala] is the description of the result accomplished by that skillful means (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3). It comprises (i) provisional results (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.1) and (ii) conclusive results (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2).

Among these, the former [comments on the verse]:

**Accomplishment will be achieved within six months  
or twelve, fourteen, or sixteen months.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:32)***

འཇག་ནི་སུམ་ཅུ་ཕྱག་རྒྱལ་གསལ།  
བཅུ་གཉིས་བཅུ་བཞི་བཅུ་རྒྱལ་གསལ།  
དབང་རྒྱུར་རིགས་ཀྱི་དམ་པ་འགྲུབ།  
དེ་ཚོ་བཅུ་རྒྱལ་ཚུན་ཆད་ཀྱིས།  
སྐྱེ་ལྔ་ལྟན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་པ་ནི།

The genuine accomplishment of empowered awareness  
Will be achieved in six or twelve months,  
Or in fourteen or in sixteen.

[Within sixteen months, empowerment will be obtained.]

within sixteen life spans [one will obtain]  
The spontaneously perfect five buddha bodies.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The genuine accomplishment of the awareness** holder who is **empowered** with control over the life span **will be achieved** by those of highest acumen and perseverance **within six** months, or literally six times thirty days (*zhag ni sum cu phrag drug*), **or** by those of mediocre acumen in **twelve months, or** by those of inferior acumen **in fourteen, or** even by the basest **in sixteen** months.

The term “genuine,” in this context, does not denote those [accomplishments] possessed by the higher [awareness holders] of the [great] seal and spontaneous presence. Why therefore is this [power over the life span] described as genuine? It is designated as such because it surpasses [the accomplishment of the awareness holder] of maturation and because it refers to the attainment of buddhahood in this very body, just as the term “supreme phenomenon” (*agradharma, chos mchog*) designates the supreme phenomenon on the path of connection.<sup>551</sup> Accordingly, the *Sequence of the Path* also says:

Through accomplishments attained by the holding of  
    communion ceremonies,  
Which conclude one’s entry into the vision of truth,  
The contaminations of body, sensory elements, and  
    birthplace are exhausted.  
Transformed into the body of indestructible reality,  
One passes into nirvāṇa, in the reality  
Where awareness with power over the life span is  
    discerned.  
This is the level of the conquerors,  
On which the body is not relinquished.<sup>552</sup>

On the basis of this attainment of power over the life span, one will obtain buddhahood in the number of years or time comprised by **sixteen** contiguous **life spans**. **Within** sixteen such births, one will obtain **the spontaneously perfect** buddhahood endowed with the **five buddha bodies**.

It is held in certain mantra texts that this [level of the] sky-farers will be traversed and buddhahood attained by means of a single body within a single life span and that, even if one loiters, buddhahood will be obtained within seven births or in sixteen. Although this is indeed the case, here in [the tradition of the *Secret Nucleus*] one who has obtained power over the life span is capable of a single life span [lasting] for sixteen hundred years, and then obtains the status of an awareness holder of spontaneous presence. This is because when the expected life span comes to an end, the life span may be prolonged through skillful means, accelerating the course (*snur ba*) of each century sixteen times, while maintaining a single body. As is said in the *Extensive Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation [in Eighty-Two Chapters]*:

The life span can be maintained sixteen times,  
Accelerating the course of each century,

And buddhahood then attained  
Without relinquishing the body.  
Contamination comprising the three aspects of  
contamination<sup>553</sup>  
Is nonexistent therein.<sup>554</sup>

And in the *Tantra of the Indestructible Peak*:

At the conclusion of sixteen births  
Quiescent buddhahood will be attained.<sup>555</sup>

There are some who claim that although this occurs over a single life span, the course of the physical body is accelerated and this is effected in the manner of resurrection from the dead (*grong 'jug*), but they are refuted because it is said that “buddhahood will be attained without relinquishing the body.”

In connection with the two [kinds of awareness holder that are revealed] here, namely, those with power over the life span and spontaneous presence, the [other two]—the awareness holder of maturation and the awareness holder of the great seal—are also [implicitly] indicated.<sup>556</sup>

The latter concerns the conclusive result (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2), which is [the attainment of] the awareness holder of spontaneous presence. It comprises (i) the accomplishment of self-manifesting buddha body and pristine cognition in the spontaneous Bounteous Array (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2.1); (ii) the presence of the inwardly radiant field of the buddha body of actual reality, which is the expanse of the real free from conceptual elaborations (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2.2); and (iii) the reemergence of the buddha body of emanation in the world systems inhabited by those to be trained (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2.3).

The first of these has two subdivisions, among which the former concerns the attainment of the five buddha bodies (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Spontaneously present as the five buddha bodies, the  
supreme accomplishment will be established.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 9:33)**

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐིག་ལེ་དེ་ཉིད་ལ།  
ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐིག་ལེ་ཉིད་སྣང་བ།  
འབས་མ་གྲིས་མི་བྱབ་མཐའ་ཡས་མཚོག  
འབྲོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞི་མངོན་རྫོགས་པའི།

In pristine cognition, the reality of the [unique] vital  
essence,  
The appearances of pristine cognition—the nature of  
this vital essence—  
Are inconceivable, infinitely supreme, and manifestly  
perfect  
Throughout the ten directions and four times.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

The **pristine cognition** in which the nature of mind, partaking of the intrinsically pure expanse, attains primordial buddhahood, is [known as] **the reality of the unique vital essence**, free from all extremes of conceptual elaboration, beyond proof and elimination (*grub bsal med pa*). Therein, adventitious and imaginary stains are purified right where they are, so that the pristine cognition of the cessation [of contaminants] (*kṣayajñāna, zad pa'i ye shes*) and the pristine cognition that [contaminants] will not recur (*anutapādajñāna, skye ba med pa'i ye shes*) are established;<sup>557</sup> **pristine cognition** is mingled indivisibly in that expanse in a single savor, like water poured into water. **The appearances of the**

**nature of this vital essence are inconceivable and infinitely supreme.** For it is spontaneously present as the five buddha bodies, namely, (i) [the buddha body of] awakening; (ii) [the buddha body of] unchanging indestructible reality; (iii) the buddha body of quiescent actual reality; (iv) the radiant buddha body of perfect resource; and (v) the buddha body of emanation endowed with pristine cognition. It is said that the supreme accomplishment is established because there is a **manifestly perfect** awakening, indivisible from the nature of the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas **throughout the ten directions and four times.**<sup>558</sup>

The latter concerns the appearance of the buddha fields (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The maṇḍalas of the buddha field, pervading space,  
will be mastered.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:34)***

|ཞིང་ཁམས་རྣམ་དག་བསམ་ཡས་དང་།

|རྒྱ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་གཞལ་ཡས་ཁང་།

|འཁོར་ལོའི་རྒྱན་དང་རོལ་མོའི་ཚོགས།

|དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་བསམ་ཡས་ཀུན།

|མཐོང་ནས་ཉེ་བར་བརྟེན་པ་དང་།

|རྒྱ་ཚེན་གསུང་ལས་དོན་བྱུང་བའང་།

|མཐུན་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་སྣང་བའོ།



Within the buddha field, pure and inconceivable,  
Is the celestial palace, beyond spatial dimensions.  
Its ornamental features [supported on] the wheel [of  
pristine cognition],  
The provisions of its display,  
And its maṇḍala are all inconceivable, without  
exception.  
When this is seen, it will be mastered,  
And it will indeed manifest from the vast buddha speech,  
For the benefit [of living beings].  
This is the harmonious pristine cognition,  
Manifesting in and of itself.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

At that time [of manifest awakening], **the buddha field** of the spontaneous Bounteous Array is naturally **pure and** entirely immaculate in its **inconceivable** disposition because it pervades the expanse of actual reality and the infinity of space. **Within it is the celestial palace**—its **spatial dimensions** unlimited throughout the ten directions, **beyond** comprehension in any specific terms. **Its** foundation is immeasurable and the **ornamental features** supported on **the wheel** of pristine cognition are also marked with precious wheels. **The** lavish **provisions of its display**, including the excellent desirable attributes of the senses, which are densely arrayed throughout the ten directions, **and its maṇḍala** of the five enlightened families appear to permeate the limits of space. Spontaneously present inner radiance is the intrinsic nature of **all** these **inconceivable** attributes, **without exception**.

**When this is seen** as an object of the pure vision of pristine cognition, the ground of great resources **will be** actually **mastered**, **and it will indeed manifest for the benefit** of living beings **from the** great mass of letters of **buddha**

**speech**, which is **vast** because it is inexpressible and impartial. Buddhahood is primordially attained in the maṇḍala of the spontaneous ground, but through the visualization of the profound maṇḍala of meditative stability on the path, there results the three degrees of enlightenment, which are indivisible in the original abiding nature. **This is** designated as **the naturally harmonious pristine cognition**. By one's knowing that which is [primordially] present to be present, that presence is directly reached.<sup>559</sup>

Moreover, a buddha field such as this is not seen by all beings, as if it existed in some extraneous spatial direction. Rather, it is the pristine cognition of buddhahood, **manifesting in and of itself**.

The second aspect [of the conclusive result, concerning the buddha body of actual reality] (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2.2) [comments on the verse]:

**When that [buddha field] dissolves [into the buddha body of actual reality], its cognition remains unimpeded but resembles the moon of the darkest night.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:35)***

།གཅིག་དང་དུ་མར་བྲལ་བ་ཡི།  
།མཐའ་དང་དབྱུས་མེད་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།  
།སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་མི་གཟིགས་ཏེ།  
།རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་གནས་མེད་སྣང།

The actual truth is free from  
The single and the multiple,  
And it is without extremes or middle—

Even the buddhas do not see therein.

This naturally present pristine cognition  
Appears without abiding.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

This apparitional buddha field also dissolves into the field of the buddha body of actual reality, an expanse that resembles the moon of the darkest night.<sup>560</sup> It is therefore without outward appearance (*snang char med pa*), but its cognition as inner radiance remains unimpeded (*nang gsal mkhyen char ma 'gag pa*). This is **the actual truth** of the buddha body of actual reality, which **is naturally free from the single and the multiple and without extremes or middle**. In that expanse where all conceptual elaborations are quiescent, this aspect of the buddha body of perfect resource abides in accordance with the dissolution of outward appearances.<sup>561</sup> It is such that **therein even the buddhas do not see** one another because **this naturally present** and most subtle **pristine cognition** itself **appears** and abides in the expanse of quiescence, **without abiding** anywhere at all.<sup>562</sup> The *Tantra of the Marvelous King* accordingly says:

In the palace of reality's expanse, all buddhas of the three  
times are present without seeing one another.<sup>563</sup>

There are some who hold that this [buddha body of actual reality] is not seen by the six classes of living beings but is seen by the buddhas. However, that is not the intention of this present passage, which is connected with the conclusion of the four visionary appearances (*snang ba bzhi*).<sup>564</sup> Accordingly, (i) the visionary appearance of actual reality (*chos nyid mngon sum gyi snang ba*) occurs at the time when an [awareness holder] with power over the life span first perceives the pristine cognition of inner radiance as smoke and so forth. (ii) The visionary appearance of ever-increasing experience (*nyams gong du 'phel ba'i snang ba*) occurs when that diffusion

intensifies so that outer and inner signs are perceived. Then (iii) the visionary appearance that reaches the limit of awareness (*rig pa tshad phebs kyi snang ba*) occurs when the field of the buddha body of perfect resource is perceived; and (iv) the visionary appearance of the cessation [of cyclic existence in] actual reality (*chos nyid zad pa'i snang ba*) occurs when that too becomes inward quiescence, so that there is no subjective apprehension. Then, when the effulgence of the field of the buddha body of perfect resource dissolves in the original disposition, the ground is directly reached, and it is present without being seen, within a precious spontaneous enclosure (*lhun grub rin po che'i sbubs*).<sup>565</sup>

The third aspect [of the conclusive result], which concerns the reemergence of the buddha body of emanation in the world systems inhabited by those to be trained (16.1.1.3.2.2.3.3.2.3) [comments on the verse]:

**[Emanations] manifest in all times and abodes,  
without exception, establishing connections  
through compassionate spirituality.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:36)***

འཇིག་པར་རྟོག་བརྟགས་རྣམ་དག་ཅིང་།  
ཡི་ཤེས་དབྱིངས་ལས་མི་གཞན་གྱིར།  
སྤྱགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོས་འབྲེལ་པས་ན།  
འགྲོ་བླུག་དུས་གནས་མ་ལུས་སྣང་།

Purified of imaginary misconceptions,  
That pristine cognition is not extraneous to the expanse.  
As such, it establishes connections through great  
compassionate spirituality,

Whereby it manifests to the six classes of living beings  
In all times and places without exception.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Then, in the world systems of those to be trained, exhibiting spontaneous enlightened activity for each in accord with his or her needs, the buddha body of emanation endowed with the pristine cognition of awareness actually manifests. This pristine cognition of compassionate spirituality or awareness is the essence, **purified of** the entirety of the two obscurations along with their propensities, without exception, which are **imagined** through erroneous **misconceptions**. Indeed, the pristine cognition that definitively and quantitatively knows all things without exception is extensive throughout the ten directions. **That same pristine cognition is not extraneous to** the treasure of enlightened attributes that constitute **the expanse**—the naturally pure buddha body of actual reality—but is identical in essential nature. **As such,** it emerges spontaneously and in a nonconceptual manner for the sake of living beings. **Through great compassionate spirituality,** in which both the object or world systems to be trained and the subject or omniscient pristine cognition are primordially and spontaneously present, **connections are established** between the object and subject, **whereby** the eye of pristine cognition sees the world systems of **the impure six classes of living beings in all times**—past, future, and present—and cognizes those for whom instruction is timely. **And** so, in all **places without exception,** including the celestial abodes, which are filled with sentient beings, an immeasurable number of emanations including the six sages **manifests** and performs acts of benefit corresponding to the perception of different [beings].

## THE SYNOPSIS CONCERNING THOSE ON WHOM EMPOWERMENT IS CONFERRED [16.1.1.3.2.3]

The third part [of the detailed exegesis of the nature of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery, see above, p. 343] is the synopsis concerning those on whom empowerment is conferred. [It comments on the verse:]

**Those who have received the empowerments and keep their commitments will attain accomplishment, whereas those who have degenerated will be ruined.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 9:37)*

|བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ནི།  
|སྒྲུངས་དབྱུང་གཉིས་སམ་ཡང་ན་ལྟ།  
|བྱས་ཏེ་དད་ལྡན་རབ་བྱུགས་ན།  
|འདོད་པ་ཡིད་འོང་མཉམ་པར་འགྱུར།  
|སྐལ་བ་མཉམ་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་དེ།  
|གཉེར་ན་ཉེ་བར་འགྱུར་བ་ཡི།  
|ཡ་མཚན་ཆེན་པོ་འགྱུར་བར་ངེས།  
|དད་མེད་ཉམས་ན་སྤང་བར་འགྱུར།  
|ཞེས་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་དོ།

If faithful [disciples] enter either into the maṇḍala of  
supreme bliss,  
Where the two spouses are present,  
Or when the five[-colored maṇḍala] has been  
constructed,  
They will be equal to their desirable and agreeable  
[accomplishment].  
The pristine cognition equal to one's fortune  
Will be actualized if it is cultivated,  
And its most amazing [accomplishment] will certainly  
emerge.  
But if those lacking faith degenerate, they will be  
ruined.  
—Such were their aphorisms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Either in the maṇḍala of supreme bliss, where** supreme empowerment is conferred in the aforementioned manner and **the two spouses**, male and female, are present, **or else when the five-** colored sand maṇḍala **has been constructed, if** disciples who are **faithful enter** therein, the **desirable and agreeable** accomplishments that they obtain **will be equal to** those that others have obtained in the past. **The great pristine cognition, equal to one's fortune, will be actualized** as a great accomplishment in this very lifetime **if it is** assiduously **cultivated; and its** intrinsic nature—the **most amazing** supreme accomplishment, buddhahood itself—**will certainly emerge** and be obtained on the basis of their having [previously] undertaken the four rites and attained power over the life span. It accordingly says in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*:

Any merits that have been revealed  
By entering and manifestly beholding the maṇḍala  
Of Vajrasattva and the other deities



Will be similar—even for those who do so in the future.<sup>566</sup>  
**But** otherwise, **if those lacking faith** in the sacred doctrine and the spiritual teacher, and who **degenerate** in the basic and ancillary commitments, engage in these practices, disparate unwanted circumstances such as illness and harm will emerge in this life, and in the next life they will be born in the lower realms of existence. In this way, **they will be ruined**. It says accordingly in the Yogatantras:

One who has not cultivated the mind set on  
enlightenment  
But harbors hesitation and doubt,  
Does not strive in accordance with the transmitted  
teachings,  
And is devoid of faith  
Will not attain accomplishment—

Suffering will be endured in this life and in the future.<sup>567</sup>  
**Such were the aphorisms** uttered by the tathāgatas and the assembled host of their queens.

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 9 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
concerning the commitments associated with the  
maṇḍala of reflected imagery.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 9:38)*

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་ངེས་པ་ལས་རྩོུ་བཀོད་པའི་གསང་བའི་དམ་  
ཚིག་གི་ལེན་སྒྲེ་དགུ་པའོ།།

This completes the ninth chapter of the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Secret Commitment of the Indestructible Array.”

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the ninth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus***, the abiding nature of the primordial and spontaneous maṇḍala, ***Definitive with Respect to the Real***, genuine pristine cognition. It is **entitled “The most Secret Commitment** of all the buddhas **of the Array”** in the maṇḍala of reflected imagery, which symbolizes the **Indestructible** essential nature of the primordially present maṇḍala.

## 10. THE CONFERRAL OF THE EMPOWERMENTS

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The purpose of this chapter is to disclose the actual empowerments that are conferred in respect of the aforementioned maṇḍalas. Having revealed all the maṇḍalas in which empowerment is to be conferred, Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then enters the meditative stability called “the conferral of the king” in order to express the actual empowerments (v. 1).

The three empowerments of profundity—namely, those of secrecy (*gsang dbang*), discriminating pristine cognition (*shes rab ye shes kyi dbang*), and word and meaning (*tshig don gyi dbang*)—are conferred on the basis of the maṇḍala of the female consort. At the outset, the appropriate visualizations should be made, the master and student should enter into the maṇḍala, the lower empowerments should be successfully conferred, and the female consort should be consecrated in the appropriate manner (v. 2).

The lower empowerments, which are the first to be conferred, comprise those of ability and beneficence. The five inner empowerments of ability are those of the listener, the meditator, enlightened activity, the expositor, and the king of indestructible reality, which are respectively associated with Ratnasambhava, the principal deity (Vairocana/ Akṣobhya), Amoghasiddhi, Amitābha, and all five enlightened families together (vv. 3-7). If one has not received these, one is not enabled and no progression through the secret mantras is possible (v. 8).

The ten outer empowerments of beneficence are those of the crown ornament, the diadem, the rosary, the armor, the victory banner, the seals, the parasol, the vase, food and drink, and the

five nectars. These are said to confer benefits and excellence, to remove obstacles, and to reveal the indivisibility of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa (v. 9).

In brief, those who have received all the empowerments possess the means to achieve swiftly the provisional and conclusive results (v. 10).

THE LATTER PART [of the generation of and empowerment in the maṇḍala of the ground, see [p. 159](#)] is the detailed exegesis of the skillful means through which the empowerments are conferred (16.1.2). It comprises (i) a brief introduction to the empowerments (16.1.2.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis of the nature [of the empowerments] (16.1.2.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**[The Great Joyous One then] uttered these following aphorisms, concerning the conferral of empowerment as a king of the sacred doctrine:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:1)***

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྤྱིན་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཉིང་ཇི་  
འཛིན་ལ་སློམས་པར་བྱགས་ནས་ཆེད་དུ་བཟོད་པ་འདི་བཟོད་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, became equipoised in the meditative stability called “the conferral of kingship” and uttered these following aphorisms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala had been revealed, **then the Transcendent Lord**, the male and female Samantabhadra, [known as] **the Great Joyous One** on account of their uncontaminated bliss, **became equipoised in the meditative stability called “conferral on the disciples’ minds of empowerment with righteous kingship of the three world systems” and uttered these following aphorisms** concerning the conferral of the empowerments.

The [Sanskrit] term *abhiṣeka* means “empowerment” and it also means “enabling.” Just as when worldly rulers are enthroned and empowered by the vase of Vedic ritual they are then enabled to hold sway over the country, so, in this context, one is enabled to act for the benefit of oneself and others, and this is called “the conferral of kingship” (*rgyal po sbyin pa*). Moreover, the [related Sanskrit] term *abhisiñca* also suggests empowerment in the sense that one has been imbued with pristine cognition and the stains of body, speech, and mind are cleansed.

## **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE EMPOWERMENTS [16.1.2.2]**

The latter comprises (i) the empowerments of ability (16.1.2.2.1); (ii) the empowerments of beneficence (16.1.2.2.2); and (iii) their advantages (16.1.2.2.3).

### **THE EMPOWERMENTS OF ABILITY [16.1.2.2.1]**

The first of these also has three parts, of which the first, a general presentation of the empowerments of profundity

(16.1.2.2.1.1) [comments on the verse]:

**The empowerments of profundity are conferred when the nectar of skillful means and discriminative awareness is offered and dissolves.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:2)***

།ཤེས་རབ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ཕུག་རྒྱ་ལས།  
།བདེ་བའི་འབྲུ་ཚོགས་གསལ་བའི་རྒྱན།  
།རྩོུའི་ལམ་ནས་བསྐྱར་འབྱེལ།  
།ཅེ་ནས་བསྐྱེམ་ཞིང་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་བསྐྱར།

Derived from the sealing of skillful means  
In discriminative awareness,  
The blissful stream visualized as a mass of seeds  
[Emerges] from the pathway of the vajra,  
Converges in the lotus,  
Dissolves from the tip [of the tongue],  
And transforms into the maṇḍala.

***Interlinear Commentary***

These [empowerments of profundity are conferred] once the maṇḍala of the deity has been visualized, as previously explained, and the master and the disciples have entered, the empowerments of beneficence and ability have been given, and the female consort (*gzung ma*) has been consecrated. The male who is **the seal of skillful means** becomes equipoised **in** union with the female who is the seal of **discriminative awareness**, and **derived from** that union, **the** generative fluid

of the male, **blissful** in nature, [appears as] the syllable HŪM, which emerges **from the pathway of the secret vajra** in a **stream visualized as a mass of seeds**. It **converges in the lotus** of the female, whence it then **dissolves** into the disciples **from the tip** of the tongue, **and** blessings are gathered through the diffusion and absorption of **the maṇḍala** of the principal deity. These **transform** the hearts of the disciples, whereupon the secret mantras are enunciated.

Concerning this passage, there are some who claim that all the five empowerments of ability are conferred by means of this ritual, that their different visualizations and permissory initiations are given, and that the secret stream [of generative fluid] is transformed into the seed syllables beginning with TRĀM, and then dissolves into the students, so that diffusion and absorption of the five maṇḍalas of the different deities occurs. However, this view is defective because the order [in which empowerments are conferred] would be mistaken.<sup>568</sup>

The second part [of the empowerments of ability] is the detailed exegesis of the [actual] empowerments of ability (16.1.2.2.1.2). This has five sections, of which the first concerns the empowerment of the listener (16.1.2.2.1.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The empowerment of the listener, with respect to the outer and inner tantras, is conferred in the maṇḍala of Ratnasambhava, within the ears.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:3)***

།ཉན་བྱེད་འཁོར་ལོའི་གཞལ་ཡས་སུ།  
 །གསལ་བའི་ཐིག་ལེ་དེ་བོ་ཉིད།  
 །རྩྭ་གི་ཕྱག་རྒྱའི་ཚོགས་མཚོག་ལས།  
 །རིན་ཅེན་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་གསལ་སྟོ་ཐིམ།  
 །རྩྭ་གསང་བ་གསང་ཆེན་གསང་མཚོག་གང།

།གསང་བ་ཀུན་ལའང་མཉན་པར་བྱ།  
 །གསང་བའི་དོན་ཉིད་བརྟག་པ་ལས།  
 །གཞན་དུ་སྦྱ་པར་བྱ་བ་མིན།

Clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped  
 Celestial palaces of the ears,  
 The nature of the vital essence  
 Constitutes the supreme assembly of the seal  
 Of the syllables TRĀM.  
 Therefrom, the maṇḍala of Ratnasambhava  
 Radiantly emanates and dissolves.  
 TRĀM! One should listen indeed to all secrets Which are  
     secret, most secret, and supremely secret.  
 One should examine the secret meaning itself  
 And otherwise not divulge it to others!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The meditative stability associated with the empowerment of the listener is as follows: The disciples are visualized as Ratnasambhava. Within **the** two **ears** of that deity there are **clearly visualized** the **celestial palace**, derived from **the**



seed **syllable** TRĀṂ, on a **wheel-shaped** base with four spokes, which derives from the syllable BHRUM. Therein, the sense organ of the ear is present in **the nature of** an utterly translucent **vital essence** which sustains its ability to hear sound and which consists **of** five pairs or ten single syllables TRĀṂ along with four syllables HŪṂ and the syllables JAḤ, HŪṂ, VAM, HOḤ. These syllables **constitute the supreme assembly of the doctrinal seal** of buddha speech. They melt into light, and **therefrom, the maṇḍala of Ratnasambhava is radiantly** generated.<sup>569</sup> The teacher **emanates** exactly like the being of pristine cognition **and dissolves** into the ears of the disciples, whereupon the obscurations of hearing are purified and melt into light along with the deity. The disciples are then considered to be Ratnasambhava, the commitments are proclaimed, and the following promissory initiation is given: It is headed by the syllable TRĀṂ! **“One should indeed listen to all secrets** of the inner vehicles, namely, Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and the Great Perfection of Atiyoga, **which are** respectively **secret, most secret, and supremely secret,** and also of the outer tantras of capability (*phyi thub pa rgyud*),<sup>570</sup> namely, Kriyā, Ubhaya, and Yoga, receiving them from the master. Until one has received the authorization of one’s own master, **one should** inquire into and **examine** this **secret meaning itself** in one’s own mind **and otherwise** not proclaim it, because one should **not divulge it to others,** in other places or times!”

The second, concerning the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of the meditator (16.1.2.2.1.2.2) [comments on the verse]:

**[The empowerment of] the meditator, with respect to the deities, mantras, and meditative stabilities, is conferred in the maṇḍala of buddha mind, within the heart.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:4)***

|གསལ་བའི་འཁོར་ལོའི་གནལ་ཡས་སུ།  
 |གསལ་བའི་ཐིག་ལའི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད།  
 |ཡི་གེ་འབྲེང་བའི་ཚོགས་མཚོག་ལས།  
 |རིགས་ཀྱི་དྲིལ་འཁོར་གསལ་སྣོ་ཐིམ།  
 |ཨོ་དུས་གསུམ་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྲས་ཆེན་པོ།  
 |སྐྱུ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་དོ་རྗེ་གཟུང།  
 |རྒྱལ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཉེས་མཚོད་ལ།  
 |རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་དང་མཉེས་པར་སྦྱོར།

Clearly visualized in the celestial palace  
 [Of the heart], which is a radiant wheel,  
 The nature of the vital essence  
 Constitutes the supreme assembly of the garland of  
 letters.

Therefrom, the maṇḍala of the enlightened family  
 Radiantly emanates and dissolves.  
 OM! Great child of the conquerors of the three times,  
 Grasp the indestructible reality  
 Of buddha body, speech, and mind!  
 Make offerings that please all the conquerors,  
 And be united with all the conquerors!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The heart, **which is a radiant wheel**, is visualized as **the celestial palace**, and within it, the ground of recollection (*dran gzhi*) is **clearly visualized**. **The nature of the** translucent **vital essence** which is the support **of** that

visualization, the size of a mustard seed, **constitutes the supreme assembly of the garland of letters** HŪM, the seed syllable of the principal deity. These [syllables] melt into light, and **therefrom, the maṇḍala of the enlightened family** of buddha mind is **radiantly** visualized.<sup>571</sup> The being of pristine cognition then **emanates and dissolves**, so that the obscurations of the mental faculty are purified, melt into light, and are transformed into the deity.<sup>572</sup> Consequently, the following promissory initiation is given: The disciples are summoned with the words: “**om! Great child of the conquerors of the three times**, you should **grasp** the meditation on the profound truth—the **indestructible reality of the buddha body, speech, and mind** of all the buddhas, in which body becomes deity, speech becomes mantra, and mind becomes actual reality. Then from that disposition, you should **make offerings that please all the conquerors** and, with supreme bliss, present the outer, inner, and secret offerings. **And** consequently, you should obtain the rank of one who is **united with all the conquerors!**”

The third, concerning the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of enlightened activities (16.1.2.2.1.2.3) [comments on the verse]:

**[The empowerment of enlightened activities] that perform acts of benefit for the sake of living beings, make offerings, and attain all requirements is conferred in the maṇḍala of buddha activity, within the hands.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:5)***

|ལག་བའི་འཁོར་ལོའི་གནལ་ཡས་སུ།

|གསལ་བའི་ཐིག་ལའི་རོ་བོ་ཉིད།

། རྩྱེ་གི་ཕྱག་རྒྱའི་ཚོགས་མཚོག་ལས།  
། ལས་ཀྱི་དྲིལ་འཁོར་གསལ་འཕྲོ་བེམ།  
། ཨོྲེ་ལྷོད་ནི་དོ་རྗེ་ལས་ཡིན་གྱིས།  
། ལས་རྣམས་མ་ལུས་ཀུན་གྱིས་ཤིག།  
། སོ་ཉ་མང་པོའི་འདུ་འཕྲོ་ཀུན།  
། ལྷོད་ཀྱི་དགོས་པ་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན།

Clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped celestial palaces  
of the hands, The nature of the vital essence  
Constitutes the supreme assembly of the seal of HĀM.  
Therefrom, the maṇḍala of enlightened activity  
Radiantly emanates and dissolves.  
OM! You should embody the activity of indestructible  
reality.  
Perform all activities without exception,  
And all the diffusions and absorptions

Of the multitude of intermediaries  
Should fulfill your purposes!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The consciousness of touch (*reg shes*)<sup>573</sup> is **clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped celestial palace of the hands. The nature of the translucent vital essence** that supports that visualization **constitutes the supreme assembly of the seal of the syllable HĀM**, naturally expressed as the syllables.<sup>574</sup> **Therefrom, the maṇḍala of enlightened activity is radiantly generated.**<sup>575</sup> The being of pristine cognition **emanates and dissolves.** Melting, these are transformed into the male and female buddhas Amoghasiddhi, and the following promissory initiation is granted: “**OM!** Child of enlightened heritage, from this day on you should be Amoghasiddhi. **You should embody the enlightened activity of indestructible reality. You should perform all activities without exception** that respectively benefit sentient beings and make offerings to the buddhas. Thereby, **all the assemblies of the multitude of intermediaries**, who are emanations of buddhas and bodhisattvas, should naturally confer accomplishment through their inward **absorptions and** attain enlightened activities through their outward **diffusions.** They **should fulfill all your purposes.** Alternatively, the accomplishments will be attained through meditation by means of an intermediary!”

The fourth, concerning the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of the expositor (16.1.2.2.1.2.4) [comments on the verse]:

**The empowerment of the expositor of all the vehicles is conferred in the maṇḍala of buddha speech, within the tongue.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 10:6)**

|སྣ་བྱེད་འཁོར་ལོའི་གཞལ་ཡས་སུ།  
|གསལ་བའི་ཐིག་ལའི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད།  
|སྤྱི་ཡི་ཕྱག་རྒྱའི་ཚོགས་མཚོག་ལས།  
|ཚོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་གསལ་སྣོ་ཐིམ།  
|ཨོ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་བདུད་ཅི་བླ་མེད་ཀྱིས།  
|དད་ལྡན་སྤྱིས་བྱ་ངོམས་པར་བྱོས།  
|རབ་འབྱིང་ཐ་མའི་སློ་ཅན་ལ།  
|མཐུན་པར་གསང་བསྐྱགས་གཞན་དུ་མིན།

Clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped celestial palace of  
the tongue, The nature of the vital essence  
Constitutes the supreme assembly of the seal of hrīḥ.  
Therefrom, the maṇḍala of the doctrine  
Radiantly emanates and dissolves.  
OM! Satisfy faithful persons  
With the unsurpassed nectars of the doctrine!  
Corresponding to those of superior, mediocre,  
And inferior acumen,  
The secrets should be proclaimed,  
But not otherwise!

## **Interlinear Commentary**

The sense organ of the tongue, which apprehends taste, is

translucent and **clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped celestial palace of the tongue**, which expresses words. **The nature of the vital essence** [which supports that visualization] **constitutes the supreme assembly of the seal**, the natural expressions of the syllable HRĪḤ in five pairs.<sup>576</sup> These melt into light, and **therefrom, the maṇḍala of Amitābha**, the enlightened family of **the sacred doctrine** of buddha speech, is **radiantly** visualized.<sup>577</sup> The being of pristine cognition then **emanates and dissolves**, and on melting, Amitābha is visualized. Thereupon the following promissory initiation is given: “OM! You should **satisfy** those **persons** who are **faithful** to any of the different vehicles by means of **the unsurpassed nectars of the doctrine**, outer, inner, and secret, teaching them whatever doctrines meet their needs. **Corresponding to** the degrees of acumen, **the secrets** of the doctrine **should be** differently **proclaimed**, that is, the most secret and marvelous vehicle should be given to **those of superior** acumen, the causal teachings of the Great Vehicle to those of **mediocre** [acumen], **and** the vehicles of pious attendants, hermit buddhas, gods, and humans to those of **inferior acumen**. **But** it should **not otherwise** be proclaimed glibly, in such a way that the doctrines of the greater [vehicle] are entrusted to lesser individuals, those of the lesser [vehicle] to greater individuals, and so forth!” This is because there would be no benefit, and deeds that renounce the doctrine would be accrued. Accordingly, it says in the *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva* that supreme doctrines are not explained to lesser beings.<sup>578</sup>

And it says in the *Sūtra of the Bounteous Array*:

Those who are worthy recipients of the extensive doctrine  
Should not be placed alongside those who are  
unworthy.<sup>579</sup>

The fifth, concerning the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of the myriad precepts of the king of indestructible reality (16.1.2.2.1.2.5) [comments on the verse]:

**The empowerment of the myriad precepts [of the king of indestructible reality] is conferred in the**

**maṇḍalas of the [five] enlightened families, within  
the limbs.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:7)***

|བསྐྱོད་ཆེན་འཁོར་ལོའི་གནལ་ཡས་སུ།  
|གསལ་བའི་ཐིག་ལའི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད།  
|ཧྱཱི་ཨོ་ཨྲཱི་ཨྵཱི་རྩུ་རྩུ་ལས་ལས།  
|དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལྔ་དང་ཁྲོ་འབྲེང་བསྐྱོམ།  
|ཨོ་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞི་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི།  
|སྐྱུ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་དོ་རྗེ་ཆེ།  
|དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཀུན་གྱི་བྱེད་པ་པོ།  
|དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཀུན་གྱི་སྐྱིན་པ་སྦྱོང།

Clearly visualized in a wheel-shaped celestial palace,  
Indicative of great movement, are the vital essences,  
The nature of which constitutes the syllables  
HŪṀ, OṀ, SVĀ, ĀṀ, AND HĀ.

One should meditate that therefrom the five maṇḍalas  
[arise],

Along with the ring of wrathful deities.

OM! Great indestructible reality

Of the body, speech, and mind

Of all the ten directions and four times,

Progenitor of all maṇḍalas!

Enact the gift of all maṇḍalas!

***Interlinear Commentary***



The sense organ of the body (*lus kyi dbang po*) is translucent and **clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped celestial palace** of the five limbs [of the body], including the head, which are **indicative of great movement** because they may be active or stationary, perform gestures of sealing, or observe objects. Indivisible therefrom **are the vital essences, the nature of which** respectively **constitutes the syllable HŪṂ** on the right shoulder, the syllable OM on the head, the syllable SVĀ on the left shoulder, the syllable ĀṂ on the left leg, **and** the syllable HĀ on the right leg. These all melt into light, and **one should meditate that therefrom the five maṇḍalas** of the five different enlightened families arise, **along with** the protective circle outside them and **the ring of the ten wrathful deities.**<sup>580</sup> Then the following promissory initiation is granted: “OM! **Great indestructible reality of the body, speech, and mind of all** buddhas of **the ten directions and four times**, you, glorious Samantabhadra, are the **progenitor of all maṇḍalas** of marvelous intrinsic nature which primordially pervade all cyclic existence and nirvāṇa. May you therefore **enact** or bestow **the genuine gift of all** accomplishments of the supreme **maṇḍalas** on this child of enlightened heritage!”

The third part [of the empowerments of ability] concerns the defects of not possessing these empowerments (16.1.2.2.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Those who would listen to and practice [the secret mantras] without pleasing [the master] and without obtaining [the empowerments] will have no result and will be ruined.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:8)***

།སློབ་དཔོན་མཉེས་པར་མ་བྱས་ཤིང་།  
།དབང་རྣམས་ཐོབ་པར་མ་བྱས་པར།  
།ཉན་པ་ལ་སོགས་ཚུམ་པ་རྣམས།  
།འབྲས་བུ་མེད་ཅིང་བརྟུག་པར་འགྱུར།

Those who attempt to listen and so forth

Without pleasing the master

And without obtaining empowerment  
Will have no result and will be ruined.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Those who attempt to listen** to the secret mantras, or to practice them, or to explain them to others, **and so forth, without pleasing the master** of the secret mantras by means of body, speech, mind, and material necessities, **and without obtaining** in their minds **the** outer, inner, and secret **empowerments, will have no result** or accomplishment attained in this lifetime, **and,** experiencing suffering in evil existences during subsequent lives, they **will be ruined**. This is because they will have usurped the profound doctrine. As is said in the *Tantra of the Ocean of Activity*:

Without obtaining the empowerments,  
It would be wrong to practice the secret mantras.<sup>581</sup>

## **THE EMPOWERMENTS OF BENEFICENCE [16.1.2.2.2]**

The second part [of the extensive exegesis of the nature of the empowerments, see [p. 401](#)] concerns the empowerments of beneficence. [It comments on the verse:]

**Having received through ten sacraments the empowerments [of beneficence]—those of the regent of the buddhas, those of excellence for the sake of others and oneself, and the one of nonduality—**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 10:9)**

།དབུ་རྒྱན་ཅོད་པན་ཐེང་བ་དང་།  
།གོ་ཚ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་དང་།  
།གཏུགས་དང་བུམ་པ་བཟའ་བཏུང་དང་།  
།སྒྲིང་པོ་ལྔ་ཡིས་དབང་བསྐྱར་ན།

When the empowerments have been conferred  
Of crown ornament, diadem, garland,  
Armor, victory banner, seals,  
Parasol, vase, food and drink,  
And the five essences . . .

## **Interlinear Commentary**

The disciples are visualized as embodiments of the deities, and then the precious **crown ornament** is attached, whereby mastery and empowerment are conferred on them as a doctrinal king of the three world systems, indicating that the eight modes of consciousness are radiant as the five pristine cognitions and that this is irreversible. The **diadem** with its silken ribbons indicates that the two kinds of obscuration are purified and that skillful means and discriminative awareness are coalesced. The **garland** of flowers indicates that deeds and propensities are purified and that the branches of enlightenment are obtained. These three comprise the empowerments of the crown ornament through which one becomes a regent of the buddhas.

The **armor** indicates that one is unharmed by the weapons of afflictive mental states and that the deceptions of demonic

forces are tamed. The **victory banner** indicates that the causal base of cyclic existence is purified along with its obsessions (*paryutthāna, kun nas ldang ba*) and that its dis-harmonies are conquered. The **seals** of the five enlightened families including the vajra indicate that the five afflictive mental states are inherently pure and comprehended as the five pristine cognitions. The **parasol** indicates that one is protected from the afflictions of afflictive mental states and that living beings are protected by compassionate spirituality. These four<sup>582</sup> comprise the empowerments of excellence for the sake of others.

The **vase** indicates that there is an uncontaminated flow of water, which cleanses the stains of afflictive mental states and establishes the capacity of the five enlightened families. The **food and drink** indicate that savor of meditative concentration is enhanced and free from the deterioration of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa. These two<sup>583</sup> comprise the empowerments of excellence for the sake of oneself.

**And then, when the empowerments are conferred** by means of **the five essences**, namely, those pure essences of solar and lunar fluids [semen and vaginal fluid], water [urine], earth [excrement], and human flesh, this indicates that the five psychophysical aggregates are indivisibly purified as the five male buddhas, the five elements as the five female buddhas, and the five afflictive mental states as the five pristine cognitions. This latter empowerment is the one revealing that cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are indivisible.<sup>584</sup>

## **THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING OBTAINED THESE EMPOWERMENTS [16.1.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the extensive exegesis of the nature of the empowerments, see [p. 401](#)] concerns the advantages of having

obtained these empowerments. [It comments on the verse:]

**You will not fall into lower existences: you will attain longevity and the buddha [bodies].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:10)***

། ལུས་འདི་ཕྱིན་ཆད་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྲས།  
། འན་སོང་ཐམས་ཅད་མེད་པ་དང་།  
། ཚོ་རིང་བདེ་བ་སྤུན་སྲུང་ཚོགས།  
། མཐོ་རིས་ཐར་པའི་བདག་པོར་འགྱུར།  
། ཞེས་བཟོད་དོ།

Henceforth you will become an heir of the Conqueror,  
You will be without all lower existences,  
You will experience the excellent happiness of longevity  
And become a master of the higher realms and  
liberation!  
—Such were the aphorisms he uttered.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Henceforth**, after perfectly obtaining the empowerments of ability and beneficence, **you**, child of enlightened heritage, **will become an heir of the Conqueror**, Samantabhadra. As is said in the *Tantra of Secrets*:

Immediately after obtaining the secret empowerment,  
One will become an actual heir of Samantabhadra.<sup>585</sup>  
It is also said, according to the outer [teachings of] the

transcendent perfections (*pāramitā*, *pha rol tu phyin pa*), that one becomes an heir of the conquerors immediately after cultivating an enlightened attitude. Correspondingly, it says in the *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*:

Immediately after cultivating the mind set on  
enlightenment,

Those who are weakened and bound in the prison of  
cyclic existence Should be called children of the  
tathāgatas,



And become objects of homage

For gods and human beings of the world.<sup>586</sup>

After you have obtained empowerment, your reincarnation through deeds and propensities that would otherwise cause you to fall in the next life into evil existences will actually diminish and cease, so that **you will be without all the three lower existences** and their sufferings. Also, since there will be causal affinity (*niṣyanda, rgyu mthun pa*) with the empowerment of longevity, in this life **you will entirely experience the excellent happiness of longevity**, wealth, possessions, and genuine mastery, and you will be without suffering. **And** in the next life, too, you will provisionally be born among the gods and humans of **the higher realms**, you will constantly practice the virtuous doctrines, **and** conclusively you will **become a master of liberation**, achieving the excellent twofold benefit for living beings through the excellent buddha bodies of actual reality and form! —**Such were the aphorisms he uttered.** Accordingly, the *Tantra of the Vital Essence of Union* also says:

Those who have obtained empowerment,

Endowed with excellent happiness,

Will indeed accomplish all that is good in this life<sup>587</sup>

And be without all evil existences.

In the next life, too, they will spontaneously

Accomplish the twofold benefit.<sup>588</sup>

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 10 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
concerning the conferral of the empowerments.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 10:11)**

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་ངེས་པ་ལས་དབང་སྐྱུན་པའི་ལེན་སྟེ་བརྒྱ་པོ་།།

This completes the tenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Conferral of the Empowerments.”

## **Interlinear Commentary**

**This completes** the exegesis of **the tenth chapter from the** supremely *Secret Nucleus*, the pristine cognition of buddha mind, ***Definitive with Respect to the Real***, excellent, and profound nature. It is **entitled “The Conferral of the** pristine cognition of **the Empowerments”** as a regent of the buddhas.

## **EPILOGUE TO BOOK 16, PART 1**

When we embark on the fifth [path of death, *pañcama*], Having  
reached in one lifetime the level of definitive excellence,  
Endowed with the six supernormal cognitive powers,  
May all fetters be liberated right where they are  
Through the *Net of Magical Emanation*—the tantra that reveals  
Phenomenal existence to be primordial buddhahood.<sup>589</sup>

Having encountered this conclusive profound path,  
Which the Guide of the three times,  
Unrivaled in the sacred doctrine,  
The foremost of all living creatures,  
Refined over many aeons as the general sūtra and mantra

vehicles

In the authentic Akanīṣṭha, endowed with the five certainties,  
Where this mighty secret tantra emerged from the Teacher and  
retinue Who are undifferentiated at all times,  
It is certain that buddhahood will swiftly be attained.  
May we therefore persevere with earnest sincerity  
In our experiential cultivation!<sup>590</sup>

Through this aspiration, may we find certainty in the maṇḍalas  
of buddha body, speech, and mind, along with the maṇḍala of  
reflected imagery and the conferral of empowerments, which  
collectively constitute the ground of the peaceful deities.

This book was compiled by Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje  
—he who is unvanquished and victorious over all directions!

## BOOK 16, PART 2

### *Secret Nucleus: The Path and Result of the Peaceful Deities*

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Herein is contained Book 16, Part 2 (THI), from *The Extensive Commentary of the Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra: A Beauteous Ornament of Great Brahmā, concerning the Path and Result of the Peaceful Deities*.

### THE GOLDEN KEY

In order to elucidate the path and result of the peaceful deities,  
This book contains the generation stage [of meditation], The  
attainment of the communion, the perfection stage  
[of meditation],  
And the [fruitional] eulogy.

## **VERSES OF HOMAGE**

Homage to Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi  
Along with Pāṇḍaravāsini and [Samaya]tārā,<sup>591</sup>  
Who enact manifold enlightened activities on behalf of living  
beings,  
Without moving from the state of the buddha body of perfect  
resource!<sup>592</sup>

## **SUMMARY OF BOOK 16, PART 2**

The second main topic [concerning the revelation of the spontaneously present maṇḍala of the peaceful deities (16), on which see above, p. 159] is the presentation of the generation and perfection stages of the path pertaining to the peaceful deities (16.2). This has two parts: (i) the generation stage, which reverses common attachments (chs. 11–12, 16.2.1) and (ii) the perfection stage, which engages in the essential meaning (ch. 13, 16.2.2).

The former comprises (i) a presentation of the maṇḍala of communion according to the generation stage of skillful means (16.2.1.1) and (ii) a detailed exegesis of its branches (16.2.1.2) [corresponding respectively to chs. 11 and 12].

## 11. THE MAṄḌALA OF THE COMMUNION

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The purpose of this and the following two chapters is to present the paths through which the aforementioned maṅḍalas of the ground are to be attained. In particular, chapters 11 and 12 concern the generation stage of meditation (*utpattikrama*), which reverses common attachments, while chapter 13 reveals the perfection stage (*sampannakrama*), in which the essential meaning of the practice is engaged.

Having conferred empowerment in the maṅḍala of the ground, Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then enters the meditative stability called “the king or transformation of the *Net of Magical Emanation*,” which is the coalescence of skillful means and discriminative awareness, in order to reveal the generation stage of skillful means.

As a preparation, there are four axioms of correct view, clarifying the maṅḍala of the spontaneous ground that is to be realized through the generation stage. These are known as single basis, modality of seed syllables, blessing, and direct perception, and they respectively concern the primordial emptiness that gives rise to cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, the indivisibility of appearances and emptiness, the innate purity of all things in the primordial maṅḍala, and the realization that all phenomena are the deities of the maṅḍala (v. 2).

The actual experiential cultivation of the path has two aspects, namely, the discernment that all appearances are pristine cognition and the display of the maṅḍala of communion.

According to the former, all subjective psychophysical aggregates are discerned as the maṅḍalas of peaceful and wrathful male deities (v. 3), all objective elements are

discerned as the maṇḍalas of the female consorts of the peaceful and wrathful deities (v. 4), and all their offerings, ornaments, and so forth are discerned as the maṇḍala of the indivisible display of the male and female deities (v. 5). In particular, the indivisibility and natural purity of the paths of skillful means and liberation, which employ the secret offerings, are discerned as follows:

The path of skillful means (*thabs lam*) concerns the maṇḍala of great bliss in which union is naturally pure. In general, there are three kinds of *mudrā* or female medium—the *devī* aged twelve, the *nāginī* aged sixteen, and those of inferior genus aged twenty—who are respectively the consorts of buddha mind, buddha speech, and buddha body (v. 6). In particular there are six types of female medium, known as the lotus, conch, marked, doe, elephant, and diverse types, each of which is associated with one of the six different enlightened families and classified according to superior, mediocre, and inferior characteristics or signs. The signs are said to be clearest in girls under the age of twenty.

As for the development of pristine cognition in this path of skillful means, there are the preliminary practices, namely, ritual service (*bsnyen pa*), which induces bliss by means of relaxation; dietetics and medicinal elixirs (*rasāyana*); massage (*bsku mnye*); conversation and so forth; rites of attainment (*sgrub pa*), which require the male and female yogins to be visualized as the male and female consorts and to engage in foreplay; and rites of great attainment (*sgrub chen*), which require the union of the male and female consorts (v. 7). The actual foundation or main practice then concerns the four delights (*dga' ba bzhi*), which are experienced through the descent of generative essences within the central channel of the subtle body (v. 8), and the pristine cognition experienced through the subsequent reascending of these essences (v. 9). The result of the practice of the path of skillful means includes supreme accomplishments, such as the level of Samantabhadra and the buddha body of indestructible reality, and common accomplishments that are endowed with supernormal cognitive

powers (v. 10).

The path of liberation (*sgrol lam*), which forcibly transfers the consciousness of negative beings to a higher realm of rebirth in order to compassionately thwart their negative intent, is also discerned to be naturally pure. There are ten objects or “fields of compassion” suitable for the application of such “liberating” techniques, including those who are hostile to the three precious jewels (*triratna*) and spiritual teachers, those who misinterpret the commitments, and those trapped in lower existences (v. 11). The actual skillful means that effect this liberation are meditative stability, mantra recitation combined with hand gestures of sealing, and the burnt offering of an effigy, which are respectively for yogins of superior, mediocre, and inferior potential (v. 12). The benefit of this practice is that beings destined for rebirth in lower realms are liberated and transferred to higher realms (v. 13).

The paths of skillful means and liberation are discerned to be naturally pure because in each case, the maṇḍala of magical pristine cognition is untainted by the defects associated with past actions (*karma*) (v. 14).

Second, the experiential cultivation of the generation stage of meditation sets the aforementioned refinements of pure view within the context of the communion ceremony. The Sanskrit term *gaṇacakra* is defined as “a communion of the extraordinary supports, persons, and requisites associated with the deliberate practice of the secret mantras.” The yogin who discerns through the axioms of the three purities and four samenesses that all phenomena comprising the mundane world and its inhabitants are the communion of Samantabhadra, primordial buddhahood itself, will swiftly attain supreme spiritual accomplishment (vv. 15–16).

The diverse types of communion that emerge from the communion of Samantabhadra are classified according to the number of participants or the kinds of maṇḍala they form. Those of the peaceful deities may form five, three, or a single pair of male and female yogins, while those of the wrathful deities may form their own distinctive clusters. Altogether,



there may be a hundred or even a multitude of participating yogins and yoginīs (vv. 17-20).

Communion ceremonies may also be classified according to the diverse outer, inner, and secret hand emblems that the participants hold, the diverse deities who confer accomplishments in the course of the ceremonies, and the provisions of merit and pristine cognition that are accrued.

As far as the actual procedures for the communion ceremonies associated with the peaceful and wrathful deities are concerned, the participants should enter the assembly according to the correct ritual sequence. This means that the maṇḍala of the single cluster is entered first of all (vv. 21-22), followed by the maṇḍala of the threefold cluster (v. 23), then the maṇḍala of the fivefold cluster (v. 24), and then the maṇḍala of indestructible expanse (v. 25). On the basis of the symbolic maṇḍala that is constructed in accordance with these clusters, suitable offerings and implements are arrayed and transformed through meditative stability before being offered to the visualized deities and enjoyed by them. The ceremony concludes with the prayers and benedictions that dedicate the merit of the practice for the sake of all beings.

The chapter ends with a synopsis of the basic elements necessary for enacting the communion ceremonies, namely, meditative stability (v. 26), the appropriate location and implements (v. 27), and the specific time for their performance (v. 28).

THE FIRST OF THESE [the presentation of the maṇḍala of communion according to the generation stage of skillful means (16.2.1.1)] comprises (i) the context (16.2.1.1.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (16.2.1.1.2); and (iii) the conclusion (16.2.1.1.3).

Among these, the first [comments on the verse]:

**[Samantabhadra then] uttered these following aphorisms that reveal all things as the path to liberation:**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 11:1)**

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་སྐྱེ་འཕྲུལ་བྲ་བའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་བསྐྱེར་  
བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛིན་ལ་སྟོམས་པར་ཞུགས་ན། ཆེད་དུ་བཙོད་པ་འདི་  
བཙོད་དོ།

Then the Tathāgata, the Great Joyous One, became equipoised in the meditative stability called “the kingly transformation of the Magical Net” and thereupon uttered these following aphorisms.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

Once empowerment in the maṇḍala of the ground had been conferred, **then**, in order to take into the path the apparitional entities of skillful means according to the generation stage [of meditation], **the tathāgata** Samantabhadra himself, who is known as **the Great Joyous One** because he takes delight through skillful means, and who comprises both male and female aspects, **became equipoised in the genuine meditative stability**. This great coalescence of indivisible reality, primordially free from the dichotomies of acceptance and rejection, refutation and proof, has the essential nature **of a Net** because **the Magical** appearances of skillful means, manifesting as the afflicted phenomena of cyclic existence, including the desirable attributes of the five senses, abide in the intrinsic nature of emptiness, which is discriminative awareness. This [meditative stability] is **called “the king”** or the abiding nature of all things because buddhahood is

primordially attained, and in order that this may be known, it is also called the potent **transformation** into great pristine cognition of the desirable attributes of the senses and the afflictive mental states, from the very moment at which they manifest, without abandoning them. **Thereupon**, Samantabhadra **uttered these following aphorisms**, which reveal all things as the path to liberation.

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [16.2.1.1.2]**

The second part [of this chapter] comprises (i) the maṇḍala of the spontaneous ground that is to be known (16.2.1.1.2.1) and (ii) the maṇḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness that are to be experientially cultivated according to the path (16.2.1.1.2.2).

### **THE MAṆḌALA OF THE SPONTANEOUS GROUND THAT IS TO BE KNOWN [16.2.1.1.2.1]**

The former [comments on the verse]:

**[The ground] is realized owing to four axioms: the [single] basis, the [manner of] seed syllables, blessing, and direct perception.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:2)***

།སྐྱུ་གཅིག་པ་དང་ཡིག་འབྲུའི་ཚུལ།  
 །བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབས་དང་མཛོན་སུམ་པར།  
 །རབ་ཏུ་རྟོགས་པ་རྣམ་བཞི་ཡིས།  
 །ཐམས་ཅད་མཛོན་ཚོགས་སྐུལ་པོ་ཆེ།

The single basis and the manner of seed syllables,  
 Blessing, and direct perception—  
 Owing to [these] four axioms of excellent realization,  
 All things are the great king, manifestly perfect.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The single basis** means that all things subsumed within phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, emerge from the disposition of primordial emptiness.<sup>593</sup> As is said in the *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*:

Just as when swirls of cloud instantly appear  
 From a sky that has no trace of clouds  
 And, having emerged, disintegrate,  
 So that the swirls of cloud cease to exist,  
 One should examine whence they originate,  
 And one should know all things in their entirety to be  
 similar.<sup>594</sup>

Not only have all things emerged initially from that disposition of emptiness, their naturally uncreated essential nature also abides from this present moment at which they appear, without duality of appearance and emptiness, in **the manner of the seed syllable** A.<sup>595</sup> The *Sūtra Requested by Devaputra* accordingly says:

All things abide in the manner of the naturally pure  
 syllable A.<sup>596</sup>

In this regard, appearances abide in the nature of the syllable OM, emptiness abides in the nature of the syllable ĀḤ, and their nonduality abides in the nature of the syllable HŪM. Therefore, things are empty while they appear, and they appear while they are empty. There is no dichotomy between appearance and emptiness. It says in the *Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way, Entitled Discriminative Awareness*:

Production, abiding, and similarly cessation

Are said to resemble dreams,

Magical apparitions, and castles in the sky.<sup>597</sup>

And:

For this reason, there is nothing but emptiness.<sup>598</sup>

Just as the nature of fire is infused with heat, the intrinsic nature of all things is endowed with  **blessings**  whereby buddhahood is attained in the nature of the primordial maṇḍala. There is nothing that is impure; they abide in an exclusively pure manner.<sup>599</sup> As is said in the *Tantra of Secrets*:

All things are pure,

Primordially blessed in the maṇḍala.<sup>600</sup>

The intrinsic natures of the buddha body of actual reality, which is empty; the buddha body of perfect resource, which is apparitional; and the buddha body of emanation, which is diversified are such that all visual forms abide as the maṇḍala of buddha body, all sounds abide as the maṇḍala of buddha speech, and all reality abides as the maṇḍala of buddha mind.

Furthermore, the intrinsic natures that abide in that manner are not covert and they do not exist in an extraneous temporal dimension. Indeed, from this very moment of their appearance their essential nature is visible to  **direct perception** —external appearances abiding as the intrinsic nature of the female buddhas, internal aggregates as the intrinsic nature of the male buddhas, and the amalgam of ideation as the intrinsic nature of the [other] deities. From the very moment of their appearance, they reveal an enlightened intention that does not stray from the disposition of sameness.<sup>601</sup> It says accordingly in

the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*:

From [the energy of] enlightened mind, the basis of all,  
The essential nature of mind appears as the five primary  
elements,

And the teacher,<sup>602</sup> enlightened mind, appears as the  
five [buddhas].

Their form is that of the buddha body of perfect  
resource,

And their doctrine explains [nonconceptual sameness]  
Through the nature of each [of the five primary  
elements].

These teachers display the intrinsic nature of each [of  
the five elements].

Appearing as the buddha body of perfect resource,  
They do not conceive of the enlightened intention [of  
great sameness]

In terms of its own [intrinsic nature],

And nor do they not conceive of anything else.

Rather, the five teachers of enlightened mind

Reveal all things to be actual reality.<sup>603</sup>

In this way, the presence of the pristine cognitions is indicated by the five poisons, the five male buddhas are indicated by the mind, and the five female buddhas are indicated by the five elements. Clearer even than one's own face or its reflection, the individual characteristics of all things directly reveal the actual reality of buddhahood and the apparent reality that is visible but not recognized [to be genuine]. The abiding nature of the genuine ground, present in that manner, is consecrated by one's own merits and the compassionate spirituality of a genuine teacher. Reliant on that, **owing to these four axioms of excellent realization, all things are** incontrovertibly realized to be **the great king** of primordial, **manifestly perfect** enlightenment. At that time, the things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, arise as the display of pristine cognition, in a single equilibrium, without having to be renounced or accepted—so this is the abiding nature of most secret meaning. That is the explanation [of these verses] in

terms of the actual truth of the expanse.<sup>604</sup>

[When this same passage is explained] according to the generation stage [of meditation], all things are known owing to these four kinds of excellent realization. Here, **the single basis** refers to the three kinds of meditative stability, **the manner of seed syllables** to the generation of the heart [mantras] of the different deities, the **blessing** to the generation of the maṇḍala of the deities, **and direct perception** to spontaneously perfect meditation in that disposition.

Then, when interpreted according to the perfection stage [of meditation], **the single basis** refers to the unity of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa in the mind, **the manner of the seed syllables** refers to realization in the uncreated disposition, the **blessing** refers to indivisible transformation in the essential nature of indestructible buddha mind consequent on meditative absorption, and **direct perception** refers to realization that ensues from having meditated by means of the pristine cognition of one's own particular awareness. It says accordingly in the *Sequence of the Path*:<sup>605</sup>

The view dependent on study and thought is concluded  
By those who are assuredly confident,  
Because, like a reflection on a clear ocean,  
Without the support of sound and without ideation,  
The direct perception of their own awareness  
Is free from objective referent, naturally radiant,  
unswerving,<sup>606</sup>  
And free from the threefold interaction.<sup>607</sup>

Then, [when the same verses are explained] according to the coalescence [of the two stages,]<sup>608</sup> the single basis refers to the unity of the generation and perfection [stages] as the two truths; their essential nature abides as the cloud mass of letters beyond eternalism and nihilism; from the naturally pure disposition of the expanse [all things] are then blessed, such that they manifest in and of themselves as the generation and

perfection [stages]; and having directly realized this reality through awareness in a decisive and non-contradictory manner, one engages diligently with it day and night. It says accordingly in the *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*:

According to the inner yoga,  
Realization also is claimed to be fourfold:  
Owing to [the axioms of] the single basis, the manner of  
seed syllables,  
The blessing, and direct perception,  
One engages with the meaning of the Great Perfection.  
The basis refers to the two truths,  
Which, in an immediate manner,  
Are characterized as a single [truth]  
Because they are of a single [nature].<sup>609</sup>  
In the maṇḍala of buddha body, speech, and mind,  
The intrinsic nature of all things is realized.  
From the blessing of the uncreated expanse,  
All things are known to appear.  
When such a nature is determined  
Independently and without contradiction,  
Through the awareness of direct perception,  
One has arrived at the level of yoga.<sup>610</sup>

According to passages such as these, it would be improper even to suggest that a single [interpretation] has validity, because the verses of indestructible reality (*vajrapada*) are profound and may be applied in any context whatsoever.

## **THE MAṆḌALAS OF SKILLFUL MEANS AND DISCRIMINATIVE AWARENESS THAT ARE TO BE EXPERIENTIALLY CULTIVATED ACCORDING TO THE PATH [16.2.1.1.2.2]**

The latter, concerning the maṇḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness that are to be experientially



cultivated according to the path, comprises (i) the maṇḍala in which all that appears is pristine cognition (16.2.1.1.2.2.1); (ii) the maṇḍala of communion that is enjoyed (16.2.1.1.2.2.2); and (iii) the ancillary aspects of the means for attainment (16.2.1.1.2.2.3).

## **THE MAṆḌALA IN WHICH ALL THAT APPEARS IS PRISTINE COGNITION [16.2.1.1.2.2.1]**

The first of these includes (i) a general presentation of the maṇḍala in which appearances and mind are indivisible (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.1) and (ii) a detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala in which the paths of union and liberation are indivisible (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.2).

## **THE GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE MAṆḌALA IN WHICH APPEARANCES AND MIND ARE INDIVISIBLE [16.2.1.1.2.2.1.1]**

The former comprises (i) the maṇḍala of the male deities who represent the apprehending subject (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.1.1); (ii) the maṇḍala of the female deities who represent the apprehended object (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.1.2); and (iii) the maṇḍala of their indivisible enjoyment (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.1.3).

The first [comments on the verse]:

**One should meditate on the limbs and sense organs  
as the peaceful and wrathful male deities.**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 11:3)**

ལམ་ལག་དབང་པོ་རྣམ་ཤེས་ཀུན།  
རྣམ་མིན་ཚེ་དུ་ཤེས་པར་བྱ།  
རྫོགས་པའི་དགེལ་འཁོར་ཉིད་དུ་བསྐྱེལ།  
ལང་ན་ཁྲོ་བོའི་དགེལ་འཁོར་བསྐྱེལ།

The limbs, sense organs, and consciousness—  
All are to be known not as [ordinary] phenomena but as  
the syllable OM.

One should meditate on these as the nature  
Of the perfect maṇḍala.

Alternatively, one should meditate on them  
As the maṇḍala of wrathful deities.

### **Interlinear Commentary**

There are two parts, of which [the first] concerns [the apprehending subject] that is to be known as the maṇḍala of [peaceful] male deities: **The five limbs** of the body, the **sense organs** including the eyes, **and** the modes of **consciousness** associated with them **are all to be known not as** ordinary **phenomena** with individual characteristics **but as the syllable OM**, the nature of the five pristine cognitions. To illustrate this, **one should meditate on them as the nature of the maṇḍala of perfect** resource, comprising the five enlightened families who appear without inherent existence in the manner of the reflection in a mirror, and who are naturally expressed as the five male buddhas, the eight male bodhisattvas, the four male gatekeepers, and the six sages.

The second concerns [the apprehending subject] that is to be

known as the maṇḍala of wrathful deities: **Alternatively**, in accordance with the acumen of those to be trained or by one's own volition, **one should meditate on** all these psychophysical aggregates, sense organs, and aspects of consciousness **as** the essential nature of the five pristine cognitions in **the maṇḍala of** the extremely **wrathful deities**.<sup>611</sup>

The second [the maṇḍala of the female deities who represent the apprehended object] (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.1.2) [comments on the verse]:

**One should meditate on the desirable attributes of the senses and the five elements as the peaceful and wrathful female deities.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:4)***

།གཟུགས་སྐྱོ་རི་རིག་ལ་སོགས།  
།རྣམ་མིན་སྤྱི་དུ་ཤེས་པར་བྱ།  
།ཡུམ་གྱི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་ཉིད་དུ་བསྐྱོམ།  
།ཡང་ན་ཁྲོ་མོའི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་བསྐྱོམ།

Visual forms, sounds, odors, tastes, tangibles, and so forth

Are to be known not as [ordinary] phenomena but as the syllable MŪM.

One should meditate on them as the maṇḍala of female deities.

Alternatively, one should meditate on them

As the maṇḍala of female wrathful deities.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

Here there are also two parts, of which the former concerns [the apprehended object] that is to be known as the female consorts of the peaceful deities: All the **visual forms** subsumed by the living beings of phenomenal existence, and other phenomena including **sounds, odors, tastes, tangibles, and so forth**, and all appearances of the five elements, **are to be known not as ordinary phenomena**—sights, sounds, and so forth—**but as the syllable MŪṂ**, the essential nature of nondual pristine cognition. To illustrate this, **one should meditate on them as the nature of the maṇḍala of female deities**, who appear but are not recognized [as inherently existing], that is, the forms of the four female gatekeepers, the eight female bodhisattvas, and the five female buddhas.

The latter concerns the visualization of the female consorts of the wrathful deities: **Alternatively, one should meditate on them as the maṇḍala of female wrathful deities**, depending on the status of those to be trained or on one's own volition.

The third [the maṇḍala of their indivisible enjoyment] (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.1.3) [comments on the verse]:

**Raiment, ornaments, food, and drink are bestowed  
by offering goddesses on the body maṇḍala.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:5)***

།ལོ་ས་རྒྱན་བཟའ་བཏུང་སྒྲུ་དང་ཚོགས་  
 །བྲོ་གར་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིན་ཕུང་ལ།  
 །རྩྭ་དུ་ཤེས་པས་རབ་སྦྱད་ན།  
 །དོ་མཚར་འབྱུང་བའི་དྲེད་ཀྱི་ལ་འཁོར་མཉེས།

The raiment, ornaments, food and drink, songs,  
 Verses, dance steps and gestures,  
 And the cloud mass of provisions  
 Are known as the syllable HŪM.  
 So when these have been well enjoyed,  
 It is pleasing to the maṇḍala of wondrous source.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**The raiment** that covers the body, the **ornaments** that are fastened to it, the **food and drink**, the lyrical **songs**, the expressive **verses**, the configurations of the body—**dance steps** of the feet **and gestures** of the hands—**and the** great **cloud mass of** all the **provisions** of enjoyable requisites, whichever are employed, are not ordinary appearances, but they **are known as the syllable HŪM**, the intrinsic nature of appearance and emptiness, or male and female without duality, which is the reality of nondual supreme bliss. **So when**, without attachment, **these** requisites of the provisions **have been well enjoyed** as the nature of the six [offering] goddesses,<sup>612</sup> in a dreamlike disposition without true existence, the result **is the maṇḍala** that is the natural **source of wondrous** supreme and common accomplishments, **pleasing to** all buddhas present as the psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields. Consequently, the most bounteous of beneficial attributes—the swift accomplishment of

enlightenment—is obtained.

**THE PARTICULAR EXEGESIS OF THE MAṄḌALA IN WHICH THE  
PATHS OF UNION AND LIBERATION ARE INDIVISIBLE  
[16.2.1.1.2.2.1.2]**

The second part [of the maṅḍala in which all that appears is pristine cognition, see above, p. 429] concerns the maṅḍala in which the paths of union and liberation are without duality. This comprises (i) the maṅḍala of great bliss or supreme enlightenment in which the rites of union are inherently pure (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.1); (ii) the maṅḍala of the secret great skillful means in which the rites of liberation are inherently pure (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.2); and (iii) the maṅḍala of magical pristine cognition untainted with respect to union and liberation (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.3).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**[The practice of union concerns] the object [or female medium], the manner [of this engagement], the essential nature [of this engagement], [the receiving of] accomplishment, and the twofold result.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:6-10)***

།ལྷ་མོ་སྐྱ་མོ་རིགས་དན་མོ།  
 །དབྱེ་འཇམ་ཡང་ན་མི་དབྱེ་བར།  
 །བསྐྱེན་པ་དང་ནི་ཉེ་བསྐྱེན་དང་།  
 །སྐྱབ་པ་དང་ནི་སྐྱབ་ཆེན་པོ།  
 །ཡུམ་གྱི་པདྨའི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་དུ།  
 །བདེ་བ་ལུགས་གྱི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་སྟོ།  
 །སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྱིན་ཚོགས་མ་ལུས་ལ།  
 །དབྱེས་མཉམ་མཚོག་གི་སྤྱིན་པས་བསྐྱེམ།  
 །སྐྱབ་པའི་ཉེ་ཟླ་སྤྱིང་པོ་སྟེ།  
 །དགྱིལ་འཁོར་དོ་རྗེ་སྟེ་ཡིས་བླང་།  
 །མཁའ་འགོ་གསལ་འབར་ཚོ་ལ་སོགས།  
 །ཡིད་བཞིན་སྤྱིན་གྱི་བདག་པོར་འགྱུར།

Discriminating between *devīs*, *nāginīs*, and inferior  
 female mediums,  
 Or else without discrimination,  
 There are [rites of] ritual service, further ritual service,  
 Rites of attainment, and rites of great attainment.  
 In the maṇḍala of the lotus of the female consort,  
 The maṇḍala of blissful buddha mind is diffused,  
 And through the supreme offerings of joy and  
 equanimity  
 Made to all maṇḍalas of buddhas without exception,  
 [The deities and beings of pristine cognition] dissolve  
 therein.  
 Those essences of attainment, the sun and moon fluids,

Are then drawn by the tonguelike vajra into the  
maṇḍala.

[Consequently] one will become a sky-farer,  
Radiant and ablaze with longevity and so forth,  
And one will become a sovereign of the Wish-Fulfilling  
Clouds.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the object [or female medium] with whom one enters into union, **discriminating between** the good and bad qualities and the different particular qualities of *devī*, who are the twelve-year-old secret female mediums of buddha mind; *nāginī*, who are the sixteen-year-old secret female mediums of buddha speech; **and inferior female mediums**, who are the twenty-year-old secret female mediums of buddha body, one should reject those who are bad and rely on those who are good; **or else, without discrimination**, one should resort to whichever female partner is appropriate.<sup>613</sup>

With regard to the manner in which one engages in union, there are four branches of ritual service and rites of attainment through which one [generally] relies on or serves a single deity. Accordingly, in this context also, **there** [are rites of] **ritual service** through which the mind of the female medium is refined and generative essences enhanced; there are [rites of] **further ritual service**, which include glancing at and touching [the female medium] with purity of perception; there **are rites of attainment**, which include the radiant visualization of her as the deity and the consequent embrace; **and** there are **rites of great attainment**, wherein, through their display in nonduality, [the generative fluids] descend from the four centers to the secret center.<sup>614</sup> Through these four steps, one unites with pristine cognition.

With regard to the essential nature [of the generative essences] which are united, one should visualize the receptacle



of the nondual generative fluids, the size of a mustard seed, **in the maṇḍala of the lotus of the female consort**, and then **the maṇḍala of** natural supremely **blissful buddha mind** adorned with clusters of buddhas **is diffused** and visually generated. The beings of pristine cognition are invited from the expanse [of actual reality] and dissolve therein, whereupon the offering of this union is **made to all** cloud masses of the **maṇḍalas of the buddhas without exception** who are present. Consequently, **through the great supreme offerings of joy and equanimity**, the deities who have been invited and all the deities of the naturally present maṇḍala located in the energy centers of one's own body respectively **dissolve therein**. By virtue of making these offerings in a satisfactory manner, the accomplishment of nondual supreme bliss is visualized to be obtained, and the generative fluids are held, concentrated in the lotus.

With regard to the way in which the accomplishment is received, **those essences** that are **the sun and moon fluids**<sup>615</sup> of the pudenda are activated by the [aforementioned] four branches **of** ritual service and **attainment**, and **then** they **are drawn by the tonguelike secret vajra into the maṇḍala** of the four centers within the energy channels. Filled by this movement from below (*mas rim gyis*), all centers of the body are permeated, and this is determined to be pristine cognition.<sup>616</sup>

In this context, there are some who hold that the tongue of the visualized deity is visualized as the vajra, which extracts [the generative fluids] and ingests them. However, that is not the case. They do not understand the meaning of the rite of union.

With regard to the result of that attainment, through miraculous abilities, **one will become a sky-farer**; through supernormal cognitive power, one will directly experience the **radiant** realization of all things; **and ablaze with** the light rays of meditative stability and pristine cognition, one will upwardly traverse the distinctive levels and paths. With **longevity** equal to that of the sun and moon, the benefit of

oneself and others will be attained, and the body of indestructible reality (*vajrakāya*) will be acquired, **and so forth**. The latter includes the following, which are also revealed to be obtained: the eight common accomplishments of the enchanted sword, eye salve, pills, alchemical transmutation [of iron] into gold, swift-footedness, and so on. **And**, conclusively, **one will become a sovereign of the Wish-Fulfilling Clouds**, which refers to the supreme level of Samantabhadra.<sup>617</sup> Inasmuch as buddha body and pristine cognition are without conjunction or disjunction, the twofold benefit of living beings will be spontaneously accomplished.

The second of these, the maṇḍala of the secret skillful means in which liberation is inherently pure (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.2) [comments on the verse]:

**The practice of ritual liberation concerns the [targeted] object, the skillful means, the five ways [in which yogins are skilled], the actual liberation and ejection [of the target's consciousness], and the beneficial consequences [of this practice].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:11-13)***

འཛིན་གྱུར་མཚོག་དང་མཚོག་ཕྱན་རྣམས།

འཁྱིལ་དཀྱིལ་དུ་མཁས་པས་གཞག་

།ད་རྒྱལ་ལག་གི་འདུ་བྱེད་བསྐྱོམ།  
།རྩྱེ་དུ་གྱུར་པས་རྣམ་པར་དག།  
།དབྱིངས་སུ་ཐིམ་ནས་ཕྱག་རྒྱར་འབར།  
།སྐྱར་གྱུར་འོད་ཟེར་འཕྲོ་བས་བརྗིད།  
།གཞུག་ཏུ་རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་བ་བསྐྱོམ།  
།དོ་མཚར་དན་འགོ་ཐར་པའི་ཐབས།

Those denizens of supreme and lesser realms  
Who have become fields [of compassion]  
Are placed by a skilled [yogin] on solar and lunar disks.  
Meditating with [divine] pride and movement of the  
hands,  
[The consciousness of the target] is transformed into the  
syllable HŪM  
So that it is purified,  
Dissolving into the expanse.  
It blazes forth as the symbolic seal  
And becomes the buddha body [of Vajrasattva],  
Brilliant through the proliferation of light rays.  
One should then meditate that [as a sign of] this  
triumph,  
It [is placed] on the crown.  
This is the wondrous skillful means  
That releases beings from lower existences.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the object that is to be ritually liberated, there are **those who have become fields** of compassion [i.e., suitable targets for the rites of liberation], on whom it says in the *Tantra of Vajrakīla*:

The commitment that liberates by means of compassion  
Is not an act of murder or suppression—

After permeating the psychophysical aggregates  
[Of the target] with indestructible reality,  
One should meditate on the consciousness [of the  
target] as indestructible reality.<sup>618</sup>

Accordingly, those [who enact ritual liberation] should themselves be devoid of the inherent characteristics of hatred, and they should be guided by compassion.

Sentient beings who cannot be trained by the rites of pacification and enrichment and who are to be trained by means of wrathful sorcery (*abhicāra, mngon spyod*) comprise gods and human beings—the **denizens of supreme** exalted realms **and** living beings **of lesser** and lower **realms**. When classified, there are beings of ten such fields [of compassion] who endure the causes and results of suffering. So, it is in order that they might be freed from their respective sufferings that these beings are to be ritually liberated. As the *Clarification of Commitments* also says:

Those who are hostile to the Precious Jewels,  
And to the physical body of the [vajra] master,  
Those who have deviated from their commitments  
And those who are resentful,  
Those who attack the assembly [of practitioners]  
And those who are harmful to all beings in general,  
Those who are inimical and ill-disposed toward the  
commitments  
And denizens of the three lower realms—

These ten kinds of beings

May be accepted [as suitable targets] by all yogins.<sup>619</sup>

In circumstances when three conditions are present—that is, when one resorts to activity on behalf of others, understands how this will transpire, and has great compassion—there are occasions when the first seven [of the ten] nonvirtuous actions may be permitted, even according to the causal phase of the Great Vehicle:

For great bodhisattvas,

Seven nonvirtuous actions may be permitted.<sup>620</sup>

This may be exemplified by [the incident when Śākyamuni Buddha liberated the pirate] Black Spearman (*mi nag mdung thung can*) [who had murdered five hundred merchants].<sup>621</sup>

With regard to the skillful means through which these beings are to be ritually liberated, the best yogin liberates [such beings] through meditative stability; the mediocre yogin liberates them through meditative stability, mantra, and gestures of sealing; and the inferior yogin, in addition to those methods, gathers together the actual sacraments including a pit (*brub khung*)<sup>622</sup> and an effigy (*ling ga*), and then ritually liberates them utilizing an effigy (*gzugs brnyan*).

The basic equipment to be prepared is the burning pit, triangular in the shape of the [Sanskrit] letter e and smeared with charcoal (*rdo sol*),<sup>623</sup> which is placed at the southwest of the maṇḍala. Within it and **upon a solar disk** transformed from the [Sanskrit] letter ma, **and a lunar disk** transformed from the [Sanskrit] letter a, the [appropriate] effigy and tokens indicative of the subject's name and clan **are placed by a yogin who is skilled** in the rite of liberation, after which [the consciousness of the target] is summoned and induced therein by means of meditative stability.

The five ways in which [yogins] may be skilled (*mkhas tshul lnga*) are as follows: They may be skilled in the view that liberates by nature; they may be skilled in meditation that liberates by meditative stability; they may be skilled in conduct that liberates [beings] in accordance with their acumen, place, and time; they may be skilled in the oral instructions that

liberate by the secret mantra of great skillful means; and they may be skilled in the deeds and conduct that ritually liberate [the consciousness of the target] by means of profound wrathful sorcery.<sup>624</sup>

Then endowed **with** [divine] **pride**, one should visualize oneself as a great warrior, in the essential nature of male and female combined, and think, “The malignant being should be liberated.” Then one should visualize that on the ten fingers of the hands there are the five seed syllables of the heroes or the ten syllables HŪṂ, which are the seeds of the ten liberating acolytes (*daśakiṃkara*, *sgrol ging bcu*), from which the ten male acolytes (*ging pho bcu*)<sup>625</sup> are generated. Meanwhile, one turns the copper spike (*phur ba*) **and**, with **movement of the hands**, thrusts it into the heart of that effigy, so that it is cut into pieces of flesh and blood, thereafter **meditating** that the ten liberating acolytes deliver these to the principal deity and offer them to the maṇḍala. Then again, once the obscurations of [the target’s] body, speech, and mind have been purified, the consciousness [of the deceased] **is transformed into the single white syllable HŪṂ, so that** all past deeds and propensities are **purified**. This same syllable HŪṂ gradually **dissolves into the expanse** of its superscript crescent and bindu (*zla tshe*), and then the crescent and bindu are wholly transformed into the mirrorlike pristine cognition, which itself becomes a single vajra, **the symbolic seal** of buddha mind, **blazing forth** rays of light. **One should then meditate** that this **becomes the buddha body** of Vajrasattva, **brilliant through the proliferation of light rays**. One should meditate that **on the crown** there is a thumb-size Samantabhadra image, as a sign of **this triumph** over cyclic existence. That is to say, one should visualize that this is placed upon a lunar throne on a maṇḍala of vital energy and ejected by the sound of phaṭ to Akanīṣṭha, where it enters through the mouth of the tathāgata and is generated in the form of Vajrasattva, within the womb of the female consort, thereafter taking birth as a child of the tathāgatas and acting on behalf of sentient beings.

With regard to the beneficial consequences that accrue from

having performed ritual liberation, this skillful means liberates by wrathful sorcery and releases into exalted realms those negative beings who would otherwise be certain to be reborn endlessly in lower existences. **This is the means**, particularly sublime, the great secret of the vehicle of indestructible reality, more **wondrous** than the other vehicles, **that releases** evildoers **from lower existences** and secures their liberation.

There are some who might doubt that such acts of killing belong to the genuine path because the rite is based on hatred, but there is no defect. For the genuine ones establish living beings in a state of release, liberating them with an altruistic mind that is devoid of hatred. As is said by the Vedic Guru:



No defect is visible

In one who acts malignly

For the benefit of the malign.<sup>626</sup>

And in the *Tantra of the Purification of All Lower Realms*,  
which is a Yogatantra, it also says:

Sarvavid has said that

If one should eradicate

Those who make improper attempts  
To curse the spiritual teacher, and so forth,  
One will become accomplished.

And:

Moreover, those who attempt to curse the spiritual  
teacher,  
Those who would harm the three precious jewels,  
And those who would destroy the buddhas' teaching  
Should be ritually “liberated” by the mantras of a  
*mantrin*.<sup>627</sup>

The third part [of the maṇḍala in which the paths of union and liberation are without duality, see [p. 433](#)] concerns the maṇḍala of magical pristine cognition untainted with respect to union and liberation (16.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.3). [This comments on the verse:]

**The practices of union and ritual liberation are  
without defect because they are uncreated magical  
apparitions.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:14)***

|ཡེ་ནས་སྐྱེ་མེད་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།  
|སྐྱེ་མར་སྐྱེད་བ་མིག་ཡོར་ཚུལ།  
|སྐྱོར་སྐྱོལ་བྱ་བ་ཀུན་བྱས་ཀྱང་།  
|རྒྱལ་ཆ་ཅམ་ཡང་བྱས་པ་མེད།

The primordial uncreated actual truth  
Appears as a magical apparition,  
In the manner of an optical illusion.  
Although all rites of union and liberation may have been  
performed,  
They have not been performed,  
Even to the extent of an atomic particle.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Ultimately, the abiding nature of all things is **the primordial original uncreated actual truth**, on which the *Sūtra of the Lamp of Precious Jewels* says:

All things are uncreated  
And eternally resemble space.<sup>628</sup>

And in the *Sūtra Revealing the Nonemergence of All Things*:

Whosoever sees that no buddha exists,  
That no doctrine of the buddha exists,  
And that sentient beings never exist,  
And whosoever knows the actual reality resembling  
space,  
Will swiftly become foremost among living beings.<sup>629</sup>

From the very moment of its relative appearance, [this reality] diversely **appears** through conditions and without independent existence, **in the manner of a magical apparition** and in the manner of **an optical illusion** that is undetectable, as when the forms of a horse, ox, man, or woman arise in place of a twig or a pebble. As is said in the *Sūtra of the Ornament of Pristine Cognition's Appearance*:

Just as illusory forms are not created and do not come into being,

The diversity of phenomena similarly

Is not created and does not come into being.<sup>630</sup>

So it is that because all things are primordially pure and of the nature of a magical apparition, the rites of union and liberation too are primordially pure. **Although** the yogin who understands this nature of magical apparition **may have performed all the rites of union and liberation**, during these very performances, there are **no** [rites of] union and liberation generated by the defect of accruing [world-forming] deeds, or possessed of inherent characteristics, that **have actually been performed—even to the extent of an indivisible atomic particle**. This is because there is no grasping and no fixation. It also says in the *Extensive Pristine Cognition*:

One who is skilled in means  
Should perform [the rites]



In the manner of magicians

Whose phantomlike magical apparitions  
Are untainted by any defect,  
Predisposed as virtuous or nonvirtuous.<sup>631</sup>

And in the *Verse Summation of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness*:

One who knows well that all beings are phantomlike will  
not be afraid  
Even though the heads of many millions of people are  
being cut off.<sup>632</sup>

And in the *Yogatantras*:

Even if one slays all sentient beings,  
One will be untainted by negativity.<sup>633</sup>

For negativity to emerge with inherent characteristics, there must also be inherent characteristics of attachment to its true existence, but here there is established to be no downfall because there are no defects when there is no inherent existence, perception is transformed, and there is no grasping or fixation, as in the case of an insane person. This may be known from the following passages of the *Root Sūtra of Monastic Discipline*:

Dreams are, as it were, nonexistent.

Their fruit is itself uncreated.<sup>634</sup>

And:

There is no downfall  
For those who are insane and mentally disturbed.<sup>635</sup>

And:

It is known (*vṛt, shes gtso*) that when there is transformation of perception, [Downfalls do not occur].<sup>636</sup>

In this context too, there is no defect because the rites of union and liberation are realized to be dreamlike and without inherent existence, the perception is transformed into a deity, and, as in the case of an insane person, there is no attachment to true existence.

## **THE MAṄḌALA OF COMMUNION THAT IS ENJOYED [16.2.1.1.2.2.2]**

The second part [of the maṅḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness that are to be experientially cultivated according to the path, see above, p. 429] concerns the maṅḍala of communion that is enjoyed. This comprises (i) a brief introduction to the communion offerings of Samantabhadra (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis of the nature of the different maṅḍalas (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2).<sup>637</sup>

The first of these [the brief introduction to the communion offerings of Samantabhadra comments on the verse]:

**If the yogin has achieved [the communion] endowed with the three purities, the four modes of sameness, and the three sets of five [branches, requisites, and rituals], that one will become accomplished.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 11:15-16)**

།སྣོད་བཅུད་རྒྱུད་རྣམས་དག་རྟོགས་ཤིང་།  
།མཉམ་གཉིས་ལྷག་པའི་མཉམ་གཉིས་གྱིས།  
།དགྱིལ་འཁོར་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་ཞིང་།  
།བྱེད་སྣོད་ཚོགས་ཆེན་གཉིས་གྱུར་ནས།  
།ཡན་ལག་མཉམས་ཡོ་བྱད་ལྡན།  
།ཚོག་རྫོགས་པར་ཤེས་པ་ཡི།  
།རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཚོགས་པའི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱིས།  
།ངེས་པར་ལེགས་པའི་དགོས་པ་འགྲུབ།

The environment, its inhabitants, and their mind  
streams  
Are realized to be pure,  
And owing to the two states of sameness  
And the two states of superior sameness,  
The maṇḍala is the field of Samantabhadra.  
Once conduct has then been transformed through the  
two great provisions,  
The yogin who has not degenerated in the branches [of  
mantra],  
Who possesses the requisites,  
And who completely knows the rituals  
Will, by means of the maṇḍala of communion,  
Certainly become accomplished in the excellent  
objective.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the nature [of this communion] that is to be known, to illustrate that through the three purities and the four modes of sameness, all things manifest primordial buddhahood in the field of Samantabhadra, the essential nature of the five mundane elements that comprise **the external environment** is naturally pure as the five female buddhas. The sentient beings who comprise **its** inner **inhabitants and** who are subsumed in the five psychophysical aggregates are [inherently] pure as the five male buddhas; while the sense organs and consciousness of **the mind streams** of the respective [classes of beings], along with their sense objects, are pure respectively as the male bodhisattvas, the female bodhisattvas, and the male and female gatekeepers.

Moreover, all those who abide in the great maṇḍala where the environment is the celestial palace, its inhabitants are the male and female deities, and their individual mind streams are the nature of the five pristine cognitions **are realized to be pure** in the nature of primordial buddhahood.

In addition, there are **two states of sameness** in accordance with which all things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, are ultimately the same in their uncreated disposition and relatively the same in the manner of a magical apparition; **and two states of superior sameness** in accordance with which the five psychophysical aggregates are equated with the buddhas and the eight modes of consciousness are equated with the pristine cognitions. **Owing to** these [axioms], **the maṇḍala** in which all things are without [the dichotomies of] positive and negative, acceptance and rejection, **is the field of** the natural **Samantabhadra**, the abiding nature of actual reality, just as it arises and appears, pervading all cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, without partiality or bias. As is said in the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*:

O! The center is the unerring, genuine nucleus.

The periphery envelops and pervades cyclic existence

and nirvāṇa.<sup>638</sup>

With regard to the means through which [this communion] is to be known, **once**, through the realization of this intrinsic nature of the Great Perfection, power has been obtained over the maṇḍala of actual reality, and all **conduct** of body, speech, and mind **has been perfectly transformed through** the innate force of **the two great provisions** of merit and pristine cognition, then whatever appears will arise as pristine cognition. It says in the *Tantra of Vajrasattva: The Great Space*:

When all things are realized to be uncreated,  
Spontaneously perfect, and primordially liberated,  
One's habitual conduct will spontaneously accomplish  
The generation and perfection stages [of meditation],  
And the unfabricated nature will perfectly appear.<sup>639</sup>

**The yogin who has not degenerated in the five branches** of mantra that have previously been described, **who possesses the five requisites, and who completely knows the five rituals** should pleasingly achieve the requisites of a communion, endowed with supportive individuals, at special times and in locations such as charnel grounds **by means of the maṇḍala of communion**. Once this has been achieved, that person **will certainly become accomplished in** the desired result, which includes the provisional status of the three kinds of awareness holder and four rites, and the conclusive enlightenment that is **the definitively excellent objective**.

## **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE DIFFERENT MAṆḌALAS [16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2]**

The second part [of the maṇḍala of communion that is enjoyed] is the extensive exegesis of the nature of the different maṇḍalas. This comprises (i) the nature of the supporting

maṇḍala (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the corresponding sequence of attainment (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2).

The former includes both the maṇḍala of the peaceful deities (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.1) and the maṇḍala of wrathful deities (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.2).

The first of these, in turn, comprises (i) the maṇḍala of the fivefold cluster (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.1); (ii) the maṇḍala of the threefold cluster (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.2); and (iii) the maṇḍala of the single cluster [of deities] (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.3).

The first of these [the maṇḍala of the fivefold cluster, comments on the verse]:

**There are fifty [deities] in union, who constitute the fivefold cluster, along with the ten [pairs] of [protective] wrathful deities.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:17)***

ལྷ་དང་ལྷ་ཡི་སྦྱར་བ་ཡི།  
ཚེས་བུ་ལྷ་ཡི་ལྷ་བཀོད་ལ།  
ཁྲོ་བོ་བཅུ་དང་ཁྲོ་མོ་བཅུ།  
འཁོར་ལོའི་རྩལ་དུ་རྣམ་པར་བསྐྱེལ།

One should meditate on the form  
Of the deities of the fivefold cluster,  
Arrayed five in union with five,  
And on the ten wrathful male deities  
And the ten wrathful female deities,  
[Who are arrayed] in the manner of a circle.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**One should meditate on the form of the deities of the fivefold cluster**, which derives from the [male buddhas of the] **five** enlightened families **in** indivisible **union with** the **five** female buddhas, who are the objective fields of the five enlightened families. These are **arrayed**—fifty in number, that is, ten male and female deities derived from the five primary male and female pairs, along with ten others belonging to each of the other four [peripheral] enlightened families. **And** also [one should meditate] **on the ten wrathful male deities**, such as Hūṃkara, **and the ten wrathful female deities**, such as Vajranāditā (*rdo rje sgra 'byin ma*), who are situated outside those [deities] on the ten radial spokes of a hollow protective wheel, that is, in the eight cardinal directions along with the zenith and nadir. They are arrayed **in the manner of a circle**, which protects [the maṇḍala] from obstacles: In the center there are the male and female buddhas [Vairocana and Ākāśadhātviśvarī] who are the natural expression of Samantabhadra, surrounded by Sattvavajra, Ratnavajra, Dharmavajra, and Karmavajra with their four respective female consorts Sthiravajrā, Jvalavajrā, Valivajrā, and Kṣobhavajrā, making ten pairs altogether.

In the east are the male and female buddhas Akṣobhya [and Buddhalocanā], surrounded by Vajrasattva, Vajrarāja, Vajrarāga, and Vajrasādhu with their four respective female consorts Lāsyā, Dhūpā, Aṅkuśā, and Vajratārā.

In the south are the male and female buddhas Ratnasambhava [and Māmakī], and around them are Vajraratna, Vajrasūrya, Vajradhvaja, and Vajrahāsyā, with their respective female consorts Mālyā, Puṣpā, Pāśā, and Vajrasukhī.

In the west are the male and female buddhas Amitābha [and Pāṇḍaravāsini], surrounded by Vajradharma, Vajratikṣṇa, Vajracakra, and Vajravāk, with their respective female consorts Gītā, Ālokā, Sphoṭā, and Vajradyuticitrā (*rdo rje gsal bkra ma*).

In the north are the male and female buddhas Amoghasiddhi



[and Samayatārā], surrounded by Vajrakarma, Vajrarakṣita, Vajrayakṣa, and Vajramuṣṭi, with their respective female consorts Nartī, Gandhā, Kiṅkinī, and Vajrapraveśā.

Outside these fifty [deities] there are the ten wrathful male deities with their female consorts, so that the fivefold cluster altogether comprises seventy deities.<sup>640</sup>

In general, it is held that this cluster represents the principal deities and retinues when the form of the celestial palace with its gates, tiered pediments, and so forth is absent, whereas the maṇḍala proper does include the celestial palace. However, in this context, it denotes that these deities are present as an encircling cluster (*skor tshom*).

The second, the maṇḍala of the threefold cluster (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.1.1.2) [comments on the verse]:

**There are thirty [deities] who constitute the [threefold] cluster, representing the three families, along with the eight gatekeepers.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:18)***

།དེ་བཞིན་རིགས་དང་དོ་རྗེའི་རིགས།  
།པརྟའི་རིགས་ཉི་ལྔ་གསུང་བྱགས།  
།ཁྲོ་བོའི་ཚོགས་དང་ལྷན་པ་ཡི།  
།ཚོམ་བྱ་གསུམ་གྱི་ལྷ་རྣམས་བསྟོམ།

One should meditate on the deities of the threefold cluster

Of buddha body, speech, and mind,  
Namely, those of the Buddha family,

Of the Vajra family, and of the Padma family,  
Which are accompanied by a host of wrathful deities.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**One should meditate on the deities of the threefold cluster**, which constitute the maṇḍala comprising the thirty deities **of buddha body, speech, and mind, namely, those of the Buddha family, of the Vajra family, and of the Padma family**, each of **which** is naturally expressed as ten male and female deities. On their periphery too they **are accompanied by a host of wrathful deities**, namely, the eight male and female gatekeepers.

The third of these [the maṇḍala of the single cluster] (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.1.1.3) [comments on the verse]:

**There are ten [deities] who constitute the [single] cluster, representing buddha mind, along with the eightfold host of wrathful deities.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:19)***

།རིགས་ཀྱི་རིགས་ཏེ་རིགས་ཀྱི་གཙོ།  
།སྤྱགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱགས་ཏེ་སྤྱགས་ཀྱི་མཚོག།  
།ཁྲོ་བོ་ཚོགས་དང་ལྷན་པ་ཡི།  
།ཚོམ་བུ་གཅིག་པའི་ལྷ་རྣམས་བསྐྱོམ།

One should meditate on the deities of the single cluster,  
Which among [all] the enlightened families

which, among [all] the enlightened families,  
Represents the enlightened family [of the actual truth],  
Where the principal deity of the enlightened families  
Denotes the mind aspect of buddha mind—the supreme  
buddha mind,  
Accompanied by a host of wrathful deities.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**One should meditate on the** eighteen **deities of the single cluster, which** comprises a maṇḍala of ten deities, **accompanied by a host of wrathful deities**, namely, the eight male and female gatekeepers. **Among all the enlightened families**, this [cluster] **represents the enlightened family** of Samantabhadra, the actual truth, **where the principal deity of** the maṇḍala of **the five enlightened families** is Vairocana. When the maṇḍala of the tathāgata is divided into its five enlightened families, his intrinsic nature **denotes the mind aspect of buddha mind**. So it is that the principal deity Vairocana, dark blue in color, represents **the supreme** aspect of **buddha mind**.

The second part [of the nature of the supporting maṇḍala, concerning the maṇḍala of wrathful deities] (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1.2) [comments on the verse]:

**Through the fifty-eight blood drinkers, provisional and conclusive [accomplishments] will be attained.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 11:20)*

།ལྷོ་བོ་ལྷོ་མའི་ཚོགས་ཆེན་པོ།  
 །པོ་ཉ་ཕྱག་བརྟན་བཀའ་ཉན་ཚོགས།  
 །ཅི་བགྱི་ལ་སོགས་ཚོགས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས།  
 །དངོས་གྲུབ་ལས་རྣམས་རྫོགས་པར་བྱེད།

Through the assembled hosts [of the blood drinkers],  
 Who include the great assembly of wrathful male and  
 female buddhas,  
 Accompanied by the hosts of their intermediaries,  
 Retainers, obedient attendants, and other servants,  
 The rites and accomplishment are perfected.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The communion may [also] be achieved in the blazing maṇḍala **through** the agency of **the great assembled hosts** of the fifty-eight blood drinkers, **who include** the ten male and female pairs forming **the great assembly of** the five **wrathful male buddhas and** five wrathful **female buddhas, accompanied by the hosts of intermediaries** through whom **their** rites are attained, namely, the eight *mātaraḥ*, representing the seats of sensory consciousness; their **retainers**, who are the eight *piśācī*, representing the [corresponding] sense objects; their **obedient attendants**, who are the four female gatekeepers representing the pristine cognitions; **and other servants**, that is, the twenty-eight mighty *īśvarī* who perform the rites.<sup>641</sup> Thereupon, **the rites** of wrath that eradicate malign beings and so forth **are** provisionally **perfected, and**, conclusively, the supreme **accomplishment** of the definitively excellent enlightened intention will also be perfected, along with its rites.

## THE CORRESPONDING SEQUENCE OF ATTAINMENT [16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2]

The latter part [of the detailed exegesis of the nature of the different kinds of maṇḍala, see [p. 446](#)] concerns the corresponding sequence of attainment. This comprises the attainments corresponding to (i) the single cluster (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1); (ii) the threefold cluster (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.2); (iii) the fivefold cluster (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.3); and (iv) the maṇḍala of the indestructible expanse (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.4).

The first of these [the attainment corresponding to the single cluster] (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.1) [comments on the verse]:

**Accomplishment will be attained through the realization that all things are indivisible and that [all the deities] are gathered within the Vajra family.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 11:21-22)*

ནལ་འབྱོར་སྤྲུགས་འཆང་དངོས་གྲུབ་ནི།  
མཉམ་རྗེ་གས་ལྷན་གྲུབ་ངང་གནས་ཤིང་།  
སྦྱོད་པས་ཅི་ལའང་ཐོགས་མེད་པའི།  
ཐམས་ཅད་ཡི་ནས་དབྱེར་མེད་པའོ།  
རྩོ་རྗེའི་རིགས་སུ་ཐམས་ཅད་དཀྱིལ།  
འོད་འཕྲོ་འབར་བར་རབ་ཏུ་བསྐྱོམ།

འཆགས་མེད་ཚུལ་གྱིས་བསྐྱེལ་པར་བྱ།

འགཉིས་མེད་གྱུར་ནས་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེ།

The yogin or *mantrin*, in terms of accomplishment,  
Abides in a disposition of spontaneous sameness and  
perfection;  
And through conduct, unimpeded in all respects,  
All things are primordial and indivisible;  
And all maṇḍalas are present within the Vajra family.

The yogin should excellently meditate  
That [the deities and palace] diffuse light and are  
ablaze,  
And this [visualization] should then be dissolved,  
without attachment.  
Transformed, without duality,  
That one [obtains] the great seal.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the individuals by whom [the single cluster] is attained, the type of individual who attains this [single cluster] is **the yogin** (*rnal 'byor pa*), that is, one who unites (*'byor*) the intellect (*buddhi, blo*) in actual reality—the objective being the fundamental (*rnal*) nature of mind (*sems nyid*). When [yogins] are classified, there are three types, namely, yogins of the natural ground, yogins of the generation and perfection stages according to the path, and yogins of the spontaneously present result. Among them, this passage refers to the yogins of the path. The *Two Stages* also speaks of:

The yogin who has generated and perfected

The modes of the ground and the natural result . . . <sup>642</sup>

And in the *Madhyamaka*:

This term denotes certain beings who would attain  
enlightenment,  
Endowed with the nucleus of emptiness and  
compassion.<sup>643</sup>

**Or** alternatively, [the individual concerned] should be a **mantrin** (*sngags 'chang*), that is, one who upholds (*'chang*) the words and meanings of the mantras (*sngags*) that constitute the profound and marvelous mystery of the tathāgatas. The [Tibetan] term *sngags* renders [the Sanskrit] *mantra*. Three kinds of mantra are upheld, namely, secret mantra

(*guhyantra*), gnostic mantra (*vidyāmantra*), and mnemonic incantation (*dhāraṇī*). The first of these affords protection from the suffering of cyclic existence because it comprises the secret and marvelous view, meditation, conduct, and result of the outer and inner [vehicles]. The second affords protection from suffering through the mighty awareness of anchorites (*ṛṣi*) and so forth, who have obtained power over meditative stability. The third comprises solemn oaths of truth (*bden tshig*) and protective spells (*bgos pa'i tshig*) that bring about their appropriate results, beneficial or harmful.

With regard to the accomplishments to be attained thereby, **in terms of accomplishment**, the yogin acquires excellent enlightened attributes that are supreme and common. That person **abides in a disposition** where all things are **spontaneous** and indivisible in their nature **of primordial sameness and** their disposition of great **perfection**, without partiality or subjective attachment. **Through conduct** without acceptance and rejection, the yogin who attains the realization that **all things are primordially** of a single essential nature **and indivisible, unimpeded**, and without attachment or fixation **in all respects** will become accomplished. The **maṇḍalas** of **all** enlightened families **are** gathered **within the Vajra family** or buddha mind, which is the maṇḍala attained in this context [of the single cluster]. Consequently, **the yogin should excellently meditate that** all the deities and their celestial palace **diffuse light** rays of pristine cognition **and are ablaze** with splendor, after which the deities should be delighted by means of the divine offerings, **without attachment** to or fixation on all the desirable attributes of the senses, **and then** [the visualization] **should be dissolved**. The result is that the nature of mind is **transformed** into the buddha body of actual reality, **without duality**, and then **that one** obtains the state of **the spontaneous great seal**.

The second is [the attainment corresponding to the threefold cluster] (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.2) [which comments on the verse]:



**Suffering will be alleviated since [all deities] are gathered in buddha body, speech, and mind.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:23)***

|ཡང་ན་སྐྱེ་གསུང་བྱུགས་ཉིད་དེ།  
|ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་སྐྱེ་གསུང་བྱུགས།  
|ཉིད་འཛིན་གསལ་འབར་འོད་ཟེར་འཕྲོ།  
|གཉིས་མེད་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་དང་དུ་བེམ།  
|རིགས་འཛིན་དངོས་གྲུབ་མཚོག་ཐོབ་འགྱུར།  
|དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་འབར་བ་འགྲུབ།  
|ཉོན་མོངས་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱེད་སེལ་བར་བྱེད།  
|རྩོམ་མེད་རིགས་སུ་སྐྱེ་བའི་གནས།

Alternatively, [the yogin should attain] the nature  
Of buddha body, speech, and mind—  
All [maṇḍalas] without exception  
Are [gathered in] buddha body, speech, and mind.  
During meditative stability, [the deities] radiate,  
Diffusing rays of light that blaze forth,  
And then dissolve in the disposition of the nondual  
expanse.

The supreme accomplishment of  
The awareness holder will then be obtained,  
All maṇḍalas without exception will be ablaze,  
The suffering of afflictive mental states will be  
alleviated,  
And [beings] will be born into the Vajra family.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Distinct from that aforementioned [single cluster], the yogin should **alternatively** attain **the nature** of the maṇḍalas of **buddha body, speech, and mind**, which are respectively those of Akṣobhya, Amitābha, and Vairocana. This is because the maṇḍalas of **all** buddhas **without exception**, when condensed, **are** gathered in the maṇḍalas of **buddha body, speech, and mind**. Also **during** the **meditative stability** of the generation and perfection stages which brings about this attainment, the yogin should meditate that the forms of the deities **radiate, diffusing rays of light**, which are **ablaze** with the major and minor marks, and thereby perform acts of benefit for the sake of sentient beings. All the desirable attributes of the senses, which are visualized as the female consorts, are enjoyed by the male consorts, whereupon these should all be visualized to **dissolve in the disposition of the natural nondual expanse** of actual reality, free from conceptual elaboration.

**Then** the result is that **the supreme accomplishment of the awareness holder** of spontaneous presence **will be obtained**, and thereafter, **all maṇḍalas** of the deities **without exception will be ablaze** with the glory of enlightened attributes for the sake of those to be trained, **the suffering of afflictive mental states** experienced by sentient beings without exception **will be alleviated, and** then the enlightened activity will be achieved, establishing that these

sentient beings **will be born into the Vajra family.**

The third is [the attainment corresponding to the fivefold cluster] (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.3) [which comments on the verse]:

**Endowed with skillful means, [the yogin] should meditate on the fivefold [maṇḍala] cluster, along with the ring of wrathful deities, and supreme [accomplishment] will then be achieved.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:24)***

|སྐྱབས་འཚང་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཡང་དག་ནི།  
|ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱིས།  
|ད་གྱིལ་འཁོར་ལྡན་མོ་འབྲེང་བསྐྱོམ།  
|ཆགས་པ་མེད་པའི་རྩལ་གྱིས་ནི།  
|འོད་ཟེར་རྣམ་པ་མང་པོ་འཕྲོ།  
|གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་བསྐྱིམ་པར་བྱ།  
|དངོས་གྲུབ་མཚན་གི་སླིང་པོ་འགྲུབ།

For genuine accomplishment, the *mantrin*,  
[Visualizing the deities] as skillful means and  
discriminative awareness,  
Should meditate by all means upon the fivefold maṇḍala  
[cluster]  
And the ring of wrathful deities.  
Manifold rays of light are then diffused,  
And, without attachment, these should be dissolved, free  
from dichotomy.  
The nucleus of supreme accomplishment will then be  
achieved.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the type of individual who attains this maṇḍala and the manner of the attainment, **for genuine accomplishment** to be obtained in the mind, **the** yogin who is a **mantrin should** radiantly visualize the male and female pairs **as skillful means and discriminative awareness** and **meditate on the fivefold maṇḍala cluster and the ring of wrathful deities** outside them, **by all ritual means**, beginning with the three kinds of meditative stability. **Manifold light rays are then diffused** from those deities throughout the ten directions, **and** then, **without attachment** to the desirable attributes of the senses, **these should be dissolved, free from** grasping and attachment to the **dichotomy** between the object of offering and the act of offering, and in accordance with the dissolution of deity into deity. The result is that **the nucleus of supreme accomplishment**, the awareness holder of spontaneous presence, **will then be achieved**.

There are some who hold that there are different accomplishments, that is, that the awareness holder of the seal is attained by means of the single cluster, the awareness holder with power over the life span by means of the threefold cluster, and the awareness holder of spontaneous presence by means of the fivefold cluster. That does not follow because, through each of these clusters, one becomes provisionally accomplished as the three [lower] kinds of awareness holder and conclusively accomplished as the awareness holder of spontaneous presence.

The fourth is [the attainment corresponding to] the maṇḍala of the indestructible expanse (16.2.1.1.2.2.2.2.4) [which comments on the verse]:

**[The yogin] should then meditate perfectly on the**

## maṇḍala of the forty-two conquerors.

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 11:25)*

།རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས།  
།དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་དང་ཡུམ་དུ་བསྐྱོམ།  
།སེམས་དཔའ་སེམས་མ་ཉིད་དུ་བསྐྱོམ།

The yogin, by means of skillful means  
And discriminative awareness,  
Should meditate on the tathāgatas  
And their female consorts;  
And should then meditate on the nature of  
The male and female bodhisattvas.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

With regard to the type of individual by whom this is attained and the manner of attainment, **the yogin, by means of skillful means**, which is naturally expressed as the male buddhas, **and discriminative awareness**, which is naturally expressed as the female buddhas, **should meditate on the five tathāgatas and their five respective female consorts, and should then meditate on** the sense organs and the amalgam of ideation as **the nature of the male and female bodhisattvas**, along with the male and female gatekeepers.

In the *Parkhab Commentary*, this is said to refer to the concise *Net of Magical Emanation*, comprising a maṇḍala of eighteen deities. Although there is no contradiction, according to the root text itself, it is the maṇḍala of the forty-two conquerors that is clearly described in this context. <sup>644</sup>

## **THE ANCILLARY ASPECTS OF THE MEANS FOR ATTAINMENT [16.2.1.1.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the maṇḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness that are to be experientially cultivated according to the path, see [p. 429](#)] concerns the ancillary aspects of the means for attainment. [This comments on the verse:]

**[As for the ancillary aspects,] they should have meditative stability, a suitable location, steadfast mind, and [perseverance] with regard to auspicious times and dates.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:26-28)***

|སོ་སོའི་སྐྱུགས་དང་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་དང་།  
 |ཉིང་འཛིན་ཡང་དག་སོ་སོར་གསལ།  
 |གནས་དང་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ཅི་བདེ་དང་།  
 |མ་ཉམས་སློན་ཀི་རབ་ལྡན་པས།  
 |དང་པོར་དམ་ཅོས་བཞིན་དུ་བྱ།  
 |ལེ་ལེ་སྤྱོད་སྟོམས་མེད་པ་ཡི།  
 |ཐེ་ཚོམ་མེད་པར་བསྐྱབ་བྱས་ན།  
 |དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་འགྲུབ་པར་འགྱུར།  
 |རོ་རྗེ་གསང་མཚོག་དམ་པ་ཐོབ།  
 |སྐྱབ་པའི་ཞག་དང་ཚོས་གངས་ནི།  
 |རྒྱད་ལས་སློས་པ་བཞིན་དུ་བཤད།

The respective mantras, seals,  
 And meditative stabilities are to be visualized  
 Correctly and individually.  
 The yogin who is well endowed  
 With the locations and resources,  
 Whichever are adequate,

And a mind without degeneration



Should act from the start  
In accordance with the vows that have been pledged;  
And when the practice has been performed,  
Without laziness or languor, and without hesitation,  
All maṇḍalas will be accomplished,  
And the supreme, genuine secret of indestructible  
reality will be obtained.  
The number of days and dates suitable for this practice  
Are explained according to the description in the *Tantra*.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the branch of meditative stability that is to be attained, when all things are attained as the maṇḍala, the outer and inner body, its resources, and other objects that are utilized, as well as the self that utilizes them, are enjoyed through the maṇḍala. Consequently, one should know that **the respective mantras, seals, and meditative stabilities** that are applied according to circumstances **are to be visualized—individually**, incontrovertibly, **correctly, and** distinctly.

With regard to the branch concerning compatible circumstances that is to be attained, **the locations** suitable for these rites of attainment should be endowed with complete characteristics, without obstacles, **and** with the necessary **resources, whichever are adequate**, without falling into the two extremes.<sup>645</sup> Exemplified thereby, the requisites, supports, sacraments of commitment, and other appropriate necessities that facilitate this attainment should be completely present, **without degeneration** and without contradictions, **and** the **mind** of the practitioner should not be captivated by extraneous conditions but established in and determined on a single goal. **The yogin who is well endowed with** these attributes should think **from the start**, before engaging in the practice, “Until I attain accomplishment, I shall not rise from

this seat or leave this place!” and so forth. That one **should act** steadfastly, **in accordance with** whatever commitments **have been pledged**.

Then while engaging in the practice, the yogin should cultivate perseverance, **without** engaging in other activities, without **laziness** due to the occurrence of bad signs and indications **or** the absence [of positive signs], without idleness due to the self-indulgent thought that one will not succeed, and without **languor** through which attainment emerges slowly and unpunctually, and through which physical and verbal distractions are indulged. Then, with regard to mantra and meditative stability, one should be **without hesitation** and doubt, wondering whether this is authentic or not and so forth, or whether the result will or will not emerge, and so forth. **When the practice has been performed** with an attitude profoundly established in a single goal, thinking this is assuredly authentic, **all maṇḍalas** that are practiced **will be accomplished, and the supreme secret of indestructible reality**, the **genuine** buddha body of actual reality, where buddha body and pristine cognition are without conjunction or disjunction, **will be obtained**.

With regard to the branch concerning the time within which attainment will occur, **the number of days suitable for the practice**, as stated in the [aforementioned verse] from the ninth chapter [ch. 9:32] comprise “six or [twelve] months.” Along with the **dates** for commencing the practice, the [auspicious] planets and stars, and so forth, these **are** to be **explained according to the description found in the Extensive Tantra** [of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters]:

As to time, since the bodhisattvas intensively engage in  
conduct

Beginning on the eighth day of the waxing moon,

And above all under the constellation of Puṣyā,

In order to obtain the accomplishment of the supreme  
secret

This auspicious planet and constellation should be

chosen.<sup>646</sup>

Is it not, one might ask, incorrect to recognize [these times] because [the yogin] should be without acceptance and rejection? Although in essence that is the case, one should begin at an auspicious time owing to the coincidence whereby the relative causes and results are not mistaken, and one should not begin at an inauspicious time. One should know this to resemble the planting of seeds, which occurs during a season of heat and moisture but not in another season. As is said in the *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*:

Derived from the Vedāṅgas,  
The times that should be known  
Comprise the auspicious days associated with the gods  
And the auspicious hours conducive to prosperity.  
Although these are of course symbolically conceived,  
When investigated, they do evoke signs of  
accomplishment.<sup>647</sup>

In this regard, there are those of diminished perception and consciousness, who, having surrounded their lofty citadel of error and its walls of hesitation with a perimeter that is hard to cross or refute, say, “This *Secret Nucleus* of yours is not a tantra because it cites [other] tantras [as an authority].” However, the *Supreme Tantra of Clear Expression*,<sup>648</sup> the *Tantra of Hevajra*, and so forth, which you uphold in your own minds, would, also by implication, not be tantras because they too cite other tantras [as authorities]. The latter indeed says, for example:

But why say more?

One should perform this in accordance with

The maṇḍala ritual from the *Summation of the Real*.<sup>649</sup>

The *Tantra of [the Litany of the Names of] Mañjuśrī* also cites [other authorities] when it says:

According to the great *Tantra of the Net of Magical  
Emanation . . .*<sup>650</sup>

Therefore, the intrinsic nature of the tantras that have been equally taught by the Teacher rejects hierarchical statements (*gong ’og gi zlos pa spangs pa*). The cross-reference mentioned

here was made in order to establish the ancillary and commentarial tantras that derive from this root tantra [of the *Secret Nucleus*].

## THE CONCLUSION [16.2.1.1.3]

The conclusion [see p. 423, comments on the verse]:

**Through these secret words, [the tathāgata] held meaningful discourse with himself.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 11:29)*

། རྗོ་རྗེ་གསང་བའི་ཚིག་ཏུ་འོ།

ཞེས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་ཆེད་ཏུ་གླེང་ངོ།

—Such were his words of secret indestructible reality.  
With these words, the tathāgata held meaningful discourse with the tathāgata himself.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Because all things are primordially pure as the display of Samantabhadra, everything should be utilized without acceptance and rejection.

**Such were his words** in this tantra, the essential nature of **secret indestructible reality**. At the time when he spoke<sup>651</sup> **these words**, all the self-manifesting appearances of the spontaneous Bounteous Array were not extraneous to the buddhas' display, and so **the tathāgata** is said to have **held**

**meaningful discourse with the tathāgata himself,** indicating that there is no duality of object and subject. In this way, all things are revealed to be self-manifesting, and that which is self-manifesting is revealed to be the nondual intrinsic nature of mind, essentially uncreated, in the manner of a dream.

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 11 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
concerning the maṇḍala of communion.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 11:30)*

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ཚོགས་གྱི་དྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ལེན་  
སྟེ་ཐུ་གཅིག་པའོ།།

This completes the eleventh chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Maṇḍala of the Communion.”

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**This completes** the exegesis of **the eleventh chapter from the *Secret Nucleus*** of actual reality, ***Definitive with Respect to the Real***, in which whatever manifests is the display of pristine cognition. It is **entitled** “**The Meaning of the**

**Maṇḍala of the Communion**” in which all things that appear are made into the path of skillful means and discriminative awareness because the gathering of all yogins who have harmonious view and conduct perfect the two provisions in their minds without fixation or grasping, freely partaking of the requisites they possess, while meditational deities, *ḍākinīs*, and oath-bound protectors congregate.

## 12. THE ATTAINMENT OF THE COMMUNION

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The purpose of this chapter is to disclose the particular aspects of the maṇḍala of communion, namely, the meditative stabilities associated with the visualized deities and offerings, and the attainments of the awareness holders which ensue.

Having explained the maṇḍala of communion, Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then enters the meditative stability of “the array of ornaments,” which are enjoyed by buddhas and sentient beings and are laid out within the maṇḍala of communion (v. 1).

This chapter begins with a general discussion of the meditative stabilities connected with the communion ceremonies and their beneficial attributes: Spiritual accomplishments are achieved through the various meditative stabilities that perceive all things as the *Net of Magical Emanation* (v. 2). These include the meditative stability focusing on the meditational deities’ dance steps and hand gestures, which confer the benefit of unimpeded motion (v. 3); the meditative stability focusing on the seals of their songs, which confer the benefit of unimpeded sound (v. 4); the meditative stability focusing on the seals of their ornaments and raiment, which confer the benefit of protection, along with the major and minor physical marks of the buddha body (v. 5); the meditative stability focusing on their food and drink, which confers the benefit of buddha body and the nectar of buddha speech (v. 6); and the meditative stability focusing on the seals of union and forceful liberation, which confer all accomplishments and enlightened activities (v. 7).

By retaining the correct view concerning the coalescence of appearance and emptiness, and practicing the generation and

perfection stages of meditation, the yogin will gradually attain the mature status of an awareness holder and then be confirmed on the buddha level (vv. 8–9). Thus, the results achieved through the performance of the communion ceremonies and their meditative stabilities are known as the attainment of the four kinds of awareness holder, which are to be differentiated in terms of their emanational birth and their association with provisional results and levels, including the ten transcendent perfections (vv. 10–11), and with the conclusive attainment of the buddha levels (v. 12).

The chapter ends with a synopsis describing the all-embracing maṇḍala that supports the communion: By visualizing and meditating on Samantabhadra and Samantabhadrī in union, which is the true nature of mind, the yogin comes to meditate on all maṇḍalas (vv. 13–14) and thereby attain the accomplishment of all maṇḍalas (v. 15). With the understanding that all things are the true nature of mind, there will be no defect with respect to the result, whatever the yogin’s degree of proficiency in the generation stage (v. 16).

THE LATTER SECTION [of the presentation of the generation stage of meditation, which reverses common attachments, see [p. 419](#)] is the detailed exegesis of the branches of that [maṇḍala of communion] (16.2.1.2). It comprises (i) the context (16.2.1.2.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (16.2.1.2.2); and (iii) the conclusion (16.2.1.2.3).

The first of these [comments on the root verse]:

**[Replete with] the supreme resources of the communion, [the Great Joyous One then] uttered these following aphorisms:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:1)***



དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་དབྱིས་པ་ཆེན་པོས་རོལ་མོའི་སྒྲིན་རྣམ་པར་སྐྱོས་  
ཏེ། རྒྱན་བཀོད་པའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛོལ་སྒྲོམས་པར་ཞུགས་ནས་ཆེད་དུ་བཟོད་པ་  
འདི་བཟོད་དོ།

Then the Tathāgata, the Great Joyous One, diffused the cloud of his emanational display, became equipoised in the meditative stability of “the array of ornaments,” and uttered these following aphorisms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of communion had been explained, **then the Tathāgata, the Great Joyous One**, Samantabhadra, who enjoys all things without duality, **diffused** all things of phenomenal appearance throughout the infinity of space as **the cloud of his emanational display** of pristine cognition, wherein all that is desired emerges spontaneously and perfectly by nature. He then **became equipoised in the meditative stability of “the array of ornaments,”** which is replete with great resources, and within the entire perceptual range of the buddha fields and the six classes of living beings, corresponding to their respective perceptions. **And** then he **uttered these following** naturally arisen **aphorisms**, without being encouraged or requested to do so, to the assembled array, which is a pure self-manifestation of the Teacher himself.

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [16.2.1.2.2]**

The second comprises (i) a general presentation of the meditative stabilities of the communion along with their beneficial consequences (16.2.1.2.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the results attained through the communion (16.2.1.2.2.2); and (iii) a synopsis of the great all-gathering maṇḍala that supports the communion (16.2.1.2.2.3).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE MEDITATIVE STABILITIES OF THE COMMUNION ALONG WITH THEIR BENEFICIAL CONSEQUENCES [16.2.1.2.2.1]**

The first of these includes (i) a brief introduction (16.2.1.2.2.1.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis (16.2.1.2.2.1.2), among which the former [comments on the verse]:

**Accomplishments will be achieved through meditative stability in the maṇḍala of the *Net of Magical Emanation*.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:2)***

།སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་བྲ་བས་མངོན་རྫོགས་པའི།  
།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བརྟན་པའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛིན།

Through firm meditative stability in the manifestly perfect Maṇḍala of the *Net of Magical Emanation* . . .

***Interlinear Commentary***

All things themselves abide **in the manifestly perfect maṇḍala** of male and female deities, in a great coalescence of subject and object, or of male and female, within the essential nature **of the Net of Magical Emanation**, which is an emanational display of pristine cognition. **Through** the diffusion and absorption of **firm meditative stability** on that very object, radiantly visualized and experienced by the intellect, the supreme and common accomplishments will be achieved.

## **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS [16.2.1.2.2.1.2]**

The latter [the extensive exegesis] has five sections, of which the first concerns the meditative stability of dance steps and hand gestures along with its beneficial consequences (16.2.1.2.2.1.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**By the seals of the dance steps and gestures, one will sink within the earth or traverse the heavens.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:3)***

འགྲོ་གར་ཕུག་རྒྱའི་འདུ་འགྲོ་ཡིས།  
འཇུ་ལ་ལམ་ནམ་མཁའ་འགྲོ་བར་འགྱུར།

By the absorption and diffusion of the seals,  
Including the dance steps and hand gestures,  
One will sink [within the earth] or traverse the heavens.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

According to this meditative stability, the five appendages of the body including the head are visualized as the maṇḍala of the five enlightened families. Imagining, on ground that is of the nature of indestructible reality, that one's residence is the beautiful celestial palace of the deities, in a pure buddha field, there then ensues **the absorption and diffusion of the diverse seals, including the dance steps of the feet and the gestures of the hands.** In this disposition, in which the form of the deity, indivisible from the *Net of Magical Emanation*, is known to be without true inherent existence, all movements and postures [of the body] and configurations of the hands do not transgress the intrinsic nature of the deity. Therefore, all activities connected with dance steps and hand gestures whatsoever are conveyed by the term "seal" (*phyag rgya*), which is not confined to those seals that merely employ the extension and contraction of the fingers, and so forth.<sup>652</sup>

As for its beneficial consequences, **by** means of such activities, **one will sink** within the earth and overpower those subterranean female mediums who are *nāginīs* by passing unimpededly through mountains and rocks, **or** one will unimpededly **traverse the heavens** above in the manner of a bird, and so come to overpower the gods, demigods, and so forth.

The second concerns the sealing by means of songs, along with their beneficial consequences (16.2.1.2.2.1.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**By the seals of songs, lyrics, and resonance, one will achieve the buddha speech of the sacred doctrine.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:4)***

། ལྷ་ཚོག་སྒྲ་ཡི་ཕྱག་རྒྱས་ནི།  
། ཚོས་ཀྱི་དེས་གྲུབ་ཐོབ་པར་འགྱུར།

By the sealing of songs, lyrics, and resonance,  
One will achieve the accomplishment of the sacred  
doctrine.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

According to this meditative stability, the syllable HRĪḤ is arrayed within one's own throat, and offerings are made to the deities of the maṇḍala **by** means of **the** verbal **sealing of** sweet melodious **songs**, their **lyrics**, **and** the **resonance** of eulogies, benedictions, and so forth.

As to its beneficial consequences, **one will achieve the accomplishment** of the conch-like speech **of the sacred doctrine**, capable of understanding by means of the unique inexhaustible wheel of adornment, which is buddha speech. Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra Revealing the Diffusion of Light Rays Everywhere*:

I also possess rays of light,  
Known as the conch of the sacred doctrine,  
Permeating all worlds with a single melody  
Which all will understand.  
The pure basis of those rays of light  
Arises from that inestimable [source].<sup>653</sup>

The speech of the buddhas may be heard by whichever beings there are who require training, corresponding to their volition and without reference to those who are near and those who are far. There is no difference whether one is present within the [teaching] courtyard or far beyond [the world systems] as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges. Just so, when Maudgalyāyana went to the world of Marīcikā in the west, he

could hear the doctrine of Śākyamuni as before, whereas when beings were without good fortune they did not hear him even when seated within the assembly.<sup>654</sup> For example, when [Śākyamuni Buddha] was teaching the *Sūtra of the Cornucopia of Avalokiteśvara's Attributes* at Jetāvana, he was heard by the bodhisattvas but not by any of the pious attendants.<sup>655</sup>

The third concerns the sealing of ornaments and raiment, along with their beneficial consequences (16.2.1.2.2.1.2.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**By the seals of ornaments and raiment, one will  
achieve the ten powers that cannot be matched.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:5)***

། རྒྱན་དང་བགོ་བའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཡིས།  
། འབར་བའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ལྷུང་མེད་འགྲུབ།

By the sealing of ornaments and raiment,  
One will achieve the kingly [buddha body], ablaze [with  
marks],  
That cannot be matched.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

According to this meditative stability, one's crown and other ornaments are visualized issuing from the syllable TRĀM as precious gems; and one's clothing is consecrated, issuing from the syllable A, as the raiment of the deities and the garb of the

peaceful and wrathful deities. After one has donned **the ornaments**, including those fashioned of gemstone and bone, **and raiment**, including upper and lower robes and so forth, these resources are then enjoyed **by** means of **the sealing of offerings** that are made to the deities.

As for its beneficial consequences, provisionally one will be clad in strong armor, which is luminous and brilliant and cannot be destroyed even by Nārāyaṇa;<sup>656</sup> and conclusively one will become a universal monarch, and a bodhisattva **ablaze** with major and minor marks, and then **one will achieve the kingly** buddha body, with mastery of the ten powers<sup>657</sup> **that cannot be matched** by Māra or by any disputant. The energy comprised of these ten powers accords with the description found in the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*, which says that one athlete is stronger than seven human beings of Jambudvīpa, and similarly, one Śākya youth is stronger than seven athletes. The demigods are superior to seven of these, and the gods, *yakṣas*, Nārāyaṇa, pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas who have attained the levels each have seven times the power and skills of their immediate predecessor. However, the buddhas surpass all of them, even those who have power that fills the expanse of space.<sup>658</sup>

The fourth concerns the sealing of food and drink along with their beneficial consequences (16.2.1.2.2.1.2.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**By the seals of food and drink, one will achieve the nectar of all that is desired.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:6)***

།བཟའ་དང་བདུང་བའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱལ་ནི།  
།ཡིད་བཞིན་སྐྱེ་དང་བདུད་ཅི་འགྲུབ།

By the sealing of food and drink,  
One will achieve a wish-fulfilling buddha body and nectar.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

According to this meditative stability, food and drink is consecrated as nectar, issuing from the syllable KHAM. **By** means of **the sealing of food**, including fish and meat, **and drink**, including tea and ale, offerings are made to the outer and inner deities.

As for its beneficial consequences, one's own body **will achieve a buddha body**, like the **wish-fulfilling** gem that brings forth all that is desired, **and** the resources that partake of the supreme savor of buddha speech will become **nectar**, endowed with a hundred savors.

The fifth concerns the sealing of the rites of union and liberation, along with their beneficial consequences (16.2.1.2.2.1.2.5). [It comments on the verse:]

**By the seals of the rites of union and liberation, one will achieve supreme and common accomplishments, along with the rites.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:7)***



|ཇུ་ལི་ཀུ་ལིའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཡིས།

|ཐམས་ཅད་ཐམས་ཅད་འགྲུབ་པར་འགྱུར།

By the sealing of “vowels” and “consonants,”  
Each and every [accomplishment and activity] will be  
achieved.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

[According to this meditative stability,] the male and female are visualized as deities and the maṇḍala is invited into their pudenda, where it should be pleased **by the sealing of the “vowels”** [i.e., the rites of union], which confer the offering of supreme bliss, **and** of the **“consonants,”** which confer liberation by transforming into nectar and offering the flesh and blood of human and nonhuman [enemies of the sacred doctrine].<sup>659</sup>

The beneficial consequences [of this meditative stability] are that **each** supreme and common accomplishment, including uncontaminated meditative stability, **will be achieved** through the rite of union, **and every** great wave of enlightened activity, including those that eradicate malign beings, pacify harmful forces afflicting oneself and others, and release others [from unbearable sufferings], will also be achieved by the rite of liberation.

**A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE RESULTS ATTAINED THROUGH  
THE COMMUNION [16.2.1.2.2.2]**

Second [see p. 465], the detailed exegesis of the results attained through the communion comprises (i) the causal basis through which the status of an awareness holder is accomplished (16.2.1.2.2.2.1); (ii) the provisional results accomplished thereby (16.2.1.2.2.2.2); and (iii) the conclusive result of one who has reached the goal (16.2.1.2.2.2.3).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**The awareness holders who become potent and powerful through this basis and condition are [renowned] in the fields of the conquerors.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:8-9)***

|ཤེས་འཇུག་མཚན་ཉིད་འགྲོར་བའི་གཟུངས།

|འབྲས་བུ་སློན་ཁྱེད་རྒྱ་དང་རྒྱུན།

|རུས་མཐུ་ཅན་དུ་གང་གྱུར་པ།

|རིག་འཛིན་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཞིང་དུ་གྲགས།

Retention endowed with characteristics

Of understanding and engagement  
Is the basis and the condition that bring the result to  
maturity.  
Those awareness holders who become potent and  
powerful  
Will be renowned throughout the fields of the  
conquerors.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The actual primary cause refers to **retention** in the mind which is **endowed with** the abiding nature of excellent view, **characteristic of the understanding** that all things primordially attain buddhahood by means of the four axioms of realization. This **is the basis** that **brings the result to maturity** as the four awareness holders. **And** once that has been understood, **the secondary condition** refers to the retention endowed with the coalescence of the generation and perfection stages [of meditation], characteristic of the **engagement** in practice, which brings the result to maturity as the four awareness holders. Through understanding these characteristics and practicing accordingly, the result of the sacred doctrine is attained. **Those who**, having experienced and familiarized themselves with that [theoretical] basis **and** its [practical] **condition, become** particularly **potent and powerful**, will emerge as awareness holders—ranging from the [awareness holders] of maturation to those of spontaneous presence, just as a fertile<sup>660</sup> seed of causal basis when sprinkled with the water and fertilizer of conditions produces its results, which range from the [green] shoots to the fruits of the harvest.

Therefore, this mode of attainment is such that these **awareness holders** are themselves the fields that give birth to **the conquerors**. They **will be renowned throughout the**

buddha **fields of** the ten directions,<sup>661</sup> and they will obtain prophetic declarations to the effect that:

Thus, in such-and-such a world system,  
Such-and-such an awareness holder will abide And at  
such-and-such a time

Will accomplish the deeds of the buddhas.

The second part concerns the two provisional results accomplished thereby (16.2.1.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[Those awareness holders,] gods and humans, causal and fruitional, are subsumed on the extraordinary levels.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:10-11)***

།མི་དང་ལྷ་དང་ཚེས་པ་ཡི།  
།སྐྱེ་བ་རྣམ་དག་འཛོལ་མོད་ཀྱང་།  
།ཁྱད་པར་ས་ལ་གནས་འགྱུར་ཡིན།  
།པ་ལོལ་བྱིན་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་རྫོགས།

Although these [awareness holders] may assume a pure birth

Among humans, gods, and the Brahmā realms,  
They are all transformed on the extraordinary levels,  
And the transcendent perfections are totally complete.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the realms of living beings of which [those

awareness holders] partake, among those awareness holders, there are some in the respective abodes of the **humans** of the four continents, of the **gods** of the world system of desire, **and the Brahmā realms** of the world system of form, and so forth. **Although** the faultless [awareness holders], excellent in enlightened attributes, **may assume a pure birth** in those respective abodes, the living beings who already inhabit those abodes have no equality in fortune or similarity in their qualities, just as, for example, buddhas and bodhisattvas may assume the corporeal forms associated with the different abodes of living beings, but there is no similarity in their fortune or qualities.

In this regard, there are four ways in which birth may be assumed, as is said in the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*:

Birth is held to be determined

Through the deeds of intelligent beings,

Through their aspiration and power for the sake of others,

And through their meditative stability and mastery.<sup>662</sup>

Among these [four], one is born on the level of an ordinary individual, either into higher or lower realms of existence, by dint of positive and negative deeds. Then, one is held to be born on the [bodhisattva] levels from the first to seventh through aspiration and emanation that is skilled in means, and one is born on the three pure [bodhisattva] levels [i.e., the eighth to the tenth] in order to train each according to his or her needs by means of meditative stability and overpowering mastery. Then, on the buddha levels, spontaneously present emanations manifest a display of supreme mastery of the twelve deeds [of the buddha body of emanation] and so forth.<sup>663</sup>

Such sublime beings lack the [mundane] defining characteristics of birth because they have traversed the rivers of birth, aging, sickness, and death. However, they do continue to emanate [within this cyclic existence] through their compassionate spirituality, as is said in the *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*:

The sublime ones have radically removed  
The sufferings of death, sickness, and aging.  
They are without them because their birth  
Is not determined by deeds and afflictive mental states.  
Since they have seen genuine reality, just as it is,  
Their compassionate nature demonstrates birth, death,  
aging, and sickness,  
Even though they have transcended birth and so  
forth.<sup>664</sup>

And in the *Verse Summation of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness*:

Though he is without aging, sickness, and death,  
He demonstrates the transference of consciousness at  
death.<sup>665</sup>

[Among them] (i) the awareness holders of maturation (*rnam smin rig 'dzin*) have put an end to birth determined by deeds, because immediately after relinquishing the physical body, they obtain the level of sublime beings.<sup>666</sup> This is therefore identical to the conclusive path of connection (*sbyor lam mthar thug*). Indeed, there is no possibility of being reborn in the inferior realms once the stage of warmth that is experienced on the path of connection (*sbyor lam drod*) has been reached, as is said in the following verse concerning the stage of warmth from [Vimuktisena's *Commentary on*] *the Ornament of Emergent Realization*:<sup>667</sup>

Hesitation and the absence of [the eight] freedoms will be  
ended.<sup>668</sup>

So it is that [the awareness holders of maturation] take birth, through aspiration, in the pure fields and so forth, for the sake of living beings.

[By contrast] (ii) the awareness holders with power over the life span (*tshe dbang rig 'dzin*) and (iii) the awareness holders of the [great] seal (*phyag [chen] rig 'dzin*) take birth through meditative stability and thereby perform acts of benefit. However, they lack the particular characteristics normally

associated with birth because their body itself has transformed into the buddha body of indestructible reality, so that it is subject neither to annihilation nor to separation.<sup>669</sup>

Then (iv) the awareness holders of spontaneous presence (*lhun grub rig 'dzin*) manifest birth through mastery in order to train each according to his or her needs, so that there is a diffusion of emanations.<sup>670</sup>

With regard to the [bodhisattva and buddha] levels of which [the awareness holders] partake, although the first three kinds of awareness holder partake of the causal levels, and the last partakes of the fruitional levels, all of them partake of extraordinary irreversible levels.<sup>671</sup> Therefore, the *Root Tantra* says:

They are all transformed on the extraordinary levels,

And the transcendent perfections are totally complete.

When [these verses] are explained according to the way in which [awareness holders] partake of the causal levels, it is said that **although** those awareness holders of the first three categories **may assume birth among humans, gods, and Brahmā realms, they are all transformed on the ten extraordinary [bodhisattva] levels** because they have acquired the essential nature of the ten levels—that is to say, **the ten transcendent perfections are totally complete.**

When [these same verses] are explained according to the way in which [awareness holders] partake of the fruitional levels, it is said that the [awareness holders] of spontaneous presence **are transformed on** [the level named] Holder of Indestructible Reality (*vajradhara, rdo rje 'dzin pa*), which is **the extraordinary thirteenth [or buddha] level,** because **the ten transcendent perfections,** which are the causal basis for the attainment of the conclusive result, **are totally complete.**

And when [these verses] are explained according to the way in which [awareness holders] partake of the extraordinary irreversible levels, it is said that those four awareness holders **are all transformed on the extraordinary levels** because it is certain that they abide as fruitional awareness holders, **and** their sequential gradation of attainments is such that the



essences of their accomplishment on those levels, that is, **the causal and fruitional transcendent perfections, are totally complete.** This resembles, for example, a fish that has been caught by an iron hook and brought forth to dry land. The third part [of the particular exegesis of the result attained through the communion] (16.2.1.2.2.2.3) concerns the conclusive result that partakes of the eleventh level, named Universal Light. [It comments on the verse:]

**And then the supreme eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth [buddha] levels will be spontaneously perfected.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:12)***

།ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མཚོག  
 །ཤེས་རབ་མཚོག་གི་མཚོག་གྱུར་པའི།  
 །ས་ཡི་བྱད་པར་བཅུ་དང་གསུམ།  
 །རྒྱ་འབྲས་བྱད་པར་ལྷན་གྱིས་རྫོགས།

The extraordinary levels, comprising the ten [causal levels]  
 And the three [fruitional levels], which partake of Skillful means, supreme [interconnectivity of] skillful means and discriminative awareness,  
 And the most superlative of supreme discriminative awareness,  
 Are [classified] owing to their causal and fruitional distinctions,  
 But they are all spontaneously perfect.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The eleventh level, Universal Light (*samantaprabhā, kun tu 'od*), is the level on which living beings are trained through emanations and enlightened activities, manifested by conclusive **skillful means**. It says in a sūtra:

It is called the level of Universal Light because there is a diffusion of light rays that convert those to be trained into worthy recipients.<sup>672</sup>

The conclusive twelfth level, named Unattached Lotus-Endowed (*ma chags padma can*), which **partakes of the supreme interconnectivity of discriminative awareness and skillful means**, is the level that manifests effortlessly, in and of itself, as the buddha field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array. It says in the *Tantra That Clearly Reveals All [Vital Essences]*:

On Lotus-Endowed, the [buddha body of] perfect resource,  
The spontaneous pristine cognition, manifests in and of  
itself.<sup>673</sup>

Then there is [the thirteenth level,] the field of the buddha body of actual reality, free from all conceptual elaborations, the original Samantabhadra, which is the **most superlative**, precious, and spontaneously present enclosure—the basis that, through **supreme discriminative awareness**, absorbs both the buddha body of perfect resource and the buddha body of emanation in the expanse of nirvāṇa, the ground of the buddha body of actual reality.<sup>674</sup> It says [*Secret Nucleus*, ch. 9:35]:

The actual truth is free from  
The single and the multiple,  
And it is without extremes or middle—  
Even the buddhas do not see therein.

This naturally present pristine cognition  
Appears without abiding.

So it is that **the** provisional and conclusive **extraordinary levels, comprising the ten** [bodhisattva levels] beginning with the Joyful, **and the three** [buddha levels] beginning with Universal Light, are classified **owing to their causal and fruitional distinctions, but they are** naturally and **spontaneously perfect**, without being sought. That is the conclusive [result] that is to be obtained.

## **A SYNOPSIS OF THE GREAT ALL-GATHERING MAṄḌALA THAT SUPPORTS THE COMMUNION [16.2.1.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter, see [p. 465](#)] is a synopsis of the great all-gathering maṅḍala that supports the communion. It comprises (i) the revelation of the generation and perfection of Samantabhadra (16.2.1.2.2.3.1); (ii) the accomplishment of all maṅḍalas thereby (16.2.1.2.2.3.2); and (iii) [the result] untainted by the slightest defect (16.2.1.2.2.3.3).

The first of these [the revelation of the generation and perfection of Samantabhadra comments on the verse]:

**All [maṅḍalas] are gathered in the male and female Samantabhadra.**

**[The nature of] mind is the buddha.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:13-14)***

|མཁའ་དགེལ་དྲུང་པའི་དབྱིངས་ཉི་ཟླ།  
 |ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྤངས་དཔུལ་བསྐྱོམ།  
 |རྒྱལ་བའི་དགེལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀུན།  
 |མ་ལུས་པར་ནི་བསྐྱོམ་པར་འགྱུར།  
 |དུས་བཞི་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་གང་ནས་ཀྱང།  
 |རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཆེད་མི་འགྱུར།  
 |སེམས་ཉིད་རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉི།  
 |སངས་རྒྱས་གཞན་ནས་མ་འཚོལ་ཅིག

One should meditate that on cushions of sun and moon,  
 In the expanse of the clear maṇḍala of the sky,  
 There is the king of pristine cognition,  
 In union with his consort;  
 Thus one comes to meditate without exception  
 On all the maṇḍalas of the conquerors in their entirety.  
 From any of the four times and ten directions,  
 The perfect buddha will not be found.  
 The nature of mind is the perfect buddha.  
 Do not search elsewhere for the buddha!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the actual meditation, preceded by the three modes of meditative stability, **one should meditate that on** a lotus seat with **cushions of sun and moon in the expanse of the** exceedingly **clear maṇḍala of the sky, there is** the luminous celestial palace of pristine cognition, and within it the buddha body of Samantabhadra, **the king of pristine cognition** who is **in union with his consort**. Meditate that

they are equipoised in the posture of indestructible reality and that many rays of light are diffused from their bodies.

This is revealed to be different from the common vehicles, which hold that buddhas have different causal bases, different fields, different times, and different modalities. According to the uncommon vehicles, although the buddha bodies of emanation that appear as such are in the perception of those to be trained, when investigated, they are all subsumed in the uncreated buddha body of actual reality and the unimpeded buddha body of perfect resource that resides in Akaniṣṭha. Therefore, all [deities] will naturally be accomplished through meditation on whichever buddha body one wishes. In particular, by meditation on the single pair of male and female Samantabhadra, who are the intrinsic nature or progenitors of all the buddhas, **one comes to meditate without exception on all the maṇḍalas of the conquerors in their entirety.** This is because all the maṇḍalas of deities are gathered together in the buddha body, speech, and mind and in the naturally pure expanse.

The following point should be correctly established in order to abandon hesitation caused by wondering how the deities who are the object of such meditation could be accomplished since they are [the nature of] one's own mind, or by wondering whether the nature of the deity arrives extraneously and then grants accomplishment. **From any of the four times** such as the past **and ten directions** such as east, **the perfect buddha will not be found** as an independently existing characteristic apart from the mind, whether as one yet to be attained or as one that is emergent. **The nature of mind, just as it abides, is the perfect buddha.** Indeed the buddha will not be found by those who differentiate place and time, wondering whether such buddhas have emerged from somewhere else, or thinking that this present mind is the seed or cause of buddhahood, which will through refinement at some future time become a buddha, although it is not now a buddha. Therefore, as it is advised, **do not search elsewhere for the buddha** apart from the mind! The *Sūtra of the*

*Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines* accordingly says:

When the body of the Buddha made a prophetic declaration in the presence of the bodhisattva Sadāprarudita, and then vanished,<sup>675</sup> at that time there occurred to Sadāprarudita this

following thought: “Whence did this tathāgata come, and where does he reside?” Then Dharmodgata said, “Child of enlightened heritage, this tathāgata did not come from anywhere and he does not reside anywhere. Why, you may ask, is this the case? When, for example, the Tathāgata appears during the dreams of certain persons and then vanishes, does he actually come from or reside anywhere?” Sadāprarudita replied, “He does not exist. There is nothing but [a dream] induced by sleep.” Dharmodgata said, “In the same way, there is nothing apart from the mind. So it is that all things are naturally pure.”<sup>676</sup>

And also:

If the mind is realized, it is the buddha. Therefore one should well cultivate the perception that does not seek elsewhere for the buddha!

The second part [of the synopsis of the great all-gathering maṇḍala that supports the communion] concerns the accomplishment of all maṇḍalas thereby (16.2.1.2.2.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Through the unique [Samantabhadra], all  
[maṇḍalas] will be accomplished, just as when the  
sun and moon are present there will be light.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:15)***

།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཀུན་ཏུ་རབ་སྐྱོར་བས།  
།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་འགྲུབ་པར་གྱུར།

One should be well united in the maṇḍala that is  
Samanta[bhadra],  
So that all maṇḍalas will be accomplished.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**One should be well united in** and meditate on the generation and perfection stages [of meditation], with reference to **the** unique **maṇḍala that is Samanta[bhadra]**, **so that all maṇḍalas** that are diffused therefrom, without exception, **will be accomplished**, just as when the sun and moon are present, all their light rays without exception take effect.

The third part concerns the [result] untainted by the slightest defect (16.2.1.2.2.3.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Without dichotomy, there are no defects, whether  
the rituals are excessive or incomplete.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:16)***

།ཚོག་ལྷག་གསུམ་མཚན་ནའང་།  
།སྐྱོན་ཉིད་དག་སྟེ་ཉེས་པ་མེད།

Whether the rituals are excessive or incomplete,  
Flaws are themselves pure, and there is no defect.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Having thus understood the point that there should be no dichotomy of acceptance or rejection with respect to all things because they are known to be the nature of mind, one acquires mastery over the perfection stage. **Whether the intricate rituals of the generation stage are excessive or incomplete, the flaws of having degenerated in the aspects of the ritual are themselves pure, and there is no defect.** So one's accomplishment will not be obscured. As is said in the [*Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*:

The yogin who unites with pure reality  
Is thoroughly pure in the ritual activities of the  
generation stage.

Whether these are excessive or incomplete, there is no  
defect—

The amazing great accomplishment will be achieved.<sup>677</sup>

Although this is generally known in both the symbolic generation stage and the nonsymbolic perfection stage, when the mind of the yogin grasps entities and symbols, whatever that yogin meditates on, the symbolic will not be transcended; whereas whatever the yogin meditates on when the mind does not grasp symbols will be nonsymbolic. It says in the *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*:

Therefore the yogin,  
Abiding in a nonsymbolic disposition,  
Should meditate on the yoga of symbols  
And should know there is no difference  
Between the nonsymbolic and the symbolic.



A yogin of such awareness  
Achieves this, my own level.  
That one is also called a buddha.<sup>678</sup>

And also:

As long as one grasps the symbolic,  
One is a mundane being, endowed with symbols,  
But when one is without entities and symbols,  
The best will transcend the mundane,  
And their perceptual range will be the field of  
Samantabhadra.  
There will be no duality between  
Afflictive mental states and pristine cognition.<sup>679</sup>

## THE CONCLUSION [16.2.1.2.3]

The third section [of this chapter] is the conclusion [which comments on the verse]:

**[Thus were the tathāgatas] pleased by this  
meditative stability, which shines without  
obscuration.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 12:17)*

ཅེས་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པས་རྣམ་མོ་འཛི་སྤྱོད་གྱིས་མཉམ་བར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

—Through these aphorisms, [the tathāgatas] were  
pleased by the cloud of that emanational display.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Through these aphorisms** uttered in the presence of the retinue, which is pure and self-manifest,<sup>680</sup> all the tathāgatas **were pleased by** the offerings arrayed as **the cloud of that emanational display** of meditative stability, an excellent self-manifesting ornament that shines without obscuration throughout the ten directions.

## **CHAPTER ENDING**

**This completes chapter 12 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the attainment of the communion.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 12:18)***

།གསང་བའི་སླིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་ངེས་པ་ལས་ཚོགས་སྐྱབ་པའི་ལུ་སྟེ་བཅུ་  
གཉིས་པའོ།།

This completes the twelfth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Attainment of the Communion.”

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the twelfth chapter from**

**the** supremely ***Secret Nucleus*** of the emanational display of skillful means, ***Definitive with Respect to the Real*** nature of the apparitional communion, **entitled “The Attainment of the Communion,”** that is, the provisions of merit and pristine cognition according to the path.

## 13. THE NUCLEUS OF MOST SECRET PITH INSTRUCTIONS

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This chapter expounds the perfection stage of the path, including the Great Perfection of inner radiance, which is the culmination of experiential cultivation, bringing about the result of perfect buddhahood.

Having revealed the generation stage of the path of meditation, Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then enters the meditative stability that is “the cloud-like array of the nucleus of most secret commitment,” in order to reveal the perfection stage. Accordingly, all things are revealed to be spontaneously present in the primordial Great Perfection (v. 1).

There are two aspects to the exposition of the perfection stage—the first concerning the manner in which the secret truth abides in the mind of the spiritual master of the tantras (*vajrācārya*) and the second concerning the natural Great Perfection itself. This secret truth abides in the minds of the diverse spiritual teachers (v. 2), whose teaching may partake of diverse views, encompassing non-Buddhists who harbor no understanding and wrong understanding, as well as the adherents of the Hīnayāna who have partial understanding, the followers of the Mahāyāna causal vehicles whose understanding approaches completion, and the adepts of Kriyā, Caryā, Yoga, and Mahāyoga tantra who maintain distinct understandings. However, all these teachings culminate in the natural secret truth that is the *Net of Magical Emanation*. In brief, this secret truth is fully present in the syllables and sounds of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* itself (v. 3), and its concealed and hidden meanings are revealed by the *vajrācārya* (v. 4).

The following exposition of the three aspects of the natural

Great Perfection is given in the form of a brief outline and then as an extensive exegesis. The former comprises the generation stage of skillful means (v. 5), the perfection stage of discriminative awareness (v. 6), and the stage of inner radiance that is without duality (v. 7).

As for the latter, the extensive exegesis of these three stages, the outer generation stage is that in which all phenomena, psychophysical aggregates, and so forth are visualized as the maṇḍala of meditational deities (v. 8). The inner perfection stage concerns the meditations on bliss and emptiness, along with their result (vv. 9-10); while the secret stage of inner radiance concerns the Great Perfection and entails the recognition of inner radiance as the ground (v. 11), the recognition of the appearance of pristine cognition in meditative stability as the path (v. 12), and recognition of the supreme spiritual accomplishment of buddhahood as the result (v. 13).

The commentator, having already expounded the outer generation stage, at this juncture omits Longchen Rabjam's extensive and important overviews concerning the inner perfection stage and the secret stage of inner radiance, which is the Great Perfection.

Among them, the inner perfection stage includes both the path of skillful means and the path of liberation. In this context, the path of skillful means comprises the control of vital energy within the yogin's subtle body and also when in union with a yogic partner. In the former case, the practice refines the four energy centers, the seventy-two thousand energy channels, and the twenty-one thousand six hundred vital energies within the subtle body. The purpose of this training is to transform the coarse vital energy associated with past actions into vital energy of pristine cognition, within the central channel, where it transforms the energy centers into globes of light and thence into the meditational deities of the enlightened families. This practice brings about provisional results such as the supernormal cognitive powers and the conclusive result of the buddha level.

The purpose of the second kind of training, which refines the movement of vital essences when the yogin is in union with a yogic partner, is to transform afflictive mental states into the path of purification. There are four kinds of delight experienced by the yogin during this practice, and these are differentiated through the degrees to which conceptions are renounced and bliss is present, as well as by their locations within the subtle body. This generation of bliss is activated by the downward movement of the vital essences, which gives rise to the perfection of the causal paths and levels, along with the transcendent perfections, while the upward movement of vital essences in reverse gives rise to the fruitional paths and levels, along with the six supernormal cognitive powers and the major and minor marks of the buddha body. This practice results in the attainment of both supreme and common spiritual accomplishments.

In addition, there are subsidiary instructions concerning the generation of inner heat (*gtum mo*), which assists the practitioner on the path of skillful means. During the meditation on the *caṇḍāli* energy channel, which connects with the heart center of the subtle body, the syllable A, located below the navel center, is visualized as if blazing on fire, in consequence of which it melts the syllable HAM located in the crown center, thereby generating an inner heat within the body. This warmth gives rise to the pristine cognition of bliss and emptiness, which acts as an aid to the two aforementioned kinds of training.

The path of liberation includes meditative stability on the apparitional meditational deities, which transforms all conceptualization into the maṇḍala, and meditative stability on emptiness or actual reality, which integrates the practices of tranquillity (*śamatha*, *zhi gnas*) and higher insight (*vipaśyanā*, *lhag mthong*) during periods of meditation and postmeditation. As a result, both provisional and conclusive enlightened attributes are accomplished.

The secret inner radiance of the Great Perfection is then considered in three phases: First, the inner radiance of the

maṇḍala of the ground is present within the heart and crown centers of the subtle body in the form of the clusters of peaceful and wrathful deities respectively, and yet these are concealed in the form of incandescent vital essences that become fully manifested only through the generation and perfection stage practices when attained by the four kinds of awareness holder.

Second, when pristine cognition is recognized as the path through the yogin's experiential cultivation, this refers to darkness meditation during which the yogin assumes the so-called seven postures of Vairocana and experiences the various signs of inner radiance, and to daylight meditation during which he or she is absorbed in a nonreferential meditative equipoise. The fusion of these two coalesces tranquillity and higher insight, bringing about the cessation of coarse vital energy and the manifestation of the vital energy of pristine cognition, resulting in the attainment of the four kinds of awareness holder (*rig 'dzin rnam bzhi*) and the buddha level.

This manifestation of pristine cognition occurs through four successive visionary appearances (*snang ba bzhi*), each of which has its own internal and external signs. In the first, the mundane body, speech, and mind become blissful, radiant, and nonconceptual. In the second, all things become apparition-like forms. In the third, all appearances manifest naturally as maṇḍalas of deities, and in the fourth, liberation from the snare of the physical body and its appearance is achieved, along with the twenty-five fruitional realities of the buddha level. These instructions of the Great Perfection are potently combined with *bar do* instructions to effect liberation in the intermediate state after death. In brief, the atemporal maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition is obtained in a spontaneously present manner through study, reflection, and meditation (v. 14).

The text then analyzes the superiority of the natural Great Perfection over other teachings, and the worthy recipients to whom it should be given. The superiority of Atiyoga is known through the greatness of the individuals who accomplish it (v. 15) and through the greatness of the path of Atiyoga, which is

the result of all paths (v. 16), traversed by all the buddhas (v. 17), through which all yogins accomplish the conclusive result (v. 18), and which is superior to that of the causal vehicles (v. 19). In brief, there are no paths superior to this (v. 20).

The worthy recipients of this teaching should be endowed with discriminative awareness born of study, reflection, and meditation and noble in their attributes of spiritual wealth. They should not fear the profound meanings, they should have renounced evil through their virtuous and noble aspirations, and they should be steadfast in their faith. Such individuals should offer their body, speech, and mind to the spiritual teacher and the sacred teachings (v. 21). On the other hand, the Great Perfection should not be given to unworthy recipients who would misunderstand it, act erroneously, or deviate in their vows and commitments, in their practice of the generation and perfection stages, or from the accumulation of the two provisions (*tshogs gnyis*). In such cases, retributions are severe (v. 22).

THE SECOND PART [of the presentation of the generation and perfection stages of the path pertaining to the peaceful deities, see [p. 419](#)] concerns the perfection stage that engages in the essential meaning (16.2.2). This comprises: (i) the context (16.2.2.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (16.2.2.2); and (iii) the conclusion (16.2.2.3).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**[The Great Joyous One] then uttered the following aphorisms concerning the spontaneous presence of all things in the primordial Great Perfection:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:1)***



དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞིའི་སྐྱེ་དང་གསུང་དང་བྱུགས་  
རྣེ་རྗེའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་གཅིག་ཏུ་འདུས་ནས་དགྲིས་པ་ཆེན་པོས།

ཆོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡེ་ནས་རྫོགས་པ་ཆེན་པོར་ལྷན་གྲིས་གྲུབ་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་ཤིན་ཏུ་  
གསང་བའི་སྤྱིང་པོ་སྤྱིན་བཀོད་པའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛོན་ལ་སྦྱོམས་པར་ཞུགས་ནས་ཆེད་  
དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then, when all maṇḍalas of the indestructible buddha body, speech, and mind of the tathāgatas throughout the ten directions and four times had been subsumed together, the Great Joyous One became equipoised in the meditative stability that is a cloud-like array of the nucleus of the most secret commitment, whereby all things are spontaneously present in the primordial Great Perfection, and then he uttered these following aphorisms.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the generation stage of the path had been revealed, **then** in order to reveal the perfection stage, **when all maṇḍalas of indestructible buddha body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas throughout the ten directions and four times had been subsumed together**, they were displayed by **the Great Joyous One** of unsurpassed pristine cognition, Samantabhadra the teacher in whom they abide. He **became equipoised in the meditative stability that**, for the sake of supremely fortunate beings, **is a cloud-like array of the nucleus of** the real—its intrinsic nature being **the commitment, most secret** to unworthy recipients, **whereby**

**all things** of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **are spontaneously present in the primordial Great Perfection. And then he uttered these following aphorisms** concerning the genuine pith instructions.

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [16.2.2.2]**

The second, the explanation of the verses [of this chapter], comprises (i) a general presentation on the presence of this secret truth in the mind of the master of indestructible reality (*vajrācārya*) (16.2.2.2.1) and (ii) a detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection (16.2.2.2.2).

### **A GENERAL PRESENTATION ON THE PRESENCE OF THE SECRET TRUTH IN THE MIND OF THE MASTER OF INDESTRUCTIBLE REALITY [16.2.2.2.1]**

The former has three sections, of which the first concerns the recognition of that truth (16.2.2.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**There are [the vehicle of] gods and humans, the non-Buddhist systems, the great and lesser [vehicles], and the outer and inner tantras.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 13:2)*

མ་རྟོགས་པ་དང་ལོག་པར་རྟོགས།  
ཕྱོགས་རྟོགས་ཡང་དག་ཉིད་མ་རྟོགས།  
འདུལ་བ་དགོངས་པ་གསང་བ་དང་།  
རང་བཞིན་གསང་བའི་དོན་རྣམས་ནི།

There are those of no understanding,  
And those of wrong understanding,  
Those with partial understanding,  
Those who have not [quite] understood genuine reality,  
And those endowed with discipline, enlightened  
intention, secrecy,  
And the naturally secret truth.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**There are first those of no understanding** of the genuine truth: These are ordinary folk who do not entertain philosophical systems but who follow the basic vehicles of gods and humans (*sor bzhag lha mi'i theg pa*) through which rebirth in exalted realms (*sugati, bde 'gro*) is attained by striving after a modicum of excellence. Their purpose is to be propelled into rebirth among the gods and humans of the world system of desire through the practice of the ten virtuous actions and to attain the higher formless realms through meditative concentration. In this regard, there is a passage in the Madhyamaka teachings that begins:

The correct view for a mundane being . . . <sup>681</sup>  
There are some who hold [those of no understanding] to include both the apathetic (*phyal ba*) and the materialists (*rgyang 'phen pa*), but that would imply an improper temporal sequence [of progression], and it does not even differentiate

the vehicles. Indeed, in the previous section on the five vehicles [see ch. 3], the vehicle of gods and humans has been mentioned. This is also designated as the basic vehicle (*sor bzhag theg pa*) because it partakes of the truth contained in all the vehicles that there are. By contrast, the apathetic and the materialists are unconnected with it because they are included among the philosophical extremists who have erroneous understanding.<sup>682</sup>

Then there are **those of wrong understanding**, divorced from the genuine truth, who establish extremist standpoints or “fords.” Although these have inconceivable subdivisions, according to the enumeration of their wrong views, when subsumed they are known as the five schools of philosophical extremists, comprising four schools that adopt an eternalist view (*rtag par lta ba sde bzhi*) and one that adopts a nihilist view (*chad par lta ba*).

Among them, the four eternalist schools are the Nyayāyika (*rig pa can*), which holds Īśvara to be eternal; the Vaiṣṇava (*khyab ’jug pa*), which holds Viṣṇu to be eternal; the Sāṃkhya (*grangs can pa*), which holds primal matter (*pradhāna, gtso bo*) to be eternal; and the Vaiśeṣika (*bye brag pa*), which holds atomic particles to be eternal. These are the followers of the sages Kapila, Kaṇāda, Akṣapāda, and Ulūka. Those who hold a nihilist view are the Lokāyata materialists (*rgyang ’phen pa*) or Carvāka hedonists (*tshul rol mdzes pa*), or else they include the so-called Digambara Jains (*nam mkha’i gos can*). The latter [apart from the Digambara] hold Bṛhaspati as their deity.<sup>683</sup>

All of them propound the self. Among them, the eternalist views uphold a single, independent, and permanent self or primal matter, asserting that its nature empowers and pervades the elements while abiding in the hearts of all sentient beings. They also hold that there are eternal deities—Īśvara, Viṣṇu, and so forth—who may cast beings into exalted realms or into evil existences. The nihilists, however, hold that the self comes into being, having emerged suddenly within the mother’s womb, and that at the time of death, the continuity of the self is interrupted. Thus they are nihilistic with respect

both to the past and the future. Because they hold that there are no past or future lives, and that there is neither liberation nor omniscience, they are called nihilistic extremists (*mur thug pa*) or Lokāyataka materialists. When these are all subsumed together, they are gathered into the two categories of the eternalists and the nihilists.

Then there are **those with partial understanding** of the genuine reality, who comprise both the pious attendants and the hermit buddhas. This is because they respectively understand one part and one and a half parts of what is implied by selflessness, and because they attain liberation from cyclic existence.<sup>684</sup>

The pious attendants, when classified, comprise the four basic orders [of the Vinaya], which are subdivided into eighteen.<sup>685</sup> Among them, the Mūlasarvāstivāda order had seven subdivisions, namely, the Kāśyapīya, Mahīśāsaka, Dharmagupta, Bahuśrutīya, Tāmrasatīya, Vibhājyavādin, and the basic subdivision or Sarvāstivādin. These are the lineages derived from the students of Rāhulabhadra, who was the son of the Transcendent Lord [Śākyamuni] and belonged to the ruling class (*kṣatriya*, *rgyal rigs*). They spoke in Sanskrit, and their robes had between twenty-five and twenty-nine patches, with the motifs of the blue lotus (*utpala*), the lotus (*padma*), and the gemstone (*ratna*).<sup>686</sup>

The Mahāsaṃghika order had five subdivisions, namely, the Pūrvaśāila, Haimavata, Prajñāptivādin, Lokottaravādin, and the basic subdivision [Uttaraśāila]. These were the lineages derived from the students of the elder Mahākāśyapa, who belonged to the priestly class (*brāhmaṇa*). They spoke in Prakrit languages, and their robes had between twenty-three and twenty-nine patches with the motifs of the *svāstika* and the glorious heart orb (*śrīvatsa*).<sup>687</sup>

The Sthavira order had three subdivisions, namely, the Jetavanīya, Abhayagirivādin, and Mahāvihāravādin. These are the lineages derived from the students of the sublime renunciant Mahākāṭyāyana, who belonged to the bamboo-craftsman caste [of the mercantile class] (*vaiśya*). They spoke

in the Apabhramśa language, and their robes had between twenty-one and twenty-nine patches with the motif of the conch shell.<sup>688</sup>

The Sammitīya order had three subdivisions, namely, the Kaurukullika, Āvantaka, and Vatsīputrīya. These were the lineages derived from the students of the sublime renunciant Upāli, who belonged to the barber caste [of the working class] (*śūdra*). They spoke in the Paisācika language, and their robes had the same number of patches as those of the Sthaviras.<sup>689</sup>

All these [pious attendants] actualize their result by realizing that the individual self (*gang zag gi bdag*), the ego and its possessiveness, do not exist apart from the psychophysical aggregates.

The hermit buddhas, when classified, are of three types, namely, those who practice in a large assembly, those who do so in a small assembly, and those who do so alone like a [solitary] rhinoceros. Their view encompasses one and a half [parts of what is implied by selflessness] because they understand the selflessness of the individual (*pudgalanairātmya, gang zag gi bdag med*) and they also realize that external objects are without inherent existence. To accomplish enlightenment for themselves in their final rebirth, without actually referring to a spiritual teacher, they realize that the reality of dependent origination arises of its own accord, and then they are liberated. They teach the [sacred] doctrine by way of communicative symbols but do not divulge it through speech.<sup>690</sup>

Furthermore, **there are those who have not** absolutely **understood** the **genuine reality**—the truth of the abiding nature. These are the adherents of the causal vehicles of defining characteristics, who hold that sentient beings, by acquiring the two provisions, which are the causal basis, accomplish their desired result of buddhahood over many countless aeons.

When classified, they comprise both the adherents of the Madhyamaka (*dbu ma*) and of the Mind Only (*sems tsam*) schools.<sup>691</sup> Among them, the latter believe that the phenomena

of the external world are the mind, and this mind is also equated with pristine cognition, intrinsic awareness, where there is no subject-object dichotomy. They include the Sākāravādin (*rnam bden pa*) and Nirākāravādin (*rnam rdzun pa*) schools, who respectively claim that this mind has veridical and false status because they hold it ultimately to be either veridical or false.<sup>692</sup> It says in Avalokitavrata's *Commentary on Madhyamaka* [i.e., his *Commentary on the Lamp of Discriminative Awareness*]:

Having admitted that the entities that diversely appear are their own mind, those who ultimately equate this mind with the pristine cognition of particularizing intrinsic awareness, where there is ultimately no duality of subject and object, must refute both aspects [of selfhood], either by propounding [the mind] as true or as false.<sup>693</sup>

There are also two schools of Madhyamaka, among which the Svātantrika [who espouse independent reasoning] hold that diverse appearances have a relative existence, in the manner of a magical display, but that ultimately they are of a sky-like nonexisting nature. The adherents of Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka hold that at all times these [appearances] are without inherent existence. They may appear corresponding to the eight similes of apparition, but they are nonexistent in any respect and beyond the stains of the four extremes because they are free from all extremes of conceptual elaboration.<sup>694</sup>

In addition, there are the Kriyātantra and Caryātantra (*bya spyod kyī rgyud*), which emphasize cleanliness and austerities and which therefore **discipline** the misconduct of body, speech, and mind.<sup>695</sup>

When [these tantras] are classified, there are three categories, namely, those in which the deity is attained dependent simply upon the cultivation of an enlightened attitude, those in which the deity is attained dependent simply on austerities and purificatory fasting, and those in which the deity is attained dependent simply on the permissory blessings that focus on awareness (*rig gtad rjes snang*). The

commencement of the practice should coincide with auspicious planets and stars and the [twenty-four] meteorological phases of the year (*dus tshigs*) and continue until liberation is attained.

There are also those endowed with **enlightened intention** who adhere to Yogatantra. The Tibetan term *dgongs pa*, corresponding to the Sanskrit *abhiprāya*, means the “enlightened intention of mind.” Here, the deity is attained chiefly through the meditative stability of the one-pointed mind.<sup>696</sup> There is, by the way, no tradition in which the deity may be attained without receiving empowerment.

There are those that clearly reveal the **secrecy** of the buddha body, speech, and mind, namely, the Mahāyoga tantras. These are secret because they should not be revealed in the context of the lower vehicles where beings have an intelligence that is fixated on entities. When classified, they comprise the father tantras, which emphasize the generation stage [of meditation]; the mother tantras, which emphasize the perfection stage; and the nondual tantras, which emphasize the coalescence [of the two stages].<sup>697</sup>

And then there is **the marvelous naturally secret truth** that is primordial and spontaneously present. This is the great *Net of Magical Emanation*, where mind and pristine cognition are revealed to be self-manifest in accordance with the Great Perfection. It is secret on account of its essential nature, natural expression, and extraordinary skillful means, which are not within the perceptual range of all beings. When classified, it comprises (i) the Great Perfection of the coalescence of the generation and perfection stages, which reveals mind and pristine cognition to be without duality; (ii) the Great Perfection of the primordial liberation according to the mental and spatial [classes], which emphasize the [nature of] mind; and (iii) the Great Perfection of the reality of inner radiance, which emphasizes pristine cognition.<sup>698</sup> So it is that the modalities of the different vehicles encompass the truth that is to be understood.



The second section [of the general presentation of the presence of the secret truth in the mind of the *vajrācārya*] reveals the disposition in which this truth abides (16.2.2.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The points of the texts are disclosed by compounding syllables, words, and phrases.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:3)***

ཡི་གེ་སྐྱབ་བྱས་མིང་ཚོགས་ལ།  
བརྟེན་པའི་ཚོག་གིས་རབ་མཚན་ཏེ།

Dependent on the sounds of syllables, forming  
designated nominal clusters,  
[Syntactically bound] phrases [are formed],  
Through which [the meanings] are well illustrated.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The points conveyed in these vehicles are preserved in the texts that form their verbal expression. Such texts are comprised **of** minute **syllables**, their vocalic and consonantal **sounds forming** conventionally **designated** words, such as the noun *ama*—indicating one’s own “mother,” which combines the vowel *a* and the consonant *ma*. [Syntactically bound] **phrases** are then formed, **dependent on** the formation of phrases from all the manifold **nominal clusters**,<sup>699</sup> and **through** these, the versified *ślokas*, chapters, and the full corpus of the different treatises or tantras are given form. In

this way, the respective meanings that are expressed through different texts **are well illustrated.**

The third section [of the general presentation on the presence of the secret truth in the mind of the *vajrācārya*] concerns the one by whom this truth is revealed without error (16.2.2.2.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**The concealed and hidden points are retained in the mind of the spiritual teacher who reveals them.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:4)***

ཁོང་ནས་གཟ་སྤྲོད་དོན་འབྱེད་པ།  
སྟོན་པ་དོ་ཇི་ལྟར་ལ་གནས།

The concealed and hidden points  
Extracted from within [these texts]  
Are retained in the mind of the vajra [master] who  
reveals them.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Different shades of meaning are respectively contained **within** these individual texts and their words. In particular, there are **concealed** meanings contained within the different words of this natural *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* which are naturally hard to understand, including [the view] that all things are primordial buddhahood; **and** there are also **points** that are **hidden** by means of symbolic language and so forth because the profound secrets, which it is improper to proclaim within range of ordinary folk, are not to be comprehended by those who lack good fortune. These may be exemplified in the aforementioned verse [ch. 12:7], which begins:

By the seals of “vowels” and “consonants”. . .<sup>700</sup>

Since such points, manifestly **extracted from** the texts, **are retained in the mind of** the **vajra** master **who reveals** the meanings of the tantra incontrovertibly, the teacher is a unique resource.<sup>701</sup>

## **THE DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE MEANING OF THE NATURAL GREAT PERFECTION [16.2.2.2.2]**

The latter part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter] is the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection. It comprises (i) a presentation of the actual profound meaning of the nucleus (16.2.2.2.2.1); (ii) its

superiority over other [teachings] (16.2.2.2.2); and (iii) a teaching concerning the worthy recipients to whom it should be given (16.2.2.2.2.3).

## **A PRESENTATION OF THE ACTUAL PROFOUND MEANING OF THE NUCLEUS [16.2.2.2.1]**

The first of these comprises (i) a brief introduction (16.2.2.2.1.1); (ii) an extensive exegesis (16.2.2.2.1.2); and (iii) a synopsis (16.2.2.2.1.3).

### **THE BRIEF INTRODUCTION [16.2.2.2.1.1]**

The first of these [the brief introduction] is also threefold, and its first subsection concerns the generation stage of skillful means (16.2.2.2.1.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Endowed [with the primordial maṇḍala], one should meditate on it as [the maṇḍala] possessed in the manner in which gold ore is smelted and refined.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:5)***

།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལྡན་པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱིས།  
།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལ་ནི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བསྐྱོལ།

Through the maṇḍala endowed with the maṇḍala,  
One should meditate on the maṇḍala as a maṇḍala.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

All things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa subsumed in the psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields attain buddhahood primordially in the maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind, and they are naturally pure. Apart from that, buddhahood is not subsequently attained through the path by one who has not previously attained buddhahood. Abiding primordially in that way, all living beings partake of the intrinsic nature that is effortlessly **endowed with the maṇḍala** of the spontaneous ground. Realizing this, **through the maṇḍala** of meditative stability, **one should** visualize and **meditate on the** primordially present **maṇḍala, as a maṇḍala** that is known to be present.

Although the intrinsic nature of all things is such, there is no advantage in it merely being so. For it is the ground in which they are present as such, and this is yet to be attained through the path, just as gold and silver are present in gold and silver ore but invisible if they are not smelted and refined, and just as a white conch shell may be present but appear yellow to one afflicted with bile disorder until [the disease] has been treated, so that it is essential to treat the bile disorder.

The second subsection [of the brief introduction] concerns the perfection stage of discriminative awareness (16.2.2.2.1.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The supreme maṇḍala of buddha mind is that in which bliss and radiance are perceived, without being renounced.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 13:6)**

།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལས་བྱུང་བའི།  
།ཐུགས་གྱི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མཚོག།

The maṇḍala emerges from the maṇḍala.  
This is the maṇḍala of buddha mind,  
Supreme among maṇḍalas.

**Interlinear Commentary**

**The maṇḍala** of bliss, radiance, and nonconceptualization **emerges from the maṇḍala** that sustains through skillful means the perception of the amalgam of ideation as afflictive mental states. Because these [afflictive mental states] partake of the intrinsic nature of purity, right where they are, without being renounced, **this is called the maṇḍala of buddha mind, supreme among all maṇḍalas.**

The third subsection [of the brief introduction] concerns the stage of inner radiance where these [generation and perfection stages] are without duality (16.2.2.2.2.1.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**The secret buddha body and pristine cognition within the heart center [of the subtle body] is the expanse in which [all] maṇḍalas [emerge].**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 13:7)**

།གསང་བའི་ཐིག་ལེ་དགྱི་ལ་འཁོར་དབྱིངས།

The secret vital essence is the expanse  
In which the maṇḍalas [emerge].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Within the doctrinal wheel of the heart center and so forth [within the subtle body of the yogin], there is **the** amazing **secret vital essence** that abides as the primordial and spontaneous nature of buddha body and pristine cognition. When it is experientially cultivated through certain conditions—the pith instructions of the spiritual teacher—it **is** then [identified with] **the expanse in which** all **the maṇḍalas** of buddha body, speech, and mind—the inexhaustible wheels of adornment—emerge. This appears to have been misunderstood by the ordinary scholars of the *Net of Magical Emanation* of the past because in this tantra it is extremely hidden and concealed.<sup>702</sup>

## **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS [16.2.2.2.1.2]**

The second part [of the description of the actual profound meaning of the nucleus] is the extensive exegesis, which itself comprises (i) the outer generation stage (16.2.2.2.1.2.1); (ii) the inner perfection stage (16.2.2.2.1.2.2); and (iii) the secret stage of inner radiance (16.2.2.2.1.2.3).

## **THE OUTER GENERATION STAGE [16.2.2.2.1.2.1]**

The first of these also has two parts, among which the first concerns the determination [of the generation stage] by means of the view (16.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The material elements, the enlightened families,  
The awareness, the sense organs, and the sense  
objects  
Are [inherently] pure as the deities—in emptiness.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:8a)***

|འབྲུང་བ་ཤེས་རབ་རིགས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ།  
|ཆེན་པོ་རིགས་ཀྱི་དེ་བཞིན་ཏེ།  
|བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་ནི་དོ་རྗེའི་ཚོགས།  
|དབང་པོ་ཡུལ་དུས་རིག་པ་རྣམས།  
|ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ལ།

The material elements [abide as] the female buddhas  
Of the enlightened families,  
Embodying discriminative awareness.  
The great [psychophysical aggregates] are the actual  
truth  
Of [the male buddhas of] the enlightened families.  
The enlightened mind is the communion of  
indestructible reality.  
The sense organs, objects, times, and modes of  
awareness  
[All are present within] the maṇḍala of All-Positive  
[Samantabhadra].



## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The external reflections (*gzugs brnyan*), which manifest as **the five material elements**, are [identified with] the reality that appears but is nonexistent. This is the naturally pure abiding nature, Prajñāpāramitā, **embodying discriminative awareness**, who gives visible form to emptiness.<sup>703</sup> She [naturally] abides as **the female buddhas** or the emanational display **of reality—the enlightened families** originally without inherent existence. This means that the appearances of reality (*chos can*) abide indivisibly in the emptiness of actual reality (*chos nyid*). It says accordingly in the *Supreme Tantra of Clear Expression*:

Through the intrinsic nature of diverse phenomena,  
Emptiness is expressed as visual forms.<sup>704</sup>

And in the *Heart Sūtra of Discriminative Awareness*:

Emptiness is physical forms.<sup>705</sup>

**The** five psychophysical aggregates, signified by the term “**great elements**,” **are the actual truth** of the five male buddhas **of the enlightened families**—the intrinsic nature of empty forms, similar to reflections in a mirror.

In this regard, the actual elements are said to be subsumed within the inner aggregates—their natures respectively indicating solidity, liquidity, warmth, lightness combined with motility, and spaciousness. The corresponding external elements comprise the so-called elemental transformations or elemental forms [earth, water, fire, wind, and space]. The inner aspects outwardly appear—in the manner of a face and its reflection in a mirror. Thus, the apparent reality (*chos can*) of the five psychophysical aggregates, which are empty of inherent existence, is therefore the actual reality (*chos nyid*), which appears but is without independent existence. As [the same text] continues:

Physical forms are empty.<sup>706</sup>  
And in the *Madhyamaka*:

That which is the intrinsic nature of physical forms is  
said to be emptiness.<sup>707</sup>

**The** awareness that is **enlightened mind**—the intrinsic nature without ground or basis which does not primordially conceive of conceptual objects—**is** [identified with] **the communion** of the male-female Samantabhadra, the intrinsic nature **of indestructible reality**. This indescribable expanse of awareness, where radiance and emptiness are without duality, is designated as the communion of male-female Samantabhadra because it is the source of all the innumerable pristine cognitions.

**The sense organs** such as the eyes, the sense **objects** such as visual forms, the **times** including the past, **and** the **modes of awareness** including visual consciousness are [inherently] pure as the male bodhisattvas, the female bodhisattvas, and the gatekeepers, and they primordially abide as **the maṇḍala of reality**, which is that of [Samantabhadra], without resorting to proof or elimination. This means that their intrinsic nature is indeed **positive** (*bzang po*) because they appear but are in **all** (*kun tu*) respects without inherent existence, and that the essential nature of their diverse phenomena is of a single savor in emptiness. To understand phenomena in this manner is the [genuine] view.<sup>708</sup> As is said in the *Madhyamaka*:

A single entity has the essential nature of all entities.

Whoever sees the actual truth of one single entity

Perceives all entities, just as they are.<sup>709</sup>

And in the *Intermediate Mother*:

If one thing is known, this is said to be omniscience, for it  
is an aspect of the quiescent reality.<sup>710</sup>

The second part [of the outer generation stage] concerns the experiential cultivation [of this view] through meditation

(16.2.2.2.1.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The five pristine cognitions are [present in the nonduality of] objects and awareness, free from conceptual elaboration and without grasping.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:8b)***

།བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོ་ལྷག་པ་ཡི།  
།སྤྱུགས་ཀྱི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ལྷན་བལྟ་ཞིང་།

One should behold that superior Supreme Identity  
By means of the five pristine cognitions of buddha mind.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once it is known that all things of phenomenal appearance are from this very moment present in the maṇḍala of Samantabhadra, without inherent existence, one should meditate on that disposition. Beginners of little acumen who have clearly meditated in accordance with the generation stage should gradually become equipoised in this nonreferential state. On the other hand, those who have either experienced the spaciousness [of reality] or possess supreme acumen should regard the nature of any appearances and thoughts that arise as primordially empty and without basis; or else they should become equipoised in the disposition of that generation stage, [in which appearances] are without independent existence, like a reflection. At that time, the essential nature of mind is free from conceptual elaborations, without the apprehension of and fixation upon entities or signs. This is **the**

**superior** profound enlightened intention of the male and female Samantabhadra, the **Supreme Identity. One should behold** and completely master the disposition of that reality **by means of the five pristine cognitions of buddha mind**, beginning with the mirrorlike one.

Now, the mirrorlike pristine cognition refers to the unceasing appearance of the sensa or forms of external objects. The pristine cognition of reality's expanse refers to the emptiness that is their essential nature. The pristine cognition of sameness refers to the absence of subjective apprehension in that respect. The pristine cognition of discernment refers to their particular appearances as visual forms, sounds, and so forth, and the pristine cognition of accomplishment refers to liberation from the afflictive mental states of refutation, proof, and so forth. These five pristine cognitions also denote the five poisons, which, through mere recognition at the time of their arising, are inherently pure without being renounced.

Moreover, when the mind enters into one-pointed meditative equipoise, the pristine cognition of reality's expanse denotes the essential nature or emptiness. The mirrorlike pristine cognition is the unimpeded radiance and clarity of awareness. The pristine cognition of sameness is the absence of dualistic apprehension. The pristine cognition of discernment is the unimpeded appearance of objects, and the pristine cognition of accomplishment is liberation from the subject-object dichotomy.

At this juncture, it is revealed that one should rest in the disposition of<sup>711</sup> that reality which accords with the generation stage, but it is not the generation stage itself that is being described. There are some who apply this [teaching] to the maṇḍala of the deities in the context of the generation stage, but they are mistaken and have not discerned so much as a part of [this present exegesis].<sup>712</sup>

## **THE INNER PERFECTION STAGE [16.2.2.2.1.2.2]**

The second part [of the extensive exegesis] concerns the inner perfection stage.<sup>713</sup> It has two sections, of which the first concerns the offerings of bliss (16.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Offerings are made to the deities within the maṇḍala of the pudendum and within the body and to [the nature of] mind, which is ecstatic.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:9)***

།སྒྲིང་པོ་ཐིག་ལེ་མཉམ་སྦྱར་བས།  
།བདེ་བའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྩལ་མོ་ཡིས།  
།ཡེ་ཤེས་དགེས་ལ་མཚོད་པ་འབྲུལ།

Through the display of the pristine cognition of bliss  
When the essential generative essences are united,  
Offerings are presented to ecstatic pristine cognition.

***Interlinear Commentary***

The way of meditating on the meaning of bliss and emptiness is as follows: **Through the** supremely secret emanational **display of the pristine cognition of bliss** and emptiness, which is obtained **when the essential generative essences**, comprising the white and red pure essences of the male and female, intermingle and **are united** at the tip of the vajra and of the lotus, offerings are made to the deities who have been invited into the maṇḍala of the pudendum. Then, when these

[essences] are inducted upward [within the central channel of the subtle body] by means of vital energy, **offerings** of nondual bliss and emptiness **are presented to** the energy channels of the four centers, **to** the maṇḍalas of the buddhas that naturally abide throughout the body, and to the nature of one's own mind, which becomes utterly **ecstatic** owing to the **pristine cognition** of supreme bliss.

The second section [of the inner perfection stage] concerns the result of this [practice] (16.2.2.2.1.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The result is that the eight [common] accomplishments, the buddha body of perfect resource, and the buddha body of reality will be attained.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:10)***

།ཟག་པ་མེད་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་གྱིས།  
།ཡི་ཤེས་སྣ་མ་རང་སྣང་བ།  
།རོལ་མོའི་དྲིལ་འཁོར་མཐའ་ཡས་མཚོག།

Through that merit, free from contamination,  
[There will be obtained] the infinite and supreme  
Maṇḍala of the emanational display,  
Which manifests in and of itself as a magical display of  
pristine cognition.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Through the merit** of these offerings that have been made, **free from contamination**, the three provisional awareness holders and the eight great accomplishments are obtained, and conclusively there will be obtained the field of the awareness holder of spontaneous presence, comprising **the emanational display** of the spontaneous and immeasurable Bounteous Array, rare and precious by nature, **which manifests buddhahood in and of itself as a magical display of pristine cognition**. This is **the infinite**<sup>714</sup> **maṇḍala** of the five enlightened families—perfection in the **supreme** field of the buddha body of actual reality, the ground of Samantabhadra.<sup>715</sup>

## **THE SECRET STAGE OF INNER RADIANCE [16.2.2.2.1.2.3]**

The third part [of the extensive exegesis] concerns the secret stage of inner radiance.<sup>716</sup> It has three sections, of which the first concerns the recognition of the nature of the ground that is inner radiance (16.2.2.2.1.2.3.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The vital essence of the heart center [within the subtle body] is Akanīṣṭha—the essential nature of all the conquerors.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:11)***

།གསང་བའི་ཐིག་ལེ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

།དེ་ནི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་དངོས།

The secret vital essence is the expanse of actual truth.  
This is the actuality of all the buddhas.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition, which is **the secret vital essence** of inner radiance, abiding in the four energy centers and especially in the heart center [of the subtle body], **is the expanse of reality—the actual truth** which is spontaneously present. Naturally abiding in the form of Akanīṣṭha, the Bounteous Array, **this is** spontaneously present as **the actuality of all the primordial buddhas**. So it is that the three buddha bodies are said to abide within oneself. Among them, this [secret vital essence] functions as the basis for the manifest appearance of the buddha body of perfect resource and the buddha body of emanation.

The second section [of the secret stage of inner radiance] concerns the recognition of the visionary appearances of pristine cognition that accord with the path (16.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Through the visionary appearances, [the buddhas]  
are perceived face to face, enlightened attributes  
and perfect [resources emerge], and [sentient  
beings] are trained by the buddha body of form.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:12-13)***



|ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞིར་མངོན་རྫོགས་པའི།  
|སྐྱུ་གསུང་ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་སྤྱགས།  
|མ་ལུས་བདག་ཉིད་ཞལ་མཐོང་བ།

|དབང་སྐྱུར་མཚོག་ཉིད་དམ་པ་ཡིན།  
|དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལ་གནས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཉིད།  
|རྫོགས་པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལྷན་གྲིས་གྲུབ།  
|སྐྱུ་དུ་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་ཐོགས།  
|རྫོགས་པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མཉམ་སྦྱོར་བས།  
|སྤྱགས་རྗེའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཡོངས་གྲིས་འབྱུང།  
|ཕྱོགས་དུས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་འདུལ་བའི་མགོན།  
|སྐྱུ་མའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་སྦྱོལ་བ་ཡི།  
|བྱ་བྱེད་མེད་པར་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་སྦྱོད།

The identity of the body, speech, attributes, activities,  
and mind,  
Manifestly perfect in the ten directions and four times  
Without exception, is perceived face to face.  
Abiding in the maṇḍala, the maṇḍala itself  
Is spontaneously present in the maṇḍala of the  
perfection [stage],  
And all maṇḍalas without exception are encountered as  
ornaments.  
Through the union of the perfect maṇḍala,  
The maṇḍalas of compassionate spirituality entirely  
emerge.  
[One becomes] a protector who trains the maṇḍalas of

space and time,  
And by [deeds] that liberate the illusory maṇḍalas  
One will engage with the maṇḍala  
Where object and subject are without existence.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Through meditation on this maṇḍala, the objective visionary appearances of meditative stability are perceived as the natural expression of the ten signs [of inner radiance],<sup>717</sup> including light and vital essences. **The identity** of all the maṇḍalas **of the body, speech, attributes, activities, and mind** of all the buddhas **without exception**, who have attained **manifestly perfect buddhahood in the ten directions and four times**, **is then perceived face to face**. As is said in the *Extensive [Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters]*:

When the truth of signlessness is perceived,

The maṇḍalas of all the buddhas are perceived.<sup>718</sup>

It is explained that when one thing is seen all things are seen and that conclusive buddhahood is the body of actual reality, and it is said that that one who has experienced the uncreated truth will perceive the face of the buddhas. Accordingly, this mastery through meditative stability of naturally pure buddhahood, the nature of mind, is most sacred and supreme of all because it is the meditation on the conclusive truth of abiding nature. As is said in the *Tantra of Genuine Pristine Cognition*:

The supreme meditative stability,

Unwavering in its disposition,

Is the nucleus of all things.<sup>719</sup>

When one meditates in this way, by **abiding in the maṇḍala** of intrinsic nature and the maṇḍala generated through meditative stability, one meditates on **the maṇḍala** of self-manifesting inner radiance. This **itself is spontaneously**

**present in the maṇḍala of** great pristine cognition—the **perfection** stage of discriminative awareness. So it is that increasingly higher attributes of the path are perfectly actualized.

In particular, when this self-manifesting [inner radiance] is transformed into the field of the five enlightened families, in all outer [phenomena] and the inner centers of the energy channels [within the subtle body], **all maṇḍalas** of the individual deities **without exception are encountered as ornaments** of awareness, the intrinsic nature of pristine cognition, and these are embellished with one thousand enlightened attributes, and so forth. Then, when all subjective apprehension of them has ceased, the intrinsic nature of the levels and paths culminates in the primordially pure cessation of [cyclic existence in] actual reality (*chos nyid zad pa*).<sup>720</sup>

[Third, (16.2.2.2.1.2.3.3)]<sup>721</sup> the result is that, **through the nondual union of the maṇḍala of perfect** resource in the maṇḍala of the buddha body of actual reality, **the emanational maṇḍalas of compassionate spirituality entirely emerge** without exception in a great spontaneous presence. By the force of that [experience], one becomes **a protector who trains the maṇḍalas of** the six realms within the ten directions of **space and** the four **times**, without exception. One assumes the nature of the six sages and so forth, **and by the deeds of excellent enlightened activity that liberate all the illusory maṇḍalas** of sentient beings without exception from the vast ocean of cyclic existence, one appears to train each according to his or her needs. However, from the very moment when one assumes that appearance, the mind with individual characteristics, which is the **object** to be liberated, **and** the buddha bodies of emanation—the **subject** bringing about this liberation—are all **without true existence**. So it is that **one will** be able to **engage with the maṇḍala where** the training that occurs and the beings to be trained resemble a reflection or a phantom emanation. Accordingly, it also says in the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation*:

Sentient beings are magical forms.

Enlightenment too is like magic.  
For example, when certain magicians  
Cast spells on pots and so forth,  
If their practical experience is intensified,  
Those charming forms may appear to minds that  
    apprehend them  
In the form of four-legged animals and the like.  
Similarly, the mind that partakes of the provisions  
Derived from merit and pristine cognition

Manifests the unsurpassed enlightenment  
Within the thoughts of sentient beings.<sup>722</sup>

## THE SYNOPSIS [16.2.2.2.1.3]

The third part [of the description of the actual profound meaning of the nucleus] is the synopsis [which comments on the verse]:

**Through understanding and meditation, pristine cognition becomes present, along with enlightened activities.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 13:14)*

ལེ་ཤེས་རྫོགས་པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལ།  
ཤོས་བསམ་སྒྲུབ་པའི་མཉམ་སྦྲུང་གྲིས།

རང་བྱུང་ཀུན་དོམས་ལྷན་གྲིས་གྲུབ།  
འདི་ནི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཐམས་ཅད་གྲིས།  
འདའ་བར་མི་མཛད་དམ་ཚོག་མཚོག།

In the maṇḍala that is perfect in pristine cognition,  
Through union with study, reflection, and meditation,  
The self-originated [pristine cognition],  
Satisfying all, will be spontaneously present.

This is the supreme commitment  
From which all the buddhas do not stray.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

All things abide **in the maṇḍala that is perfect in** primordial buddha body and **pristine cognition**. **Study** enables one to understand this, **reflection** engages mindfully with its meaning, **and** the act of **meditation** directly realizes it. The intrinsic nature of this [meditation] is the **union** of the generation stage of skillful means and the perfection stage of discriminative awareness. As the result of one's having practiced accordingly, **the self-originated** pristine cognition **will be** obtained in a **spontaneously present** manner, along with the enlightened activities that **satisfy all** through great compassionate spirituality for the sake of those to be trained.

**This** excellent [meditation on inner radiance] has been assumed by **all the buddhas** as the unfailing doctrine. It **is** revealed as **the supreme commitment** that does **not stray from** the intrinsic nature, according to which fruitional buddhahood will be attained through meditation on the generation and perfection stages of the path without duality.

## **THE SUPERIORITY OF THE NATURAL GREAT PERFECTION OVER OTHER TEACHINGS [16.2.2.2.2]**

The second part [of the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection, see [p. 497](#)] concerns its superiority over other [teachings].<sup>723</sup> This has three sections, of which [the first] concerns the greatness of its individual practitioners (*sādhaka, sgrub pa po*) (16.2.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the

verse:]

**Those who aspire toward this [goal] are deemed the close heirs of all the conquerors, throughout space and time.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:15)***

།གང་ཞིག་འདི་ལ་མོས་གུར་པ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་དྲུག་ཀྱི་ལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས།  
།ཕྱོགས་དུས་ཀུན་ནས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ།  
།དྲུག་ཀྱི་ལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་བསྐྱེན་པ་ཡི།  
།ཉེ་བའི་སྐྱས་སུ་དགོངས་པར་འགྱུར།

One who has aspired toward this  
Is deemed by all the maṇḍalas of buddhas to be a close heir,  
Who will serve all maṇḍalas without exception  
Throughout space and time, in all their aspects.

***Interlinear Commentary***

The yogin **who has** merely **aspired toward this** vehicle **is deemed by all the maṇḍalas of** all the **buddhas** of the ten directions **to be a close heir** to this marvelous secret [inheritance]—its intrinsic nature being that **all maṇḍalas** of most secret meaning, **without exception, throughout space and time,** wherever they reside and **in all their aspects, will be served** and swiftly attained in the mind. Just as, for

example, a universal monarch may have a thousand heirs but hold as his genuine heir the one with the appropriate defining characteristics, so those pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas who abide in the causal [vehicle] are not close heirs because it is not within their perceptual range to hear the *Secret Nucleus* and so forth, which is the natural enlightened intention of the buddhas.<sup>724</sup>

The second section [of the superiority of the Great Perfection] concerns the greatness of its path of means for attainment (16.2.2.2.2.2).

This has four parts, the first of which concerns its greatness because it is the result of all paths (16.2.2.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**This is the result attained by those who have refined  
all vehicles, over aeons equal to the number of  
atoms in the [buddha] fields.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:16)***

།བསྐྱེལ་པ་ཞིང་གི་རྩལ་སྒྲིང་དུ།  
།ཤིན་ཏུ་སྐྱུངས་ལ་རབ་གནས་ཤིང་།  
།དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་བསྐྱེན་པ་ཡི།  
།འབྲས་བུ་གསང་ཆེན་འདི་ཡིན་ཏེ།

This is the most secret result,  
Excellent refined and established over aeons  
Equal to the number of atoms in the [buddha] fields,  
And toward which the ritual service of all maṇḍalas  
Without exception should be performed.



## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This** vehicle of Atiyoga **is the most secret result** in which one must engage, having **excellently refined and** become **established** in the diverse causal vehicles **over aeons** of time **equal to the number of atoms in the buddha fields, and toward which** one must strive so that **the ritual service** and attainment **of all maṇḍalas**, outer and inner, **without exception should be performed** in their entirety, in accordance with the vehicle of secret mantra. This is because all of them depend upon this path for the attainment of buddhahood.

The second part [of the greatness of its path of means for attainment] reveals that this is the track along which all conquerors have passed (16.2.2.2.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**All the conquerors of the three times have mastered this [path] and perfected the five buddha bodies.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:17)***

།འཇིག་རྟེན་རྣམས་གི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་ན།  
།འདས་དང་ད་ལྟར་བྱུང་བ་ཡི།  
།སྐུ་ལ་བའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་པ།  
།བརྟེན་ནས་སྐུ་ལྔ་ལྟན་གྱིས་རྫོགས།

In the ten directions of the six realms

IN THE TEN DIRECTIONS OF THE SIX REALMS,  
All maṇḍalas without exception of the conquerors  
Of the past, present, and future  
Have mastered this [path] and then  
Spontaneously perfected the five buddha bodies.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Formerly, **in the ten directions of the six realms**, including those that are lateral, upward facing, and downward facing, **all maṇḍalas without exception of the conquerors of the past, present, and future** who act on behalf of living beings **have mastered this path and then spontaneously perfected the five buddha bodies**. This is because all the buddhas of the three times follow none other than this unique path of progression. Even those who proceed through the causal vehicles must enter into the fruitional vehicle because the buddhas emerge through the fruitional vehicle. This is proven by the following passage [from the *Secret Nucleus*, ch. 3:15]:

Having attained emancipation through the four vehicles,<sup>725</sup>

One abides in the fruition of the single vehicle.

The third part [of the greatness of its path of means for attainment] reveals that this is the path of all yogins (16.2.2.2.2.2.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**All yogins of the three times will accomplish  
spontaneous presence through this [path].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:18)***

།བྱུང་དང་མ་འོངས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀུན།  
།འདི་ཡིས་ལྷན་གྱིས་འགྲུབ་པར་འགྱུར།

All [yogins] who have emerged,  
And those in the future, each and every one,  
Will accomplish spontaneous presence through this [path].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**All yogins who have emerged** in the past and in the present, **and all** yogins or awareness holders who will emerge **in the future, each and every one, will accomplish** the buddha level<sup>726</sup> as awareness holders of **spontaneous presence through this** path. This is because there is no difference in the paths of all the buddhas of the three times. It also says in the Yogatantras:

Great is the indestructible reality  
Of buddha body, speech, and mind!  
The buddhas who reside in the three times  
Through the power of the secret mantras of  
indestructible reality

Acquired the peerless and genuine pristine cognition.<sup>727</sup>

The fourth part [of the greatness of its path of means for attainment] concerns its superiority over the causal vehicles (16.2.2.2.2.2.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**This is the sacred doctrine through which the  
definitive, most secret result has been actualized.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:19)***

།འདི་ནི་གསང་ཆེན་ཅེས་པ་ཡི།  
།འབྲས་བུ་ལས་དུ་གྱུར་པ་ཡིན།

The result, definitive and most secret,  
Has been actualized in the path.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

This system of Atiyoga, the Great Perfection, comprises the **definitive** pith instructions that actualize the **most secret** result that is merely proclaimed in the lower vehicles. In this very lifetime, the maṇḍala of primordial buddhahood, the essential nature of **the result**, is made **into the path**. So it is that buddhahood, which is effortlessly present without having to be attained elsewhere, **has been actualized** by means of this shortcut. As is said in the *Tantra of the Indestructible*

Peak:<sup>728</sup>

Ordinary persons will accomplish buddhahood,  
But they will not do so extraneously.<sup>729</sup>

The third section [of the superiority of the Great Perfection] teaches that there are no other paths superior to this one (16.2.2.2.2.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Since there is no definitive meaning apart from this,  
even though sought, none will be found.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:20)***

། རྒྱལ་བའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མ་ལུས་ལ།  
། འདི་ལས་གསང་བའི་དེས་དོན་མེད།  
། བཅོམ་ཀྱང་རྒྱལ་བས་མི་བརྟེན་སོ།

For the maṇḍalas of the conquerors, without exception,  
Apart from this, there is no secret definitive meaning.  
Though sought, none is found by the conquerors.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**For all the maṇḍalas of the conquerors** of the ten directions and four times, who have passed away in ancient and recent times and who are currently present, along with their heirs, **without exception, there is apart from this** vehicle of Atiyoga where primordial liberation is spontaneously perfect, **no** other shortcut to the **secret definitive meaning** at all, for there are no other doctrines better than this one. If there were,

it is correct that they would be found by the buddhas who seek them, but **though sought** elsewhere, **none** better than this doctrine **is ever found by the conquerors**. This is the sense of the expression “is not found” (*mi rnyed do*). Making the result of the secret mantra into the path in this context also implies that even when the minds, sense organs, and so forth of living beings obtain the conclusive result of primordial buddhahood, that [atemporal goal] is directly reached, and apart from that there is no achievement. As is said in the *Sequence of the Path*:

Like the wish-granting tree and gemstones,  
All things abide in the essential nature [of the ground].  
In the actual appearances of the inanimate world  
And its living organisms, there is no inherent existence.  
That itself is the great buddha body of actual reality,  
The intrinsic nature of which abides dispositionally.  
Other than this, there is nothing to be obtained.  
All things have already been brought to maturity,  
And there is nothing to traverse.

This is the essential nature of the path.<sup>730</sup>

However, one might think, if [the path] is the result, why should one practice it from the beginning according to the generation and perfection stages and so forth? That which abides in this manner is established as the result from the standpoint of the conclusive goal, but its essential nature has been obscured by fundamental ignorance. Nonetheless, when the erroneous perception that resembles the [mistaken] apprehension of a conch shell as yellow has been refined, the ground of one’s own original essential nature is directly reached, and those bewildering adventitious perceptions are reversed. Apart from that, there is no extraneous result that newly emerges and was not present before. As is said in the *Sūtra of All-Gathering Awareness*:

Having been sought, it will not be obtained.

The supreme result is present  
At the time of the cause itself.<sup>731</sup>

## **A TEACHING CONCERNING THE WORTHY RECIPIENTS TO WHOM THIS INSTRUCTION SHOULD BE GIVEN [16.2.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection, see p. 497] indicates the recipients to whom this instruction should be given (16.2.2.2.3).

This has two sections, of which the first concerns the fortunate recipients to whom it should be given (16.2.2.2.3.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**This [teaching] should be given to those endowed  
with discriminative awareness who are well  
refined, of steadfast disposition, and dedicated.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:21)***

། །ཀུན་གྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཚེན་པོ་མཚོག  
། །ཐོས་བསམ་བསྐྱོམ་ལ་རབ་སྦྱངས་པའི།  
། །ཤེས་རབ་མིག་ལྡན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བྱུང་།  
། །སྲོད་ལྡན་དང་ཚུལ་བཟང་ལ་བརྟན།  
། །ལུས་དང་ལོངས་སྲོད་གཏོང་ལ་སྦྱིན།

Among the great seals of all [the buddhas],  
This supreme [*Secret Nucleus*] should be retained by

those endowed  
With the eyes of discriminative awareness,  
Who have well refined it in study, thought, and  
meditation.  
And it should be given to those worthy recipients  
Who are of noble disposition and steadfast,  
Who generously offer their bodies and resources.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The secret great seals of all** the buddhas are the three inner classes of the secret mantra. **Among** them, **this** natural *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* is the most superior and wondrously **supreme**. Therefore it **should be retained by those** individuals **endowed with the eyes of discriminative awareness** who have become skilled in the sequence of its words through abundant **study**,<sup>732</sup> who have become skilled in its genuine abiding nature through discriminative awareness born of **thought** that scrutinizes the meaning of those [words], **and who have well refined it in** repeated **meditation** on that genuine truth.

Among those [adepts] too, this doctrine should be entrusted to **those worthy recipients** of the natural *Secret Nucleus* who do not fear the great waves of its profound meaning, who have abandoned negativity through the virtuous and **noble disposition** of their aspirations,<sup>733</sup> and **who are** unchanged by conditions **and steadfast** in faith. **It should be given** completely **to those who** can **generously offer their own bodies and** all their **resources** to the spiritual teacher and to the [sacred] doctrine. As is said in the *Verse Summation of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness*:

Those whose minds are not afraid to generously offer  
even life itself  
For the sake of the [sacred] doctrine,  
And who are without doubt regarding their own level,



Are always [steadfast], like Mount Sumeru.<sup>734</sup>  
Therefore, the words and meaning [of tantras such as the *Secret Nucleus*] should be conferred perfectly on [bodhisattvas] of the caliber of Sudhana and Sadāprarudita.<sup>735</sup>

The second section reveals the unfortunate recipients to whom it should not be given (16.2.2.2.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**If it is given to those who are deluded, one's life may come to an end, and one may come to dwell in the hells.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:22)***

།གཞན་དུ་ནམ་ཡང་སྦྱིན་མི་བྱ།  
།ཚོངས་ལ་འབྲུར་བས་གལ་ཏེ་སྦྱིན།

།དུས་མིན་པར་ནི་སློག་ཟད་ནས།  
།བསྐྱེགས་དང་སྦྱིབས་པར་ཡུན་རིང་གནས།

It should never be given to others [who are unworthy].  
If it has been given to those who are deluded  
Because they are agitated,  
One's life may come to an untimely end,  
And then one will be roasted, parched,  
And will remain so for a long time.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Apart from those worthy recipients to whom it should be given, **it should never be given to others** who would not understand it even after it had been revealed or who, even if they did understand, would act erroneously, vacillate in respect of the vows and commitments, and be careless and fearful with respect to the rites of ritual service and attainment or to the two provisions. This is because [these beings] are afflicted by great defects.

Why so? **If it has been given to those who are deluded**, who do not know the genuine meaning, and who are unfortunate, and to those who commit negative actions, divulge secrets, and so forth **because** their body, speech, and mind **are agitated**, uncontrolled, and unpacified, **one's life may come to an untimely end** owing to the punishment of the *ḍākinīs* and oath-bound protectors, **and then** the duration of one's life span will be interrupted,<sup>736</sup> and in the next life, among the throngs [afflicted] by the unbearable darkness of the hot hells, **one will be roasted** by the fires of hell **and parched** by the snows and blizzards of the cold hells, **and** so forth. Then, barely holding on to life, one's body **will** indeed **remain so for a long time**, tormented by the suffering of affliction, and for twenty thousand aeons and so forth one will have no opportunity for release. Accordingly, it says in the *Tantra of Vairocana from the Net of Magical Emanation*:

Having been slain by weapons, fire, and poison,  
And similarly by demons and contagious diseases,  
And by snakes and cannibal spirits,  
One will be born in the great hells.<sup>737</sup>

And in a sūtra:

One who has accumulated deeds that are adverse to the [sacred] doctrine is a sentient being who will proceed from the great hells to the great hells.<sup>738</sup>

## THE CONCLUSION [16.2.2.3]

Third, the conclusion [comments on the verse]:

**Such were the aphorisms that [the tathāgata] himself uttered to [the tathāgata] himself.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 13:23)*

ཞེས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུངས་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུངས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་དོ།

—Such were the aphorisms that the tathāgata himself uttered to the tathāgata himself.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Such were the aphorisms that the tathāgata**, the lord of the maṇḍala, Samantabhadra **himself, uttered to the tathāgata himself**, including the five enlightened families of self-manifesting array.

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 13 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the nucleus of pith instructions.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 13:24)***

།གསང་བའི་སློང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་རིས་པ་ལས་ཤིན་ཏུ་གསང་བ་མན་ངག་གི་སློང་  
པོའི་ལེན་སྟེ་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའོ།།

This completes the thirteenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Nucleus of Most Secret Pith Instructions.”

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the thirteenth chapter from the** supremely ***Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*** oral instructions of the Great Perfection, which effects liberation in this very lifetime. It is **entitled “The Nucleus of the Pith Instructions”** through which buddhahood is obtained in a single lifetime, **Most Secret** in comparison to the lower vehicles.

## 14. THE EULOGY WHICH PLEASES

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Following the continuum of the ground and the continuum of the path, which have been revealed in the previous chapters in respect of the peaceful deities, the continuum of the result is now presented in the form of a eulogy to the fruitional buddha body and pristine cognition, in the fully manifest maṇḍala of the peaceful deities.

Having divulged the maṇḍalas of the generation and perfection stages of the path, Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, sings the following eulogy to the fruitional maṇḍala of the result, which coalesces buddha body and pristine cognition (v. 1).

This chapter contains a general eulogy in five verses to the buddhas of the five enlightened families and the five pristine cognitions, which are also identified respectively with buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities (vv. 2–6). It concludes with a particular eulogy to the Supreme Identity of Samantabhadra and Samantabhadrī in union (v. 7).

THE THIRD MAIN TOPIC [of the spontaneously present maṇḍala of peaceful deities, see [p. 159](#)] is the eulogy to the fruitional nature of buddha body and pristine cognition (16.3). It comprises (i) the context (16.3.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (16.3.2); and (iii) the conclusion (16.3.3).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**[Samantabhadra] then sang this song of joy to the maṇḍala of [all the tathāgatas] themselves:**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 14:1)**

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུང་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་ལ་དགྱེས་པ་ཚེན་  
པོའི་སྐྱུ་འདི་སྐྱངས་སོ།

Then [Samantabhadra] sang this song of great joy to the maṇḍala of all the tathāgatas themselves.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

Once the maṇḍalas of the generation and perfection stages of the path had been revealed, **then**, in order to praise the spontaneously present maṇḍala of the result, Samantabhadra, who is lord **of all the tathāgatas themselves** and the essential nature of all the buddhas of the ten directions and four times, **sang this** following **song of great joy to the** self-manifesting **maṇḍala** of buddha body and pristine cognition.

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [16.3.2]**

The second part comprises (i) a general eulogy to the five buddha bodies along with the five pristine cognitions (16.3.2.1) and (ii) a particular eulogy to the mighty male and female lords of the maṇḍala (16.3.2.2).

## **THE GENERAL EULOGY TO THE FIVE BUDDHA BODIES ALONG WITH THE FIVE PRISTINE COGNITIONS [16.3.2.1]**

The former has five sections, among which the first is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of] buddha body (16.3.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The indestructible reality of buddha body is the [pristine cognition of] reality's expanse, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:2)***

།ཨོྩ་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་དུས་བཞི་ཚྛོགས་པ་ཡི།  
།ཡེ་ཤེས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཐིག་ལེ་ཆེ།

།བསོད་ནམས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་སྐྱ་ཡི་ཚྛོགས།  
།སྐྱ་ད་སྟོང་ཐིག་ལེ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ཚྛོགས་ཏེ།

OM! [The buddha body is] perfect in the ten directions and four times.  
[It comprises] the maṇḍala of pristine cognition—the great vital essence;  
The maṇḍala of merits—the provisions of buddha body;  
And its appearance and emptiness—the entirely perfect vital essence. HOḤ!

***Interlinear Commentary***

The syllable **OM** introduces the song because the maṇḍala of the Vajra family, indicative of buddha body, has perfected the five buddha bodies in [the pristine cognition] of reality's expanse. It also reveals that this maṇḍala of buddha body illustrates the intrinsic nature of the five buddha bodies and the five pristine cognitions.

Now, there are five elements to these songs: the singer, the melody of the song, the lyrics, the embellishments of the song, and the blessing that the song imparts. Among these, the melody of the song is introduced in the following sequence of intonation: the [cuckoo-like] fifth tone (*pañcama, lnga pa*), followed by the [peacock-like] sixth tone (*ṣadja, drug pa*), followed by the [crane-like] middle tone (*madhyama, bar ma*), followed by the [goatlike third] tone (*gāndhāra, sa 'dzin*),<sup>739</sup> followed by the melody of the [horselike] clear tone (*dhaivata, blo gsal*), followed by the [elephant-like] base tone (*niṣāda, 'khor nyan pa*).<sup>740</sup>

The buddha body is indeed the intrinsic nature of manifestly **perfect** buddhahood, indivisible in nature with the indestructible body of all the buddhas **in the ten directions and four times**.<sup>741</sup>

**The** mind aspect of buddha body, indivisible with **the great pure vital essence**, is the natural **maṇḍala of** self-manifesting pure **pristine cognition**, mirrorlike and so forth, which is without conceptual elaboration.<sup>742</sup>

The body aspect of buddha body is its self-manifestation as **the maṇḍala of** excellent **merits**, which appears but is without inherent existence. **The provisions of buddha body** are inconceivable because the intrinsic nature of the five enlightened families is pervasive without extremes or center.<sup>743</sup>

The speech aspect of buddha body is **its** essential nature in which **appearance and emptiness** are naturally without duality. It is **the** genuine indescribable and supreme **vital essence, entirely perfect** in excellent attributes.<sup>744</sup>

**HOḤ!** is expressed [at the end of the verse] owing to the joy that arises.



The second is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of] buddha speech (16.3.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]<sup>745</sup>

**The indestructible reality of buddha speech is the [pristine cognition of] discernment, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:3)***

།ཨོ་ཨྲོ་ཨྲེ་བསོད་ནམས་ཐིག་ལེ་ཚེ།  
།ཨྲོ་ཨྲེ་ཡེ་ཤེས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལྷན།  
།ཨྲོ་ཨྲེ་སྐྱ་ཚེན་མཐའ་ཡས་པ།  
།ཨྲོ་ཨྲེ་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཐིག་ལེ་ཚེ་ཏོ།

OM! The indestructible reality [of buddha speech] is a great vital essence of merit. [It comprises] indestructible reality endowed with the maṇḍala of pristine cognition; Indestructible reality, infinite in its great resonance; And indestructible reality [known as] the king—the great vital essence. HOH!

## **Interlinear Commentary**

The syllable OM is expressed because within the maṇḍala of the Padma family, indicative of buddha speech, the five aspects of buddha speech, endowed with primordial purity, are perfect

and spontaneously present in the pristine cognition of discernment.

**The indestructible reality** of buddha speech,<sup>746</sup> which is the maṇḍala of Amitābha, **is indeed a great natural and spontaneous vital essence of merit** and pristine cognition.

The mind aspect of buddha speech is **indestructible reality, endowed with the maṇḍala of the pristine cognition** of discernment and so forth, because appearances and emptiness are indivisible.

The speech aspect of buddha speech is the nondual **indestructible reality, infinite in its great natural resonance** of pristine cognition.

**And** the body aspect of buddha speech is the genuine self-manifesting **indestructible reality**, [known as] **the king—the great vital essence** in which appearance and emptiness are indivisible.

HOḤ! is expressed [at the end] owing to great amazement.

The third is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of] buddha mind (16.3.2.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]<sup>747</sup>

**The indestructible reality of buddha mind is the mirrorlike [pristine cognition], comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 14:4)**

།ཨོ་སྐྱ་གསུང་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་ཚྭ་གས་པ་ཆེ།  
།ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་ཀྱན་ཏུ་ཚྭ་གས།  
།ཡོན་ས་ལྷན་ཚྭ་གས་ཀྱན་ཏུ་བཟང་།  
།འདུས་པའི་ཚྭ་གས་ཆེན་མིག་ལེ་ཆེ་ཏོ།

OM! [The buddha mind] is the great perfection of body,  
speech, and mind.  
[It comprises] entirely perfect enlightened attributes  
and activities,  
Primordially and spontaneously perfect Samantabhadra,  
And the great communion of convergence—the great  
vital essence. HOḤ!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The syllable OM is expressed because the five aspects of buddha mind, which constitute the eulogy to the mirrorlike pristine cognition, are perfect within the maṇḍala of the Buddha family, indicative of buddha mind. This denotes Vairocana—the **great perfection of the body, speech, and mind** of all the buddhas.

The mind aspect of buddha mind is the **enlightened attributes and activities**, which are **entirely perfect** therein, without exception.

The speech aspect of buddha mind is the natural disposition of **Samantabhadra** in whom excellent enlightened attributes abide **primordially and spontaneously perfect**, without being sought.

**And** the body aspect of buddha mind is **the great communion** indicating the **convergence** of the maṇḍala of pristine cognition which occurs at this time in a self-manifesting manner. Owing to its natural purity, it is **the great vital essence**.

HOḤ! is expressed [at the end] because [buddha mind] is spontaneously present.

The fourth is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of] buddha attributes

(16.3.2.1.4) [It comments on the verse:]<sup>748</sup>

**The indestructible reality of buddha attributes is the [pristine cognition of] sameness, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:5)***

།ཨོ་མི་དམིགས་སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་མཉམ་པའི་དབྱིངས།  
།མཐའ་ཡས་ཀུན་ནས་སྣ་ཚོགས་འཕྲོ།  
།མཐའ་ཡས་ཀུན་ནས་ལྷན་གྱིས་ཐིམ།  
།སྣ་ཚོགས་སྐྱུ་གསུང་བྱགས་ཆེན་པོ་ཉེ།

OM! [The buddha field] is an expanse of sameness—a magical emanation, without reference. [It comprises] an infinite and entirely diverse diffusion, The infinite [pristine cognition] spontaneously absorbed from all directions, And the diverse and supreme buddha body, speech, and mind. HOH!

***Interlinear Commentary***

OM! is expressed because the five excellences of buddha attributes, which constitute the eulogy made through the pristine cognition of sameness, are spontaneously present within the maṇḍala of the Ratna family, indicative of buddha attributes.

The excellent buddha field, the expanse of reality, **is** entirely **without reference** in symbolic terms. It is **a magical emanation** of skillful means and discriminative awareness, the spontaneous Bounteous Array—**an expanse of** self-manifesting **sameness**.

The body aspect of buddha attributes is the celestial palace within [that buddha field], along with the **infinite** maṇḍala of deities that are **entirely** bedecked with ornamental details, **and a diffusion of diverse** light rays in the ten directions.

The speech aspect of buddha attributes is their symbolic or intrinsic nature—the **infinite** pristine cognition that is **spontaneously** and inseparably **absorbed from all directions**, in the disposition of sameness.

**And** the mind aspect of buddha attributes is the possession of **the supreme buddha body, speech, and mind**, where all the **diverse** treasures of meditative stability, miraculous ability, supernormal cognitive power, and so forth that are desired emerge in the manner of the wish-fulfilling gem.

**HOH!** is expressed [at the end] to indicate great astonishment.

The fifth is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of] buddha activities (16.3.2.1.5). [It comments on the verse:]<sup>749</sup>

**The indestructible reality of buddha activities is the [pristine cognition of] accomplishment, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 14:6)*

།ཨོ་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་འཛིན་རྟེན་རྣམས་སྟོན་ཏེ།  
།རྒྱལ་བའི་དོན་རྣམས་རྣམས་སྟོན་ཏེ།  
།སྐྱུ་ལ་བའི་རྣམས་སྟོན་ཏེ་བསམ་ཡས་གྱིས།  
།སྐྱེད་ཅིག་ཡུད་ལ་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་ཏེ།

OM! [The field of beings to be trained permeates] the  
worlds  
Within the ten directions, numerous as atomic particles.  
[It comprises] the objectives of the conquerors,  
numerous as atomic particles;  
[Training] through inconceivable emanations, equal to  
the number of atomic particles;  
And spontaneous presence, in an instantaneous moment  
of time. HOH!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The syllable **OM** is expressed because the five aspects of enlightened activity, which constitute the eulogy made through the pristine cognition of accomplishment, are spontaneously present within the maṇḍala of the Karma family, indicative of buddha activities.

The excellent field of those beings who are to be trained permeates **the** inhabited **worlds within the ten directions** of the six realms, and their sentient inhabitants who require training, as **numerous as atomic particles**.

The body aspect of buddha activities comprises **the objectives of the conquerors** which demonstrate in these [worlds] the four kinds of enlightened activity, **numerous as atomic particles**. That is the essential nature of the actual deeds [of the buddhas].

The speech aspect of buddha activities is the diffusion of emanations by whom [these activities] are demonstrated, training beings **through inconceivable emanations**, who instruct each according to his or her needs and who are also **equal to the number of atomic particles**.

The mind aspect of buddha activities is the effortless **spontaneous presence** in accordance with which these emanations train beings, pervading those fields **in an instantaneous moment of time** for the sake of living creatures. This is accomplished effortlessly, without wavering from the buddha body of actual reality.

HOH! is expressed [at the end] owing to great amazement.

## **THE PARTICULAR EULOGY TO THE MIGHTY MALE AND FEMALE LORDS OF THE MAṄḌALA [16.3.2.2]**

The latter part [of the explanation of the verses] is the particular eulogy to the mighty male and female lords of the maṅḍala. [It comments on the verse:]

**The active male and passive female aspects of all the conquerors [are the reality of] buddha body, speech, and mind, encompassing cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 14:7)*

།ཨོ་ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས།  
།སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེ།  
།སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱིས་ཀུན་དུ་བྱུང།  
།སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ཐིག་ལེ་ཆེ་ཙོ།

OM! All [maṇḍalas] without exception comprise buddha body, speech, and mind:  
[They include] the supreme identity of buddha body, speech, and mind;  
The [passive aspect] entirely pervaded by buddha body, speech, and mind;  
And the great vital essence of buddha body, speech, and mind. HOH!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The syllable **OM** is expressed because the buddha body and pristine cognition that constitute the particular eulogy to the mighty male and female lords of the maṇḍala are spontaneously perfect.

The intrinsic nature of **all** maṇḍalas of the five enlightened families **without exception**, which manifest in and of themselves throughout the ten directions and four times, **comprises the buddha body, speech, and mind**, the inexhaustible wheels of adornment.

Samantabhadra is **the Supreme Identity**—the creator or active male aspect **of the buddha body, speech, and mind** of these [maṇḍalas]; Samantabhadri is **the** object or passive female aspect, **entirely pervaded by buddha body, speech, and mind; and** the natural expression of the nonduality of those two male and female buddhas is the reality in which the



essential nature **of buddha body, speech, and mind**, comprising all cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, manifests buddhahood primordially.<sup>750</sup> Since they are enlightened in that expanse of **the great vital essence**, the male and female Samantabhadra of the ground, path, and result are naturally unchanging throughout the three times.

**HOH!** is expressed [at the end] because [this male-female Samantabhadra] is spontaneously present as the original protector of all buddhas and sentient beings.

Such is the eulogy expressed in the song of the Great Joyous One.

## **THE CONCLUSION [16.3.3]**

Third, the conclusion [comments on the line]:

**Thus did he purposefully proclaim to the retinue of the pure and self-manifesting [field].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:8)***

ཞེས་བསྐྱབས་སོ།

—Thus did he proclaim.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Thus did he** purposefully **proclaim**, unprompted, to the retinue of the pure and self-manifesting field of the

spontaneous Bounteous Array.

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 14 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
entitled “The Eulogy Which Pleases.”**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 14:9)*

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་མཉེས་པའི་བསྟོན་པའི་<sup>751</sup>ལུ་སྒྲིབ་  
བཟུ་བཞི་པའོ།།

This completes the fourteenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Eulogy Which Pleases”

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**This completes** the exegesis of **the fourteenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus*** of the result, ***Definitive with Respect to the Real*** buddha body and pristine cognition. It is **entitled “The Eulogy<sup>752</sup>** that accords with the abiding nature [of reality], **Which** naturally and spontaneously **Pleases”** the maṇḍala and the great mighty lords of the maṇḍala.

## EPILOGUE TO **BOOK 16, PART 2**

Through the cascade of tantra,  
Derived from the power of the Lord of Secrets,  
King Ja and one hundred thousand retainers attained the [level  
of] a sky-farer.  
[Sustained] by regular emissions from these rain clouds,  
The glorious leafy groves [of the lineage] then thrived.<sup>753</sup>

The causal basis that is to be adorned  
Comprises the celestial palace of the body,  
Which is not to be drawn with colored sand.  
The causal basis that is to be eliminated  
Comprises the views based on the amalgam of ideation  
Wherein no stains are to be wiped clean.  
The causal basis that is to be accomplished  
Comprises the root mantra letters,  
Which are not to be drawn by pens.  
The causal basis that is to be cleansed  
Comprises the inherent purity,  
Which is not to be refined through ablutions.<sup>754</sup>

The ocean depths are hard to fathom,  
Containing gems that effortlessly yield all that is desired.  
How wonderful is this cool and gentle [remedy],  
Alleviating afflictions due to fever,  
Endowed with the taste and potency of restored vitality!<sup>755</sup>

This completes Book 16 of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra (mDo rgyud rin po che'i mdzod)*, which elucidates the meaning of all the vehicles—a commentary on the chapters that disclose the ground, path, and result in connection with the diffusion of the peaceful deities, according to the *Secret Nucleus*.

In order to facilitate the understanding of the generation and perfection stages of the path, pertaining to the peaceful deities of the *Secret Nucleus*, along with their result, this text was compiled by Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje. May virtue prevail!

It was produced for the sake of the Buddhist teaching and living beings by one named Kunpangpa Pel.

## NOTES TO BOOKS 15 AND 16

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1. According to Nordrang Orgyan's own *Compendium of Buddhist Numeric Terms*, p. 1067, this remark derives from Candrakīrti's *Extensive Exegesis [of the Tantra of the Secret Assembly] Entitled Clarifying Lamp*. However, the exact wording is not apparent in that text.
2. Jigme Tekchok, *The Successive Hierarchs of Rongpo Gonchen*, pp. 45-46.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
4. Tulku Thondup (1999, 160-61) notes that the four prophesied individuals were respectively Dola Jigme Kelzang Dorje (in the east), Repa Damtsig Dorje of Khyunglung (in the south), Gyelse Rigpei Dorje Zhenpen Thaye (in the west), and Choying Tobden Dorje (in the north).
5. These eight renowned places conducive to spiritual attainment in Repkong are enumerated in Dragon Konchok Tenpa Rabgye, *Doctrinal History of Amdo*, vol. 2, pp. 304-12. See also Chenak Hūmchen and Yeshe Ozer Dolma, *An Historical Anthology of the Mantrin Communities of Repkong (Reb kong sngags mang gi lo rgyus phyogs bsgrigs)*, pp. 2-25; and Ricard *et al.* 1994, 602-3. Among them, Chuchik Shel is located in the northeast.
6. For an account of Rabgya Monastery in Golok, see Dorje 2009, 759-60, and Gruschke 2001, 75-78.
7. The three trainings (*trisīkṣā*, *bslab pa gsum*) comprise ethical discipline (*sīla*, *tshul khrims*), discriminative awareness (*prajñā*, *shes rab*), and mental development, i.e., meditation (*citta*, *sems*).
8. On Dzogchen Monastery in Dzachuka, see Dorje 2009, 593-96. The life of Dzogchen Migyur Namka Dorje (1793-1870) is summarized in Barron 2005, 400-404.
9. An extensive account of the life of the first Dodrubchen Rinpoche Jigme Trinle Ozer (1745-1821) can be found in Thondup 1999, 136-62. See also Barron 2005, 319-22. For a description of Yarlung Pemako in Sertar, see Dorje 2009, 772.
10. A detailed history of Ko'ude Dzogchen Namgyeling can be found in Chenak Hūmchen and Yeshe Ozer Dolma, *An Historical Anthology*, pp. 70-106. A very brief account in Chinese has also been published in Pu Wencheng 1993, 456.
11. Further information on the life of Choying Tobden Dorje, along with those of his successive incarnations Dzogchen II Tenpe Gyaltzen (1849-1936), Dzogchen III Tubten Chokyi Nyima (1937-1961), and Dzogchen IV Jigme Choying Rangdrol Dorje (b. 1978), can be found in Chenak Hūmchen and Yeshe Ozer Dolma, *An Historical Anthology*, pp. 73-83. Some references can also be gleaned from Dragon Konchok Tenpa Rabgye's *Doctrinal History of Amdo*, Jigme Tekchok's *The Successive Hierarchs of Rongpo Gonchen*, and Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol's *Autobiography*, the last of which is translated

- in Ricard *et al.* 1994. A brief summary of Choying Tobden Dorje's life, compiled by Nyoshul Khenpo, is also found in Barron 2005, 407–8.
12. Gartse is an impressively located monastery in northeast Amdo, situated below the watershed pass at Amnye Nyemri. See Dorje 2009, 725–26.
  13. The second part of the illustrated version, entitled *Garland of the Sun* (*dPe ris nyi ma'i phreng ba*), is unfortunately no longer extant.
  14. The original Tibetan text can be found in *DGD*, vol. 3, pp. 113–423. The root verses are found in vol. 1 (pp. 58–67), along with the corresponding sections of the concise commentary (pp. 303–86) and the synoptic outline (pp. 117–34).
  15. The doxography of the four or six classes of tantra is discussed from the Nyingma perspective in Longchen Rabjam's *Treasury of Philosophical Systems*, on which see the translation in Barron 2007, 275ff; also see Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets*, pp. 59–83; and Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 268ff.
  16. See the relevant citations from the writings of Menyak Khyungdrak, Kyoton Śāk-ye of Gongbu, and Longchen Rabjam, which are translated in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 357–59.
  17. As cited in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 359.
  18. See Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets*, pp. 70–83.
  19. These eighteen tantra texts are specifically found in the Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa (*rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*), Dg. NGB, vols. 9–13 (TA-PA). For a brief analysis, see GGFTC, 32–36, and the revised introduction to that work at <http://www.wisdom-books.com/FocusDetail.asp?FocusRef=36>.
  20. The texts of this cycle can be found in the Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa (*rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*), Dg. NGB, vols. 9–11 (TA-DA). Their content is outlined in GGFTC, 37–49, and also available at <http://www.wisdom-books.com/FocusDetail.asp?FocusRef=47>. Some of them are frequently cited throughout the commentary contained in the present volume.
  21. See also Cantwell and Mayer 2007, 2. It is significant that the author has focused here on the *Secret Nucleus* and the *Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*, which are the only tantras in the cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation* with extensive commentarial traditions. The last-mentioned work also has pride of place in the rGyud 'bum section of the Kangyur, preceeding even the *Tantra of the Wheel of Time*. Its extant Indic commentaries preserved in the Tengyur include six classed alongside the commentaries on the *Tantra of the Wheel of Time* (T 1395–1400), twenty-one classed alongside other Yoganiruttara tantras (T 2090–2110), and ninety that are classed within the Yogatantras (T 2532–621). Indigenous Tibetan commentaries on the *Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* are far fewer, including those by Rongzom Chokyi Zangpo, Bodong Pañchen, Dalai Lama II Gendun Gyatso, and Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo. The only other significant tantras of the Mahāyoga genre outside the cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation* with extensive commentarial literature appear to be the *Tantra of the Secret Assembly* (*Guhyasamājatantra*) and the *Tantra of Vajrakīla in Twelve Sections* (*Ki la ya tantra bcu gnyis*).
  22. Painted scrolls in the Repkong style depicting the forty-two peaceful and fifty-eight wrathful deities according to the tradition of Karma Lingpa are illustrated, alongside the translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (*Bar do*

- thos grol chen mo*), in Dorje 2005.
23. GGFTC, 50–57.
  24. See *ibid.*, 423.
  25. Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa, *Catalog of the Ancient Tantra Collection*, p. 464, lines 1–3.
  26. On this controversy, see GGFTC, 82–83.
  27. I have summarized the range of these Indic and Tibetan commentaries on the *Secret Nucleus* and related tantras within the cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation* in the introduction to GGFTC, 72–109, and the revised version available at <http://www.wisdom-books.com/FocusDetail.asp?FocusRef=50>, <http://www.wisdom-books.com/FocusDetail.asp?FocusRef=53>, and <http://www.wisdom-books.com/FocusDetail.asp?FocusRef=68>, Regrettably, there is no scope for a detailed reappraisal of this literature here, but the subject is to be revisited in a forthcoming publication.
  28. The allocation of the Indian and Tibetan commentarial writings on *Guhyagarbha* to one or other of these two approaches is discussed in Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets*, pp. 83ff; also GGFTC, 126–27.
  29. Ju Mipham Namgyel, *Overview Entitled Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 11–12.
  30. Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets*, p. 68.
  31. As we shall see below, pp. 504–9, ch. 13 of the *Guhyagarbha* is interpreted according to both the perfection stage (*rdzogs rim*) and the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*).
  32. Compassionate spirituality (*thugs rje*) denotes the capacity of the buddhas to respond to the needs of sentient beings through the buddha body of emanation (*nirmāṇakāya*) in its multifarious appearances. In the literature of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs pa chen po*), this is contrasted with the essential nature (*ngo bo*) that identifies the buddha body of reality (*dharmakāya*) and the natural expression (*rang bzhin*) that characterizes the buddha body of perfect resource (*sambhogakāya*).
  33. His biography is presented in some detail in Stewart 2014; also see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 575–96.
  34. According to Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 571–72, Longchen Rabjam’s teacher Kumārādza also played a significant role in the establishing of *rdzogs chen* terminology.
  35. GGFTC; Chonam and Khandro 2011.
  36. GGFTC; Chonam and Khandro 2011.
  37. GGFTC. This work contains the edition of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* and the translation of Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions (Phyogs bcu mun sel)*, which I prepared between 1983 and 1986 and presented as a doctoral thesis at SOAS, University of London, in 1987.
  38. Vajradhara, the lord (*prabhū*) of the hundred enlightened families, embodies the forty-two peaceful and fifty-eight wrathful deities who form the maṇḍala of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*.
  39. The male buddha Vairocana is described below, in the context of the maṇḍala of the ground, ch. 1, p. 79; in the context of visualization, ch. 6, pp. 248–49, 251; in the context of the mantras, ch. 7, p. 279; and in the context of the gestures of sealing and hand emblems, ch. 8, pp. 314–316. Choying Tobden Dorje’s commentary on the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* altogether comprises four

- books of *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra* (Books 15; 16, Part 1; 16, Part 2; and 17), each of which is introduced by short verses of homage. The first three of these books are dedicated to the five peaceful male buddhas and their female consorts, and the last to the wrathful buddhas. Among the former, Book 15 is specifically dedicated to Vairocana and consort; Book 16, Part 1, to Vajrasattva and Ratnasambhava with their consorts; and Book 16, Part 2, to Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi along with their consorts.
40. The female buddha Ākāsadhātviśvarī, consort of Vairocana, is described below, in the context of the maṇḍala of the ground, ch. 1, p. 81; in the context of visualization, ch. 6, pp. 249, 251; in the context of the mantras, ch. 7, p. 280; and in the context of the gestures of sealing and hand emblems, ch. 8, pp. 314–16.
  41. The six classes of living beings who are subject to the cycle of rebirth comprise the gods, demigods, humans, animals, anguished spirits, and denizens of the hells. On their respective relationship with the six sages, see below, ch. 4, pp. 197–98.
  42. Choying Tobden Dorje’s enumeration of the eighty-nine subtopics of Book 15 are all indicated in parentheses in the outline to Book 15, pp. 1094–104.
  43. This refers to the natural manifestation of the buddha body of actual reality (*dharmakāya*) as the buddha body of form (*rūpakāya*) in both its aspects—the buddha body of perfect resource (*sambhogakāya*) that appears to tenth-level bodhisattvas and the buddha body of emanation (*nirmāṇakāya*) that appears to fortunate beings of the six classes. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 115–38.
  44. The buddhas of the five enlightened families who represent the buddha body of perfect resource are therefore inseparable from the minds of all buddhas throughout space and time.
  45. On Vajrapāṇi as compiler of the Mahāyoga teachings, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 451–55.
  46. Disparate enumerations of the four primary texts of the *Net of Magical Emanation* cycle are discussed in GGFTC, 37–41.
  47. Discrepancies between the three translations suggest that there were varying Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* extant during the eighth century. This is discussed in GGFTC, 661–64; on the controversy surrounding the Sanskrit manuscript, see 61–72.
  48. The various listings of the eight tantras ancillary to the *Secret Nucleus* are contrasted in GGFTC, 38–41.
  49. According to Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa’s *Scholar’s Feast of Doctrinal History*, the first of these four exegetical tantras is identified with the *Ye shes snying po* rather than the *sGyu ’phrul rol pa*. The gradual and immediate functions of the other three are also presented differently therein. See GGFTC, 39.
  50. On these tantras that pertain exclusively to the maṇḍala of the fifty-eight wrathful deities, see GGFTC, 49.
  51. The variant listings of the seventeen other tantras of Mahāyoga, distinct from the *Guhyagarbha*, which are all contained in the Ancient Tantra Collection (*rnying ma’i rgyud ’bum*), are discussed in GGFTC, 33–36.
  52. All the extant texts of the *Māyājāla* cycle outlined here are summarized individually in GGFTC, 41–50, and this is followed (50–57) by a table comparing the content of the versions of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* in eighty-two, forty-six, and twenty-two chapters.
  53. It is important to note the inclusion of commentarial literature in the Derge



xylographic edition of the Ancient Tantra Collection. Lochen Dharmaśrī's *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention of the Lord of Secrets* (*gSang bdag dgongs rgyan*) and his *Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets* (*gSang bdag zhal lung*) are prime examples, included here because they represent the commentarial approach of Mahāyoga with respect to the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*. His approach is often contrasted with that of Longchen Rabjam, Choying Tobden Dorje, and others who emphasize the Atiyoga content of the *Guhyagarbha*. On this distinction, see GGFTC, 123–27. References have been made in the notes that follow to the interpretations of both Lochen Dharmaśrī and Longchen Rabjam.

54. Choying Tobden Dorje here misplaces the *sGyu 'phrul bla ma* at the end of vol. 10 of the Derge xylographic edition, whereas it is actually found in vol. 11.
55. Akaṅiṣṭha is the highest level of refinement among the pure abodes that transcend the fourth meditative concentration within the world system of form. See the chart in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 17–18; on its role as the supreme location where the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* was transmitted, see below, pp. 58–59. Alakāvātī is the buddha field of the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, and Mount Malaya is generally identified with Sumanakūṭa (Adam's Peak) in Sri Lanka. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 454–56, where Vajrapāṇi's transmission to the five great awareness holders is discussed. This group comprised the *deva* Yaśasvī Varapāla, the *nāga* king Takṣaka, the *yakṣa* Ulkāmukha, the *rākṣasa* Matyaupāyika, and the human being Vimalakīrti of the Licchavi race.
56. These powers are outlined in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 2:155–56.
57. This is the tenth of the twelve circumstances, on all of which see Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 32–33.
58. This citation derives from the *Sūtra That Gathers All Intentions*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 472, line 20–p. 473, line 3. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 458, where the citation is additionally attributed to the *Subsequent Tantra of the Emergence of Cakrasaṃvara* (*Samvarodayottaratantra*).
59. King Ja, also known as the intermediate Indrabhūti, is considered to be the son of Indrabhūti the Great, who was a king of Oḍḍiyāna traditionally held to have been a contemporary of Śākyamuni Buddha. King Ja's own son, in turn, is known alternatively as Śakraputra or as Indrabhūti the Younger. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 458–62.
60. The seven dreams of King Ja are recounted in Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 46–48. Cf. Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa, *Scholar's Feast*, p. 310, which is based on the tradition of the *Sūtra That Gathers All Intentions*. The conflation of Mount Malaya with Sahor is not generally accepted in that most sources associate Mount Malaya with Sri Lanka, while Sahor is commonly identified with Mandi in Himachal Pradesh in northwest India or more rarely with the Orissa region of east India.
61. The first twelve lines of this citation are found, with minor variations, in the *Sūtra That Gathers All Intentions*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 231, lines 13–20. Three of the subsequent lines are also found on p. 235, lines 12–13. Cf. Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 48.
62. Vajrasattva, from this perspective, embodies all the hundred peaceful and wrathful deities who appear in the context of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* and its ancillary texts, subsumed within the *Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva* (*sGyu 'phrul rdor sems*).

63. The generation stage of meditation (*utpattikrama*, *bskyed rim*) through which purification and transformation occur through the visualization of meditational deities, is summarized in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 279–80. In the context of the present work, see also below, chs. 11–12, pp. 421–83, which concern the attainments associated with the generation stage.
64. The twenty-three commitments pertaining to the conduct of ascetic discipline (*vrata*, *brtul zhugs*) are enumerated in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 2:178–80.
65. On the vital role of Kukkurāja in the redacting and dissemination of the eighteen tantra sections of Mahāyoga, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 460–62, and GGFTC, 74–75.
66. Also known as Śakraputra. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 462. The text misreads Indrabhūti the Great.
67. All these familial descendants of King Ja are outlined in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 462.
68. For a summary of the life of Buddhaguhya, who transmitted the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* in the environs of Mount Kailash, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 464–66 and 533. Although *DGD* suggests that Gomadevī was the teacher of Buddhaguhya, it is clear that the latter received the *Guhyagarbha* and the *Net of Magical Emanation* cycle directly from Lilāvajra.
69. Vimalamitra, *Illuminating Lamp of the Fundamental Text*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1121, lines 2–4.
70. Cf. the explanation of the title given in Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 111–27.
71. The perfection stage of Mahāyoga is summarized in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 280–81. The specific application of the two stages of meditation in the context of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* is discussed below—the generation stage in chs. 11–12, pp. 421–83, and the perfection stage in ch. 13, pp. 485–521.
72. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 355, lines 19–20.
73. Cf. the fourfold definition of the term *Net of Magical Emanation* given in Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 115–18.
74. *Tantra of Supplementary Points from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB vol. 10 (THA), ff. 182b–238a. This citation has not yet been identified.
75. See below, ch. 4, pp. 185–86; also GGFTC, 582.
76. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 356, lines 10–12. Here the title is abbreviated to *rDo rje*.
77. *Extensive Exegetical Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 544, lines 5–8.
78. Vimalamitra’s *Short Commentary on the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, TPD, vol. 44, p. 4, lines 11–12.
79. The five excellences (*phun sum tshogs pa lnga*) of location, time, teacher, retinue, and doctrine, which characterize the introductory narrative and give authenticity to the teachings, are discussed below, in ch. 1, pp. 48–90. For the perspective of Longchen Rabjam, see also GGFTC, 336–49, and especially 357–436.
80. See GGFTC, 338–49.
81. The first and third modalities of the introductory narrative are presented below, in chs. 1–3 of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*, where the teachings are imparted by the buddha body of perfect resource in its peaceful aspects and the six sages who represent the buddha body of emanation. The ancillary introductory narrative associated with the wrathful deities is presented in ch.

- 15.
82. See GGFTC, 437–60.
83. These three initiations of the discourse by the male buddha Samantabhadra, the female buddha Samantabhadrī, and their nondual coalescence are successively introduced in ch. 2. See below, pp. 97–110, and GGFTC, 437–60.
84. The arousal of the great compassionate spirituality of the six sages, including Śākyamuni Buddha, gives rise to the exposition of phenomena, as presented in ch. 3. See below, pp. 119–54 and GGFTC, 461–542.
85. *rGyud phyi ma*. This citation is attributed to Go Lotsāwa’s later translation of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*. The first line is also found in variant forms, as in the *Subsequent Tantra of the Secret Assembly*, KPD, vol. 81, p. 588.
86. The continuum of the ground (*gzhi’i rgyud*) is summarized and its synonyms enumerated in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 263–65, and in Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 129–46.
87. Vimalamitra’s *Three Sequences of the Net of Magical Emanation*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1173, lines 3–4.
88. That is to say, the ground cannot be identified with afflictive mental states, nor with their negation through the consequential reasoning of the Madhyamaka school.
89. On the structures of the continuum of the path (*lam gyi rgyud*), see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 265–66; see also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 149ff.
90. These specific terms accord with the exposition of the path in Anuyoga. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 286–87; and on the distinctions between *thabs lam* and *grol lam* according to Mahāyoga, 277–78.
91. Vimalamitra’s *Three Sequences*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1175. *DGD*, p. 119, attributes this citation to the *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*. Dg. NGB, vol. THA, no.7, ff. 279a–313, but it appears not to be found therein.
92. *Māksika*, identified as pyrite in Monier-Williams and elsewhere equated with a special kind of mercury, is reputedly used in alchemy as a catalyst for the transmutation of iron into gold. See Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Overview Entitled Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 48–49, and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 17.
93. There are two aspects to the path of skillful means, the first of which concerns the practices that control and refine the movement of generative fluids or essences through all the six energy centers and the three main energy channels within the subtle body of the yogin. This is known as the yoga of the upper gate (*steng sgo*), which the yogin practices alone, without reference to a female partner, and the movement of the generative essences through the channels is metaphorically likened to the “milking of the cow of space” (*nam mkha’i ba bzho ba*). See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 277; below, ch. 13, pp. 486–87, 504; and Longchen Rabjam’s overview in GGFTC, 1007–10.
94. *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*. Dg. NGB vol. THA, no.7, f. 281b, lines 6–7.
95. The yoga of the lower gate (*’og sgo*) controls the flow of generative fluids or essences when the yogin is engaged in union with a female partner. See below, ch. 11, pp. 433–36; see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 277, and Longchen Rabjam’s overview in GGFTC, 1010–19.
96. *rGyas pa* in this instance denotes the midlength version—the *Tantra of the*

*Net of Magical Emanation in Forty-Six Chapters*. Dg. NGB vol. THA (10), no. 4, f. 142a, lines 6–7.

97. The *rin po che kaustubha*, according to Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 48–49, is applied to the base metal that extracts gold in a gradual manner. Just so, liberation can be acquired by refining discriminative awareness (*prajñā*) gradually through study, reflection, and meditation. On this, see also Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 28–29. Longchen Rabjam’s exposition of the path of liberation is presented in GGFTC, 1019–21.
98. This threefold distinction according to view, meditative stability, and fruition is outlined in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 278–83. On the four kinds of awareness holder (*rig ’dzin rnam bzhi*) specifically, see note 556; also ch. 12, pp. 471–75.
99. The distinguished axioms of reasoning applicable in the view of Mahāyoga, which are contrasted with those of Madhyamaka dialectics, are mentioned below, ch. 11, pp. 425–29.
100. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*; KPD, vol. 102, p. 392, lines 1–3.
101. On this distinction, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 278.
102. These five purificatory and transformative techniques, which constitute the generation-stage practices of Mahāyoga and are further intensified during the perfection stage, respectively enable the yogin to reconnect with (1) the absorption in the buddha body of actual reality, as experienced at death; (2) the arising of the buddha body of perfect resource, as experienced during the intermediate state; (3) the generation of the emanational body of a deity in the womb, as experienced between conception and birth; (4) the visualization of the maṇḍala clusters of deities, as experienced in the formative years of youth; and (5) the attainment of the maṇḍala clusters of deities, as experienced in the years of adult maturity. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 278–81; see also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 306–9.
103. Buddhaguhya’s *Sequence of the Path of the Net of Magical Emanation*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1009, lines 7–8.
104. The cessation of the contaminated aggregates occurs following the path of connection and as a precursor to the path of insight. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 281, 298.
105. *Ibid.*, 281–82.
106. Buddhaguhya’s *Lesser Sequence of the Path*, NK vol. 81, p. 770, line 1.
107. On these attainments, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 282 and on the five buddha bodies, see below, pp. 266–68.
108. The latter view is expressed in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 282. For a detailed discussion on the ten bodhisattva levels, see Dayal 1932, 270–91, and Williams 1989, 204–14; see also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 312–19.
109. The continuum of the result is summarized in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 266–67.
110. All these fruitional attributes of the buddhas are mentioned in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 139–48 and 282–83.
111. Regarding this subsumption of the five pristine cognitions, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 140. The same source (141) also offers the alternative view of Longchen Rabjam, which allocates the pristine cognitions of the expanse of reality and sameness to the pristine cognition that definitively knows the view, and the other three pristine cognitions to the pristine cognition that

- quantitatively knows phenomena.
112. Elsewhere these enlightened activities are enumerated as (1) the pacification of suffering and its causes; (2) the enrichment of excellent provisions; (3) the overpowering of trainees; (4) the forceful uprooting of those who are hard to train; and (5) the spontaneous accomplishment of whatever emerges without effort. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 283.
  113. These ten aspects of tantra were subsequently to form the core subject matter of Jamgon Mipham Gyatso's *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*. My translation of this text, which was made in 1983, has not been published, but the content was subsequently summarized in GGFTC, 114–23. Cf. the recently published translations of this work by Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009 and by Chonam and Khandro 2011.
  114. The seven aspects of spiritual wealth pertaining to the ultimate truth (*don dam bden pa'i dkor bdun*) comprise the ultimate truth of the expanse of reality (*dbyings don dam*), the ultimate truth of pristine cognition (*ye shes don dam*), and the fivefold ultimate truth of the result (*'bras bu don dam*), i.e., the great mystery of the buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 248–49.
  115. Cf. *ibid.*, 360–61.
  116. Buddhaguhya's *Sequence of the Path of the Net of Magical Emanation*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 973, lines 1–5.
  117. The rational axioms employed to establish the view of Mahāyoga, including the four realizations (*rtogs pa bzhi*), the three purities (*dag pa gsum*), the four samenesses (*mnyam nyid bzhi*), and the supreme identity (*bdag nyid chen po*) are all discussed below in ch. 11, pp. 425–29. See also GGFTC, 115–17, and Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 66–113; Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 38–68; and Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 159–66. The biographical narratives of and distinctions between the close lineages of the spiritual revelations (*nye brgyud gter ma*) and the distant lineages of the oral teachings (*ring brgyud bka' ma*), which together form the entire corpus of Nyingma literature, are discussed in many sources, such as Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 597–881 and 927–28.
  118. Reference has already been made to the twenty-three commitments associated with the former. See above, note 64.
  119. Cf. the summary in GGFTC, 116–17. Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 127–36; Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 77–83; and Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 281.
  120. Līlāvajra's *Innermost Point of Buddha Mind*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1110, lines 11–12. The seven circumstances are outlined in the following quotation concerning the classification of the modalities of the maṇḍala.
  121. Cf. the summary in GGFTC, 119; Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 136–44; and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 84–88.
  122. *rGyas pa* here denotes the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 554, lines 6–8.
  123. The last of these classifications denotes the supreme provisions of the communion ceremony in which male and female practitioners of the generation stage of meditation assemble and participate in a feast offering for the sake of attaining spiritual accomplishment.

124. The two requisite causal bases (*rgyu gnyis*) that engender the maturation of the empowerments comprise the cause producing a result similar in type to itself (*sabhagahetu, skal mnyam gyi rgyu*), which here denotes the all-pervasiveness of the supreme bliss of purity and sameness, and the concomitant cause (*samprayuktahetu, mthungs ldan gyi rgyu*) which denotes the potency of the sacramental substances employed in the various empowerments. The four conditions of empowerment (*rkyen bzhi*) comprise the causal condition (*hetupratyaya, rgyu'i rkyen*), which denotes the worthy recipient of the empowerments; the predominant condition (*adhipatipratyaya, bdag gi rkyen*), which denotes the authentic master of the secret mantra; the referential condition (*ālambanapratyaya, dmigs pa'i rkyen*), which denotes the sacraments, mantras, and meditative absorptions; and the immediate condition (*samanantarapratyaya, de ma thag pa'i rkyen*), which denotes previously received empowerments. Cf. also the summary of empowerment found in GGFT 1987, 119-20; Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 144-52; and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 88-93 (esp. 91).
125. This general enumeration of five empowerments therefore includes the two aspects of the vase empowerment, with the addition of the three empowerments of profundity.
126. These eighteen empowerments of the peaceful deities are all conferred in the context of ch. 10, on which see below, [pp. 399-415](#).
127. The thirty-six empowerments of the wrathful deities are not conferred here, in the short version of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*, but they are to be found elsewhere within the cycle, i.e., in the *Tantra of the Supreme Spiritual Teacher*.
128. Tib. *yal ga dang bcas pa'i tha tshig*. DGD (p. 125) misreads *yal gam*.
129. Cf. the exposition of the commitments summarized in GGFTC, 120, and found in Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 152-85, and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 93-112.
130. On all these enumerations of the basic and ancillary commitments, see below, ch. 19, [pp. 697-727](#); also GGFTC, 1192-211; and Dorje 1991, 71-95.
131. These comprise loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity, on the cultivation of which see Padmakara 1994, 195ff.
132. Cf. the summary of enlightened activity in GGFTC, 121-22; Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 215-26; and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 130-38.
133. Chains are formed when the ritual participants entwine their fingers together. See below, ch. 20, [pp. 733ff](#).
134. Concerning these rites of enlightened activity, see below, ch. 20, [pp. 731-43](#).
135. As noted above (note 85), this citation derives from Go Lotsāwa's later translation of the *Secret Nucleus*.
136. The eight common accomplishments are listed as the compounding of medicinal pills, eye salve, swiftness of feet, the ability to penetrate solid matter, the accomplishment of the enchanted sword, sky-faring, invisibility, and immortality. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 2:157.
137. Cf. the summary of spiritual attainment in GGFTC, 120-21; Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 185-202; and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 112-23.
138. Cf. the summary of meditative stability in GGFTC, 113-27; and Dharmachakra

Translation Committee 2009, 68–77.

139. In the generation stage of meditation, where the visualization of the deity is emphasized, there are four methods of purifying propensities associated with the four modalities of viviparous, oviparous, bacterial (*drod sher*), and miraculous birth (*skye gnas bzhi'i bag chags sbyong tshul bzhi*), whereby mammals, reptiles and birds, bacteria, and deities are respectively conceived and reborn. The four birthplaces (*caturyoni*, *skyes gnas bzhi*) are therefore enumerated as birth from a womb (*jārāyujā*), birth from an egg (*aṇḍajā*), birth from moisture (*samsvedajā*), and miraculous birth (*upapāduka*). Among the four methods of purifying their associated propensities, the extensive and intermediate processes of visualization are fully developed in the practice of Mahāyoga, whereas the abridged and extremely abridged methods correspond to the techniques of Anuyoga and Atiyoga, respectively. See GGFTC, 117–18. On the visualization of the four awakenings (*mngon byang bzhi*)—the throne with moon cushion, the seed syllable of buddha speech, the emblem symbolic of buddha mind, and the fully formed body of the deity—through which this purification is effected, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 279–81.
140. See the summary of offerings in GGFTC, 121, and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 123–30.
141. As indicated in Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 204–6, and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 124–26, the outer offerings comprise songs of praise, dance, desirable resources, sacramental substances, skillful means of burnt offering, and the like, and the establishment of all phenomenal existence as the ground of the offering. The inner offerings comprise the sacraments of nectar, blood, and *torma* cakes, as well as the subtle body of indestructible reality with its network of energy channels, winds, and generative essences. The secret offerings are those associated with the rites of union and liberation, as well as the transformations of the five poisons into the five pristine cognitions and of the three poisons into offerings of buddha body, speech, and mind. The fourteen offerings appropriate for the peaceful deities comprise homage (*gus pa'i phyag*), dances and gestures of sealing (*phyag rgya gar*), [the offering clouds of] Samantabhadra (*kun bzang*), water for washing the feet (*zhabs bsil*), crosses (*bzhi bsnol*), nectar (*bdud rtsi*), *torma* cakes (*gtor ma*), secret and intricate substances (*gsang nan*), superior meditative stability (*lhag par ting 'dzin*), union (*sbyor ba*), liberation (*sgrol ba*), desirable resources (*'dod yon*), music and song (*rol mo glu*), and pristine cognition (*ye shes*). In the case of the wrathful deities, superior meditative stability is replaced with the offering of sacramental blood (*rakta*).
142. Cf. the summary on mantra and sealing in GGFTC, 122–23; Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 226–59; and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 138–59. The four seals comprise the great seal of buddha body (*mahāmudrā*, *phyag rgya chen po*), the doctrinal seal of buddha speech (*dharmamudrā*, *gsung chos kyi phyag rgya*), the commitment seal of buddha mind (*samayamudrā*, *thugs dam tshig gi phyag rgya*), and the action seal of buddha activity (*karmamudrā*, *las kyi phyag rgya*). Respectively, the great seal of buddha body secures the substratum consciousness as the mirrorlike pristine cognition; the doctrinal seal of buddha speech secures the mental faculty as the pristine cognition of discernment; the commitment seal

- of buddha mind secures the afflictive mental consciousness as the pristine cognition of sameness; and the action seal of buddha activities secures the five sensory consciousnesses as the pristine cognition of accomplishment. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 356.
143. These three classes of mantra are respectively associated with the inner tantras, the outer tantras, and the sūtras.
  144. On the seed syllables and the mantras associated with visualization and rituals, see below, ch. 4, pp. 161–207 and ch. 7, pp. 275–305.
  145. In Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, these are respectively designated as the seals of the ground, the seals of the path, and seals of the result. See Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 139. The gestures of sealing are presented below in ch. 8, pp. 307–40.
  146. Līlavajra's *Clarification of Commitments*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1192, lines 16–17.
  147. See also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 322–23 and 581–82. Jamgon Mipham Gyatso also explores this theme in his *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, in addition to which he examines the interrelatedness of the ten aspects of tantra, concluding each section with a statement showing how each of the ten is related to all the others.
  148. Tib. 'dir phyi ma btang snyoms su byas pa'o. The author here makes the point that interconnectedness of the meanings and words pertaining to the esoteric path of skillful means is not emphasized in the present commentary.
  149. See also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 323–24.
  150. This is the implication of the introductory words of ch. 22:1, on which see below, pp. 766–67.
  151. Cf. the explanation of this passage in Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 99 and nn. 189–90.
  152. Vimalamitra's *Illuminating Lamp of the Fundamental Text*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1130, lines 2–3.
  153. This passage derives from Longchen Rabjam's overview of the title, on which see GGFTC, 319–20; also see the translation in Chonam and Khandro 2011, 131–32.
  154. *Tantra of the Rutting Elephant*. NGB, vol. PA (13), no. 5. This citation has not yet been identified, although the first line is reminiscent of f. 280a, line 7.
  155. Cf. Longchen Rabjam's explanation of the word "secret" (*guhya*, *gsang ba*) in GGFTC, 321–22; also see Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 118–21; and Chonam and Khandro 2011, 132–33.
  156. *Tantra of the Awakening of Vairocana*, KPD, vol. 86, p. 675, lines 4–6.
  157. Līlavajra's *Clarification of Commitments*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1193, lines 1–4.
  158. Longchen Rabjam's explanation of the term "nucleus" (*snying po*) is much shorter. The present threefold derivation corresponds to Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 121–23. Cf. also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 133–34.
  159. *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 544, lines 7–8.
  160. *Tantra of the Indestructible Garland*, KPD, vol. 81, p. 847, lines 4–5, where the citation takes the form *de dag dbus na gnas pa'i khams / khyab cing spyod yul ma yin pa*.
  161. Cf. Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 123–24.
  162. Cf. GGFTC, 323; Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal



- 2011, 124-25.
163. *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 544, lines 5-8.
  164. Of these the first two are said to be demonic forces of nonhuman agency (*amanuṣyamāra*), and the latter two are demonic forces associated with conceptual thought (*vikalpanamāra*). On the difference between residual (*lhag bcas*) and nonresidual (*lhag med*) nirvāṇa in terms of the causal vehicles, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 227. The residue concerns the consciousness of the cessation of obscurations and the knowledge that they are not re-created. In terms of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs pa chen po*), the residue denotes the traces of *rūpaskandha* that are left behind in the lesser attainment of the 'ja' lus but not in the attainment of the 'ja' lus 'pho ba chen po (Skt. *mahāsaṃkrāntikāya*). See *ibid.*, 337-45.
  165. On how these two obscurations are abandoned in the three causal vehicles, see *ibid.*, 226-37.
  166. The expression "three aspects" (*'khor gsum*) denotes the three cognitive aspects of subject, object, and their interaction.
  167. Maitreya's *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*, ch. 5, v. 14. See TPD, vol. 70, p. 977, lines 7-9; Holmes and Holmes 1985, 154 (v. 390). Note that the two couplets of this quatrain are reversed in *DGD*. Also, in *DGD* (p. 132), this citation is wrongly attributed to the *Analysis of the Middle and Extreme*.
  168. *Tantra of Embrace*, KPD, vol. 79, pp. 216-469. This citation is not found in that work but in the *Tantra of the Indestructible King*, which is contained in the same volume, p. 707, lines 2-4. Note that there *brtson 'grus* is replaced with *ye shes*. Another version that retains *brtson 'grus* but reverses the first two verses is also found in the *Tantra of the Nondual Victor*, KPD, vol. 82, p. 539, lines 13-15.
  169. This definition is discussed in Guenther 1984, 236.
  170. "Sublime" (*'phags pa*) here denotes those bodhisattvas who have reached the highest levels of nonregression in their spiritual attainment, from the eighth (*acalā*) to the tenth (*dharmameghā*).
  171. *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*, KPD, vols. 35-38. This citation has not yet been identified.
  172. This is the Ghanavyūha realm of Akaniṣṭha, associated with the teachings of the buddha body of perfect resource (*sambhogakāya*), on which see below, ch. 1, pp. 49-50 and 58-59. Cf. Longchen Rabjam's definition of Samantabhadra in GGFTC, 327-29.
  173. *Tantra of the Secret of Pristine Cognition (Ye shes gsang ba)*. This citation has not yet been identified, either in *Śrījñānaguhyatantrarāja (dPal ye shes gsang ba'i rgyud)* T 392, KPD, vol. 79; or in *Ye shes gsang ba'i rgyud*, Dg. NGB vol. CA (5), no. 20, ff. 261b-297b.
  174. Vimalamitra's explanation of the actual verse of homage can be found in his *Short Commentary*, TPD, vol. 44, p. 3, lines 1-5. See also the translation in GGFTC, 330. Cf. Chonam and Khandro 2011, 139.
  175. This opening line is invariably formulaic, indicating that the text that follows is the authentic teaching of the buddhas. In the context of most sūtras and many of the outer tantras, it generally takes the form "Thus have I heard" (*evaṃ mayā śrūtaṃ, 'di skad bdag gis thos pa*). For Longchen Rabjam's interpretation of the distinctive wording that appears in the *Guhyagarbha*, see GGFTC, 336ff. While three distinct interpretations of this verse are

- offered here from the perspective of the outer tantras, the inner tantras, and the Great Perfection of Atiyoga, each interpretation integrates the five excellences (*phun sum tshogs pa lnga*) of location, teacher, retinue, doctrine, and time, which are the hallmarks of the Buddhist canonical texts.
176. This follows Longchen Rabjam, who intentionally conflates the Sanskrit expressions *mayā* (“by me”) and *māyā* (“magical display”). See GGFC, 336.
  177. *Tantra of the Nondual Victor*, KPD, vol. 82, pp. 266–789. This citation has not yet been identified, although the work expresses similar sentiments.
  178. This citation has not been identified in the extant Derge version of Padmavajra’s *Verification of Secrets*. T 2217, ff. 1b–28b.
  179. *Tantra of Hevajra*. See Snellgrove 1959, vol. 2, p. 49 (II ii, v. 39).
  180. This derives verbatim from Longchen Rabjam’s explanation according to the outer tantras. See GGFC, 336–38.
  181. *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB, vol. DA (11), no. 6, f. 250a, lines 4–5.
  182. This hermeneutical interpretation according to the path of skillful means expounded in the inner tantras refers both to the Sanskrit expression *evam mayā* and the Tibetan *’di skad bshad pa’i dus na*. Here, *mayā* is interpreted as a combination of *madamanu* (*sdom byed yid*), which implies “the controlling mind,” and *yāna* (*theg pa*), meaning “vehicle.” The affix *pa* abbreviates Sanskrit *paramārtha* (Tib. *don dam*), meaning “ultimate reality.” Cf. the corresponding explanation in Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, ch. 1, p. 56.
  183. The five aspects of the generative essences (*byang sems lnga*) may be explained according to either the path of liberation (*grol lam*) or the path of skillful means (*thabs lam*). In the latter context, which is intended here, they comprise (1) the arousal of seminal fluid from its natural position (*byang chub kyi sems gnas nas g.yo ba*); (2) its descent and coming to rest in the secret center of the subtle body (*gnas su babs pas sdad pa*); (3) its retention in the secret vajra (*rdo rjer bzung bas gnas pa*); (4) its subsequent induction upward (*gyen du drangs pas ’jug pa*); and (5) its pervasion of the subtle body (*lus la khrem pas don dam pa byang chub kyi sems*). See Longchen Rabjam’s *Overview of the Glorious Tantra of the Secret Nucleus Entitled Dispelling All Mental Darkness with the Light of Eloquence*, p. 69b. This movement is perfected at the conclusion of the experience of the sixteen delights (*dga’ ba bcu drug*), namely, delight (*dga’ ba*), the supreme delight (*mchog gi dga’ ba*), the absence of delight (*dga’ bral*), and the coemergent delight (*lhan skyes dga’ ba*)—each of which has four aspects in combination with the other three. When the momentum of the sixteen delights is supported from above, descending through the central channel, they represent the perfection of the successive causal levels. Then, when the two pure essences come forth onto the tip of the lotus, the male savors radiant bliss, and the female savors nonconceptual emptiness; by the fusion of these two, there arises the intention where bliss and emptiness are coalesced, radiating unobscured by the two extremes. Then, when the momentum of the sixteen delights is consequently supported from below, the fruitional levels are experienced. See especially GGFC, 1007–17.
  184. This explanation is similar, though not identical, to that of Longchen Rabjam. See GGFC, 338–40, and Chonam and Khandro 2011, 142–43.
  185. Here the text reads “compassionate spirituality” (*thugs rje*) for “buddha

- mind” (*thugs*), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 66, and GGFTC, 340.
186. Cf. Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 66, which reads “are complete” (*tshang ba*) instead of “are interrupted” (*chad pa*).
  187. This interpretation of the introductory verse from the perspective of Atiyoga—the secret inner radiance (*gsang ba ’od gsal*)—corresponds to GGFTC, 340–46. Cf. Chonam and Khandro 2011, 143–44.
  188. *DGD* (p. 135) misreads “and so forth” (*la sogs*) instead of “beginning with E” (*E sogs*), but see the correct reading in Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 66, and GGFTC, 341.
  189. The fourfold consciousness comprises (1) the substratum consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*, *kun gzhi’i rnam par shes pa*); (2) the afflictive mental consciousness (*kliṣṭamanovijñāna*, *nyon yid kyi rnam par shes pa*); (3) the consciousness of the mental faculty (*manovijñāna*, *yid kyi rnam par shes pa*); and (4) the engaged sensory consciousness (*’jug pa’i rnam par shes pa*), the last of which is otherwise known as the consciousnesses of the five senses (*pañcendriyavijñāna*, *sgo lnga’i rnam par shes pa*). The distinctions between these are explained by Jamgon Kongtrul in Dorje 2012, 511–30.
  190. *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB vol. THA (10), no.7, f. 280b, lines 2–4.
  191. On the five buddha bodies (*pañcakāya*, *sku lnga*), which include the buddha body of actual reality (*dharmakāya*, *chos sku*), see below, pp. 266–68; also see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 139–43.
  192. *Sūtra Revealing the Inconceivable Secrets of the Tathāgata*, KPD, vol. 39, p. 364, lines 1–4.
  193. Candrakīrti’s *Seventy Verses on Going for Refuge*. T 3971, f. 251a. Note that the first verse reads: *rmongs pa’i zum pa bcom pas na* instead of *ma rig gnyid las sangs phyir dang*. Also, the second verse ends: *la ni blo rnam rgyas* instead of *la yang blo rgyas phyir*.
  194. *Tantra of Supplementary Points from the Net of Magical Emanation*. Dg. NGB vol. THA (10), f. 184a, line 7.
  195. These six attributes of the buddha’s greatness, comprising lordship (*dbang phyug*), noble form (*gzugs bzang*), glory (*dpal*), fame (*grags*), pristine cognition (*ye shes*), and perseverance (*brtson ’grus*) have already been mentioned. See above, p. 45.
  196. The buddha body of emanation is thus said to give teaching at specific points in time with reference to a specific audience.
  197. It is suggested that this threefold expression *ma lus*, *mi lus*, and *lus pa med pa* links the three buddha bodies respectively to the past, present, and future. See Chonam and Khandro 2011, 152.
  198. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa* (*dkon brtsegs*) section of the Kangyur (T 45–93) and the KPD (vols. 39–44) has not yet been identified.
  199. *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*, KPD, vol. 77, p. 11, line 16. Note also the alternative but less frequent reading: *dus gsum dus med rtogs par gnas*.
  200. *Tantra of the Awakening of Vairocana*, T 494; KPD, vol. 86, pp. 436–693. This citation has not yet been identified.
  201. For Longchen Rabjam’s comments concerning alternative explanations of the four times, see GGFTC, 353–56.
  202. For Longchen Rabjam’s overview of the Akaniṣṭha realms, see GGFTC, 357–

- 71; and Chonam and Khandro 2011, 155–65.
203. MVT 135–53. Cf. also the explanation in Dayal 1932, 21–23.
204. For a detailed presentation of the ten consummations of the elements and their impact in the context of meditative concentration, see Nāṇamoli 1979, 122–84, and Sparham 2006–12, 4:70–75.
205. These eight masteries of the material elements originate through engagement with the eight aspects of liberation, on which see below, pp. 66–67. They are the basis for the control and transcendence of the world system of desire. See Nāṇamoli 1979, 866. In terms of realization, the perception of inner form ( *nang gzugs*) corresponds to emptiness ( *sūnyatā*); the perception of formlessness ( *gzugs med*) corresponds to signlessness ( *animitta*); and the appreciation of beauty ( *sdug par mos pa*) corresponds to aspirationlessness ( *apraṇihita*).
206. The term  *glo 'bur* ( *avacchādika*) may denote either the buttresses supporting the walls of a building or a projecting bay that functions as the extension of a wall, often containing a room.
207. See the illustrations of the three-dimensional celestial palace ( *vimāna, gzhal yas khang*) according to the cycle of the  *Net of Magical Emanation (Māyājāla)* on pp. 60 and 64. A two-dimensional drawing by Chris Banigan is also found on p. 375. In this symbolism of the four projecting bays, the central pristine cognition of reality's expanse ( *dharmadhātujñāna, chos dbyings ye shes*) is not included since it itself is represented by the spire.
208. See the illustration of the spire of the three-dimensional celestial palace according to the  *Māyājāla* constructed at Katok, on p. 60.
209. The five shapes are square, round, triangular, semicircular, and bindu or finial shaped. The five colors are white, blue, yellow, red, and green.
210.  *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines*, KPD, vol. 33, p. 6, lines 14–15.
211. Tārāyaṇa is a grove of fig trees near Vārāṇasī, where Śākyamuni Buddha sojourned during the seventh week following his attainment of buddhahood.
212.  *Sūtra of Extensive Play*, KPD, vol. 46, p. 456, lines 5–8 (ch. 25, v. 1). Note the variant readings for these renowned verses.
213. Maitreya's  *Ornament of Emergent Realization*, TPD, vol. 49, p. 22, line 20–p. 21, line 1.
214. Maitreya's  *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 21, p. 887, line 20–p. 888, line 1. See also Jamspal  *et al.* 2004, 335 (v. 43).
215. On the eight aspects of liberation, see also Dayal 1932, 230–31; Sparham 2006–12, 4:68–69.
216. See the two-dimensional drawing below, p. 375.
217. Līlavajra,  *Parkhab Commentary*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 282. DGD (p. 142) suggests that this citation derives from the  *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*. Dg. NGB vol. THA (9), no.7, ff. 279a–313, but it has not been located therein.
218. On the distinction between the causal and resultant pediments ( *rgyu dang 'bras bu'i rta babs*), see Lochen Dharmasrī,  *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, ch. 1, p. 76.
219. The present context of the self-manifesting Ghanavyūha realm is the resultant Akaniṣṭha and not one in which the structures of the path apply.
220. The four assurances are discussed in Dayal 1932, 20–21, and in Sparham 2006–12, 4:80–81.

221. Maitreya's *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 21, p. 888, lines 17–19. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 339 (v. 52).
222. The full explanation of these powers is given in the *Sūtra of the Royal Lord of Mnemonic Incantation (Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra)*. See also Dayal 1932, 20; Sparham 2006–12, 4:80; and the listing found in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 2:167.
223. Maitreya's *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 21, p. 888, lines 15–17. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 339 (v. 51).
224. *DGD* (p. 143) reads “recollection” (*dran pa*) for “mentation” (*sems*).
225. *DGD* (p. 143) reads “volition” (*mos pa*) for “scrutiny” (*dpyod pa*).
226. On these four supports for miraculous abilities, see also Dayal 1932, 104–6, and Sparham 2006–12, 1:113–15.
227. Vimalamitra's *Short Commentary on the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, TPD, vol. 44, p. 7, lines 10–11.
228. The ten kinds of absolute control (*daśavaśitā*) are listed in Dayal 1932, 140–41, and Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 2:166–67.
229. Scribal error. This verse (*DGD*, p. 143) includes “doctrines” (*chos*) twice among the *daśavaśita*, omitting “volition” (*mos pa*).
230. Vimalamitra's *Short Commentary on the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, TPD, vol. 44, p. 7, lines 13–15.
231. The *shang shang (cīvaṃcīvaka)* is a mythical creature symbolizing enlightened activity, with a human torso and a birdlike lower body.
232. The four kinds of genuine analytic knowledge are the unhindered discernments through which the buddhas impart their teachings. See Dayal 1932, 159–267, and Sparham 2006–12, 4:78–79. In this present context, *DGD* (p. 144) reads “words” (*tshig*) for “meaning” (*don*) and “language” (*skad*) for “etymology” (*nges tshig*).
233. Maitreya's *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 21, p. 888, lines 7–9. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 337 (v. 47).
234. *Tantra of Precious Empowerment (Rin po che dbang gi rgyud)*. This source has not yet been located. The verses are not found in the *Lha rgyud dbang rin po che'i rgyud* (Dg. NGB, vol. CA [5], no. 10).
235. For Longchen Rabjam's overview concerning the appearance of the buddhas of the five families and their symbolism, see GGFTC, 389–405; also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 176–87.
236. Longchen Rabjam's interpretation in GGFTC, 406–9, follows the *Ornament of Emergent Realization*. The thirty-two major physical marks identify the buddha body of emanation (*nirmāṇakāya*) and, in some sources and traditions, portend the advent of a universal monarch. See also Sparham 2006–12, 4:84–90, 4:254–56; on the eighty minor marks, see Sparham 2006–12, 4:90–96, 4:257–62; also Conze 1975, 661–64 and Rigdzin 1993 165–66.
237. *DGD* (p. 145) here misreads “imbalanced” (*mnyam du med pa*) for “inaudible” (*mnyan du med pa*).
238. *Sūtra of All-Gathering Awareness*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 18, lines 4–5. Note that the second verse ends in *bshad* rather than *gsungs*.
239. On the sixty modulations of buddha speech, see below, pp. 296–97.
240. Maitreya's *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*, ch. 4, v. 71. See TPD, vol. 70, p. 972, line 20–p. 973, line 3; also Holmes and Holmes 1985, 140 (vv. 350–51).
241. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa (dkon brtsegs)* section of the Kangyur (T 45-

- 93) and KPD (vols. 39–44) has not yet been identified.
242. DGD (p. 146) here misreads “four” (*bzhi*) for “ground” (*gzhi*).
243. As stated below, p. 81, Ākāśadhātuvīśvarī represents the expanse of apparition (*snang ba’i dbyings*) and is the female consort of the principal deity.
244. In accordance with unsurpassed union tantra (*yoganiruttaratantra*, *bla med rgyud*), all the deities are multiarmed and in union with their respective consorts, except the six sages (*thub pa drug*). This distinction between common and uncommon tantras is drawn by Longchen Rabjam, *Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems*, pp. 292–94, where it is explained that in Kriyātantra the deities regard each other, in Ubhayatantra they smile at each other, in Yogatantra they embrace, and in Yoganiruttaratantra they are coalesced in union.
245. On the hand emblems that the five male buddhas of the enlightened families hold in their six hands, see below, ch. 6, pp. 248–49 and ch. 8, pp. 314–22.
246. For Longchen Rabjam’s overview concerning the inherent purity of the five psychophysical aggregates in the five male buddhas, see GGFTC, 414–19, and Chonam and Khandro 2011, 195–96.
247. This identification of Vairocana, and of Akṣobhya in the following sentence, accords with the Atiyoga interpretation of Longchen Rabjam, who asserts that in the view of the uncommon tantras the expression “king of consciousness” and the color dark blue both denote the buddha mind aspect of buddha mind in the enlightened family of the tathāgata, whereas the expression “king of physical forms” and the color white denote the buddha body aspect of buddha mind. See the discussion in GGFTC, 397–400. Lochen Dharmaśrī, on the other hand (*Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 81–86, reverses these deities and their roles in conformity with the mainstream Mahāyoga perspective. Readers should note that the captioning of color plates 1a and 1b (following p. 340), depicting Vairocana and Akṣobhya, has been reversed in conformity with the iconographic system of Longchen Rabjam, whereas the labels of the original *tsakali* give precedence to Akṣobhya, in accordance with the *bka’ ma* tradition.
248. See above, note 189; also GGFTC, 417–18. It has been suggested that smelling and tasting are omitted here because they are said not to function in the world system of form. See Engle 2009, p. 362.
249. Cf. GGFTC, 419, and Jamgon Kongtrul’s discussion of the aggregate of physical forms in Dorje 2012, 478–84. Among them, imperceptible forms (*avijñaptirūpa*, *rnam min gyi gzugs*) are not identified with space, but with forms belonging to the sense field of phenomena, which arise during distracted periods of apperception and during any meditative stability.
250. For a brief analysis of these aggregates in terms of (1) feelings of happiness (*sukhavedanā*, *bde ba’i tshor ba*), (2) feelings of sorrow (*duḥkhavedanā*, *sdug bsngal gyi tshor ba*), and (3) feelings of neutrality (*samavedanā*, *mnyam nyid kyi tshor ba*), see Jamgon Kongtrul’s discussion in Dorje 2012, 485–86; and for the corresponding presentation of three modes of perception, comprising (1) infinite perception (*aprameyasamjñā*, *tshad med pa’i ’du shes*), (2) limited perception (*parittasamjñā*, *chung ngu’i ’du shes*), and (3) extensive perception (*mahadgatasamjñā*, *chen po’i ’du shes*), which are associated respectively with the world systems of formlessness, desire, and form; *ibid.*, 486–88.
251. Cf. GGFTC, 418–19, and Jamgon Kongtrul’s detailed discussion of the fifty-

- one mental states, along with the class of formative predispositions disassociated with mind, in Dorje 2012, 488-511.
252. Skt. *prajñopāya* denotes the male buddhas (*yab*) representing skillful means and the female buddhas (*yum*) representing discriminative awareness. On the phrase *ma lus mi lus lus pa med pa*, see above, note 197.
253. The present context is that of the Ghanavyūha realm, where the buddha body of perfect resource (*sambhogakāya*) is manifest in and of itself (*rang snang*), and not that realm in which the five enlightened families become extraneously manifest to bodhisattvas, or that in which all phenomenal existence is pervaded by buddha body, speech, and mind.
254. *Tantra of the Indestructible Peak*, T 480; KPD, vol. 84, p. 450, lines 3-5.
255. *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 766, lines 1-3. Note, however, that the first line reads *rang bzhin nyid kyis de ltar gnas*, whereas in *DGD* it reads *rdo rje'i rang bzhin sgrib pa kun*.
256. Cf. GGFTC, 423-26, and Chonam and Khandro 2011, 198-99.
257. As explained below, p. 90, each of these buddha sense organs supports the apprehension of five types of sense object, and these are consequently subdivided according to twelve hundred sensory attributes.
258. Cf. GGFTC, 426-27.
259. *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*, KPD, vols. 35-38. The exact citation has not been found. The closest in the extant version appears to be in vol. 35, p. 567, lines 2-3: *'das dang ma 'ongs da ltar byung ba dang / dkar nag las rnams ji snyed yod de dag*.
260. *Subsequent Tantra of the Secret Assembly*, KPD, vol. 81, p. 590, lines 15-16.
261. That is to say, Amṛtakuṇḍalin represents the realization that there is neither production nor disintegration, Aśvottama the realization that there is nothing to be expressed, Mahābala the realization that there is nothing to be apperceived, and Yamāntaka the realization that there is nothing at all to be conceived. Cf. GGFTC, 428-29.
262. Cf. *ibid.*, 430.
263. *DGD* (p. 153) misreads “female consorts” (*yum*) for “sense objects” (*yul*).
264. Maitreya’s *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 10, p. 824, lines 17-18. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 88 (v. 41).
265. Cf. GGFTC, 430-31.
266. Cf. Rongzompa’s alternative explanation of this synopsis, as presented in GGFTC, 435. The same source (435-36) further rejects any notion that the introductory narrative (ch. 1) of the *Guhyagarbhatantra* was interpolated by its compiler and defends its status as *buddhavacana*.
267. As explained in Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, ch. 2, pp. 98-104, this denotes the conferral of the secret empowerment (*gsang dbang*), on which see below, ch. 9, pp. 344ff. and ch. 10, pp. 401-2. For Longchen Rabjam’s overview of the categories of empowerment in general, see GGFTC, 786-810.
268. See Jamgon Kongtrul’s discussion of the twelve sense fields (*dvādaśāyatana*, *skye mched bcu gnyis*) and the eighteen sensory elements (*aṣṭadaśadhātu*, *khams bco brgyad*), in Dorje 2012, 531-40.
269. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101, pp. 3-189. The text is also extant in various recensions of the *rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum*, the *Bairo'i rgyud 'bum*, and the *rNying ma'i bka' ma rgyas pa*. The first eighty-four chapters, along with the commentary of Zhenphen Thaye Ozer, have been

translated by Jim Valby (2008-14), based on his collated edition of the root text. However, the verses cited here have not yet been identified in any of the extant versions of the text.

270. *Sūtra of the Irreversible Wheel*, KPD, vol. 65, pp. 625-768. This citation has not yet been identified. However, the last line (*byang chub nam mkha'i mtshan nyid do*) does occur in the *Sūtra Requested by Druma*, KPD, vol. 85, p. 748.
271. On this cosmology, see Kloetzli 1983, 22-72; Kalu Rinpoche Translation Committee 1995; and the chart in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 14-15.
272. These three planes of existence (*srid gsum*) comprise the nether world of *nāgas* (*sa 'og klu'i srid pa*), the surface world of humans (*sa'i steng mi'i srid pa*), and the upper world of gods (*gnam steng lha'i srid pa*). The same term may also sometimes denote the three world systems (*khams gsum*) of desire, form, and formlessness. For the full range of meanings, see Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, pp. 457-58
273. The point here is that Longchen Rabjam holds the five degenerations or impurities to denote the five poisons (*pañcakleśa*), namely, desire (*rāga*), hatred (*dveśa*), delusion (*moha*), pride (*abhimāna*), and envy (*īrṣa*), rather than the generally accepted five degenerations (*pañcakaśāya*, *sn'yigs ma lnga*) in life span, view, afflictive mental states, sentient beings, and time (MVT 2335-2340).
274. Cf. GGFTC, 447-49; Chonam and Khandro 2011, 210-11.
275. *Tantra of the Marvelous King* (*rMad byung rgyal po'i rgyud*). This tantra is identified by Longchen Rabjam under the full title: *Tantra of the Marvelous King: Primordially Empty Nature of Mind* (*Sems nyid ye nas stong pa rmad byung rgyal po*). See his *Overview of the Trilogy on Rest Entitled Ocean of Eloquence* (*Ngal gso skor gsum gyi spyi don legs bshas rgya mtsho*), p. 56. This tantra appears not to be extant, but there is a corpus of three possibly related texts found in Dg. NGB, vol. CHA (6), nos. 43, 45, and 46. The citation has not yet been identified therein, although there is a similarity with the *Sūtra That Gathers All Intentions*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 385, lines 11-13 (*bdag cag mtha' yas sems can rnam don gyi sangs rgyas yin mod kyang byang chub mchog tu sems bskyed do*).
276. Cf. GGFTC, 450-52. The preceding five stanzas indicate how the five pristine cognitions perceive their respective atemporal or primordial nature. As such, the atemporal nature of creation is perceived by the pristine cognition of reality's expanse (*dharmadhātujñāna*); the atemporal nature of cessation is perceived by the mirrorlike pristine cognition (*ādarśajñāna*); the atemporal nature of abiding is perceived by the pristine cognition of sameness (*samatājñāna*); the atemporal nature of referential objects is perceived by the pristine cognition of discernment (*pratyaivekṣanājñāna*); and the atemporal nature of motion is perceived by the pristine cognition of accomplishment (*krtyānuṣṭhānajñāna*). On these stanzas, see also Guenther 1984, 29ff.
277. These stanzas have been related to the "five aspects of the generative essences" (*sems lnga*), on which see above, note 183, and Lochen Dharmasrī's *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 106-9. The exegesis of the latter seeks to explain the five stanzas in terms of both the path of liberation (*grol lam*) and the path of skillful means (*thabs lam*), and it is in the context of the path of skillful means that the four delights are introduced. Longchen Rabjam, however, following the Atiyoga interpretation, maintains



- that this is a structure related not to the path but to the self-manifesting ground.
278. Again Longchen Rabjam rejects the view that would include interpretations associated with the continuum of the path rather than the ground. The former view that the reality should be kept secret from unworthy recipients is also expressed below in the context of the path, e.g., ch. 10, v. 6, and ch. 13, v. 22.
  279. In this enumeration of only five classes, the demigods (*asura, lha ma yin*) are subsumed with the gods (*deva, lha*). See the chart in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 14–15.
  280. *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*, KPD, vol. 55, pp. 3–411. This citation has not yet been identified in the extant versions of the text, but it is reminiscent of p. 111, lines 14–15 (*dag pa dang ba 'od gsal ba mi 'khrugs 'dus ma byas pa ni byang chub sems dpa'i spyod yul lo*).
  281. This line indicates the nondual and self-manifesting nature of the Ghanavyūha realm. According to Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 115, it means that the coemergent retinue was transformed into the tathāgata on perfectly receiving the empowerment. Cf. GGFTC, 453–59.
  282. The ultimate enlightened mind (*paramāṛthabodhicitta*) refers to the indivisibility of Samantabhadra and Samantabhadrī, while the relative enlightened mind (*samvṛtibodhicitta*) refers to the generation of compassionate spirituality for the sake of all sentient beings trapped within cyclic existence.
  283. In GGFTC, 466–91, Longchen Rabjam presents the exemplary life of Śākyamuni Buddha—the sage of the human realm. See also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 219–39.
  284. This is, of course, a reference to the four continents (*caturdvīpa, gling bzhi*) of Indian cosmology, which assume these distinctive shapes. See, e.g., Kloetzli 1983, 23–29.
  285. That is to say, gods and humans hold their heads upward, animals and anguished spirits hold theirs horizontally, while denizens of the hells hold theirs upside down.
  286. Cf. Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 415–16.
  287. *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*, KPD, vols. 35–38. This citation has not yet been identified.
  288. DGD (p. 164) misreads “realization” (*rtogs pa*) for “included” (*gtogs pa*), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 156.
  289. Cf. GGFTC, 495.
  290. Cf. Longchen Rabjam’s account of the life of Śākyamuni Buddha in GGFTC, 466–91; also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 121 and 416–27.
  291. Various enumerations of the twelve deeds are found. Cf. Longchen Rabjam, *Precious Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle*, p. 271. The most standard enumeration comprises the residence in Tuṣita, the descent into the womb, birth, proficiency in the arts, enjoyment of consorts, renunciation of the world, the practice of asceticism, the reaching of the point of enlightenment, the vanquishing of demonic forces, the attainment of manifestly perfect enlightenment, the turning of the doctrinal wheel, and the passing into final nirvāṇa.
  292. Cf. Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 131–32. The first five of these supernormal cognitive powers may be acquired by pious attendants and hermit buddhas, and the last only by bodhisattvas who attain manifestly perfect buddhahood.

- See also Sparham 2006-12, 4:78.
293. *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in One Hundred Thousand Lines*, KPD, vols. 14-25. This citation has not yet been identified.
  294. That is to say, throughout the world systems of desire (*kāmadhātu*) and form (*rūpadhātu*). See the chart in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 14-15.
  295. Although *DGD* attributes this citation to the *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas* (*Sangs rgyas thams cad dang mnyam par sbyor ba*), the verses appear not to derive from that text, but are rather a hybrid derived from the *Tantra of the Hidden Vital Essence of the Moon*, KPD, vol. 83, where the first three verses are found on p. 872, lines 15-16, and the last verse on p. 857, line 2.
  296. Cf. Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 132.
  297. See Longchen Rabjam's overview (GGFTC, 500-518), which discusses the fivefold division of the vehicle presented here in the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*; also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 245-59. Cf. Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 132-33.
  298. Concerning these world systems, virtuous actions, meditative concentrations, and formless absorptions cultivated through the vehicle of gods and humans (*devamanuṣyayāna, lha mi'i theg pa*), see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 57-62, and Jamgon Kongtrul's exposition in Dorje 2012, 420-39.
  299. The four noble truths (*caturāryasatya, 'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi*) and thirty-seven aspects of enlightenment (*saptatṛiṃśadbodhipakṣadharmā, byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos sum cu rtsa bdun*), adopted on the vehicle of pious attendants, are discussed in Dayal 1932, 80-164. For the Nyingma perspective, see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 223-27.
  300. Jamgon Kongtrul discusses the reversal (*pratiloma, lugs ldog*) of the twelve links of dependent origination (*dvādaśāṅgapratītyasamutpāda, rten 'brel gyi yan lag bcu gnyis*) and the completion of the five paths (*pañcamārga, lam lnga*) through the vehicle of the hermit buddhas (*pratyekabuddhayāna, rang rgyal gyi theg pa*) in Dorje 2012, 576-611. See also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 227-31.
  301. On the attainment of the two kinds of selflessness—i.e., of the individual person (*pudgalanairātmya, gang zag gi bdag med*) and of phenomena (*dharmanairātmya, chos kyi bdag med*)—and the attainment of the ten transcendent perfections (*daśapāramitā, pha rol tu phyin pa bcu*) through the vehicle of the bodhisattvas (*bodhisattvayāna, byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa*), see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 231-37; Williams 1989, 45-49; and Dayal 1932, 165-269.
  302. The six vehicles that culminate in the unsurpassed fruitional vehicle of the tantras (*yoganiruttaratantra, bla med rgyud kyi theg pa*) comprise Kriyātantra, Ubhayatantra, Yogatantra, Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 243-372. The three maṇḍalas are those of buddha body, speech, and mind.
  303. Cf. Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 77-80.
  304. *Hundred Parables on Deeds*, KPD, vols. 73-74. This citation has not yet been identified in that work. It is found, however, in the *Foundation of the Minor Transmissions on Monastic Discipline*, KPD, vol. 11, p. 691, lines 17-19.
  305. These would include apathetic materialists lacking understanding (*ma rtogs pa*) and the Aiśvarya and nihilists among those of wrong understanding (*log rtogs pa*), on whom see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 63-69, and Dorje 2012, 500ff.

306. These verses derive not from Nāgārjuna's Precious Garland (*Ratnāvali*, T 4158), as stated in *DGD* (p. 169), but from his *Hundred Verses on Discriminative Awareness*, T 4328, f. 103a. Note that the third verse reads *lha dang mi yi them skas la* instead of *lha yi chos lugs legs spyad na*, and the final verse begins *'dzegs na* instead of *rim gyis*.
307. The expression "variegated" (*dkar dmar*) denotes gross external forms that have the appearance of white flesh and a ruddy complexion. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 876.
308. Bewilderment (*bhrānti*, *'khrul pa*) is identified as the primary characteristic of cyclic existence. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 54-55.
309. *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*, KPD, vol. 55, p. 67, lines 8-10.
310. *Sūtra of the Descent to Lañkā*. The last three verses are found in KPD, vol. 49, p. 405, lines 19-20. This is in the version translated from Chinese into Tibetan.
311. Maitreya's *Ornament of Emergent Realization*, TPD, vol. 49, p. 4, line 21.
312. *Slob dpon padma'i sangs rgyas mnyam 'byor*. This citation may possibly derive from Guru Chowang's celebrated revelation, entitled *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas* (*Sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor lcags smyug ma*). The Tengyur (vols. RA and LA, T 1659-63, 1671-79) also contains several commentaries on this tantra, by Indranāla, Indrabhūti, and others, but none attributed to Padmasambhava, nor is it found in his commentary on the means for attainment of Śrīheruka (NK vol. 61, pp. 5-585).
313. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101, ch. 32, p. 84, lines 3-5. Note, however, that the last line here ends *de la gnas* (instead of *lhun gyis grub*). See also Valby 2008-14, 3:191-95.
314. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa* (*dkon brtsegs*) section of the Kangyur (T 45-93) and the KPD (vols. 39-44) corresponds closely to that found in the *Answers to the Questions of Ratnacūḍa*, KPD, vol. 44, p. 628, lines 13-15.
315. The five attributes of sensory enjoyment (*kun spyod yon tan lnga*) pertain to the objects of the five senses, namely, visual forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangibles. See the commentary in Valby 2008-14, 3:98.
316. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101, ch. 30, v. 16, p. 79, line 20-p. 80, line 1. See also Valby 2008-14, 3:98.
317. That is to say, the vehicles of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, bodhisattvas, and gods and humans. On the first three of these, see Jamgon Kongtrul's presentation in Callahan 2007, 85-174.
318. This remark and the inclusion of the quotation that follows are indicative of the Atiyoga perspective adopted by Longchen Rabjam.
319. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101. These verses have not yet been identified in the extant versions of the text, although the third line (*blang dor med pa chos nyid 'di rtogs nas*) is reminiscent of ch. 78, p. 175, lines 18-19, which read *blang dor med par rtogs par lung bstan to* and p. 176, line 8, which reads *blang dang dor ba'i chos nyid nga mi ston*. The final verse (*'gro dang 'ong med kun tu khyab par gdal*) is found in ch. 62, lines 10-11.
320. *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*, KPD, vol. 55, pp. 3-411. This citation has not yet been identified in the Derge version of the text but is reminiscent of p. 62, lines 14-16 (*ji ltar bar snang cung zad sprin med las skad cig tu ni sprin gyi dkyil 'khor snang thog ma ga las byung bar shes par bya / de bzhin chos rnams thams cad shes par gyis*).
321. *Sūtra Requested by Druma*, KPD, vol. 58, pp. 664-816. This citation has not

been located in the text.

322. *Sūtra of Supreme Golden Light*, KPD, vol. 89, p. 481, lines 8–9.
323. *Sūtra Revealing the Three Buddha Bodies* (*sKu gsum bstan pa'i mdo*). This text may be identified with the *Āryatrikāya-nāma-mahāyānasūtra* (*'Phags pa sku gsum zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*). KPD, vol. 68, pp. 168–70. The citation has not been identified therein, despite a certain similarity in structure.
324. Maitreya's *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*, ch. 4, v. 1. See TPD, vol. 70, p. 964, line 19–p. 965, line 1; Holmes and Holmes 1985, 118 (v. 280).
325. Maitreya's *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 12, p. 831, lines 14–16. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 114 (v. 4).
326. Maitreya's *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 12, p. 831, lines 12–13. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 113 (v. 3).
327. Maitreya's *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 12, p. 831, lines 13–14. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 113–14 (v. 3).
328. Here and in a similar passage below, in ch. 13, pp. 497ff., Longchen Rabjam identifies the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* with Atiyoga. On the three piṭakas from the Nyingma perspective, see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 77–80, and on the six classes of tantra, 243–372.
329. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101. This citation has not yet been identified in the extant versions of the root text, although the first verse is reminiscent of ch. 34, p. 88, line 16, which reads *spyi 'dus sgos 'dus dgongs pa 'dus*. See also Valby 2008–14, 3:222.
330. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101. This citation has not yet been identified in the extant versions of the root text, although the last verse (*mdo rgyud kun gyi spyi 'grel yin*) is reminiscent of ch. 12, p. 41, line 18, which reads *rgyud dang mdo sde kun gyi spyi 'grel yin*. See also Valby 2008–14, 2:53–54. The first two verses are also reminiscent of the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 543, lines 2–3: *rang bzhin gsang ba'i snying po 'di / sde snod kun dang rgyud kun gyi*.
331. Elsewhere this citation is attributed to the *Intermediate Mother* (*Yum bar ma*), either the *Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines* or the *Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eighteen Thousand Lines*, but the exact reference has not yet been identified.
332. *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*, KPD, vol. 55, pp. 3–411. This citation has not yet been identified in the Derge version of the text, although the last two lines (*nang dang phyi rol kun tu btsal na med / chos rnams thams cad de bzhin she spar gyis*) are reminiscent of the lines on p. 83 (*nang dang phyi rol kun tu snying po med / chos rnams thams cad de bzhin shes par gyis*).
333. *Sūtra of the Applications of Mindfulness*, KPD, vols. 68–71. This citation has not yet been identified.
334. This is the description of the continuum of the ground according to the Great Madhyamaka, on which see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 169–77.
335. The buddha mind is characterized by two kinds of knowledge (*thugs mkhyen pa gnyis*): the pristine cognition that definitively knows the view (*ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes*) and the pristine cognition that quantitatively knows phenomena (*ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes*).
336. This citation has not yet been identified in the extant Derge versions of the *Tantra of the Marvelous King* (*rMad byung rgyal po*).

337. Here Choying Tobden Dorje (*DGD*, p. 117) notes that this verse “employs the ornament of concatenating poetic association” (*mālādīpaka, phreng ba’i gsal byed*).
338. The author states here (*DGD*, p. 178) that these verses “employ verbal repetition (*śabdāvṛtti, tshig bskor ba*), an aspect of the poetic ornament of repetition” (*āvṛtti, bskor ba’i rgyan*).
339. The author states here (*DGD*, p. 178) that this verse “employs the poetic ornament of denial (*ākṣepa, ’gog pa’i rgyan*) with reference to doubt” (*the tshom gyis*).
340. The vast majority of the commentary derives verbatim from Longchen Rabjam’s *Dispelling the Darkness*, supplemented by introductory material and occasional comments from Lochen Dharmaśrī’s *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*.
341. On Akṣobhya Vajrasattva, see ch. 1, p. 79 in the context of the ground; ch. 6, pp. 248 and 252 in the context of the visualization; ch. 7, p. 279 in the context of the mantras; and ch. 8, pp. 316–17 in the context of the gestures of sealing and the hand emblems. On Ratnasambhava, see ch. 1, p. 79 in the context of the ground; ch. 6, pp. 248 and 252 in the context of the visualization; ch. 7, p. 280 in the context of the mantras; and ch. 8, pp. 318–19 in the context of the gestures of sealing and the hand emblems.
342. Here the author notes (*DGD*, p. 181) that these verses of homage are written as “a poetic ornament of natural description, referring to attributes” (*guṇasvabhāvokti, yon tan rang bzhin brjod*).
343. *DGD* reads 345, but the actual number of subtopics appears to be 347.
344. *DGD* reads 245, whereas the actual number of subtopics works out to 250.
345. *DGD* reads 90, but the actual number of subtopics is 87.
346. Longchen Rabjam’s overview of the garland of Sanskrit letters is presented in GGFTC, 550–57. Cf. Chonam and Khandro 2011, 281–85. This discusses the essential nature of the syllables of sound and their written representations, their phonetic articulation, their presence within the energy centers of the subtle body, their presence as the seed syllables and mantras of the hundred peaceful and wrathful deities, and their subsumption in the letter A.
347. The deities corresponding to the garland of the forty-two letters are enumerated below, pp. 189–99.
348. On these four rites of burnt offering, which respectively engender pacification (*zhi*), enrichment (*rgyas*), subjugation (*dbang*), and violent destruction (*drag*), see below, ch. 9, pp. 349–51 in the context of the peaceful deities, and ch. 20, pp. 731–43 in the context of the wrathful deities. Longchen Rabjam’s overviews regarding the four rites are presented in GGFTC, 783–86 and 1258–64.
349. *DGD* (p. 183) reads “demonstrably emerge” (*bstan ’byung*) for “firmly emerge” (*brtan ’byung*). See the preferred reading in Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 191.
350. Longchen Rabjam explains in his overview (GGFTC, 552–53) that the letters are held to be the basis of buddha body, speech, and mind, as well as of all sentient beings, and therefore the single letter A and the garland of letters are not simply the means of respectively transforming the *dharmakāya* and *rūpakāya* into the path.
351. The distinctive elemental properties of solidity, cohesion, combustion, movement, and vacuity are held to derive respectively from the primary

- elements (*mahābhuta*) of earth, water, fire, wind, and space.
352. Cf. Jamgon Kongtrul's exposition of Sanskrit phonetics and articulation in Dorje 2012, 105–12. Among these syllables, the flat pitched vowel *I* technically “curves backward” (*bkug pa*) into a palatal position, while the low pitched vowel *U* “descends” (*smad pa*) into a labial position.
  353. On these three punctuation marks, see GGFTC, 554–55 and 576–78. See also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 285. With regard to the medial punctuation circles in particular, some confusion appears to have arisen owing to the Tibetan conflation of *sūtri* (*tig* or *thig*) with *tsheg*—the dot used in the Tibetan script to demarcate syllables. The original Sanskrit expression is discussed in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 916n1279. It is clear that Tibetan commentators, such as Longchen Rabjam, attribute this function of demarcating nouns or words to the *visarga* aspirate, which is written as two vertically stacked circles and is said to “resemble the eyes of Maheśvara.” See also below, note 361.
  354. Cf. Jamgon Kongtrul's discussion on the aggregation of syllables, the formation of words, and their semantic implications, in Dorje 2012, 121–23.
  355. Extensive information on the right-and left-sided energy channels (*rasanā* and *lalanā*) can be found in Callahan 2014, pp. 183–86.
  356. On the manifold clusters of deities who emerge from the basic series, see below, ch. 11, pp. 446–57.
  357. Again Longchen Rabjam emphasizes the fruitional aspect of the wheel of letters: its appearance as the fully mature maṇḍala of deities or as the five inexhaustible adornments comprising buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities.
  358. This citation has not yet been identified.
  359. On this initial punctuation mark, see Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 154, where three aspects are considered: its symbolic representation in the shape of a staff; its purpose, which is to illustrate the nondual pristine cognition; and its action, which resembles a pathway in that it precedes all the syllables.
  360. The term *rathavāhaka* (*shing rta'i dran byed*) could refer either to a wagon driver or to the horse that pulls a wagon. See also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 295.
  361. In Sanskrit, the punctuation circles (*visarga*) are appended to stems, enabling them to form substantives, and then modified through inflections that accord with the different cases. See Whitney 1896, 23. The *visarga* takes the form of an *h*-breathing, substituting for a final *s* or *r*, and is uttered in the articulating position of the preceding vowel.
  362. Longchen Rabjam (GGFTC, 576–78) takes issue at this juncture with those critics of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* who deny that such punctuation marks are found in Sanskrit manuscripts, basing his critique on observation of Sanskrit manuscripts and scriptural authority.
  363. The digression that follows is one of the very few of Longchen Rabjam's overviews that Choying Tobden Dorje retained in his commentary. See GGFTC, 579–86.
  364. The six sages are of a different category in that they represent the buddha body of emanation rather than the buddha body of perfect resource.
  365. That is to say, the four female bodhisattvas transcend the four extremes of eternalism, nihilism, selfhood, and substantialism.

366. *Tantra of the Precious Gems of Pristine Cognition* (*Ye shes rin po che'i rgyud*). This text, also entitled *gSang ba ye shes rin po che'i rgyud kun 'dus*, is sometimes cited by Longchen Rabjam, but the source has not yet been identified.
367. *Tantra of the Coalescence of Sun and Moon*. Dg. NGB vol. NGA (4), no. 8, ff. 117b-140b. This citation has not yet been identified but for the first line, which is found on f. 120b, line 5.
368. This after-death experience of the *chos nyid bar do* is discussed preeminently in Karma Lingpa's *Bar do thos grol chen mo*. See the translation in Dorje 2005, 225-72. While the hundred deities of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* also appear in that cycle, there are important differences in iconography—most notably in the central male and female buddhas who are depicted with a single face in the Karma Lingpa tradition.
369. *Enlightened Intention of the Nucleus of Esoteric Instructions*. Dg. NGB vol. RA (25) no. 7, ff. 35a-49b. The citation has not been specifically identified, although the theme pertains to ch. 5 (f. 41b, line 4-f. 42a, line 7).
370. That is to say, in the *thod rgal* instructions of the Great Perfection, on which see below, ch. 13, pp. 394, 506-9.
371. In particular these instructions refer to Padmasambhava's revelation of the *Innermost Spirituality of the Dākinī* (*mKha' 'gro snying thig*) and Vimalamitra's *Innermost Spirituality of Vimalamitra* (*Bi ma snying thig*), both of which are contained in Longchen Rabjam's *Four Part Innermost Spirituality* (*sNying thig ya bzhi*), as well as to their Mahāyoga-based commentaries extant in P Tengyur, vol. 83, and TPD, vol. 44.
372. *Yum bar ma*. In this instance, the citation is found in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eighteen Thousand Lines*, KPD, vol. 29, p. 397, line 12. Part of the verse is also found in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines*, KPD, vol. 26, p. 551, lines 16-17. On this citation, see also Conze 1975, 160.
373. This reading accords with the commentary of Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 209, who interprets “buddha mind” (*thugs*) as “compassionate spirituality” (*thugs rje*).
374. On the cessation of cyclic existence in actual reality (*chos nyid zad pa*), which is the last of the four visionary appearances (*snang ba bzhi*) experienced in the all-surpassing realization (*thod rgal*) of the Great Perfection, see Longchen Rabjam's overview on ch. 13 in GGFTC, 1029 and 1034; also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 337-45.
375. The terms for these parts of the syllable or letter *aum̐* are *bindu* (superscript point), *zla tshes* (superscript crescent), *khog pa* (central form), *nāda* (vibration), and *rang bzhin* (intrinsic nature). Among them *nāda* may also refer to a superscript semicircle used as an abbreviation to represent nasalization. See Monier-Williams 2005, 534.
376. On these forty-five maṇḍalas, see above, ch. 4:11. DGD (p.197, line 4) here follows extant editions of *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions* in reading “fifty-five maṇḍalas” (*dkyil 'khor lnga bcu rtsa lnga*).

377. The practices associated with the wheel of letters in the energy channels of the body are mentioned in Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 1006-19. The four wheels (*cakra*) referred to are those of crown, throat, heart, and navel.
378. For Longchen Rabjam's overview of the path of liberation (*grol lam*), see GGFTC, 1019-21, and Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 277-81. The three meditative stabilities on this path of liberation—those of real nature, universal appearance, and causal basis—are also mentioned in GGFTC, 679 and 771.
379. *Thabs yab kyi zla ba dang shes rab yum gyi nyi ma*. On the path of skillful means (*thabs lam*), see Longchen Rabjam's overviews in GGFTC, 899-914, and especially 1006-19; see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 277.
380. The terms are as follows: blending (*bsrubs pa*), filling (*'gengs pa*), and extension (*'grems pa*).
381. This citation is found in Kāmadhenupa's *Extensive Commentary on the Detailed Kingly Rites Pertaining to the Majestic Tantra of the Sublime Purification of All the Lower Realms*, T 2625, f. 256a.
382. Cf. ch. 6, v. 23 and ch. 17, v. 10.
383. The present description of the wheel of letters is held by the author to indicate the continuum of the ground and is thus distinguished from their utilization of the path, as described in GGFTC, 1006-19.
384. Maitreya's *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*, ch. 1, vv. 55-57. See TPD, vol. 70, p. 941, lines 1-7; Holmes and Holmes 1985, 40 (vv. 55-57).
385. Saraha's *Treasury of Songs*. T 2224, f. 72b.
386. On the consummation of the five elements, see also above, ch. 1, p. 61 and note 204; and on the enumeration of the eight lesser rites, see below, pp. 217-18.
387. *Carakasamhitā*. This classical Indian medical treatise is translated in Kaviratna and Sharma 1996.
388. These 404 diseases may be derived from the three humors and their combination, or alternatively from the following four categories: (1) imaginary diseases caused by demonic possession (*kun brtags gdon gyi nad*); (2) ostensible diseases that suddenly occur (*ltar snang 'phral byung rkyen gyi nad*); (3) absolute diseases that harm the life span (*yongs grub tshe'i nad*), otherwise known as the basic treatable diseases associated with imbalance of the elements and humoral combinations (*'byung 'dus gzhi yi nad*); and (4) dependent diseases due to past actions (*gzhan dbang sngon las kyi nad*), otherwise known as naturally occurring diseases due to past actions (*rang bzhin sngon gyi nad*). See Dorje 2012, 328; see also Parfionovitch, Dorje, and Meyer 1992, 165-68 (plates 75-76) and, specifically on humoral imbalances and their combinations, 53, 912.
389. This denotes bodhisattvas of the tenth level who have received the empowerment of great light rays at the approach to the buddha level of Universal Light. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 912.
390. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa* (*dkon brtsegs*) section of the Kangyur (T 45-93) and the KPD (vols. 39-44) has not yet been identified.
391. The particular means for attainment is described in Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 619-20.
392. *Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 602, lines 13-17. Note the variant readings.
393. *Ibid.*, p. 604, lines 4-7.



394. *Dra ba sdom pa*. This quotation is a slight variant on our ch. 9, v. 19.
395. Śāntideva's *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, TPD, vol. 61, pp. 951–1048, and the bilingual edition in Bhattacharya 1960, ch. 5, v. 16. Note that the verses here are out of order and one of them (*yun ring dus su spyad byas kyang*) is missing; see also the commentary in Padmakara 2007, 169–70.
396. *Supreme Wheel* (*'Khor lo mchog*). This title is probably an abbreviation of the *Tantra of the Wheel of Time* (*dpal dus kyi 'khor lo mchog*), but the citation has not yet been identified in the relevant literature.
397. For a more extensive account of the recitation of mantras relating to this tradition, see Jamgon Mipham Gyatso, *Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 252–59; also Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 156–57.
398. *Dam tshig mchog*; also entitled *Ye shes bkod pa chen po dam tshig mchog gi rgyud*. This citation and its source are as yet unidentified.
399. *Supreme Conqueror* (*rGyal mchog*). This citation and its source are as yet unidentified.
400. On these five requisites, see also below, ch. 9, pp. 386–87.
401. *Tantra of the Secret Vital Essence* (*Thig le gsang ba brda'i rgyud*). Dg. NGB vol. RA (25), no. 8, ff. 49b–53b. However, this citation is not found therein, nor is it found in the *rDzogs pa chen po thig le gsang ba de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud*. Dg. NGB vol. NGA (4), no. 20, ff. 346a–350a.
402. These aspects of meditative stability based respectively on skillful means (*thabs*) and discriminative awareness (*shes rab*) are discussed in the following pages of this chapter from the standpoint of the ground. In terms of the path, see below, chs. 11–13.
403. *Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 664, lines 6–7.
404. Śāntideva's *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, TPD, vol. 61, pp. 951–1048, and the bilingual edition in Bhattacharya, 1960, ch. 9, v. 34. See also the commentary in Padmakara 2007, 334.
405. *Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*, KPD, vol. 55, pp. 3–411. This citation has not yet been identified in the Derge version of the text.
406. Cf. Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 619–20.
407. The integration of the generation and perfection stages of meditation in the path of the Great Perfection is presented below in ch. 13. The visualized maṇḍala of the perfection stage is said to become spontaneously present “in the manner of a fish leaping from the water.”
408. The emphasis that Longchen Rabjam places on the *rdzogs chen* interpretation of this chapter is at variance with that of the view of commentators such as Yungtonpa Dorjepel, who, in order to present the gradualist structure of the path, was responsible for altering the exegetical order of the root verses. Lochen Dharmaśrī (*Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, ch. 5, pp. 167ff.) differentiates three interpretations according to which different structures are recognized in chs. 1–9 of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* from the respective standpoints of the essential nature that is to be realized (*rtogs bya'i ngo bo*), the means of realizing it (*rtogs byed thabs*), and the conclusive result (*mthar phyin pa'i 'bras bu*). Among them he attributes the second to Yungtonpa.
409. On Jamgon Kongtrul's general presentation of calm abiding (*śamatha*, *zhi gnas*) and higher insight (*vipaśyanā*, *lhag mthong*), see Dorje 2012, 428–31; on their integration within the Great Perfection, see Longchen Rabjam's overviews in GGFTC, 1019–20 and 1026.

410. Maitreya's *Analysis of the Middle and Extremes*, TPD, vol. 70, p. 909, line 6. Note that the correct reading is *mi phro rnam par 'byed kyang ngo*, not . . . *'byang ngo*. Cf. Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2006, 108. DGD attributes this citation to the *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*.
411. The source of this citation is unclear, although the second verse (*gid ni ting nge 'dzin la bzhas*) is found in Śāntideva's *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, TPD, vol. 61, p. 999, line 20, and Bhattacharya 1960, 135 (ch. 8, v. 1). See also the commentary in Padmakara 2007, 258–59.
412. This is one of the four formless absorptions, associated with the experiences of the world system of formlessness. See Jamgon Kongtrul's explanation in Dorje 2012, 437.
413. Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's *Lamp for the Eye of Meditative Concentration*. The first two lines of this citation are found with minor variants in NK vol. 104, p. 648.
414. See Longchen Rabjam's overview concerning the three maṇḍalas of the ground, path, and result in GGFTC, 632–36; see also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 327–32.
415. That is to say, earth, physical forms, and delusion are present as the pristine cognition of reality's expanse (*dharmadhātujñāna*); water, feelings, and pride are present as the pristine cognition of sameness (*samatājñāna*); fire, perceptions, and desire are present as the pristine cognition of discernment (*pratyavekṣanājñāna*); and wind, formative predispositions, and envy are present as the pristine cognition of accomplishment (*kṛtyānuṣṭhānajñāna*), while space, consciousness, and hatred are present as the mirrorlike pristine cognition (*ādarśajñāna*).
416. On these modes and aspects of liberation, and on the other causal and fruitional attributes outlined in the following paragraphs, including the four assurances, see above, ch. 1, p. 69–72.
417. The point is that if there were a single courtyard in which both the buddha body of perfect resource and the buddha body of emanation appeared, the maṇḍala would not be considered valid in terms of *rang snang* and Ghanavyūha Akaniṣṭha. See also the diagram in Tendzin Lungtok Nyima et al., *Maṇḍala Illustrations of the Tibetan Buddhist Nyingma Tradition*, p. 6.
418. Buddhaguhya's *Sequence of Light*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 904, line 18–p. 905, line 3.
419. Cf. ch. 1, pp. 71–72 above, where the western throne of Amitābha is said to rest upon a peacock (*rma bya*).
420. Buddhaguhya's *Sequence of Light*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 908, lines 11–12.
421. This is defined as the distance from the middle joint of the thumb to the tip of the thumbnail. See Zhang Yisun et al., *Tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 2298.
422. *Garland of Lightning (Glog gi phreng ba)*. This text may be tentatively identified with the *rTa mgrin la bstod pa glog gi phreng ba*. Elsewhere, Longchen Rabjam attributes the same verses to the *Tantra of Heruka Galpo (Gal po che)*, Dg. NGB, vol. DZA (no. 1). The citation is also found in the *Tantra of Hevajra*, II, v. 26.
423. These statements are rejected by Longchen Rabjam because they confuse the position of Samantabhadra as expositor, principal deity, and basis for the incandescence of the deities. On his sometimes controversial placement of Vairocana rather than Akṣobhya at the center, see above, note 247.
424. The order of the hand implements here concurs with Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 185, who suggests that Akṣobhya

should be at the center since he holds the vajra, and Vairocana in the east since he holds the wheel. Longchen Rabjam himself agrees with this symbolism in ch. 1 (GGFTC, 397). In ch. 8, however, as in the present context, he asserts that Vairocana, as the central figure, holds the vajra, while Akṣobhya in the east holds the wheel.

425. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 407, lines 1–3.
426. This implies in the view of Longchen Rabjam that Akṣobhya holds wheel and bell, vajra and lotus, and sword and gemstone; Ratnasambhava holds gemstone and bell, wheel and lotus, and sword and vajra; Amitābha holds lotus and bell, wheel and vajra, and sword and gemstone; while Amoghasiddhi holds sword and bell, wheel and lotus, and vajra and gemstone.
427. I am grateful to Chonam and Khandro 2011, 359, for this explanation.
428. Whereas in Karma Lingpa's *Peaceful and Wrathful Deities: Natural Liberation of Enlightened Intention (Zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol)*, the male buddhas do have a single face and two arms.
429. The four affirmations of the doctrine (*chos kyi sdom bzhi*), which Śatakratu taught to the *devas* of Tuṣita, are impermanence, suffering, emptiness and selflessness, and quiescence of nirvāṇa.
430. The four attractive qualities of a bodhisattva (*catuḥsamgrahavastu, bsdu ba'i dngos po bzhi*) are generosity (*dāna, sbyin pa*), affectionate speech (*priyavacana, snyan par smra ba*), purposeful activity (*arthacaryā, don spyod pa*), and harmony (*samānārtha, don mthun pa*).
431. According to Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 553, the seed syllable of the animals, Ṛ, is located in the throat center and is therefore given the color green, in accordance with his tradition, which attributes green/yellow to the throat center. In certain other *upadeśa* systems, this syllable is located in the navel center and given the color dark red. See Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa, *Unsurpassed Pristine Cognition*, p. 6b. Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 189, concurs with the latter view, describing it as dark red. Cf. plate 5d.
432. Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 189, speaks of these as the nine styles of the peaceful deities (*zhi ba'i tshul dgu*) and describes the first set of five as essential attributes (*ngo bo'i yon tan*) and the second set of four as their secondary attributes (*rnam pa'i yon tan*).
433. These brilliant purificatory colors diffused from the six centers of the deities are distinguished from the lusterless colors of the seed syllables within the corresponding centers of sentient beings, which are respectively dull white, yellowish green, pale blue, dark red, smoke gray, and black. See Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa, *Unsurpassed Pristine Cognition*, p. 6b.
434. See Longchen Rabjam's overview of the buddha bodies, pristine cognitions, and enlightened activities in GGFTC, 657–64; also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 342–47.
435. *DGD* (p. 217) reads *bcos*, but the interlinear commentary that follows accords with the reading *g.yos*.
436. On these distinctive modes of the buddha body of emanation, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 128–38.
437. *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*, KPD, vols. 35–38. This citation has not yet been identified, although there are passages reminiscent of this theme, as in vol. 35, p. 822, lines 8–10.
438. The commentary (*DGD*, p. 218) reads “purify” (*sbyong*) whereas the root

- tantra cited above reads “renounce” (*spong*).
439. The four noble truths (*caturāryasatya*, *'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi*) comprise the truth of suffering (*duḥkhasatya*, *sdug bsnal gyi bden pa*); the truth of the origin of suffering (*samudayasatya*, *kun 'byung gi bden pa*); the truth of cessation (*nirodhasatya*, *'gag pa'i bden pa*); and the truth of the path (*mārgasatya*, *lam gyi bden pa*). See, e.g., Jamgon Kongtrul's exposition in Callahan 2007, 90–122.
440. This citation and the one that immediately follows have not been identified in the extant Derge version of the *Sūtra Requested by the Emanational King*.
441. The meaning of this disclosure is clarified in the following paragraphs.
442. On the causal interpretation of these ten levels, see Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 964–68 and 1011ff.
443. This is held to occur on the eleventh level (*samantaprabhā*, *kun tu 'od*).
444. This empowerment concludes the path of the causal vehicles.
445. Maitreya's *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 15, p. 848, line 15. Note, however, that the second line in the dpe bsdur ma version reads: *byang chub sems dpa'i dbang bskur ba*. See also Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 185n9 (v. 44), where Sthiramati's interpretation is compatible with our text.
446. Here and in his *Overview of the Mantras Entitled Melodious Thunder of Brahmā*, p. 65, Longchen Rabjam holds that the *yi ge 'khor lo'i tshogs chen gyi sa* does not refer to the actual emanation of the letters but to their causal basis, or *dharmakāya*. On these resultant levels, see also Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 967–69.
447. *Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful Means*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 812, line 12.
448. Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 967–69, offers a clearer explanation of this point.
449. On the Nyingma interpretation of the five or six buddha bodies, see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 139–43 and 447–50.
450. The three preceding paragraphs explain the maṇḍala of pristine cognition as an integration of ground, path, and result. In the sections that follow, the same verses are explained one by one, according to the ground, path, and result.
451. *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*, KPD, vol. 77, p. 428, lines 1–4, except that the last verse ends *de bzhin gshegs* instead of *rtag tu bzhugs*.
452. *Tantra of the Hidden Vital Essence of the Moon*, KPD, vol. 83, pp. 843–979. The second and third lines are found reversed and with minor modifications on p. 859. The other two lines have not been identified.
453. *Sūtra of the Arrayed Bouquet*, contained in the *Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*, KPD, vols. 35–38. The citation is found in vol. 35, p. 430, lines 14–16.
454. Vimalamitra's *Short Commentary on the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, TPD, vol. 44, p. 25, lines 11–12.
455. Buddhaguhya's *Sequence of Light*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 903, line 21.
456. *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB, vol. 15, no. 6, f. 2509b, line 6. Note, however, that *dbyings* is replaced with *yig* in the first line of verse, and the last line is quite different—*byin rlabs skyob phyir yum de brjod* instead of *sangs rgyas rin chen za ma tog*.
457. *Tantra of the Secret Assembly*, KPD, vol. 81, pp. 442–578. While these five Sanskrit mantras are mentioned on pp. 447–48, the actual citation seems to

- derive not from that work but from the related *Tantra of the Indestructible Garland* in the same volume, KPD, vol. 81, p. 877, lines 9–11, where there are some variants (especially *'khor tu bgrol* for *chags chen mtshon*).
458. *Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 418, line 4.
459. This accords with *DGD* (p. 225), whereas Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 259, offers no specific explanation.
460. According to the oral interpretation of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, these are metaphors respectively for utility and care.
461. The text (*DGD*, p. 226) misreads *mdzes* for MAI JAḤ.
462. Here the interpretation of Choying Tobden Dorje differs markedly from that of Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 262, on which see GGFTC, 695–96.
463. The pristine cognition of emptiness (*śūnyatājñāna*) is a synonym for the pristine cognition of reality's expanse (*dharmadhātujñāna*).
464. *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB, vol. 15, no. 6, f. 260b, lines 4–5.
465. Longchen Rabjam in an earlier overview (GGFTC, 390) states that Vairocana represents the buddha mind of the Buddha family and Akṣobhya the buddha mind of the Vajra family.
466. On the composition of this number through the multiplication of the blessings of buddha body, speech, and mind, see below, ch. 8, pp. 331–34; also GGFTC, 736–41.
467. *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB, vol. 15, no. 6, f. 260b line 7–f. 261a, line 1.
468. These are the substantial primary cause (*upadānakaraṇa*, *nyer len gyi rgyu*) and the contributory secondary cause (*sahakāripratyaya*, *lhan cig byed rkyen*).
469. The expression *lte ba rnam gnyis* here indicates both the navel and secret energy centers within the subtle body.
470. This citation is not found in the shorter version of the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB, vol. 15, no. 6, but rather in the longer version, entitled *Great Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation* (*sGyu 'phrul thal ba'i rgyud chen po*), contained in the mTshams brag manuscript of the Ancient Tantra Collection, vol. 22, p. 222, lines 4–6.
471. These two enumerations of the sixty modulations are also presented by Longchen Rabjam in his *Precious Treasury of Word and Meaning*. See Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, p. 3575. They stand in contrast to the general listing of the sixty modulations of buddha speech enumerated in Jamspal *et al.* 2004, 156–58, and in MVT 445–504.
472. This phrase can be rendered in English either formally as “removal of numbness,” which corresponds to the meanings given here, or colloquially as “sneezing,” which is the meaning implied in the following paragraph.
473. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa* (*dkon brtsegs*) section of the Kangyur (T 45-93) and the KPD (vols. 39–44) has not yet been identified.
474. This alternative interpretation, which Longchen Rabjam rejects, recalls the incident recorded in the life of Śākyamuni Buddha (e.g., Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 425), when the nun Prajāpati, Śākyamuni Buddha's former nurse, on hearing him sneeze, mistakenly encourages the view of permanence.
475. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa* (*dkon brtsegs*) section of the Kangyur (T 45-93) and the KPD (vols. 39–44) has not yet been identified.

476. The twelve branches of the scriptures (*dvādaśāṅgapravacana*, *gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis*) altogether comprise discourses (*sūtra*, *mdo sde*), proverbs in prose and verse (*geya*, *dbyangs bsnyad*), prophetic declarations (*vyākaraṇa*, *lung bstan*), verses (*gāthā*, *tshig bcad*), aphorisms (*udāna*, *ched brjod*), legends or frame stories (*nidāna*, *gleng gzhi*), extensive teachings (*mahāvaipulya*, *shin tu rgyas pa*), tales of past lives (*jātaka*, *skyes rabs*), marvelous events (*adbhutadharmā*, *rmaḍ du byung*), narratives (*avadāna*, *rtogs brjod*), fables (*itivr̥ttaka*, *de lta bu byung ba*), and established instructions (*upadeśa*, *gtab phab*). See the analysis offered in Buton Rinchendrub, *History of Buddhism*, pp. 17–18. In the present context, these are all expressed in accordance with the teachings of the five vehicles, which have been outlined above, pp. 128–29, namely, *devamanuṣyayāna*, *śrāvakayāna*, *pratyekabuddhayāna*, *bodhisattvayāna*, and *vajrayāna* or *guhyamantrayāna*.
477. *Diamond Cutter*, KPD, vol. 34, p. 354, lines 4–7.
478. Maitreya’s *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*, ch. 4, v. 71. See TPD, vol. 70, p. 972, line 20–p. 973, line 3; Holmes and Holmes 1985, 140 (vv. 350–51). Note that the verses in square brackets are omitted from the quotation but found in the original.
479. The title of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* itself exemplifies the ultimate seal of Samantabhadra.
480. *Yum bar ma*, i.e., *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines*, KPD, vols. 26–28. This precise citation has not yet been identified in that work, although somewhat similar words are found in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eighteen Thousand Lines*, KPD, vol. 30, p. 180, lines 8–18.
481. Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 225–26, concurs in this description of Vairocana and Akṣobhya, citing in support Vimalamitra’s *Short Commentary on the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*.
482. Here, Longchen Rabjam maintains (GGFTC, 721) that the commitment seal, the great seal, the doctrinal seal, and the action seal are all encapsulated in this sealing hand gesture, whereas Rongzompa and Buddhaguhya argue respectively that only two and three of them are included.
483. *Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful Means*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 815, line 20–p. 816, line 2.
484. DGD (p. 237) misreads *rdo rje ba snga ma pa*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 273.
485. These variations on the general seal depend on the different seed syllables, which change owing to the rotation of the principal deities.
486. See Longchen Rabjam’s remarks in GGFTC, 721.
487. Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 274, offers two readings—either lunar or solar.
488. Rongzompa, *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 163, explains that the left leg is consecrated as Amitābha, [the buddha body of] reality (*chos [sku] snang ba mtha’ yas*). So “reality” (*chos*) is here employed as a code word, indicating the left thigh of the female consort.
489. Rongzompa, *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 164, similarly explains that the right leg is consecrated as the “enlightened family of activity” (*las kyi rigs*). So the embrace of “activity” here denotes the touching of the right thigh of the male consort.

490. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 400, lines 6–7.
491. Specifically, Śatakratu holds the lute, Vemacitra bears the armor, Śākyamuni holds the begging bowl, Sthirasimha holds the book, Jvālamukha holds the casket, and Yama holds the fire and water.
492. This verse is found in Vajrahāsyā’s *Exegesis of the Tantra of the Secret Assembly*, T 1909, f. 55b.
493. There are, particularly in the context of the unsurpassed yogatantras (*yoganiruttaratantra*), forms of the buddha body of emanation such as Padmasambhava in union with a consort. The number of deities in this case, however, excludes that possibility.
494. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 400, lines 3–5. Here the title of the text is abbreviated to *rDo rje*.
495. Cf. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 234. On the distinction that is drawn here between Samantabhadra the principal deity and Samantabhadra through whom the incandescence of the maṇḍala arises, see also GGFTC, 645–49.
496. Cf. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 237, who interprets this passage with the words *yan lag gi lha bzhi bcu tham pa rtsa lha gnyis la bkod pa’i thabs lha bzhi bcu*. This straightforward reading enables him to avoid Longchen Rabjam’s explanation that the two basic deities are subsequently excluded from the calculation.
497. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 236–37, effectively holds this position.
498. *DGD* (p. 244) here misreads “twenty-one thousand” (*nyi khri chig stong*) instead of “twenty-four thousand” (*nyi khri bzhi stong*). See GGFTC, 741.
499. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 238, while agreeing that the sages have no consorts, holds that they still number twenty-four thousand because he includes a retinue of inner and outer male and female bodhisattvas associated with their energy channels, alongside the standard enumeration of twenty-three male and seventeen female deities within their limbs.
500. Rongzompa, *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 165.
501. This appears to indicate that in Rongzompa’s view, the verse *bcu gnyis drug gi ’od ’phro ’bar* reads alongside the previous section on the threefold diffusion of the forty-two deities, rather than in the context of the maṇḍala of twenty-one thousand buddhas. See *ibid.*
502. On the attainment of power over the life span (*tshe dbang*), see also GGFTC, 810–11 and 959–74.
503. The full title of this text is the *Tantra of Genuine Pristine Cognition That Reveals the Nature of Mind as Intrinsic Awareness (Sems nyid rang rig tu bstan pa ye shes dam pa)*. It is listed by Longchen Rabjam among the twenty-four great tantras of the mental class (*sems phyogs kyi rgyud sde chen po nyi shu rtsa bzhi*), on which see Barron 2007, 334. However, it appears to be no longer extant. The text is not to be confused with the *Sūtra Requested by Jñānottara* (KPD, vol. 44, pp. 82–178). Other sources appear to attribute this citation to Dharmakīrti’s *Exposition of Valid Cognition*.
504. See Longchen Rabjam’s general overview on the conferral of empowerments in GGFTC, 783–811, and specifically, on the secret empowerments of discriminative awareness (*shes rab kyi gsang dbang*) and skillful means (*thabs kyi gsang dbang*), to which the present distinction refers, see p. 801.

- The same ground is covered in Chonam and Khandro 2011, 397–419.
505. With regard to these signs indicative of a female mudrā, see below, ch. 11, pp. 433–36.
  506. The title *Klong gsal* denotes the *Tantra of Radiant Expanse* (*rGyud kyi rtse rgyal nyi zla 'od 'bar mkha' klong rnam dag rgya mtsho klong gsal gyi rgyud*), Dg. NGB vol. KA (1), no. 13, ff. 122a–135a. However, the citation has not been identified therein. Other manuscript versions of the Ancient Tantra Collection have not yet been consulted.
  507. As indicated below in chs. 11–13.
  508. The expression *dmigs pa'i rten yod dam med* indicates that the offerings may or may not be physically present.
  509. That is to say, the female consorts generate delight through the secret offering of this blissful union, the maids do so through the inner offering of the blissful objects of sensory contact, and the female bodhisattvas do so through the outer offering of the sense organs, especially the eyes, which perceive bliss. Some versions of the root tantra read “female gatekeepers” (*sgo ma*) for “maids” (*jo ma*).
  510. Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 262–63, considers the expression “the intrinsic element of Agni, the god of fire, is transformed into a mouth to consume the offerings” to be an epithet of Agni. On the four rites, see also above, note 348.
  511. Longchen Rabjam’s overview on the distinctions between common, uncommon, and unsurpassed offerings is found in GGFTC, 780–82.
  512. This citation has not yet been identified in the transmissions of the Vinaya (T 1–7, KPD, vols. 1–13), although similar words are expressed in Haribhadra’s *Light for the Ornament of Emergent Realization*, T 3791, f. 271b.
  513. *DGD* (p. 251) reads “diverse” (*sna tshogs rnams dang*), following Longchen Rabjam’s reading of the root verses. See *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 322.
  514. This subsequent establishment is also known as the “absorption that follows after insight” (*mthong ba'i rjes la ' jog pa*), which occurs through blessing and after recalling the view that one has studied and pondered. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 280, in the context of the perfection stage of Mahāyoga.
  515. This citation has not been identified in the Derge version of the *Sūtra of the Lamp of Precious Gems*.
  516. *DGD* (p. 252) misreads “communion” (*tshogs*) for “ritual” (*cho gas*).
  517. On this threefold distinction of offerings, see Longchen Rabjam’s overview in GGFTC, 780–81.
  518. *DGD* (p. 253) misreads “pure” (*dag*) for “speech” (*ngag*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 324.
  519. The world system of form (*rūpadhātu*) is said to be semimanifest (*phyed snang*) in the sense that its higher expressions are *rang snang* (manifest only in and of themselves), whereas its lower expressions are considered to be *gzhan snang* (extraneously manifesting). See also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 128–29 and 139.
  520. The *Tantra of the Wheel of Time* and other works include slightly different enumerations of these ten signs. See, e.g., Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 339, which designates the ten signs as smoke, mirage, radiance, immaculate sky, butter lamps, blazing flames, moon, sun, vajras, and supreme vital essences.
  521. These seventeen procedures for the entry of the student into the maṇḍala (*jug pa'i chos bcu bdun*) are outlined by Longchen Rabjam in GGFTC, 786–95.



522. See *ibid.*, 794.
523. *Tantra of the Array of Commitments (Dam tshig bkod pa'i rgyud)*. The citation has not been located either in the *Dam tshig bkod pa sa gzhi'i rgyud rin po che spungs pa'i rgyan*. Dg. NGB vol. CA (5), no. 8, ff. 74b-75b; or in the *Dam tshig chen po'i rgyal po dam tshig bkod pa'i rgyud*, Tingkye NGB, vol. 12, pp. 560-626.
524. The ten empowerments of beneficence are enumerated in GGFTC, 795-97, and the five empowerments of ability at 797-804. See also below, ch. 10, pp. 401-12.
525. *Tantra of the Supreme Commitment: The Great Array of Pristine Cognition (Ye shes bkod pa chen po dam tshig mchog gi rgyud)*. This source has not yet been identified.
526. Cf. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 271-72, which reads: "taking the female consort into the lap of the male consort, visualized as the great seal of the deity's body, the adept should perform [the empowerment] in accordance with the ritual, in the supporting maṇḍala where pristine cognition is generated, i.e., the secret vajra which is symbolized by the five-pronged vajra, one finger span in dimension."
527. See Longchen Rabjam's detailed overview of the preparation of the maṇḍala of colored sand in GGFTC, 756-68. Exquisite color illustrations of the sand maṇḍalas of both the peaceful and wrathful deities are found in Tendzin Lungtok Nyima et al., *Maṇḍala Illustrations of the Tibetan Buddhist Nyingma Tradition*, pp. 9-13.
528. Ch. 2:2.
529. *'gying phur sor bzhi; bgegs bsrung ba'i don du sor bco brgyad pa*. On the term *'gying* (also *ging*), a class of acolytes or messengers who execute certain liberating rites and protect the maṇḍala from impediments, see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, 278-80. The number four indicates the presence of the *ging chen sde bzhi*, while the number eighteen suggests the *gsang ba sgrol ging bco brgyad*, on whom see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 620.
530. *khrun du dkyil 'khor nyis 'gyur yod pa*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, pp. 330-31. DGD (p. 256) misreads *khru bdun du dkyil 'khor nyis 'gyur yod*, suggesting that the threads are seven cubits long and twice the length of the mandala. The double-length threads are twisted together to form the *ye shes kyi thig*.
531. The attributes of the requisite female medium or consort (*karmamudrā*) are detailed by Longchen Rabjam. See GGFTC, 900-7.
532. On the distinctions between the line of pristine cognition (*ye shes kyi thig*) and the line of action (*las kyi thig*), also known as the terrestrial line (*sa'i thig*), see Longchen Rabjam, GGFTC, 762-65; also Lessing and Wayman 1968, 283-87.
533. The reach of hearing (*krośa, rgyang grags*) is a traditional Indian measurement of distance, often equated with 4,000 cubits or 1,829 meters (2,001 yards). See Monier-Williams (1899) 2005, 322. However, there are several variant traditions, such as that of Vasubandhu cited here. The cubit (*hasta*) is usually reckoned to be equivalent to eighteen inches, in which case, from Vasubandhu's perspective, the double arm span or bow length (*dhanuḥ*) works out at six feet (1.8 meters), and the reach of hearing at 3,000 feet (0.57 miles, 914 meters). Eight ranges of hearing are equivalent to one yoking distance (*yojana*), or 24,000 feet (4 miles and 960 yards, 7,315 meters). The

- krośa* is therefore in excess of four furlongs and the *yojana* in excess of one league.
534. Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Phenomenology*, T 4089, f. 10a (ch. 3, vv. 87-88). See Pruden 1988-90, 2:474.
  535. These two incidents are briefly related in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 533 and 710-12. On the first dissemination in Tibet of the Vajradhātumaṇḍala, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 534-36.
  536. *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 755, lines 7-11.
  537. *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 794, lines 5-6.
  538. On this visualization process, see Longchen Rabjam's detailed overview in GGFTC, 771-80.
  539. As indicated in GGFTC, 281n54, the different editions of the root tantra suggest either *brda'* (symbols) or *gdan* (seats). Since Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 333, adopts the former reading, DGD follows suit in the commentary (p. 259) although in the root verses it paradoxically offers the latter interpretation.
  540. These comprise the realizations of pious attendants (*śrāvaka*), hermit buddhas (*pratyekabuddha*), and buddhas.
  541. *Sūtra of Pristine Cognition at the Moment of Decease*, KPD, vol. 54, p. 385, lines 5-6.
  542. This citation has not yet been identified in the extant versions of the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*. It is, however, found in the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* itself (ch. 12, vv. 13-14) and in the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters* (KPD, vol. 102, ch. 24, p. 589).
  543. The story of Jyotiṣka, is recounted in Vaidya 1959, 271-82; and on the inhabitants of Uttarakuru, *ibid.*, 215-16.
  544. *Yum bar ma*, i.e., *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines*, KPD, vols. 26-28. This precise citation has not yet been identified.
  545. Longchen Rabjam emphasizes that the gradualist view of an accumulated provision of pristine cognition (*jñānasambhāra*), as upheld in the causal vehicles, is not intended here. Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 277-78, offers a similar interpretation.
  546. The exact citation has not yet been identified, although the first verse (*gsog nyid du snang ba*) is found generally in the *Phar phyin* literature.
  547. Candrakīrti, *Introduction to the Middle Way*, TPD, vol. 60, p. 590, line 21-p. 591, line 2. See Padmakara 2002, 106-107 (ch. 11, v. 18).
  548. *rDo rje* frequently denotes the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102. However, the citation has not been identified in the Derge version of this text.
  549. This is the definition of the five kinds of ritual (*cho ga lnga*), the five requisites (*yo byad lnga*), and the five aspects of attainment through the mantras (*sngags kyi yan lag lnga*), which accords with the perfection stage of meditation (*sampannakrama*). For the enumeration corresponding to the generation stage of meditation (*utpattikrama*), see immediately below.
  550. This explanation of the five requisites according to the generation stage of meditation is developed in ch. 11, pp. 444-46. The five aspects or elements of mantra recitation (*sngags kyi yan lag lnga*) are more generally held to comprise (1) one's own real nature; (2) the deity's real nature; (3) secret

- mantra; (4) actual recitation; and (5) diffusion and absorption of light rays. See GGFTC, 850.
551. “Genuine” (*dam pa*) and “supreme phenomenon” (*chos mchog*) are both technical terms, respectively indicating distinct steps on the mantra and sūtra paths. For a Nyingma view of the latter term as an aspect of the path of connection (*prayogamārga*), see Longchen Rabjam, *Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems*, pp. 142–46.
552. Buddhaguhya’s *Sequence of the Path of the Net of Magical Emanation*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1027, lines 1–4.
553. The three aspects of contamination (*zag pa gsum*) comprise the contamination of desire (*kāmāsrava*, *’dod pa’i zag pa*), the contamination of rebirth (*bhavāsrava*, *srid pa’i zag pa*), and the contamination of fundamental ignorance (*avidyāsrava*, *ma rig pa’i zag pa*). See the definition in Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, p. 402.
554. *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 727, lines 13–15.
555. *Tantra of the Indestructible Peak*, KPD, vol. 84, p. 599, lines 5–6.
556. As explained, the two parts of v. 32 refer to the awareness holder with control over the life span (*tshe dbang rig ’dzin*) and the awareness holder of spontaneous presence (*lhun grub rig ’dzin*) directly, whereas the awareness holder of maturation (*rnam smin rig ’dzin*) and the awareness holder of the great seal (*phyag chen rig ’dzin*) are merely implied. For an explanation of all four, see Longchen Rabjam’s overview in GGFTC, 810–11, 853–54, 959–74; also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 313–15.
557. The pristine cognition of the cessation of contaminants (*kṣayañāna*, *zad pa’i ye shes*) denotes the sixth of the six supernormal cognitive powers (*ṣaḍabhijñā*, *mngon shes drug*), which, in contrast to the other five, can only be acquired by bodhisattvas who attain manifestly perfect buddhahood and not by pious attendants or hermit buddhas. See Konow 1941, 46–47, and Sparham 2006–12, 4:78. This is further reinforced by the pristine cognition that contaminants will not recur (*anutpādajñāna*, *skye ba med pa’i ye shes*).
558. The means of realizing this manifest awakening of buddha body and pristine cognition are outlined by Longchen Rabjam in his overview to ch. 13. See GGFTC, 1022–44.
559. *yin pa la yin par shes pas yin thog tu slebs pa yin no*. The meaning is that through the ground and path, the result is directly reached.
560. Literally, the thirtieth day of the lunar month.
561. *DGD* (p. 265) misreads “generally” (*spyir*) for “outwardly” (*phyir*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 343.
562. This resultant description of the buddha body of actual reality (*dharmakāya*) as inner radiance without extraneous appearance is also referred to as the youthful vase body (*gzhon nu bum pa’i sku*), on which see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 342.
563. The citation has not yet been identified in the corpus of the *Tantra of the Marvelous King* (*rMad byung rgyal po’i rgyud*).
564. Longchen Rabjam, GGFTC, 1011–44, offers a more detailed account of these four visionary appearances (*snang ba bzhi*), experienced through the all-surpassing realization of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen thod rgal*).
565. On the “precious spontaneous enclosure” (*lhun grub rin po che’i sbubs*), which pertains to the aforementioned youthful vase body (*gzhon nu bum pa’i*

- sku*), see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 448.
566. This citation is a variant on the verses found in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 432, lines 12–14: *dpal ldan rdo rje sems dpa' yi sku gsung thugs kyi 'khor lo chen mngon du mthong zhugs bsod nams gang / 'dir zhugs pa nyid de bzhin no*.
567. This citation is found in the *Tantra of the Indestructible Peak*, KPD, vol. 84, p. 569, lines 7–8, but for the final verse ('*di phyir sdug bsngal nyid du 'gyur*) which is missing.
568. The structural hierarchy requires the empowerments of beneficence (*phan pa'i dbang*) to be followed by the empowerments of ability (*nus pa'i dbang*), and then by the empowerments of profundity (*zab pa'i dbang*).
569. The deities forming the maṇḍala of Ratnasambhava are enumerated in Longchen Rabjam's overview. See GGFTC, 797–98.
570. The distinctions between the outer tantras of capability (*phyi thub pa rgyud*), i.e., Kriyātantra, Ubhayatantra, and Yogatantra, and the inner tantras of skillful means (*nang pa thabs kyi rgyud*) are summarized in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 346–48.
571. The maṇḍala of buddha mind associated with the empowerment of the meditator (*sgom pa'i dbang*) is discussed in GGFTC, 798–99. Any meditational deity (*yi dam*) representing buddha mind is appropriate in this context, except in the view of Buddhaguhya, who asserts that it must refer to Akṣobhya.
572. DGD (p. 269) misreads *ltar* for *lhar*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 349.
573. This is equivalent to the tactile consciousness (*kāyavijñāna*, *lus kyi rnam par shes pa*).
574. DGD (p. 270) misreads HŪṂ for HĀṂ. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 350.
575. For the deities in the maṇḍala of enlightened activity (*phrin las kyi dkyil 'khor*), which is that of Amoghasiddhi, see Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 799–800.
576. That is to say, there are ten syllables HRĪḤ.
577. On the deities forming the maṇḍala of Amitābha, which is associated with the empowerment of the expositor ('*chad pa'i dbang*), see GGFTC, 799.
578. Śāntideva's *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, TPD, vol. 61, pp. 951–1048. The exact citation has not been identified. Bhattacharya 1960, 74 (ch. 5, v. 89) reads somewhat differently: *dman dang mchog gi chos rnam la / mtshungs par gus pas kun tu spyad*. See the commentary in Padmakara 2007, 191.
579. This citation has not been identified in the Derge version of the *Sūtra of the Bounteous Array*, KPD, vol. 50, pp. 2–127. The first line of verse corresponds to ch. 5, v. 90 from the *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*. Note, however, that the second line reads: *dman pa'i chos la sbyar mi bya* instead of *snod ma yin la sbyar mi bya*. See the commentary in Padmakara 2007, 191.
580. Regarding the deities of the maṇḍala associated with the empowerment of the king of indestructible reality (*rdo rje rgyal po'i dbang*), see GGFTC, 800–1. The ten wrathful deities (*khro bo bcu*) forming the protective circle comprise: Hūṃkara, Vijaya, Nīladaṇḍa, Yamāntaka, Acala, Hayagrīva, Aparacitta (a.k.a. Aparājita), Amṛtakunḍalin, Trailokyavijaya, and Mahābala. They are the ten guardians of attainment, corresponding to the ten directions of the inner protective circle. For a detailed examination, see Boord 2002,

- 185–91 and 316–18.
581. *Tantra of the Ocean of Activity (Las rgya mtsho'i rgyud)*. It has been suggested that this may be the *bDud rtsi las rgya mtsho'i rgyud*. NGB vol. WA (20) no. 5, ff. 80a–114b. However, the citation has not been identified in that work. The first line does occur in the *Tantra of the Circle of the Sun*, KPD, vol. 79, p. 671, and also in the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 583.
582. DGD (p. 272) misreads “three” (*gsum*) for “four” (*bzhi*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 352.
583. DGD misreads “three” (*gsum*) for “two” (*gnyis*).
584. On the ten aspects of the empowerment of beneficence, see Longchen Rabjam’s overview in GGFTC, 795–97.
585. *Tantra of Secrets (gSang ba'i rgyud)*. This may be identifiable with the *Ye shes gsang ba'i rgyud*. NGB vol. CA (5), no. 20, ff. 261b–279b, but the citation has not yet been located.
586. Śāntideva’s *Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, ch. 1, v. 9. See also the commentary in Padmakara 2007, 47.
587. DGD (p. 273) misreads “wrong” (*log pa*) for “good” (*legs pa*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 354.
588. The citation has not yet been identified in the *Tantra of the Vital Essence of Union*, KPD, vol. 79, pp. 410–69.
589. Here Choying Tobden Dorje notes that these verses “employ the poetic ornament of coincidence” (*samāhitālaṃkāra, kun phan gyi rgyan*).
590. Here the author states that these verses “employ the poetic ornament of extraordinary hyperbole” (*utkarṣātiśayoktyalaṃkāra, khyad 'phags phul byung*).
591. On the male buddha Amitābha, see ch. 1, p. 79 in the context of the ground; ch. 6, pp. 248 and 252 in the context of visualization; ch. 7, p. 280 in the context of the mantras; and ch. 8, pp. 319–20 in the context of the gestures of sealing and the hand emblems. On the male buddha Amoghasiddhi, see ch. 1, p. 79 in the context of the ground; ch. 6, pp. 249 and 252 in the context of visualization; ch. 7, p. 280 in the context of the mantras; and ch. 8, pp. 321–22 in the context of the gestures of sealing and the hand emblems. On the female buddha Pāṇḍaravāsini, see ch. 1, p. 81 in the context of the ground; ch. 6, pp. 249 and 252 in the context of visualization; ch. 7, p. 280 in the context of the mantras; and ch. 8, pp. 320–21 in the context of the gestures of sealing and the hand emblems. On the female buddha Samayatārā, see ch. 1, p. 81 in the context of the ground; ch. 6, pp. 249 and 252 in the context of visualization; ch. 7, p. 280 in the context of the mantras; and ch. 8, p. 322 in the context of the gestures of sealing and the hand emblems.
592. Here Choying Tobden Dorje notes that this verse “employs the poetic ornament of natural description, referring to activities” (*kāryasvabhāvokti, bya ba rang bzhin brjod*).
593. For commentary on this initial axiom, see also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 160–62.
594. See above, note 320.
595. On this second axiom, see Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 162–64.
596. This citation has not yet been identified in either of the two most likely

- sources—the *Āryasusthitamati-devaputrapariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra* ('Phags pa lha'i bu blo gros rab gnas kyis zhus pa) T 80 and the *Āryasuvikrāntaci ntadevaputrapariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra* ('Phags pa lha'i bu rab rtsal sems kyis zhus pa) T 161.
597. Nāgārjuna, *Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way, Entitled Discriminative Awareness*, ch. 7, v. 34, T 3824, f. 5b. See also Padmakara 2008, 50.
598. Nāgārjuna, *Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way, Entitled Discriminative Awareness*, ch. 24, v. 19, T 3824, f. 15a. See also Padmakara 2008, 112.
599. On this third axiom, see also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 164-65.
600. *Tantra of Secrets (gSang rgyud)*. This may be identifiable with the *Ye shes gsang ba'i rgyud*. NGB vol. CA (5) no. 20, ff. 261b-279b, but the citation has not yet been located.
601. On this fourth axiom, see also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 165-66.
602. *DGD* (p. 278) misreads “empty” (*stong pa*) for “teacher” (*ston pa*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 356.
603. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101, ch. 25, p. 69, lines 5-9. This passage is translated with inserts, based on the commentary of Zhenpen Thaye Ozer (NK vol. 105, pp. 775-78).
604. The “actual truth of the expanse” (*dbyings de bzhin nyid*) indicates the explanation according to the ground, in contrast to those of the path in its subsequent generation and perfection stage aspects.
605. Buddhaguhya's *Sequence of the Path of the Net of Magical Emanation*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 978, lines 14-17.
606. *DGD* (p. 279) misreads “unliberated” (*mi sgral bas*) for “unswerving” (*mi sgul pas*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 357.
607. The state devoid of the threefold interaction (*gsum bral*) indicates freedom from the dichotomy of subject, object, and their interaction.
608. The coalescence of the two stages (*rim gnyis kyi zung ' jug*) here refers to the Great Perfection (*rdzogs pa chen po*) and is most commonly implied in the phrase *bskyed rdzogs gsum*, where *gsum* may denote either the coalescence of the two stages or the second stage of the perfection stage.
609. *gcig pas gcig pa'i mtshan nyid dang*—the single nature being emptiness.
610. *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 875, line 17-p. 876, line 3.
611. The procedures connected with the wrathful maṇḍala are explained below, chs. 15-21.
612. The six offering goddesses (*mchod pa'i lha mo drug*) are those embodying the resources of the six senses, Lāsyā and so forth.
613. Longchen Rabjam's extensive overview of the rites of union can be found in GGFTC, 900-910. See also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 469-75.
614. *DGD* (p. 281) misreads “clearly descend” (*gsal bar 'bebs pa*) for “descend to the secret center” (*gsang bar 'bebs pa*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 368.
615. *DGD* (p. 282) misreads “by” (*gis*) for “of” (*gi*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 368. The sun and moon fluids are the semen and vaginal fluid.
616. On this fruitional phase of the experience of the four delights when vital essences are drawn upward through the body, see Longchen Rabjam's overview on ch. 13 in GGFTC, 1015-17.

617. This denotes the sixteenth buddha level of Unsurpassed Pristine Cognition (*ye shes bla ma*), on which see GGFTC, 968.
618. *Tantra of Vajrakīla: The Root Fragment*, KPD, vol. 81, p. 151, lines 4–7. See also Boord 2002, 79.
619. Līlāvajra’s *Clarification of Commitments*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 1194, lines 1–4.
620. The source of this verse has not yet been located, but for similar quotations from the *Collection of Aphorisms* (T 326) and the *Sūtra Revealing the Conduct of Bodhisattvas* (T 184), see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 221 and 899–900.
621. On this incident from the past lives of Śākyamuni, see Padmakara 1994, 125.
622. The pit is often ritually symbolized by a black triangular box.
623. Note the alternative reading “ashes from a corpse” (*ro sol*), as found in *DGD*, p. 283.
624. Among these five ways in which the yogin is skilled (*mkhas tshul lnga*), the fourth refers to the practice of union (*sbyor ba*), and the fifth to the present rite of wrathful liberation.
625. Concerning the class of deities from which the enumerations of *sgrol ging bcu* and their functionaries, the *ging pho bcu*, are derived, see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, 278–79. See also above, note 529.
626. *Rig byed bla ma*. This citation is found in Puṇḍarīka, *Taintless Light: A Great Commentary on the Wheel of Time*, KPD, vol. 99, p. 54, lines 17–18, where the wording is slightly different: *gang zhig gdug la gdug spyod pa / de la skyon ni ma mthong ngo*. It has been suggested that Rig byed bla ma (Vedic Guru) may be identified with Puṇḍarīka himself or with Kalkī Aja, who is said to have established the method of *karaṇa* calculations (*byed rtsis*) in 806.
627. The citation has not been identified in the *Tantra of the Purification of All Lower Realms*, KPD, vol. 85, pp. 164–254, but in Ānandagarbha, *Exegesis of the King of Tantras, King of Majesty, the Purification of All the Lower Realms, Entitled Beautiful Ornament*, T 2626, f. 54a. Cf. Skorupski 1983, 79–80.
628. This citation has not been identified in the Derge version of the *Sūtra of the Lamp of Precious Jewels*.
629. *Sūtra Revealing the Nonemergence of All Things*, KPD, vol. 60, p. 723, lines 1–3.
630. This citation has not been identified in the Derge version of the *Sūtra of the Ornament of Pristine Cognition’s Appearance*, KPD, vol. 47, pp. 722–99. However, the first couplet is found in the *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*, KPD, vol. 35, p. 822, lines 15–16.
631. This citation purportedly derives from the *Tantra of Extensive Pristine Cognition (Ye shes rgyas pa’i rgyud)*, which has not yet been located. The citation is not found in the *Sūtra of Extensive Pristine Cognition*, KPD, vol. 47, pp. 3–667, although the first verse does occur in the *Sūtra of Heroic Meditative Stability*, KPD, vol. 55, p. 693, line 6.
632. *Verse Summation of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness*, KPD, vol. 34, p. 6, lines 5–7. Note that the first verse ends with *pa’i* rather than *kyang*. See also Conze 1973, 11, v. 19.
633. This citation has been identified in Smṛtijñānakīrti, *Commentary on the Secret Twofold Rite of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī Entitled Lamp of Pristine Cognition*, T 2584, f. 146b, line 3.
634. Guṇaprabha, *Root Sūtra of Monastic Discipline*. T 4117, f. 18b.
635. These verses are found in the *Exegetical Comments of Unrecorded*

*Authorship concerning the Vows of Individual Liberation*, T 4108, f. 18b (except that *smyon pa* is replaced with *las dang po*). See also Kalyāṇamitra, *Extensive Commentary on the Questions Pertaining to Monastic Discipline*, T 4135, f. 87a.

636. The source of this Vinaya citation has not yet been identified.
637. See Longchen Rabjam's overview of the communion offering ceremony in GGFTC, 923–31; also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 482–87.
638. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101, ch. 62, p.150, lines 4–5. Note, however, that the last line here ends *bde chen rdzogs par ldan* (instead of *gdal ba yongs la khyab*).
639. This citation has not yet been identified in the *Tantra of Vajrasattva: The Great Space* (*rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che [rgyas pa yi ge med pa'i rgyud]*). NGB vol. CHA (6), no. 20, ff. 87a–99b; or in any of the following related works: *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor pa'i rgyud*, vol. RA, no. 23, ff. 286b–302a; *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che bram ze rgyas pa'i rgyud*, vol. RA, no. 18, ff. 215a–224b; and *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che kun tu bzang po gsang ba'i snying po'i rgyud*, vol. RA, no. 13, ff. 179b–205a.
640. On the *khro mo bcu*, see Boord 2002, 81–84.
641. The diffusion of these hosts of wrathful deities is the subject of chs. 15–21.
642. This citation has not yet been identified in Indrabhūti, *Two Stages*, TPD, vol. 44, pp. 481–82.
643. This citation derives from Candrakīrti, *Clearly Worded Commentary on the Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way*, T 3860, f. 116b.
644. See the *Parkhab Commentary*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 372. However, the eighteen-deity maṇḍala is that of the single cluster, outlined above, p. 450, and detailed by Longchen Rabjam in GGFTC, 797–98.
645. The appropriate locations for these rites are described by Longchen Rabjam in his overview of the four rites. See above, note 348; also ch. 20, pp. 752–53.
646. This citation has not been identified in the Derge versions of the *Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*, KPD, vol. 102. However, two verses (*shin tu skar ma rgyal rnam la / byang chub spyod pa cher spyod pa'i*) do occur in the *Sūtra of All-Gathering Awareness*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 29, lines 12–13.
647. *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 793, lines 10–13.
648. *Abhidhānottaratantra* (*mNgon par brjod pa'i rgyud bla ma*), T 369; KPD, vol. 77.
649. This citation is from the *Tantra of Hevajra*. See Snellgrove 1959, 2:85, II v.. 57.
650. 'Jam dpal, i.e., the *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*, KPD, vol. 77, p. 4, line 16. Note, however, that the verse ends with 'dir rather than las. The exact reading is found in Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*, pp. 2–3.
651. DGD (p. 292) misreads *gsum dus* for *gsungs dus*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 387.
652. This initial section therefore concerns the sealing of the body through the dance movements and hand gestures of the respective deities.
653. *Sūtra Revealing the Diffusion of Light Rays Everywhere*, KPD, vol. 40, pp. 554–702. The citation is not found in this version of the text, although the wording is reminiscent of many similar modulations that do occur therein.



654. Maudgalyāyana's visit to Marīcīkā is recounted in Vaidya 1959, 52ff.
655. *Āryakaraṇḍavyūha-nāma-mahāyānasūtra* ('Phags pa za ma tog bkod pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo), T 116; KPD, vol. 51, pp. 529–640.
656. Nārāyaṇa (*sred med kyi bu*) is a proverbially mighty being, often identified with Viṣṇu. The point of this passage is that even the status of a pious attendant (*śrāvaka*) surpasses that of the highest gods of the world system of desire (*kāmadhātu*).
657. These are the ten powers (*daśabala*, *stobs bcu*) of a bodhisattva, comprising reflection (*āśayabala*, *bsam pa'i stobs*), superior aspiration (*adhyāśaya*, *lhag bsam*), application (*prayoga*, *sbyor ba*), discriminative awareness (*praññā*, *shes rab*), aspiration (*prañidhāna*, *smon lam*), vehicle (*yāna*, *theg pa*), conduct (*caryā*, *spyod pa*), transformation (*vikurvaṇa*, *rnam par 'phrul pa*), enlightenment (*bodhi*, *byang chub*), and promulgation of the doctrinal wheel (*dharmacakrapravartana*, *chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba*). See MVT 760–69.
658. This reference has not yet been located.
659. *Āli* and *kāli* are respective symbolic terms indicating the rites of sexual union and forceful liberation (*sbyor sgröl*). See also below, ch. 20, p. 752, and Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 292. According to Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, the phrase “human and nonhuman flesh and blood” (*zhing dang zhing phran gyi sha khrag*) may also be understood as “the flesh and blood of those born in seven successive lives as a pure brahman [i.e., as a vegetarian], and the flesh and blood of ordinary beings.” On the significance of tasting pills derived from the flesh of such seven-times-born beings, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 2:n975.
660. DGD (p. 296) misreads “sixth” (*drug pa*) for “fertile” (*grung po*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 398.
661. The distinction here is between causal and fruitional modalities of buddhahood.
662. Maitreya, *Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*, TPD, vol. 70, ch. 21, p. 884, lines 10–12. See also Jampal *et al.* 2004, 321–22 (v. 8).
663. Among these four ways in which birth may be assumed, the first corresponds to sentient beings, the second and third to bodhisattvas, and the fourth to buddhas.
664. Maitreya, *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*, ch. 1, vv. 67–68. See TPD, vol. 70, p. 942, lines 4–8; Holmes and Holmes 1985, 42 (vv. 67–68).
665. *Verse Summation of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness*, KPD, vol. 34, p. 15, lines 1–2. See Conze 1973, 25 (v. 2).
666. Longchen Rabjam's brief overview on the awareness holder of maturation (*rnam smin rig 'dzin*) may be found in GGFTC, 960. See also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 314.
667. This verse is found not in the *Ornament of Emergent Realization* but in Vimuktisena's *Commentary* (T 3787, vol. KA, f. 148b, line 4), on which see Sparham 2006–12, 3:62–63. From the perspective of the causal vehicles, the sensation of warmth that is experienced on the path of connection (*sbyor lam drod*) marks an irreversible step on the continuum to the attainment of omniscience. For a specifically Nyingma interpretation of the *Ornament of Emergent Realization*, see Brunnhölzl 2012.
668. Tib. *the tshom mi dal zad pa dang*. The eight freedoms (*dal ba brgyad*) constitute freedom from birth in the hells or as anguished spirits, animals, border tribespeople beyond the pale of civilization, long-living gods, holders

- of erroneous views, those born in a time when there is no buddha, and imbeciles. For a Nyingma interpretation, see Padmakara 1994, 19–21.
669. On the awareness holder with power over the life span (*tshe dbang rig 'dzin*) and the awareness holder of the great seal (*phyag chen rig 'dzin*), see Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 960–61; also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 314.
670. Regarding the conclusive awareness holder of spontaneous presence (*lhun grub rig 'dzin*), see Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 962ff; also Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal 2011, 315.
671. See Longchen Rabjam's overview of this integration in GGFTC, 964–69.
672. This reference has not been located.
673. *Tantra That Clearly Reveals All [Vital Essences] (Kun gsal)*. This could possibly be identified either with the *Thig le kun gsal gyi rgyud*, NGB vol. NGA (4), no. 12, ff. 213a–278b, or else with the *Rin po che spyi gnad skyon sel thig le kun gsal gyi rgyud*, NGB vol. KHA (2), no. 17, ff. 313a–315b. However, the citation has not been located in the extant Derge versions of these texts.
674. Longchen Rabjam's brief overview regarding the association of the eleventh and thirteenth levels with the *nirmāṇakāya* and *dharmakāya* respectively is contained in GGFTC, 672–73. In this context, no real distinction is made between the thirteenth level and the sixteenth level.
675. *DGD* (p. 299) misreads *ngu snang bar gyur pa* for *mi snang bar gyur pa*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 402.
676. This appears to be a synopsis of the conversation between Dharmodgata and Sadāprarudita. The exact words cited here have not been identified in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines*, KPD, vol. 33.
677. Although *rDo rje* frequently denotes the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, the citation is not found in that text and may therefore be found elsewhere within the *sGyu 'phrul* cycle.
678. *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*, KPD, vol. 101, p. 877, lines 4–7.
679. These verses have not yet been identified in the *Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*.
680. *DGD* (p. 300) misreads “natural” (*rang bzhin*) for “self-manifest” (*rang snang*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 404.
681. This citation appears not to be derived from the Madhyamaka treatises, although it is found in several other texts, such as the *Collection of Aphorisms*, ch. 4, v. 9, T 4099, f. 5b, and Jinaputra, *Commentary on the Compendium of Phenomenology*, T 4053, f. 86b.
682. On these categories of non-Buddhist philosophy and view, see Longchen Rabjam's overview in GGFTC, 505–6. A slightly different classification that places the apathetic (*phyal ba*) and the materialists (*rgyang 'phen pa*) among those of no understanding (*ma rtogs pa*) is given in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 63–64.
683. For Jamgon Kongtrul's presentation of these eternalistic and nihilistic traditions of ancient India, see Dorje 2012, 400–416; and for a Nyingma perspective, Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 64–69. Among the teachers mentioned here, Kapila is associated with the Sāṃkhya tradition and Akṣapāda with the Nyayāyika. Kaṇāda and Ulūka are alternative names for the founder of the Vaiśeṣika system.
684. The pious attendants (*śrāvaka*) are said to realize the selflessness of the

individual (*pudgalanairātmya*), and the hermit buddhas (*pratyekabuddha*) are also said to realize the selflessness of the external phenomena composing the outer world (*dharmanairātmya*). The latter are not, however, considered to have realized the selflessness of the inner phenomena of consciousness. On this, see GGFTC, 506–9, and Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 155–59 and 222–31.

685. For another Tibetan view of the Vinaya orders and their subdivisions, see Roerich 1976, 27–33; see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 429–30, where the account is based on Buton Rinchendrub, *History of Buddhism*, p. 98.
686. Cf. Khedrubje’s account in Lessing and Wayman 1968, 69.
687. Ibid. Note that Khedrubje’s description is at variance with this, in that the language is said to be Apabhraṃśā and the number of patches twenty-three to twenty-seven, while the motif is the conch.
688. Ibid. Khedrubje differs in holding the Sthavira to speak Prākṛit, their robes to have twenty-one to twenty-five patches, and their motif to be the wheel.
689. Ibid. Their motif was the *sorsika* flower.
690. On the proverbial silence of the hermit buddhas, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 230.
691. For Longchen Rabjam’s overview of the Madhyamaka and Mind Only systems, see GGFTC, 509–13; and for another Nyingma perspective, Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 160–90.
692. On these distinctions of view within the Mind Only tradition, see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 161.
693. This citation has not yet been identified in Avalokitavrata’s *Commentary on the Lamp of Discriminative Awareness*, TPD, vols. 58–59.
694. For another Nyingma perspective on the distinction between Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 162–69; for Jamgon Kongtrul’s view, see Callahan 2007, 195–247.
695. The nuances of Kriyātantra and Caryātantra are summarized in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 268–72, 348–53.
696. For a Nyingma summary of Yogatantra, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 272–73 and 353–57.
697. On the distinctions between father, mother and nondual tantras according to Mahāyoga, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 273–74 and 359–63.
698. As previously indicated, Longchen Rabjam identifies the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* in accordance with the classes of the Great Perfection rather than Mahāyoga. Among the classes of the Great Perfection that are enumerated here, on the mental and spatial classes see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 319–29; on the third category, otherwise known as the esoteric instructional class, 329–45.
699. *DGD* (p. 304) misreads *ming du mtshon pa’i spyi* for *ming du ma tshogs pa’i spyi*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 411.
700. This symbolism, as indicated above, note 659, pertains to the rites of union (*sbyor ba*) and the rites of wrathful liberation (*sgrol ba*).
701. Here *DGD* (p. 304) reads *de la thugs gcig pa’o*. Cf. Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 412, which reads *de la phug gcig pa’o*.
702. This particular verse is seen as the basis for Longchen Rabjam’s extensive exegesis in *Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions* on the all-surpassing realization (*thod rgal*) practices of the Great Perfection. See GGFTC, 1022–44; also Chonam and Khandro 2011: 541–53. Cf. the more exoteric treatment of the same verse in Lochan Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 331, which is representative of the *bka’ ma*

tradition.

703. *stong pa nyid gzugs snang ba ste*. The elements are regarded as the nature of the ground or emptiness, known in the causal tradition of the Great Vehicle as *prajñāpāramitā*.
704. *Nges brjod bla ma*. This is an alternative title of the *Supreme Tantra of Clear Expression, Abhidhānottaratantra (mNgon par brjod pa'i rgyud bla ma)*, T 369; KPD, vol. 77. On this identification, see Situ Chokyi Jungne, *Catalog of the Derge Kangyur*, p. 391. However, the citation is not found in that work. The second line (*stong pa nyid ni gzugs su brjod*) occurs in Maitreya's *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle (rGyud bla ma)*, ch. 5, v. 14; TPD, vol. 70, p. 944, line 18; Holmes and Holmes 1985, 50 (v. 92). The Sanskrit titles of the two works have most probably been conflated.
705. *Heart Sūtra of Discriminative Awareness*, KPD, vol. 34, p. 403, line 10.
706. Ibid.
707. Cf. Candrakīrti, *Clearly Worded Commentary on the Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way*, T 3860, f. 199a.
708. That is to say, the five external elements are understood as the five female consorts, the five inner aggregates are understood as the five male consorts, and the sense organs, objects, times, and aspects of consciousness are understood as the male and female bodhisattvas and gatekeepers.
709. Bodhibhadra, *Interlinear Commentary on the Compendium of the Nucleus of Pristine Cognition*, T 3852, f. 33b. Note that *gcig* and *kun* are reversed in the first line.
710. This precise citation has not yet been identified in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines*, KPD, vols. 26–28, although it is reminiscent of vol. 28, p. 296, lines 7–8.
711. DGD (p. 307) misreads *de'ang* for *de'i*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 416.
712. The basic generation stage (*utpattikrama*) is the subject matter of the foregoing chs. 11–12. Here, on the other hand, the generation stage is seen as an integral part of the entire path, including the perfection stage (*sampannakrama*) and the Great Perfection (*rdzogs pa chen po*), so there is a greater emphasis on the inner experiences that connect this stage to the others, rather than on structural visualization.
713. For Longchen Rabjam's overview of the inner perfection stage (*nang rdzogs pa'i rim pa*), see GGFTC, 1006–21; also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 531–40.
714. Here the commentary (DGD, p. 308) and Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 425, both read “inconceivable” (*bsam yas*) instead of “infinite” (*mtha' yas*), which is the reading found immediately above in the *Root Tantra* (ch. 13:10).
715. DGD (p. 308) misreads *kun tu bsam pa'i* for *kun tu bzang po'i*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 425.
716. Longchen Rabjam's extensive overview of the secret stage of inner radiance (*gsang ba 'od gsal gyi rim pa*), i.e., the all-surpassing realization of the Great Perfection, is presented in GGFTC, 1022–40, and also in Chonam and Khandro 2011, 541–53.
717. DGD (p. 309) misreads “eighty” (*brgyad cu*) for “ten signs” (*rtags bcu*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 435. These ten signs of inner radiance are enumerated above, p. 360.

718. This citation has not yet been located in the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*. It probably derives from other texts within the cycle.
719. The citation has not yet been identified. On this text, see above, note 503.
720. The visionary appearance of the cessation of cyclic existence in actual reality (*chos nyid zad pa'i snang ba*) is the fourth of the four visionary appearances (*snang ba bzhi*) of all-surpassing realization (*thod rgal*), which are experienced in the context of the six lamps (*sgron ma drug*). Among these, (1) the lamp of the far-sighted watery eyes (*rgyang zhags chu'i sgron ma*) perceives the apparitions of inner radiance. It is connected to (2) the lamp of the flesh of the heart (*citta sha'i sgron ma*) by means of (3) the lamp of the soft white channels (*dkar 'jam rtsa'i sgron ma*). In addition, (4) the lamp of naturally present discriminative awareness (*shes rab rang byung gi sgron ma*) is the basis of the apparitions of inner radiance that are perceived by the first three lamps. (5) The lamp of the pure expanse of awareness (*rig pa dbyings kyi sgron ma*) is the ornament of that apparition, and (6) the lamp that is the emptiness of the vital essence (*thig le stong pa'i sgron ma*) is the defining characteristic of that apparition. Cf. Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 337–45. Note also that *DGD* (p. 309) misreads *ngang lam* for *sa dang lam* (“levels and paths”). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 436.
721. This subtopic heading is omitted in *DGD* but included in Longchen Rabjam, *ibid.*
722. *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation*, KPD, vol. 83, p. 386, lines 5–11.
723. On this theme, see also Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 294–310.
724. As indicated in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 80–87, 911–13, these other levels of Buddhist teaching are not rejected but integrated within the overall structure from the resultant point of view.
725. *DGD* misreads “three vehicles” (*theg pa gsum*) for “four vehicles” (*theg pa bzhi*).
726. *DGD* (p. 311) misreads *sangs rgyas kyi* for *sang rgyas kyi sa*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 439.
727. This citation is found in Advayavajra, *Empowerment Ritual Embodying Thirteen Verses of Glorious Cakrasamvara*, T 1486, f. 145a, where the first two lines are reversed and take this form: *dus gsum 'byung ba'i sangs rgyas rnams / sku gsung thugs kyi rdo rje can*. The last two lines are also found with minor variations in the *Tantra of the Emergence of Cakrasamvara*, KPD, vol. 78, p. 827, lines 1–2.
728. *Tantra of the Indestructible Peak*, KPD, vol. 84, p. 584, lines 10–21.
729. *DGD* (p. 312) misreads *gzhan du yin* for *gzhan du min*, on which see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 439.
730. Buddhaguhya’s *Sequence of the Path*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 963. Our text attributes this citation to the *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*, where it appears not to be found.
731. *Sūtra of All-Gathering Awareness*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 32, lines 1–2.
732. *DGD* (p. 313) misreads *thos pa'i* for *thos pas*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 440.
733. The correct reading *mos pa sems kyi ngang tshul dge zhing bzang bas . . .* is found in Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 441. *DGD* (p. 313) misreads *mos po / sems kyi ngang tshul de dag zhing bzang bas . . .*
734. *Verse Summation of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative*

- Awareness, KPD, vol. 34, p. 23, lines 18–19. Note that the verses are reversed in *DGD*. See also Conze 1973, 40 (v. 7).
735. Sadāprarudita epitomizes the ideal self-sacrificing recipient of the teachings in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines*. See Conze 1973, 277–300.
736. *DGD* (p. 313) misreads *dus byed*.
737. This citation has not yet been identified in the *Tantra of Vairocana from the Net of Magical Emanation (rNam snang sgyu 'phrul dra ba)*, Tingkye NGB, vol. 19, pp. 289–395.
738. This citation has not been located.
739. *DGD* misreads *dri za (gandharva)* for *sa zin (gāndhāra)*. See *MVT* 5030.
740. On these tones, which with *ṛṣabha* form the seven pitches of the octave (*glu dbyangs kyi nges pa bdun*, *MVT* 5027–34), see Ellingson 1979, 161–62.
741. Longchen Rabjam interprets ch. 14, vv. 2–6 in an integrated manner that accords with his unique exegetical approach. In his view, the first of these verses considers the pristine cognition of reality's expanse (*dharmadhātujñāna*) in terms of buddha body, and its subdivisions of body, speech, and mind. According to Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 360, however, the first verse refers simply to the five buddha bodies. In his view, the first line of this verse refers specifically to the buddha body of awakening (*abhisambodhikāya*).
742. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 360, associates this verse with the buddha body of actual reality (*dharmakāya*).
743. Lochen Dharmasrī interprets this as the buddha body of form (*rūpakāya*), “the maṇḍala of merits” referring to the buddha body of perfect resource (*sambhogakāya*) and the “provision of buddha body” referring to the buddha body of emanation (*nirmāṇakāya*).
744. According to Lochen Dharmasrī, this verse refers to the buddha body of indestructible reality (*vajrakāya*).
745. In the view of Longchen Rabjam, this verse considers the pristine cognition of discernment (*pratyavekṣanājñāna*) in terms of buddha speech and its subdivisions of buddha body, speech, and mind, whereas Lochen Dharmasrī interprets it simply in terms of the five kinds of buddha speech. On these five, see *GGFTC*, 1035–36.
746. The requisite words *gsung rdo rje* are omitted in *DGD* (p. 315), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 443, where they are included.
747. Longchen Rabjam interprets this verse as a commentary on the mirrorlike pristine cognition (*ādarśajñāna*), in terms of buddha mind and its subdivisions of body, speech, and mind, whereas in Lochen Dharmasrī's view it refers to the five pristine cognitions.
748. In Longchen Rabjam's view, this verse concerns the pristine cognition of sameness (*samatājñāna*) in terms of enlightened attributes and its subdivisions of body, speech, and mind. Lochen Dharmasrī, however, considers it in terms of the five kinds of enlightened attributes, on which see *GGFTC*, 1037–38.
749. According to Longchen Rabjam, this verse refers to the pristine cognition of accomplishment (*krtyānuṣṭhānajñāna*) in terms of enlightened activities and their subdivisions of body, speech, and mind. Lochen Dharmasrī, on the other hand, regards it as a commentary on the five kinds of enlightened activity. *Ibid.*, 1038–39.

750. On the terms *kun tu bzang po byed pa po* (Samantabhadra the active male aspect) and *kun tu bzang mo bya ba mo* (Samantabhadri the passive female aspect), see GGFTC, 401-3.
751. Here *DGD* (p. 317) reads “offering” (*mchod pa*), rather than “eulogy” (*bstod pa*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 446.
752. *DGD* (p. 317) misreads “teaching” (*bstan pa*) for “eulogy” (*bstod pa*). For the correct reading, see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 446.
753. Here Tobden Choying Dorje notes that these verses “employ the poetic ornament of specific corroboration” (*viśeṣasthārthānantaraniyāsa*, *khyad par la gnas pa'i don gzhan bkod pa'i rgyan*).
754. Here the commentator notes that these verses “employ the poetic ornament of peculiar causation that discloses an outcome through the slight intimation of an unusual or inner causal basis” (*kiṃcitkāraṇānantaraphaladeśanavibhāvanā*, *nang gi rgyu cung zad dang bcas pas 'bras bus ton pa'i srid pa can*).
755. Here the commentator notes that these verses “employ the poetic ornament of concise suggestion of a different topic endowed with similar attributes” (*tulyakāryāsamāsokti*, *khyad gzhi tha dad la khyad chos mtshungs pa'i bsdu brjod*).



FIGURE 6. THREE-DIMENSIONAL CELESTIAL PALACE OF THE *GUHYAGARBHA* AT PHARPING, NEPAL. PHOTO BY GERO GARSKE



## BOOK 17, PART 1

### *Secret Nucleus: The Wrathful Deities and the Colophon*

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Herein is contained Book 17, Part 1 (DI), from *The Extensive Commentary of the Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra, concerning the Wrathful Deities, along with the Colophon.*

### THE GOLDEN KEY

In order to elucidate the ground, path, and result of the wrathful deities, This book contains their ground, mantras, maṇḍala, Offerings, commitments, rites of enlightened activity, and [fruitional] eulogy.

## VERSE OF HOMAGE

Homage to the absolutely terrifying Palchen Dupa,<sup>756</sup>  
Foremost of the absolutely terrifying deities of the *sādhana*  
class, Who subdues the host of absolutely terrifying  
obstructing forces Through the blazing brilliance of the  
absolutely terrifying Hayagrīva and Garuḍa!<sup>757</sup>

## SUMMARY OF BOOK 17

This seventeenth [book] presents the diffusion of the wrathful deities according to the *Secret Nucleus* (17). There are five main topics: (i) a teaching on the manifestation of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities which is the natural expression of the spontaneously present ground (ch. 15, 17.1); (ii) an extensive exegesis of the branches of its means for attainment in accordance with which the path is attained (chs. 16–20, 17.2); (iii) a description of the eulogies to the fruitional buddha body and pristine cognition (ch. 21, 17.3); (iv) the entrustment and colophon (ch. 22, 17.4); and (v) an interlinear commentary on the [related] *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* (17.5). These five main topics also encapsulate within them two hundred three subtopics.<sup>758</sup>

## 15. THE CLOUD-LIKE DIFFUSION OF THE NATURAL MAṄḌALA OF WRATHFUL DEITIES

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The purpose of this chapter is to explain the natural spontaneous presence of the wrathful deities within the primordially pure ground, the enlightened intention that gives rise to their manifestation, and the modality of their maṅḍala array.

Having revealed the maṅḍala of peaceful deities, Samantabhadra, the Supreme Identity, then manifests as the primordial buddha body of perfect resource in the maṅḍala of naturally manifesting wrathful deities, which is their emanational basis (v. 1).

There are therefore two major aspects to the emergence of the maṅḍala of wrathful deities, which Longchen Rabjam discusses in an extensive overview (omitted in our text). These concern the spontaneous presence of the wrathful deities in the ground and the consequent emanation of the wrathful deities, including Rudra, from the ground.

The Sanskrit term *krodha* is defined as a deity “triumphant over disharmony and acting on behalf of living beings through the enlightened activity of wrath.” There are three types of wrathful deity, corresponding to the three buddha bodies, and these are said to have four attributes through which their wrath is forcefully expressed: their reality cannot be symbolized, their pristine cognition is undeluded, their deeds are effortless, and their enlightened activity is ostensibly wrathful for the sake of those beings who are dominated by anger or hatred and its concomitant self-cherishing pride or envy. This prevalence of anger, pride, or envy is said to occur owing to a disproportionate excess of energy emitted by the

wrathful maṇḍala, which abides naturally within the skull of the subtle body. In terms of the ground, therefore, wrathful deities are primordially present as the maṇḍala of herukas in the crown center of the subtle body. In terms of the path, they are visually generated through meditation, and in terms of the result, they are spontaneously and fully manifest in the realm of the Bounteous Array.

As far as the emanation of the wrathful deities from the spontaneous ground is concerned, the maṇḍala of wrathful deities is recognized to be both natural and emanational without contradiction because there is a movement from its natural manifestation in the crown center to its extraneous manifestation in the world. Through the energy of the natural maṇḍala of wrathful deities, Rudra, the archetype of rampant egotism, emerges to display unenlightened wrath, and the wrathful deities of pristine cognition emerge to subdue him. Although Rudra and his followers appear to have mundane forms and powers, and in the context of a narrative are said to be subdued by Heruka and placed around him in the maṇḍala, actually Rudra is a contrivance of the wrathful deities for didactic purposes and not an individual living being who experiences suffering. Fundamentally, Rudra is atemporally and naturally manifest as Samantabhadra, and his taming indicates the reversal of the sufferings of cyclic existence through the reversal of rampant egotism.

There is no contradiction between the tantras that describe this subjugation in beginningless time and those sūtras that ostensibly refer to the subjugation of Rudra in a specific temporal setting, nor is there a fundamental distinction between Heruka who tames Rudra in the tantras and Guhyapati who does so in the sūtras because these are respectively inner or natural and outer or emanational aspects of the same wrathful maṇḍala.

The main text of this chapter concerns the emergence of mundane wrathful deities, endowed with the chronic patterns of contaminated past actions, such as Rudra, and their consequent subjugation by the wrathful deities of pristine

cognition.

As to the former, on account of egotism and having violated their former tantric commitments (vv. 2-3), beings are reborn in unbearable hellish domains (v. 4) and then as tormented spirits (v. 5). Then, once their coarse obscurations have diminished, they are consequently born in a monstrous ogre-like form that is harmful to others, on the basis of the subtle obscurations of having perversely meditated in the past on a wrathful deity and misinterpreted the correct conduct of the secret mantras. In this guise, they then come to dominate the mundane world systems of desire and form, terrifying their inhabitants (v. 6).

The subjugation of such negative forces by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition emerges as follows: Samantabhadra in the form of Heruka observes Rudra and his activities (v. 7), and to bring about their subjugation, he assumes the meditative stability of the “kingly Net of Magical Emanation of wrathful deities” (v. 8). The actual subjugation is carried out in four steps by means of the “four miracles”: First, Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri appear in union as Krodheśvara and Krodheśvari (v. 9). Second, through their enlightened intention they emanate a cloud of generative essences (v. 10). Third, the maṇḍala of wrathful deities, vast as the world systems, is emanated therefrom (v. 11). Fourth, this maṇḍala then generates fifteen great signs, indicating how cyclic existence is liberated in actual reality, in order to conquer Rudra and his acolytes (v. 12).

Once subjugated, Rudra is wrathfully eradicated in the following manner: Samantabhadra transforms into the three-headed Mahottara or Buddha Heruka (v. 13), with a retinue comprising the herukas of the four other enlightened families (vv. 14-15). Then, responding to the ferocious reaction of Rudra and his twenty-eight followers (v. 16), the nine-headed form of Mahottara manifests in order to “liberate” them by wrathful sorcery (vv. 17-18) and to gather together their twenty-eight consorts, the *īśvari*, through which he absorbs the entire mundane world and its inhabitants (vv. 19-20). Through

further meditative stability, the five herukas then reappear to enter into nondual union with these consorts (vv. 21-23), and from their wombs, the retinue of the wrathful *mātarah*, *piśācī*, and female gatekeepers emanates (vv. 24-27), taking their places along with them on the periphery of the maṇḍala (v. 28).

Rudra and the proud malign forces who follow him are then revived and granted ablution, after which they are placed within the maṇḍala on the seats of the herukas and come to acquire a certain vision of the pure maṇḍala (vv. 29-31). Following their subjugation, which occurs simultaneously throughout the chiliocosms of the universe (v. 32), they are accepted as retainers after taking an oath of allegiance. Their former consorts, the *īśvarī*, also request the conferral of the various rites that they might obey (vv. 33-36), in response to which they are granted empowerments and injunctions (v. 37).

THE FIRST MAIN TOPIC, concerning the manifestation of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities which is the natural expression of the spontaneously present ground (17.1), comprises (i) a brief introduction to the emergence of the wrathful deities (17.1.1) and (ii) an extensive exegesis of their natural expression (17.1.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**The peaceful deities having been revealed, there follows the ground, path, and result pertaining to the wrathful deities.**

**One may wonder why this diffusion ensues from the disposition of the buddha body of perfect resource.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:1-2)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་བདག་པོ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཐམས་ཅད་  
ཀྱི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་ཐོ་བོའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་མངོན་པར་འདུ་མཛད་དེ། དེ་ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་  
ཞེ་ན།

Then the identity of all the tathāgatas, the essential nature of all the buddhas, manifested as the maṇḍala of wrathful deities. One may wonder why.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of the peaceful deities had been revealed, **then** glorious Samantabhadra, **the** supreme **identity of all the tathāgatas** of the ten directions and four times, who is **the essential nature** of the indestructible body, speech, and mind **of all the buddhas, manifested as** the primordial buddha body of perfect resource in **the maṇḍala of** self-manifesting **wrathful deities** in the field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array, without straying from the disposition of the buddha body of actual reality, free from conceptual elaboration. In this way, he became present as the basis for the emergence (*'char gzhi*) of the emanational wrathful deities.

**One may wonder why** this maṇḍala of wrathful deities, comprising the buddha body of perfect resource that is the basis for its emergence, and the buddha bodies of emanation that arise from it, is revealed.<sup>759</sup>

## **A DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE WRATHFUL DEITIES [17.1.2]**

The latter comprises (i) the emergence of the wrathful deities of [malign] deeds who are to be disciplined (17.1.2.1) and (ii) their subjugation by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition who impose discipline (17.1.2.2).

## **THE EMERGENCE OF THE WRATHFUL DEITIES OF MALIGN DEEDS WHO ARE TO BE DISCIPLINED [17.1.2.1]**

The first of these comprises (i) the causal basis through which [wrathful malign forms] are generated (17.1.2.1.1) and (ii) the result in which that causal basis is brought to maturation (17.1.2.1.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**Coarse engagement in the concealed secrets,  
without an understanding of the hidden secrets, is  
the cause [for the arising of malign beings].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:3)***

བདག་ཏུ་སྐྱོད་ས་པའི་རྟོག་པ་དང་། བརྟགས་པ་ལ་མངོན་པར་ཞེན་པས། ཡང་དག་  
པའི་ལམ་དང་བྲལ་བ་དག་གི་པའི་གསང་བ་མ་རྟོགས་པར་སྦྱས་པའི་གསང་  
བ་ལ་མངོན་པར་འཆེལ་ནས། རྩུ་དང་འབྲས་བུ་ལ་སྐྱོད་ས་པས།

Through conceptions that are deluded with respect to selfhood and manifest fixation upon imputed things, those beings become separated from the genuine path. Without understanding the hidden secrets, they become manifestly attached to the concealed secrets,



and then they become deluded with respect to causes and results. In consequence . . .

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Through** egotism and possessiveness, the **conceptions** of their own minds **that are deluded with respect to the selfhood** of the individual person grasp the coemergent fundamental ignorance and become attached to the self, **and**, without the knowledge that all **things** are merely symbols similar to reflected imagery and merely **imputed** by the intellect, there arises a **manifest fixation upon** the true independent existence of each and every entity.

Through this fundamental ignorance of the imaginary, objects are possessively grasped. In this way, beings come to wander in cyclic existence, activating the causal basis of the rebirth process.<sup>760</sup> **Those beings** who are afflicted in cyclic existence by suffering **become separated from** the profound discriminative awareness, **the genuine path** to emancipation from cyclic existence. This is the causal basis of all the formative predispositions that constitute the rebirth process.

In addition, **without understanding the hidden** nature or natural **secrets** contained in the tantras and transmissions of profound meaning, which are hard to understand, **they become manifestly attached to** willful, coarse engagement in **the concealed secrets** such as the skillful means of union and liberation. **And then**, acting in that way, **they become deluded with respect to** dependent origination whereby connections with virtuous and negative **causes and** pleasant and unpleasant **results** have an unfailing outcome. **In consequence**, those who practice the profound secrets literally and enter into erroneous paths resemble Tharpa Nagpo, whose [misapplication of the tantras] was the causal basis for his [subsequent] emergence as Rudra.<sup>761</sup> Therefore, it says in the *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*:

According to the tathāgatas' scriptures,

The eternal Supreme Identity  
Who first appeared in time past  
Manifested in the guise of a living creature.  
At that time all sentient beings  
Persevered in wrong views,  
And due to their extremely wrong views,  
They fell into great Avīci hell.<sup>762</sup>

### **THE RESULT IN WHICH THAT CAUSAL BASIS IS BROUGHT TO MATURATION [17.1.2.1.2]**

The latter comprises (i) the ripening result, which is the experience of suffering (17.1.2.1.2.1) and (ii) the result in conformity with that causal basis, which entails the harming of others (17.1.2.1.2.2).

The first of these has two parts, of which the first concerns rebirth in the hells (17.1.2.1.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Consequently they have experienced [sufferings] for  
twelve thousand aeons in the hot and cold hells,**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:4)***

སྲིད་པའི་ས་བོན་རྩལ་མོས་འཕངས་ནས། མཚམས་མེད་པའི་རབ་ཏུ་ཚ་བའི་  
 དམུལ་བར་སྐྱེས་སོ། དེ་རབ་ཏུ་ཚ་བའི་སྐྱལ་བསྐྱལ་དྲག་པོས་གདུངས་པ་  
 དང་། འདི་བས་ཤིན་ཏུ་གང་ཡང་ཅི་མ་རུང་སྐྱམ་པའི་མོད་ལ། རབ་ཏུ་སྐྱེབས་  
 པ་དང་། བརྒྱ་ལྟར་གས་པའི་སྐྱལ་བསྐྱལ་དྲག་པོ་དག་གིས་རབ་ཏུ་གདུངས་  
 པ་དེ་ལྟ་བུའི་སྐྱལ་བསྐྱལ་རབ་ཏུ་ཚ་བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་བརྒྱད་དང་། ཤིན་ཏུ་གང་  
 བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་བརྒྱད་པོ་དག་ཏུ། འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཁམས་བརྒྱད་ཅིང་བསྐྱལ་  
 པ་ཆེན་པོ་སྟོང་ལྔ་ག་བཅུ་གཉིས་སུ་བྱུང་ངོ།

. . . they have been cast down by the harsh seeds of the rebirth process and then born in the hottest of hells, which is unceasing. Having been afflicted there by the excruciating sufferings of intense heat, at the very moment when they think, “Would that I might experience intense cold rather than this!” they have been thoroughly numbed and utterly afflicted by severe pains that split [the body] in the manner of a lotus flower. Such sufferings endured in the eight [hells] beginning with the hottest—[Avīci and] Pratāpana—and in the eight [hells] beginning with the coldest have been prolonged through the world systems and experienced for twelve thousand great aeons.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Deeds such as murder that are motivated by past hatred, deeds connected with pride and jealousy, malice directed toward one’s spiritual teacher and associates (*mched grogs*), verbal abuse, wrong view, and other such flaws that violate the commitments constitute **the harsh seeds of the rebirth**

**process.** By these basest of nonvirtuous acts beings **have been cast down** directly into indestructible hell, without passing through the intermediate state, **and then** instantly transformed and **born** miraculously **in Avīci, the hottest of hells, which is unceasing.** Therein suffering has been experienced for many great aeons. Because of their **having been afflicted by the excruciating sufferings of intense heat there** in the hells, [the impact of] their past deeds was to some extent diminished. But when they were almost released from that state, they saw the conditions of the cold hells, **and at the very moment when they thought, “Would that I might be reborn and experience suffering in those domains of intense cold rather than this!”** they have been indeed reborn therein: **they have been thoroughly numbed** and frozen by snow, blizzards, and so forth, **and utterly afflicted** over many aeons **by severe pains** that recur, are hard to endure, and **split** the body into four parts, eight parts, and so forth **in the manner of a lotus flower. Such sufferings are endured** alternately in the unbearable hells in their respective pairs, that is, **in the eight beginning with the hottest,** namely, [Avīci and]<sup>763</sup> **Pratāpana, Tapanā, Mahāraurava, Raurava, Saṃghāta, Kālasūtra, and Saṃjīva; and in the eight beginning with the coldest,** namely, Mahāpadma, Padma, Utpala, Huhuva, Hahava, Aṭaṭa, Nirarbuda, and Arbuda.<sup>764</sup> It says in the *Sūtra of the Applications of Mindfulness*:

Those who have accumulated unremitting deeds  
 Will be born in the Avīci hell,  
 And they will be roasted for a long time by the fires of hell.  
 Then they will be born in Mahāpadma,  
 And similarly [back and forth in pairs],  
 Up to and including Saṃjīva and Arbuda—  
 Their respective sufferings will be thoroughly  
 experienced.<sup>765</sup>

[These sufferings] are revealed to exceed the number of years after which, according to the common vehicles, beings would

be released from the hells at [the end of] an aeon and so forth. If, when beings have been reborn in these hells, the destruction of their particular world system should occur, [their sufferings] will **have been prolonged** in other **world systems, and** should destruction also have occurred there, they will have been reborn elsewhere to endure the eight [successive] pairs of hot and cold hell. These sufferings of heat and cold have altogether been **experienced for twelve thousand great aeons.**

Concerning the term “great aeon” (*mahākalpa, bskal chen*), it is explained that in a single great aeon there are eighty [lesser] aeons (*adhamakalpa, bskal chung*), twenty for each of the processes of creation, duration, destruction, and dissolution that occur with reference to a single world system. As is said in the *Treasury of Phenomenology*:

So, in this way the created world endures for twenty aeons  
While the processes of creation, destruction,  
And the state of dissolution equal that.  
These eighty [aeons] comprise a “great aeon.”<sup>766</sup>

According to the pious attendants, this process of creation and destruction with reference to the external inhabited world and the hells has no true [inherent] existence, but sentient beings do appear to be born therein, in accordance with the perception of past actions; and at that time, it does appear that the world system undergoes processes of creation and destruction. As in a dream, it seems that one is reborn in the different hell realms of other world systems. All this emerges through the propensities and full force of bewilderment.

The second concerns rebirth among the anguished spirits (17.1.2.1.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**And they have endured for six aeons the hunger and  
thirst of the anguished spirits.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 15:5)**

དེ་ནས་རྣམ་པར་སློན་པ་དེ་བཟད་པ་དང་། ཡི་དྲུག་ས་ལྷོག་ས་པ་དང་། སློམ་པའི་  
སྤྱུག་བསྐྱེལ་གྱིས་ཉེན་པ་དང་། འདོད་པའི་དངོས་པོ་རྣམས་ཡིད་དུ་མི་འོང་བ་  
དང་། གདུག་ཅིང་རྩུབ་པའི་དངོས་པོ་སྣ་ཚོགས་སུ་གྱུར་པ་དང་ཡང་མེད་པར་  
འགྱུར་ཞིང་། ཤིན་དུ་རིད་ཅིང་བསྐྱེལ་ས་པ་དང་། ལྷུས་དང་ཡན་ལག་དང་  
དབང་པོ་མི་འཚམས་པར་གྱུར་པར་བསྐྱེལ་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དུག་དུ་སྐྱེས་སོ།

Then that process of maturation came to an end and they suffered among the anguished spirits, due to pangs of hunger and thirst. Desirable things became unpleasant and turned into all sorts of poisonous and harsh substances, but even these became nonexistent. Utterly emaciated and dry, they have been reborn for six great aeons with disproportionate body, limbs, and sense faculties.

**Interlinear Commentary**

**Then, when that process of maturation** in the hells **came to an end**, they have been subsequently reborn **among the anguished spirits.**<sup>767</sup>

There are two ways in which that [hellish condition] comes to an end: there is the cessation of nonvirtue, the object to be renounced, by means of a virtuous antidote, as when the sensation of heat and the sensation of cold are subdued by an antidote and cease; and there is the cessation through the maturation of one's own particular result, when the fruits of one's past virtuous and negative actions have been

experienced, in the manner of a shoot that has ceased to grow from its seed. The present case refers to the latter.<sup>768</sup>

Why, one might ask, is one who has the karma to be born among anguished spirits not reborn among them before ending the karma conducive to his or her rebirth in the hells? If one has both kinds of karma, the lesser cannot take effect until the result of the greater has first taken its effect, just as when the light of the sun is present, the light of planets and stars is invisible. Therefore, the process of ripening occurs first for whichever is the most powerful among the respective kinds of karma and which is most potent in terms of virtuous and negative actions. Indeed, it says in the [*Autocommentary on the*] *Treasury of Phenomenology*:

Among those cycles of past actions,  
Whichever is the weightiest,  
Whichever is the most immediate,  
Whichever is the most familiar,  
And whichever is the oldest—  
These will be the first to ripen.<sup>769</sup>

So this [text] indicates that the weightiest [deeds] will ripen first.

Anguished spirits (*preta, yi dvags*) are so called because they are afflicted by the fires of hunger and thirst and because they absolutely yearn in their minds for food and drink. Those among them who have general obscurations (*spyi mthun gyi sgrib can*) have **suffered due to pangs of hunger and thirst**.

Those among them who have external obscurations (*phyi'i sgrib can*) have been displeased and afflicted even by the sun and moon, which are pleasant to all. External **desirable things have become unpleasant**, and they have perceived pure water as pus, blood, and so forth. As it says in the *Letter to a Friend*:

To anguished spirits, the moon is hot in summer,  
And even the sun is cool in winter.<sup>770</sup>



Those among them who are enveloped by a circle of flames (*me lce'i 'khor lo can*) initially do not find food and drink, and what they do find cannot be swallowed. Even if it can be swallowed, it will burn inside their digestive organs and burn throughout their bodies, outside and inside. For this reason, enjoyable resources have **turned** instantly **into all sorts of poisonous and harsh substances**.

Those among them who have obscurations associated with food and drink (*zas skom gyi sgrib pa can*) yearn to enjoy lakes and rivers when they are thirsty, and particular kinds of food or pleasant environments and resources when they are hungry. But when they have seen and drawn near to them, **these** have become scraps (*lhag rol*), or else **even** their mere traces **have become nonexistent**, and their suffering has increased.

Their bones have become merely a cage covered with skin, lacking the complexion of flesh and blood. **Utterly emaciated and dry, their body and limbs** have been ill-proportioned, like Mount Sumeru and a blade of grass, **and their sense faculties** incomplete, defective, and **disproportionate** in nature, with heads as large as Mount Sumeru, mouths as small as the eye of a needle, and so forth. Continuing from one world system to the next, **for six great aeons, they have been reborn** in that world of the anguished spirits.

**THE RESULT IN CONFORMITY WITH THAT CAUSAL BASIS,  
WHICH ENTAILS THE HARMING OF OTHERS  
[17.1.2.1.2.2]**

The latter concerns the result in conformity with that causal basis, which entails the harming of others. [It comments on the verse:]

**[Thereafter, assuming the form of] cruel,**

**cannibalistic ogres, they have subjugated and subdued the three planes of existence.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:6)***

དེ་ནས་ལས་ཀྱི་སྐྱིབ་བརྒྱབ་མོའི་རྣམ་པར་སྤྲིན་པ་དེ་ཁད་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱབས་པ་དང་།  
སྤོན་གྱི་སྲིད་པས་མཚམས་སྐྱར་ནས། ཡི་དྲུགས་སྤྲིན་པོ་ཚེན་པོ་རབ་ཏུ་གདུག་  
པ་གདུམ་པོ་ལུས་གཅིག་ལ་མགོ་བོ་བརྒྱུ་པ་དང་། མགོ་བོ་སྣ་ཚོགས་པ་དང་།  
ལུས་བརྒྱུ་ལ་མགོ་བོ་གཅིག་པ་དང་། ལུས་སྣ་ཚོགས་པ་དང་། ཡན་ལག་  
མང་པོ་དང་། ཡན་ལག་སྣ་ཚོགས་པ་དང་། གདུག་པའི་ལག་ཆ་སྣ་ཚོགས་  
པ་ཐོགས་པ། འཁོར་རབ་ཏུ་མང་པོ་དང་། འཇིགས་པའི་གཟུགས་སྣ་  
ཚོགས་དང་། འཇིགས་པའི་སྣ་སྣ་ཚོགས་སྣོག་པ། གཟུགས་དང་ང་རོ་དང་།  
བྱི་དང་ཁ་རླངས་ཀྱིས། ཐམས་ཅད་སྐྱི་བྱང་ཞེས་བྱེད་པ། རབ་ཏུ་འཇིགས་པའི་  
རླང་ནག་དང་། གང་བ་དང་། ཚ་བའི་དབྱུགས་ཀྱིས་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ཁམས་  
འཁྲུགས་པར་བྱེད་པ། ནད་བཞི་བརྒྱ་རྩ་བཞི་འདེབས་པར་བྱེད་པ། སྤོས་ཤིང་  
ཉམས་པར་བྱེད་པའི་མཐུས། ལྷའི་རིས་དང་། ལྷ་མ་ཡིན་གྱི་རིས་དང་། ལྷའི་  
རིས་དང་། ཚེས་པའི་རིས་དང་། འོད་གསལ་དང་། དགོ་རྒྱས་དང་། འབྲས་  
བུ་ཆེ་བ་མན་ཆད་དབང་དུ་བསྐྱུས་སོ།

Then, when that process of maturation of the coarse obscurations of past deeds had gradually diminished, they have been reincarnated owing to their previous rebirth, [assuming a form] among the anguished spirits as a mighty cannibalistic ogre, extremely cruel and fierce. Such beings may have one body with a hundred

heads or diverse heads, or else they may assume a form with a hundred bodies and a single head. They may assume diverse bodies with multiple limbs, while their limbs may also be diverse. They hold diverse harmful weapons, and they have a multitude of retainers. They may assume diverse terrifying physical appearances, and they bellow diverse terrifying roars. Their forms and roars, stench, and bad breath cause all beings to panic in fear. With black vital energy, which is utterly terrifying, and with breath that is cold and hot, they have disturbed the [chilio]cosms throughout the ten directions. They have inflicted four hundred four diseases and induced insanity and debility. Through these powers, they have subjugated the *nāga* classes, the classes of the demigods, the classes of the gods, and those of Brahmakāyika, Abhāsvara, Śubhakṛṣṇā, and Bṛhatphala, from the bottom upward.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then, when that process of maturation of the coarse obscurations of their past deeds,** which were the causal basis for rebirth among the anguished spirits, **had gradually diminished,** the coarseness came to an end **and** their subtle causal basis then took effect. **Owing to their rebirth** in a **previous** life, in which they had meditated on a wrathful deity with multiple heads and arms, clung to it as [a being with] independently existing characteristics, attended to the retinue of *piśācī* and so forth, recited harsh wrathful mantras, practiced the four shocking things (*dngos po bzhi*),<sup>771</sup> and engaged in other such actions, **they have then been reincarnated** and reborn **with** the mind of Rudra. Their essential nature is that they were classed **among** sentient beings who are **anguished spirits**, in the guise of **a mighty cannibalistic ogre** holding weapons and skulls, with a mind

that is **extremely cruel**, wrathful, **and** terrifyingly **fierce**.

Such beings possess miraculous abilities; they may have one body with a hundred heads or diverse dissimilar heads—those of a tiger, lion, or other animal—or else they may assume the form of a god, demigod, and so forth, with a hundred bodies and a single head, like that of a buffalo. They may assume the diverse bodies of elephants, sea monsters, and so forth, or a single body with multiple limbs, while their limbs also may be diverse and dissimilar in color and form. They hold diverse harmful weapons, including stones and pikes, and they have a multitude of retainers, including the *mātarah*, the carnivorous *piśācī* and the [peripheral] *ḍākinīs*. They may assume diverse terrifying physical appearances, including those whose limbs appear as snakes and those that have wings on their bodies, and they bellow diverse terrifying roars, such as rala rala and rulu rulu, and so forth.

As for their function, **their** terrifying **forms and** displeasing **roars**, their foul **stench**, **and** their **bad** suffocating **breath** that brings plague and sickness **caused all beings to panic in fear**. They covered all directions **with** the darkness of their **black vital energy, which was utterly terrifying, and with cold and hot breath they have disturbed all the chiliocosms throughout the ten directions**, including zenith and nadir. **They have inflicted** on living beings **four hundred four diseases** derived from wind, bile, and phlegm disorders and their combinations, **and they** have had inconceivable powers to **induce insanity** of mind **and debility** of body and memory.

**Through these powers, they have subjugated the nāga classes** of Nanda, Takṣaka, and so forth; **the classes of the demigods** such as Vemacitra; **the classes of the gods** of [the world system of] desire, including Indra and Viṣṇu, that is to say, those from Paranirmittavaśavartin downwards; **and those of the twelve realms [of the world system of form] from the bottom upward**, namely, **Brahmakāyika**, Brahmapurohita, and Mahābrahmā, which sustain the first meditative concentration; Parīttābha, Apramāṇābha, and **Ābhāsvara**,

which sustain the second meditative concentration; Parītaśubha, Apramāṇaśubha, and **Śubhakṛtsnā**. which sustain the third meditative concentration; and Anabhraka, Puṇyaprasava, and **Brhatphala**, which sustain the fourth meditative concentration.<sup>772</sup>

## **THE SUBJUGATION OF SUCH CRUEL AND MALIGN BEINGS BY THE WRATHFUL DEITIES OF PRISTINE COGNITION WHO IMPOSE DISCIPLINE [17.1.2.2]**

The latter part [of the detailed exegesis of the natural expression of the wrathful deities] concerns the subjugation [of such cruel and malign beings] by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition who impose discipline.

This has two aspects, of which the first is the observation of those beings to be disciplined (17.1.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Owing to the [meritorious] service that Rudra [the archetype of such cruel and malign beings] had performed in the past, [the omniscient Heruka] observed that the time had arrived for him to be disciplined.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:7)***

དེ་སྔོན་བསྟེན་པའི་སྔོན་གྱིས་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པས་གཟིགས་ནས་སྤྱགས་  
རྗེས་འདུལ་བར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

Owing to the [meritorious] service that [Rudra, the archetype of such cruel and malign beings] had performed in the past, [the omniscient Heruka] observed that the time had arrived to discipline him.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**That** [archetypal] Rudra had **in the past** cultivated an enlightened attitude in the Great Vehicle and received empowerments. **Owing to** the merit of **the services he had performed** on behalf of a spiritual adviser, he had become a powerful force (*che btsan*) and a field [suitable for] discipline. The omniscient Great Glorious Heruka **observed** that the time had arrived for **him** to be disciplined, and then through the deeds of his self-originating compassionate spirituality skilled in means, [Heruka] demonstrated the miracle that disciplined Rudra in a manner appropriate to his fortune, thinking **that the time for discipline had arrived.**

## **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THAT SUBJUGATION [17.1.2.2.2]**

The second aspect [of the subjugation of such cruel and malign beings by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition who impose discipline] concerns the extensive exegesis of that subjugation (17.1.2.2.2). This comprises (i) the overwhelming of the arrogant spirits through the four miracles (17.1.2.2.2.1); (ii) the eradication of the cruel and malign spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath (17.1.2.2.2.2); and (iii) the taking [of the arrogant spirits] into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions (17.1.2.2.2.3).

## THE OVERWHELMING OF THE ARROGANT SPIRITS THROUGH THE FOUR MIRACLES [17.1.2.2.1]

The first of these also has two parts, of which the first concerns equipoise in the meditative stability of the causal basis (17.1.2.2.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**In order to discipline this lord of existence,  
[Samantabhadra] became absorbed in the  
meditative stability of the cloud of wrathful deities.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 15:8)*

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཆེ་བའི་དོ་རྗེ་བཀོད་པའི་སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་ཏུ་བསམ། འཛིག་  
རྟེན་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་སྟོད་པ་གསུམ་གྱི་བདག་པོ་འདུལ་བའི་ར་རྒྱལ་ཆེན་  
པོའི་གཟི་བརྗིད་སྟོན་པའི་ཕྱིར། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱི་སྐྱུ་གསུང་  
ཐུགས་དོ་རྗེའི་བདག་པོ། བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོས་ཁོ་པོའི་རྒྱལ་  
པོའི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་སྒྲིན་ཆེན་པོ་རྣམ་པར་འཕྲོ་བའི། སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་ཏུ་བའི་རྒྱལ་  
པོའི་ཉིང་ལེ་འཛིན་ལ་སྟོམས་པར་བྱས་ཏེ།

In order that the tathāgata, the *Net of Magical Emanation*, which is an indestructible array of greatness, might display the brilliance of great pride that disciplines the lord of the three planes of existence within the ten directions of the six realms, this identity of the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas, the Transcendent Lord, with great joy

became absorbed in the kingly meditative stability of the *Net of Magical Emanation*, which diffuses the great cloud of the maṇḍala of kingly wrathful deities.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the wrathful beings of [malign] deeds who are to be disciplined had appeared, **then** in order to reveal the wrathful deities of pristine cognition who impose discipline, the body of actual reality of **the tathāgata** brought forth the body of perfect resource of the wrathful deities, manifesting in and of itself from the sky-like disposition of **the *Net of Magical Emanation*, which is** without duality of appearance and emptiness—a natural **array of** nondual **indestructible greatness**, without partiality or bias.

The reason [for his emergence as the wrathful deities] is **in order that he might display the brilliance of great pride** that overwhelms all haughty spirits including those consumed by hatred, and **that disciplines** proud Rudra, **the lord of the three planes of existence**<sup>773</sup> **in** the field of **the ten directions of the six realms**.

Thus **the Transcendent Lord**, Samantabhadra, **the supreme identity of the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas, with great joy** in the means that instructs those to be trained, **became absorbed in the meditative stability** of the **kingly** self-manifesting pristine cognition **of the *Net of Magical Emanation*, which diffuses the great cloud of the maṇḍala** of herukas—the **kingly** ones among the **wrathful deities**.

The second part [of the overwhelming of the arrogant spirits through the four miracles] concerns the miraculous diffusion [of the wrathful deities of pristine cognition] from within that [disposition] (17.1.2.2.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]



**The assembly of male and female wrathful deities  
then terrified [the most powerful of malign beings]  
through their fifteen indications.**

**Root Tantra (Ch.15:9-12)**

དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ནས། ལྷོ་མོ་དབང་ཕྱུག་ཆེན་མོ་མདོན་དུ་ཕྱུང་སྟེ། ཉི་ཉི་  
 ཞེས་དབྱེས་པའི་གཟི་མདངས་ཀྱིས། རིན་ཆེན་པར་རྒྱ་རྒྱས་པར་མཛད་ནས། གཉིས་  
 ལུ་མེད་པར་འཁྲིལ་བའི་དབྱེས་པས་ཐིམ་ནས། བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིན་ལས། ལྷོ་  
 ལྷོ་སྐྱོ་སྐྱོ་བི་ལྷ་བཟོ་གོ་རྒྱ་རྫོ་ལ་མཇུ་ལ་པའ་པའ་པའ་ཉ་ལ་ཉ་ལ་ཉ་ལ་སྐྱོ་ཞེས་བཟོད་  
 པས། འཛིག་རྟེན་རྒྱལ་གི་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་མཐའ་ཡས་པ་ཁྲལ་པར་ལྷོ་བོའི་དབྱིལ་འཁོར་  
 ཀྱི་ཚོགས་སྟོང་གསུམ་ཀྱི་འཛིག་རྟེན་ཅམ། ཕྱོགས་བཅུའི་དུལ་སྤ་མོ་སྟེད་འཐོན་  
 པར་གྱུར་ནས། འཛིག་རྟེན་རྒྱལ་གི་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་ཐམས་ཅད་གཡོས། རབ་ཏུ་  
 གཡོས། ཀུན་ཏུ་གཡོས་སོ། འུར་འུར། རབ་ཏུ་འུར་འུར། ཀུན་ཏུ་འུར་འུར་  
 རོ། ཆེས་ཆེས། རབ་ཏུ་ཆེས་ཆེས། ཀུན་ཏུ་ཆེས་ཆེས་སོ། ཤིག་ཤིག །རབ་ཏུ་  
 ཤིག་ཤིག །ཀུན་ཏུ་ཤིག་ཤིག་གོ། །གཏོར་གཏོར། རབ་ཏུ་གཏོར་གཏོར། ཀུན་  
 ཏུ་གཏོར་གཏོར་རོ། འཛིག་རྟེན་རྒྱལ་གི་ཕྱོགས་བཅུའི་སྟོང་ཁམས་ཐམས་ཅད་  
 ན་གནས་པའི་དབང་ཆེ་བ་དང་། གཟི་བཟོད་ཆེ་བ་དང་། མཐུ་ཆེ་བའི་དབང་ཕྱུག་  
 ཆེན་པོ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད། བརྒྱལ། རབ་ཏུ་བརྒྱལ། ཀུན་ཏུ་བརྒྱལ་བར་  
 གྱུར་ཏོ།

From the expanse of the real nature, the great  
Krodheśvarī emerged, exclaiming “HĪ! HĪ!” Through her  
lustrous incandescence, which is joyous, the jewel and

the lotus became distended, and then penetration occurred through the joy of their nondual embrace. From the cloud of generative fluid, there emerged [the mantra] HŪM HŪM HŪM VIŚVAVAJRA KRODHAJVALA MAṄḌALA PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ HALA HALA HALA HŪM. At these words, pervading the infinite ten directions of the six realms, the assembly of the maṅḌala of wrathful deities came forth, as large as the trichiliocosm and equal in number to the atomic particles of the ten directions, and thereby all the ten directions of the six realms rocked, further rocked, and absolutely rocked. [Pebbles of thunder] rumbled, further rumbled, and absolutely rumbled. [Musical instruments] resounded, further resounded, and absolutely resounded. [Solid entities] were crushed, further crushed, and absolutely crushed. [Waves] were disturbed, further disturbed, and absolutely disturbed. Maheśvara and all such beings who were most powerful, most brilliant, and greatest in strength among those who abide in all the chiliocosms of the ten directions of the six realms then fainted, further fainted, and absolutely fainted.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the expanse from which this diffusion [of wrathful deities] arose, **from the expanse of** actual reality, **the real nature, the great Krodheśvarī** of pristine cognition, Samantabhadrī, the passive female aspect of this incandescence, **emerged** manifest in and of herself, **exclaiming “hī hī!”** **Through the lustrous incandescence** of **her** body, **which is joyous** to her male consort [Samantabhadra], **her** secret **lotus** was distended with bliss and exposed. Thereupon, the active male aspect, Samantabhadra, exclaimed “**HĀ! HĀ!**” **and his jewel** expanded. **Through the joy of their** union, the **nondual embrace** of the

male and female buddhas, **penetration occurred** of the jewel in the lotus, **and then** they enjoyed one another.<sup>774</sup>

With regard to the diffusion [of the wrathful deities], the causal basis here refers to the emergence [of the wrathful deities] **from the cloud of the generative fluid** of the male buddha which descended into the pudendum of the female buddha; while the secondary condition comprised [the following mantra], which also **emerged**: HŪM HŪM HŪM VIŚVAVAJRA KRODHAJVALA MAṄḌALA PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ HALA HALA HALA HŪM. This means “May the blazing maṅḌala of wrathful deities on the crossed vajra which is the identity of buddha body, speech, and mind destroy to shreds the body, speech, and mind of cruel and malign beings because they have three such pernicious aspects!” **At these words, pervading all the infinite ten directions of the six realms** in infinite space, without beginning or end, **the assembly of the maṅḌala of wrathful deities** of the five enlightened families **came forth** from the expanse of the pudendum of Samantabhadrī, the female buddha, **as large as the trichiliocosm** in their extent **and equal in number to the atomic particles** of all world systems of **the ten directions**, thereby filling [the entirety of space].

With regard to the indications of this diffusion [of the wrathful deities], since the cloud of wrathful deities radiated throughout the expanse of space in that manner, the terrain of **all the ten directions of the six realms** and all their mountains and continents to a lesser degree **rocked**, to a middling degree they **further rocked**, **and** to a greater degree they **absolutely rocked**. Peals of thunder and so forth to a lesser degree **rumbled**, to a middling degree they **further rumbled**, **and** to a greater degree they **absolutely rumbled**. The assembled instruments of music such as the divine drum<sup>775</sup> were not merely beaten, but, sounding of their own accord, they to a lesser degree **resounded**, to a middling degree they **further resounded**, **and** to a greater degree they **absolutely resounded**. Gross compounded entities such as mountains, earth, and stones were not merely split, but they **were** to a

lesser degree **crushed**, to a middling degree they were **further crushed, and** to a greater degree they were **absolutely crushed**. The waves of the oceans and so forth **were** to a lesser degree **disturbed**, to a middling degree they were **further disturbed, and** to a greater degree they were **absolutely disturbed**. These three degrees—lesser, middling, and greater—indicate the regions below, above, and upon the earth. It is said therefore that there were fifteen great indications when each of these five [events] assumed the three degrees. All this registered externally in the context of the inhabited world, and the inhabited world was itself overwhelmed.

When [these events] registered internally, in the context of the sentient inhabitants [of this inhabited world], the three degrees of rocking applied to the [past, present, and future] thoughts of living beings (*'gro ba'i sems gsum*); the three degrees of rumbling to the three media [of body, speech, and mind]; the three degrees of resounding to objects, subjects, and their interaction; the three degrees of crushing to the three poisons; and the three degrees of disturbance to renunciation, antidote, and retention, so that fifteen purificatory acts occurred in all.

When they registered secretly, in the context of pristine cognition, the three degrees of rocking applied to the self-manifesting appearance of the five lights,<sup>776</sup> the three degrees of rumbling to the radiance of the celestial palace of pristine cognition throughout the ten directions, the three degrees of resounding to the supported maṇḍala of deities, the three degrees of crushing to the array of dissimilar appearances that manifoldly appear, and the three degrees of disturbance to the diffusion, absorption, and display of the maṇḍala.

Again, when they registered in the context of the unsurpassedly secret [teachings], the three degrees of rocking applied to bewildering appearances that are positive, negative, or neutral; the three degrees of rumbling to cognition that is refuted, proven, or neither; the three degrees of resounding to the naturally liberated Samantabhadra who arises as skillful

means, discriminative awareness, and their coalescence; the three degrees of crushing to the pristine cognition free from conceptual elaboration which at that time arises as bliss, radiance, and nonconceptualization; and the three degrees of disturbance to the destruction of renunciation, antidote, and retention by means of natural realization. Thus, there were fifteen great indications of the liberation of cyclic existence in actual reality.

When all these indications had been demonstrated, the gods **Maheśvara**, Brahmā, Indra, **and all such beings who were most powerful** lords presiding over their respective abodes, **most brilliant** and lustrous, **and the greatest in** power, ability, and **strength among those who abide in all the great trichiliocosms of the ten directions of the six realms** wilted. They **fainted** because their brilliance was diminished, they **further fainted** because they could not speak at all, **and they absolutely fainted** because their minds were terrified and they forgot their bravado.

## **THE ERADICATION OF THE CRUEL AND MALIGN SPIRITS THROUGH THE ENLIGHTENED ACTIVITY OF WRATH [17.1.2.2.2.2]**

The second section [of the detailed exegesis of this subjugation] concerns the eradication of the arrogant spirits [headed by Rudra] through the enlightened activity of wrath. This comprises (i) the array of the foremost maṇḍala of pristine cognition (17.1.2.2.2.2.1); (ii) the actual liberation of the proud male spirits (17.1.2.2.2.2.2); (iii) the joyfulness experienced through union with the female spirits (17.1.2.2.2.2.3); and (iv) the consequent diffusion of the maṇḍala of the retinue (17.1.2.2.2.2.4).

# THE ARRAY OF THE FOREMOST MANDALA OF PRISTINE COGNITION [17.1.2.2.2.1]

The first of these has two parts, of which the former concerning the presence of the principal deity Mahottara (17.1.2.2.2.1.1) [comments on the verse]:

**[Among them] the principal deity was dark brown in color, with three heads and six arms.**

## *Root Tantra (Ch. 15:13)*

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དགེས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཉིད། འཛིགས་བྱེད་ཆེན་པོ་ཤིན་  
'རྟུ་ཇམ་པ་སྐྱི་བུང་ཞེས་བྱེད་པའི་འབར་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཁྲག་འབྱུང་སྐྱུ་སྐྱུག་ནག་  
ཅིར་ཡང་འབྱུང་བ་དབུ་དང་ཕྱག་དང་ཞབས་སྟོང་ལམས་གྱི་རྩལ་སྟེང་མཚོན་  
ཆ་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་འཛིན་པ་དེ་དབུ་གསུམ་ཕྱག་རྩལ་ཞབས་བཞིར་བྱུང་ཏེ། དུར་  
ཚོད་ཆེན་པོར་དགེས་ནས་ཁྲག་གི་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་དཀྱིལ་ན། ཀེར་རུས་ཆེན་པོའི་རི་  
རབ་གྱི་སྟེང་འབར་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་གློང་གི་འཁོར་ལོའི་དཀྱིལ་ན་དབང་ཕྱག་ཆེན་པོ་  
དང་། དུར་ཚོད་གྱི་བདག་པོ་རྟེགས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཁྱོ་ལྷག་གི་གདན་ལ་བརྒྱུད་ས་  
བསྐྱུམས་སུ་བཞུགས་སོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One himself, completely transformed into the dark brown buddha body of the blood drinker, utterly terrifying, most awesome, causing panic, in a massive blaze [of light], with heads, arms, and legs equal in number to the atomic particles of the chiliocosm, brandishing diverse weapons; and he then gravitated into a form

with three heads, six arms, and four legs. Rejoicing in a great charnel ground, in the midst of an ocean of blood, upon a mountain of human bones, and at the hub of a wheel, with a massively blazing aureole, there he stood with [left legs] extended and [right legs] drawn in, upon a mat comprising Maheśvara and the most proud mistress of the charnel ground, husband and wife.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, Samantabhadra himself completely transformed into the dark brown buddha body of the blood drinker Mahottara Heruka, assuming an utterly terrifying and most awesome guise, his lustrous incandescence of pristine cognition causing panic, diffusing a massive blaze of light brighter than a hundred thousand suns, and endowed with heads, arms, and legs equal in number to the atomic particles of the infinite chiliocosm, brandishing diverse weapons in his hands, such as the vajra and the [sharp-edged] discus.**

**He then gravitated into a form with three heads** representing [the three approaches to] liberation, **six arms** representing the six transcendent perfections, **and four legs** representing the [four] supports for miraculous ability. **There he stood, rejoicing in a great charnel ground,** indicating that cyclic existence is inherently pure without having to be renounced, **in the spacious midst of an ocean of blood,** indicating that desire is inherently pure, **upon an** accumulated heap and great **mountain pile of human bones** to symbolize that hatred is inherently pure without having to be abandoned, **and at the hub of a** four-spoked **wheel,** in the midst of a **massively blazing aureole** with volcanic flames of pristine cognition to indicate that delusion is inherently pure—**with** left [legs] **extended and** right [legs] **drawn in, upon a mat comprising** the god **Maheśvara** or Mahādeva **and the most**

**proud mistress of the charnel ground, Umādevī, husband and wife.**<sup>777</sup>

There are some who hold that the right legs are extended and the left legs drawn in, but that system does not correspond to the pure view indicative of discriminative awareness and skillful means.<sup>778</sup>

The latter, concerning the array of his retinue, the four enlightened families (17.1.2.2.2.1.2) [comments on the verse]:

**And the blood drinkers of the four enlightened families were arrayed on the spokes [of the maṇḍala wheel] in the four directions.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:14)***

ལྷོ་པོ་འི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་སྤྱིན་པུང་དེ་དག་ཀྱང་། ལ་ལ་ནི་དཔལ་ལྷག་འཐུང་  
ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེར་གྱུར་ཏེ་ཤར་ཕྱོགས་སུ་བཞུགས་སོ། ལ་ལ་ནི་དཔལ་ལྷག་འཐུང་  
ཆེན་པོ་རིན་པོ་ཆེར་གྱུར་ཏེ་ལྷོ་ཕྱོགས་སུ་བཞུགས་སོ། ལ་ལ་ནི་དཔལ་ལྷག་  
འཐུང་ཆེན་པོ་པརླར་གྱུར་ཏེ་ནུབ་ཕྱོགས་སུ་བཞུགས་སོ། ལ་ལ་ནི་དཔལ་ལྷག་  
འཐུང་ཆེན་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ལས་སུ་གྱུར་ཏེ་བྱང་ཕྱོགས་སུ་བཞུགས་སོ། དེ་དག་ཀུན་  
ཀྱང་འཇིག་བྱེད་ཆེན་པོའི་ཆ་ལུགས་དང་། རྣམ་པའི་ངོ་དང་། འབར་བའི་  
སྒོར་ན། དབུ་གསུམ་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཞབས་བཞིས། སྲི་ཟ་དང་། གཞོད་སྤྱིན་དང་། སྲིན་  
པོ་དང་། གཤིན་རྗེ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཁྱོ་ཤུག་གི་གདན་བྱས་པ་ལ་བརྒྱུད་བསྐྱུམས་  
སུ་བཞུགས་སོ། བཅུན་མོ་ལྷག་འཐུང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་རྣམས་ཀྱང་སོ་སོའི་སྐྱེ་  
ལ་འཁྲིལ་བའི་ཚུལ་གྱིས་བཞུགས་སོ།

Also, as for that cloud mass of the maṇḍala of wrathful



deities, there were some gravitating toward the great glorious Vajra Blood Drinker who stood in the eastern direction; there were some gravitating toward the great glorious Ratna Blood Drinker who stood in the southern direction; there were some gravitating toward the great glorious Padma Blood Drinker who stood in the western direction; and there were some gravitating toward the great glorious and universal Karma Blood Drinker who stood in the northern direction. All of these [herukas] stood there, assuming an utterly terrifying guise, with an awesome roar and a blazing aureole, with three heads, six arms, and four legs—[the left legs] extended and [the right legs] drawn in, upon mats comprising husband-and-wife couples of *gandharvas*, *yakṣas*, ogres, *yama* spirits, and other such spirits. The host of the great blood drinker queens also stood there, embracing the bodies of their respective [lords].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Also, as for the hosts who form that cloud mass of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities**, diffusing in the above manner, they are natural expressions of the five or four enlightened families.<sup>779</sup> **There were some** belonging to the enlightened family of the mirrorlike pristine cognition, **gravitating toward the great glorious Blood Drinker, Vajra Heruka, who stood at the spoke of the maṇḍala in the eastern direction.** Some hold him to be the Buddha Heruka, but they are imperceptive because Mahottara himself is said to be the Buddha Heruka.

**There were some** belonging to the enlightened family of the pristine cognition of sameness, **gravitating toward the great glorious Ratna Blood Drinker, Ratna Heruka, who stood at the spoke of the maṇḍala in the southern direction.** **There were some** belonging to the enlightened family of the pristine cognition of discernment, **gravitating toward the great**

**glorious Padma Blood Drinker**, Padma Heruka, **who stood** at the spoke of the maṇḍala **in the western direction**. **And there were some** belonging to the enlightened family of the pristine cognition of accomplishment, **gravitating toward the great glorious universal Karma Blood Drinker**, Karma Heruka, **who stood** at the spoke of the maṇḍala **in the northern direction**.

All of these [herukas of the] four enlightened families of wrathful deities assumed an utterly terrifying guise, comprising the eight accoutrements of the charnel ground,<sup>780</sup> with an awesome roar of HŪṂ and PHAṬ and so forth, and an aureole ablaze with the flames of pristine cognition. There they stood, with three heads indicating that the three poisons are uprooted and that the three buddha bodies are present; six arms, indicating that the six classes of living beings are liberated in the expanse [of reality]; and four legs, indicating that they perform acts of benefit for living beings through the four rites of enlightened activity and naturally liberate the four possible birthplaces (*skye gnas bzhi*)<sup>781</sup>—their [left] legs extended and [right legs] drawn in, in the previous manner, upon mats comprising supine and constrained (*phyi chings*) husband-and-wife couples to symbolize that the four erroneous views and the four demonic forces have been subdued.<sup>782</sup> Those mats consist respectively of gandharvas in the eastern direction, yakṣas in the northern direction, ogres in the western direction, yama spirits in the southern direction, and other such spirits, equal to the number of pernicious, venomous species.

**The host of the great blood drinker queens** of the five enlightened families of herukas—Buddha Krodheśvarī and so forth—**also stood there**, entwining and **embracing the bodies of their respective** wrathful [lords]. [See plates 7a-7e.]

**THE ACTUAL LIBERATION OF THE ARROGANT MALE SPIRITS**

## [17.1.2.2.2.2]

The second part [of the eradication of the arrogant spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath] concerns the actual liberation of the class of proud male spirits. This has two sections, the first of which describes the fierce awesome sounds made by the arrogant spirits in their pride (17.1.2.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The class of male spirits bellowed their fierce words with a malignant roar.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 15:15-16)*

དེ་ནས་རྗེགས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་སོགས་པ་གཏུམ་པའི་སེམས་གྲིས་གདུག་པའི་  
རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་ཆེན་པོ་སྣ་ཚོགས་བསྟན་ནས། མགྲིན་གཅིག་ཏུ་གདུག་པའི་ང་  
ལོས། བརྒྱུ་པའི་གཏུམ་ཚིག་ཏུ་སྣམ་པ། ཐོང་ཐོང་སླིང་རྗེའི་བདག་པོ་ཅི་དེ་  
ལྟར་བྱེད་དམ་ཞེས་ཟེར་ཞིང། ཤིན་ཏུ་གདུག་པའི་སེམས་གྲིས་ཁྲོས་ནས་རྣམ་མོ།

Then the Great Arrogant Spirit and other such spirits, with a ferocious temper, displayed great, diverse, and malignant miraculous abilities, and with one voice and a malignant roar, they bellowed their unpleasant, harsh, and fierce words. “Release us! Let us go!” they said. “Why do you act in this manner, O Lords of Compassion?” Thus they were angered and enraged, with an absolutely malignant temper.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Then Rudra, the Great Arrogant Spirit, and other such spirits** who belong among the twenty-eight male spirits of the Maheśvara class who had been intertwined as a mat, were enraged, **with a venomous and ferocious temper**. Although their bodies had been spread out as mats, they still **displayed their great, diverse, and malignant miraculous abilities, and** uniformly, **with one voice and a malignant roar, they bellowed their unpleasant, harsh, and fierce words**. **“Release us** from under your feet, **O Lords of Compassion!”** they said. **“Are you not apparitions who act for the benefit of living beings? Why do you act in this manner toward us?”** **Thus they were angered and enraged, with an absolutely malignant temper** because they had been surpassed.

The second section [of the actual liberation of the class of proud male spirits] concerns the actual liberation enacted through the wrath of compassionate sorcery (17.1.2.2.2.2.2).

This itself has two aspects, of which the first concerns the diffusion of a cloud of terrifying and awesome forms (17.1.2.2.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Whereupon [Mahottara Heruka] assumed [a form] with nine [heads] and eighteen [arms], bellowing KHĀHI.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:17)***

དེ་ནས་བཙམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགེས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དབྱ་དགུ་ཕྱག་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་ཞབས་བརྒྱད་  
 དུ་གནས་ནས། རྩམ་པའི་སྐད་ཀྱིས་ཐུགས་རྗེས་འདུལ་བའི་ཐབས་ཀྱིས་ཤིན་ཏུ་  
 ཁོས་ནས། སྦྱོ་སྦྱོ་སྦྱོ། ཉ་ཉ་ཉ། ལུ་ཉི་ལུ་ཉི་ལུ་ཉི། ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས།

Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One,

assumed a form with nine heads, eighteen arms, and eight legs, and then with an awesome voice he [displayed] extreme wrath in accordance with the skillful means that instructs through compassionate spirituality, bellowing HŪṂ HŪṂ HŪṂ HA HA HA KHĀHI KHĀHI KHĀHI!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One** Mahottara himself, emanated and **assumed a form with nine heads** as an indication that he outwardly partakes of the nine awesome demeanors of a heruka<sup>783</sup> and inwardly possesses the nine serial steps of meditative equipoise (*snyoms 'jug dgu*);<sup>784</sup> with **eighteen arms** to symbolize outwardly the eighteen liberating acolytes (*sgrol ging bco brgyad*) who liberate the cruel and malign spirits, and to symbolize inwardly the eighteen kinds of emptiness;<sup>785</sup> and **eight legs** to indicate outwardly that he acts on behalf of sentient beings through the four immeasurable aspirations and four rites of enlightened activity, and inwardly that he possesses the eight aspects of liberation (*rnam pa thar pa brgyad*).

**And then, with an awesome voice** directed at the cruel and malign spirits, and **in accordance with the skillful means that instructs through compassionate spirituality**, skilled in means, **he displayed extreme wrath** in the perception of those to be trained, **bellowing** three syllables HŪṂ, meaning “Gather together the body, speech, and mind [of the male spirits]!” three syllables HA, meaning “Array and prepare to consume the three poisons!” and three syllables KHĀHI, meaning “Eat and enjoy their flesh, blood, and bones!” At this mantra, [the male spirits] trembled and panicked and then were made amenable.

The second aspect concerns the actual liberation [of the arrogant male spirits] (17.1.2.2.2.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Then the blood drinkers enjoyed the entrails of the arrogant spirits, along with their flesh, blood, and bones.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:18)***

དབང་ཕྱུག་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་སོགས་པ། གདུག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཚོགས་དེ་དག་གི་སྤྲིང་  
དང་དབང་པོ་ཀྱན་སྤྲུང་། ནང་ཁྲོལ་ཀྱན་བྲངས། ཡན་ལག་ཀྱན་བཅད་གདུབས་  
ནས་ཤ་ཀྱན་ཟོས། ཟླག་ཀྱན་འབྲངས། རུས་པ་ཀྱན་འཚོས་སོ།

Then they extracted the hearts and all the sense organs of the hosts of the most cruel and malign spirits such as Maheśvara, they drew out their entrails, cut off their limbs, ate all their flesh, drank all their blood, and chewed all their bones.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Those assemblies of wrathful deities **then extracted the hearts of the hosts of the most cruel and malign spirits such as Maheśvara**, cutting off the essential nature of egotism in the modalities of their consciousness; **and** they extracted **all** their **sense organs** including the eyes, thereby obstructing the sensory gates that apprehend objects. **They drew out all their entrails**—intestines and so forth—thereby rejecting attachment to the body, which is the support of the

subject-object dichotomy. They **cut off all their limbs**, including the head, thereby destroying the formative predispositions for rebirth, and then they **ate all their flesh**, thereby purifying delusion; **drank all their blood**, purifying desire; **and chewed all their bones**, thereby purifying hatred.

## **THE JOYFULNESS EXPERIENCED THROUGH UNION WITH THE CLASS OF FEMALE SPIRITS [17.1.2.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the eradication of the arrogant spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath] concerns the joyfulness experienced through union with the class of female spirits. It comprises (i) the miracle of condensing the world (17.1.2.2.2.2.3.1) and (ii) the enjoyment of the great rites of union (17.1.2.2.2.2.3.2).

The former also has two aspects, of which the first concerns the condensing of the inhabited world (17.1.2.2.2.2.3.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Then through the ĀRALI JAḤ [mantra], they minutely condensed the inhabited worlds.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:19)***

དེ་ནས་མྱོ་མྱོ་མྱོ་མྱོ་ཨེ་ཨུ་ར་ལི་མི་མི་མོ་མོ། ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། ལྷོགས་བཅུ་ཉི་  
འཛིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཁམས་ནས་མཁའ་དང་བཅས་པ་ཡུངས་འབྱུང་གཅིག་ཅེས་དུ་  
ཚུད་པར་བསྐྱུས་སོ།

Then, by their uttering HŪM HŪM HŪM BHYOH E ĀRALI HRIM

HRIM JAḤ JAḤ, the world systems of the ten directions along with space were condensed within an area the size of a single mustard seed.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then** they uttered the following mantra, which condenses the world: three syllables **HŪM**, meaning “May [the world] be condensed by the body, speech, and mind of the Great Glorious One!”; **BHYOḤ**, meaning “the *mātarah*”; **E**, meaning “here”; **ĀRALI**, meaning *ḍākinīs* or “female intermediaries”; **HRIM HRIM**, meaning “gather together!”; and **JAḤ JAḤ**, meaning “Come, come!” or “Draw in!”

**By their uttering** of these [mantra] syllables, **the world systems of the ten directions, along with** the frontiers of space, were all **condensed within an area the size of a mustard seed**. This is the miraculous ability associated with the power of the buddhas, on which the *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas* accordingly says:

The expanse of space, the expanse of reality itself,  
And the expanse of the world systems  
May be condensed in a single mustard seed.  
But their dimensions are undiminished, as before.  
This is a miracle of the expanse of the sugatas.<sup>786</sup>

The second aspect [of the miracle of condensing the world] concerns their gathering of the sentient inhabitants (17.1.2.2.2.3.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**And they gathered together the twenty-eight *īśvarī*,  
along with their slaves and servants.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:20)***



དེ་ནས་འབྲུང་མོ་མ་ལུས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཡང་རྒྱལ་པོ་དེགས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་སོགས་  
 པའི་རྒྱུང་མ་འབྲུང་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་རྗེ་མོའི་ཡང་རྗེ་མོ། སྲིན་མོ་ཆེན་མོ་མི་སྲིན་མོ་  
 དང་། ཚོངས་མ་དང་། འབྲུག་མོ་དང་། དབང་མོ་དང་། འཇུག་སྲིད་མོ་དང་།  
 གཞོན་ལྷ་མོ་དང་། དམར་མོ་དང་། བདུད་རྩི་མོ་དང་། ཞི་བ་མོ་དང་། བེ་ཚོན་མོ་  
 དང་། སྲིན་མོ་དང་། ཟ་བ་མོ་དང་། དག་འབ་མོ་དང་། ར་རོ་ཁྲག་འབྲུང་ལྷོས་  
 མ་དང་། གཅིག་ལུ་རྩོད་མ་དང་། ཡིད་འཕྲོག་མ་དང་། སྲུབ་མོ་དང་། རྒྱུང་  
 མོ་དང་། གསོད་བྱེད་མོ་དང་། མེ་མོ་དང་། བག་མོ་དང་། རྒྱན་བྱེད་མོ་དང་།  
 ལྷ་ཆེན་མོ་དང་། རྒྱ་ལྷ་མོ་དང་། རྣམ་མོ་ཆེན་མོ་དང་། ར་མགོ་དམར་སེར་  
 ཆེན་མོ་དང་། བུམ་ལྷ་སྲོ་ནག་ཆེན་མོ་དང་། གསུམ་འཛིན་སེར་ནག་ཆེན་མོ་  
 ལ་སོགས་པ། བྲན་དང་ཡང་བྲན་དང་། གཡོག་དང་ཡང་གཡོག་འཁོར་ཞིང་  
 གི་རྩལ་སྟེད་ཀྱང་བསྐྱུས་སོ།

Then they gathered the highest queens among the queens of all female elementals, who were the wives of the highest kings, including the Great Arrogant Spirit, among the kings of all the male elementals. These are, namely, Mahārākṣasī Manurākṣasī, Brahmāṇī, Raudrī, Indrāṇī, Vaiṣṇavī [Nārāyaṇī], Kaumārī, Piṅgalā, Amṛtā [Sūryā], Saumī [Sāntī], Daṇḍī, Rākṣasī, Bhakṣasī, Ratī, Rudhiramadī, Ekacariṇī, Manohārikā, Siddhikarī, Vāyudevī, Mahāmāraṇā, Agnāyī, Vārāhī, Cāmuṇḍī, Bhujanā, Varuṇānī, Mahākālī, Yellow-Red Mahāchāgalā, Dark-Blue Mahākumbhakarnī, Dark-Yellow Lambodarā, and so forth, along with their entourage—slaves and slaves of slaves, and their servants and servants of servants, equal in number to the atoms of their fields.

**Interlinear Commentary**

**Then they gathered** under their sway all the twenty-eight *īśvarī*—**the highest queens among the queens of all** the common classes of **female elementals** such as Mahākarnī (*rna rnyan chen mo*), **who were** mistresses of ministerial class. These were **the wives of the** respective twenty-eight [*īśvara*], **including the Great Arrogant Spirit** and Brahmā, who are the **highest kings among the kings of all** common classes of mighty **male elementals**, such as Takṣaka, Pāṇḍara, and Yakṣa, who function as the great ministers of gods and demigods, obedient to their injunctions.<sup>787</sup>

Although these [queens] act in the world according to the ordinary point of view, they are, in the extraordinary view, revealed to be supramundane; in the most extraordinary view, they are held to be present within the centers of the energy channels [of the subtle body] and to appear as such when buddhahood is attained, so that they can be taken into the fold [by a buddha].<sup>788</sup> In this context, however, because they are easy to understand when described in accordance with their depiction in worldly folklore and so forth, I [Longchen Rabjam] must describe them accordingly.<sup>789</sup>

**These** wives **are** merely known after the names of their respective spouses. Among them:

1. **Mahārākṣasī Manurākṣasī** is the wife of Maheśvara [i.e., Rudra], the arrogant spirit of the charnel ground, who is delighted by offerings of fat and grease.
2. **Brahmānī** is the wife of Brahmā, who was formerly born from the celestial palace of [Viṣṇu's] lotus navel. At that time, he emanated a mental body in the form of a girl, and in order to gaze upon her, he assumed four heads, one in each of the four directions, and a fifth surmounting these, which Viṣṇu out of jealousy decapitated by hurling a wheel.
3. **Raudrī** [i.e., Pārvatī] is the wife of Maheśvara, the master of the Paranirmitavaśavartin realm. When the gods and demigods were engaged in dispute, she

consecrated her body as a fortress into which the army of the gods entered and from which they fought. Consequently the gods were victorious.

4. **Indrāṇī** is the wife of Śatakṛatu. Formerly she lived as the wife of a hermit sage (*ṛṣi*) and was once invited to a feast by another hermit sage [named Gautama], who had prepared three seats and then invited those two to the feast. When [her husband] the hermit sage asked why he had done so, the other hermit sage [Gautama] said, “There are three of you!” So saying, he made [Śatakṛatu] who had been swallowed in the stomach of Indrāṇī come out there.<sup>790</sup> At that time, the hermit sage [Gautama] grew angry and cursed Śatakṛatu, saying, “May your body have a thousand wombs,” whereupon he was transformed into such an apparition. After the gods had seen him in that state, he begged the hermit sage for forgiveness, so that he was also consecrated to have one thousand eyes. Consequently, he also became known as [Sahasrākṣa]—the god “endowed with a thousand wombs and a thousand eyes.”<sup>791</sup>
5. **Vaiṣṇavī** [or Nārāyaṇī] is the wife of Viṣṇu, who is pervasive above, upon, and below the earth.
6. **Kaumārī** is the wife of the youth Kārtikeya. When Agni, the god of fire, mentally made love to a daughter of the gods, Ṣadānana, the six-faced youth, was born, and on becoming a king among the gods was known as Kārtikeya.
7. **Piṅgalā** is the wife of Nārāyaṇa (*‘jug sred*), who is so called because her body resembles copper in color.
8. **Amṛtā** [i.e., Sūryā] is the wife of Sūrya, the sun, who, during the perfect age of the aeon, was produced from the churning of the ocean, propelled thence into space, and so illuminated the world, whereupon he became known as “the nectar (*amṛta*) of the eyes of living beings.”
9. **Śāntī** is the wife of Candra, the moon, who, when the

ocean was again churned, emerged and was propelled into space, whereupon he became known as “the peaceful one” (*śānta*) and “the cool one” (*saumī*) because he alleviates the afflictions of heat.

10. **Danḍī** is the wife of Daṇḍa, who is known as the club-bearing subduer of Śanaīścara (Saturn).
11. **Rākṣasī** is the wife of Rākṣasa, who is known as the ten-headed Daśagrīva of Laṅkā in the town of Laṅkāpurī.
12. **Bhakṣasī** is the wife of Mahākāla, general of the gods, so called because she “eats” (*bhakṣ*) the demigods and violators of commitments.
13. **Ratī** is the wife of Nandikeśvara (“the lord who grants joy”), also known as Vaiśravaṇa, who pleases others by granting wealth.
14. **Rudhīramadī** is the wife of the god Balabhadra, who is so called because he became intoxicated by wine and then insane after casting Vedic dice at a sacrificial offering to Indra.
15. **Ekacārīṇī** is the wife of the *gandharva* Tambura, a learned musician among the gods, who walked ahead carrying the lute. He is also known as the son of Īśvara, called Bhṛṅgiriṭa.
16. **Manohārikā**, or Lakṣmī, is the wife of Kāmadeva, the god of desire, who is so called because he has a beautiful form, captivating to all who see him.
17. **Siddhīkarī** is the wife of Vasurakṣita, the protector of wealth who accrues wealth and sends forth imprecations (*byad ka*).
18. **Vāyudevī** is the wife of Pavana, the god of wind, who is the source of wind.
19. **Mahāmāraṇā** is the wife of the killer Māra.
20. **Agnāyī** is the wife of Agni, the god of fire.
21. **Vārāhī** is the wife of Mahāvārāha, a lord of the soil (*bhūmipati*), who is so called because he supports the world below the earth in the form of a pig.<sup>792</sup>
22. **Cāmuṇḍī** is the wife of Yama, so called because

formerly when she was the wife of Mahādeva she grew angry when he had regard for Umādevī alone, and consequently transformed the latter into an old woman (*rgyan byed mo*).

23. **Bhujanā** is the wife of Gaṇapati, who was born as the son of Īśvara's wife Puṣpacāpī [i.e., Pārvatī]. At the time of his birth, Umādevī inquired if the child was male and was [deliberately] misinformed that it was a boy, but headless. The child then became headless in accordance with a curse that she made to that effect. Then, in distress, she begged forgiveness and said, "Let him have a new head and he will be as before!" The head of a baby elephant was attached, so that he became known as "elephant-nose."
24. **Varuṇānī** is the wife of Varuṇa, the god of water.
25. **Mahākālī** is the wife of the black Mahāviṣāda. In Laṅkāpurī there were four sons of *rākṣasas*, namely, Viṣāda (*rnam ' jig*), Daśagrīva (*mgrin bcu*), Kumbhakarṇa (*bum sna*), and Rāvaṇa (*'bod grogs*).
26. **Yellow-Red [Mahā]chāgalā** is the wife of the ogre Daśagrīva.
27. **Dark-Blue Mahākumbhakarṇī** is the wife of the ogre Kumbhakarṇa.
28. **And Dark-Yellow Lambodarā** is the wife of Lambodara (*gsus po che*).

The words **and so forth** here indicate that the wives of all the most powerful spirits, as many as there are, were gathered, and all of them overpowered, **along with their** mundane **entourage**, comprising **slaves and the slaves of their slaves** who accomplish external activities, **and their servants and the servants of their servants** who accomplish internal activities, **equal in number to the atoms of their fields.**<sup>793</sup>

The latter part [of the joyfulness experienced through union with the class of female spirits] concerns the enjoyment of the

great rites of union (17.1.2.2.2.3.2).

This has two aspects, of which the first is equipoise in the meditative stability of the causal basis (17.1.2.2.2.3.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Through their joyousness, [they then became  
equipoised in] the meditative stability of  
enjoyment. VAJRA PRAVEŚAYA!**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:21-22)***

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགེས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དཔལ་ལྷག་འབྱུང་ཆེན་པོས་འདུལ་  
བའི་ཐབས་གྱིས། ཡང་རིགས་ལྷའི་འཛིགས་བྱེད་ཆེན་པོ་སྣང་བར་བྱས་ནས།  
དེ་དག་ཀྱན་ཀྱང་དགེས་པས་རོལ་བའི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་སྤྲིན་འབྱུང་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་  
བའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛིན་ལ་སྣོམས་པར་ཞུགས་ཏེ། སྐྱེད་གསུང་དང་བྱུགས་རྩོམ་  
ལས་འདི་བྱུང་དོ། ཨོྫེ་ཨུཾ་ཧྲུྃ་བཛྍ་ཎ་བེ་ཤ་ཡ་ཨ་ལ་ལ་ཧྲོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, the great glorious blood drinker, again manifested the very terrifying forms of the five enlightened families through the skillful means that imposes discipline, and then all of them through their joyousness became absorbed in the meditative stability called “the emergence of the cloud-like maṇḍala of enjoyment.” This following [mantra] then emerged from their indestructible body, speech, and mind: OM ĀḤ HŪṀ VAJRA PRAVEŚAYA ALALAHO.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once [these queens] had been overpowered, **then the**

**Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, the great glorious blood drinker** of living beings, **through the skillful means that imposes discipline** on trainees, **again manifested** the blazing host of **the very terrifying forms of the five enlightened families**. Then all these males and females, without duality, **became absorbed, through their joyousness, in the meditative stability called “the emergence of the cloud-like maṇḍala of enjoyment,”** which pervades the self-manifesting expanse of space.

As a secondary condition, **this following** secret mantra of great awareness **then emerged from their indestructible body, speech, and mind**: OM ĀḤ HŪM indicate the buddha body, speech, and mind respectively.<sup>794</sup> VAJRA PRAVEŚAYA means “let the vajra penetrate,” and ALALAHO indicates utmost amazement.

The second aspect [of the enjoyment of the great rites of union] concerns the result, which is their nondual union (17.1.2.2.2.3.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**With desire the queens respectively embraced the bodies of the [blood drinkers of the] five enlightened families.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:23)***

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། འབྲུང་པོའི་རྒྱལ་མོ་རྣམས་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆགས་པའི་ཡིད་གཡོས་  
 ནས། བསྐྱའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་སྤྱད་ཅིང་རྒྱས་པར་གྱུར་ནས། དཔེར་ན་ཁབ་ལེན་  
 ལ་ལྷགས་འདུ་བའི་རྩྭ་ལ་དུ། བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དགེས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དཔལ་  
 ཁག་འཕྲང་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྗེའི་སྐྱུ་ལ། སྲིན་མོ་ཆེན་མོ་མིའི་སྲིན་མོ་དང་། དམར་མོ་  
 དང་། དགའ་བ་མོ་དང་། གསོད་བྱེད་མོ་དང་། ནག་མོ་ཆེན་མོ་དང་། དམར་མེར་  
 ཆེན་མོ་དང་། སྲོ་ནག་ཆེན་མོ་དང་། སེར་ནག་ཆེན་མོ་རྣམས་འཁྲིལ་ལོ། བཅོམ་  
 ལྡན་འདས་དཔལ་ཁག་འཕྲང་ཆེན་པོ་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་སྐྱུ་ལ། ཚངས་མ་  
 དང་། འབྲུག་མོ་དང་། དབང་མོ་དང་། འཕྲུག་སྲིད་མོ་དང་། གཞོན་ཏུ་མོ་རྣམས་

འཁྲིལ་ལོ། བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དཔལ་ཁག་འཕྲང་ཆེན་པོ་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་སྐྱུ་ལ། བདུད་  
 རྩེ་མོ་དང་། ཞི་བ་མོ་དང་། བེ་ཚོན་མོ་དང་། ཟ་བ་མོ་དང་། སྲིན་མོ་རྣམས་འཁྲིལ་  
 ལོ། བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དཔལ་ཁག་འཕྲང་ཆེན་པོ་བསྐྱའི་སྐྱུ་ལ། ཁག་གི་རྩྭ་ས་  
 མ་དང་། གཅིག་སྤར་སྦྱོད་མ་དང་། ཡིད་འཕྲོག་མ་དང་། སྲུབ་མོ་དང་། རྒྱང་  
 མོ་རྣམས་འཁྲིལ་ལོ། བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དཔལ་ཁག་འཕྲང་ཆེན་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ལས་  
 གྱི་སྐྱུ་ལ། མི་མོ་དང་། བག་མོ་དང་། སྐན་བྱེད་མོ་དང་། སྲུ་ཆེན་མོ་དང་། རྩ་  
 ལྷ་མོ་རྣམས་འཁྲིལ་ལོ།

So saying, the queens of the elemental spirits were excited with extreme desire. Their lotus maṇḍalas contracted and distended, and then, just as iron is attracted to a magnet, the great ogress Manurākṣasī, Piṅgalā, Ratī, Mahāmāraṇā, Mahākālī, Yellow-Red Mahāchāgalā, Dark-Blue Mahākumbhakarṇī, and Dark-Yellow Lambodarā embraced the body of the transcendent lord, or Great Joyous One, the great glorious Vajra Heruka. Brahmāṇī, Raudrī, Indrāṇī, Vaiṣṇavī, and Kaumārī embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Buddha Heruka. Amṛtā, Śāntī, Daṇḍī, Bhakṣasī, and Rākṣasī embraced



the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Ratna Heruka. Rudhi ramadī, Ekacariṇī, Manohārikā, Siddhikarī, and Vāyudevī embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Padma Heruka. And Agnāyī, Vārāhī, Cāmuṇḍī, Bhujanā, and Varuṇānī embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious and universal Karma Heruka.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**So saying, the queens of the elemental spirits were excited with extreme desire for the host of herukas. Their lotus maṇḍalas contracted or closed, and distended or opened, and then, just as iron is attracted to a magnet, eight [queens], namely, Mahārākṣasī Manurākṣasī, Piṅgalā, Ratī, Mahāmāraṇā, Mahākālī, Yellow-Red Chāgalā, Dark-Blue Mahākumbhakarṇī, and Dark-Yellow Lambodarā, embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the Great Joyous One, the great glorious Vajra Heruka. Five [queens] of the eastern direction, namely, Brahmānī, Raudrī, Indrānī, Vaiṣṇavī, and Kaumārī, embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Buddha Heruka, Mahottara [who holds] the wheel.<sup>795</sup> Five [queens] of the southern direction, namely, Amṛtā, Śāntī, Daṇḍī, Bhakṣasī, and Rākṣasī, embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Ratna Heruka. Five [queens] of the western direction, namely, Rudhiramadī, Ekacariṇī, Manohārikā, Siddhikarī, and Vāyudevī, embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Padma Heruka. And five [queens] of the northern direction, namely, Agnāyī, Vārāhī, Cāmuṇḍī, Bhujanā, and Varuṇānī, embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious universal Karma Heruka. [See plates 11a-11e.]**

## THE DIFFUSION OF THE MAṄḌALA OF THE RETINUE [17.1.2.2.2.4]

The fourth part [of the eradication of the arrogant spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath] concerns the diffusion of the maṅḍala of the retinue [of these wrathful deities]. It has five aspects, of which the first is the union that gives rise to this diffusion (17.1.2.2.2.4.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**As they uttered the syllable HŪM, the vajras entered into union with the lotuses.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 15:24)*

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཁོ་བོའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དེ་དག་  
གིས། ལྷོ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། སངས་འདྲེན་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ཚོགས་བསྐྱུས་ནས་ཤིན་  
ཏུ་བརྒྱུ་པར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

Then these maṅḍalas of wrathful deities, transcendent lords and great joyous ones, uttered the syllable HŪM, whereby the assembled lotus maṅḍalas [of those queens] tightened, and they closely embraced.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Then these maṅḍalas of wrathful deities** of the five enlightened families of blood drinkers, the **transcendent lords and great joyous ones, uttered the syllable HŪM,**

**whereby the assembled lotus maṇḍalas** of those mighty queens **tightened** around the vajras of the five herukas, their arms and legs mutually entwined, **and** the upper and lower parts of their bodies **closely embraced**, so that their ecstasy increased.

The second aspect [of the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the retinue of these wrathful deities] concerns the diffusion of the *mātaraḥ* (17.1.2.2.2.4.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**As they uttered the syllable HA, there came forth the eight gaurī, who assumed their positions in the cardinal and intermediate directions.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 15:25)**

དེ་ནས་དབྱུག་ཏེ་ཉ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ཀྱི་སྤྲིན་ལས། དཀར་མོའི་  
 ཚོགས་དང་། རྒྱན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། རྩོད་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། ཐལ་བྱེད་མོའི་  
 ཚོགས་དང་། སྤོས་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། གདུམ་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། སྤྲེལ་ཕན་གྱི་  
 ཚོགས་དང་། མ་ཚོགས་མའི་ཚོགས་རྣམས་རང་རང་གི་ལག་ཆ་དང་། རོ་མཚར་  
 དང་བཅས་ནས་འཐོན་ཏོ། ། འཐོན་ནས་ཀྱང་འབར་བ་ཆེན་པོ་འཁོར་ལོའི་ཕྱིབས་  
 མཚན་ཤར་ཕྱོགས་ནས་འཁོར་བར་འཛིགས་པའི་གཟུགས་རང་གི་ལག་ཆ་དང་།  
 བཅས་ནས་འཁོད་དོ།

Then with joy, they uttered [the syllable] HA, so that from the cloud of their generative fluid, there came forth the host of Gaurī, the host of Caurī, the host of Pramohā, the host of Vetālī, the host of Pukkasī, the host of Caṇḍālī, the host of Ghasmarī, and the host of Śmaśānī, each with their respective hand emblems and wonder. And having come forth, they assumed their

terrifying forms with their respective hand emblems, in a circle, starting from the eastern direction, at the ends of the spokes of the wheel of the great blazing [herukas].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then with joy they uttered** the syllable HA **so that from** this causal basis—**the cloud of the** male and female **generative fluid—there came forth** from the pudenda of the queens **the host of Gaurī**, she whose pure buddha mind performs the rites of pacification. This is said to be an “assemblage” (*cha tshogs*) because one [*gaurī*] each emerges from each of the twenty-eight queens. There is no defect in the number [of *gaurī*] being excessive because they are all gathered in the single family of Gaurī. The remaining [seven *mātarah*] also have similar [retinues].<sup>796</sup>

Also, if you think that there is a contradiction because the *mātarah* emerge in this context from the pudenda of the queens, and during the means for attainment they emerge from the union of the male and female deities of the five enlightened families, there is no defect. Formerly, when the arrogant spirits were disciplined, the *mātarah* purposefully appeared in this manner. Subsequently, however, when [the maṇḍala] is experientially cultivated, they accord with their description in the means for attainment.<sup>797</sup>

There also came forth the hosts of the [other] *mātarah*, namely, **the host of Caurī**, who perform rites of subjugation because they amass an accumulation of enlightened attributes; **the host of Pramohā**, who perform rites of wrath by causing amnesia because they are without duality of abstention and acceptance; **the host of Vetālī**, who perform rites of wrath because they pulverize disharmonies; **the host of Pukkasī**, who perform rites of enrichment because they are replete with enlightened attributes; **the host of Caṇḍālī**, who perform rites

of wrath because they are aggressive and quarrelsome; **the host of Ghasmarī**, who perform all kinds of rites because they accomplish anything whatsoever; **and the host of Śmaśānī**, who perform rites of enrichment because they increase the life span and resources. [See plates 8a–8h.]

**Each** of these came forth from the pudenda of the mighty queens, endowed **with their respective hand emblems**, including human clubs and bows and arrows **and** clad in ornaments, with light rays of **wonder**. **And having come forth, they assumed their terrifying forms, with their respective hand emblems, clockwise in a circle, upon the ends of the spokes of the wheel of the great blazing herukas, starting from the end of the spoke in the eastern direction.** Actually, they are at the ends of the four spokes and the four corners or angles [between them].<sup>798</sup>

The third aspect [of the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the retinue of these wrathful deities] concerns the diffusion of the *piśācī* (17.1.2.2.2.4.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**As they uttered the syllable HE, there came forth the eight *piśācī*, who assumed their positions in the cardinal and intermediate directions.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:26)***

དེ་ནས་ཤིན་ཏུ་དགུས་ནས་ཉེ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། སེང་གཏོང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་  
 དང་། ལྷག་གཏོང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། ལྷ་གཏོང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་།  
 ལྷི་གཏོང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། བཞད་གཏོང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། ཀང་ཀའི་  
 གཏོང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། ལྷ་གཏོང་ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་། ལྷག་པའི་གཏོང་  
 ཆེན་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་བཅས་པ་རྣམས། རང་རང་གི་ལག་ཆ་དང་རོ་མཚར་དང་  
 བཅས་ནས་འཕྲོན་པར་གྱུར་དོ། །འཕྲོན་ནས་ཀྱང་འབར་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་འཁོར་ལོའི་ཕྱི་  
 རོལ་ཤར་ཕྱོགས་ནས་འཁོར་བར་རྩམ་པའི་མདུངས་ཀྱིས་འཁོད་དོ།

Then with extreme joy they uttered the syllable HE, so that there came forth the host of great Siṃhamukhī, the host of great Vyāghramukhī, the host of great Śṛgālamukhī, the host of great Śvānamukhī, the host of great Ḡṛdhramukhī, the host of great Kaṅkamukhī, the host of great Kākamukhī, and the host of great Ulūkamukhī, each with their respective hand emblems and wondrous guise. And having come forth, they assumed their positions with an awesome incandescence, in a circle, starting from the eastern direction, outside the wheel of the great blazing ones.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Then with extreme joy they uttered the syllable HE so that there came forth the host of great Siṃhamukhī**, who perform rites of enrichment because they are overwhelming; **the host of great Vyāghramukhī**, who perform rites of wrath because they are endowed with excellent bravery; **the host of great Śṛgālamukhī**, who perform rites of wrath because they subdue the demon of the psychophysical aggregates and are skilled in means;<sup>799</sup> **the host of great Śvānamukhī**, who perform all kinds of rites because they subdue the demons of

deception and are skilled in keeping watch; **the host of great Gṛdhramukhī**, who perform rites of enrichment, unimpeded in all that is knowable, because they are sharp-eyed; **the host of great Kaṅkamukhī**, who perform rites of pacification, subduing the demon of the lord of death, because they enjoy lifeless corpses; **the host of great Kākamukhī**, who perform rites of subjugation without having to renounce anything because they are liberated in actual reality without abandoning cyclic existence; **and the host of great Ulūkamukhī**, who perform rites of pacification, visually observing cyclic existence because they have night vision. [See plates 9a-9h.]

They too came forth, endowed **with their respective hand emblems and wondrous guise**<sup>800</sup>—with arms crossed, staring at the corpses<sup>801</sup> [they hold], and so forth. **And having come forth, they assumed their positions with an awesome incandescence, in a circle, starting from the eastern direction, outside the wheel of the great blazing ones**, in the inner courtyard (*khyams nang ma*), with the four fanged deities in the four cardinal directions and the four winged deities in the four intermediate directions.<sup>802</sup>

The fourth aspect [of the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the retinue of these wrathful deities] concerns the diffusion of the female gatekeepers (17.1.2.2.2.4.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**As they uttered the syllable PHAṬ, there came forth the four female gatekeepers, who assumed their positions at the four gates.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:27)***

དེ་ནས་ཤིན་ཏུ་དགུས་པས་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་འི་ཞིང་མ་ལུས་པར་བྱས་ནས་པཎ་  
 ཅེས་བརྗོད་པས། རྫོ་རྗེ་སྤྱིང་འགྲོ་མའི་ཚོགས་དང་། རྫོ་རྗེ་གདོང་མའི་ཚོགས་  
 དང་། རྫོ་རྗེ་འཇིག་རྟེན་མའི་ཚོགས་དང་། རྫོ་རྗེ་རོ་ལངས་མའི་ཚོགས་རྣམས་  
 རང་རང་གི་ལག་ཚ་དང་། རོ་མཚར་དུ་བཅས་ནས་འཕྲོན་པར་གྱུར་ཏེ། འཕྲོན་  
 རས་ཀྱང་འབར་བའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་སྐོར་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྩམ་པའི་གཟུགས་ཀྱིས་  
 གནས་སོ།

Then with extreme joy they filled all the fields of the ten directions without exception and uttered the syllable PHAṬ, so that there came forth the host of Vajratejasī, the host of Vajrāmoghā [Vajramukhī], the host of Vajrālokā, and the host of Vajravetālī, with their respective hand emblems and wonder. And having come forth, they took up their positions, in an extremely awesome form, at the gates of the blazing maṇḍala.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**Then with extreme joy they filled all fields of the ten directions without exception** with the great luminance of their pristine cognition, **and they uttered the syllable PHAṬ, so that there came forth the host of Vajratejasī**, who has a horse head; **the host of Vajrāmoghā [Vajramukhī]**, who has a sow head; **the host of Vajrālokā**, who has a bear head; **and the host of Vajravetālī**, who has a wolf head, symbolizing respectively that they act on behalf of living beings through the four immeasurable aspirations and that they subdue the four erroneous views and the four demonic forces.<sup>803</sup> [See plates 10a-10d.]

These came forth endowed **with their respective hand**



**emblems**, namely, the iron hook, the lasso, the iron chain, and the bell, **and** with ornaments of **wonder**. **And having come forth, they took up their positions in an extremely awesome form** for the sake of the cruel and malign spirits, **at the four gates of the blazing maṇḍala**.

The fifth aspect [of the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the retinue of these wrathful deities] concerns the expulsion of these retinues to their respective abodes (17.1.2.2.2.4.5). [It comments on the verse:]

**The syllable PHAṬ resounded and all the *mātarah* were dispatched to their own abodes.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:28)***

དེ་ནས་དགྲེས་པའི་སྤྱིན་ལས་ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་ནས་པཎ་ཅེས་བསྐྱབས་པས། ཐམས་  
ཅད་ཁྲོས་ནས་མ་མོ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱང་རང་རང་གི་གནས་གལ་བ་དེར་ཡུད་ཅོམ་  
གྲིས་སྤྱིན་པར་བཀྲའོ།

Then from that cloud of joy the syllable PHAṬ resounded throughout the ten directions, so that they all grew wrathful, and all the *mātarah* then again were instantaneously dispatched to their particular and respective abodes.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then from that cloud of joy the syllable PHAṬ resounded throughout the ten directions** without exception, **so that** the male and female [herukas] and their retinues appeared

awesome owing to their compassion, and **they all grew wrathful. Then** [the mighty queens] who embraced the bodies [of the herukas] and **all the *mātarah*** who were assigned as servants **were once again instantaneously dispatched** through miraculous power **to their particular and respective abodes**, just as they had previously emerged from them.

### **THE TAKING OF THE ARROGANT SPIRITS INTO THE FOLD THROUGH COMPASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY AND THE CONSEQUENT IMPARTING OF INJUNCTIONS [17.1.2.2.2.3]**

The third section [of the detailed exegesis of the subjugation of cruel and malign beings by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition] concerns the taking of the arrogant spirits into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions. It comprises (i) a teaching on the vision of the maṇḍala that [the arrogant spirits] had on being ejected to their appropriate locations (17.1.2.2.2.3.1); (ii) their subjugation, which occurred simultaneously throughout all chiliocosms (17.1.2.2.2.3.2); (iii) the acceptance of the arrogant spirits as subjects (17.1.2.2.2.3.3); and (iv) the conferral of empowerments and imparting of injunctions (17.1.2.2.2.3.4).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**[Then the cruel and malign spirits] were expelled from the bowels [of the herukas] and [Ucchuṣmakrodha] drank the mire, so that they regained mindfulness and perceived [the herukas] with multiple faces.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:29-31)***

དེ་ནས་བཙམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགེས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དཔལ་ལྷག་འབྱུང་ཆེན་པོ་དེ་དག་  
 ཀུན་ལྷགས་ཇི་ཆེན་པོ་བདུད་ཅི་འབྱུང་བ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛིན་ལ་སྦྱོམས་  
 པར་ཞུགས་ནས། ལྷ་དང་གསུང་དང་ལྷགས་དོ་ཇི་ལས་འདི་དག་ལྷུང་དོ། ཨོ་  
 བརྗེ་མ་རྒྱ་མི་ཏ་མ་རྒྱ་ཀོ་རྩ་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་ཨི་  
 ལ་སོགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད། བཙམ་ལྷན་འདས་ལྷོ་བོ་ཆེན་པོ་དེ་དག་གི་བསྐྱམ་  
 ནས་བཏོན་ཏོ། མི་གཙང་བའི་འདས་གྱི་རྒྱ་མཚོར་རྒྱུད་པ་ལས་བསྐྱམ་ནས་  
 ལྷ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ཀོ་རྩ་ལྷུང་ནས་འདས་ཀུན་འབྱུངས་ཉི་ལྷན་པ་སྐྱར་རྩེད་ནས། ལྷོ་  
 བོའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ཚོགས་དེ་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱང་དབུ་དབུ་བརྒྱ་ལྷོ་  
 བརྒྱད་བརྒྱ། ཞབས་བརྒྱད་བརྒྱ། ལྷ་འབར་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལྷོང་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ན་  
 བཞུགས་པར་མཐོང་དོ།

Then all these transcendent lords, the great joyous ones, the great glorious blood drinkers, became absorbed through great compassionate spirituality in the meditative stability called “the emergence of nectar”; and these following [mantra syllables] emerged from their indestructible body, speech, and mind: OM VAJRA MAHĀMRṬA MAHĀKRODHA AM AM AM. Thereupon, all the [arrogant] spirits headed by Maheśvara were expelled from the bowels of these transcendent lords, the great wrathful deities. They were immersed in an ocean of unclean mire, and then Uchchuṣmakrodha emerged from the bowels, and, drinking all the mire, caused them to regain mindfulness. Then they saw all these hosts of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities present within a great blazing aureole, with buddha bodies, nine hundred heads, eighteen hundred arms, and eight hundred legs.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then all these transcendent lords, the great joyous ones, the great glorious blood drinkers** of the five enlightened families, taking living beings into their fold, **became absorbed** from the expanse of actual reality **in the meditative stability called “emergence of nectar” through great** naturally present **compassionate spirituality**, which cures the sickness of those to be trained. **And these following [mantra syllables]** then **emerged from their indestructible body, speech, and mind: OM VAJRA MAHĀMṚTA**, meaning “great nectar of indestructible reality”; **MAHĀKRODHA**, meaning “great wrathful deity”; and **AM AM AM**, meaning that empowerment is thrice conferred.

With regard to the reemergence of the arrogant spirits from that [body maṇḍala of the herukas] and their ablution, **thereupon, all the [arrogant] spirits headed by Maheśvara** whose flesh had formerly been eaten and consumed **were expelled from the bowels**, through the anuses **of these transcendent lords, the great wrathful deities** of the five enlightened families. **They were immersed in an ocean of unclean mire** including excrement (*dri chen*), **and then**, in order that they might be purified, the wrathful deity **Ucchuṣmakrodha emerged from the bowels** of each of the wrathful deities. **Drinking all the unclean mire, he caused** those arrogant spirits **to regain mindfulness.**

Ucchuṣmakrodha is the wrathful deity known [in Tibetan] as *rme ba brtsegs pa*, “mound of impurity.” He is so called because, in addition to emerging from the bowels, he also drinks the mire.

**And then**, with regard to the visage of the maṇḍala of blazing [wrathful] deities that was then revealed, **they saw all these** cloud-like **hosts of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities** of the five enlightened families, along with their female consorts, **present within an aureole** of the **great blazing** flames of pristine cognition, **with buddha bodies** and **nine hundred heads, eighteen hundred arms, and eight hundred legs.** These symbolize the hundred authentic families (*dam pa rigs brgya*) since each [of the five enlightened families] is classified

according to the five pristine cognitions and the four rites of enlightened activity.<sup>804</sup> So it was that they were made for the first time to behold the truth in the inconceivable and spontaneous meditative stability of the buddhas.

The second aspect [of the taking of the arrogant spirits into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions] concerns their subjugation, which occurred simultaneously throughout all chiliocosms (17.1.2.2.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Then all the arrogant spirits of the ten directions  
without exception were subjugated simultaneously.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:32)***

དེའི་དུས་སུ་འཇིག་རྟེན་རྣམས་གི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱའི་སྲིད་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བྲེགས་པའི་དབང་  
ཕྱོག་ཐམས་ཅད་འདུལ་བའི་ཐབས་སྣ་ཚོགས་བསམ་གྲིས་མི་བྱབ་པར་སོ་སོར་  
སྒྲུབ་བས་དུས་གཅིག་ཏུ་བདུལ་ལོ།

At this time, the skillful means that train all the proud Maheśvara spirits in all the existences of the ten directions of the six realms manifested diversely and were inconceivably different. But their subjugation occurred simultaneously.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**At this time** when the miracle of self-manifesting pristine cognition was arrayed in Akaniṣṭha, the display of **the skillful**

**means that train** each of **all the proud Maheśvara spirits** according to their needs, **in all three existences of the ten directions of the six realms, manifested diversely, and** its particulars **were** visible in the **inconceivably different** world systems, from the zenith to the nadir. **But** for those who were subjected to this training, **their subjugation occurred simultaneously**, without temporal sequence. Accordingly, whatever appears in the spontaneous self-manifesting (*rang snang*) Bounteous Array demonstrably appears in the extraneously manifesting (*gzhan snang*) [worlds of] the ten directions.<sup>805</sup>

The third aspect [of the taking of the arrogant spirits into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions] concerns the acceptance of the arrogant spirits as subjects (17.1.2.2.2.3.3).

This has four sections, of which the first concerns the oath of allegiance they make as subjects and the offering they obsequiously make of themselves as seats in the maṇḍala (17.1.2.2.2.3.3.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**They offered themselves as subjects, with body,  
speech, and mind, and swore an oath.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:33)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་དག་གི་ན་ཏུ་འདར་ཞིང་བྱེད་པ་རབ་ཏུ་ལྷུ་མ་པའི་ངོ་མོ་ས།  
 །འབངས་སུ་མཆི། འབངས་སུ་མཆི།  
 །འབངས་སུ་ནན་ཏན་མ་བརྒྱུས་ན།  
 །མགོ་དང་ལུས་ནི་བརྒྱར་འགས་ཤིང་།  
 །སྙིང་ཡང་འགས་ཤིང་གཏུབས་སྐྱར་ཅིག  
 །རུལ་སྐྱགས་ཚིག་ནས་བརྒྱག་པ་དང་།  
 །དུལ་བར་ལྷུང་ནས་འབོད་པར་ཤོག  
 ཅེས་འབངས་སུ་མཆི་བར་མནའ་བོར་ནས། དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་གདན་ཏུ་བཞག་གོ

Then these [arrogant spirits] trembled greatly in  
 trepidation and, with a howl of utter desperation,  
 swore an oath that they would become subjects,  
 saying,  
 “Let us be your subjects! Let us be your subjects!  
 If we do not act persistently as your subjects,  
 Tear our heads and bodies in a hundred pieces!  
 Break our hearts, too, and cut them up!  
 Burn our putrid decomposing [bodies] and cast them  
 away!  
 And let us fall into hell! We implore you!”  
 Then they took up their positions as the seats of the  
 maṇḍala.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once that miraculous display [of the maṇḍala] had been  
 arrayed, **then these** arrogant spirits were terrified. Their  
 bodies **trembled greatly, and in trepidation, with a howl of  
 utter desperation,** they **swore an oath that they would**

**become subjects, saying, “Let our bodies be your subjects! Let our voices be your subjects! If our minds do not act persistently as your subjects, tear our heads and bodies in a hundred pieces! Break our hearts, too, into a hundred thousand pieces and cut them up! Burn our bodies with fire, having cursed them to be putrid and decomposing and then cast them away in this life! And let us fall into hell in the next life! We implore you lamentably!” Then, in their respective bodies, they took up their positions as the seats of the maṇḍala of the five enlightened families of wrathful deities.**

The second section [of the acceptance of the arrogant spirits as subjects] concerns the offering of their retainers, and the offerings they respectfully make of their crowns (17.1.2.2.2.3.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**They presented their retainers and made their offering, saying, “Let us maintain [only] the name [of this maṇḍala] as our crown [jewel]! Let us accomplish the [four] rites!”**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:34)***



ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་མགིན་གཅིག་ཏུ་ཡང་སྐྱས་པ།  
|བདག་ཅག་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མཆིས་བྱང་དང་།  
|མ་དང་བུ་མོ་སྲིད་མོ་རྣམས།  
|དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཆེན་པོར་བཞེས་སུ་གསོལ།  
|དཔའ་བོ་ལྷ་རྗེ་བཞེས་སུ་གསོལ།  
|བདག་ཅག་སོ་སོ་འཁོར་བཅས་ཀྱི།  
|ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཆེན་པོ་འདིའི།  
|མིང་ཅུམ་འཛིན་པར་བྱེད་པ་ཡང་།  
|གཙུག་གི་འོ་བུ་འབར་བ་ལྟར།

|གཡོ་སྦྱ་མེད་ཅིང་གུས་ལྡན་པའི།  
|སེམས་ཀྱིས་སྐྱངས་ནས་སྤྱི་བོ་ཡི།  
|གཙུག་ཏུ་བཞག་སྟེ་བཀུར་བར་བགྱི།  
|དེ་ཡི་དགོས་པ་ཅི་ཡང་རུང་།  
|མ་ལུས་རྫོགས་པར་བདག་ཅག་བསྐྱབ།

They all said yet again with one voice,  
“Please accept our wives,  
Mothers, sisters, and daughters  
Within the great maṇḍala!  
Please accept them, heroic deities and lords!  
Let us and all our respective retinues

Maintain only the name  
Of this great maṇḍala of the assembly!  
Indeed, just as our blazing crown jewel,  
May we adopt you with an attitude  
That is free from deceit and respectful,  
And then, placing you on our crowns,  
Let us venerate you!  
Let us perfectly accomplish without exception  
Whatever may be the purpose of those [in the maṇḍala]!”

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**All** the arrogant spirits **yet again** said with **one voice**, **“Please accept our wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters within the great maṇḍala** of resources enjoyed<sup>806</sup> by the assembly of wrathful deities! **Please accept them** with certainty, **heroic** subduers of cruel and malign spirits, **deities** who take us into your fold, **and lords** who are sacred objects of refuge! **Let us and all our respective retinues** be creatures who **maintain only the name of this great maṇḍala of the assembly** of wrathful deities, whose visage we behold! **Indeed, just as** the **blazing** light of the wish-fulfilling **jewel** in the **crown** of **our** heads is venerated, **may we adopt you** as our objects of offering, **with an attitude that is free from deceit and supremely respectful!** **Then, placing you** evermore **on** the **crowns** of **our** heads, **let us venerate** and serve you! **Let us perfectly accomplish** all your aspirations **without exception, whatever** of the four rites of enlightened activity **may be the** desired aim or **purpose of those** [wrathful deities] who bear the insignia of this maṇḍala!”

The third section [of the acceptance of the arrogant spirits as subjects] concerns the ritual assistance that they provide, having taken the oath of allegiance (17.1.2.2.2.3.3.3). [It

comments on the verse:]

**They invoked a curse, saying, “If we do not do as we have said, may our heads and bodies be severed!”**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:35)***

ཞེས་སྐྱུས་སོ།  
།གལ་ཏེ་དཔའ་བོའི་སྐུན་སྡེ་འདིར།  
།སྐྱུས་པ་བཞིན་དུ་མ་བསྐྱབས་ན།  
།བདག་ཅག་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མགོ་ལུས་སྦྱིང།  
།བཀམ་གཏུབས་དུམ་བུར་རུལ་བར་མཆོའོ།

And they said,  
“If here in the presence of these heroic ones  
We do not do as we have said,  
May our heads, bodies, and hearts  
Be broken, severed, and decompose in pieces!”

***Interlinear Commentary***

**And they said, “If here in the presence of these heroic ones we do not do as we have said** in the oath of allegiance that we have taken, **may our heads, bodies, and hearts be broken** into bits, **severed** with weapons of exorcism, **and made to decompose in pieces!”**

The fourth section [of the acceptance of the arrogant spirits as subjects] concerns the request made by the mighty queens for enlightened activities that they might obey on becoming

subjects (17.1.2.2.2.3.3.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**All their mothers and sisters then assembled and made their request concerning the accomplishment of their rites.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:36)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་དག་གི་རྒྱུ་མའི་ཚོགས་དང་། མ་དང་སྲིད་མོ་དང་། སུ་མོའི་ཚོགས་  
ཐམས་ཅད་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་དུ་ཡུད་ཅེས་གྱིས་འོངས་ནས། ཐམས་ཅད་གྱིས་མགྲིན་  
གཅིག་ཏུ་སྣམ་པ།

།བདག་ཅག་འཁོར་ཚོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིན།  
།དཔའ་བོ་ཆེན་པོའི་འབངས་སུ་མཆི།  
།དཔའ་བོ་ཆེན་པོས་བདག་ཅག་ལ།  
།ལས་གྱི་དངོས་གྲུབ་བསྐྱེད་དུ་གསོལ།  
ཞེས་སྣམ་སོ།

Then the host of their wives and all the hosts of their mothers, sisters, and daughters instantly arrived in the maṇḍala, and they all spoke as follows with one voice:

May all the hosts of our retinues in their entirety  
Become the subjects of the great heroic ones.  
May the great heroic ones grant [injunctions] to us  
Concerning the accomplishment of their rites!

Thus they spoke.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then the host of the wives of these arrogant spirits and all the hosts of their mothers, sisters, and daughters, who had previously been dispatched, once more arrived instantly in the maṇḍala of wrathful deities, and they all spoke as follows with one voice: “May all the hosts of our retinues in their entirety become subjects of the great heroic ones who subdue the armies of obstructing demons, and thereupon, may the great heroic ones grant injunctions to us concerning the accomplishment of their rites, that we may perform whatever rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrath are in accordance with our own respective past deeds.” Thus they spoke.**

The fourth part [of the taking of the arrogant spirits into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions] concerns the empowerments and injunctions that were subsequently imparted to them (17.1.2.2.2.3.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**[Mahottara] presented the vajra into their hands and conferred the name empowerment upon them, whereupon they were enjoined to perform their respective rites, and they assumed their positions.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:37)***

དེ་ནས་བཙུག་ལྷན་འདས་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོས་ལག་རྒྱ་རྩི་བྱིན་ནས་མིང་གི་དབང་  
བསྐྱར་ཏེ་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ཕྱི་རོལ་དུ་བཀོད་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One,

presented the vajra into their hands and conferred the name empowerment, whereupon they were arrayed in the outermost [area] of the maṇḍala.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Then the Transcendent Lord, Mahottara [Heruka], the Great Joyous One, for the sake of living beings, presented the vajra into their hands and conferred the empowerment of name** respectively on them—Vajramanurākṣasī and so on,<sup>807</sup> **whereupon they were arrayed** successively **in** the outer courtyard, **the outermost area of the maṇḍala** of blazing [wrathful] deities, their positions being allocated in accordance with their respective rites.<sup>808</sup>

## **CHAPTER ENDING**

**This completes chapter 15 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Diffusion of the Wrathful Deities.”**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 15:38)***

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ཁྲོ་བོ་རང་བཞིན་གྱི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་  
གྱི་སྒྲིན་རྣམ་པར་སྐྱོས་པའི་ལུ་སྟེ་བཙོ་ལྷ་པའོ།།

This completes the fifteenth chapter from the *Secret*

*Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled  
“The Cloud-Like Diffusion of the Natural Maṇḍala of  
the Wrathful Deities.”

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the fifteenth chapter from the** supremely ***Secret Nucleus***, the pristine cognition of the emanational display, ***Definitive with Respect to the Real*** nature of the buddha body of perfect resource. It is **entitled** “**The great Cloud-Like primordial and spontaneous Diffusion of the Natural Maṇḍala of the Wrathful Deities**” in the spontaneous Bounteous Array—self-manifesting and pervasive without extremes or center.

## 16. THE DIFFUSION OF THE MAṄḌALA OF BUDDHA SPEECH OF THE GREAT ASSEMBLY OF WRATHFUL DEITIES

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The purpose of this and the succeeding four chapters is to present the continuum of the path through which the natural maṅḍala of the wrathful deities is actually attained. In sequence, these chapters present the wrathful mantras that arouse the continuum of buddha mind (ch. 16), the maṅḍala of images to be visualized through meditative stability (ch. 17), the offerings that are then made to this maṅḍala (ch. 18), the corresponding commitments that practitioners are encouraged to adopt (ch. 19), and the ensuing enlightened activities that are performed (ch. 20). Practically, this implies that on the basis of the three kinds of meditative stability the celestial palace and deities of the wrathful maṅḍala are visually generated. Then the genuine beings of wrathful pristine cognition are invited and supplicated with the clasped flowers, symbolic of the yogin's awareness. Dissolving into the visualized maṅḍala, they confer commitments and are pleased by the communion ceremonies, which are performed in conjunction with the recitation of mantras and clear visualization of the deities. Consequently, enlightened activities are performed, along with concluding rituals of benediction and dedication of merit.

Having arrayed the natural maṅḍala of the wrathful deities, in chapter 16 Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then brings forth their maṅḍala of buddha speech, the wrathful mantras, in order that this naturally manifesting array might be perceived externally by bodhisattvas and accomplished by yogins (v. 1).



This chapter presents the five categories of mantras through which the wrathful maṇḍala is activated or energized. There are mantras that visually generate the fifty-eight wrathful deities (vv. 2-5), mantras that invite the beings of pristine cognition (*jñānasattva*) corresponding to those deities (v. 6), mantras that scatter the flowers of the yogin's awareness as a request for commitments to be imparted (v. 7), mantras in the form of a prayer for spiritual accomplishment and the conferral of commitments (v. 8), and mantras through which *torma* offerings are made for the sake of enlightened activity (v. 9).

Finally, as an extraordinary sign of the efficaciousness of these mantras, all nonvirtuous acts of body, speech, and mind are incinerated and the purified body, speech, and mind then blaze forth as buddha body, speech, and mind (v. 10). The entirety of space is filled with the maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind.

THE SECOND MAIN TOPIC [of the diffusion of the wrathful deities according to the *Secret Nucleus*, see p. 599] is the extensive exegesis of the branches of its means for attainment in accordance with which the path is attained (chs. 16-20, 17.2). This comprises (i) the maṇḍala of the secret mantras [of the wrathful deities] that arouse the continuum of buddha mind (ch. 16, 17.2.1); (ii) the maṇḍala of reflected imagery that is the support for visualization (ch. 17, 17.2.2); (iii) the presentation of offerings to them (ch. 18, 17.2.3); (iv) the sequence of commitments to be kept by those who are committed (ch. 19, 17.2.4); and (v) the attainment of enlightened activities by those who are committed (ch. 20, 17.2.5).<sup>809</sup>

Among these, the first comprises (i) a brief introduction to the emergence of the secret mantras (17.2.1.1); (ii) an extensive exegesis of the nature [of the mantras] that actually emerged (17.2.1.2); and (iii) a concluding synopsis concerning the extraordinary signs [associated with those mantras] (17.2.1.3).

The first part [comments on the verse]:

**[The Great Joyous One] then brought forth the following maṇḍalas of buddha speech from the assembly of the wrathful deities:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:1)***

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགུམ་པ་ཆེན་པོས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ཚོགས་ཆེན་པོ་འདི་  
དག་དམ་ཚོག་གིས་གྲུབ་པར་བྱ་བའི་ཕྱིར། དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུམ་པ་ཁོ་བོ་ལྷག་འཇུང་  
ཆེན་པོ་བཙུན་མོ་དང་བཅས་པའི་ཚོགས་དེ་དག་གི་སྐྱེ་དང་གསུང་དང་ཐུགས་རྩོ་  
རྗེ་ཡི་ཤེས་རྒྱལ་པ་ལས་གསུང་གི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་འདི་དག་ལྷུང་དོ།

Then, in order that these great assemblies of the maṇḍala that the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, [had revealed] might be accomplished through commitment, the following maṇḍalas of buddha speech emerged from the awesome pristine cognition that identifies the indestructible body, speech, and mind of those assemblies of wrathful tathāgatas, the great blood drinkers, along with their queens.

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the natural maṇḍala [of the wrathful deities] had been arrayed, **then, in order that these great assemblies of the maṇḍala** of wrathful deities that **the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One**, had revealed above **might be accomplished** by yogins—inasmuch as they are the intrinsic nature of the buddha speech of great **commitment**, the expression “**wrathful tathāgatas** of the self-manifesting array” indicates that they are not dissimilar to the indestructible expanse of peaceful deities of the buddha body

of perfect resource and rejects the suggestion that they are subsumed<sup>810</sup> in the minds of others, bodhisattvas and the like. So it was that, naturally arising, **the following** clusters of mantra, the **maṇḍalas of buddha speech, emerged from the awesome roar of those assemblies** of wrathful deities, **the great blood drinkers, along with their** respective **queens**, equal to a thousand peals of thunder. This is the naturally present **pristine cognition**, embodying their respective **indestructible body, speech, and mind**, which arises of its own accord as the natural sound of mantra.

## **THE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THE WRATHFUL MANTRAS THAT ACTUALLY EMERGED [17.2.1.2]**

The second part comprises (i) the mantras for generating the [wrathful] deities (17.2.1.2.1); (ii) the mantras for inviting the beings of pristine cognition (17.2.1.2.2); (iii) the mantra for tossing the flower of awareness (17.2.1.2.3); (iv) the mantras of supplication for the sake of accomplishment (17.2.1.2.4); and (v) the mantras of *torma* offering in respect of the rites of enlightened activity (17.2.1.2.5).

## **THE MANTRAS FOR GENERATING THE WRATHFUL DEITIES [17.2.1.2.1]**

The first of these also has five sections, of which the first concerns the mantras of the ten principal male and female [wrathful] deities (17.2.1.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The mantras of the ten male and female wrathful**

**deities of the five enlightened families,**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 16:2)**

ཨོཾ་རྩ་ཐུ་ག་ཏ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ཅུ་ག་མ་རྩ་ཅུ་ཐུ་མཐ་རྩུ་རྩུ་ག་ཏ་ན་ད་ཏ་པ་ཅེ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་  
 སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་བརྩ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ཅུ་ག་མ་རྩ་ཅུ་ཐུ་མཐ་རྩུ་རྩུ་ག་ཏ་ན་ད་ཏ་པ་ཅེ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་རྩུ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ཅུ་ག་མ་རྩ་ཅུ་ཐུ་མཐ་རྩུ་རྩུ་ག་ཏ་ན་ད་ཏ་པ་ཅེ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་པདྩ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ཅུ་ག་མ་རྩ་ཅུ་ཐུ་མཐ་རྩུ་རྩུ་ག་ཏ་ན་ད་ཏ་པ་ཅེ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་ཀམ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ཅུ་ག་མ་རྩ་ཅུ་ཐུ་མཐ་རྩུ་རྩུ་ག་ཏ་ན་ད་ཏ་པ་ཅེ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་ལྷོཾ་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་མཐ་རྩ་ཐུ་ག་ཏ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ལྷི་ལྷི་མཐ་རྩུ་རྩུ་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་མ་རྩ་བརྩ་རྩུ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ལྷི་ལྷི་ལྷི་ལྷི་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་མ་རྩ་རྩུ་རྩུ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ལྷི་ལྷི་དུ་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་རྩི་ལྷི་རྩུ་མ་མཐ་པདྩ་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ལྷི་ལྷི་ལྷི་སེཿ།  
 ཨོཾ་མཐ་ལམ་ལྷི་མ་རྩ་ལྷི་རྩེ་ལྷི་ལྷི་ལྷི་སེཿ།

OM TATHĀGATA MAHĀŚRĪHERUKA MAHĀCAṄḌA SARVADUṢṬĀNTAKA  
 HANA DAHA PACA HŪṢ HŪṢ HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM VAJRA MAHĀŚRĪHERUKA MAHĀCAṄḌA SARVADUṢṬĀNTAKA HANA  
 DAHA PACA HŪṢ HŪṢ HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM RATNA MAHĀŚRĪHERUKA MAHĀCAṄḌA SARVADUṢṬĀNTAKA HANA  
 DAHA PACA HŪṢ HŪṢ HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM PADMA MAHĀŚRĪHERUKA MAHĀCAṄḌA SARVADUṢṬĀNTAKA  
 HANA DAHA PACA HŪṢ HŪṢ HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM KARMA MAHĀŚRĪHERUKA MAHĀCAṄḌA SARVADUṢṬĀNTAKA  
 HANA DAHA PACA HŪṢ HŪṢ HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ SARVADUṢṬĀN HŪṢ  
 PHAṬ  
 OM MAHĀVAJRADHARA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM MAHĀSŪRYARATNA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ VIDAMĀ HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM HREṢITASAMANTAPADMA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ KHĀHI HŪṢ PHAṬ  
 OM SARVĀMOGHA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ VIŚVĀ HŪṢ PHAṬ

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

These begin with the syllable **OM**, for the syllable **OM** is auspicious and it consecrates the mantras that follow.

**TATHĀGATA** means “one who has passed on [to nirvāṇa]”; **MAHĀ** means “great”; **ŚRĪ** means “glorious”; **HERUKA** means “blood drinker”; **MAHĀCAṆḌA** means “great fierce one”; **SARVADUṢṬA** means “all inimical forces”; and **ANTAKA** means “eliminating.” These syllables constitute the root mantra, which summons the Transcendent Lord [Buddha Heruka]. **HANA** means “strike!” **DAHA** means “burn!” **PACA** means “cook!” **HŪM** **HŪM** means “subdue the body, speech, and mind of cruel and malign spirits”; and **PHAṬ** means “tear into pieces.” These mantra syllables refer to the rites of enlightened activity.

Similarly [in the case of the other male herukas], **VAJRA** means “indestructible reality”; **RATNA** means “gemstone”; **PADMA** means “lotus” (retaining the original [Sanskrit]); and **KARMA** means “activity.” The other [syllables] are the same as above.

Among the mantras of their female consorts, **OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ** [denotes Buddha Krodheśvarī and] means “Great Wrathful Queen of the Buddha [family].” **SARVADUṢṬĀN HŪM PHAṬ** means “May she gather and shatter all inimical forces!”

**OM MAHĀVAJRADHARA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ JVĀLANĪ HŪM PHAṬ** [denotes Vajra Krodheśvarī and] means “May the Great Wrathful Queen, the Mighty Blazing One, consort of the Vajra [family], gather and tear apart the cruel and malign spirits!”

**OM MAHĀSŪRYARATNA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ VIDAMĀ** [denotes Ratna Krodheśvarī and] means “Great Wrathful Queen, sun of the Ratna [family], who subjugates!”<sup>811</sup>

**OM HREṢITASAMANTAPADMA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ KHĀHI** [denotes Padma Krodheśvarī and] means “Eat! Great Wrathful Queen of the Ever-Neighing [Lotus family]!”

**OM SARVĀMOGHA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ VIŚVĀ** denotes [Karma

Krodheśvarī and] means “Diversified Great Wrathful Queen of the All-Accomplishing [Karma family]!”

The second section [of the mantras for generating the wrathful deities] concerns the mantras of the eight *mātarāḥ* (17.2.1.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The mantras of the eight *mātarāḥ*, headed by Gaurī, along with their [concluding] seed syllable HA,**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:3a)***

ॐ वज्रं गौरीं ह्रीं ॥  
ॐ वज्रं कौरीं ह्रीं ॥  
ॐ वज्रं प्रमोहं ह्रीं ॥  
ॐ वज्रं वेतलीं ह्रीं ॥  
ॐ वज्रं चण्डालीं ह्रीं ॥  
ॐ वज्रं पुक्कसीं ह्रीं ॥  
ॐ वज्रं घास्मरीं ह्रीं ॥  
ॐ वज्रं श्मासानीं ह्रीं ॥

OM VAJRA GAURĪ HA  
OM VAJRA CAURĪ HA  
OM VAJRA PRAMOHĀ HA  
OM VAJRA VETĀLĪ HA  
OM VAJRA CAṆḌĀLĪ HA  
OM VAJRA PUKKASĪ HA  
OM VAJRA GHASMARĪ HA  
OM VAJRA ŚMAŚĀNĪ HA

***Interlinear Commentary***

[These mantras are all preceded by] the syllables **OM VAJRA**, the meanings of which have been explained above.

**GAURĪ** means “she who is white” (*dkar mo*). Many earlier texts render this as *ko’u rī*, which means the same. However, the term has several other connotations, such as “repository” (*mdzod ldan*), “skilled” (*mkhas pa*), and “delighting in lotus flowers” (*padma la dga’ ba*), so that it may also be translated as “repository” (*mdzod ldan*).<sup>812</sup>

**CAURĪ** means “she who is a thief ” (*chom rkun ma*). **PRAMOHĀ** means “she who is deluded” (*rab tu rmongs ma*). **VETĀLĪ** means “she who is a zombie” (*ro langs ma*). **CAṄḌĀLĪ** means “she who is fierce” (*gtum ma*). **PUKKASĪ** means “she who is fragrant” (*spos ma*). **GHASMARĪ** means “she who is voracious and unclean” (*sme sha can*). **ŚMAŚĀNĪ** means “she who frequents charnel grounds” (*dur khrod ma*). The eight [concluding] syllables **HA** are their seed syllables.

When these mantras assume the form **OM VAJRA GAURĪ JAḤ** [and so forth], the rites [of the eight *mātarah*] are performed. If the syllable **JAḤ** is omitted, [the mantra] will be defective.<sup>813</sup> The mantras [of the remaining *mātarah*] should be known accordingly.

The third section [of the mantras for generating the wrathful deities] concerns the mantras of the eight *piśācī* (17.2.1.2.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**The mantras of the eight *piśācī*, headed by  
Siṃhamukhī, along with their [concluding] seed  
syllable HE,**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:3b)***

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་མིང་ཉ་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་བླ་མ་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་མི་གྲུ་ལ་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་ལྷ་ན་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་མི་ལྷ་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་ཀ་ད་ཀ་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་ཀྲ་ཀ་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

།[ཨྀ]བཙྰ་ལྷ་ལྷུ་ཀ་མུ་ཁྲི་ཉེ།

OM VAJRA SIMHAMUKHĪ HE  
OM VAJRA VYĀGHRAMUKHĪ HE  
OM VAJRA ŚṚGĀLAMUKHĪ HE  
OM VAJRA ŚVĀNAMUKHĪ HE  
OM VAJRA GRḌHRAMUKHĪ HE  
OM VAJRA KAṆKAMUKHĪ HE  
OM VAJRA KĀKAMUKHĪ HE  
OM VAJRA ULŪKAMUKHĪ HE

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**SIMHAMUKHĪ** means “she who is lion-faced” (*seng gdong ma*); **VYĀGHRAMUKHĪ** means “she who is tiger-faced” (*stag gdong ma*); **ŚṚGĀLAMUKHĪ** means “she who is fox-faced” (*va gdong ma*). **ŚVĀNAMUKHĪ** means “she who is wolf-faced” (*spyang gi gdong ma*). **GRḌHRAMUKHĪ** means “she who is vulture-faced” (*bya rgod gdong ma*). **KAṆKAMUKHĪ** means “she who is kite-faced” (*dur bya gdong ma*). **KĀKAMUKHĪ** means “she who is crow-faced” (*bya rog gdong ma*); and **ULŪKAMUKHĪ** means “she who is owl-faced” (*ug pa’i gdong ma*). The eight [concluding] syllables **HE** are their seed syllables.

The mantras associated with their rites of enlightened



activity are formed as above, [with their names preceded by OM VAJRA and followed by jaḥ].

The fourth section [of the mantras for generating the wrathful deities] concerns the mantras of the four female gatekeepers (17.2.1.2.1.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**The mantras of the four female gatekeepers, along with their [respective] seed syllables JAḤ, HŪM, VAṂ, HOḤ,**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:4)***

ॐ वज्रं अर्यतेजतेनं जाहं  
ॐ वज्रं अमोघं हुं  
ॐ वज्रं अलोकां वामं  
ॐ वज्रं भस्मीं वलयवतीं होहं

OM VAJRA ĀRYATEJATENṆ JAḤ  
OM VAJRĀMOGHĀ HŪM  
OM VAJRĀLOKĀ VAṂ  
OM VAJRA BHASMĪ VALAYAVATĪ HOḤ

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Among these, ĀRYATEJATENṆ, meaning “the brilliance of the sublime ones,” denotes [Vajratejasī] the horse-headed one (*rta mgo can*). AMOGHĀ, meaning “successful,” denotes [Vajramoghā] the sow-faced one. VAJRĀLOKA, meaning “indestructible illuminator of the world,” denotes [Vajrālokā] the bear-faced one (*dred gdong ma*). BHASMĪ VĀLAYAVATĪ,

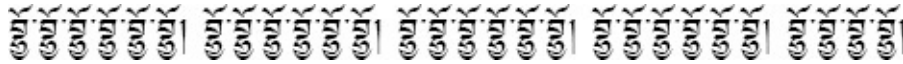
meaning “turning to ashes,” denotes [Vajravetālī] the wolf-faced one (*spyang gdong ma*).<sup>814</sup>

The terminating syllables **JAḤ**, **HŪṂ**, **VAM**, and **HOḤ** are their respective seed syllables.

The fifth section [of the mantras for generating the wrathful deities] concerns the mantras of the twenty-eight queens (17.2.1.2.1.5). [It comments on the verse:]

**And the mantras of the rites of the twenty-eight queens, with their seed syllable BHYOḤ.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:5)***



BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ  
 BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ  
 BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ  
 BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ  
 BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ BHYOḤ

***Interlinear Commentary***

There are twenty-eight syllables **BHYOḤ**, which function as the seed syllables [of the twenty-eight queens], **BHYOḤ** being a contraction of *bhaginī* (“sister”) and *bhāryā* (“wife”).<sup>815</sup> When the rites [of these twenty-eight queens] are accomplished, **BHYOḤ** is attached to their respective mantras, beginning with [the mantra of Manurākṣasī] which is OM MANURĀKṢASĪ BHYOḤ DUṢṬAMĀRAYA HŪṂ PHAṬ.

## THE MANTRAS FOR INVITING THE BEINGS OF PRISTINE COGNITION [17.2.1.2.2]

The second part [of the extensive exegesis] concerns the mantras for inviting the beings of pristine cognition. [This comments on the verse:]

**Then [the actual beings of pristine cognition] were invited by means of the RULU EHYEHI mantra,**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 16:6)*

ॐ रुरु रुरु ह्रूं  
ओ ह्रीं शिं श्रुं न यं ह्रूं  
ह्रूं ह्रूं ह्रूं  
ॐ

OM RULU RULU HŪM  
EHY EHI ĀNAYA HOḤ  
JAḤ HŪM VAḤ HOḤ  
RAM

### *Interlinear Commentary*

[OM] RULU RULU HŪM summons the maṇḍala to which the wrathful deities are assigned. In the past, this [mantra] was consecrated by the Great Glorious [Mahottara Heruka] as a ferocious song (*gdug pa'i glu*) in accordance with<sup>816</sup> the commitments of the ogre executors of ritual activity.<sup>817</sup> EHY EHI

means “come here, come here!” ĀNAYA HOḤ means “to this place.” JAḤ HŪṂ VAM HOḤ are the syllables that summon [the actual deities] to perform their rites on behalf of sentient beings through the four immeasurable aspirations. RAM is the syllable through which the visualized forms and the actual beings of pristine cognition who have been invited are present, converging like a volcanic conflagration (*me ri 'dab sbyor tsam du*). Lama Rong[zom]pa explains that “this is the mantra for tossing the flower of awareness, so that oneself is realized to be indivisible in nature from the deity and nonduality is approached.”<sup>818</sup>

## THE MANTRA FOR TOSSING THE FLOWER OF AWARENESS [17.2.1.2.3]

The third part [of the extensive exegesis] concerns the tossing of the flower of awareness. [It comments on the verse:]

**And absorbed into the [visualized] forms by means of  
the VAJRA KRODHA mantra.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:7)***

འོཾ་བཛྲ་ཀྲོད་མ་མལ་ཧཱུྃ།

OM VAJRA KRODHA SAMAYA HŪṂ

***Interlinear Commentary***

OM VAJRA KRODHA SAMAYA HŪM means “Be absorbed in the visualized forms, O wrathful deities!”

## THE MANTRAS OF SUPPLICATION FOR THE SAKE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT [17.2.1.2.4]

The fourth part [of the extensive exegesis] concerns the supplication for the sake of accomplishment. [It comments on the verse:]

**Please confer your blessings, accomplishments, and commitments!**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 16:8)*

།ཨོྫ་ལྷོ་ལ་ལྷོས་བས་ཞི་མཛད་པ།  
།ལྷགས་རྗེ་ལྷོ་དཔལ་རྒྱལ་པའི་ཚོགས།  
།འབར་བའི་བྱིན་རླབས་མཛད་པོ་ཆེ།  
།ད་ཉིད་དུ་ནི་བདག་ལ་སྤྲུལ།  
།ཨོྫ་བཟླ་གྲོ་རྩ་ས་མ་ཡ་ལྷོ།  
།ཨོྫ་བཟླ་གྲོ་རྩ་ས་མ་ཡ་པཌ།  
།ཨོྫ་བཟླ་གྲོ་རྩ་ས་མ་ཡ་ཧྲོཾ།

OM! Since you are wrathful for the sake of wrathful beings,  
Wrathful [deities] who pacify through compassionate  
spirituality,  
O host of awesome glorious [herukas],

Grant me at this time  
The most amazing blessing, which blazes forth.  
OM VAJRA KRODHA SAMAYAS TVAM  
OM VAJRA KRODHA SAMAYA PHAT  
OM VAJRA KRODHA SAMAYA HOH

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

OM! Since, for the sake of pernicious wrathful beings fashioned by [negative] past actions, who are to be disciplined, the natural expression of pristine cognition may appear even more wrathful than them, O host [of herukas], exceedingly awesome and most glorious among living beings, emanating through your disposition of compassionate spirituality as the wrathful deities who pacify the minds of those to be trained, grant me at this present time all the accomplishments of buddha body, speech, and mind without exception; for your buddha body, speech, and mind are endowed with the most amazing blessing, which blazes forth as the natural expression of pristine cognition!

SAMAYAS TVAM means “confer your commitments!” SAMAYA PHAT means “send forth your commitments!” SAMAYA HOH means “these are the commitments!”

## **THE MANTRAS OF *TORMA* OFFERING IN RESPECT OF THE RITES OF ENLIGHTENED ACTIVITY [17.2.1.2.5]**

The fifth part [of the extensive exegesis] concerns the *torma* offering in respect of the rites of enlightened activity. [It comments on the verse:]

**Please consume this food and drink and their**

**branches, O Sharp-Fanged [Host]!**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:9)***

ཨ་ལི་ལྷ་ལི་ཏུ་ལི་ཏ་ལྷ་ལི།  
དེ་རྒྱ་གཏེ་རྩ།  
མེ་རྩ་ཡོ་གི་རྣེ་ལྷ་ཉི་ཉེ།  
ཧྱུ་ཉ་ཉེ་པཌ།

ALI ULI TĀLĪ TAPĀLI  
DAMṢṬRAGAṆARAUDRA  
KHAM RAM YOGINĪ KHĀHI HOḤ  
HŪM HA HE PHAṬ

***Interlinear Commentary***

ALI and ULI denote food and drink respectively. TĀLĪ and TAPĀLI are the respective branches of these.<sup>819</sup> DAMṢṬRAGAṆARAUDRA means “sharp-fanged host of indestructible wrath.” KHAM RAM YOGINĪ KHĀHI HOḤ means “Eat! O host of blazing yoginīs.”<sup>820</sup> If one wonders which deities partake [of these offerings], the syllables HŪM HA HE PHAṬ indicate that they comprise the maṇḍala of thirty deities.<sup>821</sup>

One should also be aware at this point that these secret mantras were not translated into Tibetan because they constitute the solemn words of the promulgator [the Great Joyous One who taught the *Secret Nucleus*], through which accomplishment is to be attained. If they had been translated, their recitation would confer no accomplishment. This is because these [mantras] were not consecrated in the Tibetan language in ancient times by the promulgators of the secret

mantras. There is no defect even for one who does not know how the different languages correlate. For, when one recites these mantras with one-pointed faith and devotion, the great accomplishments will appropriately emerge. However, if one does know the concordance of [Sanskrit and Tibetan] terminology, there are advantages. For one who understands both word and meaning manages to retain meanings and is also undeluded with respect to words.

### **THE CONCLUDING SYNOPSIS CONCERNING THE EXTRAORDINARY SIGNS ASSOCIATED WITH THOSE WRATHFUL MANTRAS [17.2.1.3]**

The third part [of this chapter] is the concluding synopsis concerning the extraordinary signs [associated with these mantras. It comments on the verse]:

**At these words, [all worlds] were incinerated, ablaze, and filled with buddha body, speech, and mind.**

#### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 16:10)***

ཅེས་བརྗོད་པས་འཇིག་རྟེན་སྲུང་གི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཚིག་ རབ་རྟུ་ཚིག་ ཀུན་  
 རྟུ་ཚིག་གོ་ འབར། རབ་རྟུ་འབར། ཀུན་རྟུ་འབར་རོ། ཐམས་ཅད་སྲུ་འབར་བའི་  
 དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ཚོགས་གྱིས་གང། རབ་རྟུ་གང། ཀུན་རྟུ་གང་བར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

At these words, all the ten directions of the six realms were incinerated, further incinerated, and absolutely incinerated. They were ablaze, further ablaze, and absolutely ablaze. Throughout they were filled, further filled, and absolutely filled by the host of the blazing



maṇḍala.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**At these words**, the impure entities of the inhabited world, comprising **all the ten directions of the six realms**, along with the host of obscurations of their inhabitants [were transformed as follows]: Among them, the nonvirtuous acts of body **were incinerated**, those of speech were **further incinerated**, and those of mind were **absolutely incinerated**. Then, once these ordinary entities along with their obscurations had been incinerated, the apparitional inhabited worlds blazed forth, manifesting as pristine cognition—the three media of those to be trained respectively **ablaze** as the pristine cognition of buddha body, **further ablaze** as [the pristine cognition] of buddha speech, **and absolutely ablaze** as [the pristine cognition] of buddha mind. At this time **throughout** phenomenal existence, comprising the inhabited world and its inhabitants, confined by the limits of space, all the reaches of space **were filled** with the maṇḍala of buddha body, **by the host of blazing maṇḍalas** who are the natural expression of the five enlightened families. Then, derived from these [buddha bodies], [the limits of space] were pervasively or **further filled** with the natural resonance of secret mantras, reverberating like a thousand peals of thunder. **And** finally, everything was **absolutely filled** with the nondual intrinsic nature of buddha mind—illuminated by its emanations of great compassionate spirituality, light, and brilliance and pervaded by the buddha body of actual reality.

Moreover, these three maṇḍalas [of buddha body, speech, and mind] filled, further filled, and absolutely filled all of space, the earth, and the firmament between them. Even the self-manifesting spontaneous Bounteous Array itself was filled, further filled, and absolutely filled with a corresponding array of light, brilliance, and pristine cognition.

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 16 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
entitled “The Diffusion of the Buddha Speech of  
the Wrathful Deities.”**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 16:11)*

།གསང་བའི་སླིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ཁྲོ་བོའི་ཚོགས་ཆེན་པོའི་གསུང་གི་  
དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་སྣོས་པའི་ལུ་སྟེ་བརྟུ་བྱུག་པའོ།།

This completes the sixteenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Diffusion of the Maṇḍala of Buddha Speech of the Great Assembly of Wrathful Deities.”

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**This completes** the exegesis of **the sixteenth chapter from the supremely *Secret Nucleus* of buddha speech *Definitive with Respect to the Real*** natural resonance of pristine cognition. It is **entitled “The Diffusion, without extremes or center, of the inconceivably secret *Maṇḍala of Buddha Speech of the Great Assembly of Wrathful Deities*”** of pristine cognition.

## 17. THE REVELATION OF THE MAṄḌALA OF WRATHFUL DEITIES

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Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then presents the maṅḍala of images, visualized through meditative stability, which are the necessary supports clarifying the forms assumed by those wrathful deities, along with their mantras (v. 1).

This chapter describes the supporting celestial palace and the maṅḍala of wrathful deities within it. The palace (v. 2) is adorned with ornaments of skulls, snakes, corpses, and light (v. 3) and seats in the form of bull, buffalo, leopard, tiger, and bear, surmounted in turn by the proud malign forces who were subjugated (v. 4). Therein, the five herukas are present (v. 5), with their diverse ornaments and thunderous roars (v. 6), hand-held emblems, and queens (v. 7). The retinue surrounding them includes the twenty female wrathful deities—the *mātaraḥ*, *piśācī*, and gatekeepers (v. 8), along with the twenty-eight *īśvarī* (v. 9).

As a wondrous indication of this visualization, the blazing maṅḍala of wrathful deities is said to radiate with the apparitions of buddha body, speech, and mind (v. 10).

THE SECOND PART [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with which the path is attained, see [p. 656](#)] concerns the maṅḍala of reflected imagery which is the support for visualization (ch. 17, 17.2.2).

This comprises (i) a general presentation of the causal basis for the emergence of this maṅḍala (17.2.2.1); (ii) an extensive exegesis of the nature of this maṅḍala (17.2.2.2); and (iii) the appearance of its wondrous signs (17.2.2.3).

The first [comments on the verse]:

**Then [the Great Joyous One] uttered these following aphorisms in order to reveal the maṇḍala of reflected imagery:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:1)***

དེ་ནས་བཙམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགེས་པ་ཆེན་པོས། དེ་དག་གི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བསྟན་  
པའི་ཕྱིར་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་བའདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, uttered the following aphorisms in order to reveal the maṇḍala of these [wrathful deities].

***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of the secret mantras indicative of buddha speech had been revealed, **then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, uttered the following aphorisms in order to reveal the maṇḍala** of reflected imagery for the sake of the trainees of the future. This is because it is required as a visualization support to clarify the form **of these** cloud masses of wrathful deities and their secret mantras.

**AN EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE NATURE OF THIS MAṆḌALA  
[17.2.2.2]**

The second comprises (i) the supporting celestial palace (17.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the maṇḍala of the supported deities (17.2.2.2.2).

## THE SUPPORTING CELESTIAL PALACE [17.2.2.2.1.]

The former has three aspects, of which the first concerns the actual celestial palace (17.2.2.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Upon a foundation in the form of a wheel, the  
celestial palace is square with four gateways.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 17:2)*

འབར་བའི་འཁོར་ལོ་ཕྱི་བས་བཞི་པ།

སྲུ་ཚད་བཞི་ནི་རྣམ་པར་བརྒྱན།

སྲུ་བཞི་སྐྱོ་ལྷུད་བཞི་དང་ལྗན།

འབར་བའི་བར་འབྲུམ་ས་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་སེཛས།

Upon a blazing wheel with four radial spokes  
And embellished with four right-angled corners,  
[The palace is fashioned as] a square, with four entrance  
gateways,  
And it is adorned with two blazing courtyards.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

As a symbol of the intrinsic nature of the five enlightened families, the foundation below the palace comprises **a wheel with four radial spokes**, central hub, and perimeter, and it is

set within an expanse of **blazing** fire, devoid of outer and inner distinctions, to illustrate the five pristine cognitions. [This foundation] is **embellished with four right-angled corners** to symbolize the four immeasurable aspirations and the four truths. Upon it, the celestial palace of pristine cognition is fashioned as **a square** to indicate that it is extensive in enlightened attributes, **with four entrance gateways** to symbolize the four approaches to liberation. At its center, to symbolize the five buddha bodies, it is adorned with a four-spoked circle and four right-angled corners. **It is** [also] **adorned** with tiered pediments representing the eight aspects of liberation and **with two courtyards**, outer and inner, of **blazing** pristine cognition, to symbolize the meaning of the two truths; and it is raised high upon mighty ramparts of [stacked] skulls.

The second aspect [of the supporting celestial palace] concerns the ornaments with which it is embellished (17.2.2.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Its pillars and beams are fashioned of skulls and snakes, its rafters and gates of human corpses, and its roof parapets [of stars and planets].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:3)***

མཛོད་སྐྱུལ་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་ཉིམས་བརྗིད།  
འབར་བའི་འཕྲོ་བ་མང་པོ་འབྲུག།

Resplendent with skulls, snakes,  
A plethora [of other features], and the sun,  
It shimmers with multiple, bursting flames.

***Interlinear Commentary*** For the most part, this description resembles that of the aforementioned [palace of the peaceful deities].<sup>822</sup> In particular, however, it has walls fashioned of dry and moist skulls, girded by wreaths of black snakes, and it is embellished with a plethora of other features, including drainpipes of skulls and snakes, window apertures of sun and moon, beams of Brahmā gods, pillars of supreme human corpses (*mchog chen*), pillar bases of tortoise, rafters of human corpses, ceiling boards of supreme animal corpses (*mchog phran*), roof slates of flayed human skin, draping lattices of intestine, and half-length draping lattices of hearts, while the four gates have thresholds of tortoise, lintels of crocodile, bolts (*sgo'i skyes bu*) of black snakes, and door panels of charnel-ground cadavers. It is resplendent with roof parapets (*kha pad*) and ornaments fashioned of the sun, moon, planets, and stars and embellished with shimmering rays of light and with multiple rings of blazing flames, from the tips of which sparks of fire are bursting forth into the ten directions.

The third aspect [of the supporting celestial palace] concerns the distinctive features of its seats (17.2.2.2.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**The seats [within the palace] are fashioned of gods and supported by the bull, buffalo, leopard, tiger, and bear.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:4)***

།ལྷ་མཚོག་མ་ཉི་གཟིག་དང་སྟག་  
།གཏུམ་པ་དོམ་གྱིས་སྤར་བས་ནི།  
།དབང་ལྷུག་ལྷ་ཚེན་ལ་སོགས་ཟུང་།

[Supported respectively] with their talons by the bull,  
The buffalo, the leopard, the tiger, and the fierce bear,  
The mighty lords beginning with Mahādeva are  
[intertwined] in union.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

[The seats] are supported [respectively] **with their talons by the bull** who overpowers living beings, **the buffalo** who is of great brilliance, **the leopard** who is of great malignance, **the tiger** who is of great courage, **and the bear** who is naturally **fierce**. [See plate 6.] It is not the case, as the ignorant claim, that these [talons] are “the claws that grasp Mahādeva” (*sder mos lha chen po gzung*). Rather, the male and female arrogant spirits lie intertwined (*zung du bsnol ba*) on these [animal] thrones, and upon them, as seats, **the mighty lords** among arrogant spirits, **beginning with Mahādeva, are intertwined in union** with their spouses. The term *bzung*, “to grasp,” is a corruption in the text.<sup>823</sup>

These creatures [forming the seats] in fact manifest in and of themselves in order to symbolize the five pristine cognitions associated with buddha body, speech, and mind.<sup>824</sup>

## **THE MAṄḌALA OF THE SUPPORTED DEITIES [17.2.2.2]**

The latter [part of the extensive exegesis] concerns the



maṇḍala of the supported deities. This comprises (i) the presence of the principal deities (17.2.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the array of their retinue (17.2.2.2.2.2).

The first of these has three aspects, of which the first concerns their body colors and the appearances of their faces and arms (17.2.2.2.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The herukas are respectively] brown, blue, yellow, red, and green, with three faces and six arms.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:5)***

ལྷུག་ནག་མུ་ནག་སེར་ནག་དང་།  
དམར་ནག་ལྗང་ནག་འཇིགས་པའི་སྐུ།  
དབུ་གསུམ་ཕྱག་རྩུག་ཞབས་བཞིར་བགྲད།

The terrifying buddha bodies are dark brown,  
Dark blue, dark yellow, dark red, and dark green,  
With three heads, six arms, and four legs wide apart.

***Interlinear Commentary* As to their body colors, the principal deity [Buddha Heruka] is dark brown because delusion is inherently pure. Vajra Heruka is dark blue because hatred is pure. Ratna Heruka is dark yellow because pride is pure. Padma Heruka is dark red because desire is pure. Karma Heruka and his consort are dark green because jealousy is pure. [See plates 7a–7e.] The basic face [of each of these herukas] is colored in that manner.**

The right faces of the four herukas of the center, east, west,

and north are white, while the right face of [the heruka] to the south is blue. The left faces of [the herukas] of the center, south, and north are red, while the left faces of those to the east and west are yellow. All of them are said to be dark (*nag*), indicating that the enlightened activity of wrath is perfected. Such utterly **terrifying buddha bodies** are visible in the perception of the cruel and malign beings to be trained.

As for the configuration of their faces and arms, all of these deities are endowed **with three heads** because they have purified the three poisons and possess the three buddha bodies. They have **six arms** because they have mastered the six pristine cognitions<sup>825</sup> and they liberate the six classes of living beings through the six transcendent perfections; **and** they have **four legs**, which are **wide apart**, either extended or bent inward, in order to symbolize that they possess the four [supports for] miraculous ability and that they instruct the four demonic forces.

The second aspect [of the presence of the principal deities] concerns their ornamental garb and the roaring of their buddha speech (17.2.2.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[They wear] raw hides, snakes, skulls, and insignia of sun and moon, and they roar in a mighty voice.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:6)***

། ཀོ་ལྷོན་གོས་ནི་སྤྱ་ཚོགས་གྱོན།  
 །སྤྱལ་དང་ཐོད་འབྲེང་ཉི་ལྷའི་ཆས།  
 །རྗེས་པའི་སྤྱ་ཚོན་འཛིགས་པར་སྤྲོགས།

They wear various raw hides, snakes, skull garlands, And

the insignia of sun and moon disks.  
They roar in a mighty voice, awesome and terrifying.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

[These herukas] have eight kinds of glorious garb (*dpal gyi chas brgyad*): **They wear various raw hides**—upper garments of elephant hide to illustrate that they possess the meaning of the Great Vehicle, upper garments of flayed human hide [to illustrate that they] overwhelm the host of arrogant spirits, and skirts of tiger hide [to illustrate that they] liberate [beings] from the extremes of the subject-object dichotomy. They have crown ornaments of white **snakes** representing the ruling class (*kṣatriya*), ear and throat ornaments of yellow snakes representing the mercantile class (*vaiśya*), mid-length necklaces and shoulder straps of red snakes representing the priestly class (*brahman*), [girdles of green snakes representing the unskilled class (*śudra*)],<sup>826</sup> and bracelets and anklets of black snakes representing the outcastes (*caṇḍāla*).<sup>827</sup>

They have **skull garlands** including crown ornaments made of dry human craniums, shoulder cross straps (*se ral kha*) of old or shrunken skulls,<sup>828</sup> and necklaces formed of fifty-one fresh skulls. They have **the insignia of sun and moon disks**, which diffuse light from their right and left shoulders, symbolizing the illumination of skillful means and discriminative awareness.

Illustrated by these ornaments, the eight [kinds of glorious garb] are completed by spots of dry blood, marks of grease, and dots of human ash. Thus the eight accoutrements of the charnel ground (*dur khrod chas brgyad*) comprise raw hides (*ko rlon*), snakes (*sbrul*), skull garlands (*thod phreng*), solar disks (*nyi ma*), lunar disks (*zla ba*), dry blood (*rakta*), grease (*zhag*), and ash (*thal ba*).<sup>829</sup>

As for the roaring of their buddha speech, **they roar in a mighty voice, awesome and terrifying**, which reverberates

like a thousand peals of thunder.

The third aspect [of the presence of the principal deities] concerns their symbolic hand emblems and the embrace of their queens (17.2.2.2.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**With their first [right hands] respectively holding the five hand emblems, they entwine their female consorts.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:7)***

སྒྲོང་གི་འཇིག་རྟེན་འཁོར་ཡུག་བཅས།  
རྩོུ་དུང་ཆེན་གང་བ་དང་།  
རལ་གྱི་དབྱ་སྟ་གཤོལ་ལ་སོགས།  
རང་གི་ལག་ཆ་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་ཏེ།  
བུའོ་མོ་འཇིགས་པའི་ཚོགས་དང་འབྲེལ།

They have diverse hand emblems,  
Including vajra, human skull cup filled [with blood],  
Sword, ax, plowshare, [and a small drum]  
To represent the chiliocosm and its horizon,  
And they are embraced by the terrifying host of their  
queens.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Buddhaghya interprets this passage to mean that **they have hand emblems including a vajra** and wheel in their first pair of right and left hands, a **sword** and **human skull cup** in their

second pair of hands, and an **ax and plowshare** in their final pair of hands. He then says that the word **including** implies the trident, the club, and so forth. Rongzompa, on the other hand, claims that “in the first right hand they hold their respective hand emblem, while their first left hands hold a skull full of blood, and the other hands hold those other emblems in sequence.”<sup>830</sup>

However, the present explanation [accepted by Longchen Rabjam] corresponds to that of the *Mirror of Vajrasattva from the Net of Magical Emanation*, according to which the first right hand [of the herukas] holds respectively the [main identifying] hand emblem; that is, the first right hand of Vajra Heruka holds a nine-pronged vajra, while the first left hand holds a bell. The second right hand of [all herukas of] the five enlightened families holds a five-pronged vajra, while the second left hand holds a human skull cup, a hairless cranium filled with blood. [The first right hand of Karma Heruka holds a sword.]<sup>831</sup> The first left hand of Buddha Heruka and the last left hand of Ratna Heruka both hold an ax. The first left hand of Karma Heruka holds a plowshare. The last left hand of Vajra Heruka and the last left hand of Karma Heruka both hold a small drum **to represent the chiliocosm and its horizon.**<sup>832</sup>

The word **including**<sup>833</sup> here implies that the first right hand of Buddha Heruka holds a wheel, that of Ratna Heruka holds a gemstone, and that of Padma Heruka holds a lotus;<sup>834</sup> the last left hand of Karma Heruka holds a *khaṭvāṅga*,<sup>835</sup> the first left hand of Ratna Heruka holds a noose of intestines, the first left hand [of Vajra Heruka and]<sup>836</sup> Padma Heruka holds a bell, and the last left hand of Padma Heruka holds a small drum, while the last right hand of all [the herukas] brandishes a club fashioned of a human corpse (*ti ra*). In this way, **they** respectively wield their **diverse hand emblems.** It says accordingly in the [*Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*:

Vajra Heruka holds aloft the vajra and bell,  
Along with [the drum symbolizing] the world and its  
horizon.

Buddha Heruka entwines the wheel and the ax,

Along with the *khaṭvāṅga*.  
Ratna Heruka firmly holds the gemstone and the noose  
of intestines,  
Along with the vajra and the ax.  
[Padma Heruka] the one of supreme desire holds the  
great lotus,  
While playing the bell and drum.  
Karma Heruka has the sword and human plowshare,  
And [the drum] that rejects the world afar.  
Their second [pair of hands] stirs a blood-filled cranium  
with a vajra, And [with their last right hands]  
They wield a human club (*ti ra chen po*).<sup>837</sup>

Alternatively, the first right hand [of the herukas] of the five enlightened families respectively holds the vajra, the wheel, the gemstone, the lotus, and the crossed vajra. The second right hand of all five hold the vajra, and in the last right hand all five hold the plowshare. In the first left hand, all five hold the bell and in the second left hand all five hold the blood-filled skull. The last left hand of Vajra Heruka holds the drum indicative of the chiliocosm, the last left hand of Buddha Heruka holds the trident, the last left hand of Ratna Heruka holds the ax, the last left hand of Padma Heruka holds the small drum, and the last left hand of Karma Heruka holds the plowshare.<sup>838</sup>

As for the embrace of their queens, **they are embraced by the terrifying host of the five queens** belonging to **their** respective enlightened families. These have one face and two arms, the right one entwining around the male, and the left one holding and offering a blood-filled skull to the mouth of her lord.

The latter [part of the extensive exegesis of the maṇḍala of the supported deities] concerns the array of the retinue (17.2.2.2.2.2). This has two aspects, of which the first concerns the array of the twenty wrathful female retainers (17.2.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[Along with them] are the female mediums indicative of the sensory locations, the sense objects, and the four gates, holding their respective insignia.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:8)***

གནས་དང་ཡུལ་གྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་དང་།  
སྒོ་བཞིའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱས་རབ་མཛེས་ཤིང་།

These [principal herukas and their consorts] are  
embellished

By the female mediums of the sensory locations,  
By the female mediums of the sense objects,  
And by the female mediums of the four gates.

***Interlinear Commentary***

With regard to the eight *mātarah*, indicative of the sensory locations (*gnas kyi ma mo brgyad*), the eight modes of consciousness are the sensory locations through which cyclic existence is generated. These deities are designated as **the female mediums of the sensory locations** because they indicate the inherent purity of these [eight modes of consciousness]. Among them, Gaurī is white, holding a corpse as a club and a blood-filled skull. Caurī is yellow, shooting an arrow from a bow. Pramohā is red, hoisting in her two hands a crocodile banner. Vetālī is black, raising a vajra and holding a blood-filled skull to her heart. Pukkasī is reddish yellow, extracting the entrails of a child. Ghasmarī is dark green, stirring and drinking the contents of a cranium. Śmaśānī is dark blue, eating the heart of a child. Caṇḍālī is pale yellow,

tearing apart the head and body of a bloated corpse (*bam*).<sup>839</sup>  
[See plates 8a–8h.]

With regard to the eight *piśācī*, who are **the female mediums of the sense objects** (*yul gyi phyag rgya brgyad*),<sup>840</sup> these are designated as the female mediums of the sense objects because they indicate the inherent purity of visual forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangibles, which are the objects of the five modes of sensory consciousness, as well as mental phenomena, which are the objects of mental consciousness, and all the outer and inner phenomena that are the objects of the afflictive mental consciousness and the objects of the substratum consciousness. Among them, *Siṃhamukhī* is yellow, crossing two corpses with her hands and holding them toward her mouth. *Vyāghramukhī* is red, staring directly at a corpse. *Śṛgālamukhī* is black, licking a human corpse. *Śvānamukhī* is blue, tearing asunder the belly of a corpse. *Gr̥dhramukhī* is red, extracting the intestines of a corpse. *Kaṅkamukhī* is yellow, carrying a human corpse over her shoulders. *Kākamukhī* is black, raising a skull cup and a knife. *Ulūkamukhī* is blue, casting an iron hook.<sup>841</sup> [See plates 9a–9h.]

**These deities are embellished by the female mediums of the four** keepers of the **gates**, who subdue the four erroneous demonic forces and seal them with the four pristine cognitions.<sup>842</sup> Among them, the horse-faced [*Vajratejasī*] is white, holding an iron hook. The sow-faced [*Vajrāmoghā*] is black, holding a lasso. The bear-faced<sup>843</sup> [*Vajrālokā*] is red, holding an iron chain. The wolf-faced [*Vajravetālī*] is green, holding a large bell. [See plates 10a–10d.]

The second concerns the array of the twenty-eight mighty queens (17.2.2.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**These are embellished by their twenty-eight attendants, concubines, and maidservants, who have their own hand emblems.**



## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:9)***

།སྤྲུལ་དང་གྱི་མོ་བླ་མོའི་ཚོགས།  
།བུ་གཉིས་དང་ནི་བརྒྱད་གྱིས་མཛོལ།  
།རང་གི་སྤྲུལ་དང་ལག་ཚ་དང་།  
།ཅི་བྱི་ཞེས་ནི་ཆས་ཏེ་གནས།

These are embellished by the host  
Of their attendants,  
concupines, and maidservants,  
Twenty-eight in number,  
Who are present upon their own seats  
With their own hand emblems,  
Maintaining a servile guise.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**These are embellished** and surrounded **by the host of their attendants**, wives, intimate **concupines**, and **maidservants**, who are named according to the particular rites they serve,<sup>844</sup> **twenty-eight in number**, **who are present** in the retinue, [supported] **upon their own** respective **seats** of corpses, **with their own hand emblems**, including fresh skulls, and **maintaining a servile guise** as they request ritual activities to perform.

They are present in the following manner: Manurākṣasī is dark brown, holding a fresh skull. Brahmāṇī is reddish yellow, holding a lotus. Raudrī is pale green, holding a trident. Vaiṣṇavī (*rtogs 'dod*) is blue, bearing a wheel. Kaumārī is red, holding a pike. Indrāṇī is white, holding a vajra. Piṅgalā (*'dod pa*) is red, holding sandalwood.<sup>845</sup> Amṛtā is red, holding a lotus.

Saumi<sup>846</sup> (*zla ba*) is white, holding a white lotus. Daṇḍī is green, holding a club. Rākṣasī is dark red, drinking a skull full of blood. Bhakṣasī is dark green, extracting entrails. Ratī is red, holding a curved knife. Rudhiramadī is red, holding a plowshare. Ekacariṇī is yellow, holding a razor. Manohārikā is red, holding a bow and arrow. Siddhikarī is white, holding a vase. Vāyudevī is blue, waving a flag. Mahāmāraṇā is white, holding a sword. Agnāyī is red, holding a rectal impalement stick (*gsal shing*). Vārāhī is black, holding a noose of canine teeth. Cāmuṇḍī is black, eating a human corpse. Bhujanā is white, drinking blood from a skull. Varuṇāṇī is red, holding a lasso of snakes. Mahākālī [is black], holding an iron hook. The Yellow Rākṣasī [Lambodarā] holds a lasso. The Red Rākṣasī [Mahāchāgalā] holds an iron chain, and the Dark Rākṣasī [Mahākumbhakarnī] rings a bell. [See plates 11a-11e.]

This chapter is not explained with only a single objective, but rather it has as its general objective the drawing of and meditation on [the maṇḍala], and so forth.<sup>847</sup>

### **THE APPEARANCE OF ITS WONDROUS SIGNS [17.2.2.3]**

The third part [of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery that is the support for visualization] concerns the appearance of its wondrous signs. [It comments on the verse:]

**[Thereupon] the blazing maṇḍala, equal in its extent  
to the number of atoms, filled the entire expanse.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:10)***

ཞེས་བཟོད་པས། འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་འབར་བའི་དགྲིལ་  
འཁོར་ཀུན་དུ་གང་བར་<sup>848</sup> སྤྱར་ཏོ།

At these words, the blazing maṇḍala filled the entirety of the ten directions of the six realms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**At these words, the blazing maṇḍala**, which is the fiery mass of the wrathful deities of pristine cognition, equal in extent to the number of atoms in the world systems and pervaded by space and reality’s expanse, absolutely **filled the entirety of the ten directions of the six realms** with its manifestations of buddha body, speech, and mind.

## **CHAPTER ENDING**

**This completes chapter 17 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
entitled “The Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities.”**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 17:11)***

།གསང་བའི་སྣོད་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་རིས་པ་ལས་ཁོ་བོའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བསྟན་པའི་  
ལེན་སྟེ་བརྒྱ་བདུན་པའོ།།

This completes the seventeenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Revelation of the Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities.”

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the seventeenth chapter from the** natural *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real* nature of the maṇḍala, **entitled “The Revelation of the distinctions of the Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities.”**

## 18. THE REVELATION OF GENUINE OFFERINGS AND GENEROSITY

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Having revealed the wrathful maṇḍala, Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then describes the outer, inner, and secret offerings that are designed to please the wrathful maṇḍala through skillful means (v. 1).

The secret offerings are associated with the paths of liberation and skillful means. The former includes the authentic offering of the primordially pure true nature of mind and the offering of forceful compassionate liberation which benefits the ten kinds of being endowed with negative attitudes (v. 2). The latter refers to the blissful energy produced by the embrace of the male and female deities (v. 3).

The inner and outer offerings are collectively known as the “desirable attributes” of the five senses, which are sacramental substances. The former are the five nectars, namely, excrement, urine, human flesh, blood, and semen, through which cyclic existence is identified as nirvāṇa (v. 4). The latter are the outer sacraments of food, drink, clothing, and all else that possesses the desirable attributes of the senses (v. 5). All these sacraments are offered to the deities of pristine cognition (v. 6).

The benefits attained through the making of such offerings are the common accomplishments associated with the four rites of enlightened activity (v. 7) and the supreme accomplishment of the three buddha bodies consequent on the practice of symbolic and nonsymbolic meditation (v. 8). In sum, all worlds are filled with pleasing offerings (v. 9).

THE THIRD PART [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with

which the path is attained] concerns the presentation of offerings to [the maṇḍala of the wrathful deities] (17.2.3). It comprises (i) the context (17.2.3.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (17.2.3.2); and (iii) the conclusion (17.2.3.3).

The first [comments on the verse]:

**[Then the Transcendent Lord] uttered these following aphorisms concerning the great offerings that are pleasing:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 18:1)***

དེ་ནས་བཙམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོས་མཉེས་པའི་མཚོད་པ་ཆེན་པོ་འདི་  
ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, with great joy, uttered these following aphorisms concerning the great offerings that are pleasing.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala [of the wrathful deities] had been revealed, **then, with great joy** in the display of the offering clouds, **the Transcendent Lord uttered these following aphorisms concerning the great offerings that are pleasing** on account of their outer, inner, and secret nature.<sup>849</sup>

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [17.2.3.2]**

The second comprises (i) a general presentation of the offerings associated with the rites of union and liberation (17.2.3.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis concerning the offerings of

sacramental substances and the desirable attributes of the senses (17.2.3.2.2); and (iii) a description of the advantages—the [supreme and common] accomplishments that they accrue (17.2.3.2.3).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RITES OF UNION AND LIBERATION [17.2.3.2.1]**

The first of these has two aspects, of which the former concerns the offering associated with the rites of liberation (17.2.3.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Oneself should be liberated by realization [or from misconceptions],<sup>850</sup> and others should be liberated by compassion.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 18:2)***

དེ་ལ་མཚོན་སྦྱོན་དམ་པ་ནི།  
ཐོག་མར་བདག་ཉིད་རྟོག་གོམས་བསྐྱེལ།  
དེ་ནས་གཉིས་མེད་སློ་ཡིས་ནི།  
སློ་དན་འཇིག་རྟེན་སྦྱིང་རེ་རྗེ།  
གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་བསྐྱེལ་བར་བྱའོ།

In this regard, as for genuine offerings and generosity,  
At the outset, [the attitude] through which the self  
Becomes familiar [with entities and signs]  
Owing to misconceptions should be liberated.  
Then with intelligence that is without duality,

[Negative sentient beings] should be liberated, without duality,  
[Thinking], “How pitiable are those realms of negative attitude!”

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**In this regard**, the provision of merit includes the presentation of **offerings** to the conquerors **and** the dispensing of **generosity** to sentient beings. **As for** the most **genuine** and supreme among these, this is the authentic offering of the primordially pure nature of mind, in which there is no dichotomy between the recipient of the offerings and the one who makes the offerings. This is the great seal among offerings. Therefore, **at the outset**, in this [present] circumstance of cyclic existence, all negative attitudes fixated on the eight extremes of erroneous conception<sup>851</sup> and the subject-object dichotomy,<sup>852</sup> **through which the self becomes familiar** with entities and signs **owing to** the **misconceptions** of fundamental ignorance, **should be liberated** in the originally uncreated disposition. That is to say, one should meditate that all outer and inner phenomena have the intrinsic nature of space. Accordingly, it says in the *Tantra of the Ocean [from the Net of Magical Emanation]*:

The supreme great seal of offering  
Should liberate the entire amalgam of the mind’s  
ideation,

And then one should meditate upon the natural  
disposition of space, Without referring to the making  
of offerings or the recipient of offerings.<sup>853</sup>

There are some who add [by way of commenting on this verse] that one should be united (*sbyor ba*) in meditation that realizes (*rtogs*) and experiences (*goms*) the view, but that would seem to be a misunderstanding.<sup>854</sup> Although there would be no contradiction if [that interpretation] is made in the context of



the preliminary or perfection stage of offering in general, because the present context refers more literally to the offering of [forceful] liberation, it should be interpreted as follows.<sup>855</sup> From beginningless time, hatred freely emerges because the [mistaken] conceptions (*rtog*) of self and others are experienced (*goms*). Therefore, at the time of liberation, it is said that one's own fixation on the subject-object dichotomy should be liberated (*bsgral*) from within the disposition of nondual truth and nonreferential compassion, and that the object that is to be liberated should be liberated from within a disposition of skillful means and discriminative awareness.

As for the actual way in which liberation is implemented, once one's own dualistic conceptions have been liberated in the expanse of reality, **then with an intelligence that is without duality** between the object to be liberated and the subject undertaking the rite of liberation, one should practice the rites of liberation through the skillful means of great compassion, from a disposition in which discriminative awareness does not abide in the two extremes. One should meditate with immeasurable loving-kindness and compassion, thinking, "**How pitiable are** these sentient beings **of negative attitude**, including **those** of the ten fields and so forth,<sup>856</sup> who continue [to transmigrate] in the lower **realms** of rebirth!" Knowing the self to be merely like a magical apparition or an optical illusion, one **should "liberate"** them through the realization that although they do relatively appear, ultimately beings are **without duality**.

This [rite of liberation] should be applied according to circumstances. That is to say, it should be conducted in accordance with the rite of wrath that is presented more extensively in chapter 11 and chapter 20.<sup>857</sup>

The latter concerns the offering associated with the rite of union (17.2.3.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Once [oneself and the consort] have been visualized**

**as deities and [the being of pristine cognition] has been invited, then through union, pleasure should be conferred by means of this offering.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 18:3)***

།འགྲིལ་བའི་མཚོད་ཆེན་མཉམ་སྦྱར་བས།  
།བདག་ཉིད་མཉམ་པས་མཉམ་པར་བྱ།

The supreme offering associated with embrace,  
Which arises through union, is pleasing to oneself,  
And thereby it should confer pleasure.

***Interlinear Commentary***

In accordance with the aforementioned explanation,<sup>858</sup> once oneself and one's consort have been visualized as deities and the maṇḍala has been invited into the pudendum, then **the supreme** sacrament of **offering**, comprising the blissful generative fluids **associated with** the nondual **embrace** of the male and female, the essential nature of **which arises through** the **union** of the vajra and the lotus, **is pleasing to oneself, and thereby it should confer pleasure** on all the tathāgatas.

**THE DETAILED EXEGESIS CONCERNING THE OFFERINGS OF  
SACRAMENTAL SUBSTANCES AND THE DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES OF  
THE SENSES [17.2.3.2.2]**

The second part [of the explanation of the verses] is the detailed exegesis concerning the offerings of sacramental substances and the desirable attributes of the senses.

This has two aspects, the first of which concerns the offering of nectar as a sacrament (17.2.3.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The five nectars should then be offered to the deities, equated with oneself,**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 18:4)***

མཉམ་པའི་གྲུབ་ཇུས་ཆེན་པོ་དག  
འབདག་དང་མཉམ་པའི་ཚོགས་ལ་འབུལ།

The supreme sacraments through which sameness is achieved  
Should be offered to the assembly, equated with oneself.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**The supreme sacraments**, including the five nectars **through which** the accomplishment of **sameness is achieved** with respect to self and others, or cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **should be offered to the assembly** of the deities of pristine cognition, who are **equated with oneself**, given that one's own psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields primordially abide through profound meditative stability as the maṇḍala.

The essential nature of the five nectars—namely, excrement, urine, the chyle or pure essence (*dvangs ma*) of human flesh, blood, and generative fluids—is the primordially pure expanse

of reality, and their natural expression abides as the five enlightened families, beginning with the Buddha family, and as the essential nature of the five pristine cognitions. They constitute a supreme medication because, through blessing and the partaking of this resource, the five poisons and elemental diseases are dispelled. It says accordingly in the *Tantra of Penetration* [from the *Net of Magical Emanation*]:

The medications compounded from  
The eight roots and the thousand branches,  
Which are naturally present and originally pure,  
Facilitating union with all the buddhas,  
Are sacraments in which the five pristine cognitions are  
complete.

They are the supreme nectar that liberates  
All sentient beings of the five classes  
And dispels the five poisons.<sup>859</sup>

The combination of the eight roots with the thousand  
[branches] is arrived at by differentiating each of the five  
pristine cognitions associated with those [roots] five times, and  
so forth.<sup>860</sup>

The second aspect concerns the offering of desirable attributes  
of the senses (17.2.3.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**After which food, delicacies, drinks, clothing, and all  
that is desirable should be offered to the maṇḍala  
of deities.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 18:5-6)***

།བཟའ་དང་བཅའ་དང་བརྟུང་དང་བལོ།  
།ལོངས་སྤོད་ལྷ་ལྷན་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི།  
།དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ལ་ནི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱིས།

Then, as for food, delicacies, drinks, clothing,  
And all things that possess the five resources,  
The maṇḍala [of these desirable attributes]  
Dissolves in the maṇḍala [of the deities].

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

There are sacraments of **food** such as meat and butter, **delicacies** including fruits, **drinks** such as tea and wine, **clothing** such as Khotanese brocade (*li chu*) and Sahor cloaks (*za ber*),<sup>861</sup> **and all things that possess the five resources** of the senses, desirable by gods and humans.

**As for** the way in which all these sacraments should be offered, the recipients of the offering are visualized as the maṇḍala of the deities of pristine cognition, and the sacraments of offering are then presented in such a way that **the divine maṇḍala** of the desirable attributes of the senses **dissolves therein**. The resources should then be enjoyed, knowing oneself to be the male and displaying the sacraments as the female (*bdag yab tu shes pa la rdzas yum du rol pa*). The *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas* also says:

Those who amass diverse foods,  
[Exemplified] by the possession of meat and ale,  
Have the supreme fortune of delightful resources—  
They will attain the great and sacred  
[accomplishments].<sup>862</sup>

## **A DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVANTAGES: THE COMMON AND SUPREME ACCOMPLISHMENTS THAT THEY ACCRUE [17.2.3.2.3]**

The third part [of the explanation of the verses] comprises a description of the advantages—the common and supreme [accomplishments] that they accrue. [It comments on the verse:]

**The supreme accomplishment and, it is needless to**

**say, the common accomplishments will be achieved, and enlightened activities will blaze forth.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 18:7-8)***

འཕྲོགས་བཅུ་དུས་བཞིར་གཤེགས་པ་ཡི།  
འབདེར་གཤེགས་ཡོན་ཏན་རྒྱད་པོ་ཆེ།  
འགཞན་ནས་ཡོད་འོངས་མ་ཡིན་ན།  
འལྷ་སྲིན་ལ་སོགས་སྣོས་ཅི་དགོས།  
འརྒྱལ་འབྱོར་ལས་སུ་རུང་རྣམས་གྱིས།  
འཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་རྫོགས་འགྲུར་ཞིང་།  
འགསལ་བའི་ཡིད་གཉིས་མེད་པས་ན།  
འདྲིལ་འཁོར་ཆེན་པོ་འབར་བར་འགྲུར།

If the most amazing enlightened attributes

Of the sugatas who emerge  
In the ten directions and four times  
Are nothing apart from [mental experiences],  
It is needless to say that [common accomplishments will  
be attained]  
Such as [coercing] gods, ogres, and so forth!  
Qualified yogins have perfected the great seal,  
And being without the dualistic mind that visualizes,  
They blaze forth as the great maṇḍala.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The feasibility of the common accomplishments may be established as follows: **If all the most amazing enlightened attributes of the sugatas who emerge for the sake of sentient beings in the ten directions and four times are nothing apart from the experiences of the mind, it is needless to say that common accomplishments will also be attained, such as coercing gods and ogres and the minor rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, wrath, and so forth.** This is an actual point that can be established as feasible.

Then, with regard to the supreme accomplishment, **yogins** who are **qualified** in realization and meditative stability **have perfected** the symbolic generation stage [of meditation] in which **the great seal** of the deity's body resembles the reflection in a mirror. **And being** entirely **without the dualistic mind that** subjectively and fixatedly **visualizes** the disposition of effortless nonsymbolic Great Perfection as some identifiable extreme of conceptual elaboration, they arrive at the enlightened intention of Samantabhadra, the actual truth.<sup>863</sup> **They blaze forth as** and obtain **the great maṇḍala** of the three buddha bodies, without conjunction or disjunction, along with their enlightened activities.

All things are the miraculous display of mind, and mind too is



the intrinsic nature of the five pristine cognitions, symbolized<sup>864</sup> by the sacraments of the accomplishment of skillful means. Once these have been taken into the path, both provisional and conclusive goals will be perfected. It says accordingly in the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*:

Because all entities without exception are the nature of mind,

They are the expanse of actual reality, without defining characteristics; The five pristine cognitions, without independent existence;

And they manifest in and of themselves without fabrication.

Through meditative stability of discriminative awareness and through skillful means, Ability and power will certainly emerge.

Those who abide on such a path as this

Will be blessed throughout the ten directions

By all buddhas without exception,

And they will attain the blazing maṇḍala.<sup>865</sup>

## THE CONCLUSION [17.2.3.3]

The third part [see [p. 685](#)] is the conclusion [which comments on the verse]:

**[In this way] the ten directions were pervaded by offerings that are pleasing.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 18:9)*

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། མཉེས་པའི་མཚོན་པ་ཆེན་པོས་འཛིག་ཉེན་རྒྱག་གི་ཕྱོགས་  
བརྒྱ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལྷབ་པར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

At these words, all the ten directions of the six realms were pervaded by great offerings that are pleasing.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**At these words, all the ten directions of the six realms, outer and inner, were pervaded by those great offerings that are most pleasing among the oceanic cloud mass of outer, inner, and secret offerings.**

## **CHAPTER ENDING**

**This completes chapter 18 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Revelation of Offerings and Generosity.”**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 18:10)***

།གསང་བའི་སློབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་ལེས་པ་ལས་མཚོན་སྦྱིན་དམ་པ་བསྟན་པའི་  
ལེན་སྟེ་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་པའོ།།

This completes the eighteenth chapter from the *Secret*

*Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled  
“The Revelation of Genuine Offerings and Generosity.”

***Interlinear Commentary*** This completes the exegesis of the eighteenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus* of pristine cognition *Definitive with Respect to the Real* all-pervasive nature, entitled “The Revelation of Genuine Offerings that are presented to the conquerors and Generosity” that is dispensed to sentient beings by means of unsurpassed sacraments.

## 19. THE COMMITMENTS

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Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then divulges the supreme commitments in order that yogins of secret mantra might swiftly accomplish the result to which they aspire (v. 1).

This chapter is an exegesis of the commitments associated with the maṇḍala of wrathful deities. The Sanskrit term *samaya* is defined as “a commitment requiring the taking of a conventional oath of allegiance, which is laid down because benefits are obtained when it is guarded and retribution is exacted when it degenerates.”

The essential nature of the supreme commitments, the hallmark of their superiority, is that afflictive mental states may be engaged without accruing negative acts because the vows maintained by adherents of the lower vehicles are fully integrated with these commitments. Therefore they integrate the lower vows, which comprise the mind control generated through the seven levels of the vows of individual liberation (*prātimokṣa*) taken for the sake of one’s own peace and happiness; the bodhisattva vows, which bind the mind with an altruistic moral discipline to achieve realization and benefit others; and the vows of the awareness holders, which benefit others by transforming afflictive mental states into pristine cognition. All these three trainings are gathered without contradiction in the commitments of the secret mantra (v. 2).

In this integration the most minute defects in the observance of the lower vows are purified (v. 3). Even the four inimical defeats—killing, stealing, lying, and sexual misconduct—which pious attendants guard against through the vows of individual liberation are not contradicted because phenomena are transformed into the maṇḍala of deities. Similarly, the vows of

the bodhisattvas are not contradicted because they are retained by extraordinary compassion and skillful means. The means of gathering all such vows within the commitments of the secret mantras are inherent in the rites of liberation and the practices of union because mind control and the three kinds of ethical discipline known to bodhisattvas are always present (vv. 4-7).

As to the classification of the commitments, five basic and ten ancillary commitments have been enumerated (vv. 8-10). The former are the commitments never to abandon the three precious jewels, to venerate the spiritual teacher, not to interrupt the recitation of mantras and securing of the sealing hand gestures, to have loving-kindness for those who enter the genuine path, and not to divulge the secret truths. These are defined as aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind to be guarded and attained in order that the seed of buddha nature, latent in all beings, might not be obscured (v. 11). The ancillary commitments comprise five afflictive mental states that are not to be abandoned and five nectars that are to be acquired because they assist the observance of the basic commitments (v. 12). The benefits that follow from the keeping of commitments are the attainment of buddhahood itself, while the unpleasant results of suffering and lack of accomplishment are the disadvantages occurring when they are broken (vv. 13-16).

While all these commitments are subsumed by the indestructible reality of buddha body, speech, and mind (v. 17), there is also a more detailed enumeration of three hundred sixty subdivisions of the basic and ancillary commitments (vv. 18-19); beyond that, they may even be considered inconceivable in numerical terms, owing to the inconceivable nature of appearance and emptiness (vv. 20-21).

Consequent on keeping the commitments, the yogin is venerated by mundane beings (v. 22) and blessed by sublime beings (v. 23) and attains the rank of an awareness holder within the perceptual range of the buddhas (v. 24). He or she integrates all vows and commitments in the aforementioned

manner (v. 25) and has the ability to restore broken commitments (v. 26).

THE FOURTH PART [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with which the path is attained] concerns the sequence of commitments that are attained by those who keep the commitments (17.2.4). It comprises (i) the context (17.2.4.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (17.2.4.2); and (iii) the conclusion (17.2.4.3).

The first [comments on the line]:

**[Then the Transcendent Lord] uttered these following aphorisms concerning commitments in order to ensure success:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:1)***

དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགུམ་པ་ཆེན་པོས་སྐྱགས་འཆང་ནམས་དོན་ཡོད་པར་  
བྱ་བའི་ཕྱིར་དམ་ཚིག་ཆེན་པོ་འདི་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, with great joy, uttered these following aphorisms concerning the supreme commitments in order that mantra adepts might succeed.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the [revelation of] the offerings and generosity had been explained, **then the Transcendent Lord, with great joy** in the intrinsic nature of the supreme commitments, **uttered**

**these aphorisms concerning the supreme commitments,** which are kingly and most secret, **in order that** yogins who are **adepts** of secret **mantra might succeed** in their aspirations<sup>866</sup> by accomplishing their goal swiftly and not falling into error.

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [17.2.4.2]**

The second comprises (i) a general presentation of the essential nature of the supreme commitments (17.2.4.2.1) and (ii) a detailed exegesis of the framework [of commitments] that are to be attained and those that are to be guarded (17.2.4.2.2).<sup>867</sup>

### **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE SUPREME COMMITMENTS [17.2.4.2.1]**

The former has three sections, the first of which concerns the superiority of the secret commitments over others (17.2.4.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**When this [vehicle] is ascertained, deeds and afflictive mental states are not accumulated, while ethical discipline and vows [are perfected].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:2)***

ཁྲི་མིད་ཐེག་པར་རབ་དེས་ན།  
ཉོན་མོངས་ལས་རྣམས་ཀུན་སྤྱད་ཀྱང་།  
བྱས་ལ་མི་སོགས་ཚོགས་འགྱུར་ཏེ།  
ཚུལ་གྲིམས་སྒྲིམ་པ་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས།

When the unsurpassed vehicle is well ascertained,  
Even though afflictive mental states and deeds may be  
habitually engaged,  
These are undertaken in such a way that they are not  
accumulated,  
And they are transformed into the provisions [of merit  
and pristine cognition]  
Owing to ethical discipline, vows, and excellent  
[commitments].

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**When the** most secret **unsurpassed vehicle** is entered by any individual and **is well ascertained** without error and experientially cultivated, **even though** the five poisons or **afflictive mental states**, including desire, **and the deeds** generated by them **may be habitually engaged, these** very deeds **are undertaken in such a way that** obscurations and propensities **are not** actually **accumulated**—in the manner of the actions undertaken by an illusory phantom. **And,** in addition, these deeds **are transformed into the** two perfect **provisions** of merit and pristine cognition **owing to** the fact that, in the essential nature of this conduct, the import of the **ethical discipline** associated with the vows of individual liberation (*prātimokṣa*) and the **vows** of the bodhisattvas are complete and perfect, alongside **the excellent** commitments of the way of secret mantra.



The second section [of the general presentation of the essential nature of the supreme commitments] reveals that all [other] disciplines and vows are gathered within the secret commitments (17.2.4.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**As many vows as there are, they are all integrated in the supreme commitments.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:3)***

ལྷོ་མེད་མཚོག་གི་དམ་ཚིག་དུ།  
འདུལ་བའི་དབང་གིས་ཚུལ་གྲིམས་དང་།  
ཇི་སྟེད་སྣོམ་པ་བསམ་ཡས་པ།  
མ་ལུས་ཀུན་འདུས་རྣམ་པར་དག།

The ethics [established] in accordance with discipline,  
And as many inconceivable vows as there are—  
They are all, without exception, integrated and purified  
In the unsurpassed, supreme commitments.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**All** the positive attributes of **as many inconceivable vows as there are**, including the vows of individual liberation—**the ethics** established **in accordance with** the **discipline** of misconduct **and**, exemplified thereby, the vows of the bodhisattvas and those of the three outer classes of mantra along with the inner classes—**are, without exception**, progressively **integrated in the** most secret **unsurpassed, supreme commitments; and** even the most minute [defects]

associated with the infringement of those lower [vows] are **purified**.

The third section [of the general presentation of the essential nature of the supreme commitments] concerns the systematic presentation of the basic supreme commitments (17.2.4.2.1.3).

This has four parts, of which the first concerns the killing of life [in the context of the rite of liberation] (17.2.4.2.1.3.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Resembling a magical display, without objective referent, there is in fact no life to be killed.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:4)***

ཡོད་མེད་དབུ་མ་མི་དམིགས་ཤིང་།  
སྐྱུ་མ་མིག་ཡོང་ལྟ་བུའི་ཚུལ།

སྲོག་མེད་སྲོག་གྲང་བཅད་བུ་མེད།  
སྲོག་དང་སྐྱེས་བུ་ལོག་རྟོག་ཅེས།

Existence, nonexistence, and the middle way are without objective referent;

And there is a modality resembling a magical display and an optical illusion.

However, life does not exist,

And there is in fact no life to be killed.

Life and living creatures are merely misconceptions.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

Ultimately the extreme of eternalism that upholds the **existence** of phenomena, the extreme of nihilism that upholds their **nonexistence**, and also **the middle way** free from these two extremes **are without objective referent; and** relatively, it ostensibly seems that with respect to the rites of liberation, **there is a modality** in which oneself, the subject, **resembles a magical display and** the [target] sentient being **an optical illusion. However**, from the very moment of this perception, **life does not truly exist** because sentient beings are without independent characteristics, **and there is in fact no life to be killed** because life lacks inherent existence, in the manner of a dream. Although there appears to be **life and living creatures** who possess life, these **are merely the misconceptions** of one's own bewildered mind, and otherwise there is actually no duality.<sup>868</sup> Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra Requested by Rāṣṭrapāla*:

Oneself, others, life, and living creatures  
Appear, though nonexistent,  
And are naturally without duality.

They are nothing other than erroneous misconception,  
Inauthentic, imaginary, and illusory.<sup>869</sup>

And in the *Sūtra Requested by Upāli* from the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

Just as though an illusionist who has emanated  
Many hundreds of sentient beings in the world  
May slay all these emanational phantoms,  
Although, being illusions, they are not at all slain,  
In the same way, these living beings have an illusory  
nature,  
In which there is never any reference to finite limits.

Those who appreciate this infinity  
Do not feel [pain or sorrow] in the world.  
Those heroes who know this reality

Without independent existence  
Pass beyond the world into nirvāṇa.  
Even though they enjoy the desirable attributes of the  
senses,  
They are without attachment.  
Abandoning attachments, they train sentient beings,  
And as lords among humanity, they benefit sentient  
beings.<sup>870</sup>

Concerning the purpose [behind the basic commitment of these  
rites of liberation], it says in the *Supreme Tantra of Clear  
Expression*:

Those who harm the buddhas' teaching,  
Those who perniciously try to abuse the spiritual  
teacher,  
And those who try perpetually to harm sentient beings  
Should be slain by the skillful who are concentrated.<sup>871</sup>

And:

The purposes behind such rites of liberation  
Is that the conduct of the bodhisattvas should be  
enhanced,  
Sentient beings should be happy,  
The deities should be pleased,  
One's own commitments should be restored,  
And the suffering caused by negative deeds  
And obstacles should be reduced.<sup>872</sup>

Also in the *Tantra of the [Red] Slayer of Death*:

*Emaho!* This killing is excellent.

This killing is not killing.<sup>873</sup>

The second part [of the systematic presentation of the basic  
supreme commitments] concerns the taking of that which is not  
given (17.2.4.2.1.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Since the two truths are indivisible, the things to be  
stolen are not extraneous but self-emanated.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 19:5)**

ཁདེན་པ་གཉིས་ཀ་དབྱེར་མེད་པས།  
འཕྲུལ་དགའི་ཚུལ་དེ་ཐ་དད་མིན།  
གཞན་དང་མ་བྱིན་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།  
སྐྱད་ས་མེད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

Because the two truths are indivisible,  
There is no difference [between the stealer and the  
object],  
As [with the gods] in Nirmāṇarata.  
Because there is nothing extraneous that is not given,  
There is no stealing.  
All things are the expanse of the real.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

All things are not actually existent **because** in **the two truths**, ultimate and relative, their intrinsic natures **are indivisible**, and conventionally too they are not existent. **As** with the gods **in Nirmāṇarata** who enjoy resources of their own emanation, **there is** actually **no difference** between things that extraneously appear and the subject who steals them. Knowing this intrinsic nature, when one steals that which is not given in such a way that there is self-manifest taking of a self-manifest substance, **there is** in fact **no stealing** of something that is not given **because** at that time **there is nothing** to be stolen **that is not given**. That is to say, the object of stealing—**extraneous** sentient beings—and the things that they possess are without individual characteristics. This is because **all things**, exemplified by the one from whom things are stolen, the things

that are to be stolen, and the identity of the thief who steals them, **are the** primordially pure **expanse of the real** sky-like nature.<sup>874</sup> Accordingly, it says in the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

Just as there might be an illusory person  
Who steals an illusory gemstone,  
And even makes use of it, as in a dream,  
There is in fact no deed and no maturation.  
Similarly, when one has refined this pristine cognition  
Devoid of attachment,  
One proceeds to supreme, genuine, and quiescent  
nirvāṇa.<sup>875</sup>

The purpose behind [the basic commitment of] stealing is that the provisions of those who are rich are perfected, and the desires of the poor are fulfilled. It says in the *Purification of the Lower Realms*:

One should take wealth from the avaricious  
And give it to poor sentient beings.  
Therefore the wealth of the rulers and the rich should be  
stolen!<sup>876</sup>

The third part [of the systematic presentation of the basic supreme commitments] concerns the telling of lies (17.2.4.2.1.3.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**There are even no lies about fictitious phenomena.**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 19:6)**

ཚེས་རྣམས་སྐྱུ་མ་ལྟ་བུ་ལ།  
མིང་དང་ཚིག་ཏུ་བཏགས་པ་རྣམས།  
རྣམས་ཉིད་ལ་ནི་རྣམས་སྤྱོད་པ།  
རྣམས་ཞེས་བཏགས་ཅིམ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།

Phenomena are like a magical display.

And they are fictions, designated by names and words.  
When lies are told about fictions,  
There is nothing to be called a lie,  
Even so much as a mere designation.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

If one is endowed with the extraordinary purpose of benefiting others, then insofar as benefit is incurred, there will be no defect, whatever one says. Accordingly, the natural expressions of the **phenomena** subsumed within cyclic existence and nirvāṇa **are like a magical display**, dreamlike, and so forth; **and** even though they may be **designated by different names and words, they are** themselves **fictions** because these designations are adventitiously applied in accordance with the conceptions of ordinary individuals. It says in the *Intermediate Mother*:

Subhūti, all things are naturally nonentities. Those things that are expressed, apparent, and designated are fictitious because they are adventitious.<sup>877</sup>

If this is realized, since the subject who tells **lies about** objects that are **fictions** is also fictitious, **when** lies of affirmation, denial, and so forth **are told**, from this very moment **there is nothing to be called a lie**, either subject or object, **even so much as** a mere name or **a mere designation**. This is because sound itself does not exist anywhere, externally or internally, and its essential nature is the uncreated [coalescence of] sound and emptiness.<sup>878</sup> Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra Requested by Upāli*:

Just as when one shows a closed hand to a child  
And tells it that there is something inside,  
And then on seeing that the hand is empty  
The child will burst into tears,  
Similarly, in the case of the inconceivable buddhas,  
Skilled and learned in the ways of sentient beings,



Having understood that all these phenomena are  
vacuous and hollow,  
They show worldly beings<sup>879</sup> that which exists and that  
which does not exist.<sup>880</sup>

What then is the purpose [behind this commitment to tell lies]?  
It is stated in the previous source [the *Purification of the Lower  
Realms*]:

One who acts for the benefit of sentient beings  
Should even tell lies in order to conserve at all times  
The commitments, the wealth of the spiritual teacher,  
And the lives of sentient beings.<sup>881</sup>

The fourth part [of the systematic presentation of the basic  
supreme commitments] concerns sexual misconduct  
(17.2.4.2.1.3.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**Sexual conduct, where the nature of attachment is  
without attachment, is the supremely great  
attachment.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:7)***

|མ་ཆགས་པ་ལ་ཆགས་པ་དང་།  
|ཆགས་པ་ཉིད་ན་ཆགས་པ་མེད།  
|དེ་ནི་ཆགས་མཚོག་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྟེ།  
|འཕྱིན་ཏུ་ཆགས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡིན།

There is attachment to that which is without attachment,  
But in this nature of attachment,  
There is no attachment.  
This is the supreme king of attachment.  
It is the supremely great attachment.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

The intrinsic nature of all things is emptiness, the abiding nature **that is without attachment** in any respect, and where not even the slightest trace of entities or signs exists. When that nature is realized intellectually, **there is attachment to it, but in this nature of attachment** to pristine cognition that occurs when male and female unite through discriminative awareness in a disposition without abiding in the two extremes, **there is no** ordinary desire or **attachment. This is the** intrinsic nature of skillful means or great compassion which reigns **supreme** over ordinary willful desire or **attachment**—the **king of** pristine cognition where there is no duality of bliss and emptiness. This commitment of pure sexual conduct **is the supremely pure, great attachment**—the disposition of the Padma family, which emerges as compassionate spirituality for the sake of sentient beings.<sup>882</sup> Accordingly, it says in the *Pagoda of Precious Gems*:

Just as when men rely on [the objects of] their desires In  
an illusory or dreamlike setting,  
This [sexual misconduct] is empty of inherent existence,  
And it is a nonentity, devoid of deeds and lacking  
maturation.<sup>883</sup>

The purpose [behind this commitment concerning sexual misconduct] is stated in the previous source:

In order to please the buddhas,  
To guard the commitments,  
And to attain the secret mantras through awareness,  
One should rely on the wives of others.<sup>884</sup>

**THE DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE FRAMEWORK OF THE  
COMMITMENTS THAT ARE TO BE ATTAINED AND GUARDED  
[17.2.4.2.2]**

The latter [see p. 699] is the detailed exegesis of the framework [of the commitments] that are to be attained and guarded. This comprises (i) the essential nature [of commitments] along with the etymology [of the relevant terminology] (17.2.4.2.2.1); (ii) the advantages and disadvantages [associated with the keeping of the commitments] (17.2.4.2.2.2); (iii) the intrinsic nature and classification [of the commitments] (17.2.4.2.2.3); and (iv) an extensive exegesis of their great advantages (17.2.4.2.2.4).

## **THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF COMMITMENTS ALONG WITH THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE RELEVANT TERMINOLOGY**

### **[17.2.4.2.2.1]**

The first of these comprises (i) the essential nature [of commitments] (17.2.4.2.2.1.1) and (ii) the etymology [of the relevant terminology] (17.2.4.2.2.1.2).

Among them, the former has two aspects, the first of which concerns the basic commitments (17.2.4.2.2.1.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The [basic] commitments to be attained and guarded are [as follows:] not to abandon [the three precious jewels], to venerate [the spiritual teacher], [to maintain] the mantras, to have loving-kindness, and [not] to divulge [the secret truths].**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:8)***

།ལྷ་མེད་མི་སྤང་བླ་མ་བཀའ།  
 །སྲུགས་དང་བྱུག་གྱུ་རྒྱན་མི་གཅད།  
 །ཡང་དག་ལམ་དུ་ཞུགས་ལ་བྱམས།  
 །གསང་བའི་དོན་ཕྱིར་སྤྲོ་མི་བྱ།  
 །འདི་ནི་ཙུ་བ་ལྷ་རྣམས་ཏེ།  
 །རྒྱུ་བ་དང་བསྐྱུང་བའི་དམ་ཚིག་མཚོག།

One should not abandon the unsurpassed,  
 One should venerate the spiritual teachers,  
 One should not interrupt the flow of mantras and seals,  
 One should have loving-kindness  
 For those who enter upon the genuine path,  
 And one should not divulge the secret truths to  
 outsiders.  
 These are the five basics—  
 The supreme commitments to be attained and guarded.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The first basic commitment is that **one should not abandon the** three precious jewels (*triratna, dkon mchog gsum*), which are **unsurpassed** in the contexts of the ground, path, and result. The second is that **one should venerate the spiritual teachers** (*guru, bla ma*) with whom one has a connection, either through the [sacred] doctrine or through the commitments, and especially the spiritual teachers of the way of secret mantra—the vehicle of indestructible reality.

In this regard, there is no more awesome spiritual teacher than one who has the following three qualities: the ability to confer empowerment, the ability to explain the tantras, and the ability to reveal the instructions. The average [spiritual

teacher] has two [of these three] appropriate qualities, including the ability to confer empowerment, and the somewhat less awesome [spiritual teacher] has one of these qualities, whichever is appropriate. The order in which they are venerated should also correspond [to these qualities]. Those who have all three qualities—empowerment, exegesis, and pith instruction—are increasingly more awesome than those who have one or two of them, and in terms of the empowerments [that they can confer], the higher they are, the more awesome they are.<sup>885</sup> One should know spiritual teachers accordingly.

The third [commitment] is that over a period of time and with diligence **one should not interrupt the flow of** fivefold recitation (*yan lag lnga'i sgo nas bzlas*) in respect of **the primary mantras and** so forth, which are the unerring seeds (*rgyu ma nor ba*) of the deities present in any maṇḍala, nor should one interrupt the **seals** or hand emblems (*phyag rgya*) of the different deities that are secured by means of the four seals, namely, the commitment seal (*samayamudrā, dam tshig gi phyag rgya*), the doctrinal seal (*dharmamudrā, chos kyi phyag rgya*), the action seal (*karmamudrā, las kyi phyag rgya*), and the great seal (*mahāmudrā, phyag rgya chen po*).

The fourth [commitment] is that **one should have loving-kindness for those** individuals **who enter** the Great Vehicle, [embarking] **upon the genuine path.**

**And** the fifth [commitment] is that **one should not divulge the secret truths** concerning the hidden and concealed view and conduct **to outsiders** who are unworthy recipients.

**These are the five basics** among the commitments. The first three are the commitments **to be attained and** the last two are **the supreme commitments** through which contradictions of the buddha mind are to be **guarded.**

The second aspect [of the essential nature of commitments] concerns the essential nature of the ancillary commitments (17.2.4.2.2.1.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The five poisons and the five nectars should not be renounced, but accepted.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:9-10)***

།གཉི་ལྷག་ཆགས་དང་ཞེ་སྣང་དང་།  
།ད་རྒྱལ་ཕྱག་དོག་མི་སྣོང་དོ།

།དཀར་ཕྱི་དམར་ཕྱི་བི་ག་ཆེན།  
།དག་པའི་སྣོད་རྒྱ་མི་དོར་དོ།  
།ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱ་ཡི་དམ་ཚིག་སྟེ།  
།ཡི་ནས་དག་མཉམ་རྟོགས་པས་སྤྱད།

One should not renounce delusion, desire, hatred, pride,  
and envy.

One should not reject white generative fluid,  
Red generative fluid, excrement, urine, and human  
flesh,

Because they form a pure container, along with its  
ambrosial water.

These ten ancillary commitments

Are employed through the realization  
Of their primordial purity and sameness.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

[Among them, with regard to the five commitments that are not to be renounced,] **one should not** ever **renounce** the **delusion** that is nonconceptual in any respect, the **desire** that is supreme bliss, the **hatred** that is supreme radiance, the **pride** that is supreme arrogance (*dregs pa chen po*), **and** the **envy** that is supreme wrath, because they are natural expressions of the primordially pure ground, which is transformed into the path of skillful means and arises as the fruitional buddha body and pristine cognition.<sup>886</sup>

Then, with regard to the five commitments that are to be acquired, **one should not reject** the pure essences (*dvangs ma*) of the five substances, namely, **white generative fluid** or semen, **red generative fluid** or vaginal blood, human **excrement, urine, and human flesh**. This is **because** those essences, which some hold to be sordid and which the intellect, in conformity with their opinion, knows as things to be renounced, actually **form a container** [along with its ambrosial waters], which is **pure** in respect of the sacraments of commitment and bereft [of impurities].<sup>887</sup>

There are some who interpret this verse to mean that one should not dispense with them because they abide as a primordially pure containing world and its inhabitants (*dag pa'i snod bcud*), and others that one should not dispense with the pure sacraments of commitment and the skull cup that is their container. They appear, however, to have misunderstood [the verse], which can in fact be understood by a reading of the text itself.<sup>888</sup>

**These** are called the **ten ancillary commitments**, either because they bolster the basic [commitments] or because they



function as their skillful means.<sup>889</sup> If these were willfully employed, they would be ordinary. Rather, their intrinsic natures **are** to be known **through the realization of their primordial** presence in terms of the [aforementioned] three aspects of **purity and** the four modes of **sameness**,<sup>890</sup> and they should then be **employed** and retained in accordance with their respective skillful means.

The latter, the etymology [of the relevant terminology] (17.2.4.2.2.1.2), has two aspects, of which the first concerns the etymologies pertaining to the basic commitments (17.2.4.2.2.1.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The basic commitments] resemble the roots of a tree, and the [ancillary commitments] are the vitality that sustains them.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:11)***

།བསྐྱུང་ཞིང་བསྐྱུབ་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་ལྔ།  
།རྩ་བ་ཡིན་ཏེ་རིགས་མེད་འགྲུབ།

The five commitments to be attained and guarded  
Are the basics through [the degeneration of] which  
One will be deprived of the enlightened heritage.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The five commitments to be guarded and attained are basic** among the commitments **through which** the secret mantras are to be attained. When they are guarded in the

manner of the roots of a tree, accomplishments will emerge, but if they degenerate, **one will be deprived of the enlightened heritage** of the Great Vehicle, which is the good fortune associated with manifest awakening.

According to these words, one is not deprived perpetually of the enlightened heritage or of good fortune, but one's [unfortunate] circumstances are merely prolonged. This is because [the enlightened heritage] gives birth to the seed of liberation and because it is impossible for enlightened heritage to be cut off. As for the term “enlightened heritage” (*gotra, rigs*), the vehicle of causal characteristics holds it to abide in the manner of the virtuous seed of the beginningless expanse of reality (*thog ma med pa'i chos khams dge ba sa bon*).<sup>891</sup>

The second concerns the etymologies associated with the ancillary commitments (17.2.4.2.2.1.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The ancillary commitments, which are] not to be renounced and not to be rejected, function as an aid, equivalent [to the basic commitments], and they are hard to transgress.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:12)***

མི་སྲུང་མི་དོར་ལྷ་གཉིས་ནི།  
ཡན་ལག་དམ་ཚིག་འདུང་དགའོ།

The two [groups]—the five that are not to be renounced  
And the five not to be rejected—  
Comprise the ancillary commitments, hard to  
transgress.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The two** groups of commitments, comprising **the five that are not to be renounced and the five that are not to be rejected**, are called **the ancillary commitments** because they are required as an aid for the attainment of the basic [commitments]. They are extremely **hard to transgress** because their awesomeness is necessarily equivalent to that of the basic commitments, like a ditch around a fortified enclosure.

## **THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE KEEPING OF THE COMMITMENTS [17.2.4.2.2.2]**

The second part [of the particular exegesis of the framework of the commitments that are to be attained and guarded] concerns the advantages and disadvantages [associated with the keeping of the commitments]. This has two sections, of which the first concerns the advantages of keeping the commitments (17.2.4.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**If one maintains the commitment of union in sameness, one will be united with the three buddha bodies.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:13)***

།མཉམ་ལ་མཉམ་པར་སྦྱར་བ་ཡི།  
།མཉམ་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་ལ་གནས་ན།  
།མཉམ་ཚུགས་ཆེན་པོ་ཐོབ་འགྲུར་བས།  
།འདས་ན་སངས་རྒྱས་མ་ཡིན་ནོ།

If one maintains the commitment of sameness  
That unites one in sameness,  
One will attain the Great Perfection of sameness,  
But if one transgresses it, one will not attain  
buddhahood.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

This great **commitment of sameness** is the intrinsic nature **that unites one** through the means of the path and profound discriminative awareness **in** the truth that all things are **sameness** in the primordial buddhahood of buddha body and pristine cognition. **If one maintains** this [commitment], **one will attain** buddhahood, **the Great Perfection**, spontaneous in its attributes **of sameness**, where the fruitional three buddha bodies are without conjunction or disjunction. Therefore, this commitment is indeed to be guarded. **But if one transgresses** this commitment, **one will not attain buddhahood**. So it is not to be transgressed, just as happiness ensues from one's maintaining the laws of a king, and punishment when they are broken.

**THE DISADVANTAGES ASSOCIATED WITH DEGENERATION OF THE COMMITMENTS [17.2.4.2.2.2]**

The second concerns the disadvantages associated with degeneration [of the commitments] (17.2.4.2.2.2.2). This comprises (i) the disadvantages associated with degeneration of the basic commitments (17.2.4.2.2.2.2.1) and (ii) the disadvantages associated with degeneration of the ancillary commitments (17.2.4.2.2.2.2.2).

The former, the disadvantages of degeneration in the basic commitments, also has two aspects, of which the first concerns the harm that degeneration and obscuration bring to others (17.2.4.2.2.2.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Owing to the contagion of meeting those whose commitments have degenerated, the present and next lives of both parties will be brought down.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:14)***

འཇུག་བཅའ་ལྟུང་ལ་འཇུག་བཅའ་  
གསོ་ལ་ཉེ་བར་མི་བརྩོན་དང་།  
སྐད་ཅིག་ཡུད་ཅེས་སྐྱུ་མི་བྱེད།  
ཉམས་སྐྱུར་ཉམས་པ་བརྗོད་མི་ལང་།

Do not converse even for an instant or a moment  
With those whose basic commitments have  
uncontrollably degenerated  
And who do not try to restore them.  
The defects of those who have degenerated are  
indescribable.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Do not befriend even for an instant or converse even for a moment with those persons whose basic commitments have degenerated** and who have **uncontrollably** forsaken their training and vows **and who do not try** through skillful means **to restore** their commitments.

Why so? you may ask. It is because **the defects of those** whose commitments **have degenerated are indescribable**— in this life one would undergo various undesirable conditions of sickness, affliction, and so forth, and in the next one would necessarily proceed to the hells along with them. This is termed “degeneration through association” (*zlas nyams pa*).

There are some who say that one should additionally not drink the water in a place frequented by such persons, but that is not intended here. The lower classes of secret mantras are increasingly more restrictive and the higher ones are increasingly more open. Therefore, the boundaries of the commitments to be guarded change correspondingly. According to the Kriyātantras, it is explained that one should not drink water in a place frequented by [violators of the commitments]. As is said in the *Tantra of the Array of Commitments*:

Particular among the Kriyātantras

[Is the commitment] not to drink water

In the same place [frequented by violators of commitments].<sup>892</sup>

According to the Ubhayatantras, one should not see [such violators], even though one may live in the same place as they live. According to the Yogatantras, one should not meet [such violators], though one may see them. According to Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga, one should not speak to [such violators], even though one may meet them, but it is not said to be a defect simply to live in the same place.

The second concerns the defects of degeneration that one brings upon oneself (17.2.4.2.2.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**If [one's basic commitments] have degenerated, all that one would attain will be reversed, and sufferings will emerge.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:15)***

ལྷ་བའི་དམ་ཚིག་ཉམས་གྱུར་ན།  
བསྐྱབ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལོག་པར་འགྱུར།  
ཡིད་དུ་མི་འོང་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་པའི།  
འབྲས་བུ་མི་འདོད་བཞིན་དུ་འདུ།

If one's basic commitments have degenerated,  
All that one would attain will be reversed,  
And one will accrue against one's will  
Diversified and unpleasant results.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**If one's basic commitments have degenerated, all that one would attain will be reversed,** as if drought were to occur when it rains, or a magical spell that one has cast were to backfire against oneself. Powerlessly **and against one's will, one will accrue** the suffering of provisional and conclusive **results** produced by the cause, which is degeneration of the commitments. These [results] will be **diversified** in nature **and unpleasant** for oneself, including all sorts of unwanted experiences: in this life one will have all the undesirable experiences of poverty, sickness, ailments caused by spirits, affliction, and shortening of the life span, and in the next life one will fall into the hells and endure suffering for many aeons.

The latter concerns the disadvantages of degeneration of the ancillary commitments (17.2.4.2.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**If one's ancillary [commitments] have degenerated, there will be no [positive] result, and one will fall into lower realms.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:16)***

ཡན་ལག་དམ་ཚིག་ཉམས་གུར་ན།  
འབྲས་བུ་མེད་ཅིང་དན་སོང་ལྷོང་།

If one's ancillary commitments have degenerated,  
There will be no [positive] result, and one will fall into  
lower realms.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**If one's ancillary commitments have degenerated**, in this life **there will be no** supreme or common accomplishments at all; that is to say, there will be no [positive] **result** of attainment, **and** in the next life **one will fall into lower realms**. It says accordingly in the [*Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*:

Through the degeneration of commitments, one will head downhill. In this life, too, there will be no positive outcome.<sup>893</sup>



## THE EXEGESIS OF THE INTRINSIC NATURE AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE COMMITMENTS [17.2.4.2.2.3]

The third part [of the particular exegesis of the framework of the commitments that are to be attained and guarded] concerns the exegesis of the intrinsic nature and classification [of the commitments]. This has two sections, of which the first concerns the intrinsic nature of the commitments (17.2.4.2.2.3.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The intrinsic nature of the commitments is the identity of all the buddhas.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 19:17)*

།དམ་ཚིག་རྣམས་ནི་དོ་ཇེ་ཆེ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་བདག་ཉིད་ཡིན།

Commitments are the supreme indestructible realities.  
They are the identity of all the buddhas.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

The basic and ancillary **commitments are** the essential nature of **the supreme indestructible realities** of buddha body, speech, and mind. **They are the genuine identity of all the buddhas.** Therefore, it is correct that advantages emerge when they are guarded, and great disadvantages when they

degenerate.

The second section [of the exegesis of the intrinsic nature and classification of the commitments] concerns the classification [of the various commitments] (17.2.4.2.2.3.2). This comprises (i) the classification of enumerated [commitments] (17.2.4.2.2.3.2.1) and (ii) the classification of inconceivable [commitments] (17.2.4.2.2.3.2.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**When classified, the basic [commitments] number thirty, and the others number twenty,**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:18-19)***

།ཚུ་བའི་དམ་ཚིག་ལྔ་ལ་ནི།  
།གཅིག་ལའང་གཉིས་དང་བརྒྱ་ཕྲག་གསུམ།  
།ཡན་ལག་དམ་ཚིག་ལྔ་གཉིས་ལ།  
།གཅིག་ལའང་བརྒྱ་ཕྲག་གཉིས་སུ་དབྱེ།

With regard to the five basic commitments,  
Each is endowed with two and thirty subdivisions.  
Each single one in the two groups of five ancillary  
commitments  
Also has twenty subdivisions.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**With regard to the five basic commitments, each of them**

—including, for example, [the commitment] not to abandon the unsurpassed—**is endowed with two** basic aspects of skillful means and discriminative awareness, **and** these two each have the three further aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind, making six; while each of these [six] also has five further aspects corresponding to buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities. Tallied in this way, there are **thirty subdivisions** of [each of] the basic commitments.<sup>894</sup>

With regard to the classification of the ancillary commitments, there are **two groups of five ancillary commitments. Each single one** of these ten—including, for example, the commitment not to renounce desire—**also has twenty subdivisions**; for each is endowed with skillful means and discriminative awareness, while skillful means includes five pristine cognitions and their five objects (*yul lnga*),<sup>895</sup> and discriminative awareness includes five pristine cognitions and their five objects,<sup>896</sup> making twenty altogether.<sup>897</sup>

The latter is the classification of inconceivable commitments (17.2.4.2.2.3.2.2). This has two aspects, of which the first reveals that commitments are inconceivable because apparent reality is inconceivable (17.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**While, in order to train the thoughts of living beings,  
the commitments are inconceivable.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:20)***

།དམ་ཚིག་འདི་ནི་མཉམ་པོ་ཆེ།  
།འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་ན།  
།སྲིད་གསུམ་འགོ་བ་ཇི་སྟེད་པ།  
།རྟོག་འདུལ་དམ་ཚིག་དེ་སྟེད་སྟོ།

These commitments are most amazing.  
In the ten directions of the six realms,

Commitments are diffused in proportion  
To the living beings of the three planes of existence  
In order to train their thoughts.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**These** basic and ancillary **commitments are** wondrous and **most amazing** because they train the world systems of living beings in supreme pristine cognition. It is taught that, just as sentient beings are infinite, the three hundred sixty subdivisions of the commitments that relate to each of these beings also multiply proportionately, so that they too are demonstrated to be infinite. **In the ten directions of the six realms, the basic and ancillary commitments are diffused in proportion to the living beings subsumed in the three planes of existence in order to train their conceptual thoughts,** which are as many in number. Thus they are as inconceivable as the expanse of space and the expanse of actual reality.

There are some who explain that there are dissimilar kinds of commitments, equal in number to the multifarious thoughts of sentient beings, but that is not intended here. It would contradict the fact that [the verses beginning with the words] “These commitments are . . .” immediately follow the explanation of the basic and ancillary commitments.<sup>898</sup>

The second reveals that the commitments are inconceivable because actual reality is inconceivable (17.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The abiding nature, without laborious attainment, is inconceivable.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 19:21)**

།གཞན་ཡང་རྒྱལ་མཚོག་ཀུན་བཟང་གི  
།ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་བྱག་རྒྱ་ཡིས།  
།སྐྱབ་མེད་མཚོག་དམ་མ་ལུས་འགྲུབ།  
།དེ་ལ་སོགས་པ་མཐའ་ཡས་མཚོག

Moreover, there is the seal of the supreme conqueror  
Samantabhadra,  
In which all things are [gathered] without exception  
And through which all the most [essential] and genuine  
[commitments],  
None excepted, will be achieved without [laborious]  
attainment.  
Such [commitments] are infinitely supreme.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

Distinct from this teaching that there are commitments equaling the enumerations of apparent reality, **there is moreover the sky-like seal in which all things without exception are** gathered without duality in the supreme display of effortless **Samantabhadra**. He is **the supreme conqueror**, in whom all things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, transcend renunciation, acceptance, and boundaries to be guarded because they are primordially without acceptance or rejection. **And** so, **through** [this seal], **all the most essential and genuine** of all the commitments—their intrinsic nature **without** fabrication, laborious attainment, hope, and doubt—**will be achieved, none excepted**. Therefore, it should be known as the disposition of

the Great Perfection, the abiding nature, devoid of fabrication, contamination, hope, and doubt with respect to the real. It also says in the *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*:

O! I, the all-accomplishing king, teacher of teachers,  
Understand that all things are one in the basic  
enlightened mind

And that all things are indeed the unique essential  
commitment,

Transcending [commitments] that are or are not to be  
guarded.

O! The commitments, exemplified by the all-  
accomplishing king, Are uncreated—like space  
transcending the directions— So, those who well  
understand them

Realize the commitment of the all-accomplishing king.

O! Just as the basis of all things is one in the mind,  
The basis of the commitments is one, with nothing to be  
guarded.

O! Concerning this commitment, which is the  
enlightened intention

Of me, the all-accomplishing [king],

Through unwavering recollection, entities are naturally  
present

As pristine cognition—unfabricated and uncreated by  
anyone at all.

Empowered by awareness,

There is nothing to be guarded nor not to be guarded.

All things in their entirety, just as they appear,  
Are mastered by radiance in the naturally present  
nucleus,

And then, created by the all-accomplishing king,

All things transcend the range of both awareness and  
ignorance.

This is the commitment where there is nothing

To be transcended or violated and no boundaries to be

guarded.<sup>899</sup>

Therefore, the commitment of the genuine abiding nature refers to the meditative stability, which is indescribable, indemonstrable, without defining characteristics, and unchanging in primordial reality, throughout the three times. The essential nature of **such** commitments, transcending objects of thought, expression, and reference, is maintained in the genuine abiding nature, the **infinitely supreme** Great Perfection. Even all commitments that have not yet been achieved are instinctively gathered within such commitments. Concerning their attributes, it says in the *Tantra of the Vast Space of the Sky*:

Just as a man who finds precious jewels  
Has no need for mundane agriculture,  
If, without meditation, the meaning of mind is realized,  
All enlightened attributes without exception are  
spontaneously present.

The commitment is not to transgress this.<sup>900</sup>

## **AN EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE GREAT ADVANTAGES OF THE COMMITMENTS [17.2.4.2.2.4]**

The fourth part [of the particular exegesis of the commitments that are to be attained and guarded] is an extensive exegesis of the great advantages [of the commitments]. This has five aspects, of which the first concerns praise and veneration by mundane beings (17.2.4.2.2.4.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**Those who hold the [secret] mantras will be venerated by the foremost mundane gods, such as Brahmā and Śatakratu, and their retinues.**



***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:22)***

།སྐྱུལ་བའི་རིགས་མཚོག་འཛིན་པ་དེ།  
།འཛིག་རྟེན་གཙོ་དང་འཁོར་གྱིས་བཀུར།

Those who hold the supreme awareness of the  
conquerors  
Will be venerated by the foremost mundane gods and  
their retinues.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**Those who hold** the secret mantras, **the supreme awareness of the conquerors**, and keep the commitments **will be** praised, **venerated**, and honored **by the foremost mundane gods**, such as Brahmā and Śatakratu, **and their retinues**.

The second aspect concerns the consecration granted by sublime beings (17.2.4.2.2.4.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The conquerors and their heirs will intentionally consecrate them.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:23)***

།དམ་པ་མཚོག་དང་དམ་པ་ཡིས།  
།སྐྱུ་དང་སྐྱུ་དགོངས་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྐྱོབས།

The genuinely supreme beings and their genuine [heirs]  
Will intentionally consecrate them as a son or as a  
brother.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Among all divine and human creatures, **the** principal and **genuinely supreme beings** who are the buddhas, **and** the bodhisattvas abiding on the levels, who are **their genuine heirs**, **will** in succession **intentionally consecrate them** by means of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities, either **as a senior son or as an elder brother**.

The third aspect concerns the advantages of those who have attained the perceptual range of the conquerors (17.2.4.2.2.4.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Those who enter that level, abide on that level, and  
are mature on that level unite with  
Samantabhadra.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:24)***

།བདེ་གཤེགས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་ལ་ཟུགས།  
།འཇིགས་མེད་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོར་སྦྱོར།

Those who enter the range of the sugatas themselves  
Unite with fearless Samantabhadra.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Those who** have kept the commitments **enter the** perceptual **range of the sugatas themselves** as the three awareness holders, namely, those who enter into that level, those who abide on that level, and those who are mature on that level. Finally, they **unite with** and obtain [the nature of] supreme **Samantabhadra**, who is **fearless** with respect to all things.

Samantabhadra is explained to be the fruitional buddha who is fearless with respect to the two obscurations, the four demons, the dichotomy of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, and anything that is to be known. The awareness holders who enter into that level are those who, entering the maṇḍala, first receive the generation and perfection stages [of meditation]. The awareness holders who abide on that level are those who have obtained realization and meditative stability and who then continually abide therein. The awareness holders who are mature on that level are those who have become most powerful through that very attainment. Obtaining the status of an [awareness holder] of maturation, of power over the life span, and of the great seal, they then unite with and obtain [the status of] an awareness holder of spontaneous presence.

The fourth aspect concerns the advantages of those who have accrued the enlightened attributes of vows and commitments (17.2.4.2.2.4.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**The skillful means that grant instruction and all  
vows are progressively integrated.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:25)***

།ཇི་བཞིན་ཉིད་དང་འདུལ་བའི་ཐབས།  
།ཇི་སྟེད་སྒོམ་པ་བསམ་ཡས་འདུས།  
།མ་ལུས་རྣམས་དག་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ།

The reality just as it is,  
The skillful means that grant instruction,  
And as many inconceivable vows as there are—  
They are, without exception, pure and spontaneously  
present.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Among the unsurpassed commitments, the abiding nature of all things, **the sky-like reality just as it is**, the meanings of all **the** vehicles or **skillful means that grant instruction** to sentient beings, **and as many** classes of **inconceivable vows as there are**, including those of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and awareness holders, **are without exception** all progressively gathered, just as small measures of grain (*phul*) are scooped up into greater measures (*bre mig tu*),<sup>901</sup> and their enlightened attributes are without exception **pure and spontaneously present**.

The fifth aspect concerns the advantages of being able to restore [commitments] though they have degenerated (17.2.4.2.2.4.5). [It comments on the verse:]

**If [the commitments] degenerate, they can be restored by rites of fulfillment—a great distinction.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 19:26)**

།ཉམས་ན་བསྐྱེད་པས་རྫོགས་པ་དང་།  
།དེ་ལ་སོགས་པ་མཐའ་ཡས་མཚོག

If there is degeneration [of the commitments],  
They will be perfected through rites of fulfillment.  
Such [advantages] are infinitely supreme.

**Interlinear Commentary**

**If there is degeneration** of the basic and ancillary commitments, **they will be** restored and **perfected**, as before, **through rites of fulfillment**. These are implemented not by the discipline of the pious attendants, which cannot repair them, as if they were a broken clay vase, but by receiving empowerment, confession, and so forth.<sup>902</sup> **Such** advantages **are** inherent in the **infinitely supreme** way of secret mantras.

**THE CONCLUSION [17.2.4.3]**

The conclusion [comments on the line]:

**At these words, the self-manifesting [tathāgatas]  
paid homage to [the tathāgata] himself.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 19:27)**

ཅེས་བརྗོད་པས། དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུངས་པ་ཉིད་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུངས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་འདུད་  
པར་གྱུར་ཏེ།

At these words, the tathāgatas themselves paid homage to the tathāgata himself.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**At these words, the** hosts of the self-manifesting **tathāgatas themselves paid homage to the tathāgata** Samantabhadra **himself**, who is the lord of the maṇḍala.

## **CHAPTER ENDING**

**This completes chapter 19 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
entitled “The Revelation of the Commitments.”**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 19:28)***

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་དམ་ཚོག་གི་ལེན་སྒྲིབ་བཅུ་དགུ་  
པའོ།།

This completes the nineteenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Commitments.”

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes the exegesis of the nineteenth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus* of commitment *Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Revelation of the Meaning of the Basic and Ancillary **Commitments.**”**

## 20. THE CONSECRATION OF SPONTANEOUS ENLIGHTENED ACTIVITY

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Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, then becomes absorbed in the meditative stability known as “the consecration of the spontaneous commitment” in order that those who keep the commitments might engage in enlightened activity (v. 1).

This chapter begins with an explanation of the four rites of enlightened activity, symbolized in succession by the shapes of the sacred Sanskrit letters *E vaṃ ma yā*. These are respectively the rite of wrath (vv. 2-4), the rite of subjugation (vv. 5-7), the rite of enrichment (vv. 8-10), and the rite of pacification (vv. 11-13), each of which is presented in three phases, namely, the making of a burnt offering, the piercing with the ritual spike (*kīla*), and the enactment of the dance steps that oppress negative forces.

Particular injunctions are subsequently given to those mundane beings on the periphery of the maṇḍala who consume the residual offerings of the feast, exhorting them to maintain the former oaths administered to them by Mahottara Heruka (vv. 14-15).

The main part of the enlightened activity of the wrathful maṇḍala, however, is known as the rite of the dance steps and hand gestures (v. 16). This action, when performed by the five central herukas and their consorts, brings about the accomplishment of all five modes of enlightened activity (v. 17). When engaged by the eight *mātarah*, it brings about subjugation, enrichment, and pacification (v. 18). When engaged by the eight *piśācī*, it brings about wrathful destruction (v. 19), and when engaged by the twenty-eight *īśvarī*, it fulfills curses and imprecations (v. 20).



Corresponding to the four rites of enlightened activity, which culminate in the wrathful rite of liberation, are the places conducive to the attainment of their respective activities, namely, forests charred by fire for the rite of wrath, solitary tree trunks for the rite of subjugation, shrubbery groves and orchards for the rite of enrichment, and leafy trees or woodland for the rite of pacification. Each of the rites also requires a distinctive meditative stability (v. 21). Thereby, all the tathāgatas are trained in the performance of enlightened activities (v. 22).

THE FIFTH PART [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with which the path is attained] concerns the attainment of enlightened activities by those who keep the commitments (17.2.5). This comprises (i) the context (17.2.5.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (17.2.5.2); and (iii) the conclusion (17.2.5.3).

The first [comments on the line]:

**[Then the Great Joyous One] uttered these following aphorisms, through which all enlightened activities are accomplished:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:1)***

དེ་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུང་བ་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགུས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ལྷན་གྱིས་  
 །སྐྱབ་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་གྱིན་གྱིས་སློབ་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛིན་ལ་སྦྱོམས་པར་  
 །ཞུགས་ནས་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then the Tathāgata, Transcendent Lord and Great Joyous One, became absorbed in the meditative

stability called “the consecration of the spontaneous commitment” and uttered these following aphorisms.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the sequence of the commitments had been explained, **then** in order that those who keep the commitments might accomplish enlightened activities, [the Tathāgata] **Transcendent Lord and Great Joyous One** of pristine cognition **became absorbed in the meditative stability called “the consecration of the primordial, natural, and spontaneous commitment as enlightened activity” and uttered these following aphorisms** through which all [enlightened activities] are accomplished.

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [17.2.5.2]**

The second comprises (i) a general presentation of the sequence of the four rites of enlightened activity (17.2.5.2.1); (ii) a detailed exegesis of the concluding injunctions and the benefits of the dance (17.2.5.2.2); and (iii) the distinctive attributes of the places and meditative stabilities associated with the attainment of the four rites (17.2.5.2.3).

## **A GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE SEQUENCE OF THE FOUR RITES OF ENLIGHTENED ACTIVITY [17.2.5.2.1]**

The first has four aspects: (i) the rite of wrath (17.2.5.2.1.1); (ii) the rite of subjugation (17.2.5.2.1.2); (iii) the rite of

enrichment (17.2.5.2.1.3); and (iv) the rite of pacification (17.2.5.2.1.4).

## **THE RITE OF WRATH [17.2.5.2.1.1]**

The rite of wrath has three sections, of which the first concerns the rite of the incinerating fire (17.2.5.2.1.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of wrath, the ritual target will be destroyed.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:2)***

།ཨེ་ཡི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དྲུལ་འཁོར་མཚོག  
།འབར་བ་གཏུམ་ཆེན་ཇམ་པ་ལ།  
།ཁྲོས་པའི་ཡིད་ཀྱིས་མཚོད་སྦྱིན་བྱ།  
།སངས་རྒྱས་བསོད་ནམས་སྐྱ་ཡང་འཇིག

In the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
[In the shape of] the syllable E,  
[The *mantrin*] should make offerings

With an attitude of wrath  
To the awesome and ferocious blazing [fire]—  
Even the body of a buddha with its merits will be  
destroyed!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**In the midst of the assembled host** [of deities], complete<sup>903</sup> with the defining characteristics of the rite of wrath, which employs a triangular fire pit in the shape of **the syllable E**,<sup>904</sup> the being of meditative commitment (*samayasattva*), who is **supreme** within **the maṇḍalas** of the respective deities, is visualized, and the actual being of pristine cognition (*jñānasattva*) consequently enters therein. Then, **with an attitude of wrath** directed toward the ritual target (*bsgrub bya*),<sup>905</sup> the *mantrin* **should make offerings** of wrath and present the sacraments of burnt offerings **to** their nondual nature, which assumes **the awesome and ferocious** guise of Agni—a **blazing** mass of raging fire. Thereupon, **even the body of a buddha** attained through the two provisions and adorned **with** the signs of **its hundred merits will be destroyed**—let alone ordinary mundane beings! Alternatively, one might interpret this [last] verse to mean that the ritual target will be destroyed because all sentient beings are explained to be buddhas.<sup>906</sup>

The second section [of the rite of wrath] concerns the rite of the stabbing spike (17.2.5.2.1.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The ritual target] should be summoned and absorbed into an effigy. Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and [the effigy] presented to the assembled host.**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 20:3)**

།བདུད་ཅི་ལྷ་འཕམ་བཟས་ལྷ་ལ།  
།མཚན་མ་མིང་དུ་བཅས་པར་བྱ།  
།བཀྲུག་ནས་དོ་རྗེ་སྤར་བུས་གདབ།  
།རྩལ་དུ་བྱས་ལ་ཚོགས་ལ་དབུལ།

A symbolic representation should be fashioned  
With the five nectars or five edibles  
And with the name [of the ritual target] attached.  
Once [the actual target] has been summoned,  
The spike of indestructible reality should be stabbed  
[into it]— Reduced to dust particles,  
[This effigy] should then be offered to the assembled  
host.

### **Interlinear Commentary**

A symbolic representation or effigy of the ritual target should be fashioned from materials that include soil from the footprints fresh with the scent of the target mixed with the five nectars or the five edibles, that is, the flesh of fish, molasses, dark sesame, honey, and rice. The form [of the effigy] should bear the inscriptions of the target's name attached to its forehead, the clan name attached to its heart, and any nickname (*bla btags*)<sup>907</sup> that the target has along with the syllables MĀRAYA PHAṬ attached to its genitals, encircled with the syllables jah, which effect the ritual summons. These should be drawn on bark, cotton, or paper and inserted inside [the effigy] or else patched to the back and front, whichever is appropriate.

**Once** the actual target **has been summoned** by means of mantras, meditative stabilities, and seals, **the ritual spike of indestructible reality**, made of iron and so forth, **should be** visualized as Vajrakīla and then **stabbed** into the vital places [of the effigy], including the heart.<sup>908</sup> Visualize that the body and speech [of the target] are **reduced to dust particles**. The effigy **should then be offered** as a burnt offering **to the assembled host** of Karma Heruka or to the assembled host of the deity of the wrathful rite who was previously visualized in the fire pit.<sup>909</sup>

The third section [of the rite of wrath] concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps (17.2.5.2.1.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Linked together by their little fingers, [the yogins]  
dance, whereupon [the target] becomes insane,  
bursts asunder, and is incinerated.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 20:4)*

ཨེ་ཡི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དྲུལ་འཁོར་མཚོག

ལུ་གུ་རྒྱུད་དུ་སྒྲིལ་བསྐྱམས་ནས།

འབྱོར་སྐྱུར་བསྐྱོད་ནས་སྤོགས་བཅུར་གཡོས།

སྤོས་ནས་གས་ཏེ་འཚོག་པར་འགྱུར།

In the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
In the shape of the syllable E,  
[The yogins] are linked together in a chain.  
Then holding [this seal their bodies] undulate and flex

Then, holding [this seal, their bodies] undulate and flex  
Throughout the ten directions,  
Whereupon [the target] becomes insane,  
Bursts asunder, and is incinerated.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

At the circumference of the fire pit or **the maṇḍala of the assembled host** associated with the wrathful rite, which is **in the** [triangular] **shape of the syllable E**, the yogins **are linked together in a chain** by their raised little fingers, with their thumbs pressing down on the middle and ring fingers and the index fingers outstretched. **Then, holding** this seal, their bodies **undulate and**, with adamantine dance steps, they **flex** their bodies and hand gestures **throughout the ten directions**, saying:

HŪṂ HŪṂ HŪṂ!

By indestructible hatred and its concomitants,

All the myriad world systems  
Are instantly destroyed!

There is nothing that will not be destroyed! MĀRAYA PHAT!  
Imagine that the feet dance upon the effigy, **whereupon** the ritual [effigy] is reduced to dust particles. The actual target **becomes insane**, the heart **bursts asunder**, and the body **is incinerated** and rendered nonexistent.

There are some who say that once the previous rite of the burnt offering has been concluded, the site [of the maṇḍala] is erased clean, and upon it the male and female yogins form a triangle. They visualize the form of Karma Heruka in the midst of the flames, and, linking all their ring fingers, they place the effigy in the middle and dance around it. Now, although rites may indeed be accomplished by any of these three individual phases—burnt offering, suppression, or dance—it will be best if all three are complete.<sup>910</sup>

## THE RITE OF SUBJUGATION [17.2.5.2.1.2]

Second, the rite of subjugation has three sections, of which the first concerns the rite of the incinerating fire (17.2.5.2.1.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of subjugation, [even] buddha speech will be subjugated.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 20:5)*



འཕྲི་གི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དྲིལ་འཁོར་མཚོག  
འབར་བ་གཟི་བཞིན་ལྷན་ཆེན་ལ།  
ཆགས་པའི་ཡིད་ཀྱིས་མཚོད་སྤྱོན་བྱ།  
རྩོ་ཐེ་གསུང་ཡང་དབང་དུ་འགྱུར།

In the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
In the shape of the syllable VAM,  
[The *mantrin*] should make offerings

With an attitude of attachment  
To the brilliant and mountainous blaze—  
Even indestructible speech will be subjugated!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

In this case the fire pit that is symbolized by and drawn **in the shape of the syllable VAM** is semicircular. **The expression supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host** denotes both the defining characteristics of the fire pit<sup>911</sup> and the central and peripheral deities. This is applicable in the case of all [the four rites]. Within it, the fire of the pit and Agni, the fire god, assume a **brilliant**, subjugating guise, **blazing** intensely and **mountainous** in stature. The *mantrin* **should** then **make offerings** to the fire **with an attitude of attachment** directed toward the ritual target, offering those sacraments corresponding to the rite of subjugation.<sup>912</sup> Thereupon, **even Amitābha, who embodies indestructible speech, will be subjugated!**

The second section [of the rite of subjugation] concerns the rite of the stabbing spike (17.2.5.2.1.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The ritual target] should be summoned and absorbed into an effigy.  
Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and [the effigy] offered to the assembled host.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:6)***

|བདུད་རྩི་ལྗེས་ཟས་ལྗེས་ལ།  
|མཚན་མ་མིང་དུ་བཅས་པར་བྱ།  
|རྩོ་ཇི་ཆགས་པའི་སྤར་བས་གདབ།  
|ཆགས་པའི་ཚོགས་ལ་གྲིམ་པར་དབྱེ།

A symbolic representation should be fashioned  
With the five nectars or five edibles  
And with the name [of the ritual target] attached.  
[This effigy] should be stabbed with the spike of  
indestructible attachment  
And offered until it has vanished into the assembled host  
Who are indicative of attachment.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**A symbolic representation** or effigy of the ritual target who is the object of the rite of subjugation **should be fashioned with the five nectars or five edibles** and an article of clothing that bears the scent of the target. Inside it one should insert paper labels **and** so forth, inscribed **with the target's name**, clan, and [nick]name **attached**. Then **the ritual spike**, made of copper and so forth, indicative **of indestructible attachment**, **should be** visualized as Padmakīla and **stabbed** into it, **and** the effigy that has been stabbed should then be **offered** to Padma Heruka and his retinue, **the assembled host who are indicative of attachment**, or to the deities who were previously [visualized] in the pit, **until it has vanished** indivisibly.

The third section [of the rite of subjugation] concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps (17.2.5.2.1.2.3). [It comments

on the verse:]

**Linked together by their ring fingers, [the yogins] dance, whereupon all that is desired will come to pass.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:7)***

།མྱོ་གི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དགྱིལ་འཁོར་དུ།  
།ལུ་གུ་རྒྱུད་དུ་སླེལ་ནས་བསྐྱམས།  
།འགྲུགས་འགྱུར་དོ་རྗེའང་ཕྱི་བཞིན་འབྲངས།  
།ཅི་འདོད་དེ་བཞིན་འོང་བར་འགྱུར།

In the maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
In the shape of the syllable VAM,  
[The yogins] are linked together in a chain.  
Then, even Vajra[padma], through whom [all beings] are  
summoned,  
Will become an attendant.  
Whatever is desired will similarly come to pass.

***Interlinear Commentary***

At the extremities of the fire pit or **the maṇḍala of the assembled host** associated with the rite of subjugation, which is **in the shape of the syllable VAM**, the yogins **are linked together in a chain**, and **then**, after the dance has been performed, **even Vajrapadma** and handsome Mahendra, **through whom** all living beings **are summoned, will become an attendant**,<sup>913</sup> let alone ordinary human beings! **Whatever**

**is desired** in one's mind **will similarly come to pass.**

## **THE RITE OF ENRICHMENT [17.2.5.2.1.3]**

Third, the rite of enrichment has three sections, of which the first [concerns the rite of the incinerating fire] (17.2.5.2.1.3.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of enrichment, excellent provisions will increase.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:8)***

མ་ཡི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དྲུལ་འཁོར་མཚོག  
འབར་བ་འདུ་འཕྲོ་གཟི་ཆེན་ལ།  
དགའ་བའི་ཡིད་ཀྱིས་མཚོད་སྦྱིན་བྱ།  
ཡོན་ཏན་ནམ་མཁའི་མཐའ་དང་མཉམ།

In the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
In the shape of the syllable ma,  
[The *mantrin*] should make offerings

With an attitude of joy  
To the blazing [fire] that is absorbed  
And diffused with great brilliance—  
Enlightened attributes will equal the limits of space!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**In the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host**, which in this case employs a square fire pit **in the shape of the syllable MA**, visualize that the fire and Agni, the fire god, are both inwardly **absorbed** as a mass of **blazing** light rays, so that resources are gathered, **and** they are outwardly **diffused with great brilliance**, so that hopes are fulfilled. The *mantrin* **should** then **make offerings** of enrichment<sup>914</sup> **to it, with an attitude of joy** and gladness.<sup>915</sup> Thereupon, **enlightened attributes** such as an increase in life span, glory, and riches **will** be obtained, **equal to the limits of space**.

The second section [of the rite of enrichment concerns the rite of the stabbing spike] (17.2.5.2.1.3.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The ritual target] should be summoned and absorbed into an effigy.**  
**Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and [the effigy] presented to the assembled host.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:9)***

།བདུད་རྩི་ལྔ་ལྔ་མ་ཟས་ལྔ་ལ།  
 །མཚན་མའི་མིང་དུ་བཅས་པར་བྱ།  
 །ཡོན་ཏན་ཡིད་བཞིན་གཏེར་དུ་བཏགས།  
 །ང་རྒྱལ་དགའ་སྤོའི་ཕུར་བས་གདབ།  
 །རྩོ་རྩེའི་གཟི་བཞིན་འཕེལ་བར་དབུལ།

A symbolic representation should be fashioned  
 With the five nectars or five edibles  
 And with the name attached.  
 Conceived as a wish-fulfilling treasure of attributes,  
 This should be stabbed with the spike of joyous pride  
 And be offered so that indestructible brilliance will  
 multiply.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**A symbolic representation** or effigy **should be fashioned** of those things that one desires to increase and multiply—gems, gold, silver, pearls, horses, oxen, and so forth, mixed with grains of rice, precious stones, and other things and **with five nectars or five edibles** which are appropriate. It should be inscribed **and attached with the name** and [mantra syllables of the rite of] enrichment. This should be meditated on and **conceived as a treasure of wish-fulfilling** precious gems through which the desirable **attributes** of the senses manifest, as required. Then **the ritual spike**, made of gold and so forth, indicative of **joyous pride**, **should be** visualized as Ratnakīla, bringing a downpour of accomplishments, and **stabbed** into it, **and** [the effigy] should then **be offered** to the assembled host of Ratna Heruka, or to the aforementioned [assembled host] in the fire pit appropriate for the rite of enrichment, **so that** the

great **brilliance** of **indestructible** enlightened attributes **will multiply**.

The third section [of the rite of enrichment concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps] (17.2.5.2.1.3.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Linked together by their middle fingers, [the yogins] dance, whereupon all wishes will be fulfilled.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:10)***

མ་ཡི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དུ།  
ལུ་གུ་རྒྱུད་དུ་སྒྲིལ་བསྐྱམས་བསྐྱོད།  
གཟི་བུ་འབར་བའི་འཕྲུལ་ཚེན་སྟོ།  
ཡིད་བཞིན་ནམ་མཁའ་གང་བར་འགྱུར།

In the maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
In the shape of the syllable MA,  
[The yogins] undulate, linked together in a chain.  
As they diffuse supreme magical forms of blazing  
brilliance,  
Space will become filled with wish-fulfilling [gems].

***Interlinear Commentary***

At the extremities of the maṇḍala or fire pit where rites of enrichment are enacted **in the maṇḍala of the assembled host** [of deities], which is **in the shape of the syllable MA**, the



yogins are **linked together in a chain** and **undulate** throughout the ten directions. Through the light rays made by their dancing steps, **they** then **diffuse** the meditative stability in which a cascade of glorious billowing clouds of resources descends in that very place, along with **supreme magical forms of blazing brilliance**. Visualize that thereby the poverty of sentient beings is dispelled. Thereupon, **space will become filled with wish-fulfilling** gems that bring forth all the desirable attributes of the senses, and all aspirations will be fulfilled.

## **THE RITE OF PACIFICATION [17.2.5.2.1.4]**

Fourth, the rite of pacification also has three sections, of which the first [concerns the rite of the incinerating fire] (17.2.5.2.1.4.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of pacification, all fears will subside.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:11)***

། ཡུ་ཡི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དྲུལ་འཁོར་མཚོག  
། གསལ་བའི་གཟི་བརྗིད་འཚོར་བ་ལ།  
། དང་བའི་ཡིད་ཀྱིས་མཚོད་སྤྱོད་བྱ།  
། གདུམ་ཚེན་རྩམ་པའང་ལྷན་ནེར་འགྱུར།

In the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
In the shape of the syllable YĀ,  
A luminous brilliance shines forth.  
[The *mantrin*] should make offerings  
With an attitude of clarity—  
Even beings of most awesome ferocity will become  
lustrous!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host** that is **in the shape of the syllable YĀ** employs a circular fire pit. Inside it, both the fire and Agni, the fire god, are visualized in a peaceful form in which **a luminous brilliance shines forth**. The *mantrin*, **with an attitude of clarity, should make offerings** to it, pacifying sickness, harmful forces, and fears. Thereupon, **even beings of** most pernicious and **most awesome ferocity**, such as Māra and Rudra, **will** be thoroughly pacified and **become lustrous** in the enlightened mind, let alone ordinary mundane beings!<sup>916</sup>

The second section [of the rite of pacification concerns the rite of the stabbing spike] (17.2.5.2.1.4.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The ritual target] should be summoned and  
absorbed into an effigy.  
Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and  
[the effigy] presented to the assembled host.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:12)***

།བདུད་རྩི་ལྷ་ལམ་བཟས་ལྷ་ལ།  
།གཏུམ་རྩམ་འབྲུག་པའི་དེ་བོར་བརྟག།  
།ལྷན་ནེར་གསལ་བའི་ཕུར་བུས་གདབ།  
།འབར་བ་ལྷན་ནེའི་ཚོགས་ལ་དབྱུལ།

[A symbolic representation should be fashioned]  
With the five nectars or five edibles.  
Conceived as an essential nature of disturbing awesome  
ferocity,  
This should be stabbed with the spike of lustrous  
radiance  
And offered to the assembled host of blazing luster.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

A [symbolic representation or] effigy should be fashioned as before, mixing the clothing, scent, and other articles of the ritual target whom one desires to pacify **with the five nectars or five edibles; this** [effigy] should be **conceived as an essential nature of** hostile, obstructing spirits and so forth who are endowed with **ferocity** in body, **awesome** voice, and **disturbing** mind. Then **the** ritual **spike**, made of silver and so forth, indicative **of lustrous radiance, should be** visualized as Buddhakīla **and stabbed** into this effigy, which should then be **offered to** Buddha Heruka and his retinue, **the assembled host of** glory, brilliance, and **blazing luster**, or to the fire god Agni, in accordance with the rite of pacification.

The third section [of the rite of pacification concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps] (17.2.5.2.1.4.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**Linked together by their index fingers, [the yogins]  
dance, whereupon negativity will subside.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:13)***

།ཡུ་ཡི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དྲུལ་འཁོར་དུ།

།ལུ་གུ་རྒྱུད་དུ་སྒྲིལ་བསྐྱམས་ནས།

།འབར་བ་ལྷན་ནེའི་བྱིན་གྱིས་བྱུང།

།ཐམས་ཅད་གཡོས་བ་མེད་པར་བྱེད།

In the maṇḍala of the assembled host,  
In the shape of the syllable YĀ,  
[The yogins] are linked together in a chain,  
Whereupon they fill the blazing [fire of anger]  
With the blessing of their luster.  
All things will be rendered undisturbing!

***Interlinear Commentary***

**In the maṇḍala of the assembled host** [of deities] that is **in the shape of the syllable YĀ**, at the extremities of the maṇḍala or fire pit associated with the rite of pacification, the yogins dance, **linked together in a chain**, whereupon, through the rite of pacification, **they** permeate even **the blazing** fire of anger that engulfs others **with the blessing of their luster**. **All things** including negative and malicious attitudes do not even minutely agitate the mind, so that they

**will be rendered undisturbing.**

Thus the shapes of the [four] fire pits are respectively symbolized by the shapes of the four syllables E-VAM MA-YĀ.

Lama Rong[zom]pa observes that when the rites of pacification and subjugation are applied, [the hearths are] incongruously shaped since the letters [VAM and YĀ] that they represent do not conform. This is because [in this context] VAM is an etymological contraction of *bandhana*, “binding” or “fettering” [and the letter yā suggests *layāvati*, “coming to rest”].<sup>917</sup>

## **THE DETAILED EXEGESIS OF THE CONCLUDING INJUNCTIONS AND THE BENEFITS OF THE DANCE [17.2.5.2.2]**

The second part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter] is the [detailed] exegesis of the concluding injunctions and the benefits of the dance. It comprises (i) the injunctions given to those who are under oath (17.2.5.2.2.1) and (ii) a teaching on the benefits of dance (17.2.5.2.2.2).

The former has two aspects, of which the first describes how injunctions are given concerning the rites (17.2.5.2.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**The residual offerings should then be presented to the hosts, and then their commitments should be proclaimed and injunctions given for them to perform their [respective] rites.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:14)***

།སྐྱུ་ས་དང་བྱི་མོ་བྱན་མོའི་ཚོགས།  
།ལྷག་མའི་མཚོད་སྦྱིན་འདོད་པ་སྦྱིན།  
།རང་གི་དམ་ཚིག་རབ་བསྐྱུགས་ནས།  
།གང་འདོད་ལས་དེ་བྱེད་པར་བསྐྱོ།

Offerings should be made to the retainers,  
The hosts of their concubines, and female servants,  
Who wish for the residual offerings.  
One should then proclaim their commitments

And command them to perform  
The rites that are desired.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Immediately after any of these four rites of enlightened activity has been performed, one should partake of a communal feast offering. The residue (*lhag ma*) of food and drink is then gathered and consecrated by the saliva (*kha phru*) of the vajra master.<sup>918</sup> **Offerings should be made** [of this residue] **to the retainers** who gather in the maṇḍala of the Great Glorious [Heruka], and to the wives of the Mahādeva class and to **the hosts of their concubines and female servants**, because they are guests **who wish for the residual offerings**. Carrying the residue to an eating place at a distance of seventy paces (*za lam bdun cu'i sar bskyal*), **one should then proclaim their respective commitments**, that is, those they previously took in the presence of the Great Glorious [Heruka], **and command them to perform the rites** such as pacification **that are desired**.

The second aspect [of the injunctions given to those who are under oath] concerns how the actual injunctions are given] (17.2.5.2.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**May you actualize the rites with which you are  
charged, just as you have pledged!**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:15)***

|སྒོན་ཚོ་དཔལ་ཚེན་ཉེ་རུ་ཀ  
|ཤིན་ཏུ་གདུག་ཅིང་གདུམ་བག་ཅན།  
|ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་འདུལ་མཛད་པའི།  
|དབང་དང་བྱིན་རླབས་མད་པོ་ཚེ།  
|ལྷ་ཚེན་ལ་སོགས་དབང་དུ་བསྐྱུས།  
|འཁོར་རྣམས་དབང་ཕྱག་སྐྱས་སུ་བྱས།  
|སོ་སོའི་ལས་རྣམས་བསྐྱོས་པ་དེ།  
|ཇི་ལྟར་དམ་བཅས་ཁས་སྲུངས་པའི།  
|མ་ཐོགས་སྐྱར་དུ་མདོན་པར་སྐྱང།  
|དམ་བཅས་བཞིན་དུ་མ་བྱས་ན།  
|ཇི་ལྟར་དམ་བཅས་མནའ་བོར་བའི།



|སྒྲོམ་བཅས་དེ་ལས་འདའ་བར་འགྱུར།  
|དམ་ཚིག་དེ་ལས་འདས་གྱུར་ན།  
|མགོ་ལུས་སླིང་ཡང་ཚལ་པ་བདུན།  
|ཡ་ཀྲ་ཁྲོ་བོས་གཏུབས་པར་འགྱུར།  
|དེ་བས་རྣལ་འབྱོར་སྲུགས་འཆང་གིས།  
|ཇི་ལྟར་བཅོལ་བ་བཞིན་དུ་བྱོས།  
|ལས་དེ་མཛོན་དུ་མ་བྱས་ན།  
|རང་གི་མནའ་བོར་ཁས་སྦངས་བཞིན།  
|རུལ་མྱགས་ཚིག་ནས་དམྱལ་བར་འགྲོ།  
|རྣལ་འབྱོར་དམ་ལ་གནས་གྱུར་པའི།  
|ལས་རྣམས་ཡོངས་སུ་བྱ་བ་དང་།

|འཁོར་རྣམས་བྱ་གཅིག་བཞིན་དུ་སྐྱོངས།  
|སྤ་མེན་མ་ཡང་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཐོབ།  
|བཅོལ་བའི་ལས་རྣམས་མཛོན་དུ་བྱོས།  
|ཞེས་བསྐྱོའོ།

Swiftly actualize without impediment  
The oaths that you pledged and upheld  
When in the past the Great Glorious Heruka,  
Most malignant, fierce, and fearful,  
Exhibited most amazing power and blessing,  
Which disciplined you all without exception.  
He overpowered Mahādeva and so forth,  
Making you, their retinues, into his *īśvarī* and retainers,  
And he assigned you your different rites.  
If you do not act as you have pledged,  
You will transgress those vows [and commitments]  
On which you swore an oath.  
If you transgress these commitments,  
The Wrathful Yakṣa will sever your very heads,  
Bodies, and hearts into seven pieces.  
Rather, may you perform the tasks

With which you are charged  
By this yogin who holds the mantras!  
If you do not actualize these activities,  
Which you yourselves have sworn and pledged,  
You will decompose, burn, and then fall into hell.  
May you undertake the activities of yogins who keep the  
commitments,  
And may you protect our retinues as an only child!  
You *piśācī* will also obtain accomplishments.  
May you actualize the rites as you have been charged!  
—Such an injunction is to be given.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Swiftly actualize**, instantly and **without impediment**, the results of your rites, in accordance with **the oaths that you pledged and upheld** previously **when in the past the Great Glorious Heruka** grew **most malignant, fierce, and fearful** to tame the proud *īśvarī* spirits. He **exhibited most amazing power and blessing, which disciplined you**, arrogant spirits of **all world systems without exception. He overpowered** all spirits, **Mahādeva and so forth, making** and consecrating **you, their retinues**, wives, daughters, mothers, and sisters without exception **into his *īśvarī* and retainers** for the sake of enjoyment. **And** then the Great Glorious [Heruka] **assigned you** respectively **your different rites**, such as attraction, imprisoning, and slaying.

**If you do not act as you have** respectively **pledged, you will transgress those vows** and commitments that you pledged in the past and **on which you** respectively **swore an oath. If you transgress those commitments, the Wrathful Yakṣa Jvaladanala** (*me 'bar*)<sup>919</sup> **will sever your very heads, bodies, and hearts into seven pieces. Rather, therefore, may you perform the tasks with which you are charged by**

**this yogin, myself, who holds the mantras. If you do not actualize these activities, then, in accordance with the oath that you yourselves have sworn and pledged, you will decompose, burn, and then fall into the indestructible hell. Therefore, may you undertake whatever are the desired activities of those yogins who keep the supreme commitments, and may you protect the retinues of us yogins as an only child. By the power of this, you *piśācī* will also obtain supreme and common accomplishments. Therefore, may you actualize the rites as you have been charged by us yogins!**

**—Such an injunction is to be given.**

The latter part [of the particular exegesis of the concluding injunctions] concerns the benefits of the dance (17.2.5.2.2.2). It comprises (i) a recognition of the significance [of the dance] (17.2.5.2.2.2.1) and (ii) a more extensive exegesis (17.2.5.2.2.2.2).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**The main part of the rite of the wrathful deities is the dance that follows:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:16)***

ལྷོ་བོ་སྐྱབ་པའི་ལས་ཀྱི་གཙོ་བོ་ནི་འདི་ཡིན་ནོ།

The main part of the rite in which the wrathful deities are attained is this that follows:

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The main part of the rite in which the maṇḍalas of the wrathful deities are attained is this dance that follows: THE MORE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS [17.2.5.2.2.2]**

The second [the more extensive exegesis] has four aspects, of which the first concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the five principal deities (17.2.5.2.2.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**By the dance [of the herukas] of the five enlightened families, the supreme and common [accomplishments] and enlightened activities will be achieved.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:17)***

།ཐུག་འཕུང་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་སོགས་པའི།  
།བློ་གར་སྐུ་ཚོག་ཆེན་པོས་ནི།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཅི་འདོད་པ།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་ཐམས་ཅད་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན།

By the great lyrical song and dance  
Of the mighty blood drinkers and so forth,  
Whatever is desired—all and all—  
All and all will be achieved.

***Interlinear Commentary***

**By the great** melodic contour of **lyrical song** revealed during the four rites, **and the dance of the mighty blood drinkers,** Buddha Heruka **and so forth,** along with their queens,

**whatever is desired—all** the common accomplishments, including those of pacification and enrichment, **and all** the supreme accomplishments—that is, **all** enlightened activities **and all** accomplishments **will be achieved**.

The second aspect [of the more extensive exegesis] concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the eight *mātarah*, who represent [the inherent purity of] the sensory locations (17.2.5.2.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**By [the dance of the *mātarah*] in the cardinal directions, the rites of subjugation and enrichment will be achieved, and by [the dance of the *mātarah*] in the intermediate directions the rites of pacification and wrath will be achieved.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:18)***

མཛོད་ལྷན་ཆེན་མོ་ལ་སོགས་པའི།  
བྲོ་གར་སྐུ་ཚིག་ཆེན་མོས་ནི།  
འདུ་བར་འདོད་ན་འདུ་བར་བྱེད།  
འཕེལ་བར་འདོད་ན་འཕེལ་བར་བྱེད།  
སྲོས་མོ་ཆེན་མོ་ལ་སོགས་པའི།  
བྲོ་གར་སྐུ་ཚིག་ཆེན་མོས་ནི།  
ལྷན་ནེར་འདོད་ན་ལྷན་ནེར་བྱེད།  
སྐྱབས་པར་འདོད་ན་སྐྱབས་པར་བྱེད།

By the great lyrical song and dance  
Of mighty Gaurī and so forth,  
If one desires to overpower [living creatures],

Overpowering will be achieved.  
And if one desires to increase [the life span and so  
forth],  
Increase will be achieved.  
By the great lyrical song and dance  
Of mighty Pukkasī and so forth,  
If one desires to illuminate [hostile forces],  
Illumination will be achieved,  
And if one desires to obfuscate [hostile forces],  
Obfuscation will be achieved.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**By the great lyrical song and dance of mighty Gaurī and so forth**, who are radiant in the four cardinal directions, **if one desires to overpower** living creatures, **overpowering will be achieved**, and **if one desires to increase** the life span, material resources, and so forth, **increase will be achieved**.

**By the great lyrical song and dance of mighty Pukkasī and so forth**, in the four intermediate directions, **if one desires to illuminate** or pacify those spirits who are hostile, obstructive, and so forth, pacification and **illumination will be achieved**, and **if one desires to obfuscate** and cloud their minds, **obfuscation will be achieved**.

The third aspect [of the more extensive exegesis] concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the eight *piśācī*, who represent [the inherent purity of] the sensory objects (17.2.5.2.2.2.2.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**By [the dance of the *piśācī*] in the cardinal directions, [all beings] will be consumed, and by [the dance of the *piśācī*] in the intermediate directions [their entrails] will be extracted.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 20:19)**

།སེང་གཞི་ཆེན་མོ་ལ་སོགས་པའི།  
།སྲོ་གར་གླུ་ཚིག་ཆེན་མོས་ནི།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱན་ལ་ཟ་བར་བྱེད།

།རྩལ་ཆ་ཅོས་ཡང་མེད་པར་བྱེད།  
།བཞད་གཞི་ཆེན་མོ་ལ་སོགས་པའི།  
།སྲོ་གར་གླུ་ཚིག་ཆེན་མོས་ནི།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་འབྲིན་པར་བྱེད།  
།ཀྱན་ལ་རབ་ཏུ་ཉམས་པར་བྱེད།

By the great lyrical song and dance  
Of mighty *Siṃhamukhī* and so forth,  
All [beings] in their entirety will be consumed  
And rendered nonexistent,  
Even to the extent of the smallest dust particle.  
By the great lyrical song and dance  
Of mighty *Gr̥dhramukhī* and so forth,  
[Their organs] will all be extracted, without exception,  
And [their excellent qualities] will all be thoroughly  
depleted.

## **Interlinear Commentary**

**By the great lyrical song and dance of the *piśācī* in the four cardinal directions, including mighty *Siṃhamukhī* and so forth,** the bodies and life breath of **all** malignant beings and all hostile and obstructing spirits **in their entirety will be**



**consumed, and they will be rendered nonexistent even to the extent of the smallest dust particle.**

**By the great lyrical song and dance of the *piśācī* in the four intermediate directions, including mighty *Gr̥dhramukhī* and so forth, the entrails and hearts will be extracted from all malignant beings without exception, and the excellence of their vitality and so forth will all be thoroughly depleted.**

The fourth aspect [of more extensive exegesis] concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the twenty-eight *īśvarī* (17.2.5.2.2.2.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**By [the dance of] the *īśvarī*, hostile forces will be destroyed and all accomplishments bestowed.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:20)***

།སྐྱུ་སྐྱུ་དང་བྱི་མོ་བྱུ་མོའི་ཚོགས།  
།སྐྱོ་གར་སྐྱུ་ཚོག་ཆེན་མོས་ནི།  
།ཐུད་ཅིང་གཏང་བར་བྱ་བ་སྟེ།  
།ཐམས་ཅད་ཐམས་ཅད་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན།

By the great lyrical song and dance  
Of the host of retainers, concubines, and female  
servants,  
Curses and imprecations will take effect,  
And all rites will be achieved in their entirety.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**By the great lyrical song and dance of the host of retainers, concubines, and female servants, curses delivered to enemies by means of a messenger and imprecations ritually delivered by means of an envoy will take effect.**<sup>920</sup> Thus, **all rites** that externally rectify contradictions and all rites that internally bring about the desired accomplishments **will be achieved in their entirety.**

### **THE DISTINCTIVE ATTRIBUTES OF THE PLACES AND MEDITATIVE STABILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ATTAINMENT OF THE FOUR RITES [17.2.5.2.3]**

The third part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter, see p. 731] concerns the distinctive attributes of the places and meditative stabilities associated with the attainment of the four rites. [It comments on the verse:]

**The four rites should be performed respectively with clarity, joy, attachment, and wrath, in forests and so forth.**

#### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:21)***

ལྷོན་པ་དང་ནི་ལྷུག་ཕྱན་ཚལ།

ལྷོང་གཅིག་དང་ནི་མེས་རེག་རྒྱུད།

དང་པས་དགའ་བས་ཆགས་པ་དང་།

ལྷོས་པས་ཀླ་ལི་རབ་ཏུ་བྱ།

Amid trees, in shrubby groves,  
Near solitary tree trunks, and in places touched by fire,  
And with clarity, joy, attachment, and wrath,  
The “consonantal” rites should be well performed.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Amid** forests of leafy **trees, in shrubby groves** or orchards, **near solitary tree trunks, and in places touched by fire**, that is, forests that have been charred by fire, the rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrath should be respectively performed. To that end, these should be respectively accompanied **with** an attitude of **clarity, joy, attachment, and wrath**. In this way **the “consonantal” rites**, that is to say, the four rites of skillful means, **should be well performed**.

There are some who explain that this passage also refers respectively to the four types of female consorts (*yum bzhi*), implying the [inclusion of] the “vocalic rites” (*āli*), but there is no occasion for such an explanation here.<sup>921</sup>

### **THE CONCLUSION [17.2.5.3]**

The third part [of this chapter] is the conclusion [which comments on the verse]:

**At these words the tathāgatas refined [their realization] in the presence of the tathāgata himself.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 20:22)***

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་སྤོང་  
པར་གྱུར་ཏོ།

At these words, the tathāgatas refined [their realization] in the presence of the tathāgata himself.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

**At these words, in the presence of** the principal deity or **the tathāgata himself, the tathāgatas** of the retinue **refined**<sup>922</sup> their realization of the four rites of enlightened activity, through receiving his authorization.

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 20 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Consecration of Enlightened Activity.”**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 20:23)*

།གསང་བའི་སྤྲིང་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་འཕྲིན་ལས་  
བྱིན་གྱིས་རྫོབས་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་ལེན་ལྷེ་ཉི་ཤུ་པའོ།།

This completes the twentieth chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “The Consecration of Spontaneous Enlightened Activity.”

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the exegesis of **the twentieth chapter from the natural *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*** pristine cognition, **entitled “The Consecration of the great deeds of the buddhas which are inherent in the four rites of primordial **Spontaneous Enlightened Activity**”** for the sake of those to be trained.

## 21. EULOGIES TO THE WRATHFUL DEITIES

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The purpose of this chapter is to present the continuum of the result, as fully manifested in the maṇḍala of wrathful deities.

The assembled host of Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, having perfectly presented these enlightened activities of the wrathful maṇḍala, then sings a eulogy to the naturally manifesting buddha body and pristine cognition (v. 1).

The actual verses of the eulogy are dedicated to the enlightened families of buddha body (v. 2), buddha speech (v. 3), buddha mind (v. 4), buddha attributes (v. 5), and buddha activities (v. 6), that is to say, to the central pairs of the herukas and their consorts. These culminate in a particular eulogy to Mahottara Heruka and Krodheśvarī, who embody the celestial palace of the wrathful maṇḍala itself (v. 7).

THE THIRD MAIN TOPIC [of the diffusion of the wrathful deities according to the *Secret Nucleus*, see [p. 599](#)] concerns the eulogies to the fruitional buddha body and pristine cognition (17.3). This comprises (i) a brief introduction to the manner of the eulogies (17.3.1) and (ii) a more extensive exegesis of the actual eulogies (17.3.2).

The former [comments on the verse]:

**Then [the wrathful host] intoned this song of joy,  
with awesome incandescence:**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 21:1)***

དེ་ནས་བཙུམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགེས་པ་ཚེན་པོའི་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱིས་ཤིན་  
ཏུ་རྩམ་པའི་མདངས་གྱིས་སྒྲུ་འདི་སྒྲུངས་སོ།

Then the maṇḍala of the assembled host of the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, intoned this following song with a most awesome incandescence.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Once the ritual activities of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities had been perfected, **then** this great apparition that is **the maṇḍala of** the five enlightened families of blood drinkers and their retinues, comprising **the assembled host of the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, intoned this following song** of joy, **with a most awesome incandescence** in order to praise the self-manifesting buddha body and pristine cognition.

## **A MORE EXTENSIVE EXEGESIS OF THE ACTUAL EULOGIES [17.3.2]**

The latter [the detailed exegesis of the actual eulogies] comprises (i) the general eulogies to the five enlightened families (17.3.2.1); (ii) the particular eulogy to [Mahottara Heruka], the mighty lord of the maṇḍala (17.3.2.2); [and (iii) the eulogies to the maṇḍalas of the supporting celestial palace and the deities supported within it (17.3.2.3)].

## THE GENERAL EULOGIES TO THE FIVE ENLIGHTENED FAMILIES [17.3.2.1]

The first of these has five sections, of which the first concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha body (17.3.2.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The buddha body is] most ferocious, ablaze with light, with frowns of wrath and sharp fangs.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 21:2)*

། ལྷོ་གཏུམ་ཚེན་དུས་མཐའི་མེ་ཚེན་འབར།  
། འོད་ཟེར་ཉིམ་འབྲུམ་གྱི་གཟི།

། རྩོ་གཉེར་སྒྲོག་སྒྲོང་འགྲུ་བ་བཞིན།  
། མཚེ་བ་ཐངས་ཡག་ཐ་བྱེད་ཚེ་ཉོེ།

HŪM! [The buddha body is] most ferocious, Ablaze like  
the inferno at the end of time.  
[Emanating from it] there are light rays  
That [diffuse] the radiance  
Of a hundred thousand suns.  
It has frowns of wrath, like a thousand lightning bolts,  
And sharp, devouring fangs. HOḤ!

### *Interlinear Commentary*



The syllable **HOṂ** introduces each of the songs of the wrathful deities, symbolizing that they each possess the five buddha bodies and five pristine cognitions.

In this regard, the buddha body is **most ferocious** because it tames arrogant spirits such as Māra and Rudra, and it is **ablaze like the inferno at the end of time**, which destroys the aeon. Emanating from the buddha body present in the midst of that fiery aureole, **there are light rays** of pristine cognition resembling **the concentrated radiance of a hundred thousand suns** which are **diffused** throughout the ten directions. This [buddha body] is endowed with **frowns of wrath** that threaten cruel and malign beings, flashing **like a thousand lightning bolts**, and it assumes a most terrifying guise, with four **sharp**<sup>923</sup> white **fangs** that uproot cruel and malign beings, **devouring** the pernicious.

The syllable **HOḤ**, indicating laughter of astonishment, is also appended to the subsequent songs.

The second section concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha speech (17.3.2.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The roar [of buddha speech] bellows laughter like a mountain crumbling and convulses [cruel and malign beings] with terror.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 21:3)***

འཇིགས་པའི་ངོ་འབྲུག་སྤོང་གྲིང་།  
གཏུམ་ཚེན་རི་རབ་འབྲུམ་བསྐྱེལ་སྐད།  
ཞལ་ཉ་ལའི་གད་རྒྱུད་ཚེ།  
དབྲུགས་པའི་འཕྲོར་རླུང་གཡེང་བ་ཚེ་ཉོ།

HŪM! [The buddha speech is endowed] with an awesome  
roar, Most ferocious like the reverberation of a  
thousand peals of thunder And the crash of a hundred  
thousand Mount Sumerus crumbling.

[They bellow] the mighty laughter of ALA HALA, And the  
hurricane expelled [from their breath] convulses  
[cruel and malign beings], Exceeding [the winds at the  
end of time]. HOḤ!

### *Interlinear Commentary*

The buddha speech of the wrathful deities is endowed **with an awesome roar, most ferocious like** the simultaneous **reverberation of a thousand peals of thunder and** brutal like **the crash of a hundred thousand Mount Sumerus** simultaneously **crumbling**. They bellow **the mighty laughter of** A A, HA HA, and ALA HALA, **and the great hurricane expelled** from the force of their breath **convulses** cruel and malign beings with terror, **exceeding** the winds at the end of time.

The third section concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha mind (17.3.2.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**The pristine cognitions [of buddha mind] endowed  
with discriminative awareness are the great  
nondual essential nature.**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 21:4)*

། ལྷོ་ལོ་ཤེས་རབ་འདྲ་པོ་ཆེ།  
། ཡི་ཤེས་དགྲིལ་འཇོར་ཀུན་ཏུ་གསལ།  
། འབར་བའི་ཡི་ཤེས་ཀུན་ཏུ་འཇོམས།  
། ལྷོ་ལོ་ཤེས་ཤིག་ལེ་ཆེ་ཏོ།

HŪM! Possessing the great light  
Of wrathful discriminative awareness,  
The maṇḍalas of pristine cognition are totally radiant.  
Ablaze [as afflictive mental states],  
The pristine cognitions are overwhelming,  
Yet the diverse pristine cognitions abide  
In the great vital essence. HOH!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The pristine cognition [of buddha mind] is that which knows all objects of knowledge without exception and **possesses the great light** rays of **discriminative awareness**, which are **wrathful** to the host of ignorant beings. **The maṇḍalas of the five pristine cognitions are totally radiant, overwhelming** the energy of afflictive mental states with their individual characteristics—provisionally **ablaze** as the five poisons, but abiding essentially as **pristine cognition**.

With reference to the buddha body of emanation, this pristine cognition comprises both **the** pristine cognition that definitively knows [the view] and that which quantitatively knows [phenomena], and, with reference to the buddha body of perfect resource, it comprises the mirrorlike pristine cognition and so forth.<sup>924</sup> **Yet** these **diverse pristine cognitions abide** and are of a single savor **in** the pristine cognition of genuine reality, **the great vital essence** that is the nondual essential nature [of the buddha body of actual reality].

The fourth section concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha attributes (17.3.2.1.4). [It comments on the verse:]

**The wrathful cloud [of buddha attributes sends forth] a cascade of diverse [wrathful forms], permeating space.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 21:5)***

། ལྷོ་བོའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྤྲིན་ཆེན་པོ།  
། ལྷོས་པས་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཆར་ཆེན་འབེབས།  
། དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཡིད་བཞིན་འབྱུང་བའི་གཏེར།  
། ལྷོ་ཚོགས་ལྷོས་པའི་ཐིག་ལེ་ཆེ་ཉོཾ།

HŪM! The kings of wrath are a great cloud [Endowed with the buddha attributes],  
Sending forth a mighty cascade of wrathful maṇḍalas.  
Yet the [forms of] the diverse wrathful treasures  
Of the wish-fulfilling maṇḍalas that emerge  
[All] abide in the great vital essence. HOḤ!

***Interlinear Commentary***

**The kings of wrath** are endowed with the buddha attributes that instruct cruel and malign beings, and they are described as **a great cloud** because they are the basis for the downpour of manifold emanations, **sending forth a mighty cascade of wrathful maṇḍalas** through the wrath of buddha mind. **Yet**, among **the diverse wrathful** forms emanated from the

**treasures of the maṇḍalas that emerge** at will, in the manner of the **wish-fulfilling** gem, and which for the sake of those to be trained instruct each according to his or her needs, all of them that permeate space indeed **abide in the** singular **great vital essence** that is the abiding nature [of reality].

The fifth section is the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha activities (17.3.2.1.5). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The supreme demons of buddha activities] subdue  
demons of great egotism and terrify their fearsome  
hosts.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 21:6)***

། རྩི་བདུད་ཀྱན་གྱི་ནི་བདུད་ཚེན་པོ།  
། བདུད་གྱི་བདུད་དེ་བདུད་རྣམས་འཇོམས།  
། འཇིགས་པའི་ཚོགས་ཀྱང་འཇིགས་བྱེད་པ།  
། འཇིགས་བྱེད་ཚེན་པོ་ཐིག་ལེ་ཆེ་ཉོ།

hūṃ! The supreme demons of all demons  
Are the demons among demons who subdue demons.  
They comprise the most terrifying [herukas],  
Who terrify even their fearsome hosts.  
Yet they [all] abide in the great vital essence. hoḥ!

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**The supreme demons are** so called because they subdue the power **of all** four classes of [mundane] **demons**, including the psychophysical aggregates. Since the two obscurations and

their propensities are the formative predispositions that lead to cyclic existence, in order to instruct even the mightiest **among** those **demons, the** [supreme] **demons subdue** the **demons** of past actions and afflictive mental states. **They comprise the most terrifying** herukas, **who terrify even their fearsome hosts,** such as Māra and Yama. **Yet** these all **abide in this great vital essence** because they are naturally free from extremes of conceptual elaboration.

Alternatively, [this passage might be interpreted] as follows: The great demons are those such as the Lord of Desire (*dga' rab dbang phyug*) among all the demons of the Paranirmitavaśavartin realm and so forth, and the demon superior to these demons is the arrogant spirit Rudra. So, the one who terrifies his fearsome host and their wives is the terrifying Great Glorious [Heruka] himself, and he is identified with the supreme vital essence because he is present in the essential nature, without conceptual elaboration.<sup>925</sup>

The second part [of the detailed exegesis of the actual eulogy] comprises the particular eulogy to [Mahottara Heruka], the mighty lord of the maṇḍala (17.3.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**[The body, speech, mind, and activities of Mahottara Heruka] are respectively like a great rock, a river, a blazing fire, and a hurricane.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 21:7)***

།ཧཱུྃ་རྩི་མེ་ལྷན་ཆེན་ལྷ་བ་པོ།  
 །རྩི་མེ་ལྷན་ཆེན་ལྷ་བ་པོ།  
 །རྩི་མེ་ལྷན་ཆེན་ལྷ་བ་པོ།  
 །རྩི་མེ་ལྷན་ཆེན་ལྷ་བ་པོ།  
 །[ཞེས་ཆེད་རྒྱ་ལྷན་ལོ།] <sup>926</sup>

hŪM! The great rock of indestructible reality is a solidifier.

The river of indestructible reality is a mighty gatherer.

The fire of indestructible reality is a mighty blaze.

The air of indestructible reality is a great hurricane.

HOḤ!

—Such was the song that he meaningfully sang.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The body of Mahottara Heruka, in union with his female consort, is **the great rock of indestructible reality** because it is devoid of birth and transference at death. It **is a mighty solidifier**, ablaze with major and minor marks, free from destruction and separation. The speech and attributes [of Mahottara Heruka] are **the river of indestructible reality** or pristine cognition--**a mighty gatherer**, satisfying the host to be trained. The mind [of Mahottara Heruka] is **the luminous fire of omniscient pristine cognition**, the **indestructible reality** that manifests all knowable objects without exception and dispels the darkness of the fundamental ignorance of living beings with **a mighty blaze** of light rays, fashioned of his compassionate spirituality. The activities [of Mahottara Heruka] embody spontaneously accomplished **indestructible reality**, [likened to] **a hurricane**--the driving wind that scatters demons, extremists, and so forth because it permeates

those who are to be trained. Here the objectives of the four rites are entirely and spontaneously present in the **Great Perfection**.

Next, there are the eulogies to the maṇḍalas of the supporting [celestial palace] and the deities supported within it (*rten dang brten pa'i dkyil 'khor*) (17.3.2.3). This has two sections, of which the first concerns the eulogy to the maṇḍala of the supported deities (17.3.2.3.1). In this context, the above verses [ch. 21:2-6] are interpreted respectively as eulogies to the maṇḍalas of the five enlightened families of herukas,<sup>927</sup> commencing from:

    HŪM! [The buddha body is] most ferocious, Ablaze like  
    the inferno at the end of time . . .  
and continuing down to:

    These comprise the most terrifying [herukas],  
    Who terrify even their fearsome hosts.  
    Yet they [all] abide in the great vital essence. HOḤ!

The second is the eulogy to the supporting celestial palace (17.3.2.3.2), which is interpreted with reference to [the last verse, ch. 21:7] as follows: The great rock of indestructible reality is Mount Meru composed of skeletons. The water is the ocean of blood (*rakta*). The fire is the volcano of pristine cognition, and the wind is the wheel of vital energy below [the palace], which is the foundation.<sup>928</sup>

**Such was the song that the tathāgata meaningfully sang.**

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 21 [of the *Secret Nucleus*],  
entitled “Eulogies to the Wrathful Deities.”**



**Root Tantra (Ch. 21:8)**

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ལྷོ་བོ་ལ་བསྟོན་པའི་ལེབ་སྟེ་ཉི་ཤུ་  
གཅིག་པའོ།།

This completes the twenty-first chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “Eulogies to the Wrathful Deities.”

***Interlinear Commentary*** This completes the exegesis of the twenty-first chapter from the fruitional *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real* buddha body and pristine cognition, entitled “Eulogies to the Wrathful Deities” of self-manifesting pristine cognition.

## 22. THAT WHICH IS PLEASING AND RETAINED

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The final chapter concerns the manner in which the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* is taught and entrusted to its worthy recipients or lineage holders.

Having perfectly revealed the peaceful and wrathful maṇḍalas of the *Net of Magical Emanation*, Samantabhadra, the Great Joyous One, now emphasizes that this tantra text must be firmly retained for the sake of posterity (v. 1).

This tantra text is considered to be the ground, path, and result and the very essential nature of all the tathāgatas (v. 2), while other paths associated with the different vehicles are merely stepping-stones in its direction (v. 3). It should not be given to those who would not benefit by receiving it, since the preliminaries and lesser paths will suffice for them (v. 4). The expositor who confers the empowerments and instructions associated with this tantra is actually identified with Samantabhadra (v. 5).

This tantra that expounds the reality of the ground, path, and result is the most secret of all teachings, devoid of exaggeration and deprecation, and is divulged only to worthy recipients (v. 6). Prophetic declarations are given to the effect that those who retain and teach it will attain all levels and become awareness holders (v. 7).

Moreover, it is significant that on its conclusion, the teacher, Samantabhadra, and the assembled retinue of tathāgatas reveal their continuing presence as ornaments in the buddha field of the Bounteous Array, without change or transition, unlike the teachings of lesser vehicles where the five excellent circumstances surrounding the teachings fade at the conclusion of these teachings (v. 8).

THE FOURTH MAIN TOPIC [of the diffusion of the wrathful deities according to the *Secret Nucleus*, see p. 599], is the entrustment and colophon (17.4). This comprises (i) the teaching of this tantra to genuine beings and its subsequent entrustment (17.4.1) and (ii) the meaning of the colophon (17.4.2).

The former [is the subject matter of ch. 22]. It comprises (i) the context (17.4.1.1); (ii) the explanation of the verses (17.4.1.2); and (iii) the conclusion (17.4.1.3).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**[Then the Great Joyous One] uttered these following aphorisms, indicating that for the sake of [its subsequent] entrustment, [this tantra] should be firmly retained:**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:1)***

དེནས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དགྲིས་པ་ཆེན་པོས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་གསང་  
སྐྱགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་བརྟན་པར་གསུང་བ་འདི་ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་དོ།

Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, uttered these following aphorisms to the tathāgatas themselves, indicating that this king of the secret mantras must be firmly retained.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Once the maṇḍala of the [*Tantra of*] the *Net of Magical Emanation* had been perfectly revealed, **then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One**, glorious

Samantabhadra, the Teacher, whose other epithets include Supreme Bliss (*bde ba chen po*), Nucleus of Indestructible Reality (*rdo rje snying po*), First Genuine One (*dam pa dang po*), Original Protector (*gdod ma'i mgon po*), and Mahāvajradhara (*rdo rje 'chang chen po*),<sup>929</sup> **uttered these aphorisms to the tathāgatas themselves**, who comprise the five enlightened families of the self-manifesting spontaneous Bounteous Array, their eight male bodhisattvas, and so forth, **indicating that this king of the secret mantras must be firmly retained** in order that it might not vanish and that it might benefit living beings. In particular he gave this instruction to the bodhisattva of awareness, [Vajrapāṇi] the Lord of Secrets.

There are some who say that the Lord of Secrets was the expositor [of this tantra] and that he then taught Vajrakarma, Vajradharma, and Samantāvabhāsaketu, but that appears to be incorrect. This is because the teaching was not given to Vajrapāṇi without also being given to others. Furthermore, in Akaniṣṭha, Samantabhadra himself appeared as Vairocana, the principal deity among the five enlightened families, and so he is the teacher and expositor [of this tantra], while the Lord of Secrets, who appears in the retinue, is a retainer [of the tantra].<sup>930</sup>

## **THE EXPLANATION OF THE VERSES [17.4.1.2]**

The second part comprises (i) a teaching that this [tantra] is the result of all paths (17.4.1.2.1) and (ii) a teaching that this [tantra] is supreme among all secrets (17.4.1.2.2).

## **A TEACHING THAT THIS TANTRA IS THE RESULT OF ALL**

## **P**ATHS [17.4.1.2.1]

The former comprises (i) the nature of the tantra in which instruction is to be given (17.4.1.2.1.1) and (ii) the greatness of the recipient to whom instruction is given (17.4.1.2.1.2).

### **T**HE NATURE OF THE TANTRA IN WHICH INSTRUCTION IS TO BE GIVEN [17.4.1.2.1.1]

The first of these [concerning the nature of the tantra] also has three sections, of which the first reveals that this is the actual continuum of the result (17.4.1.2.1.1.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**All phenomenal appearances in the [ten] directions  
and [four] times constitute this tantra of  
primordial buddhahood.**

#### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:2)***

། གྲི་གྲི་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་དུས་བཞིའི་རང་བཞིན་འདི།  
། དེ་བཞིན་གཤམས་པའི་རོ་ཉིད།

O! O! These natural expressions of the ten directions  
and four times  
Are the essence of the tathāgatas.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**O! O!** is an invocation directed toward the self-manifesting retinue, the intrinsic nature of which is skillful means and discriminative awareness without duality, and which manifests as the male and female deities.

All **these natural expressions** of the things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, subsumed in **the ten directions and the four times are the essence of** primordial buddhahood in the maṇḍalas of the peaceful and wrathful deities, comprising the male and female deities of the five enlightened families of **the tathāgatas** along with their bodhisattvas. They abide as the *Secret Nucleus* of the ground; exemplified thereby, the *Secret Nucleus* of the path and of the result also constitute the essential nature of this tantra.

The second reveals that other paths are steps in its direction (17.4.1.2.1.1.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**The levels apprehended by conceptual thoughts are paths leading toward the *Secret Nucleus*.**

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:3)***

།གཟུང་འཛིན་སྤྱོད་ལ་འཆེལ་བ་ཡིས།  
།རྣམ་རྟོག་ཞགས་པས་སོ་སོར་འཛིན།  
།ས་རྣམས་བྱུང་པར་བཞོད་པ་ཡང་།  
།གསང་བའི་སྤྱིང་པོར་འགྲོ་བའི་ལམ།

Those who hanker for conceptual elaboration  
Of the subject-object dichotomy

Are ensnared by conceptual thoughts  
And therefore apprehend things differently.  
Distinctions are indeed arrayed in the levels,  
But these are all paths that progress to the *Secret Nucleus*.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Those** living beings **who hanker for conceptual elaboration of the dichotomy** between external **objects** and the internal **subject** or mind, and who then roam through the three planes of existence, **are ensnared by** endless **conceptual thoughts**—external, internal, extraneous, and so forth—**and therefore** they **apprehend things differently**. Regarding this suffering, the master Dignāga says in his *Eulogy to Mañjughoṣa*:

Apart from conceptual thought,  
There is nothing at all,  
Which is called cyclic existence.<sup>931</sup>

And in the *Introduction to the Middle Way* it says:<sup>932</sup>

At the outset, the expression “I”  
Brings attachment to the self;  
And the expression “mine”  
Creates attachment to entities.  
Homage to you who have compassion  
For the sake of such beings,  
Powerlessly revolving like a waterwheel.<sup>933</sup>

For this reason, with reference to the varying degrees of acumen of sentient beings who wander in cyclic existence, hierarchical **distinctions are indeed arrayed in the levels** and the paths of the different vehicles. **But these are all paths** or steps **that progress to the** natural *Secret Nucleus* and are not themselves the actual unerring and complete path. On their conclusion, one is obliged to enter into that [complete

path].<sup>934</sup>

The third concerns the purpose of the many enumerations [of the doctrine] that have been enunciated (17.4.1.2.1.1.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**The sacred doctrines that grant instruction are never divulged without bringing benefit [to sentient beings].**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:4)***

ཡི་ཤེས་དོ་མཚན་རབ་འབྱུངས་ཀྱིས།  
དོན་དུ་མི་འབྱུར་ཡོངས་མ་གསུངས།

He [who possesses] the infinite, wondrous pristine cognition  
Has never enunciated [any doctrine] without bringing benefit.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Since it would therefore be sufficient to teach the *Secret Nucleus* alone, why, one might ask, are the many enumerations of the vehicle, high and low, revealed? Because sentient beings provisionally have diverse degrees of acumen, [the vehicle] is differently revealed, satisfying each according to his or her needs. Preliminaries or steps are taught because this [*Secret Nucleus*] is at first extremely difficult to understand or encounter. Subsequently, in order that it should be encountered and practiced, the naturally present



compassionate spirituality of the teacher, Samantabhadra himself, who possesses **the infinite, wondrous pristine cognition** of renunciation and realization,<sup>935</sup> assumes the buddha body of emanation in the world. But he **has never enunciated** in the slightest, or at any time, any of those doctrines that have been divulged, **without bringing benefit** to sentient beings. Accordingly, it says in the *Sūtra Requested by Sudatta*:

In order to benefit the world systems,  
The conqueror and guide taught the sacred doctrine.  
He pacified desire, hatred, and delusion  
And established [beings] on the path to nirvāṇa.  
The great sage is one whose defects have ceased,  
Who has abandoned fictitious lies,  
And who never acts without benefiting [living beings].<sup>936</sup>

This sacred doctrine that he revealed actually perceives all knowable objects without exception and has renounced all obscurations. Since it is the speech of the buddhas, it is exclusively beneficial. Concerning this perception of pristine cognition, it says in the *Commentary on the Distinction between the Two Truths*:

A single instant of omniscience  
Pervades all maṇḍalas that can be known.<sup>937</sup>

As for being free from all obscurations, a buddha is validly cognized to be one who has abandoned fictitious lies. It says accordingly in the [*Ornament of*] *the Exposition of Valid Cognition*:

Because he has abandoned defects,  
He has no reason ever to tell lies.  
Therefore, one should know  
According to scriptural authority<sup>938</sup>  
That his defects have ceased.<sup>939</sup>

Since the teachings given by the buddhas are beneficial, their disciples and students follow the conquerors' pronouncements and compose exegeses that accord with the pronouncements. As is said in the *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*:

There are some who teach with undistracted mind,

Referring solely to the Conqueror, the Teacher.  
Conforming to the path that attains to liberation,  
Let them be reverently accepted in the manner  
Of the Sage's pronouncements.<sup>940</sup>

## **THE GREATNESS OF THE RECIPIENT TO WHOM INSTRUCTION IS GIVEN [17.4.1.2.1.2]**

The second aspect [of the teaching that this tantra is the result of all paths] concerns the greatness of the recipient to whom instruction is given.<sup>941</sup> [It comments on the verse:]

**Anyone who, having realized the secret truth,  
imparts it, is actually Samantabhadra.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:5)***

།དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུང་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི།  
།ཕྱག་རྒྱ་གསུང་ཆེན་སྦྱིང་པོ་འདི།

།ཉོགས་ནས་སྣང་བར་གང་བྱེད་པ།  
།དེ་ཉིད་ང་ཡིན་དབང་ཡང་ཚོགས།

Once this most secret nucleus, the seal  
Of all the tathāgatas, has been realized,  
The one who imparts it becomes me,  
While the empowerments too will be perfected.

## ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This**, the **most secret nucleus** of all things of the ground, path, and result, is **the genuine seal** of the excellent body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities **of all the tathāgatas** of the ten directions and four times. It is explained to be a “seal” because both aspects of this tantra text—its expressed meaning and its expressive words—have been secured by the seal of the tathāgata and are therefore hard to transgress, just as, for example, a royal edict is sealed. It says accordingly in the *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*:

This is called a “seal” because  
It denotes the symbolic form of the Supreme Identity,  
Indicative of the Conqueror’s supreme seal,  
Which is hard to transgress and likewise  
imperishable.<sup>942</sup>

Accordingly, **once** the many seals [of the teachings] have been secured and this secret truth, natural and provisional, **has been realized** by oneself incontrovertibly, **the one who imparts it** to other fortunate beings **becomes me**, Samantabhadra, the excellent teacher of tantra; **while the empowerments** of beneficence and ability **too will be perfected**—atemporally, naturally, and spontaneously.

This passage indicates that the expositor of the tantra has been empowered by the Teacher in beginningless time, with the words, “Even though you have not [previously] received it in this lifetime, you are [now] empowered in the tantra! You should act on behalf of yourself and on behalf of others! This is because you have been blessed by me, Samantabhadra in person, have attained primordial buddhahood, aspire to the profound secret truth, and are without fear.”

**TEACHING THAT THIS TANTRA IS SUPREME AMONG ALL  
SECRETS [17.4.1.2.2]**

The latter part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter] concerns the teaching that this [tantra] is supreme among all secrets. It comprises (i) the actual secret meaning (17.4.1.2.2.1) and (ii) prophetic declarations concerning the genuine persons who uphold it (17.4.1.2.2.2).

The first of these [comments on the verse]:

**All the conquerors possess nothing other than this secret truth.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:6)***

།དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ།  
།གསང་བ་འདི་ལས་གཞན་མི་མངའ།  
།སྣོ་དང་བསྐྱར་བ་ཞི་བ་ཡི།  
།གསང་བའི་སྣོ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན།  
།ཉིད་དེ་ངེས་པའི་དབྱིངས་ནས་ལྷུང།

All the tathāgatas do not possess  
Anything other than this secret.  
This real *Secret Nucleus*  
In which exaggeration and deprecation are quiescent  
Has been brought forth from the definitive expanse.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**All the tathāgatas** of the ten directions and four times **do not possess anything other than this** genuine tantra, which is the conclusive **secret** of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes,

and activities. Therefore, one should retain that which is supreme and genuine.

This actually refers to the tantra of the ground where all things are buddhahood in the secret nucleus of primordial sameness. It is the conclusive truth to be established by all the conquerors.

Although the profound truth is also contained in the scriptural collections that reveal it, this *Secret Nucleus* transcends intellectually conceived objects because its primordially empty and selfless nature is **quiescent** of all conceptual elaborations, including those that apply **exaggeration** from the extreme standpoint of eternalism **and** those that employ **deprecation** from the extreme standpoint of nihilism, as well as those that posit both existence and nonexistence and those that posit neither. **This real** nature of all things **has been** purposefully **brought forth from the definitive expanse** of inconceivable, inexpressible reality. Accordingly, it says in the *Ornament of Emergent Realization*:

This profound nature is itself free

From the extremes of exaggeration and deprecation.<sup>943</sup>

And in the *Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way, Entitled Discriminative Awareness*:

Not known through other sources, quiescent,  
Devoid of conceptual thought, undifferentiated,  
Unelaborated by conceptual elaborations—  
Such are its defining characteristics.<sup>944</sup>

And in the *Sūtra of the Adornment of Pristine Cognition's Appearance*:

Phenomena, uncreated and thoroughly quiescent, like  
space,  
Are the perceptual range of those who see the ultimate.  
The conqueror and guide, uncontaminated and  
quiescent,

Reveals this from the expanse of reality.<sup>945</sup>

These twenty-two chapters of expressive verses [of which the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* is comprised] are natural expressions of the real, integrating the profound genuine view

and extensive conduct in which exaggeration and deprecation are quiescent. This is **secret** to unworthy recipients but revealed to those who are worthy recipients. Its intrinsic nature is the **nucleus** of all things, **the real** nature of the ground, path, and result, which **has been brought forth from the definitive expanse**, within the expanse of Samantabhadra's buddha mind, and spoken for the sake of those to be trained in the coemergent retinue.

The second part [of the teaching that this tantra is supreme among all secrets] includes prophetic declarations concerning the genuine persons who uphold this [*Secret Nucleus*] (17.4.1.2.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**Those who explain this [tantra] will become heirs of buddha mind, abiding on the levels, and they will attain manifest buddhahood.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:7)***

།དེ་ནི་དེས་པར་ལུང་བསྟན་ཏེ།  
།སྲས་ནི་སྤྱགས་ལས་སྦྱིས་པ་ཡིན།  
།ས་རབ་རིག་པ་འཛིན་ལ་གནས།

Those [expositors of this tantra]  
Are definitively prophesied—

Heirs born from buddha mind  
Who will abide on the excellent level  
Of the awareness holders.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**Those** individuals who retain and teach this tantra **are** absolutely and **definitively prophesied** to become beings of awareness who will teach it to others, and to attain buddhahood, liberating themselves without impediment in a single lifetime. As our text says [ch. 22:5]:

The one who imparts it becomes me,  
While the empowerments too will be perfected.  
And in the [*Tantra of the Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*:  
Whoever practices according to this tradition  
Will attain perfect buddhahood in this lifetime.<sup>946</sup>  
And also in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*:<sup>947</sup>

In order to reveal the continuum  
Of intrinsic awareness—pristine cognition—  
This is actualized through self-manifesting awareness.  
Even without proficiency in meditative stability,

Through which spontaneous presence  
As a supreme awareness holder is attained,  
This is the unique perceptual range of the sugatas  
themselves,  
Unreached by bodhisattvas who refine the levels,



Where prophetic declarations are obtained  
To the effect that one will become a being of  
awareness.<sup>948</sup>

Such individuals are the genuine **heirs** of all the buddhas, because they are **born from** this amazing secret nature of **buddha mind**, just as, for example, the eldest son of a universal monarch is born as his regent. Provisionally, those individuals enter into the levels, they abide on the levels, and they become mature in the levels; then, conclusively, they **will abide on the highest, excellent level** of the conclusive result, known as Holder of Indestructible Reality (*rdo rje 'dzin pa*), which is also called the “level of supreme skillful means and discriminative awareness,” and the “level **of the awareness holders.**”

The words “The one who imparts it becomes me” indicate that from the very present moment the teacher who expounds this tantra abides on the level of the awareness holders because that one is actually said to be Samantabhadra. Even if the attributes of such individuals appear not to be entirely perfect, they are in fact perfect because they have attained buddhahood primordially in the maṇḍala of the buddhas. For example, when a pauper perseveres to extract a treasure of gemstones located underground or in a house, he will still be called a pauper during that period because the resource is not yet visible. However, when he actually possesses that great treasure, he will be a wealthy man. Similarly, it should be explained that the excellent level of the awareness holders abides within oneself, and that by striving to actualize it and entering therein, one is said to abide on the excellent level of the awareness holders. The great *tantrapitakas* do not explain by one-sided eternalist or extremist dogmas that only one specific enumeration [of the result] is definitive. The verses of indestructible reality are profound and may be applied in any context whatsoever.

## THE CONCLUSION [17.4.1.3]

The third part [of this chapter] is the conclusion [which comments on the verse]:

**At these words, [the tathāgatas] rejoiced, and they remain present as ornaments of the buddha field.**

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 22:8)*

ཞེས་བརྗོད་པས། དེ་བཞིན་གཤམ་གསུམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དབྱེར་མེད་པར་དབྱེས་ནས་  
དུས་བཞི་མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས། སྐྱ་གསུང་ལུགས་ལྷན་སྐྱེག་པོ་བཀོད་པའི་  
རྒྱན་ཉིད་དུ་བཞུགས་སོ།

At these words, all the tathāgatas indivisibly rejoiced, and they remain present as ornaments of the spontaneous Bounteous Array of buddha body, speech, and mind, where there is an expanse of sameness throughout the four times.

### *Interlinear Commentary*

Once the teacher of this tantra [Samantabhadra] had completed the exegesis of his great deeds, he revealed his continuing presence as follows.

In this regard, some sūtras and *tantrapitakas*, after their exegeses, simply reveal that the retinues subsequently rejoice and manifestly praise [the teacher]. They indicate that there is an alternation in time because other modes of conduct are then clearly adopted. It says in the *Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful*

*Means* that the maṇḍala is absorbed and then becomes invisible:

Entering into the heart of the [tathāgata] himself,

They became invisible.<sup>949</sup>

Since in such [texts] the teachers, teachings, retinues, times, and places alternate and are extraneous to the Teacher himself, they are inferior. Their doctrines, too, are diverse, and the locations [in which they are taught] are compounded by the perception of those to be trained.<sup>950</sup>

However, in order to reveal that this is more secret than and superior to such ordinary teachings, the point of this tantra that is expressed through **these words** is as follows: **All the tathāgatas** of the five enlightened families, arrayed as self-manifesting inner radiance, who, as many as sesame seeds, fill the extremes and center of space, did not objectify in a dualistic manner, but in essence they **indivisibly rejoiced**. Then their perfect spontaneous nature, in the ground of unchanging disposition throughout the three times, manifested **as** the buddha field of the **expanse of** space, without extremes or center, **where there is sameness** of the cycle of reality **throughout the four times**. All their arrays **remain present** without transition, increase, or decrease, subsequently just as they previously were, **as ornaments of the spontaneous Bounteous Array**, derived from the intrinsic nature of the inexhaustible wheels of adornment—the **buddha body, speech, and mind** of the Teacher himself.

## CHAPTER ENDING

**This completes chapter 22 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the entrustment and retention of this tantra.**

## **Root Tantra (Ch. 22:9)**

།གསང་བའི་སྒྲིབ་པོ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་ངེས་པ་ལས་མཉེས་པ་དང་ཡོངས་སུ་བརྒྱུད་བའི་  
ལེན་སྒྲིབ་ཉི་ཤུ་གཉིས་པའོ།།

This completes the twenty-second chapter from the *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, entitled “That Which Is Pleasing and Retained.”

## **Interlinear Commentary**

**This completes** the exegesis of **the twenty-second chapter from the *Secret Nucleus*** of the buddha field ***Definitive with Respect to the Real*** self-manifesting nature of pristine cognition. It is **entitled “That Which Is Pleasing** because [the Teacher’s] enlightened intention continues to be present after his deeds have been completed **and** [that which] is **Retained”** by the retinue because the tantras are entrusted so that they do not disappear.

## **THE MEANING OF THE COLOPHON [17.4.2]**

Remarking on the original colophon of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*, the commentator then points out that this text derives from the *Great Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva in One Hundred Thousand Chapters*. In particular, within that cycle, it is known as the all-embracing universal transmission of all vehicles and the supreme basis of the unsurpassed secret mantras.

The latter part [of the fourth main topic, see [p. 765](#)] concerns the meaning of the colophon. This has three sections, of which the first concerns the tantra cycle to which this *Secret Nucleus* belongs (17.4.2.1). [It comments on the verse:]

**[This tantra] is included within the *One Hundred Thousand Chapters of the Net of Magical Emanation*.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:10)***

འཕགས་པ་རྟོགས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྐུ་འཕུལ་བྱ་བ་ལེན་སྲོང་པྱག་བརྒྱ་བ་ལས་”

[This tantra] derives from the *One Hundred Thousand Chapters of the Net of Magical Emanation, King of Sublime Realizations*.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

The term **sublime** implies that in this tantra text the meaning of the expressive verses is more sublime than other expressed meanings because it reveals primordial buddhahood, the purpose of the indivisible truth. The term **realization**<sup>951</sup> denotes all the tantras of skillful means through which mundane and supramundane accomplishments are attained. This [text] is included within and **derives from** the *Great Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva* in *One Hundred Thousand Chapters*, which is **the king of realizations** because it is supreme among them all.

The second section concerns the supplements of this [*Great Tantra*] (17.4.2.2). [It comments on the verse:]

**All vehicles are diffused from this, the general transmission of the sūtras and tantras.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:11)***

མཚན་ཉིད་དང་རྒྱད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་ལུང་གི་སྤྱི་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་  
ཀྱི་གསང་བ་གསང་བའི་སྤྱི་དཔོན་ཉིད་དེས་པ་ལས་ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་པར་  
འཕྲོས་ཏེ།

All [vehicles] without exception are diffused from the ***Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real***, the mystery of all the tathāgatas, the general transmission of all the dialectics and the tantras.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

Within that [cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation*], this [*Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*] is designated as **the general transmission** because it is the source or basis from which all the causal vehicles **of dialectics and all the tantras** of the fruitional way of secret mantras are diffused. It itself is **the mystery** of the indestructible body, speech, and mind **of all the tathāgatas** of the ten directions and four times. It is supremely sublime, and it demonstrates topics that are most profound and extensive. Therefore, it is called the *Chapter of the Secret Nucleus, Definitive with Respect to the Real* ground, path, and result. **From** it, **all** the inconceivable

vehicles **are diffused** and revealed, **without exception**. Thus it is the basis of them all.

The third section concerns the teaching that [this tantra] is the supreme result (17.4.2.3). [It comments on the verse:]

**This completes the supreme root tantra—the unsurpassed result.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 22:12)***

།འཕོར་ལོ་བསྐྱོར་བ་དེ་དག་གི་འབྲས་བུའི་མཚོག་ཚྲིགས་སོ།། ॥

This completes the supreme result of the promulgations of the doctrinal wheel.

### ***Interlinear Commentary***

**This completes** the great root tantra, which is **supreme** among the unsurpassed secret mantras indicative of **the result**, included among **the** inestimable **promulgations of the doctrinal wheel**, such as the *Net of Magical Emanation in One Hundred Thousand Chapters*, which the conquerors turned for the sake of living beings. Through these words, [this interlinear commentary on the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*] has been well established.

## **EPILOGUE TO BOOK 17, PART 1**

Leaving unchanged the wording of the interlinear  
commentaries  
Of the Great Omniscient [Longchen Rabjam],  
Which integrate the meaning of the *Secret Nucleus*, conclusive  
among tantras, And the essential points elucidated by many  
learned and accomplished masters of India and Tibet, To  
facilitate comprehension, I have arranged these  
Alongside the supreme stanzas of the *Root Tantra*,  
The root text of this [treatise] in which each line is versified,  
And the hierarchical captions.  
I did so in order that those who would persevere  
In this supreme exegesis of the tantra might take note.  
It would be mistaken to search out the profound meanings,  
Having definitively established that such doctrines  
Are even more profound than the profound—  
Rather, one should earnestly refine each word of the tantra  
text,  
Which resembles a wish-fulfilling gem,  
And definitively understand it.

In order that fortunate beings might realize the meaning of this  
tantra, [these chapters of *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*]  
have been compiled and edited by Longchen Choying Tobden  
Dorje Mapham Chokle Namgyal.

Let virtue prevail!



## BOOK 17, PART 2

### The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī

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Herein is contained Book 17, Part 2 (NI), from the *Extensive Commentary of the Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra, concerning the Interlinear Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*.

### THE GOLDEN KEY

In order that the meaning of *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* may be understood, This book contains the *Tantra of Mañjuśrī*  
From the *Net of Magical Emanation*,  
Juxtaposing the root tantra and its commentary.<sup>952</sup>

## VERSE OF HOMAGE

Respectful homage to the lotus feet of the transcendent lord  
Mañjuśrī, the supreme Being of Pristine Cognition!

## SUMMARY OF BOOK 17, PART 2

The fifth main topic (17.5) of the seventeenth [book] is the interlinear commentary on *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*, which comprises (i) the introduction (17.5.1); the meaning of the text (17.5.2); and the conclusion (17.5.3).

## THE INTRODUCTION [17.5.1]

The first of these includes both the title and the translators' verse of homage:

In Sanskrit: *Āryamañjuśrī [jñānasattvasya paramārtha]-  
nāma-saṅgīti*

In Tibetan: །འཕགས་པ་འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱི་དོན་དམ་པའི་མཚན་ཡང་དག་པར་བརྗོད་པ།

In English: *Sublime [Tantra of the] Litany of the Names  
of Mañjuśrī [the Supreme Being of Pristine Cognition]*

འཇམ་དཔལ་གཞོན་ཏུར་གྱུར་པ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།

Homage to Mañjuśrī, who remains a youthful prince  
(Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta)!

## **THE MEANING OF THE TEXT [17.5.2]**

This comprises fourteen chapters, which are respectively entitled “The Request” (17.5.2.1); “The Response” (17.5.2.2); “Inspecting [the Classes of Individual Practitioners]” (17.5.2.3); “Manifest Enlightenment” (17.5.2.4); “Eulogy to the Maṇḍala of the Indestructible Expanse” (17.5.2.5); “The Pristine Cognition of Reality’s Expanse” (17.5.2.6); “The Mirrorlike Pristine Cognition” (17.5.2.7); “The Pristine Cognition of Discernment” (17.5.2.8); “The Pristine Cognition of Sameness” (17.5.2.9); “The Pristine Cognition of Accomplishment” (17.5.2.10); “Eulogy to the Five Conquerors” (17.5.2.11); “The Presentation of Advantages” (17.5.2.12); “The Arrangement of the Mantras” (17.5.2.13); and “Rejoicing” (17.5.2.14).

## THE REQUEST [17.5.2.1]

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***The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī contains one hundred sixty-nine stanzas. Among these, the chapter entitled “The Request” comprises sixteen stanzas.***

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:1)***

།དེ་ནས་དཔལ་ལྷན་དོ་ཇི་འཆང་།  
།གདུལ་དཀའ་འདུལ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མཚོག  
།དཔའ་བོ་འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་ལས་རྒྱལ།  
།དོ་ཇི་དབང་ལྷུག་གསང་བའི་རྒྱལ།

Then Vajradhara, endowed with glory,  
Supreme among the tamers of those who are hard to  
tame, Heroic and victorious over the three worlds,  
Mighty lord of indestructible reality, king of secret  
[mantra],

THE [CYCLE OF THE] *Net of Magical Emanation* has sixteen thousand chapters. Among them, once fifteen thousand nine hundred ninety-nine chapters had been explained, **then** Vajrapāṇi, embodying the excellence of the retinue, assumed the buddha body of essential nature in the guise of **Vajradhara**, he who is **endowed with the glory** of the two

buddha bodies of form and the indestructible reality of emptiness—the buddha body of reality—inseparably holding these three buddha bodies.<sup>953</sup> **Supreme among the tamers of those** under the sway of the three poisons **who are** to be tamed but **hard to tame**, Vajrapāṇi, master of the three buddha bodies, is **heroic**, eradicating cruel and malign beings, **and victorious over the three worlds**—subterranean, terrestrial, and celestial. Vajrapāṇi is the **mighty lord** who comprehends the **indestructible reality of** emptiness, and the **king of secret** mantra, the vehicle of indestructible reality, including the ways of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and the uncommon [tantras].<sup>954</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:2)***

ཁ་སྐྱ་དཀར་པོ་རྒྱལ་འབྲེལ་སྤྱན།  
 ཁ་སྐྱ་རྒྱལ་པའི་གདན་ལ་བཞུགས།  
 ཁང་གི་ལག་གིས་རྩོུ་མཚོག།  
 ཡང་དང་ཡང་དུ་གསོར་བྱེད་པ།

With eyes resembling wide-open white lotuses,  
 Present upon a seat in the form of a wide-open lotus,<sup>955</sup>  
 Repeatedly brandishing a supreme vajra in his hand,

Vajrapāṇi has **eyes** that **resemble** the whitest of **white lotuses**, with fine and fragrant roots, **wide open**, with five petals, and exuding pollen. They are also untainted by afflictive mental states, formed of the two provisions, and imbued with compassion, and they have the functions of taming others and benefiting living beings of the five types (*rigs lnga'i 'gro ba*). Although his **seat in the form of a wide-open lotus** is located within cyclic existence, he is **present upon** it, untainted by defects. At his heart, **in his hand**, indivisible from

the real nature, he holds a **supreme vajra** of pristine cognition as a symbol of his understanding, **brandishing** it **repeatedly** as an indication that he acts for the sake of others.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:3)***

།ཐོག་ཉེར་རིམ་པར་ལྡན་ལ་སོགས།  
།ལག་ན་དོ་རྗེ་མཐའ་ཡས་པ།  
།དཔའ་བོ་གདུལ་དཀའ་འདུལ་བ་པོ།  
།འཇིགས་སུ་རུང་དང་དཔའ་བྱད་ཅན།

[His entourage] endowed with the infinite [attributes of] Vajrapāṇi— Rippling frowns of wrath and so forth, Heroes acting to train those who are hard to train, They assume a terrifying and heroic demeanor.

**Vajrapāṇi** and his entourage are **endowed with infinite** enlightened attributes, such that all his ordinary retainers, comprising fifteen hundred wrathful deities, have **rippling frowns of wrath**, the accoutrements of the charnel ground, aureoles of blazing fire, **and so forth.**<sup>956</sup> **Heroes training** through skillful means of compassionate spirituality **those** to be trained **who are hard to train, they assume** the **terrifying** garb of wrathful deities **and a heroic demeanor**, with lower robes of tiger hide.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:4)***

།དོ་རྗེ་ཕྱོ་མོ་རབ་འཕྲོ་བ།  
 །རང་གི་ལག་གིས་གསོར་བྱེད་པ།  
 །སླིང་རྗེ་ཆེ་དང་ཤེས་རབ་དང་།  
 །ཐབས་ཀྱིས་འགོ་དོན་བྱེད་པའི་མཚོག

Their hands brandish vajras with tips diffused [from  
 their pores].  
 They are supreme in acting for the sake of living beings  
 By means of great compassion, discriminative  
 awareness, and skillful means.

**Their hands**, indicative of the union of skillful means and  
 discriminative awareness for their **own** sake, perfectly  
**brandish vajras with tips** that emanate and are **diffused**  
 from their pores for the sake of others.<sup>957</sup> **They are supreme**  
**in acting** to instruct **by means of** extensive **compassion** for  
 the sake of others, by **great discriminative awareness** for  
 their own sake, and by comprehension **and** diverse **skillful**  
**means for the sake of** all **living beings** without exception.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:5)***

།དགའ་མགུ་རངས་པའི་བསམ་པ་ཅན།  
 །ཁྲོ་བོའི་ལུས་ཀྱི་གཟུགས་ལྗན་པ།  
 །སངས་རྒྱས་འཕྲིན་ལས་བྱེད་པའི་མགོན།  
 །ལུས་བཏུང་རྣམས་དང་ལྷན་ཅིག་ཏུ།

With thoughts of delight, satisfaction, and rejoicing,  
 Endowed with wrathful corporeal forms,  
 As protectors acting by means of buddha activity,  
 Bowing humbly, along with [their attendants],

These retainers are filled **with thoughts of delight, satisfaction, and** utmost **rejoicing** toward Mañjuśrī Jñānasattva, and yet they are also **endowed with** terrifyingly **wrathful corporeal forms. As protectors acting** for the sake of living beings **by means of** the four rites of **buddha activity** inasmuch as they are purified of all obscurations and extensive in pristine cognition, they stand **along with** their attendants, **bowing humbly.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:6)***

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།  
 རྫོགས་སངས་རྒྱས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ཏེ།<sup>958</sup>  
 ཐལ་མོ་སྐྱར་བ་བྱས་བྱར་ནས།  
 སྐྱུན་སྐྱར་འདུག་སྟེ་འདི་རྐྱད་གསོལ།

They paid homage to the Tathāgata,  
 The Transcendent Lord, the perfect Buddha.  
 [Vajrapāṇi] then folded his palms together  
 And, standing in the presence [of the Teacher],  
 Made this following supplication:

**They** then **paid** respectful **homage** with body, speech, and mind **to** Śākyamuni, the excellent teacher embodying the three bodies, who is [also known as] **the Tathāgata** (“he who has comprehended the real nature and arrived for the sake of living beings”), **the Transcendent Lord** (“he who has subdued the four demonic forces, possesses the five pristine cognitions, and transcends eternalism and nihilism”), and **the buddha** of **perfect** enlightened attributes, including the ten powers, the [four] assurances, and so forth. **Then**, in order to benefit living beings, [Vajrapāṇi] **folded his palms together**, indicative of skillful means and discriminative awareness, **and, standing**



respectfully **in the presence** of the Teacher, **made this following supplication:** *Root Tantra (Ch. 1:7)*

།བྱུང་བདག་བདག་ལ་སྦྲུན་པ་དང་།  
།བདག་དོན་བདག་ལ་བྱུགས་བཅེའི་ཕྱིར།  
།སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་བྲ་བས་མངོན་རྫོགས་པའི།  
།བྱང་རྒྱུ་ཅི་ནས་བདག་ཐོབ་མཛོད།

O All-Pervading Lord! In order that I may be healed And treated with affection, for my sake, May I, by whatever means, attain manifestly perfect enlightenment Through the *Net of Magical Emanation*.

**O** supreme **All-Pervading Lord**, you who permeate living beings with compassionate spirituality—**in order that I may be healed** at all times, **and treated with** supreme **affection**, that I might attain nondual pristine cognition **for my own sake, may I** swiftly **attain, by whatever means**, this **manifestly perfect** great **enlightenment through** the path associated with **the *Net of Magical Emanation***—where the magic of skillful means and the emanation of discriminative awareness are without duality!

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:8)***

།ཉོན་མོངས་པས་ནི་སེམས་དགྲུགས་ཤིང་།  
།མི་ཤེས་འདས་བྱ་བྱིན་བ་ཡི།  
  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་ལ་སྦྲུན་པ་དང་།  
།སླ་མེད་འབྲས་བུ་ཐོབ་བྱའི་ཕྱིར།

So that all sentient beings whose minds are agitated By

afflictive mental states and sunk within the swamp of ignorance May acquire the remedy and the unsurpassed fruit,

**So that all sentient beings**, the inconceivable species of living creatures **whose** thoughts and **minds are agitated by** the **afflictive mental states** of the five poisons, who have been afflicted by the rebirth process **and** are **sunk within the swamp of** cyclic existence due to **ignorance** of their own nature, **may** swiftly **acquire the** excellent provisional and conclusive **remedy and**, best of all, **the fruit** of the **unsurpassed** three buddha bodies and five pristine cognitions . . .

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:9)***

།རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་བཙུན་ལྷན་འདས།  
།འགྲོ་བའི་སླ་མ་སྟོན་པ་པོ།  
།དམ་ཚིག་ཆེན་པོ་དེ་ཉིད་མཁྱེན།  
།དབང་པོ་བསམ་པ་མཁྱེན་མཚོག་གིས།

May the perfect, transcendent lord buddha,  
The spiritual mentor of living beings, the teacher Who,  
[without transgressing] the great commitment, Knows  
the real nature and is supreme  
In knowing the sense faculties and thoughts [of sentient  
beings, reveal] . . .

**May the perfect, transcendent lord buddha**, who is the object of this supplication, **the spiritual mentor**, highest among those who cultivate the enlightened intention of the buddhas, superior to the six classes **of living beings**, **the teacher who** opposes the doubts of nonunderstanding and wrong understanding in accordance with the truth and who,

without transgressing **the great commitment** to instruct living beings, **is supreme in knowing** individually **the dispositions, faculties, and thoughts** of sentient beings without exception, reveal by means of the pristine cognition that definitively and quantitatively **knows the real nature . . .**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 1:10)**

།བཙུག་ལྷན་འདས་ཀྱི་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྐྱེ།  
།གཟུག་ཉར་ཆེན་པོ་ཚོག་གི་བདག་།  
།ཡེ་ཤེས་སྐྱེ་སྟེ་རང་བྱུང་བ།  
།འཇམ་དབལ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་དབའ་ཡི།

. . . The Transcendent Lord's body of pristine cognition,  
Along with his great crown protuberance and mastery  
of words.  
This buddha body of pristine cognition is self-originated.  
It is that of Mañjuśrī Jñānasattva.

. . . **the body of reality**, which is **the pristine cognition of the transcendent lord** Mañjuśrī, indicative of buddha mind; **along with** the intrinsic nature of **his great crown protuberance** and so forth, indicative of buddha body, which is peerless, overwhelming, and invisible to lower bodhisattvas; **and** his great **mastery of words**, possessing the excellence of inexhaustible buddha speech. **This body of pristine cognition is self-originated** because it is not produced from causes and conditions. **It is that of Mañjuśrī** (*'jam dpal*), signifying that the buddha body of reality is gentle (*'jam*) because it is untainted by the pain of conceptual thought and that the buddha body of form is glorious (*dpal*) to living beings. It is that of **Jñānasattva** (*ye shes sems dpa'*), he who is heroic (*dpa'*) for the sake of sentient beings (*sems [can]*) and

cognizant (*shes*) of the truth that abides primordially (*ye*).

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:11)***

མཚན་ནི་ཡང་དག་བཟོད་པའི་མཚན།  
དོན་ཟབ་དོན་ནི་རྒྱ་ཆེ་གིང་།

དོན་ཆེན་མཚུངས་མེད་རབ་གི་བ།  
ཐོག་མ་བར་དང་མཐར་དགེ་བ།

The excellent litany of his names  
Is profound in meaning and extensive in meaning,  
And it is endowed with great benefit—incomparable and  
quiescent, Virtuous in the beginning, middle, and end.

**The unerring, excellent litany of his names is unrivaled, profound in meaning** that the intellect does not objectify, **and extensive in meaning** because there is nothing excluded from the intent of this view. One who experiences this truth **is endowed with the great** and excellent **benefit** of self and others, **incomparable** to the fruits of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, **and** so forth—the buddha body of reality, **quiescent** of the two obscurations. Its view is **virtuous in the beginning**, its meditation is virtuous in the **middle**, **and** its fruit is virtuous in the **end**.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:12)***

།འདས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་གསུངས།

།མ་འོངས་རྣམས་ཀྱང་གསུང་འགྲུབ་ལ།

།ད་ལྟར་བྱུང་བའི་ཚོགས་སངས་རྒྱལ།

།ཡང་དག་ཡང་དུ་གསུང་བ་གང།

It is that which was spoken by the buddhas of the past,  
Which will also be spoken by those of the future,

And which is repeatedly spoken  
By the perfect buddhas of the present.

What, one might ask, **is that** tantra **which was** formerly **spoken by the buddhas of the past, which will also be spoken by those buddhas of the future**—the supreme tantra **which is repeatedly** and insistently **spoken by the** manifestly and genuinely **perfect buddhas of the present**, throughout the ten directions?

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:13)***

རྒྱུད་ཚེན་སྐྱུ་འཕུལ་བྲ་བ་ལས།  
དོ་རྗེ་འཆང་ཚེན་གསང་སྐྱགས་འཆང་།  
དཔག་མེད་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བཀའ་བཞུགས་ཏུ།  
སྐྱུ་རྒྱུངས་གང་ལེགས་བཤད་ཏུ་གསོལ།

Please explain eloquently [this litany of names]—  
Extracted from the *Great Tantra of the Net of Magical  
Emanation*— Which was delivered in the form of a  
song  
At the insistence of the great Vajradharas,  
Inestimable [emanations] who retain the secret mantras.

**Please explain** clearly and **eloquently** this supreme chapter **extracted from the** sixteen thousand chapters **of the *Net of Magical Emanation*** of Mañjuśrī—one of the four sections of the *Net of Magical Emanation* (*sgyu 'phrul sde bzhi*)—most sublime and **great** among the four classes of **tantra** (*rgyud sde bzhi*). It **was delivered in the form of a song** by Mañjuśrī Jñānasattva, **at the insistence of the Vajradharas** (*rdo rje 'chang*)—the **great** buddha bodies of perfect resource who hold (*'chang*) in mind the indestructible reality (*rdo rje*) of

emptiness—and of countless, **inestimable** buddha bodies of emanation, **who retain** the mind of the buddha body of reality, coalescence of **the secret mantras**.<sup>959</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 1:14)**

མགོན་པོ་རྫོགས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི།  
གསང་འཛིན་ཅི་ནས་བདག་འགྱུར་བྱིར།  
དེས་པར་འགྱུར་གྱི་བར་དུ་འདི།  
བདག་གིས་བསམ་པ་བརྟན་པོས་གཟུང་།

O Protector! In order that I might become a holder of the secrets of all the perfect buddhas, I shall steadfastly maintain this [tantra] Until [living beings] attain emancipation.

**O Protector** of living beings! **In order that I**, being inseparable from Vajrapāṇi, **might become a holder of the secrets** of the three bodies **of all the buddhas** without exception, who are **perfect** in enlightened attributes, **I**, the Lord of Secrets, **shall steadfastly maintain this** tantra **until** living beings **attain emancipation** in the nonabiding nirvāṇa.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 1:15)**

ཉོན་མོངས་མ་ལུས་བསལ་བ་དང་།  
མི་ཤེས་མ་ལུས་སྤང་བའི་བྱིར།  
བསམ་པའི་བྱུང་པར་ཇི་བཞིན་དུ།  
སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ལ་བཤད་པར་འཚེལ།<sup>960</sup>

In order to dispel all afflictive mental states without exception  
And abandon all ignorance without exception,  
Please explain this to all sentient beings,  
In accordance with their distinctive aspirations.

**In order to dispel all** the obscurations of **afflictive mental states** that distress living beings, **without exception**, separating them from the seed of buddha nature (*sugatagarbha*), **and** in order to **abandon** and purify **all** the obscurations of **ignorance** with respect to the fundamental nature of phenomena (*gshis lugs*),<sup>961</sup> **without exception**, **please explain this** chapter of song concerning the meaning of the diverse vehicles of the tantras **to sentient beings** engulfed in the subject-object dichotomy and tormented by the afflictive mental states of past actions, **in accordance with their distinctive aspirations** and particular degrees of acumen.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 1:16)***

།གསང་དབང་ལག་ན་རྩོམ་ཡིས།

།དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་ལ་དེ་སྐད་དུ།

།གསོལ་ནས་ཐལ་མོ་སྐྱར་བྱས་ཏེ།<sup>962</sup>

།ལུས་བརྟན་ནས་ནི་སྐྱན་སྲུང་འདུག།

Having requested the Tathāgata accordingly,  
Vajrapāṇi, master of secrets, stood in his presence With  
folded palms and body bowed.



**Having requested the** supreme **Tathāgata** (*de bzhin gshegs pa*)—he who departs (*gshegs pa*) in accordance with the actual truth (*de bzhin*)—to teach the meaning of the diverse vehicles **accordingly, with palms folded** out of respect **and his body bowed** respectfully, **Vajrapāṇi, master of secret** mantra, **stood in the presence** of the Teacher.

## THE RESPONSE [17.5.2.2]

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**In the chapter entitled “The Response,” there are six stanzas.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:1)***

།དེ་ནས་བཙེམ་ལྷན་ལྷན་གྱི་ལྷན།  
།རྩོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་རྒྱུ་གཉིས་མཚོག།  
།ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཞལ་ནས་ལྷན་གས་བཟང་བ།  
།འིང་ཞིང་ཡངས་པ་བརྒྱུང་མཛད་དེ།

Then Śākyamuni, the perfect buddha,  
Transcendent lord and best of bipeds,  
Extended the noble tongue, long and wide, from his  
mouth.

AS SOON AS HE [Vajrapāṇi] had stood in the presence [of the Teacher], **then Śākyamuni** (*śākya thub pa*)—**the perfect buddha** of the Śākya (*śākya*) clan, capable (*thub pa*) of mastering the four demonic forces by means of the ten powers, the **transcendent lord** (*bcom ldan*) who has subdued (*bcom*) the four demonic forces and possesses (*ldan*) the five pristine cognitions, the **best of human and divine bipeds—extended the finely shaped, noble, long, and wide tongue from his mouth**, and therefrom he emanated a mass of light rays

throughout the ten directions.<sup>963</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:2)***

།འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་པོ་སྤང་བྱེད་ཅིང་།  
།བདུད་བཞི་དབང་རྣམས་འདུལ་བྱེད་པ།

།སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དན་སོང་གསུམ།  
།སྤྱོད་བར་བྱེད་པའི་འཇུག་བསྟན་ནས།

He displayed a smiling countenance to illuminate the  
three world systems, To tame hostile forces of the four  
demons, And to cleanse the three lower realms of  
sentient beings.

And then . .

**He displayed a smiling countenance** in order **to illuminate** all **the three world systems** (the world system of desire, the world system of form, and the world system of formlessness), **to tame** all **hostile forces of the four demons** without exception (the demon of the divine prince of desire, the demon of the lord of death, the demon of afflictive mental states, and the demon of the aggregates), **and to cleanse the three lower realms of sentient beings** and all the sufferings of cyclic existence, **and then . . .**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:3)***

|ཚོངས་པའི་གསུང་ནི་སྒྲན་པ་ཡིས།  
 |འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་པོ་ཀུན་བཀའ་སྟེ།  
 |ལག་ན་དོ་རྗེ་སྟོབས་པོ་ཆེ།  
 |གསང་དབང་ལ་ནི་སྒྲར་གསུངས་པ།

. . . filling all the three world systems with the sweet  
 voice of Brahmā, He replied as follows to Vajrapāṇi,  
 The most powerful master of secrets.

**Filling all realms of the three world systems with the  
 sweet and pleasant voice of Brahmā**, endowed with its sixty  
 attributes, **he** [the Teacher] **replied to Vajrapāṇi**, Lord of  
 Secrets, **the most** mighty and **powerful master of secret**  
 mantra, **as follows:** *Root Tantra (Ch. 2:4)*

|སྒྲིང་རྗེ་ཆེ་དང་ལྡན་གྱུར་པས།  
 |འགྲོ་ལ་པན་པའི་དོན་དུ་ཚུད།  
 |ཡི་ཤེས་ལུས་ཅན་འཇམ་དཔལ་གྱི།  
 |མིང་བརྗོད་པ་ནི་དོན་ཆེ་བ།

Since you possess great compassion,  
 In order to benefit living beings  
 It is most important that you  
 Should recite the litany of the names of Mañjuśrī— He  
 who is endowed with the body of pristine cognition.

**“Vajrapāṇi, since you possess great compassion, it is most  
 important that you, O Vajrapāṇi, should just recite the  
 litany of the names of Mañjuśrī—he who is endowed with  
 the body of pristine cognition, which appears but is without  
 inherent existence, in order to benefit living beings.”**

*Root Tantra (Ch. 2:5)*

།དག་པར་བྱེད་ཅིང་སྤྲིག་སེལ་བ།  
།ད་ལས་མཉམ་པར་བརྩོན་པ་ནི།  
།ལེགས་སོ་དཔལ་ལྷན་རྫོང་འཆང་།  
།ལག་ན་རྫོང་ཁྱོད་ལེགས་སོ།

It is excellent, glorious Vajradhara,  
It is excellent, O Vajrapāṇi,  
That you persevere to hear from me  
This [litany] that purifies and alleviates negativity.

**“It is excellent that you persevere to hear correctly from me, the Teacher, [this litany] that purifies obscurations, alleviates the mass of negativity, and is free from stains, thereby requesting it for your own benefit; and it is excellent that you, O Vajrapāṇi, glorious Vajradhara (*rdo rje 'chang*) among the retainers of secret mantra, who hold (*'chang*) all the vehicles of indestructible reality (*rdo rje*), request it for the benefit of others.”**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 2:6)***

།གསང་བའི་བདག་པོ་དེ་ཕྱིར་ངས།  
།ཁྱོད་ལ་ལེགས་པར་བསྟན་པར་བྱ།  
།ཁྱོད་ནི་ཙུ་གཅིག་ཡིད་གྱིས་ཉོན།  
།བཅོམ་ལྷན་དེ་ནི་ལེགས་ཞེས་གསོལ། །

“O Lord of Secrets, I will therefore demonstrate this  
excellently to you.

You should listen with one-pointed mind.”

“ཁྱོད་ལ་ལེགས་པར་བསྟན་པར་བྱ།” །

“Very well, Transcendent Lord!” he replied.

“Since you have made this request, **O Yakṣa Lord of Secrets**, in order to benefit living beings, **I**, the Teacher, **will therefore demonstrate this** path and its fruit **excellently to you**. Therefore, **you should listen well, with one-pointed mind.**”  
“**Very well, Transcendent Lord!**” he replied.

INSPECTING [THE CLASSES OF INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONERS]  
[17.5.2.3]

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**In the chapter entitled “Inspecting the Six Classes of Individual Practitioners,” there are two stanzas.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:1)***

།དེ་ནས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་གྲུ་ལྷུ་བ།  
།གསང་སྐྱགས་རིགས་ཆེན་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་།  
།གསང་སྐྱགས་རིག་སྐྱགས་འཆང་བའི་རིགས།  
།རིགས་གསུམ་ལ་ནི་རྣམ་པར་གཟིགས།

Then the transcendent lord Śākyamuni inspected The great class of secret mantra in its entirety, The class that maintains both secret mantra and gnostic mantra, And those partaking of the three classes.

**THEN THE TEACHER, the transcendent lord Śākyamuni, inspected** the different classes to which those retinues belong: (1) He inspected some individuals partaking of **the class of the secret mantra** for whom the deities are in union (*lha kha sbyor*). [Among them] he inspected some within that **great** class who had the good fortune to partake of the perfection stage [of meditation]; and he inspected some individuals who partook of the generation and perfection stages [of meditation]

in their **entirety**. (2) He inspected some individuals partaking of **the class that maintains both secret mantra and gnostic mantra**, who delight in solitary deities. (3) He inspected **those partaking of the three classes** indicative of buddha body, speech, and mind.<sup>964</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 3:2)***

།འཇིག་རྟེན་འཇིག་རྟེན་འདས་པའི་རིགས།  
 །འཇིག་རྟེན་སྣང་བྱེད་རིགས་ཆེན་དང་།  
 །ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོའི་རིགས་མཚོག་དང་།  
 །རིགས་ཆེན་གཙུག་ཏོར་ཆེར་གཟིགས་ནས། །

He inspected the mundane class, the supramundane class, The great class that illuminates the world, The supreme class of the great seal, And the most [distinguished] class partaking of the precious crown protuberance. And then . . .

**He also inspected** (4) **the mundane class** of individuals who are designated according to their wrong understanding and **the supramundane class** whose bewilderment has ended. (5) He inspected the class of extremists who **illuminate the world, the great class** of individuals who have attained the transcendent perfections, **the supreme class of** peerless individuals who have realized the truth of **the great seal** (*phyag rgya chen po*), that is, the great (*chen po*) permeation of all things, without exclusion, by means of the seal (*phyag rgya*) of emptiness, transcending the intellect. (6) [Finally] he inspected **the most distinguished class** of individuals **partaking of the precious crown protuberance** who cannot be overwhelmed by others.<sup>965</sup> And then . . .



## MANIFEST ENLIGHTENMENT [17.5.2.4]

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**In the chapter entitled “Manifest Enlightenment,”  
there are three stanzas.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 4:1)***

ཚིག་གི་བདག་པོས་ཚིགས་སུ་བཅད།  
གསང་སྐྱབས་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྣམས་ལྷན་ཞིང་།  
གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་འབྱུང་བ་དང་།  
མི་སྐྱེ་ཚོས་ཅན་འདི་གསུངས་པ།

The Master of Words proclaimed the following verses,  
Associated with the six kings of secret mantra,  
In which [the letters] emerge from nonduality—  
Nonarising and appearances [being indivisible].

THE TEACHER, the Master of Words, proclaimed the following verses in the form of a chapter of song, along with the six sections of [mantra], commencing with the letter A, which are associated respectively with the six kings of secret mantra in union.<sup>966</sup> This is a modality in which the letters emerge from the relative nonduality of vowels and consonants and the ultimate nonduality of awareness and emptiness—the nonarising ultimate truth and the appearances of relative truth being indivisible. [Here] these are revealed in the context of



mirrorlike pristine cognition, I and ī are indicative of the pristine cognition of sameness, U and Ū are indicative of the pristine cognition of discernment, E and AI are indicative of the pristine cognition of accomplishment, O and AU are indicative of the pristine cognition of reality’s expanse, AṂ is indicative of the emptiness of these pristine cognitions, while AḤ is indicative of the indivisibility of pristine cognition and emptiness.<sup>968</sup>

When one meditates on the meaning of the nonduality of emptiness and pristine cognition [one recites the mantras]:  
 STHITO HRDI JÑĀNAMŪRTIR AHAM BUDDHO BUDDHĀNĀM  
 TRYADHVAVARTINĀM|| OṂ VAJRATĪKṢṂA DUḤKHACCHEDA  
 PRAJÑĀJÑĀNAMŪRTI JÑĀNAKĀYA VĀGĪSVARA ARAPACANĀYA TE NAMAḤ.  
 Here, STHITO means **situated**, HRDI means **in the heart**, JÑĀNA means **pristine cognition**, MŪRTIR means **embodiment**, AHAM means **I**, BUDDHO means **buddha**, BUDDHĀNĀM means **of the buddhas**, and TRYADHVAVARTINĀM means that the buddhas **are** indivisibly **present throughout the three times**.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 4:3)**

ཨོྲཱ་ཨོྲཱ་ཨོྲཱ་ཨོྲཱ་ཨོྲཱ་བསྐྱེད་ལ་གཙོད།  
 །ཤེས་རབ་ཡི་ཤེས་སྐྱེ་ཅན་ཏེ།  
 །ཡི་ཤེས་སྐྱེ་ཅན་གསུང་དབང་ལྷུག།  
 །འགྲོ་བ་སྤྲིན་བྱེད་ཚུངས་ལ་འདུད། །

OṂ Homage to you—VajratīkṣṂa, Duhkhaccheda, Prajñājñānamūrti, Jñānakāya, Vāgīsvara, and Arapacana.

**OṂ** means “endowed with the five pristine cognitions,” **VajratīkṣṂa** means “sharpness of indestructible reality” (*rdo*

*rje rnon po*), **Duḥkha**ccheda means “cutting off suffering” (*sdug bsngal gcod pa*), **Prajñajñana** means “pristine cognition of discriminative awareness” (*shes rab ye shes*), **mūrti** means “embodiment,” **Jñānakāya** means “body of pristine cognition,” **Vāgīśvara** means “lord of speech” (*ngag gi dbang phyug*), **A** means “the view of unproduced buddha mind,” **ra** means “supreme bliss that has been experientially cultivated,” **pa** means “view and meditation untainted by any flaws,” **ca** means “liberation through the practice of the generation and perfection stages in common,” **nāya** means that “all things are to be known as unproduced,” TE means “the spontaneously present fruit” [lit. “**to you**”], and NAMAḤ means “unerring [**homage**].” Through these comments, the meaning of tantra subsumed in the mantras, is revealed.<sup>969</sup>

EULOGY TO THE MAṄḌALA OF THE INDESTRUCTIBLE EXPANSE  
[17.5.2.5]

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**In the chapter entitled “[Eulogy to the Maṅḍala of] the Indestructible Expanse,” there are fourteen stanzas.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:1)***

།འདི་ལྷ་ར་སངས་རྒྱས་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།  
།རྗེས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཨ་ལས་བྱུང།  
།ཨ་ནི་ཡིག་འབྲུ་ཀུན་གྱི་མཚོག  
།དོན་ཚན་ཡིག་དམ་པ་ཡིན།

In this way, the perfect transcendent lord buddhas Have  
all originated from the syllable A.  
a is the foremost of all seed syllables.  
It is the sacred syllable, associated with great benefits.

**In this way, the perfect transcendent lord buddhas,** encompassing the three buddha bodies, **have all originated from the syllable A,** which represents the uncreated reality. A indicates that the ultimate emptiness and **the foremost of all the seed syllables,** which are relative phenomena, are indivisible. Through the experiential cultivation of this, **great associated benefits** will emerge for one’s own sake and for the sake of others. This **syllable is sacred** and the best of

unerring paths.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 5:2)**

ཁོ་ནས་འབྱུང་བ་སྐྱེ་བ་མེད།  
ཚིག་སྲུ་བཟོད་པ་སྤངས་པ་སྟེ།  
བཟོད་པ་ཀུན་གྱི་རྒྱ་ཡི་མཚོག  
ཚིག་ཀུན་རབ་དྲ་གསལ་བར་བྱེད།

This [syllable A] emerges from the chest<sup>970</sup>  
But is uncreated, free from verbalization.  
It is the foremost cause of all expressions,  
And it elucidates all words.

This [syllable A], indicative of the nonduality of all phenomena, emerges from the chest [as a vocal pulse], but actually it is uncreated, free from verbalization and beyond objects of thought. It is not an object of the intellect. This uncreated [syllable] is the foremost cause of all expressions, the modality through which everything arises from the uncreated. The syllable A elucidates all words since the mass of other syllables arise therefrom; in the same manner, too, it manifests in the form of the following eulogy because it is the intrinsic nature of Mañjuśrī:<sup>971</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 5:3)**

མཚོད་པ་ཚེན་པོ་འདོད་ཆགས་ཚེ།  
སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་དགའ་བར་བྱེད།  
མཚོད་པ་ཚེན་པོ་ཞེ་སྣང་ཚེ།  
ཉོན་མོངས་ཀུན་གྱི་དགའ་ཚེ་བ།

You are endowed with great attachment, a great offering That delights all sentient beings.  
You are endowed with great aversion, a great offering That is the mighty foe of all afflictive mental states.

Mañjuśrī, **you are** the **great** repository of the objects of **offering, endowed with great attachment** for the sake of sentient beings clinging to desire, which satisfies and **delights all sentient beings** who are to be trained. **You are endowed with aversion**, which is empty, and with **great** selflessness, recognizing this to be a **great offering**. Since emptiness **is the mighty foe of all afflictive mental states**, you destroy them.<sup>972</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:4)***

མཚན་པ་ཆེན་པོ་གཏི་མུག་ཆེ།  
གཏི་མུག་ལྗོ་སྟེ་གཏི་མུག་སེལ།  
མཚན་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ལྗོ་བ་ཆེ།  
ལྗོ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་དགྲ་ཆེ་བ།

You are endowed with great delusion, the great offering That dispels the mind of delusion and its delusions.  
You are endowed with great wrath, the great offering That is most wrathful, a mighty foe.

**You are endowed with great** discriminative awareness, **the** ultimate **great offering** and the intrinsic purity of **delusion that dispels the mind of delusion**—fundamental ignorance **and** the thoughts arising from it, which are fabricated by **its delusions**. Mañjuśrī, **you are endowed with great wrath** in respect of dualistic apprehension, **the great** object of **offering that is most wrathful** because you are free from thoughts of

differentiation, and you are a **mighty foe** because you dispel all thoughts.<sup>973</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 5:5)**

མཚོད་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཆགས་པ་ཆེ།  
ཆགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་སེལ་བར་བྱེད།  
འདོད་པ་ཆེན་པོ་བདེ་བ་ཆེ།  
དགའ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་མགུ་བ་ཆེ།

You are endowed with great attachment, the great offering That dispels all attachments.  
You are endowed with great desire, great bliss, great delight, and great joy.

Mañjuśrī, **you are endowed with great attachment** in respect of living beings, **the great offering that dispels all fixations and attachments**. **You are endowed with great desire** that purifies the places of birth, **great bliss** that indicates the buddha body of reality, **great delight** that indicates the buddha body of perfect resource, **and great joy** for sentient beings, indicating the buddha body of emanation.<sup>974</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 5:6)**

གཟུགས་ཆེ་ལུས་ཀྱང་ཆེ་བ་སྟེ།  
འདོད་ཆེ་ཞིང་ལུས་བོངས་ཆེ།  
མིང་ཡང་ཆེ་ཞིང་རྒྱ་ཆེ་བ།  
དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཆེན་པོ་ཡངས་པ་ཡིན།



You are endowed with a mighty physique, and your body  
is indeed great.

You are endowed with the finest complexion, and your  
body is large.

Your names are also great and extensive,  
Your maṇḍala vast and spacious.

**You are endowed with a mighty physique, and your body,** which effects training, **is indeed great,** acting for the sake of diverse living beings. **You are endowed with the finest complexion, and your body is large,** endowed with the major and minor marks. **Your names are also great** because you are renowned everywhere, **and extensive** because they permeate all the abodes of living beings. **Your maṇḍala is vast and most spacious** because you act on behalf of living beings by means of many approaches.<sup>975</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:7)***

འཤེས་རབ་མཚོན་ཆེན་འཚང་བ་སྟེ།  
ཉོན་མོངས་ཆེན་པོའི་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་མཚོན་  
བྱུངས་ཆེན་སྟོན་བྱུངས་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།  
སྣང་བ་ཆེན་པོ་གསལ་བ་ཆེ།

Holding the great sword of discriminative awareness,  
You are endowed with the supreme hook  
[That extracts beings] from vast afflictive mental states,  
With great renown, great reputation, great light, and  
great radiance.

**Holding the great sword of emptiness and discriminative**

awareness, Mañjuśrī, **you are endowed with** the Being of Pristine Cognition (Jñānasattva). You possess **the supreme hook** of compassionate spirituality that extracts [sentient beings] **from** the **vast** swampland of **afflictive mental states**. **With great renown** among all those to be trained, and **great reputation** that is perfect in enlightened attributes, you permeate them with the **great light** of the buddha body of perfect resource **and** possess the **great radiance** of the buddha body of reality.<sup>976</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 5:8)**

མཁའ་མ་པ་རྒྱ་འཕུལ་ཆེན་པོ་འཆང་།  
 རྒྱ་འཕུལ་ཆེན་པོའི་དོན་རྒྱབ་པ།  
 རྒྱ་འཕུལ་ཆེན་པོ་དགའ་བས་དགའ།  
 རྒྱ་འཕུལ་ཆེན་པོ་མིག་འཕུལ་ཅན།

Adroitly you maintain the great nets of magical emanation: You accomplish benefits relying on the extensive net of magical emanation.

You delight through the delight of the great net of magical emanation.

You are endowed with activities resembling an optical illusion Through the [combined] nets of magical emanation.

**Adroitly** acting for the benefit of living beings, **you maintain** the benefit of living beings through **the great nets of magical emanation**, which entail diverse skillful means: **You accomplish** the two **benefits, relying on** the extensive diffusion and absorption of **the extensive net of magical emanation** that refines the [visualization of] deities according to the generation stage [of meditation]. Your coemergent buddha body of reality **delights through the delight of** pristine cognition, **the great** bliss of the **net of magical**

**emanation** that refines the energy channels, vital essences, and winds according to the perfection stage [of meditation]. **You are endowed with activities** that benefit living beings, **resembling an optical illusion, through the nets of magical emanation** of the combined generation and perfection stages.<sup>977</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:9)***

།སྤྱིན་བདག་ཆེན་པོ་གཙོ་བོ་སྟེ།  
།ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཆེན་པོ་འཆང་བའི་མཚོག་  
།བཟོད་ཆེན་འཆང་བ་བརྟན་པ་པོ།  
།བཙོན་འགྲུས་ཆེན་པོ་བརྟུལ་བ་ཡིན།

You are the principal master of great generosity, The  
supreme holder of great ethical discipline,  
The steadfast maintainer of great tolerance,  
The zealous refiner of great perseverance.

Now there follows the eulogy that accords with the ten transcendent perfections. Mañjuśrī, **you are the** hero, the supreme, **principal master** of **great** nonreferentiality with respect to the four modes of **generosity**.<sup>978</sup> Jñānasattva, you are **the supreme holder** of the actual truth **of great** nonreferentiality with respect to the three modes of **ethical discipline**.<sup>979</sup> Mañjuśrī, you are **the steadfast maintainer of great** nonreferentiality with respect to the three modes of **tolerance**<sup>980</sup> and the three spheres [of subject, object, and their interaction]. Mañjuśrī, you are **the zealous refiner of** cyclic existence through the power of **great** nonreferentiality with respect to the three modes of **perseverance**.<sup>981</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 5:10)**

ཁབས་མ་གཏན་ཆེན་པོ་ཏིང་འཛིན་གནས།  
ཤེས་རབ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལུས་འཆང་བ།  
སྟོབས་པོ་ཆེ་ལ་ཐབས་ཆེ་བ།  
སྲོན་ལམ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་སྟེ།

You abide in the meditative stability of great meditative concentration.

You maintain the body of great discriminative awareness.

You are great in power, great in skillful means, Ocean-like in aspiration and in pristine cognition.

Mañjuśrī, **you abide in the meditative stability of great nonreferentiality** with respect to the two **meditative concentrations**<sup>982</sup> and their three spheres [of subject, object, and interaction]. Mañjuśrī, **you maintain the body of nonreferentiality with respect to discriminative awareness** concerning causes and results. **You are great in nonreferentiality with respect to the ten powers** that cannot be excelled by others,<sup>983</sup> and you are **great** due to nonreferentiality **in** respect of **skillful means**—the diverse approaches of the vehicle. You are **ocean-like in aspiration** through which the benefit of living beings emerges, **and in inexhaustible pristine cognition** that knows things both quantitatively and definitively.<sup>984</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 5:11)**

།བྱམས་ཆེན་རང་བཞིན་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད།  
།སྙིང་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་སློ་ཡི་མཚོག  
།ཤེས་རབ་ཆེན་པོ་སློ་ཆེན་ལྷན།  
།མཁས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཐབས་ཆེན།

The intrinsic nature of your great loving-kindness is inestimable.

Your great compassion [imparts] supreme intelligence.

Your great discriminative awareness is [revealed] to those of great intelligence.

Supremely adroit, you are endowed with great skillful means.

Now, there follows the eulogy that accords with loving-kindness, compassion, enlightened activity, and miraculous ability. Among these attributes, **the intrinsic nature of your great, impartial loving-kindness is** immeasurable because it apprehends **inestimable** numbers of living beings. **Your great, loving compassion** imparts the **supreme** boon because it apprehends the world systems of living beings who partake of diverse **intelligence**, and you reveal **to** trainees **of great intelligence** the nature of **discriminative awareness**, which is **great** emptiness. **Supremely adroit** in the means that train living beings, **you are endowed with great** and diverse **skillful means.**<sup>985</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:12)***

།རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་ཆེན་པོ་སྟོབས་དང་ལྡན།  
 །ལྷགས་ཆེན་མགྲོགས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།  
 །རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་ཆེན་པོ་ཆེར་གྲགས་པ།  
 །སྟོབས་ཆེན་པོ་རོལ་གཞོན་པ་པོ།

Endowed with great miraculous abilities,  
 Power, great strength, and great speed—  
 Endowed with these great miraculous abilities and  
 renowned, You overwhelm others through your great  
 powers.

You are **endowed with** inconceivable **great miraculous abilities**, endowed with **power** to go everywhere without impediment, endowed with **great strength** that subdues the powers of others, **and great speed** that swiftly acts for the sake of living beings. **Endowed with these great miraculous abilities and renowned** as unrivaled, Mañjuśrī, **you overwhelm** and tame **other** trainees **through your great powers**.<sup>986</sup>

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 5:13)*

།སྲིད་པའི་རི་བོ་ཆེན་པོ་འཇོམས།  
 །མཐུགས་ཤིང་དོ་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་འཆང།  
 །རྒྱལ་པོ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱལ་ལུལ་ཆེ།  
 །འཇིགས་ཆེན་འཇིགས་པར་བྱེད་པ་པོ།

Shattering the great mountain of rebirth,  
 Firm and maintaining great indestructible reality, Most  
 wrathful [Mañjuśrī], you are endowed with great  
 ferocity.  
 You are the great terrifier who terrifies [beings].

You are the great terrifier who terrifies [beings].

**Shattering** fundamental ignorance, **the great mountain of rebirth** within the three world systems; **firm** in the indivisibility of awareness and emptiness; **and maintaining great indestructible reality** that comprehends its meaning—**most wrathful** Mañjuśrī, **you are endowed with great ferocity** because you tame [beings] by means of wrathful rites. **You are the great terrifier** of egotism, **who terrifies** [beings], having revealed the pristine cognition free from extremes.<sup>987</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 5:14)***

ཁགོན་པོ་རིག་མཚན་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།  
ལྷ་མ་གསལ་སྤྲུགས་ཆེན་པོ་མཚན་  
ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཚུལ་ལ་གནས།  
ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཚུལ་གྱི་མཚན་

You are the great protector—supreme among the [five] types, The spiritual teacher whose secret mantras are great and supreme.

Abiding in the modality of the Great Vehicle,  
You are supreme in the ways of the Great Vehicle.

**You are the protector** of living beings—**great** because you are **supreme among the five types**.<sup>988</sup> You are **the spiritual teacher** (*guru, bla ma*)—a mother (*ma*) dispensing the unsurpassed (*bla*) enlightened intention, **whose secret mantras are great and supreme**, free from extremes. **Abiding in the modality of** the path and fruit of the bodhisattvas who uphold **the Great Vehicle, you are supreme in the ways of** teaching the path of **the Great Vehicle** to living beings.<sup>989</sup>

## THE PRISTINE COGNITION OF REALITY'S EXPANSE [17.5.2.6]

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**In the chapter entitled “[The Pristine Cognition of] Reality’s Expanse,” there are twenty-five stanzas, the last of which is incomplete.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:1)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་རྣམ་པར་སྐྱབ་མཛད་ཆེ།  
།ཐུབ་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཐུབ་ཆེན་ལྷན།  
།གསང་སྐྱབས་ཚུལ་ཆེན་ལས་བྱུང་བ།  
།གསང་སྐྱབས་ཚུལ་ཆེན་བདག་ཉིད་ཅན།

You are the buddha Mahāvairocana,  
Endowed with the great sapience of the Great Sage,  
Arisen from the great way of secret mantra,  
Integrating the great way of secret mantra.

**You are the buddha** body of reality, **Mahāvairocana** (*rnam par snang mdzad che*)—he who embodies the great activities (*mdzad che*) of the illuminating (*rnam par snang ba*) buddha body of perfect resource, and you are **endowed with great sapience** because you partake of the enlightened attributes **of the Great Sage**, Śākyendra—the buddha body of emanation who acts for the benefit of living beings through the twelve deeds. O Jñānasattva, you are endowed with the outer



generation stage **of secret mantra** in which one meditates on an individual deity, with the generation stage of **the great way** in which one meditates on the deities in union, with the profound generation stage in which one meditates on the energy channels and winds [of the subtle body], and with the perfection stage in which one knows that all these lack inherent existence. You are endowed with the three buddha bodies **arisen from** these [practices], **integrating** the generation and perfection stages of **the great way of secret mantra** in common.<sup>990</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:2)***

།ས་ལོལ་གྱིན་བུ་ཐོབ་ས་སྟེ།  
།ས་ལོལ་གྱིན་ས་བུ་ལ་གནས།  
།ས་ལོལ་གྱིན་བུ་དག་ས་སྟེ།  
།ས་ལོལ་གྱིན་ས་བུ་ཡི་ཚུལ།

Having attained the ten transcendent perfections,  
Abiding in the ten transcendent perfections,  
Pure due to the ten transcendent perfections,  
You [demonstrate] the way of the ten transcendent  
perfections.

Now there follows the eulogy that accords with the inconceivable enlightened attributes of the ten transcendent perfections. **Having attained the ten transcendent perfections**, you act for the benefit of living beings, while **abiding in the ten transcendent perfections**. **Pure due to your indivisible realization of the ten transcendent perfections**, you demonstrate **the way of the ten transcendent perfections** to living beings.

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 6:3)**

ཁམ་གོ་ན་པོ་ས་བརྩའི་དབང་ལྷུག་སྟེ།  
ཁ་བརྩུ་ལ་ནི་གནས་པ་པོ།  
འཤེས་བརྩུ་རྣམ་དག་བདག་ཉིད་ཅན།  
འཤེས་བརྩུ་རྣམ་དག་འཆང་བ་པོ།

O Protector, you are the lord of the ten levels.  
Abiding in the ten levels,  
You embody the ten pure aspects of knowledge, And you  
maintain purity with respect to the ten aspects of  
knowledge.

**O Protector** Mañjuśrī, **you are the genuine lord of the ten levels. Abiding in the ten levels**, you are an agent for the benefit of living beings. **You embody the ten pure aspects of knowledge** (*daśajñāna, shes bcu*), namely, knowledge of phenomena (*dharmajñāna, chos shes pa*), knowledge of subsequent understanding (*anvayajñāna, rjes su rtog pa shes pa*), knowledge of the minds of others (*paracittajñāna, pha rol gyi sems shes pa*), knowledge of relative appearances (*samvṛtijñāna, kun rdzob kyi shes pa*), knowledge of suffering (*duḥkhajñāna, sdug bsngal gyi shes pa*), knowledge of the cause of suffering (*samudayajñāna, kun 'byung shes pa*), knowledge of the cessation of suffering (*nirodhajñāna, 'gog pa shes pa*), knowledge of the path (*mārgajñāna, lam shes pa*), knowledge of the cessation [of contamination] (*kṣayajñāna, zad pa shes pa*), and knowledge that it will not subsequently arise (*anutpādayajñāna, mi skye ba shes pa*). You know that the ten knowledges of the pious attendants are without inherent existence, **and you maintain purity with respect to the ten aspects of knowledge.**

## Root Tantra (Ch. 6:4)

འཇིགས་པ་བཅུ་པོ་དོན་བཅུ་ལྟེ་དོན།  
ལྷུ་དབང་སྟོབས་བཅུ་བྱུ་པའི་བདག  
ཀྱུན་གྱི་དོན་ནི་མ་ལུས་བྱེད།  
འཇིགས་བཅུ་དབང་ལྡན་ཆེ་བ་པོ།

[Knowing] the ten aspects [of egotistical view]  
And the meaning of the ten [antidotal] topics,  
Through the ten powers, O All-Pervading Lord,  
You enact the benefits of all beings without exception,  
Mighty in your possession of the ten aspects of  
control.

**The ten aspects** [of egotistical view] (*daśavidhmātmadarśana*, [*bdag tu lta ba*] *rnam pa bcu*) comprise (i) the apprehension of the self as singularity (*ekatvagrāha*, *gcig pur 'dzin pa*); (ii) the apprehension of the self as cause (*hetutvagrāha*, *rgyur 'dzin pa*); (iii) the apprehension of the self as a consumer (*bhokṛtvagrāha*, *za bar 'dzin pa*); (iv) the apprehension of the self as an agent (*kartṛtvagrāha*, *byed pa por 'dzin pa*); (v) the apprehension of the self as autonomous (*svatantragrāha*, *rang dbang can du 'dzin pa*); (vi) the apprehension of the self as permanent (*nityatvagrāha*, *rtag par 'dzin pa*); (vii) the apprehension of the self as afflictive mental states (*saṃkleśatvagrāha*, *kun nas nyon mongs par 'dzin pa*); (viii) the apprehension of the self as purification (*vyavadānatvagrāha*, *rnam par byang bar 'dzin pa*); (ix) the apprehension of the self as yoga (*yogitvagrāha*, *rnal 'byor can du 'dzin pa*); and (x) the apprehension of the self as unliberated and liberated (*amuktamuktatvagrāha*, *ma grol ba grol bar 'dzin pa*).<sup>991</sup> You are **the all-pervading lord** since you know these, **along with the meaning of the ten topics** [that are antidotes for such]

extremist views (*mu stegs kyi don bcu'i don*),<sup>992</sup> and act for the benefit of living beings **through the ten powers** (*daśabala, stobs bcu*) of Munīndra—he who overpowers the four demonic forces. The ten powers (*daśatathāgatabala, [de bzhin gshegs pa'i] stobs bcu*) comprise (i-ii) the powers of knowing that things that are possible are indeed possible and that things that are impossible are indeed impossible; (iii-v) the powers of knowing the diversity of the [dispositions,] inclinations [and capacities of sentient beings]; (vi) [the power of knowing] the meditative concentrations, the meditative stabilities, the aspects of liberation, the meditative equipoise, the afflicted and purified mental states, and the past actions [of sentient beings] along with their maturation; (vii) [the power of knowing] the paths that lead everywhere; (viii) the power of recollecting past abodes; (ix) the power of knowing the transference of consciousness at death and rebirth; and (x) the power of knowing the cessation of contaminants.<sup>993</sup> **You enact the benefits of all living beings without exception** and are **mighty in your possession of the ten aspects of control** (*daśavaśitā, dbang bcu*), namely, (i) control over the life span; (ii) control over past actions; (iii) control over necessities; (iv) control over devotion; (v) control over aspiration; (vi) control over miraculous abilities; (vii) control over birth; (viii) control over phenomena; (ix) control over mind; and (x) control over pristine cognition.

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 6:5)**

ཐོག་མ་མེད་པ་སྤྱོད་མེད་བདག  
 རྟོག་ཞེན་ཉིད་བདག་དག་པའི་བདག  
  
 བདེན་པར་སྤྱོད་ཞིང་ཚོག་མི་འགྱུར།  
 རི་སྐད་སྤྱོད་པ་དེ་བཞིན་བྱེད།

Beginningless lord, free from conceptual elaboration,  
You are the lord of the actual truth and master of  
purity.

Speaking the truth with genuine unchanging words,  
You act just as you speak.

Now there follows the eulogy in accord with the three buddha bodies: **Beginningless** due to your familiarity with emptiness, you are the **lord free from conceptual elaboration** because you are without faults. **You are the lord of the actual truth**, empty of inherent existence, the buddha body of perfect resource **and master of purity, speaking the truth**. As the teacher of the Great Vehicle **with genuine unchanging words** and a retinue of tenth-level bodhisattvas, **you act just as you speak**.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:6)***

།གཉིས་སུ་མེད་དང་གཉིས་མེད་སྟོན།<sup>994</sup>  
།ཡང་དག་མཐའ་ལ་རྣམ་པར་གནས།  
།བདག་མེད་མེད་གེའི་སྐྱེ་དང་ལྡན།  
།སུ་སྟེགས་རི་དྲགས་ངན་འཇིགས་བྱེད།

Without duality, and teaching nonduality,  
You abide in the finality of existence.  
Selflessness, with the roar of a lion,  
Terrifies the feeble deer of extremism.

**Without** the **duality** of the two truths, **and** similarly **teaching** their **nonduality** to living beings, **you abide in the** incontrovertible **finality of existence**. The **selflessness** of phenomena and individual persons resembles, for example, one growling **with the roar of a lion** who **terrifies the feeble**

**dear of extremism.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:7)***

། ཀྱུན་ཏུ་འགྲོ་བའི་དོན་ཡོད་སྟོབས།  
། དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་ཡིད་ལྷུང་མགྲོགས།  
། རྒྱལ་བ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་དབང་ལས་རྒྱལ།  
། འཁོར་ལོ་སྤྱད་བ་སྟོབས་པོ་ཆེ།

With power that is effective everywhere,  
With alacrity resembling the mind of the Tathāgata, A  
conqueror, victorious and triumphant over foes,  
And a universal monarch,  
You are endowed with great powers.

**With power that is effective** because you act through the ten powers for the sake of sentient beings **everywhere** in space and time, **with alacrity resembling the mind of the Tathāgata** in acting for the benefit of sentient beings, **you, Mañjuśrī, are endowed with great diverse powers**, in the manner of **a conqueror, victorious** over pious attendants, an emanational buddha **triumphant over the foes** of enlightened mind, **and a universal monarch** who acts for the benefit of living beings.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:8)***

། ཚོགས་ཀྱི་སློབ་དཔོན་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཚན།  
། ཚོགས་རྗེ་ཚོགས་བདག་དབང་དང་ལྷན།  
། མཐུ་ཆེན་གཅེས་པར་འཛིན་པ་སྟེ།  
། རྒྱལ་ཆེན་གཞན་གྱི་དྲིན་མི་འཛོག།

Master of the host, foremost of the host,  
Ruler of hosts, and empowered lord of hosts,  
Endowed with great occult power, you caringly accept  
[beings]  
And do not depend on others, apart from the great way.

As Munīndra, **master of the host** of pious attendants, **foremost** master **of the host** of hermit buddhas, protector of the three enlightened families, as Vairocana (the buddha body of perfect resource who is **ruler of hosts** of bodhisattvas) **and** as the **lord of hosts** (the buddha body of reality which is pristine cognition), **you**, Jñānasattva, are the **empowered** Mañjuśrī, **endowed with great occult power**, who **caringly accepts** those beings to be trained with compassionate spirituality, without forsaking them, **and** who **does not** look for help or **depend on other** circumstances **apart from the great way** of the Mahāyāna.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:9)***

ཚིག་ཇི་ཚིག་བདག་སྤྲུལ་མཁས་པ།  
ཚིགས་ལ་དབང་བ་ཚིག་མཐའ་ཡས།  
ཚིག་བདེན་པ་དང་བདེན་པར་སྤྲུ།  
ཁདེན་པ་བཞི་ནི་སྟོན་པ་པོ།

Ruler of words, master of words, adroit in speech,  
Empowered with regard to words, [you reveal] infinite  
words.  
Your words are true and you speak truthfully—  
Demonstrating the four truths.

As the buddha body of emanation—the **ruler** who teaches **words of** provisional meaning—and as the buddha body of perfect resource, **master of the words** of the Great Vehicle,

you are **adroit in speech** because you have mastered words. **Empowered with regard to all words** and their meanings, you reveal **infinite words** to others. **Your words are true and you speak truthfully** to living beings, **demonstrating** to living beings **the four truths** of suffering, the cause of suffering, cessation, and the path.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:10)***

ལྷིར་མི་ལྷོག་པ་ལྷིར་མི་འོང་།  
འབྲེན་པ་རང་རྒྱལ་བམེ་བུའི་རྒྱལ།  
དེས་བྱུང་སྣ་ཚོགས་ལས་བྱུང་བ།  
འབྱུང་བ་ཚན་པོ་རྒྱ་གཅིག་པོ།

Irreversible, not subject to rebirth, O Guide, you [have dwelt] as a hermit buddha  
In the manner of a [solitary] rhinoceros.  
Then, associated with diverse ways of emancipation, You have assumed the primary physical elements.  
As such, you are endowed with the singular causal basis.

Endowed with the **irreversible** fruit of **not being subject to rebirth** [within cyclic existence], you are included among the four pairs of sacred beings and the eight kinds of individual that comprise the pious attendants.<sup>995</sup> **O Guide** Jñānasattva, **you then dwell alone, as a hermit buddha, in the manner of a [solitary] rhinoceros,** meditating by reversing the [outflowing] mode of dependent origination. **Then,** in addition, you cultivate the provisions **associated with** the thirty-seven aspects of enlightenment, which offer **diverse ways of emancipation.**<sup>996</sup> Through your aspiration to benefit living beings,<sup>997</sup> **you assume the primary physical elements. As such, you are endowed with the essential, singular causal**



**basis** of enlightened mind.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:11)***

།དགེ་སློང་དག་བཅོམ་ཟག་པ་ཟད།  
།འདོད་ཆགས་བྲལ་བས་དབང་པོ་བྱལ།  
།བདེ་བ་རྗེས་པ་འཇིགས་མེད་ཐོབ།  
།བསེལ་བར་གྱུར་པས་རྣོག་པ་མེད།

As a fully ordained monk, an arhat whose contaminants have ended, Devoid of attachment, with sense faculties controlled, You have attained fearlessness by acquiring bliss.

Since your passions have been cooled, you are without turbulence.

Having emanated **as a fully ordained monk**, such as Kāśyapa, **an arhat whose contaminants have ended**, you act for the sake of living beings, and **with sense faculties** outwardly **controlled** because you are **devoid of attachment** to inward grasping, **you have attained fearlessness** with respect to the four demonic forces **by acquiring** the **bliss** of nirvāṇa. **Since your passions have been cooled** due to freedom from the torments of fixation, **you are without** the **turbulence** of obscuration.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:12)***

།རིག་པ་དང་ནི་ཀང་པར་ལྷན།  
།བདེ་གཤེགས་འཛིན་ཏེན་རིགས་པའི་མཚོག  
།བདག་གིར་མི་འཛིན་དར་མི་འཛིན།  
།བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ཚུལ་ལ་གནས།

Endowed with awareness and conduct,  
O Sugata, you are supreme in knowing the mundane.  
You are without possessiveness and without egotism,  
Abiding in the modalities of the two truths.

**Endowed with awareness**, associated with the training of meditative stability, **and conduct** (*caraṇa, rkang pa*), which is associated with the training in ethical discipline and discriminative awareness, **O Sugata** Jñānasattva, **you are supreme in knowing the** minds of **mundane** trainees. In your own mind **you are without possessiveness and without egotism** because you are free from conceptual thoughts, **abiding in** realization<sup>998</sup> where **the modalities of the two truths**—ultimate and relative—are indivisible.

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 6:13)**

།འཁོར་བའི་པ་རོལ་མཐར་སོན་པ།  
།བྱ་བ་བྱས་པ་སྐྱམ་སར་གནས།  
།ཤེས་པ་འབའ་ཞིག་དེས་གསལ་བ།  
།ཤེས་རབ་མཚོན་ཆས་རྣམ་འཛོམས་པ།

Having reached the far shore of cyclic existence,  
You abide on dry land.  
Having elucidated the unique cognition,

You have eradicated [substantial entities] with the sword of discriminative awareness.

**Having** gone to **the far shore of cyclic existence** and having **reached** the end of the path of insight and the eleventh level, **you abide on the dry land** of nirvāṇa, duty done, because you have perfected the two provisions. **Having elucidated the unique cognition** that knows [phenomena] quantitatively and definitively, in order to benefit living beings, **you have eradicated** substantial entities<sup>999</sup> **with the sword of discriminative awareness**, emptiness.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:14)***

། དམ་ཚཱ་ཚཱ་རྒྱལ་གསལ་བར་ལྷན།  
། འཇིག་རྟེན་སྣང་བར་བྱེད་པའི་མཚན།  
། ཚཱ་གྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག་ཚཱ་གྱི་རྒྱལ།  
། ལེགས་པ་ལམ་ནི་སྟོན་པ་པོ།

Endowed with [meditation] to clarify the sacred doctrine, O King of the Doctrine, You are foremost in engaging mundane appearances.

Mighty lord of [all] phenomena, O King of the Doctrine, You are the preceptor of the path of excellence.

**Endowed with** meditation **to clarify**, without grasping, **the sacred doctrine** of the view, **O King of the Doctrine**, you diversely illuminate **mundane appearances** but **are foremost in** conduct, **engaging** them without fixation. **Mighty lord of all phenomena** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **O King of the Doctrine**, Jñānasattva, on behalf of living beings, **you are the preceptor of** the two truths constituting **the path of excellence**.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 6:15)**

།དོན་གྱུབ་བསམ་པ་གྱུབ་པ་སྟེ།  
།ཀྱུན་ཏུ་རྟོག་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་སྤངས།

།རྣམ་པར་མི་རྟོག་དབྱིངས་མི་ཟད།  
།ཚོས་དབྱིངས་དམ་པ་ཟད་མི་ཤེས།

Having fulfilled your own objective and fulfilled aspirations, You have abandoned all imagination. The expanse without conceptual thought is endless, And reality's expanse inexhaustible.

**Having** successfully **fulfilled your own objective and fulfilled aspirations** for the benefit of others, **you have abandoned all** grasping after **imagination. The expanse without conceptual thought is endless**, without increase or decrease, **and** the genuine enlightened attributes of **reality's expanse** are **inexhaustible**.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 6:16)**

།བསོད་ནམས་ལྷན་པས་བསོད་ནམས་ཚོགས།  
།ཡི་ཤེས་ཡི་ཤེས་འབྱུང་གནས་ཆེ།  
།ཡི་ཤེས་ལྷན་པ་ཡོད་མེད་ཤེས།  
།ཚོགས་གཉིས་ཚོགས་ནི་བསགས་པ་སོ།

Endowed with merit, you are great in the provision of merit, And in pristine cognition, which is the source of pristine cognition

pristine cognition.

Endowed with pristine cognition, you know existence and nonexistence.

You are the accumulator of the two provisions.

Since you are **endowed with** supreme **merit**, you are **great in** [talents] that originate from **the provision of merit**, and **in** the provision of **pristine cognition**, which is the source of all enlightened attributes, including **pristine cognition** that is not yet present. **Endowed with** the **pristine cognition** that knows [things] definitively and quantitatively, **you know** all limits of **existence and nonexistence**. Mañjuśrī, **you are the accumulator of the** provisions, comprising the **two provisions** of merit and pristine cognition.

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 6:17)**

འཇིག་པ་ཀུན་རྒྱལ་རྣམ་འབྲོར་ཅན།  
འབས་མ་གཏན་བསམ་བྱ་སློ་ལྡན་མཚོག  
མོ་མོ་རང་རིག་མི་གཡོ་བ།  
མཚོག་གི་དང་པོ་སྐྱ་གསུམ་འཆང་།

Eternal, triumphant over all, yogin endowed with intelligence Through which the meditative concentrations are to be contemplated, You are foremost, and your individual intrinsic awareness is unwavering.

First in supreme [awareness], you maintain the three buddha bodies.

**Eternal** buddha body of reality, **triumphant over all** cyclic existence, and **yogin** (*rnal 'byor pa*) whose mind is united (*'byor ba*) in the fundamental nature (*rnal*) of reality, O Jñānasattva, **endowed with** the **intelligence** of discriminative awareness, **through which the meditative concentrations** of calm abiding and higher insight **are to be contemplated**,

**you are the foremost**, superior to [bodhisattvas] of the ninth level and below, **and the individual intrinsic awareness** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa **is unwavering** in your mind. **First in supreme** intrinsic awareness, O Jñānasattva, **you maintain the three buddha bodies.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:18)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་སྐྱེ་ལཱ་འཛིན་པ་ཉིད་ཅན།  
།བྱུང་བ་དག་ཡི་ཤེས་ལཱ་ཡི་འཛིན་པ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་ལཱ་འཛིན་ཅོད་པ་ན་ཅན།  
།སྐྱེན་ལཱ་ཆགས་པ་མེད་པ་འཆང་།

Integrating the five buddha bodies, O All-Pervading Lord, You are the embodiment of the five pristine cognitions.

O lord of the five buddhas, wearing the diadem, You maintain the five eyes without attachment.

**Integrating the five buddha bodies**, which comprise the three buddha bodies, the body of essentiality (*ngo bo nyid sku*), and the body of supreme bliss (*bde ba chen po'i sku*), and acting for the benefit of living beings, **O All-Pervading Lord, you are the embodiment of the five pristine cognitions**, commencing with the mirrorlike one. **O Vairocana, lord of the five buddhas, wearing the crown and diadem** of Jñānasattva, **you maintain without fixation or attachment the five eyes**, namely, the eye of flesh, the eye of the gods, the eye of the doctrine, the eye of the buddha, and the eye of discriminative awareness.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:19)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་ཐམས་ཅད་སྐྱེད་པ་པོ།  
 །སངས་རྒྱལ་སྲས་པོ་དམ་པའི་མཚོག  
 །ཤེས་པས་སྲིད་འབྱུང་སྐྱེ་གནས་མེད།  
 །ཚོས་ལས་བྱུང་བ་སྲིད་པ་སེལ།

Progenitor of all the buddhas,  
 Foremost of their genuine heirs,  
 Owing to discernment, you are without any place of  
 birth that originates from rebirth.  
 Source of all things that originate, you dispel the rebirth  
 process.

**Progenitor of all the buddhas** of the three times, you are also their father and mother, and you are the **foremost of the genuine** bodhisattva **heirs** of all the buddhas. **Owing to discernment** and realization,<sup>1000</sup> **you are without any place of birth** among living beings—the locations **that originate from** the three planes of **rebirth**. Since the **source of all things** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa **that originate** from dependent origination is actually uncreated, **you dispel the entirety of the rebirth process**.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:20)***

།གཅིག་སྲུ་སྲ་མཚེགས་རྫོ་རྗེའི་བདག  
 །སྐྱེས་མ་ཐག་ཏུ་འགྲོ་བའི་བདག  
 །ནམ་མཁའ་ལས་བྱུང་རང་བྱུང་བ།  
 །ཤེས་རབ་ཡི་ཤེས་མེ་བོ་ཚེ།

Embodiment of indestructible reality, unique and solid,  
 No sooner born, you are the lord of living beings.  
 Originating from space, you are the self-originated

Originating from space, you are the self-originated  
Pristine cognition of discriminative awareness—a  
mighty inferno!

In the uncreated essential nature that has many different phenomenal appearances, it is accepted that you are the **embodiment of indestructible reality**, the emptiness that is **unique, solid, and** indivisible. **No sooner born, you** reach the enlightened intention of **the lord of living beings**—buddha among pious attendants and hermit buddhas. It is said that you are unoriginated from causes and conditions but **originating from space**. Without being subdued, **you are the self-originated** indivisible **pristine cognition of discriminative awareness**, emptiness and awareness—a **mighty inferno** that burns conceptual thoughts of differentiation!

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:21)***

འོད་ཆེན་རྣམ་པར་སྣང་བར་བྱེད།  
ཡེ་ཤེས་སྣང་བ་ལམ་མི་བ།  
འགྲོ་བའི་མར་མི་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱོན།  
གཟི་བརྗིད་ཆེན་པོ་འོད་གསལ་བ།

Vairocana, endowed with great light,  
The shining light of pristine cognition,  
The lamp of living beings and torch of pristine cognition,  
You are of great splendor and inner radiance.

**Vairocana, endowed with the great light** that is the natural incandescence of pristine cognition, **the shining light of great pristine cognition, the lamp of living beings**, naturally radiant, **and torch of pristine cognition, you are** the supreme Being of Pristine Cognition (Jñānasattva) **of great splendor and inner radiance.**



**Root Tantra (Ch. 6:22)**

།སྲགས་མཚོག་མངའ་བདག་རིགས་སྲགས་རྒྱལ།  
།གསང་སྲགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་དོན་ཚེན་བྱེད།  
།གཙུག་ཏོར་ཚེན་པོ་མད་བྱུང་གཙུག་  
།ནམ་མཁའི་བདག་པོ་སྣ་ཚོགས་སྟོན།

Sovereign of supreme mantra, king of gnostic mantra,  
You are the king of secret mantra, achieving the  
supreme objective.  
Endowed with the marvelous protuberance—the great  
crown protuberance— O lord of space, you teach in  
diverse ways.

**Sovereign of supreme mantra**, comprehending the  
uncreated syllable A, **king of gnostic mantra** empowered in  
all mantras, **you are the king of secret mantra, achieving  
the supreme objective** where the deities are in union.  
**Endowed with the marvelous protuberance—the great  
crown protuberance** that overwhelms through charisma—**O**  
Jñānasattva, **lord of emptiness or space, you teach** living  
beings **in diverse ways**.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 6:23)**

།མངས་རྒྱལ་ཀུན་བདག་སྣ་ཡི་མཚོག་  
།འགོ་ཀུན་དགའ་བའི་མིག་དང་ལྗན།  
།སྣ་ཚོགས་གཟུགས་ཅན་སྦྱིད་པ་པོ།  
།མཚོད་ཅིང་བརྗོད་པ་བྲང་སྟོང་ཆེ།<sup>1001</sup>

Embodiment of all buddhas, you have the foremost of bodies.  
Endowed with the eye that delights all living beings,  
Progenitor in diverse physical forms,  
You are the great sage, worthy of offerings and worthy of eulogy.

**Embodiment of all the buddhas** of the three times, O Jñānasattva, **you yourself have the foremost of bodies. Endowed with the eye** of pristine cognition **that delights all living beings**, you act on behalf of living beings, abiding **in diverse physical forms. Progenitor** of pristine cognition, **you are the great sage**, the buddha who is **worthy of offerings and worthy of eulogy** on account of your superior refinement.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 6:24)***

འཇིགས་གསུམ་འཆང་བ་གསང་སྤྲུགས་ཅན།  
དམ་ཚིག་ཆེན་པོ་གསང་སྤྲུགས་འཛིན།  
གཙོ་བོ་དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ་འཛིན་པ།  
ཐེག་པ་མཆོག་གསུམ་སྟོན་པ་པོ།

Maintaining the three enlightened families, endowed with secret mantra, You hold the great commitments and the secret mantra.  
Foremost One, sustaining the three precious jewels, You teach the three supreme vehicles.

**Maintaining the three enlightened families** of buddha body, speech, and mind with skillful means and discriminative awareness, and **endowed with the most secret mantra**, **you keep the great commitments and** encourage others to **hold**

the commitments of **the secret mantra**. **Foremost** and unrivaled **one, sustaining the three precious jewels** on the crown of the head, **you teach the three supreme vehicles** of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas to living beings.

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 6:25)**

།དོན་ཡོད་ཞགས་པ་རྣམ་པར་གྱུ་ལ།  
།འཛིན་པ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་ཇི་ཞགས།  
།དོ་ཇི་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་ཞགས་པ་ཆེ། <sup>1002</sup>

Triumphant, with the noose of purposeful benefit,  
You are the great apprehender with the noose of  
indestructible reality, With the indestructible hook and  
with the mighty noose.

Securing the most **purposeful benefit** (*don yod*) of living beings **with the noose of** compassionate spirituality, you are **triumphant** over cyclic existence. **You are the great apprehender**, holding living beings with compassionate spirituality and then snaring them **with a noose of** emptiness or **indestructible reality** and compassion. The gatekeepers are symbolized respectively by the **indestructible hook, noose, chain, and mighty bell**.<sup>1003</sup>

## THE MIRRORLIKE PRISTINE COGNITION [17.5.2.7]

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**In the chapter entitled “The Mirrorlike [Pristine Cognition],” there are ten stanzas with an additional line.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:1)***

། རྡོ་རྗེ་འཇིགས་བྱེད་འཇིགས་པར་བྱེད།<sup>1004</sup>  
། ལྷོ་བོའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་གདོང་རྒྱལ་འཇིགས།  
། ལྷིག་རྒྱལ་ལག་རྒྱལ་སྟོབས་དང་ལྷན།  
། ཀེང་རྒྱས་མཆེ་བ་གཙོགས་པ་པོ།

O Vajrabhairava, terrifying [the five poisons], O Six-Faced One, terrifying king of wrath  
With six eyes and six powerful arms,  
Baring skeleton-like fangs,

**O Vajrabhairava**, benefiting living beings by means of your thirteen-deity [assemblage], **terrifying** the five poisons, transforming them into the five pristine cognitions, **O King of Wrath**, six-faced youth **with six eyes and six powerful arms**, forming a **terrifying** maṇḍala and **baring skeleton-like** white **fangs**, you benefit living beings by means of the maṇḍala of the **Six-Faced One** (Ṣaḍānana).<sup>1005</sup>

## Root Tantra (Ch. 7:2)

ཉ་ལུ་ཉ་ལ་གདོང་བརྒྱ་པ།  
གཤིན་རྗེ་གཤེད་པོ་བགགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ།  
དོ་རྗེ་གཤགས་ཅན་འཇིགས་བྱེད་པ།  
དོ་རྗེ་གཤགས་པ་<sup>1006</sup> དོ་རྗེའི་སྣིང་།

Hundred-faced Halāhala,  
O Yamāntaka, triumphant over obstructing spirits, You  
terrify with the great force of indestructible reality.  
You are the renowned indestructible reality, the  
indestructible nucleus.

Benefiting living beings by means of the maṇḍala of the **hundred-faced Halāhala** (*phug cig phug cig*), **O Yamāntaka** (*gshin rje gshed po*)—you who are the slayer (*gshed po*) of the ruler of death (*gshin rje*) and lord of death, **triumphant over** the host of **obstructing spirits, you terrify** cyclic existence **with the great force of** emptiness, the **indestructible reality** devoid of inherent existence. **Renowned** because you arise diversely from **indestructible reality**, which is emptiness, **you are the indestructible nucleus** because diversity and emptiness are indivisible.<sup>1007</sup>

## Root Tantra (Ch. 7:3)

རྒྱུ་འབྲུལ་དོ་རྗེ་གསུམ་པོ་ཆེ།  
དོ་རྗེའི་ལམ་སྣེས་དོ་རྗེའི་བདག་  
དོ་རྗེའི་སྣིང་པོ་མཁའ་འཕྲུ་བ།  
ལི་གཡོ་རལ་པ་གཅིག་གིས་བསྣྲིངས།

With a great indestructible abdomen of magical

emanation, You assume the embodiment of indestructible reality arising from indestructible reality.

O indestructible nucleus, similar to space, Without moving, your hair is piled in a single tuft.

Endowed **with a great indestructible abdomen**, indicating that **magical** emptiness and diversely arising **emanations** are indivisible, **you assume the** body of a wrathful deity, an **embodiment of indestructible reality arising from indestructible reality**—the play of emptiness in emptiness. **O indestructible nucleus, similar**, for example, **to space**, the **hair of your head is steadfast without moving, piled in a single tuft.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:4)***

ལྷང་ཆེན་ཀོ་རྫོན་གོས་སུ་བྱོན།  
ལྷགས་ཆེན་རྒྱ་རྒྱ་ཞེས་རྫོགས་པ།  
ལྷོ་རྒྱ་ཞེས་རྫོགས་འཇིགས་པར་བྱེད།  
ལག་མོ་ཆེན་མོ་གད་རྒྱུདས་ཅན།

Wearing moist elephant hide,  
Bellowing the mighty roar of hā hā,  
Terrifying with the roar of hī hī,  
You are endowed with laughter, mighty laughter.

**Wearing** an upper garment of **moist elephant hide**, **bellowing the mighty roar of HĀ HĀ**, which reveals skillful means to others, **terrifying** those who have familiarity in their own minds **with the roar of HĪ HĪ**, **you are endowed** with laughter because your joyous **mighty laughter** is delightful.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 7:5)**

། རྡོ་རྗེ་གདམ་ཚེར་སྒྲོགས་སྟེ།  
། རྡོ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔའི་སེམས་དཔའ་ཚེ།  
། རྡོ་རྗེ་རྒྱལ་པོ་བདེ་བ་ཚེ།  
། རྡོ་རྗེ་དྲག་པོ་དགའ་བ་ཚེ།

Loudly bellowing indestructible laughter, Vajrasattva,  
you are the great being,  
The indestructible king with great bliss,  
Indestructible ferocity, and great joy.

**Loudly bellowing indestructible laughter, Vajrasattva** (*rdo rje sems dpa'*)—heroic (*dpa' ba*) teacher of emptiness, in whom both the indestructible reality (*rdo rje*) of emptiness and the mind or awareness are indivisible—you are the great being who acts on behalf of others, **the indestructible king** endowed **with** the **great bliss** of the buddha body of perfect resource, wrathful body of **indestructible ferocity, and great joy**.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 7:6)**

། རྡོ་རྗེ་ཕྱོ་ཕྱོ་ཞེས་སྒྲོགས།  
། མཚན་དུ་རྡོ་རྗེའི་མདའ་ཐོགས་པ།  
། རྡོ་རྗེ་རལ་གྱིས་མ་ལུས་གཅོད།  
། རྡོ་རྗེ་སྐུ་འཆང་རྡོ་རྗེ་ཅན།

**Bellowing the HŪM of Vajrahūmkāra, Holding an**

indestructible arrow as a weapon,  
And severing all things without exception with an  
indestructible sword, You possess a vajra that secures  
the buddha body of indestructible reality.

Bellowing the HŪM of Vajrahūṃkāra, gateway to the seed  
syllables indicative of buddha speech, **holding an  
indestructible arrow as a weapon and severing all things  
without exception with an indestructible sword**, gateway  
to the hand emblems indicative of buddha mind, **you possess a  
vajra that secures the buddha body of indestructible  
reality**,<sup>1008</sup> the gateway indicative of buddha body.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:7)***

འདྲི་ཐུག་ཅིག་སུ་གཡུལ་སེལ་བ།  
འདྲི་ཐུག་འབར་བ་མིག་མི་བཟང་།  
སྐྱེ་ཡང་འདྲི་ཐུག་འབར་བ་སྟེ།  
འདྲི་ཐུག་འབེབས་པ་འབེབས་པ་ཆེ།

Vanquishing foes in battle with the unique vajra,  
Endowed with the dreadful eye of indestructible blaze,  
Your hair also ablaze with indestructible reality, You  
are the great ingress—the ingress of indestructible  
reality.

**Vanquishing foes in battle**, defeating them **with the unique  
vajra** that is emptiness, **endowed with the dreadful eye of  
indestructible blaze** that is pristine cognition, the **hair** of  
your head **also ablaze with fire**—the blaze of **indestructible  
reality**—you are the **great ingress**, the one who establishes  
**the ingress of indestructible reality**.<sup>1009</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:8)***



མིག་བརྒྱ་པ་སྟེ་དོ་རྗེའི་མིག་  
ལུས་ནི་དོ་རྗེའི་བ་སྐུ་ཅན།  
དོ་རྗེའི་སྐུ་ནི་གཅིག་སུའི་ལུས།  
སེན་མོ་སྐྱེས་པ་དོ་རྗེའི་ཚྭ།

Endowed with a hundred eyes—the eyes of  
indestructible reality— Your body has indestructible  
bristling pores,  
The indestructible hairs indicating that the body is  
unique.  
The nails are sharp, like the tips of a vajra.

**Endowed with a hundred eyes—the eyes of indestructible reality**, indicative of inconceivable pristine cognition—**your body has pores** indicative of the intrinsic nature of **indestructible reality**, **the indestructible hairs** of your entire body **indicating that the body is unique** in its natural expression. **The nails** of your fingers **are growing sharp, like the tips of a vajra.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:9)***

དོ་རྗེ་སྐྱིད་པོ་པགས་པ་མཁེགས།  
དོ་རྗེའི་འབྲེང་བོགས་དཔལ་དང་ལྷན།  
དོ་རྗེའི་རྒྱན་གྱིས་བརྒྱན་པ་སྟེ།  
གད་རྒྱུདས་རྒྱ་རྒྱ་དེས་པར་སྐྱོགས།

Endowed with the thick skin of the indestructible  
nucleus, Wearing a garland of vajras, and glorious,

You are adorned with ornaments of indestructible  
reality, Bellowing the laughter of HĀ HĀ.

**Endowed with the thick skin of the indestructible  
nucleus, wearing a garland of vajras, and glorious, you  
are beauteously adorned with ornaments of blazing  
indestructible reality, your voice definitively bellowing the  
overpowering laughter of HĀ HĀ.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 7:10)***

ཨོ་གོ་རྩལ་པ་དོ་རྩེའི་རྒྱ།  
ཨོ་རྩལ་དབྱེད་མ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱ་ཆེ་བ།  
ཨོ་རྩལ་རྩེན་གསུམ་ན་རྒྱ་གཅིག་པ།  
ཨོ་རྩལ་མཁའི་མཐའ་གྲས་རྒྱ་རྒྱོགས་པ།  
ཨོ་དང་ལྷན་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མཚན།

The indestructible sound of the six-syllable mantra And  
the great resonance of mighty Mañjughoṣa  
Reverberate in unison in the three world systems,  
Throughout the limitless expanse of space.  
This is the best of those possessed of sound.

**The indestructible sound of the six-syllable mantra  
ARAPACANĀYA and the great resonance of the names of mighty  
Mañjughoṣa reverberate the sound of the profound and  
extensive doctrine in unison throughout the limitless  
expanse of space, because there is nowhere in the three  
world systems that they are unheard. This is the best of  
those possessed of the predisposition, sound.**

## THE PRISTINE COGNITION OF DISCERNMENT [17.5.2.8]

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**In the chapter entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Discernment,” there are forty-two stanzas.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:1)***

ཡང་དག་བདག་མེད་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།  
ཡང་དག་མཐའ་སྟེ་ཡི་གེ་མེད།  
སྟོང་ཉིད་སྣ་བའི་བླ་མཚོ་གསེ།  
ཟབ་ཅིང་རྒྱ་ཆེའི་སྣ་སྟོན་གསེ།

Genuinely endowed with selflessness,  
The actual truth, and the finality of existence,  
You are devoid of syllables.

Leader of bulls expounding emptiness,  
You resonate the profound and extensive [doctrines].

**Genuinely endowed with the selflessness** of phenomena and the selflessness of the individual, **the actual truth, and the finality of existence, you are devoid of syllables**, having annihilated [wrong] views, eclipsed conventions, and rendered all philosophical systems inconspicuous. Supreme teacher, **leader of bulls expounding emptiness**, O Mañjuśrī, **you resonate the profound** doctrine of secret mantra **and the extensive** doctrine of the transcendent perfections for the sake of those to be trained.<sup>1010</sup>

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:2)***

།ཚོས་ཀྱི་དུང་སྟེ་རྒྱ་ཚེན་ལྟན།  
།ཚོས་ཀྱི་གཞི་རྒྱ་བོ་ཚེ།  
།མི་གནས་སྤྱ་དན་འདས་པ་པོ།  
།ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱའི་ཚོས་ཀྱི་རྩ་བོ་ཚེ།

As the conch of the sacred doctrine, you are endowed  
with great sound.  
As the gong of the sacred doctrine, you are endowed  
with great sound.  
Attainer of the nonabiding nirvāṇa,  
You are the mighty drum of the sacred doctrine in the  
ten directions.

**As the conch of the sacred doctrine, you are endowed with the great sound** that reveals the profound teachings. **As the gong of the sacred doctrine, you are endowed with the great sound** that reveals the extensive teachings. **Attainer of the nonabiding nirvāṇa**, free from extremes, essential nature of Jñānasattva, **you demonstrate the mighty drum of the sacred doctrine in** the particular fields of **the ten directions**.

## ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:3)***

།གཟུགས་མེད་གཟུགས་བཟང་དམ་པ་སྟེ།  
།སྤྱ་ཚོགས་གཟུགས་ཅན་ཡིད་ལས་སྦྱེས།  
།གཟུགས་རྣམས་ཐམས་ཅད་སྤྱང་བའི་དཔལ།  
།གཟུགས་བརྟན་མ་ལུས་འཆང་བ་པོ།

Devoid of physical forms and endowed with genuinely noble form, Illuminating the diverse corporeal forms made of thought and all physical forms, You are the glorious sustainer of all reflected imagery without exception.

**You are the buddha body of reality, devoid of physical forms, and the buddha body of perfect resource, endowed with genuinely noble form, and the glorious buddha body of emanation, illuminating the diverse corporeal forms made of thought and all physical forms, the sustainer of all reflected imagery without exception.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:4)***

འཇིགས་པ་མེད་ཅིང་ཆེ་བར་གྲགས།  
འཇམས་གསུམ་དབང་ཕྱུག་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།  
འཕགས་ལམ་ཤིན་ཏུ་མཐོ་ལ་གནས།  
དར་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་ཉོག།

Invincible and greatly renowned,  
You are the mighty lord of the three world systems.  
Abiding on the highest noble path,  
You are the pinnacle of the great banner of the doctrine.

**Invincible** in all ways **and greatly renowned** because you are all-pervasive, **you are the mighty lord** in possession **of the three world systems**. Endowed with the eightfold **noble path** and **abiding on the highest** eleventh level, **you are the pinnacle of the great banner** of enlightened attributes, indicative **of the entire doctrine** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:5)**

|འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་ན་གཞོན་ལུས་གཅིག  
|གནས་བརྟན་ཚན་པོ་སྐྱེ་སྲིད་བདག  
|སུམ་ཅུ་ཅུ་གཉིས་མཚན་འཆང་བ།  
|སྲུག་གྲུ་འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་ན་མཛོམ།

With youthful body, unique in the three world systems,  
As an elder, a senior, a lord of living creatures,  
Maintaining the thirty-two beautiful major marks,  
You are handsome throughout the three worlds.

**With the body of youthful Mañjuśrī, unique in the three world systems, you benefit living beings as an elder, a senior arhat, a lord of living creatures, and so forth. Maintaining the thirty-two excellent major marks and adorned with the eighty beautiful minor marks, you are handsome throughout the three worlds.**

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:6)**

|འཇིག་རྟེན་ཤེས་ལེགས་སློབ་དཔོན་ཏེ།  
|འཇིག་རྟེན་སློབ་དཔོན་འཇིགས་པ་མེད།  
|མགོན་སྐྱབས་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཡིད་གཏུགས་པ།  
|སྐྱབས་དང་སློབ་པ་སྲུ་ན་མེད།

Knowing the world, master of excellence,  
Fearless master of the world,  
Protector, savior, and befriender of the world,

You are the unsurpassed refuge and defender.

**Knowing the cyclic world** to be without inherent existence, **master of the excellence** of nirvāṇa which is without inherent existence, O Jñānasattva, **fearless** and foremost **master of the world** of living beings, ancient **protector, savior, and** handsome **befriender of the cyclic world**, O Jñānasattva, **you are the unsurpassed refuge** of trainees **and defender** of the means of training.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:7)***

ཀླུ་མཁའ་མཁའ་ལ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་པ།  
མཁའ་ཅན་མཁའ་ལོངས་ལོ་ཤེས་མཚོ།

མ་རིག་སྒོ་བའི་སྐབས་འབྱེད་པ།  
སྲིད་པའི་བྲ་བ་འཇོམས་པ་པོ།

Endowed with resources [filling] the limits of space,  
Oceanic pristine cognition that knows all things,  
Bursting the eggshell of ignorance,  
You are the destroyer of the net of rebirth.

**Endowed with resources** suitable for training living beings who fill **the limits of space** through diverse means, performing **oceanic** acts of benefit for the sake of living beings through the **pristine cognition that** quantitatively **knows all things, bursting** and eliminating **the eggshell of** the obscuration of **ignorance** with regard to the causes and results of positive and negative actions, **you are the destroyer** of the fundamental ignorance **of the net of rebirth.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:8)***

།ཉོན་མོངས་མ་ལུས་ནི་བྱེད་པ།  
 །འཁོར་བའི་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་ཕ་རོལ་སོན།  
 །ཡི་ཤེས་དབང་བསྐྱར་ཅོད་པན་ཅན།  
 །རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་རྒྱན་དུ་ཐོགས།

Pacifying all afflictive mental states,  
 Reaching the far shore of the ocean of cyclic existence,  
 And possessing the diadem of the empowerment of  
 pristine cognition, You have the perfect buddhas as  
 adornments.

**Pacifying** the amalgam of ideation associated with **all afflictive mental states; reaching** nirvāṇa, **the far shore of the ocean of cyclic existence**, which comprises birth, aging, ill health, and death and is hard to cross; **and possessing the diadem** indicative of the attainment **of the empowerment of pristine cognition, you have the** genuinely **perfect buddhas as your adornments.**<sup>1011</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:9)**

།སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་གསུམ་གྱི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་ནི།  
 །སྤུམ་སེལ་མཐའ་ཡས་གྲོལ་གསུམ་ཐོབ།  
 །སྤྱིབ་པ་ཀུན་ལས་ངེས་པར་གྲོལ།  
 །མཁའ་ལྗང་མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་ལ་གནས།

Pacifying the sufferings encompassed in the three  
 aspects of suffering, You dispel the three and attain  
 the endless three modes of liberation.  
 Emancipated from all obscurations,  
 You abide in sameness which resembles space



YOU ABIDE IN SAMENESS, WHICH RESEMBLES SPACE.

**Pacifying** and released from the eight **sufferings**<sup>1012</sup> **encompassed in the three aspects of suffering**, which are associated respectively with formative predispositions, change, and actual suffering, **you dispel the threefold** [mundane] body, speech, and mind **and attain the pure and endless three modes of liberation** associated with the three buddha bodies. **Emancipated from all the obscurations** of afflictive mental states and knowledge, **you abide in** the meditative equipoise of **sameness, which resembles space.**<sup>1013</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:10)***

ཉོན་མོངས་ཟིམ་ཀུན་ལས་འདས།  
དུས་གསུམ་དུས་མེད་རྟོགས་པ་པོ།  
སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་སྐྱེ་ཆེན་པོ།  
ཡོན་ཏན་ཐོད་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཐོད།

Having transcended all the stains of the afflictive mental states, You understand the three times and timelessness.

Mighty *nāga* among all sentient beings,<sup>1014</sup>

You are the summit of those who partake of the summit of enlightened attributes.

**Having transcended all the stains of the afflictive mental states** during meditative equipoise, **you understand the three times and timelessness** during postmeditation. As the buddha, **mighty nāga among all sentient beings**, O Mañjuśrī, **you are the summit of those** tenth-level bodhisattvas **who themselves partake of the summit of enlightened attributes.**<sup>1015</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:11)**

ཉེན་མོངས་ཀུན་ལས་རྣམ་གྲོལ་བ།  
ནམ་མཁའ་ལས་ལ་རབ་གནས་པ།  
ཡིད་བཞིན་ལོར་བུ་ཆེན་པོ་འཆང་།  
ལྷུབ་བདག་རིན་ཆེན་ཀུན་གྱི་མཚོག

Liberated from all the afflictive mental states,<sup>1016</sup>  
Established in the path of space,  
Holding the great wish-fulfilling gem,  
All-Pervading Lord, you are the best of all precious  
things.

**Liberated from all** the five attributes of the senses which are the objects of **the afflictive mental states, established in** the truth of emptiness, **the path of space**, bringing forth all that is desired in the manner of those **holding the great wish-fulfilling gem, All-Pervading Lord, Jñānasattva, you are the best of all precious things.**<sup>1017</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:12)**

འདས་ག་བསམ་ཤིང་ཆེན་རྒྱས་པ་སྟེ།  
ལྷུས་པ་བཟང་པོ་ཆེ་བའི་མཚོག  
བྱིད་པོ་སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་དོན་བྱིད།  
ལན་འདོད་སེམས་ཅན་མཉམས་གཤེན་པ།

Extensive, mighty wish-granting tree,  
Greatest of noble vases,

As an actor, you act for the benefit of all sentient beings,  
And you exhibit fond affection for sentient beings  
because you seek their benefit.

Bringing forth the **extensive** benefit of living beings, in the manner of a **mighty wish-granting tree**, you are the **greatest** because you act for the benefit of living beings in the manner **of a noble vase**. Although **as an actor** you achieve your own benefit, you **also act for the benefit of all sentient beings, and you exhibit fond affection and love for sentient beings because you always seek the benefit** of living beings.<sup>1018</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:13)***

།བཟང་དན་ཤེས་ཤིང་དུས་ཤེས་ལ།  
།བྱུང་བདག་དམ་ཤེས་དམ་ཚོག་ལྷན།  
།དུས་ཤེས་སེམས་ཅན་དབང་པོ་ཤེས།  
།རྣམ་གྲོལ་གསུམ་ལ་མཁས་པ་པོ།

Knowing those who are excellent and poor, and knowing the appropriate times, All-Pervading Lord, you know the commitments and keep the commitments.

Knowing the appropriate times, you know those sentient beings of acumen, And you are adroit in the three modes of liberation.

**Knowing those** students **who are excellent and poor** recipients, **and knowing the appropriate times** for teaching through your compassionate spirituality, **All-Pervading Lord, you know the commitments** that benefit living beings **and you keep the commitments** without transgressing them. **Knowing the appropriate times** for imparting training and not imparting the training, **you know those sentient beings of sharp and dull acumen, and you are adroit in the three**

**modes of liberation**, which are the vehicles of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas.<sup>1019</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:14)***

ཡོན་ཏན་ལྡན་ཞིང་ཡོན་ཏན་ཤེས།  
ཚེས་ཤེས་བཟ་ཤེས་བཟ་ཤེས་འབྱུང་།  
བཟ་ཤེས་ཀུན་གྱི་བཟ་ཤེས་པ།  
བྲགས་པ་བཟ་ཤེས་སྣོན་བྲགས་དགེ།

Endowed with enlightened attributes, you know  
enlightened attributes.

Since you know all things, the auspicious brings forth  
the auspicious And the most auspicious of all that is  
auspicious.

Virtuous is your reputation, O renowned and auspicious  
one!

**Endowed with** excellent **enlightened attributes** for your own benefit, **you know** those **enlightened attributes** that are for the benefit of others. **Since you know** that **all things** are without inherent existence, **the auspicious view brings forth the auspicious** result, the meditation **of all that is auspicious, and the** conduct that is **most auspicious. Virtuous is your reputation, O auspicious** Jñānasattva, **renowned** among living beings!<sup>1020</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:15)***

|དབུགས་འབྱིན་ཆེན་པོ་དགའ་སྟོན་ཆེ།  
 |དགའ་ཆེན་རོལ་མོ་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།  
 |བཀུར་སྟེ་རིམ་གྲོ་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས།  
 |མཚོག་ཏུ་དགའ་བ་གྲགས་བདག་དཔལ།

With great consolation and great festivity,  
 You are a display of supreme delight, which is great.  
 Respected and delighting in supreme, excellent service,  
 You are the glorious, renowned lord.

Offering **great consolation** from differentiating thoughts, **and with great festivity**, bringing delight and joy to those who are to be trained, **you are a display of supreme delight, which is great** because you guide by diverse skillful means. Adroit **and respected** by living beings, you are a focal point of **excellent service. Delighting in the supreme** adamant meditative stability, **you** abide on **the** eleventh level, **glorious Jñānasattva, lord renowned** in all the tantras.<sup>1021</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:16)**

|མཚོག་ལྷན་མཚོག་སྤྱིན་གཙོ་བོ་སྟེ།  
 |སྐྱབས་ཀྱི་དམ་པ་སྐྱབས་སུ་འོས།  
 |འཇིགས་ཆེན་དབྱ་སྟེ་རབ་ཀྱི་མཚོག་  
 |འཇིགས་པ་མ་ལུས་སེལ་བ་པོ།

Supremely endowed, O Principal Lord, you confer the  
 supreme [vehicle].  
 You are the most sacred and worthy refuge among  
 refuges.  
 Enemy of great fears, you are most excellent,

The dispeller of all fears without exception.

**Endowed** with the **supreme** major and minor marks, **you confer the supreme** vehicle on bodhisattvas of the tenth level. As their supreme and **principal lord, O Mañjuśrī, you are the most sacred and worthy refuge among refuges.** Known as the **enemy of great fears** (*mahābhayāriḥ*, 'jigs chen dgra), **you are the excellent and most perfect defender** of living beings, **the dispeller of all fears** of cyclic existence, **without exception.**<sup>1022</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:17)***

།གུལ་ཕུད་ཕུད་ཕུ་ལྷ་ལོ་ཅན།  
།རལ་པ་སྲུང་ཅོད་པན་ཐོགས།  
།གདོད་ལྷ་གུལ་ཕུད་ལྷ་དང་ལྷན།  
།ཟུར་ཕུད་ལྷ་པ་མེ་ཏོག་ཐོད།

With a braid of hair, topknot, and [flowing] locks, You  
wear a diadem with a bond of matted, rattan-like hair.  
You have five faces, each with five braids of hair,  
And five topknots with floral crests.

**With a matted braid of hair** (*ral pa'i gtsug phud*), a **topknot** (*phud bu*) fastened with a pin of precious gems, **and flowing locks, you wear a diadem** indicative of the lord of the enlightened family, its top fastened **with a bond of matted, rattan-like hair** (*ral pa muñja*). Acting for the benefit of living beings, **you have five faces, each** [head] **with five braids of hair, and five matted topknots** (*zur phud*), bound **with floral crests.**<sup>1023</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:18)***

མགོ་རྒྱུ་བརྟེན་ལྷན་ལྷན་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།  
ཚངས་པར་སྦྱོང་བ་བརྟེན་ལྷན་ལྷན་མཚོགས།  
དཀའ་སྦྱོར་མཐར་སྦྱིན་དཀའ་སྦྱོར་ཆེ།  
གཙུག་ལྷན་དམ་པ་གོ་ཉ་མ།

With round and shaven head and great ascetic discipline,  
Celibate in conduct, you are supreme in ascetic discipline.

As Gautama, you maintain the great ascetic practices  
Through which austerity is perfected, along with the sacred vows of purification.

**With round and shaven head and great ascetic discipline** that naturally arises, in the guise of a fully ordained monk, **celibate in conduct, you are supreme in** the austerities of the pious attendants and hermit buddhas and in the **ascetic discipline** of the awareness holders. **As** Śākyamuni, **Gautama**, at Rājagṛha and elsewhere, **you maintain the twelve great ascetic practices through which austerity is perfected, along with the sacred vows of purification** (*snātaka, gtsang gnas dam pa*).<sup>1024</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:19)***

བྲམ་ཐེ་ཚངས་པ་ཚངས་པ་ཤེས།  
སྦྱོང་བ་ལྷན་ལྷན་མཚོགས།  
གོ་ཉ་མ་ཐར་པ་རྒྱུ་གོ་ཉ་མ།  
རྒྱུ་གོ་ཉ་མ་ཐར་པ་ཐོབ།

As a brāhmaṇ, celibate, and knower of Great Brahmā,  
 You attain the purity of nirvāṇa,  
 With a body emancipated, released, and liberated.  
 The liberated [obscuration of afflictive mental states] is  
 quiescent, And the [obscuration of knowledge] is  
 quiescent.

**As a brāhmaṇ, celibate** anchorite, **and** in the guise of a bodhisattva, **knower of Great Brahmā** and the two truths, **you** act for the benefit of living beings and **attain nirvāṇa, the purity of** adamantine meditative stability that transcends suffering. You are endowed **with** the **body** of a sugata, **emancipated** and **released** from cyclic existence **and liberated** in nirvāṇa. **Liberated** from thoughts of differentiation, **the** obscuration of afflictive mental states **is quiescent, and** the obscuration of knowledge **is quiescent.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:20)***

ལྷ་པོ་འདས་ཞི་ལྷ་པོ་འདས།  
 ལེགས་པར་ལྷ་པོ་འདས་དང་ཉེ།  
 བདེ་སྐྱབས་སེལ་བ་མཐར་གྱུར་པ།  
 རྒྱལ་བུ་ལུས་ལས་འདས་པ་ལོ།

Endowed with the quiescence of nirvāṇa,  
 As one who has attained nirvāṇa, or as an excellent one  
 who has almost attained nirvāṇa, Having perfected  
 these states in order to dispel happiness and suffering,  
 You are free from attachment, transcendent of the  
 body.

As a bodhisattva **endowed with the quiescence of nirvāṇa,**  
**as** a buddha— **one who has attained nirvāṇa**—and **as an**  
**excellent** pious attendant or hermit buddha **who has almost**



**attained nirvāṇa, having perfected these states in order to transcend and dispel the limits of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, happiness and suffering, you are free from attachment, transcendent of the body composed of contaminants.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:21)***

ལྷུབ་པ་མེད་པ་དཔེ་མེད་པ།  
ལེ་མཛོན་མི་སྣང་གསལ་བྱེད་མིན།  
ལེ་འགྱུར་ཀུན་འགྲོ་བྱུབ་པ་པོ།  
ལྷ་ཞིང་ཟག་མེད་ས་བོན་གྲལ།

Unconquered, incomparable, inconspicuous,  
Unperceived, devoid of distinguishing marks,  
Unchanging, you are the pervader with total access,  
Subtle, devoid of contaminants, and devoid of seeds.

Endowed with the four assurances, **unconquered, incomparable** buddha body of reality, you know the truth that is devoid of extremes. **Inconspicuous** as an object, **unperceived** by the intellect as an object, **devoid of the distinguishing marks** associated with the transmissions, permanent owing to your **unchanging** embodiment, Jñānasattva, **you are the pervader with total access** because you appear diversely, **subtle**, hard to comprehend, **devoid of the contaminants** of afflictive mental states, **and devoid of** fundamental ignorance, which is the **seed** of cyclic existence.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:22)***

འདྲུལ་མེད་རྒྱལ་བུལ་འི་མ་མེད།  
འདིས་པ་སྤངས་པ་སྦྱོན་མེད་པ།  
འཕྱིན་ཏུ་སང་པ་སང་པའི་བདག  
འཁྱུན་ཤེས་འཁྱུན་རིག་དམ་པའོ།

Immaculate, stainless, taintless, Devoid of faults and  
flawless,  
You are wide awake, a master of wakefulness,  
Genuine, all-knowing, and all-cognizant.

**Immaculate** buddha body of reality, **stainless** buddha body of perfect resource, **taintless** buddha body of emanation, Jñānasattva, **devoid of faults and flawless, you are wide awake** to the power of aspirations, and **a master of wakefulness** since you are engaged in benefiting living beings. You are the **genuine** one in whom **all-knowing** quantitative knowledge **and all-cognizant** definitive knowledge are indivisible.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:23)***

འཇམ་པར་ཤེས་པའི་ཚོས་ཉིད་འདས།  
འཡི་ཤེས་གཉིས་མེད་ཚུལ་འཆང་བ།  
འཇམ་པར་རྟོག་མེད་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ།  
འདྲུས་གསུམ་སངས་རྒྱས་ལས་བྱེད་པ།

Transcending the phenomenal nature of consciousness,  
Maintaining the modality of pristine cognition, without  
duality, You are free from conceptual thought and  
effortless,  
Performing the activity of the buddhas of the three

times.

**Transcending the phenomenal nature of conceptual thoughts and consciousness, maintaining the modality of pristine cognition** in which awareness and emptiness are **without duality, you are** the presence of the essential nature, **free from conceptual thought and effortless, performing the enlightened activity of the buddhas of the three times.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:24)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་ཐོག་མ་ཐ་མ་མེད།  
།དང་པོའི་སངས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུ་མེད་པ།

།ཡི་ཤེས་མིག་གཅིག་ཇི་མ་མེད།  
།ཡི་ཤེས་ལུས་ཅན་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས།

Buddha without beginning and end,  
Original buddha without cause,  
With the unique eye of pristine cognition, stainless,  
You are the tathāgata endowed with the body of pristine cognition.

Uncreated **buddha without beginning and** without cessation or **end, original buddha** body of reality, **without cause** and conditions, **stainless** buddha body of perfect resource, teaching the Great Vehicle **with the unique eye of pristine cognition, you are the tathāgata**—the buddha body of emanation **endowed with the body of pristine cognition.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:25)***

།ཚིག་གི་དབང་ལུག་ལྷན་པ་ཚེ།  
 །ལྷན་པའི་རྒྱེས་མཚོག་ལྷན་པའི་རྒྱལ།  
 །ལྷན་པའི་དམ་པ་མཚོག་གི་གནས།  
 །ལྷན་པའི་མེད་གེ་རྩོགས་པ་མེད།

Master of words, great expounder,  
 Exemplary expounder, king of speech,  
 You are the best of expounders, the supreme repository,  
 The invincible lion of speech.

**Master of words, great adroit expounder** of provisional meaning, **exemplary expounder** of definitive meaning, **king of speech, you are the best of expounders, the supreme repository** adroit in both provisional and definitive [meanings], **the invincible** and peerless **lion of overpowering speech**.<sup>1025</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:26)**

།ཀླན་ཏུ་ལྷ་བ་མཚོག་ཏུ་དགའ།  
 །གཟི་བརྗིད་སྲེང་བ་ལྷ་ན་སྣུག།  
 །འོད་བཟང་འབར་བ་དཔལ་གྱི་བེའུ།  
 །ལག་ན་འོད་འབར་སྣང་བ་པོ།

Seeing all [beings], you are endowed with supreme  
 delight,  
 Splendor, and garlands, beautiful to behold.  
 You manifest the glorious eternal knot, ablaze with fine  
 light, And the light that blazes in your hands.

**Seeing all** living beings, **you are endowed with supreme delight**, giving rise to happiness, with blazing **splendor**, ornaments, **and garlands** that are pleasant and **beautiful to behold** (*sudarśanaḥ, lta na sdug*).<sup>1026</sup> **You manifest** the

features of your body to living beings, including **the glorious eternal knot** (*śrīvatsa*, *dpal be'u*) at the heart, indicative of nonconceptuality and **ablaze with fine light, and the light that blazes in your hands.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:27)***

།སྤྲུལ་པ་ཚེ་མཚོག་གཙོ་བོ་སྟེ།  
།ལྷག་རྩུ་འབྲིན་པ་གྲ་ན་མེད།  
།སྤྲུལ་རྣམས་མ་ལུས་ལྗོན་པའི་ཤིང་།  
།ནད་དོ་ཅོག་གི་དག་ཚེ་བ།

Supremely great physician, foremost,  
Unsurpassed extractor of pain,  
You are the tree of all medications without exception,  
The mighty foe of all ailments.<sup>1027</sup>

**Supremely great physician, foremost** of those alleviating the ailments of living beings, **unsurpassed extractor of pain, you are the tree of all medications without exception**, comprising the eighty-four thousand aggregates of the sacred doctrine, **the mighty foe** and subduer **of all ailments**, comprising the eighty-four thousand afflictive mental states.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:28)***

།སྤྲུག་གུ་འཛིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་གྱི་མཚོག་  
།དཔལ་ལྷན་རྒྱ་སྐར་དྲུག་ལ་འཁོར་ཅན།  
།ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱ་ནམ་མཁའི་མཐར་ཐུག་པར།  
།ཚོས་གྱི་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ལེགས་པར་འཇུགས།

Lovely and preeminent among the three world systems,  
With the circle of glorious constellations  
Extending as far as the reaches of space throughout the  
ten directions, You excellently raise the victory banner  
of the sacred doctrine.

**Lovely and preeminent among** those who impart training in **the three world systems**, acting for the benefit of living beings **with the circle of glorious constellations**, and **extending as far as the limitless reaches of space throughout the ten directions**, starting with the east, **you excellently raise the victory banner of the sacred doctrine**, establishing those to be trained in virtuous action.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:29)***

།འགྲོ་ན་གདུགས་གཅིག་ཡངས་པ་སྟེ།  
།བྱམས་དང་སྟོང་ཇིའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཅན།  
།དཔལ་ལྷན་པར་གར་གྱི་བདག།  
།བྱུང་བདག་ཆེན་པོ་རིན་ཆེན་གདུགས།

Unique umbrella, wide for the sake of living beings,  
With a circle of loving-kindness and compassion,  
You are the glorious Lotus Lord of the Dance.  
Great pervading lord, you are an umbrella of precious  
gems.

**Unique umbrella** offering shelter from the heat of different afflictions **for the sake of living beings**, **wide** and all-pervasive, **with a** [maṇḍala] **circle of** both **loving-kindness and compassion** that is not separated from living beings, although you are the glorious buddha body of form, performing all movements of the **Lotus Lord of the Dance**

(Padmanartesvara), untainted by flaws, in the manner of physical movements, you do not transgress the benefit of living beings. **Great lord, pervading** living beings with compassionate spirituality, **you are** the unique refuge, **an excellent umbrella of precious gems.**<sup>1028</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:30)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་གཟི་བརྟི་ཆེ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྐུ་འཆང་བ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཆེ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་བསྟན་པ་གཅིག།

Great splendor of all the buddhas,<sup>1029</sup>  
Holding the bodies of all the buddhas,  
Great union of all the buddhas,  
You are the unique teaching of all the buddhas.

**Great splendor of all the buddhas** manifest to all, **holding the three bodies of all the buddhas, great union of the two inseparable truths of all the buddhas, you are the unique one—the essential nature of the uncreated teaching of all the buddhas.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:31)***

།དོ་མེ་རིན་ཆེན་དབང་བསྐྱར་དཔལ།  
།རིན་ཆེན་གྱི་བདག་དབང་ལྷན་སྟེ།  
།འཇིག་རྟེན་དབང་ལྷན་གྱི་བདག་  
།དོ་མེ་འཆང་བ་གྱི་ཇི།

Endowed with the glory of empowerment through the  
vajra and gemstone, You are the lord of all masters of  
the precious gem,  
The lord of all masters of the world,  
The ruler of all Vajradharas.

**Endowed with the glory of empowerment through the vajra and gemstone crown, you are the genuine lord of all masters of the precious gem** from which manifold lights emerge, the **lord of all** aspects of Avalokiteśvara, **masters of the world** who act on behalf of living beings, and you are Mañjuśrī, **the ruler of** the Lord of Secrets (Guhyapati) and of **all Vajradharas.**<sup>1030</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:32)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཐུགས་ཆེ་བ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཐུགས་ལ་གནས།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྐྱེ་ཆེ་བ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་གསུང་ཡང་ཡིན།

You are the greatness of the mind of all the buddhas,  
Abiding in the mind of all the buddhas,  
The greatness of the body of all the buddhas,  
And you are also the speech of all the buddhas.

**You are the greatness of the mind of all the buddhas, Vajrapāṇi abiding in the mind of all the buddhas, Mañjuśrī, the greatness of the body of all the buddhas, and you are also Avalokita, the speech of all the buddhas.**<sup>1031</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:33)***



།དོ་རྗེ་ཉི་མ་སྣང་བ་ཆེ།  
 །དོ་རྗེ་ཟླ་བ་རྩི་མེད་འོད།  
 །ཆགས་བྲལ་ལ་སོགས་ཆགས་པ་ཆེ།  
 །ལ་དོག་སྣ་ཚོགས་འབར་བའི་འོད།

You are the indestructible sun, with intense light, And  
 the indestructible moon, with taintless, diffusing light;  
 Devoid of attachment and so forth, and endowed with  
 great attachment, A blazing light of diverse colors.

**You are the indestructible sun**, endowed **with an intense**  
 aureole of **light**, the intrinsic nature of discriminative  
 awareness and the lower palate which facilitates recitation;  
**and the indestructible moon**, endowed **with** an aureole of  
**taintless, diffusing light**, the intrinsic nature of skillful  
 means associated with the upper palate.<sup>1032</sup> Once the tongue  
 has been visualized as indestructible reality, the vowels and the  
 consonants emerge. The causal vehicles **and so forth** are  
**devoid of attachment**, **and** the mantra vehicles are **endowed**  
**with great attachment**, resembling **a blazing light** that acts  
 on behalf of living beings by means **of diverse colors** that are  
 the vehicles.

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 8:34)**

།དོ་རྗེའི་སྒྲིལ་ཀྱང་རྗོགས་སངས་རྒྱས།  
 །སངས་རྒྱས་འགོ་བའི་<sup>1033</sup> ཚོས་འཛིན་པ།  
 །དཔལ་ལྷན་སངས་རྒྱས་པལྒྱ་སྒྲིལ།  
 །ཀྱུན་མཁྱེན་ཡེ་ཤེས་མཛོད་འཛིན་པ།

Perfect buddha, seated in the posture of indestructible reality, You maintain the sacred doctrine of the buddha for living beings.

O lotus-born glorious buddha,  
You hold the repository of pristine cognition that knows all things.

You are a **perfect buddha** because you have attained nirvāṇa, **seated in the posture of** equipoise in **indestructible reality**, or emptiness. **You maintain the sacred doctrine of the buddha** body of form **for** the benefit of **living beings**. **O lotus-born glorious buddha**, untainted by the defects of cyclic existence, **you hold the repository of pristine cognition that knows all things** quantitatively and knows them definitively.

This verse and the next two lines [of the subsequent verse] reveal that the glorious lotus-born buddha Saroruhavajra or Padmākara is himself indivisible from Mañjuśrī.<sup>1034</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:35)***

། ཀྱུལ་པོ་སྐུ་འཕྲུལ་སྣ་ཚོགས་འཚང་།  
། ཚེ་བ་སངས་ཀྱིས་རིག་སྣགས་འཚང་།  
། རྡོ་རྗེ་ཚོན་པོ་རལ་གྱི་ཚེ།  
། ཡི་གེ་མཚོག་སྟེ་རྣམ་པར་དག

King maintaining diverse magical emanations,  
Buddha endowed with greatness, you hold the gnostic mantras

With a mighty sword, indicative of sharp indestructible reality, And the supreme scripture, indicative of purity.

**King** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **maintaining** the **diverse magical emanations** indicative of manifold skillful means, **buddha endowed with** qualities of **greatness** including ten powers, the four assurances, and the eighteen distinct attributes, **you hold the gnostic mantras** of renunciation and realization. You are brandishing **a sword** with **mighty** light in the right hand, **indicative of sharp indestructible reality**, or emptiness, **and** supporting in the left hand a book containing **the supreme scripture, indicative of the purity** of the uncreated syllable A.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:36)***

མཐོག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་སྤྱན་བསྐྱེད་གཙོད།  
 ལམ་ཆོན་ཆ་ཆེན་པོ་དོ་རྩེ་ཆོས།  
 དོ་རྩེ་ཐུབ་མོ་རྩི་ན་རྩིག།  
 དོ་རྩེ་སྤོ་གྲོས་དོན་བཞིན་རིག།

Endowed with the Great Vehicle, which cuts off sufferings,  
 [Brandishing] a mighty weapon and the indestructible doctrine, With profound indestructible reality, victorious and victorious,<sup>1035</sup>  
 Your indestructible intelligence knows things just as they are.

You perform acts of liberation, **cutting off** the **sufferings** of cyclic existence by means of the path and fruit of **the Great Vehicle**, brandishing the sword that is **a mighty weapon and** supporting the book of **the indestructible doctrine. With** buddha mind of **profound indestructible reality, victorious** buddha speech, **and victorious** buddha body, **your intelligence**, which discerns **indestructible** reality, or

emptiness, **knows all things just as they are.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:37)***

ཁོ་ལ་སྤྱིན་པ་ཀུན་རྫོགས་པ།  
ཁོ་ལ་རྣམས་ཀུན་གྱི་རྒྱན་དང་ལྡན།  
རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་བདག་མེད་ཚོས།  
ཡང་དག་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྣམ་འོད་བཟང་།

Having perfected all the transcendent perfections,  
Endowed with the ornaments of all levels,  
You are purity, selflessness of phenomena,  
And exquisite moonlight, the genuine pristine cognition.

**Having** comprehended and **perfected all the transcendent perfections** and the ten levels, **endowed with the ornaments of** the eleventh level and the **levels of all** the pious attendants and hermit buddhas, O Mañjuśrī, **you are** the **purity** of ultimate truth, free from phenomena owing to the **selflessness of** the individual and **phenomena, and** you are the **exquisite moonlight** of the buddha body of perfect resource, **the genuine pristine cognition** of reality's expanse.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:38)***

བཅོམ་ཆེན་མུ་འཕྲུལ་པ་ལྟེ།  
རྒྱུད་ཀུན་གྱི་ནི་བདག་པོ་མཚོག

།དེ་ཇིག་དན་ནི་མ་ལུས་ལྟན།  
།ཡི་ཤེས་སྐྱུ་རྣམས་མ་ལུས་འཆང།

Endowed with great perseverance in this *Net of Magical Emanation*, You are the supreme master of all tantras. Endowed with all the indestructible seats without exception, You hold the pristine cognitions and buddha bodies without exception.

Buddha body of emanation, **endowed with great perseverance**, without duality **in** respect of the **net of magical** emptiness, arising as diverse **emanations**, O **Supreme** Mañjuśrī, **you are the master of all tantras** since **this** is the root tantra of all the tantras of word, tantras of meaning, Ubhayatantras, Yogatantras, and Unsurpassed Tantras. You are **endowed with** the ritual of visualizing **the seat**, arising from emptiness or **indestructible** reality, comprising **all** the lotus, sun, and moon cushions, **without exception**. And **you hold the five pristine cognitions, the five buddha bodies, and** their retinues, **without exception**.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:39)***

།ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་སློབ་གྲོས་བཟང།  
།ས་ཡི་སླིང་པོ་འགྲོ་བ་འཛིན།  
།སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་སླིང་པོ་ཆེ།  
།སྤྱལ་བའི་འཁོར་ལོ་སྣ་ཚོགས་འཆང།

As Samantabhadra, Sumati,  
Kṣitigarbha, and the sustainer of living beings,  
You are endowed with the great nucleus of all the  
buddhas,

Holding the various emanating circles [of deities].

Acting on behalf of living beings as the bodhisattva **Samantabhadra**, Mañjuśrī **Sumati**, **Kṣitigarbha**, Avalokiteśvara **the sustainer of living beings**, and so forth, **you are endowed with the nucleus of all the buddhas**, the **great** pristine cognition of reality's expanse in which all the five pristine cognitions are indivisible. You become manifest to living beings, **holding the various** extensive and concise assemblages of deities, the **circles emanating** from that pristine cognition.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 8:40)***

།དངོས་པོ་ཀུན་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་མཚོག  
།དངོས་པོ་ཀུན་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་འཛིན།  
།སྐྱེ་མེད་ཚེས་དེ་སྣ་ཚོགས་སྟོན།<sup>1036</sup>  
།ཚེས་ཀུན་དེ་བོ་ཉིད་འཆང་བ།

Supreme intrinsic nature of all entities,  
Maintaining the intrinsic nature of all entities,  
You diversely demonstrate the uncreated doctrine,  
Holding the essential nature of all things.

**Supreme** and indivisible from emptiness, which is the **intrinsic nature of all entities** of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa; **maintaining** by means of meditative equipoise the meaning of emptiness, which is **the intrinsic nature of all entities**, **you** act for the benefit of living beings because you **diversely demonstrate** during postmeditation **the uncreated doctrine** present in meditative equipoise, **holding** in your mind **the essential nature** in which **all things** are coalesced.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:41)**

ཤེས་རབ་ཚན་པོས་སྐད་ཅིག་ལ།  
ཚེས་ཀུན་ལོང་དུ་རྒྱད་པ་འཆང་།  
ཚེས་ཀུན་མཛོན་པར་རྟོགས་པ་སྟེ།  
སྤྱབ་པ་སློ་མཚོག་ཡང་དག་མཐའ།

Maintaining the comprehension of all things  
In a single instant owing to your great discriminative  
awareness, Endowed with the clear realization of all  
things, O Sage with supreme intelligence, this is the  
finality of existence.

**Maintaining the comprehension in a single instant** that **all things** are without inherent existence **owing to your great discriminative awareness**, O Jñānasattva, **endowed with the clear realization of all things** of the cyclic world and nirvāṇa, you are liberated from grasping the uncreated. **O Sage with supreme intelligence** that knows the actual truth, subduing the four demonic forces, **this is the finality of existence**, liberated from the cyclic world.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 8:42)**

མི་གཡོ་རབ་ཏུ་དང་བའི་བདག་  
རྟོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་བྱང་རྒྱུབ་འཆང་།  
སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་མཛོན་སྤྲུམ་པ།  
ཡི་ཤེས་མི་སྣེ་འོད་རབ་གསལ། །

Unwavering, with an extremely clear disposition,

Perfect buddha holding enlightenment,  
With direct perception of all the buddhas,  
You radiate light with the flames of pristine cognition.

**Unwavering** in acting on behalf of living beings, **with an extremely clear disposition** for the sake of living beings, **perfect buddha holding enlightenment** for the sake of others, comprehending the reality **of all the buddhas with direct perception, you radiate light**, burning all thoughts of differentiation **with the sharp flames of remedial pristine cognition.**



## THE PRISTINE COGNITION OF SAMENESS [17.5.2.9]

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**In the chapter entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Sameness,” there are twenty-four stanzas.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:1)***

།འདོད་པའི་དོན་གྱུབ་དམ་པ་སྟེ།  
།དན་སོང་ཐམས་ཅད་རྣམ་སྦྱང་བ།  
།མགོན་པོ་སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་མཚོག།  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་རབ་གྲོལ་བྱེད།

Accomplishing the desired objectives, you are the best,  
Purifying all lower realms.  
O Protector, supreme among all sentient beings,  
You liberate all sentient beings.

**Accomplishing the desired objectives** of yourself and others, **you are the best** and supreme one who has perfected the eleventh [level], **purifying all lower realms** by means of votive terracottas, cremation rites, consecrations, burnt offerings, and so forth. **O Protector** of living beings, **supreme refuge among all sentient beings**, sustaining **all sentient beings**, **you liberate** them from all [negative states].<sup>1037</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 9:2)**

ཉོན་མོངས་གཡུལ་དུ་གཅིག་དཔའ་བ།  
མི་ཤེས་དབང་ཡི་རྒྱལ་ས་པ་འཛོམས།  
ལྷོ་ལྷན་སྐྱེག་འཆང་དཔལ་དང་ལྷན།  
དཔའ་བོ་མི་སྐྱུག་གཞུགས་འཆང་བ།<sup>1038</sup>

Unique one, heroic in battle with afflictive mental states,  
Subjugator of the arrogance of unknowing inimical  
forces, Endowed with intelligence and glorious,  
maintaining a sensuous demeanor, You assume heroic,  
wrathful, and unpleasant forms.

**Unique** Mañjuśrī, **heroic in battle with** the eighty[-four] thousand **afflictive mental states, subjugator of the arrogance** and pride **of inimical forces**, comprising the fundamental ignorance of **unknowing**, desire, and hatred, you are the buddha body of reality, **endowed with intelligence, and** the **glorious** buddha body of perfect resource, which transcends cyclic existence. **Maintaining a sensuous demeanor, you also assume heroic, wrathful, and unpleasant forms.**

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 9:3)**

ལག་པ་བརྒྱ་བོ་ཀུན་བསྐྱོད་ཅིང་།  
གོམ་པའི་སྐྱབས་ཀྱིས་གར་བྱེད་པ།  
དཔལ་ལྷན་ལག་པ་བརྒྱས་གར་ལ།  
ནམ་མཁའ་བྱུང་པར་གར་བྱེད་པ།

Flexing all your hundred arms<sup>1039</sup>

And performing dances by the stepping of your feet,  
You dance, pervading space, filling it with your hundred  
glorious arms.

**Flexing all your hundred arms of wrath and performing various dances by the stepping of your feet, you dance, pervading the entirety of space, filling it with your hundred powerful and glorious arms.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:4)***

།ས་ཡི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བཞི་ཡི་ཁྱོན།<sup>1040</sup>  
།ཀར་ས་ཡ་གཅིག་མཐིལ་གྲིས་གནོན།  
།ཀར་མཐིལ་སེན་མོའི་ཁྱོན་གྲིས་ཀྱང།  
།ཚངས་པའི་ཡུལ་ས་ཅེ་ནས་གནོན།

With the sole of a single foot, you press down  
Upon the area covered by the ground of the earth  
maṇḍala, And also with the surface of the nail of your  
big toe, You press down upon the realms of Brahmā,  
from their summit.

**With the sole of a single foot, you can press down upon the area covered by the four continents that form the ground of the earth maṇḍala, and also, simply with the surface of the nail of your big toe, you can press down upon the realms of Brahmā, from their summit.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:5)***

།དོན་གཅིག་གཉིས་མེད་ཚོས་གྱི་དོན།  
 །དམ་པའི་དོན་ཉི་འཇིགས་པ་མེད།  
 །རྣམ་རིག་སྣ་ཚོགས་གཟུགས་དོན་ཅན།  
 །སེམས་དང་རྣམ་ཤེས་རྒྱད་དང་ལྡན།

Endowed with the meaning of the doctrine, the singular  
 nondual meaning, The ultimate meaning that cannot  
 be destroyed,  
 You partake of meaningful forms in accord with various  
 apperceptions, And you partake of the continuum of  
 minds and consciousnesses.

**Endowed with the meaning of the doctrine, the singular  
 meaning** that is **nondual** and free from the four extremes,  
 endowed with **the ultimate meaning that** is free from  
 synonyms and **cannot be destroyed** by the defects of cyclic  
 existence, **you** reveal and **partake of meaningful forms** that  
 train the **various apperceptions** of those to be trained **in  
 accord with** their needs. **You** know and **partake of the  
 continuum of** diverse **minds and consciousnesses**.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:6)***

།དདོས་དོན་མ་ལུས་རྣམས་ལ་དགའ།  
 །སྟོང་པ་ཉིད་དགའ་འདོད་ཆགས་སྟོ།<sup>1041</sup>  
 །སྲིད་པའི་འདོད་ཆགས་སོགས་སྤངས་པ།<sup>1042</sup>  
 །སྲིད་གསུམ་དགའ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།

Delighting in all entities and objects without exception,

Endowed with intelligence that is attached to those who delight in emptiness, Having renounced attachment to the three planes of existence and so forth, You rejoice with great delight in the three planes of existence.

**Delighting in** the demonstration that **all entities and objects without exception** are objects of emptiness, **endowed with** compassion and **intelligence that is attached to those** individuals **who delight in emptiness, having renounced attachment to the three planes of existence and so forth** in your own mental continuum, **you rejoice with great delight in** the living beings of **the three planes of existence.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:7)***

ལྷིན་དཀར་དག་པ་བཞིན་དུ་དཀར།  
འོད་བཟང་སྟོན་ཀའི་སྒྲ་བའི་འོད།  
ཉི་མ་འཆར་ཀའི་དཀྱིལ་ལྗང་མཛེས།  
སེན་མོའི་འོད་ནི་གས་ཆར་དམར།

[You are] white like pure white clouds, Shining like the light of the autumn moon,  
And beautiful like the orb of the rising sun.  
The light of your fingernails is intensely red.

**You are white like pure white clouds** untainted by defects, **shining like the light of the autumn moon, and beautiful like the orb of the rising sun.** You are to be praised on account of your minor marks including **the light of your fingernails,** which is copper-colored, **intensely red.**<sup>1043</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:8)***

།ཅོད་པན་བཟང་པོ་མཐོན་ཀའི་ཕྱོ།  
 །སྐྱ་མཚོག་མཐོན་ཀ་ཆེན་པོ་འཆང་།  
 །ནོར་བུ་ཆེན་པོ་འོད་ཆགས་དཔལ།  
 །སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྲུལ་པའི་རྒྱན་དང་ལྡན།

With the excellent diadem and its sapphire crest,  
 Wearing a great sapphire on your supreme hair,  
 Glorious with the luster of great jewels,  
 You have the ornaments of the buddha body of  
 emanation.

Since you are endowed **with the excellent diadem and its sapphire crest**, the excellent major marks—**wearing a great sapphire on your supreme hair** and so forth—and the minor marks **glorious with the luster of great jewels, you have the ornaments** that reveal **the buddha body of emanation** throughout the billion worlds with their four continents.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:9)***

།འཇིག་རྟེན་ཁམས་བརྒྱ་ཀུན་བསྐྱོད་པ།  
 །རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་རྐང་པའི་སྟོབས་ཆེན་ལྡན།  
 །དེ་ཉིད་འཇན་པ་ཆེན་པོ་འཆང་།  
 །འཇན་པ་བཞི་པོ་ཉིང་འཇིན་རྒྱལ།

Rousing all the hundreds of world realms, Endowed with  
 the great power of the supports for miraculous ability,  
 You maintain great mindfulness of the actual truth,  
 Endowed with the four applications of mindfulness  
 And the king of meditative stability.

**Rousing all the living beings of hundreds of world realms from cyclic existence, endowed with the great power of the four supports for miraculous ability, O Mañjuśrī, you maintain great mindfulness of the actual truth** because you possess the five pristine cognitions, and you are **endowed with the four applications of mindfulness and the king of adamant meditative stability.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:10)***

།བྱང་ཆུབ་ཡན་ལག་མེ་ཉལ་སྤྲོས།  
།དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་མཚོ།  
།ལམ་གྱི་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད་ཚུལ་རིག།  
།ཡང་དག་སངས་རྒྱས་ལམ་རིག་པ།

Fragrant with flowers—the aspects of enlightenment,  
Ocean of the enlightened attributes of the tathāgata,  
Knowing the modality of the eightfold path,  
You know the paths of the genuine buddha.

**Fragrant with pleasant flowers** since you are adorned with **the seven aspects of enlightenment, ocean of the enlightened attributes,** including the powers of **the tathāgata** and the assurances, **knowing the modality of the noble eightfold path** concerning correct view, thought, speech, action, and so forth, **you know** and comprehend without error the meaning of **the five paths of the genuine buddha** and so forth.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:11)***

།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་ལ་ཤས་ཚེར་ཆགས།  
།ནམ་མཁའ་ལྟ་བུར་ཆགས་པ་མེད།  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡིད་ལ་འཇུག།  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡིད་ལྟར་མགྲོགས།

Highly attached to all sentient beings,  
Without attachment, like space,  
Engaging with the minds of all sentient beings,  
You are swift like the minds of all sentient beings.

**Highly attached** since you reveal your emanations **to all sentient beings, without attachment** since, **like space**, you are untainted by defects even though you act for the benefit of living beings, **engaging with** and revealing the buddha body in conformity with **the minds of all sentient beings, you are swift** in movement, **like the minds of all sentient beings.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:12)***

།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་དབང་དོན་ཤེས།  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡིད་འཕྲོག་པ།  
།སྤང་པོ་ལྔ་དོན་དེ་ཉིད་ཤེས།  
།ནམ་དག་སྤང་པོ་ལྔ་འཆང་བ།

Knowing the objects of the sense faculties of all sentient beings,  
Captivating the minds of all sentient beings,  
Knowing the real nature of the five aggregates,  
You maintain the five pure aggregates.

**Knowing the specific objects of the sense faculties of all**



**sentient beings; delighting and captivating the minds of all sentient beings to be trained; knowing the real nature of the five aggregates, including physical forms; and understanding that they are impermanent, imbued with suffering, and devoid of self, you maintain the five pure aggregates that are free from contaminants.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:13)***

།དེས་འབྱུང་ཀུན་གྱི་མཐའ་ལ་གནས།  
།དེས་པར་འབྱུང་བ་ཀུན་ལ་མཁས།  
།དེས་འབྱུང་ཀུན་གྱི་ལམ་ལ་གནས།  
།དེས་པར་འབྱུང་བ་ཀུན་རྟོན་པ།

Abiding in the conclusion of all modes of emancipation,  
Adroit in all modes of emancipation,  
Abiding in the paths of all modes of emancipation,  
You reveal all modes of emancipation.

**Abiding in the adamant stability that is the conclusion of all modes of emancipation, adroit in all the paths of the modes of emancipation, abiding through your own conduct in the paths of all modes of emancipation, you reveal to living beings all modes of emancipation.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:14)***

|ཡན་ལག་བཅུ་གཉིས་སྲིད་ཙ་བཏོན།  
|དག་པ་རྣམ་པ་བཅུ་གཉིས་འཆང་།  
|བདེན་བཞིའི་ཚུལ་གྱི་རྣམ་པ་ཅན།  
|ཤེས་པ་བརྒྱད་པོ་རྟོགས་པ་འཆང་།

Uprooting the twelve links, the basis of the rebirth  
process, Holding the twelve pure aspects  
Along with the aspects of the four truths,  
You maintain the realization of the eight modes of  
consciousness.

**Uprooting the twelve links** of dependent origination and in particular the fundamental ignorance that is **the basis of the rebirth process, holding the twelve pure aspects** corresponding to the twelve links of dependent origination, **along with** comprehension of **the aspects of the four truths** concerning suffering, its origin, and its cessation, **you maintain the pure realization of the eight modes of consciousness.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:15)***

|བདེན་དོན་རྣམ་པ་བཅུ་གཉིས་ལྡན།  
|དེ་ཉིད་རྣམ་པ་བཅུ་དྲུག་རིག།  
|རྣམ་པ་ཉི་ཤུ་བྱང་ཚུབ་པ།  
|རྣམ་པ་མངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་རིག་མཚོག།

Endowed with the twelve aspects of the truths,  
Knowing the sixteen aspects of reality,  
Enlightened through the twenty aspects,

You are supreme in knowing all ways of buddhahood.

**Endowed with** knowledge of **the twelve aspects of the four truths**,<sup>1044</sup> **knowing the sixteen aspects of the reality of emptiness**,<sup>1045</sup> **enlightened through the twenty aspects** according to which each of the five aggregates is considered in terms of its four modalities—impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness—**you are supreme in knowing all the ways** in which all phenomena **of** cyclic existence and nirvana manifest **buddhahood**.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:16)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྐུ་ལ་པའི་སྐུ།  
།བྱེད་པ་ལ་མེད་འགྲེད་པ་ལོ།  
།སྐྱད་ཅིག་ཐམས་ཅད་མཛོན་པར་རྟོགས།  
།སེམས་ཀྱི་སྐྱད་ཅིག་དོན་ཀུན་རིག།

Sending forth the inestimable tens of millions  
Of the emanational bodies of all the buddhas,  
Clearly realizing [reality] at all moments, You know all  
meanings of the mind in an instant.

**Sending forth the emanational bodies of all the buddhas**, the individual deities, the circles of the maṇḍala, and **the inestimable tens of millions of** peaceful and wrathful deities, and **clearly realizing** the meanings of reality **at all moments**, you understand and **know all meanings of the minds** of all sentient beings **in an instant**.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:17)***

ཐེག་པ་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཐབས་ཚུལ་གྱིས།  
འགྲོ་བའི་དོན་ལ་རྟོག་པ་པོ།  
ཐེག་པ་གསུམ་གྱིས་ངེས་འབྱུང་ལ།  
ཐེག་པ་གཅིག་གི་འབྲས་བུར་གནས།

Through the skillful means of diverse vehicles,  
Realizing the benefit of living beings,  
You attain emancipation through the three vehicles  
And abide in the fruit of the single vehicle.

**Through the skillful means of diverse** non-Buddhist and Buddhist **vehicles**, high and low, unwaveringly **realizing the benefit of living beings**, you attain **emancipation** from the sufferings of cyclic existence **through the three vehicles and abide in the** supreme **fruit of the single** unsurpassed **vehicle**.<sup>1046</sup>

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 9:18)*

ཉོན་མོངས་ཁམས་རྣམས་དག་པའི་བདག་  
ལས་ཀྱི་ཁམས་རྣམས་ཟད་བྱེད་པ།  
རྒྱ་བོ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཀུན་ལས་བརྒྱལ།  
སྦྱོར་བའི་དགོན་པ་ལས་བྱུང་བ།

Lord purifying the afflictive mental states and world  
systems, Terminating the realms associated with past  
actions,  
Crossing all oceans and rivers,  
You emerge from the hermitage, united [in the  
provisions].

**Lord purifying the afflictive mental states and world systems** that are the fruit of cyclic existence, **terminating the realms** of cyclic existence **associated with** causes and **past actions, crossing all oceans** that are hard to traverse, **and** specifically the four **rivers** of craving, desire, fundamental ignorance, and egotistical view, **you emerge from the** isolated **hermitage** of emptiness, **united** in the two provisions.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:19)***

ཉོན་མོངས་ཉེབ་ཀྱན་ཉོན་མོངས།  
འག་ཆགས་བཅས་པ་གཏན་སྤངས་པ།  
སྦྱིང་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་ཤེས་རབ་ཐབས།  
དོན་ཡོད་འགོ་བའི་དོན་བྱེད་པ།

Finally abandoning the afflictive mental states,  
Along with the subsidiary afflictive mental states and the  
propensities, You act purposefully for the benefit of  
living beings Through great compassion,  
discriminative awareness, and skillful means.

**Finally abandoning** the five poisons and mistaken view that comprise **the** [primary] **afflictive mental states, along with the** twenty **subsidiary afflictive mental states**, including anger, enmity, annoyance, and miserliness, as well as the mind consumed by all the general afflictive mental states, as well as the substratum consciousness **and the propensities, you act purposefully for the benefit of living beings through great compassion, discriminative awareness, and skillful means.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:20)***

།འདུ་ཤེས་ཀུན་གྱི་དོན་སྦངས་ཤིང་།  
།རྣམ་ཤེས་དོན་ནི་འགོག་པར་བྱེད།  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡུལ་དང་ལྡན།<sup>1047</sup>  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡིད་རིག་པ།

You have abandoned the objective entities of all perceptions, And the objective reality of consciousness brings about their cessation.

Assuming a form corresponding to the [perceptual] range of all sentient beings, You know the minds of all sentient beings.

**You have abandoned the objective entities** that are the apprehension **of all** symbolic **perceptions, and the objective reality of** your discriminative awareness that apprehends **consciousness brings about** the **cessation** of all external objects. **Assuming** the **form of a deity corresponding to the perceptual range of all sentient beings** who are to be trained, **you know** with your nonconceptual buddha mind **the minds of all sentient beings.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:21)***

།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡིད་ལ་གནས།  
།དེ་དག་སེམས་དང་མཐུན་པར་འཇུག།  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་ཡིད་ཚེས་པར་བྱེད།  
།སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡིད་དགའ་བ།

Abiding in the minds of all sentient beings,  
You engage in conformity with their minds.  
Satisfying the minds of all sentient beings,  
You delight the minds of all sentient beings.

Your nonconceptual pristine cognition, **abiding in the minds of all sentient beings, engages** to teach the sacred doctrine **in conformity with the minds** of all these sentient beings. **Satisfying the minds of all sentient beings, you delight the minds of all sentient beings.**

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:22)***

།སྐྱུབ་པ་མཐར་ཕྱིན་འཁྲུལ་པ་མེད།<sup>1048</sup>  
།ཞོར་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་རྣམ་པར་སྦྱངས།  
།དོན་སྲུང་ཐེ་ཚོམ་མེད་པའི་ལྷོ།  
།ཀྱུན་དོན་ཡོན་ཏན་གསུམ་གྱི་བདག།

Unbewildered in reaching the conclusion of philosophical systems, You have abandoned all errors. With an intelligence that is free from hesitation throughout the three scopes, You are the master of all and of the three attributes.

**Unbewildered in reaching the conclusion of philosophical systems** for the benefit of living beings, **you have abandoned all the errors** of misconception, **with an intelligence that is free from hesitation** and doubt **throughout the three** times or three **scopes. You are the master** because you act for the benefit **of all** living beings from extremists to bodhisattvas, **and** you are in control **of the three attributes** espoused by the non-Buddhists, namely, lightness of being, motility, and dullness or inertia.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 9:23)***

།ལུང་པོ་ལྷ་དོན་དུས་གསུམ་དུ།  
 །སྐད་ཅིག་ཐམས་ཅད་བྱེ་བྲག་བྱེད།  
 །སྐད་ཅིག་གཅིག་གིས་རྫོགས་སངས་རྒྱས།  
 །སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་འཆང།

You distinguish details in respect of the objective entities that constitute the five aggregates And in respect of all indivisible moments throughout the three times.

[Bringing forth] perfect buddhahood in an instant, You maintain the intrinsic nature of all the buddhas.

**You distinguish details in respect of the objective entities that constitute the five aggregates**, which are rendered groundless when the phenomena of **the three times** are analyzed, **and in respect of all indivisible moments**, which are also rendered nonexistent when the phenomena of the three times are analyzed. Bringing forth **perfect buddhahood in an instant**, progressing from the tenth level to the eleventh, **you maintain** the adamantine meditative stability that is **the intrinsic nature of all the buddhas**.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 9:24)**

།ལུས་མེད་ལུས་ཏེ་ལུས་གྱི་མཚོག  
 །ལུས་གྱི་མཐའ་ནི་རྫོགས་པ་པོ།  
 །གཟུགས་རྣམས་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཀུན་ཏུ་སྟོན།  
 །འོར་བུ་ཆེན་པོ་རིན་ཆེན་ཏོག

Endowed with the incorporeal, the corporeal, and the supreme body. You are realized in the conclusive goal



supreme body, you are realized in the conclusive goal  
of the body.

Everywhere revealing diverse forms,  
You are the supreme gem, Ratnaketu.

**Endowed with the incorporeal** buddha body of reality, **the corporeal** buddha body of perfect resource, **and the supreme buddha body** of emanation, **you are realized in the conclusive goal of the body** since you are adroit in the objectives of the three buddha bodies. **Everywhere revealing the diverse forms** that train each according to need, **you are** bringing forth all that is desired, in the manner of **the supreme gem, Ratnaketu.**<sup>1049</sup>

## THE PRISTINE COGNITION OF ACCOMPLISHMENT [17.5.2.10]

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**In the chapter entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Accomplishment,” there are fifteen stanzas.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:1)***

།སངས་རྒྱལ་ཀུན་གྱིས་རྟོགས་བྱ་བ།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལྷ་ན་མེད།  
།གསང་སྐྱབས་ལས་བྱུང་ཡི་གེ་མེད།  
།གསང་སྐྱབས་ཚེན་པོ་རིགས་གསུམ་པ།

Unsurpassed enlightenment of the buddhas,  
To be realized by all the buddhas,  
Devoid of syllables, having emerged from the secret  
mantra, You are endowed with the three enlightened  
families of the great secret mantra.

Nonabiding nirvāṇa, which is the **unsurpassed enlightenment of the buddhas, to be realized by all the buddhas** of the three times, **devoid of syllables, having emerged from the secret mantra** without intellectual objectification, **you are endowed with the three enlightened families of the great secret mantra**, the miraculous buddha body, speech, and mind created from that disposition, which arises diversely.<sup>1050</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 10:2)**

།གསང་སྐབས་དོན་ཀུན་སྐྱེད་པ་པོ།  
།ཐིག་ལེ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡི་གེ་མེད།  
།སྟོན་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡི་གེ་ལྷ།  
།ཐིག་ལེ་སྟོང་པ་ཡི་གེ་བརྒྱ།<sup>1051</sup>

Progenitor of all objectives of the secret mantra, Great vital essence devoid of syllables,  
Great emptiness comprising the five syllables,  
You appear as the hundred syllables constituting the empty vital essence.

**Progenitor of all objectives of the secret mantra** endowed with the four rites, unerring **vital essence** that is **devoid of syllables** and **great** because it permeates everything, **great emptiness** without inherent existence **comprising the five syllables** of relative appearance that correspond to the five classes of sentient beings, **you appear** manifoldly **as the hundred syllables** of phenomenal existence, the expressive energy of this reality **constituting the empty vital essence.**<sup>1052</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 10:3)**

།རྣམ་པ་ཀུན་ལྡན་རྣམ་པ་མེད།  
།བརྒྱ་རྒྱུག་སྐྱེད་སྐྱེད་ཐིག་ལེ་ཅན།  
།ཡན་ལག་མེད་པ་སྟེང་ལས་འདས།  
།བསམ་གཏན་བཞི་པའི་སྟེ་མོ་ཅན།

Endowed with all aspects and without aspects,  
You master the sixteen channel branches half that

you master the sixteen channel branches, half that number, Half that again, and the vital essence, Which transcend calculations and lack subdivisions; And you partake of the summit of the fourth meditative concentration.

**Endowed with all aspects** of the circle of deities of relative appearance, **and without aspects** since in the perfection stage the deities lack inherent existence, **you master** inconceivable supernormal powers and miraculous abilities because you have experientially cultivated the energy channels, winds, and vital essences [of the subtle body], inasmuch as **the sixteen channel branches**, the eight [channel branches] that comprise **half that number**, the four energy centers that are **half that again, and the vital essence** or seminal fluid and its light all assume the form of syllables. Then, meditating that these [syllables] **transcend all calculations and** that they **lack** the elaboration of **subdivisions** or words, **you partake of the summit of the fourth** mundane **meditative concentration**, which is the particularly exalted emptiness.<sup>1053</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:4)***

ཁས་མ་གཏན་ཡན་ལག་ཀུན་ཤེས་ཤིང་།  
 ཉིང་འཛིན་རིགས་དང་རྒྱད་རིག་པ།  
 ཉིང་འཛིན་ལུས་ཅན་ལུས་ཀྱི་མཚོག  
 འོངས་སྤྱོད་ཚོགས་སྐྱུ་ཀུན་གྱི་རྒྱལ།

Knowing all the meditative concentrations and their branches, Knowing the meditative stabilities, and knowing the categories, You are the one with a body of meditative stability, the best of corporeal forms, King of all aspects of the buddha body of perfect

resource.

**Knowing all the meditative concentrations and their branches**, including the [meditative stability] of heroic valor (*śūraṅgama, dpa' bar 'gro ba*); **knowing all the mundane and supramundane meditative stabilities; and knowing** on the basis of that familiarity **the categories** of all living beings, Mañjuśrī, **you are the one with a body of realized meditative stability, the best of corporeal forms, king of all apparitional aspects of the buddha body of perfect resource.**<sup>1054</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:5)***

།སྐྱུལ་པའི་སྐྱེ་སྐྱེ་ཡི་མཚོག  
།མངས་རྒྱས་སྐྱུལ་པའི་རྒྱད་འཆང་བ།  
།ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱུར་སྐྱུལ་པ་སྐྱེ་ཚོགས་འགྲེད།  
།ཇི་བཞིན་འགྲོ་བའི་དོན་བྱེད་པ།

Endowed with the buddha body of emanation, best of corporeal forms, You maintain the lineages of the buddha's emanations, Diffusing diverse emanations throughout the ten directions And acting commensurate with the benefit of living beings.

**Endowed with the buddha body of emanation**, the essential nature of which is the inseparability of the three buddha bodies, **best of corporeal forms, you** reveal and **maintain the lineages of the buddha's emanations** for the sake of endless beings to be trained, **diffusing diverse emanations** who impart training according to need **throughout the ten directions and acting** diversely for **the benefit of living beings, commensurate with** the constitution and acumen of living beings.

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 10:6)**

།ལྷ་དང་ལྷ་དབང་ལྷ་ཡི་ལྷ།<sup>1055</sup>  
།ལྷ་ཡི་དབང་པོ་ལྷ་མིན་བདག།  
།འཆི་མེད་དབང་པོ་ལྷ་འི་གྲུ་མ།  
།འཛོམས་བྱེད་འཛོམས་བྱེད་དབང་ལྷུག་པོ།

You appear as the god mighty among the gods, god  
among the gods, Potentate of the gods, lord of the  
demigods,  
Guru of the immortal masters and the gods,  
The destroyer, the destructive, and the almighty.

You appear as Viṣṇu, **the great god mighty among the gods;**  
Śakra, **god among the gods;** Brahmā, **potentate of the**  
**gods;** Rāhu, **lord of the demigods;** Bṛhaspati, **guru of the**  
**immortal** [elemental] **masters and the gods;** Vemacitra, **the**  
**destroyer;** Daśagrīva, **the destructive** ten-headed cannibal  
ogre of Lankā; **and the** supreme **almighty** Mahādeva.<sup>1056</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 10:7)**

།སྲིད་པའི་དགོན་པ་ལས་བརྒལ་བ།  
།སྟོན་པ་གཅིག་ལུ་འགྲོ་བའི་གྲུ།  
།འཇིག་རྟེན་ཕྱོགས་བརྒྱུད་རབ་གྲགས་པ།  
།ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྤྱིན་བདག་ཆེ་བ་པོ།

Having crossed over the wilderness of existence,  
Unique teacher, unsurpassed among living beings,  
Renowned throughout the ten directions of the world.

You are the great patron of the sacred doctrine.

**Having crossed over** from the state of emptiness, **the wilderness** that is the intrinsic nature **of existence**, O **unique** and peerless **teacher**, **unsurpassed among living beings**, with marks **renowned throughout the ten directions of the world**, **you are the great patron**, bequeathing the meaning **of the uncontaminated sacred doctrine**.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:8)***

བྱུང་མཁའ་པའི་གོ་ཆས་ཆས་པ་སྟེ།  
སྦྱིང་རྩེ་ཡི་ནི་ཡ་ལད་བགོས།  
ཤེས་རབ་རལ་གྱི་མདའ་གཞུ་ཐོགས།  
ཉོན་མོངས་མི་ཤེས་གཡུལ་ངོ་སེལ།

Clad in the armor of loving-kindness,  
Wearing the chain mail of compassion,  
Brandishing the sword of discriminative awareness  
along with the bow and arrow, You have annihilated  
the afflictive mental states and unknowing.

**Clad in the strong armor of loving-kindness** that protects living beings from obstacles, unharmed by hatred, **wearing the chain mail of compassion**, **brandishing the sword of discriminative awareness along with the bow and arrow** in your hands, **you have** destroyed in battle and **annihilated the eighty[-four] thousand afflictive mental states and the fundamental ignorance of unknowing.**<sup>1057</sup>

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:9)***

།དཔལ་ལོ་བདུད་དག་བདུད་འདུལ་བ།  
།བདུད་བཞིའི་འཇིགས་པ་སེལ་བར་བྱེད།  
།བདུད་ཀྱི་སྲུང་རྣམས་པམ་བྱེད་པ།  
།ཇོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱལ་འཇིག་རྟེན་འབྲིན།

Heroic enemy of demonic forces, taming the demonic  
forces, Alleviating fears of the four demonic forces,  
You defeat the armies of demons,  
O perfect buddha, guide of mundane beings.

**Heroic** Jñānasattva, unconquerable by others, **enemy of demonic forces, taming the obstructing demonic forces, alleviating all fears of the four demonic forces** without exception, **you defeat the armies of demons** and their cohorts, **O perfect buddha** Mañjuśrī, **guide of mundane beings.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:10)***

།མཚན་འོས་བསྟོད་འོས་ཕྱག་གི་གནས།  
།རྟེན་ཏུ་རིམ་བྱ་བའི་འོས།  
།བཀུར་འོས་ཇིང་པར་བྱ་བའི་མཚོག  
།ཕྱག་བྱར་འོས་པ་སྤྲོ་མའི་རབ།

You are worthy of offerings, worthy of praise, an object  
of homage, Worthy of veneration at all times,  
Worthy of respect, supreme among those to be  
worshipped, Worthy of obeisance, and best of spiritual  
teachers.

**Mañjuśrī, you are worthy of offerings, worthy of praise, an object of homage, worthy of veneration at all times,**



worthy of respect, supreme among those to be worshipped, worthy of obeisance, and best or highest of spiritual teachers.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 10:11)**

།འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་པོ་གོམས་གཅིག་བགོད།  
།མཁའ་ལྗང་མཐའ་མེད་རྣམ་པར་གཞོན།  
།གསུམ་རིག་གཙུག་མ་དག་པ་སྟེ།  
།མཛོན་ཤེས་རྟུག་ལྡན་རྗེས་བློ་རྟུག་

Taking a single step across the three worlds,  
Like space, overwhelming them without limits,  
Clean and pure in respect of the threefold knowledge,  
You possess the six supernormal cognitive powers and  
the six recollections.

**Taking a single step**, you stride **across the three worlds** in an instant, **overwhelming them without limits** because **like space** you are untainted by the defects of cyclic existence, **clean and pure** because you are untainted **in respect of** the limits of **the threefold knowledge** (*gsum rig*) comprising being, nonbeing, and nonduality. **You possess the six supernormal cognitive powers**, comprising the supernormal power of clairvoyance and those of clairaudience, knowing the minds of others, death and transference of consciousness, miraculous abilities, and the end of contaminants. **And** you also possess **the six recollections** (*anusmṛti, rjes su dran pa*), with respect to the buddha, the sacred doctrine, the monastic community, renunciation (*tyāga, gtong ba*), the god realms, and the spiritual teacher.

**Root Tantra (Ch. 10:12)**

།བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དཔའ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཚེ།  
།རྩལ་ལྷུ་ཚེན་པོས་འཇིག་རྟེན་འདས།  
།ཤེས་རབ་པ་ལོ་ལྷན་པའི་མཐའ།  
།ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་ནི་དེ་ཉིད་ཐོབ།

Bodhisattva, great spiritual being,  
Transcending the world through great miraculous  
ability, You have attained through discriminative  
awareness The finality of the transcendent perfection  
of discriminative awareness.

**Bodhisattva, great spiritual being**, intent on the benefit of  
self and the benefit of others, **transcending the world  
through** the four supports for **great miraculous ability**,  
abiding in **the finality of the transcendent perfection of  
discriminative awareness** born of study and thought, you  
have attained the adamant meditative stability **through** the  
**discriminative awareness** born of meditation.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:13)***

།བདག་རིག་གཞན་རིག་ཐམས་ཅད་པ།  
།ཀུན་ལ་པན་པ་གང་ཐག་མཚོག  
།དཔེར་བྱ་ཀུན་ལས་འདས་པ་སྟེ།  
།ཤེས་དང་ཤེས་བྱའི་བདག་པོ་མཚོག

Having abandoned the entirety of intrinsic awareness  
and extraneous awareness, Supreme individual intent  
on the welfare of all,  
Surpassing all comparisons,  
You are the supreme lord of cognition and the objects of  
cognition.

**Having abandoned** through adamantine meditative stability **the entirety of** the subjective and objective dichotomy, that is, the subjective **intrinsic awareness and** the objective **extraneous awareness, supreme** because you arise from that meditative stability as the buddha body of form, as an **individual intent on the welfare of all** beings, **surpassing all comparisons, you are the supreme lord**, mastering the awareness or cognition that makes appraisals **and the objects of cognition** that are appraised.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:14)***

།གཙོ་བོ་ཚལ་གྱི་སྤྱིན་བདག་སྟེ།  
།ཕྱག་རྒྱ་བཞི་པོའི་དོན་སྟོན་པ།  
།འགྲོ་བའི་བསྟེན་བཀུར་གནས་གྱི་མཚོགས།  
།དེས་འབྲུང་གསུམ་པོ་བགྲོད་རྣམས་གྱི།

Foremost patron, granting the sacred doctrine,  
Revealing the meaning of the four seals,  
You are a supreme object of respect and veneration  
among living beings And those who traverse the  
threefold emancipation.

**Foremost patron, granting the supreme sacred doctrine** to living beings, **revealing the meaning of the four unsurpassed seals, you are a supreme object of respect and veneration among living beings and those who traverse the threefold emancipation** of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 10:15)***

།དོན་གྱི་དམ་པ་རྣམ་དག་དཔལ།  
།འཇིག་རྟེན་གསུམ་ན་སྐལ་བཟང་ཚེ།  
།དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྱོར་པ་ཀུན་བྱིད་པ།  
།འཇམ་དཔལ་དཔལ་དང་ལྷན་པའི་མཚོག

Pure and glorious, of ultimate meaning, Greatly  
fortunate in the three worlds,  
You achieve all glorious endowments,  
Mañjuśrī, best of the glorious ones!

**Pure and glorious** because you comprehend the vehicles of **ultimate meaning**, **greatly fortunate** because you are endowed with an intelligence that is incontrovertible **in the three worlds**, **you achieve all endowments** because you reveal the **glorious** buddha body that trains living beings according to need. This eulogy is offered to you, **Mañjuśrī**, **best of the glorious ones**, by means of the five pristine cognitions, each [chapter of] verse referring to each of the pristine cognitions respectively.

## EULOGY TO THE FIVE CONQUERORS [17.5.2.11]

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**In the chapter entitled “Eulogy [to the Five Conquerors],” there are five stanzas.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:1)***

མཚོག་སྤྱིན་དོ་ཇེ་མཚོག་ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།  
ཡང་དག་མཐར་གྱུར་ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།  
སྣོད་ཉིད་ལས་བྱུང་<sup>1058</sup> ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།  
སངས་རྒྱས་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།

Homage to you, giver of the best, supreme  
indestructible pristine cognition!

Homage to you, who have reached the finality of  
existence!

Homage to you, originating from emptiness!

Homage to you, enlightenment of the buddhas!

**Homage to you, supreme Jñānasattva, giver of the best, in whom the pristine cognition of reality’s expanse and the five aspects of the indestructible pristine cognition are indivisible! Homage to you, who have reached the finality of existence, where the intellect has no object! Homage to you, originating from emptiness, created from the uncreated! Homage to you, enlightenment of the buddhas,**

endowed with the excellence of conduct!<sup>1059</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 11:2)**

།སངས་རྒྱལ་ཆགས་པ་ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་འདོད་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་འདུད།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་དགུས་པ་ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་རོལ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་འདུད།

Homage to you, the attachment of the buddhas!  
Obeisance to you, the desire of the buddhas!  
Homage to you, the rejoicing of the buddhas!  
Obeisance to you, the play of the buddhas!

You are **the attachment of the buddhas**, attached to the welfare of sentient beings. You are the **desire of the buddhas**, with desire for the welfare of living beings. You are **the rejoicing of the buddhas**, rejoicing in the welfare of living beings. You are **the play of the buddhas**, revealing diverse forms.<sup>1060</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 11:3)**

།སངས་རྒྱལ་འཇམ་མཁའ་ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་བཞད་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་འདུད།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་གསུང་ཉིད་ཁྱོད་ལ་འདུད།  
།སངས་རྒྱལ་སྤྲུགས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་འདུད།

Homage to you, the smiling buddha!  
Obeisance to you, the laughing buddha!  
Homage to you, the buddha speech!  
Obeisance to you, the buddha mind!

Obeisance to you, the buddha mind:

You are **the smiling buddha**, the form associated with the rites of pacification. You are **the laughing buddha**, the form associated with the rites of enrichment. You are **the buddha speech**, the form associated with the rites of subjugation. You are **the buddha mind**, the form associated with the rites of wrath.<sup>1061</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:4)***

མེད་པ་ལས་བྱུང་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།  
མངས་རྒྱས་འབྱུང་བ་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།  
ནམ་མཁའ་ལས་བྱུང་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།  
ཡི་ཤེས་ལས་བྱུང་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།

Homage to you, originating from nonexistence!  
Homage to you, originating from the buddhas!  
Homage to you, originating from space!  
Homage to you, originating from pristine cognition!

You are the emptiness **originating from nonexistence**, the buddha body of reality **originating from the buddhas**, its exemplar **originating from space**, and the five pristine cognitions **originating from pristine cognition**.<sup>1062</sup>

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 11:5)***

སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་བ་བ་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།  
མངས་རྒྱས་རོལ་སྟོན་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།  
ཐམས་ཅད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།  
ཡི་ཤེས་སྐྱུ་ཉིད་ཚོད་ལ་འདུད།

Homage to you, the *Net of Magical Emanation*!  
Homage to you, revealing the play of the buddhas!  
Homage to you, all for all!  
Homage to you, the body of pristine cognition itself!

**Homage to you, the *Net of Magical Emanation***, in whom bliss and emptiness are indivisible, to you **revealing the play of the buddhas**, to you partaking of the diverse wrathful forms, **all for all**, and to you partaking of **the body of pristine cognition itself**, which is radiant and nonconceptual in respect of all things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.<sup>1063</sup>



## THE PRESENTATION OF ADVANTAGES [17.5.2.12]

**In the chapter entitled “[The Presentation of] Advantages,” the words take the form of prose.**

### ***Root Tantra***

ལག་ན་རྩོམ་རྩོམ་འཆང་། འདི་ནི་བཙུག་ལྷན་འདས་ཀྱི་ཡི་ཤེས་སྐྱུ། དེ་བཞིན་  
གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་ཡི་ཤེས་སྐྱུ། འཇམ་དཔལ་ཡི་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའི་ཡི་  
ཤེས་ཀྱི་སྐྱུ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པའོ། ཞེས་སོགས་པར་ཡོན་མཐའ་ཡས་གསུངས་པ་  
ལ་སོགས་སུ་བཀོད་པ་ལྟར་ཤེས་པར་བྱའོ།།

O Vajrapāṇi, Vajradhara! This [*Litany of Names*] concerns the body of pristine cognition of the Transcendent Lord, the body of pristine cognition of all the tathāgatas, the utterly pure body of pristine cognition of Mañjuśrī Jñānasattva. There are infinite advantages of [the litany] that have been enunciated, and these should be known in accordance with the scriptures that establish them.<sup>1064</sup>

## The [ARRANGEMENT OF THE] MANTRAS [17.5.2.13]

In the chapter entitled “The [Arrangement of the] Mantras,” there are three stanzas.

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 13:1)*

ॐ सर्वधर्मसुखाय सुखाय विप्रकृतं सर्वं तन्मा अं अं अं अं

OM SARVADHARMĀBHĀVASVABHĀVAVIŚUDDHE VAJRACAKṢUḤ A Ā AM  
AḤ

OM O pure indestructible vision, whose intrinsic nature is the nonentity of all things. A Ā AM AḤ

OM implies the “five pristine cognitions.” SARVADHARMĀ means “all things.” ABHĀVA means “nonentity.”<sup>1065</sup> SVABHĀVA means “intrinsic nature.” VIŚUDDHE means “pure.” VAJRACAKṢUḤ means “indestructible vision.” A Ā imply “the uncreated.” AM AḤ imply “intrinsically present.”<sup>1066</sup>

### *Root Tantra (Ch. 13:2)*

प्रकृतिपरिसुद्धः सर्वधर्मयदुता सर्वतथगत  
ज्ञानाकाया मांजुश्रीपरिसुद्धिता उपदायति अं अं

PRAKRTIPARIŚUDDHĀḤ SARVADHARMĀ YADUTA SARVATATHĀGATA  
JÑĀNAKĀYA MAÑJUŚRĪPARIŚUDDHITĀM UPĀDĀYETI A ĀḤ

All things are intrinsically pure. That is to say, they have partaken of the purity of Mañjuśrī, the body of pristine cognition of all tathāgatas, A ĀḤ

**PRAKṚTIPARIŚUDDHĀḤ** means “intrinsically pure.” **SARVADHARMĀ** means “all things.” **YADUTA** means “that is to say.”<sup>1067</sup> **SARVATATHĀGATA** means “all the tathāgatas.” **JÑĀNAKĀYA** means “body of pristine cognition.” **MAÑJUŚRĪ** denotes “Mañjuśrī” (*‘jam dpal*). **PARIŚUDDHITĀM** means “purity.” **UPĀDĀYETI A ĀḤ** implies that “they themselves have partaken of.”<sup>1068</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 13:3)**

སེའུ་ཉལ་གཏེ་མི་དལ་ཉ་ར་ཉ་ར་ཙོ་ཨུཾ་ཧཱུྃ་ཧཱུྃ།

SARVATATHĀGATA HRDAYA HARA HARA OM ĀḤ HŪM HRĪḤ  
Annihilate! Annihilate! O Heart of all the tathāgatas. OM  
ĀḤ HŪM HRĪḤ

**SARVATATHĀGATA** means “all the tathāgatas.” **HRDAYA** means “heart.” **HARA HARA** means “Annihilate! Annihilate!” **OM ĀḤ HŪM HRĪḤ** imply “buddha body, speech, and mind.”<sup>1069</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 13:4)**

ཐུགས་ལྷན་རྒྱལ་ལུ་རྟེ།

BHAGAVĀN JÑĀNAMŪRTE

O Transcendent Lord, embodiment of pristine cognition.

**BHAGAVĀN** means “transcendent lord.” **JÑĀNA** means “pristine cognition.” **MŪRTE** means “embodiment” (in the vocative).<sup>1070</sup>

### **Root Tantra (Ch. 13:5)**

ཐུགས་ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན་ལྷན།

VĀGĪŚVARAMAHAĀPACA O Lord of Speech, endowed with great ripening.  
**VĀGĪŚVARA** means “lord of speech.” **MAHAĀPACA** means “endowed with great ripening.”<sup>1071</sup>

**Root Tantra (Ch. 13:6)**

ས་ཐོ་སྐྱུ་ག་ག་ལ་ལ་སུལ་རྒྱུ་སྐྱུ་སྐྱུ་སྐྱུ་ག་ག་ལུ་ཨཱཿ

SARVADHARMA GAGANĀAMALASUPARIŚUDDHA  
 DHARMADHĀTUJÑĀNAGARBHA ĀḤ

O nucleus of the pristine cognition of reality’s expanse, in which all things are pure and stainless like the sky. ĀḤ  
**SARVADHARMA** means “all things.” **GAGANA** means “sky.”  
**AMALASUPARIŚUDDHA** means “stainless and pure.” **DHARMADHĀTU**  
 means “reality’s expanse.” **JÑĀNA** means “pristine cognition.”  
**GARBHA** means “nucleus.” ĀḤ implies the “uncreated.”<sup>1072</sup>

## REJOICING [17.5.2.14]

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**In the chapter entitled “Rejoicing,” there are five stanzas.**

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:1)***

།དེ་ནས་དཔལ་ལྷན་དེ་རྗེ་འཆང་།  
།དགའ་ཞིང་མགུ་ནས་ཐལ་མོ་སྐྱེ།  
།མགོན་པོ་བཅོས་ལྷན་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས།  
།རྗེས་སངས་རྒྱས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ནས།

Then the glorious Vajradhara,  
Joyful and delighted, folded his palms together And paid  
homage to the protector, the Transcendent Lord, The  
tathāgata and perfect buddha.

**Then the glorious** Lord of Secrets Vajrapāṇi, **Vajradhara** himself, **joyful and delighted, folded his palms together and paid homage to the protector** of living beings, **the Transcendent Lord, the tathāgata and perfect buddha** Śākyamuni.

### ***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:2)***

།དེ་ནས་མགོན་པོ་གསང་བའི་བདག  
།ལག་ན་དོ་ཇི་ལོ་བའི་རྒྱལ།  
།སྤྲོ་ཚོགས་གཞན་དང་ལྷན་ཅིག་ཏུ།<sup>1073</sup>  
།གསང་བསྟོན་ནས་ནི་ཚོག་འདི་གསོལ།

Then the protector of living beings, the Lord of Secrets  
Vajrapāṇi, together with the wrathful kings And other  
diverse [attendants],  
Having offered their secret eulogy, made this following  
request:

**Then the protector of living beings, the Lord of Secrets  
Vajrapāṇi, together with the wrathful kings and other  
diverse attendants, having offered their eulogy to this  
most secret tantra, made this following request: *Root Tantra*  
(Ch. 14:3)**

།མགོན་པོ་བདག་ཅག་ཇིས་ཡི་རང་།  
།ལེགས་སོ་ལེགས་སོ་ལེགས་པར་གསུངས།  
།རྣམ་གྲོལ་འབྲས་བུ་འཚལ་བ་ཡི།  
།འགྲོ་བ་མགོན་མེད་རྣམས་དང་ནི།<sup>1074</sup>

We rejoice, O Protector!  
Excellent! Excellent! Excellently spoken!

So that unprotected living beings  
Who seek the fruit of liberation . . .

**We rejoice** in the words of the teacher, **O Protector** of gods and humans! Most **excellent!** Very **excellent!** Since these fine words and meanings have been **excellently spoken, so that unprotected living beings who** swiftly **seek the fruit of liberation** through this great tantra. . .

***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:4)***

འབདག་ཅག་ཡང་དག་ཚོགས་ས་ཡི།  
བྱང་ཆུབ་ཐོབ་པའི་དོན་ཆེན་མཛད།  
སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་བྲ་བའི་ཚུལ་བསྟན་པ།  
འདི་ནི་རྣམ་དག་ལེགས་པའི་ལམ།<sup>1075</sup>

And so that we might achieve the supreme aim Of  
attaining the genuinely perfect enlightenment, This  
promulgated *Net of Magical Emanation* Is the pure,  
excellent path.

**And so that we might achieve the supreme aim of attaining the genuinely perfect** and unsurpassed **enlightenment, this** lucidly **promulgated *Net of Magical Emanation* (sgyu 'phrul dra ba),** the intrinsic nature of which unites both the magical (sgyu) ultimate truth and the emanational ('phrul) relative truth as if in a net (dra ba), **is** supreme among **the excellent paths** of **pure, conclusive** meaning.

***Root Tantra (Ch. 14:5)***

།ཟབ་ཅིང་ཡངས་ལ་རྒྱ་ཆེ་སྟེ།  
།དོན་ཆེན་འགྲོ་བའི་དོན་བྱེད་པ།  
།སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་འདི་ནི།  
།ཚོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀུན་གྱིས་བཤད།།

Profound, vast, and extensive,  
This great objective within the range of the buddhas  
Who act for the benefit of living beings  
Is explained by all the perfect buddhas.

Since its words and meanings are **profound and** it reveals all the vehicles, it is **vast**. Even a single word is **extensive** because there are diverse commentarial interpretations. **This** marvelous **great objective**, provisional and conclusive, **within the** perceptual **range of the buddhas** of the ten directions and four times **who act for the benefit of all living beings**, is extensively **explained by all the** genuinely **perfect buddhas** of the three times.

**THE CONCLUSION (17.5.3) The third part [of the fifth topic, comprising Book 17, Part 2,] is the conclusion:**

།བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་འཇམ་དཔལ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའི་དོན་དམ་པའི་མཚན་  
ཡང་དག་པར་བརྗོད་པ། བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཤུག་ལྷུབ་  
པས་གསུངས་པ་ཚོགས་སོ།།

This completes the litany of the names of the transcendent lord Mañjuśrī, the supreme Being of



Pristine Cognition, which was spoken by the transcendent lord and tathāgata Śākyamuni.

This interpretation accords with the commentary revealed by Avalokiteśvara to the master Candragomin. However, there are also many other commentarial traditions according to the different classes of tantra—since these are verses of indestructible reality (*vajrapada*, *rdo rje tshig*), it is permissible to comment upon them in that manner, and so there are many dissimilar commentarial approaches followed in the Indic texts.

[For example,] when the commentary [on the opening stanzas of ch. 1] is presented according to the perfection stage [of meditation], it would read: **Then** (*de nas*) **holding** (*'chang*) as one's own essential nature **the glorious** (*dpal ldan*) and unchanging **vajra** (*rdo rje*) of pristine cognition, in which bliss and emptiness are inseparable, **training** (*'dul ba*) the twenty thousand six hundred winds of past action (*las rlung*) **that are hard to train** (*'dul dka'*) by the skillful means in which bliss and emptiness are inseparable, **heroic** (*dpa' bo*) due to the unchanging supreme bliss, **best of methods** (*rnams kyi mchog*) because thoughts that apprehend symbols are subdued, **king** (*rgyal*) owing to skillful means **over the three mundane** (*'jig rten gsum las*) poisons afflicting body, speech, and mind, **powerful** (*dbang*) in guiding with mental focus the generative fluid within the tip of the **vajra** (*rdo rje*), and **mighty** (*phyug*) because the pristine cognition of bliss and emptiness is uninterrupted, **victorious** (*rgyal*) dependent on the two **secret** (*gsang ba'i*) centers [of the male and female], he sees with **his eyes** (*spyang*) the pristine cognition of inseparable bliss and emptiness, clearly manifest dependent on **the lotus** (*padma*), the central energy channel (*avadhūti*), and the descent of the stream of the **white** (*dkar po*) generative fluid, the white semen within the central energy channel, **resembling a full** (*rgyas 'dra*) lunar disk. The commentary would continue in the same vein.

This completes Book 17 of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and*

*Tantra (mDo rgyud rin po che'i mdzod)*, which elucidates the meaning of all the vehicles—a commentary on the chapters of the *Secret Nucleus* that concern the ground, path, and result that derive from the diffusion of the wrathful deities, along with its concluding entrustment and the interlinear commentary on *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*.

This was compiled by Longchen Choying Tobden Dorje—he who is unvanquished and victorious over all directions, in order that the power of intelligence might be enhanced with regard to the commentaries on the tantras and their means for attainment (*sādhana, sgrub thabs*), elucidating them in the manner of the nondual *Tantra of the Wheel of Time*, as well as the father tantras, the mother tantras, and the Yogatantras, contained within the Tengyur.

May virtue prevail!

## THE ROOT VERSES: Books 15 TO 17

*The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*

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### **BOOK 15: SECRET NUCLEUS: THE INCEPTION OF THE PEACEFUL DEITIES**

#### ***The Framing Narrative***

Having, in this way, generally presented the four classes of tantra,

Among the tantras of Mahāyoga, the [cycle of the] *Net of Magical Emanation*, With its one hundred thousand [verses], Includes four [primary texts], namely,  
The *Root Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*,  
The *Tantra of Vairocana from the Net of Magical Emanation*,  
The *Tantra of the Goddess from the Net of Magical Emanation*,  
And the *Tantra of Mañjuśrī from the Net of Magical Emanation*,  
Along with eight [ancillary texts], namely,  
The *Tantra in Eight Chapters*, the *Supreme Spiritual Teacher*,  
The *Supplementary Points*,  
The *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*,  
The *Mirror [of Vajrasattva]*, the *Tantra in Eighty-Two Chapters*,  
The *Tantra in Forty-Six Chapters*, and the *Tantra of Penetration*.

Their lineage descends in succession from King Jo

their lineage descends in succession from King Ja.

### *An Exegesis Based on the Title [of this Cycle]*

There are three points regarding the designation [of this text]:  
The definition of [the expression]  
*Vajrasattva, from the Net of Magical Emanation,*  
In terms of ground, path, and result,  
Provisional and definitive meaning, and the two truths,  
Along with the greatness [of the tantra]  
And the encapsulation [of its actual meaning].

### *An Analysis of the Content of the Guhyagarbha Tantra*

The introductory narrative is the uncommon and common  
causal basis  
[For the emergence] of the tantra.  
The initiation of the discourse—  
The actual content of the tantra—  
Is both uncommon and common.

### *The Framework of the Three Continua*

The term *tantra* denotes the three continua:  
The continuum of the ground or causal basis,  
Which is the goal to be realized;  
The continuum of the path or skillful means,  
Through which [the result] is realized and reached;  
The continuum of the result,  
Wherein the goal is perfected.

The ten aspects [of tantra] comprise view, conduct,  
Maṇḍala, empowerment, commitment, offering,  
Mantra, meditative stability, enlightened activity, and

attainment.

There are four interrelated aspects [of tantra]:

The expressed meaning, the purpose, and the [two] innermost purposes.

The instruction and entrustment are conferred,  
Without vacillating and without lapsing,  
Upon three [kinds of recipients].

### *An Analysis of the Words of the Guhyagarbha Tantra*

Tantras, composed of syllables, words, and phrases,  
Include tantras that manifest [as nonverbalized words],  
Tantras that [verbally] resonate, and tantras that are symbolic  
[in form].

[In this case], the root tantra includes the prologue, the main text, and the conclusion.

The prologue includes the title and [verses of] homage.

The main text includes the inception and two modes of diffusion,

Comprising the ground, path, and result of the peaceful and wrathful deities.

The inception includes the introductory narrative,

The initiation of the discourse, and the establishment [of all phenomena].

In the section on the peaceful deities,

The ground has seven chapters, the path has three, and the result has one.

In the section on the wrathful deities,

The ground has one chapter, the path has five, and the result has one.

Together with [the final chapter on] the instruction and entrustment,

The text altogether has twenty-two chapters.

## *The Meaning of the Title*

There now follows the extensive interlinear exegesis,  
Which is for the sake of those of lowest acumen.

As for the meaning of the title:

*Glorious* refers to all that is perfect;

*Secret* has two meanings, including *concealed*; *Nucleus* has  
three meanings;

The *real nature* has three meanings;

*Definitive* refers to the conclusive [teachings];

*Tantra* has three meanings;

And [*kingly* implies that] this is the king among vehicles.

[Endowed with] renunciation and realization, Transcending  
conceptual elaborations, Spontaneously perfect, and positive  
at all times—This homage to supreme [Samantabhadra]  
Completes the prologue.

## **Chapter 1: The Introductory Narrative The introductory narrative is endowed with the excellences**

Of the sacred doctrine, time [and so forth].

At the outset there is a brief introduction to the nature of  
perfect resources.

In the limitless buddha field of Akanīṣṭha,

The ground assumes the form of a wheel.

The celestial palace is fashioned as a square,

With buttresses and a bulbous spire.

It has garlands, silken drapes, a balustrade, desirable  
attributes,

And gates with pediments.

[The palace contains] lion, elephant, horse, peacock,

And *cīvaṃcīvaka* [thrones], along with sun, moon, and lotus  
[cushions].

[The principal deities are endowed with] the major and minor

marks,  
Posture [of the legs], six arms, and three heads.  
The [male buddhas] of the five enlightened families,  
[Who represent] the five psychophysical aggregates,  
Are in union with the five female buddhas,  
[Who represent]] the five material elements.  
On account of such intrinsic nature, they are endlessly  
pervasive.

The four [inner male bodhisattvas]  
Represent vision, hearing, fragrance, and savor,  
And the four [inner female bodhisattvas]  
Represent the corresponding sense objects.  
[The four outer male bodhisattvas] represent  
The eyes, the ears, the nose, and the tongue,  
While the [outer] female [bodhisattvas] represent the four  
times.  
[The male gatekeepers represent] sensation of contact,  
Contacting subject, contacted object, and consciousness of  
contact,  
While [the female gatekeepers represent] the four  
immeasurable aspirations.

The secret verses expressing these secret maṇḍalas are self-  
originated.  
Holding sway over the expanse that is real,  
This [maṇḍala] diversely manifests.  
This self-manifestation is a pure and radiant reflection.  
The genuine abiding nature is expressed in these secret words.  
This completes chapter 1 of the *Secret Nucleus*, entitled “The  
Introductory Narrative.”

## ***Chapter 2: The Initiation of the Discourse***

The active male subject [engaged with] the passive female  
object, indivisible from all the conquerors, and this is the  
cause giving rise to the following anaphorism: The

cause giving rise to the following aphorism. The psychophysical aggregates, the sensory elements, The five material elements, cyclic existence, and nirvāṇa are primordial buddhahood.

The passive female object united indivisibly with the active male subject and uttered the following aphorisms concerning actual reality: The trichiliocosm, the world and its inhabitants,  
Is primordially empty—great enlightenment.  
The mind endowed with primordial buddhahood  
Is also cultivated as pristine cognition.  
This [reality] is without creation, cessation, or abiding.  
It is without reference and without movement.

The male [tathāgatas], with the assembled host of their female consorts, then uttered these following aphorisms: This primordially secret [reality] remains naturally secret, owing to its essential nature, even though it is not extraneous.  
Fundamental ignorance ripens into cyclic existence,  
And compassionate spirituality is then generated.  
Through conceptual thoughts, corporeal forms and resources are possessed.  
Though unfettered, conceptual thoughts [tie and] untie knots in the sky.  
To show that there is neither fettering nor liberation,  
The diffusion of diverse [compassionate spirituality] is emanated.  
This completes chapter 2 of the *Secret Nucleus*, entitled “The Initiation of the Discourse.”

### ***Chapter 3: The Establishment of All Phenomena***

The six sages, embodiments of awareness, compassionate spirituality, then came forth.  
They instruct the trichiliocosms of the infinite and limitless six



They instruct the trichocosms of the finite and infinite six worlds.

They demonstrate the twelve great activities of the buddha body.

They instruct by means of the six great supernormal cognitive powers of buddha mind.

Their miraculous abilities comprise the buddha body, buddha mind, buddha visage, and buddha speech, which are inconceivable.

The vehicles of the gods and humans, and those of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas, as well as the unsurpassed vehicle, constitute the sacred doctrine with its eighty-four thousand antidotes.

These [vehicles] encompass bewilderment, the fruition of deeds, and that which is never sullied.

The tathāgatas then uttered the following aphorisms:

Owing to the subject-object dichotomy,

The phenomena of bewilderment [endure] dependent origination

And experiences of happiness and suffering,

But from the moment when they manifest,

They are at one with the pure expanse.

Misconceptions and bewildering appearances  
Do not stray from actual reality.  
Misconceptions are the baseless and groundless pure expanse.  
The continuity of ideation is pure  
In the emanational display of pristine cognition.  
Having attained emancipation through the four vehicles,  
One is united in the fruition of the single vehicle.  
When investigated by [a yogin of] realization,  
This resembles a magical display, which appears but does not  
exist.  
[The buddhas] do not pass into nirvāṇa,  
[Their doctrines] do not decline,  
But in order to instruct [beings],  
They [demonstrate] the passing into nirvāṇa.  
All [teachings] renowned within the nine vehicles  
Emanate from this *Secret Nucleus*.  
This is the source of the sūtras and tantras—  
The supreme [vehicle] that establishes [all others].  
All phenomena are merely names and words  
That have been applied, but they have no entity.

There then came forth the teaching that mind and pristine  
cognition are self-manifesting: The abodes, corporeal forms,  
and sufferings of the six classes of beings are of the nature of  
misconception.  
Without dualizing, intrinsic awareness is present through  
pristine cognition, in the self-manifesting nature.  
It itself appears as the buddha fields.  
All the teachings are gathered in this inexpressible nature.

This completes chapter 3 of the *Secret Nucleus*, entitled “The  
Establishment of All Phenomena.”

**BOOK 16, PART 1: SECRET NUCLEUS: THE GROUND OF THE  
PEACEFUL DEITIES**

## ***Chapter 4: The Cyclical Array of the Garland of Letters***

Having presented the inception [of this tantra],  
There follows the ground, path, and result of the peaceful  
deities:

The garland [of letters], whereby all things manifest  
buddhahood

In [the essential nature of] the letters, then emerged.

From the letter AH, the letters a are diffused and reabsorbed,  
Along with the [consonantal and vocalic] letters.

This is the causal basis through which spiritual  
accomplishments firmly emerge.

A, the vowels, and the consonants all have their distinct places  
of articulation.

Through their emergence, the six realms vibrated.

The tathāgatas then uttered these following aphorisms  
concerning the cloud mass of letters: The syllable [A],  
unexpressed as extremes or their middle ground, denotes the  
disposition of the buddha body of reality.

The syllable A manifests and [the consonants], starting with KA,  
denote the buddha body of perfect resource.

They demonstrate names, words, and diverse supreme  
meanings.

The red vowels and white consonants abide within the buddha  
body and the subtle body [of sentient beings] and  
demonstrate the sacred doctrine.

Forty-five maṇḍalas are perfectly present in the [letters] from A  
to KṢA and O.

The nature of mind is the intrinsic nature of the letter, without  
entity,

Which summons forth the wondrous maṇḍala of supreme  
buddha body, speech, and mind.

These [letters] are effortlessly abiding, written in the expanse  
by the expanse.

The initial punctuation mark, the medial punctuation circles,

And final punctuation stroke respectively denote the dispositions

Of buddha mind, buddha speech, and buddha body.

a is the nature of the expanse—the great Samantabhadri.

The retroflex set beginning with ṬA represents the conquerors  
Of magical emanation, the male buddhas of the five  
enlightened families.

The dental set beginning with ṬA represents the five female  
buddhas, including the Queen of the Expanse.

The velar set beginning with KA represents the inner male  
bodhisattvas, and Yamāntaka, [gatekeeper] of buddha mind.

The palatal set beginning with CA represents the [inner] female  
bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense objects, and Mahābala,  
[gatekeeper] of buddha body.

The labial set beginning with PA represents the [outer] male  
bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense organs, and Hayagrīva,  
[gatekeeper] of buddha speech.

The semivowel set beginning with YA represents the four  
[outer] female bodhisattvas, indicative of the purity of the  
four times.

The spirant set beginning with ŚA represents the four female  
gatekeepers, indicative of the purity of the four extremes.

KṢA represents Samantabhadra, while I, U, and E represent the  
six sages.

o represents the wrathful [gatekeeper], Amṛtakunḍalin.

From AUM, the main and peripheral wrathful deities  
sequentially emanate.

[This wheel of] letters subsumes the buddha body and pristine  
cognition, without conjunction or disjunction.

The following most secret description of the cloud of letters  
then emerged:

This [wheel of] accumulated causes and conditions abides  
within the [subtle] body and is cultivated through the path,  
comprising skillful means and liberation.

All phenomena then were transformed in a single savor, where  
buddhahood is manifested in [the wheel of] letters.

This completes chapter 4 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The [Cyclical] Array of the Garland of Letters.”

***Chapter 5: The Meditative Stabilities That Attain the Net of Magical Emanation*** The tathāgatas then uttered these following aphorisms concerning attainment in which skillful means and discriminative awareness are without duality: The nature of mind, the basis of all things, is the cloud mass of letters.

The buddhas of the four times will be accomplished through having experientially cultivated the letters.

The four rites will be spontaneously accomplished through having accomplished the pristine cognitions.

The consummation of the five elements will be accomplished through having purified the five psychophysical aggregates.

Summoning, expulsion, bondage, liberation, alleviation, killing, vanquishing, and conquering will [also] be accomplished.

[These accomplishments] resemble light, nectar, alchemical transmutation into gold, and medication.

Those who maintain the six branches will become accomplished,

And those who lack them will be lost.

The nucleus [of all accomplishments] is the [wheel of] letters,

The inexhaustible treasury of the three buddha bodies.

This entails refinement and mastery with regard to the diffusion and absorption of nonentities.

Since the ignorant do [not] know this, they should know appearances and mind through investigation.

The nature of mind is the actual expanse [of reality], without class, color, or shape.

It is the mind through which the undifferentiated deities and mantras are diffused and absorbed.

This diffusion and absorption of the letters is none other than the nature of mind

THE NATURE OF MIND.

Those whose minds have been tamed and who have relied on the mantras will, without exception, attain this accomplishment.

Saying that all things abide in the cloud mass of letters, [the tathāgata] was delighted.

This completes chapter 5 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Attainment of the Letters.”

### ***Chapter 6: The Diffusion of the Maṇḍala***

Willing the maṇḍala of meditative stability to emerge, [the tathāgata] then uttered these following aphorisms: The five material elements, aggregates, and poisons are respectively the five female buddhas, male buddhas, and pristine cognitions.

[The celestial palace comprises an inner] wheel and square walls with four corners and four entrance gateways.

It has billowing clouds of offerings and forty-two individual seats.

[The great thrones, resting upon animal figurines of] the lion, the elephant, the horse, the bird, and the *cīvaṃcīvaka*, have sun, moon, and lotus [cushions].

Seated in the manner of kings, ministers, and generals, There are the [five] enlightened families [of male and female buddhas], the [eight] bodhisattvas, Samantabhadra [and Samantabhadrī], the six sages, and the eight gatekeepers.

[These classes of deity respectively hold hand emblems, beginning with] the vajra, the blue lotus, the mirror, the lute, and the club.

There are twenty-five [deities] who partake of the five body colors [of the five enlightened families], and seventeen [of diversified color].

[Their demeanor exhibits] five essential attributes and four subsidiary attributes.

Lights of six colors [are diffused from] their six energy centers, and the light from their pores is limitless.

The buddha body of actual reality reveals the buddha body of perfect resource and the diversified buddha bodies of emanation.

Without wavering, [the buddha body] of emanation, training each according to need, resembles the moon reflected in water.

Its manifestations include the six sages, arhats, hermit buddhas, and Vairocana.

When [the retinue] beholds the buddha body, once obscurations become visible and have been refined, enlightenment will be attained.

The three buddha bodies are respectively inexpressible, inexhaustible, and inconceivable.

Perfect in the major marks, the maṇḍala within perceptual range perfectly [displays] the two provisions [of merit and pristine cognition].

The three buddha bodies are associated with the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth levels.

[More specifically,] there are the buddha body of actual reality, the buddha body of perfect resource, the buddha body of emanation, the buddha body of indestructible reality, and the buddha body of awakening.

The emanating maṇḍala then became radiant in as many fields as there are atoms.

Then the following supreme and secret [synopsis] emerged, without duality:

Ground, path, and result are the ground through which the maṇḍala of the buddha body of emanation is diffused from the buddha body of perfect resource.

This completes chapter 6 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Maṇḍala of Meditative Stability.”

### ***Chapter 7: The Absorption of the Maṇḍala and the Secret Mantras***

The following maṇḍala of the secret mantras then emerged: bhruṃ and so forth is the mantra that visually generates the supporting celestial palace.

There are ten seed syllables and ten essential mantras [indicative of the male and female buddhas].

The seed syllables beginning with KṢIṂ and HŪṂ, along with their mantras, are indicative of the eight bodhisattvas of buddha mind.

The seed syllables beginning with MAI and JAḤ, along with their mantras, are indicative of the eight bodhisattvas of buddha speech.

The seed syllables beginning with HŪṂ and OM, along with their mantras, are indicative of the eight gatekeepers.

The seed syllables beginning with HŪṂ and A, along with their mantras, are indicative of the male and female Samantabhadra.

MUNE KRIṂ and so forth are the six heart mantras of the [sages of] the six classes of beings.

The mantras of invitation and absorption are EHY EHI and so forth.

Five seed syllables and five SAMAYA [mantras scatter the flowers of awareness].

The commitments of buddha body, speech, and mind summon spiritual accomplishment.

The sound of mantra [resounded] pervasively, conferred maturation and liberation, and resounded absolutely.

Vanishing [into that maṇḍala, the Supreme Identity] then



brought forth the following mantras [of empowerment], which subsume its splendor: The mantras by which empowerment is to be conferred through the five pristine cognitions, And the mantras through which the five tathāgatas are visualized in the five centers [of the deities' bodies] and blessings then conferred.

By this empowerment and blessing, the psychophysical aggregates and sensory elements blazed forth light.

[Buddha speech] transcends language and words but emerges as diverse languages.

Though known in conformity with its sixty modulations, [buddha speech] is inexpressible.

Positive and negative language are [subsumed in] buddha speech, the uncreated indestructible reality.

A single expression of buddha speech, being inexpressible, resonates to all, but its nuances are differently appraised.

Though differently heard, [the vehicles] are not enunciated in isolation from the actual truth.

Though [buddha speech] does not resonate from the buddha tongue, [words and meanings] are distinguished for the sake of living beings owing to compassionate spirituality.

Buddha speech, which [becomes manifest through] the provisions of compassionate spirituality and volition, is like an echo.

This completes chapter 7 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the mantras of the different [deities].

***Chapter 8: The Consecration of All Limbs as the Maṇḍala and the Subsequent Diffusion of the Sealing Hand Gestures*** [The tathāgatas then] uttered these following aphorisms, which consecrated the limbs of the body: All things are primordially secured by the seal of Samantabhadra.

Ten [seed] syllables representing skillful means and discriminative awareness are [arrayed] on the ten fingers. [The general sealing hand gesture is made when] the two syllables OM and MŪM are conjoined at their fingertips and the [remaining] eight seed syllables touch.

The great seal refers to the visualization [of oneself] as the deities; the doctrinal [seal] refers to the seed syllables upon the fingers; the commitment seal refers to the hand emblems [of the deities]; and the action seal refers to the movements of the hands.

If the abiding nature [of the great seal] is realized, all physical conduct [is gathered within] this seal.

[The limbs partake of] the forty-two deities, including twenty-three male deities and seventeen female deities.

The forty deities of skillful means and discriminative awareness, [multiplied by] those of buddha body, speech, and mind, constitute one thousand.

[More elaborately, the maṇḍala constitutes] twenty-one thousand three hundred twelve deities.

[When these are each multiplied by] twenty-one thousand, the number of buddhas becomes inconceivable.

In the ten directions and four times, [these seals] that train each according to need are differently revealed.

These [seals] manifest in conformity with the volitions of non-Buddhists and Buddhists.

As in the case of a dancer, diverse emanations are revealed.

Owing to those who are to be trained, the number of seals is indeterminate.

In brief, all movements and dynamics are the great seal.

This completes chapter 8 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the diffusion of the sealing hand gestures.

## ***Chapter 9: The Secret Commitment of the Indestructible***

## ***Array***

[Then the tathāgata] uttered these following aphorisms concerning the maṇḍala of secret commitment: This maṇḍala in which empowerment is conferred is located in the pudendum of the female medium.

This maṇḍala, indicative of buddha mind, should be four finger-widths in its circumference, naturally expressing the four delights.

It is endowed with the five poisons, the [five] pristine cognitions, the [five] aggregates, the [five] buddha bodies, the [five] enlightened families, and inner radiance.

The pudendum of the female consort assumes the form of the celestial palace.

[In that location,] the disks of sun and moon, the lotus seat, the syllable HŪM, and the vajra are visualized.

Offerings should then be made, comprising ornaments, garlands, foods, beverages, songs, dance, music, and sensory contact.

The sacraments of burnt offering associated with the four rites, including pacification, [should be presented] in conjunction with their [respective] mantras.

Similarly, these [rites] should [also] be assessed in respect of other wrathful deities.

A cloud mass of offerings, [generated through] meditative stability, is then presented to the three maṇḍalas.

Owing to nonclarity and clarity, [these offerings] should be presented either in a gradual or in an immediate manner.

Then the great seal should be cultivated, through which offerings are made with purity in respect of the three spheres [of subject, object, and their interaction].

The maṇḍalas should be invited into her pudendum, and once they have been pleased with offerings, accomplishment will be attained.

All the buddhas, in whom outer and inner [phenomena are present] will without exception be pleased

present], will without exception be pleased.

The aggregates, the sensory elements, body, speech, and mind, will become manifest as deities.

They [the master and consort] should meditate, united in the manner of an optical illusion, which is nonexistent.

The master should enter into the maṇḍala, and then the disciples should be ushered in.

[The disciples then] should offer their children, spouse, and riches,

Which are cherished and pleasing.

By the making of offerings to the spiritual teacher, the deities will be pleased and all defects will be purified.

Then the ten empowerments of beneficence and the five empowerments of ability should be conferred.

Empowerment may also be received dependent on the maṇḍala of skillful means.

[Alternatively, with regard to the maṇḍala of colored sand] one should purify the surface by visualizing that it has already been purified.

An expert should perform the ritual whereby the lines are pitched in [small] maṇḍalas, measuring one cubit, one body length, or three body lengths.

The intermediate maṇḍalas should measure sixteen, twenty, or twenty-five cubits.

The [large] maṇḍalas should measure one reach of hearing, one *yojana*, or the expanse of space.

Through meditative stability, colored sand is generated and consecrated as the maṇḍala.

[The actual maṇḍalas] should then be invited as desired, from the disposition of the buddha body of reality.

The maṇḍala of the beings of pristine cognition dissolves indivisibly into the maṇḍala of the beings of commitment.

All desirable things that emerge from the wish-granting tree and the wish-fulfilling gemstone are illustrative.

The supreme and common accomplishments are attained

through cultivation of the generation and perfection stages [of meditation].

Through compassionate spirituality and merit, the [buddha body of] natural [emanation] then emerges, instructing living beings. When the five rituals, the five requisites, and the five aspects [of attainment] have been perfected, Accomplishment will be achieved within six months or twelve, fourteen, or sixteen months.

Spontaneously present as the five buddha bodies, the supreme accomplishment will be established.

The maṇḍalas of the buddha field, pervading space, will be mastered.

When that [buddha field] dissolves [into the buddha body of actual reality], its cognition remains unimpeded but resembles the moon of the darkest night.

[Emanations] manifest in all times and abodes, without exception, establishing connections through compassionate spirituality.

Those who have received the empowerments and keep their commitments will attain accomplishment, whereas those who have degenerated will be ruined.

This completes chapter 9 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the commitments associated with the maṇḍala of reflected imagery.

## ***Chapter 10: The Conferral of the Empowerments***

[The Great Joyous One then] uttered these following aphorisms concerning the conferral of empowerment as a king of the sacred doctrine: The empowerments of profundity are conferred when the nectar of skillful means and discriminative awareness is offered and dissolves.

The empowerment of the listener, with respect to the outer and inner tantras, is conferred in the maṇḍala of Ratnasambhava,

within the ears.

[The empowerment of] the meditator, with respect to the deities, mantras, and meditative stabilities, is conferred in the maṇḍala of buddha mind, within the heart.

[The empowerment of enlightened activities] that perform acts of benefit for the sake of living beings, make offerings, and attain all requirements is conferred in the maṇḍala of buddha activity, within the hands.

The empowerment of the expositor of all the vehicles is conferred in the maṇḍala of buddha speech, within the tongue.

The empowerment of the myriad precepts [of the king of indestructible reality] is conferred in the maṇḍalas of the [five] enlightened families, within the limbs.

Those who would listen to and practice [the secret mantras] without pleasing [the master] and without obtaining [the empowerments], will have no result and will be ruined.

Having received through ten sacraments the empowerments [of beneficence]—those of the regent of the buddhas, those of excellence for the sake of others and oneself, and the one of nonduality— You will not fall into lower existences: you will attain longevity and the buddha [bodies].

This completes chapter 10 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the conferral of the empowerments.

## **BOOK 16, PART 2: SECRET NUCLEUS: THE PATH AND RESULT OF THE PEACEFUL DEITIES**

### ***Chapter 11: The Maṇḍala of the Communion***

[Samantabhadra then] uttered these following aphorisms that reveal all things as the path to liberation: [The ground] is realized owing to four axioms: the [single] basis, the [manner

of] seed syllables, blessing, and direct perception.  
One should meditate on the limbs and sense organs as the peaceful and wrathful male deities.  
One should meditate on the desirable attributes of the senses and the five elements as the peaceful and wrathful female deities.  
Raiment, ornaments, food, and drink are bestowed by offering goddesses on the body maṇḍala.

[The practice of union concerns] the object [or female medium], the manner [of this engagement], the essential nature [of this engagement], [the receiving of] accomplishment, and the twofold result.

The practice of ritual liberation concerns the [targeted] object, the skillful means, the five ways [in which yogins are skilled], the actual liberation and ejection [of the target's consciousness], and the beneficial consequences [of this practice].

The practices of union and ritual liberation are without defect because they are uncreated magical apparitions.

If the yogin has achieved [the communion] endowed with the three purities, the four modes of sameness, and the three sets of five [branches, requisites, and rituals], that one will become accomplished.

There are fifty [deities] in union, who constitute the fivefold cluster, along with the ten [pairs] of [protective] wrathful deities.

There are thirty [deities] who constitute the [threefold] cluster, representing the three families, along with the eight gatekeepers.

There are ten [deities] who constitute the [single] cluster, representing buddha mind, along with the eightfold host of wrathful deities.

Through the fifty-eight blood drinkers, provisional and conclusive [accomplishments] will be attained.

Accomplishment will be attained through the realization that

Accomplishment will be attained through the realization that all things are indivisible and that [all the deities] are gathered within the Vajra family.

Suffering will be alleviated since [all deities] are gathered in buddha body, speech, and mind.

Endowed with skillful means, [the yogin] should meditate on the fivefold [maṇḍala] cluster, along with the ring of wrathful deities, and supreme [accomplishment] will then be achieved.

[The yogin] should then meditate perfectly on the maṇḍala of the forty-two conquerors.

[As for the ancillary aspects,] they should have meditative stability, a suitable location, steadfast mind, and

[perseverance] with regard to auspicious times and dates.

Through these secret words, [the tathāgata] held meaningful discourse with himself.

This completes chapter 11 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the maṇḍala of communion.

## ***Chapter 12: The Attainment of the Communion***

[Replete with] the supreme resources of the communion, [the Great

Joyous One then] uttered these following aphorisms:

Accomplishments will be achieved through meditative stability in the maṇḍala of the *Net of Magical Emanation*.

By the seals of the dance steps and gestures, one will sink within the earth or traverse the heavens.

By the seals of songs, lyrics, and resonance, one will achieve the buddha speech of the sacred doctrine.

By the seals of ornaments and raiment, one will achieve the ten powers that cannot be matched.

By the seals of food and drink, one will achieve the nectar of all that is desired.

By the seals of the rites of union and liberation, one will



By the seals of the rites of union and liberation, one will achieve supreme and common accomplishments, along with the rites.

The awareness holders who become potent and powerful through this basis and condition are [renowned] in the fields of the conquerors.

[Those awareness holders,] gods and humans, causal and fruitional, are subsumed on the extraordinary levels.

And then the supreme eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth [buddha] levels will be spontaneously perfected.

All [maṇḍalas] are gathered in the male and female Samantabhadra.

[The nature of] mind is the buddha.

Through the unique [Samantabhadra], all [maṇḍalas] will be accomplished, just as when the sun and moon are present there will be light.

Without dichotomy, there are no defects, whether the rituals are excessive or incomplete.

[Thus were the tathāgatas] pleased by this meditative stability, which shines without obscuration.

This completes chapter 12 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the attainment of the communion.

### ***Chapter 13: The Nucleus of Most Secret Pith Instructions***

[The Great Joyous One] then uttered the following aphorisms concerning the spontaneous presence of all things in the primordial Great Perfection: There are [the vehicle of] gods and humans, the non-Buddhist systems, the great and lesser [vehicles], and the outer and inner tantras.

The points of the texts are disclosed by compounding syllables, nouns, and phrases.

The concealed and hidden points are retained in the mind of the spiritual teacher who reveals them.

the spiritual teacher who reveals them.

Endowed [with the primordial maṇḍala], one should meditate on it as [the maṇḍala] possessed in the manner in which gold ore is smelted and refined.

The supreme maṇḍala of buddha mind is that in which bliss and radiance are perceived, without being renounced.

The secret buddha body and pristine cognition within the heart center [of the subtle body] is the expanse in which [all] maṇḍalas [emerge].

The material elements, the enlightened families,

The awareness, the sense organs, and the sense objects

Are [inherently] pure as the deities—in emptiness.

The five pristine cognitions are [present in the nonduality of] objects and awareness, free from conceptual elaboration and without grasping.

Offerings are made to the deities within the maṇḍala of the pudendum and within the body and to [the nature of] mind, which is ecstatic.

The result is that the eight [common] accomplishments, the buddha body of perfect resource, and the buddha body of reality will be attained.

The vital essence of the heart center [within the subtle body] is Akaniṣṭha—the essential nature of all the conquerors.

Through the visionary appearances, [the buddhas] are perceived face to face, enlightened attributes and perfect [resources emerge], and [sentient beings] are trained by the buddha body of form.

Through understanding and meditation, pristine cognition becomes present, along with enlightened activities.

Those who aspire toward this [goal] are deemed the close heirs of all the conquerors, throughout space and time.

This is the result attained by those who have refined all vehicles, over aeons equal to the number of atoms in the [buddha] fields.

All the conquerors of the three times have mastered this [path] and perfected the five buddha bodies.

All yogins of the three times will accomplish spontaneous presence through this [path].

This is the sacred doctrine through which the definitive, most secret result has been actualized.

Since there is no definitive meaning apart from this, even though sought, none will be found.

This [teaching] should be given to those endowed with discriminative awareness who are well refined, of steadfast disposition, and dedicated.

If it is given to those who are deluded, one's life may come to an end, and one may come to dwell in the hells.

Such were the aphorisms that [the tathāgata] himself uttered to [the tathāgata] himself.

This completes chapter 13 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the nucleus of pith instructions.

### ***Chapter 14: The Eulogy Which Pleases***

[Samantabhadra] then sang this song of joy to the maṇḍala of [all the tathāgatas] themselves: The indestructible reality of buddha body is the [pristine cognition of] reality's expanse, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The indestructible reality of buddha speech is the [pristine cognition of] discernment, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The indestructible reality of buddha mind is the mirrorlike [pristine cognition], comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The indestructible reality of buddha attributes is the [pristine cognition of] sameness, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The indestructible reality of buddha activities is the [pristine cognition of] accomplishment, comprising the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The active male and passive female aspects of all the conquerors [are the reality of] buddha body, speech, and

mind, encompassing cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.  
Thus did he purposefully proclaim to the retinue of the pure  
and self-manifesting [field].

This completes chapter 14 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled  
“The Eulogy Which Pleases.”

## **BOOK 17, PART 1: SECRET NUCLEUS: THE WRATHFUL DEITIES AND THE COLOPHON**

***Chapter 15: The Cloud-Like Diffusion of the Natural  
Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities*** The peaceful deities having  
been revealed, there follows the ground, path, and result  
pertaining to the wrathful deities.

One may wonder why this diffusion ensues from the disposition  
of the buddha body of perfect resource.

Coarse engagement in the concealed secrets, without an  
understanding of the hidden secrets, is the cause [for the  
arising of malign beings].

Consequently they have experienced [sufferings] for twelve  
thousand aeons in the hot and cold hells, And they have  
endured for six aeons the hunger and thirst of the anguished  
spirits.

[Thereafter, assuming the form of] cruel, cannibalistic ogres,  
they have subjugated and subdued the three planes of  
existence. Owing to the [meritorious] service that Rudra [the  
archetype of such cruel and malign beings] had performed in  
the past, [the omniscient Heruka] observed that the time had  
arrived for him to be disciplined.

In order to discipline this lord of existence, [Samantabhadra]  
became absorbed in the meditative stability of the cloud of  
wrathful deities.

The assembly of male and female wrathful deities then terrified

[the most powerful of malign beings] through their fifteen indications.

[Among them,] the principal deity was dark brown in color, with three heads and six arms, And the blood drinkers of the four enlightened families were arrayed on the spokes [of the maṇḍala wheel] in the four directions.

The class of male spirits bellowed their fierce words with a malignant roar,

Whereupon [Mahottara Heruka] assumed [a form] with nine [heads] and eighteen [arms], bellowing khāhi.

Then [the blood drinkers] enjoyed the entrails of the arrogant spirits, along with their flesh, blood, and bones.

Then, through the ĀRALI JAḤ [mantra], they minutely condensed the inhabited worlds.

And they gathered together the twenty-eight *īśvarī*, along with their slaves and servants.

Through their joyousness, [they then became equipoised in] the meditative stability of enjoyment. VAJRA PRAVEŚAYA!

With desire the queens respectively embraced the bodies of the [blood drinkers of the] five enlightened families.

As they uttered the syllable HŪM, the vajras entered into union with the lotuses.

As they uttered the syllable HA, there came forth the eight *gaurī*, who assumed their positions in the cardinal and intermediate directions.

As they uttered the syllable HE, there came forth the eight *piśācī*, who assumed their positions in the cardinal and intermediate directions.

As they uttered the syllable PHAṬ, there came forth the four female gatekeepers, who assumed their positions at the four gates.

The syllable PHAṬ resounded and all the *mātaraḥ* were dispatched to their own abodes.

[Then the cruel and malign spirits] were expelled from the bowels [of the herukas] and [Ucchuṣmakrodha] drank the mire, so that they regained mindfulness and perceived [the herukas] with multiple faces.

Then all the arrogant spirits of the ten directions without

exception were subjugated simultaneously.  
They offered themselves as subjects, with body, speech, and mind, and swore an oath.  
They presented their retinues and made their offering, saying, “Let us maintain [only] the name [of this maṇḍala] as our crown [jewel]! Let us accomplish the [four] rites!”  
They invoked a curse, saying, “If we do not do as we have said, may our heads and bodies be severed!”  
All their mothers and sisters then assembled and made their request concerning the accomplishment of their rites.  
[Mahottara] presented the vajra into their hands and conferred the name empowerment upon them, whereupon they were enjoined to perform their respective rites, and they assumed their positions.

This completes chapter 15 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Diffusion of the Wrathful Deities.”

***Chapter 16: The Diffusion of the Maṇḍala of Buddha Speech of the Great Assembly of Wrathful Deities*** [The Great Joyous One] then brought forth the following maṇḍalas of buddha speech from the assembly of the wrathful deities: The mantras of the ten male and female wrathful deities of the five enlightened families, The mantras of the eight *mātarah*, headed by Gaurī, along with their [concluding] seed syllable HA, The mantras of the eight *piśācī*, headed by Siṃhamukhī, along with their [concluding] seed syllable HE, The mantras of the four female gatekeepers, along with their [respective] seed syllables JAḤ, HŪM, VAM, HOḤ, And the mantras of the rites of the twenty-eight queens, with their seed syllable BHYOḤ.

Then [the beings of pristine cognition] were invited by means of the RULU EHY EHI MANTRA, And absorbed into the [visualized]

beings of commitment by means of the VAJRA KRODHA MANTRA.  
Please confer your blessings, accomplishments, and  
commitments!  
Please consume this food and drink and their branches, O  
Sharp-Fanged [Host]!  
At these words, [all worlds] were incinerated, ablaze, and filled  
with buddha body, speech, and mind.

This completes chapter 16 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled  
“The Diffusion of the Buddha Speech of the Wrathful  
Deities.”

### ***Chapter 17: The Revelation of the Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities***

Then [the Great Joyous One] uttered these following aphorisms  
in order to reveal the maṇḍala of reflected imagery: Upon a  
foundation in the form of a wheel, the celestial palace is  
square with four gateways.

Its pillars and beams are fashioned of skulls and snakes, its  
rafters and gates of human corpses, and its roof parapets [of  
stars and planets].

The seats [within the palace] are fashioned of gods and  
supported by the bull, buffalo, leopard, tiger, and bear.

[The herukas are respectively] brown, blue, yellow, red, and  
green, with three faces and six arms.

[They wear] raw hides, snakes, skulls, and insignia of sun and  
moon, and they roar in a mighty voice.

With their first [right hands] respectively holding the five hand  
emblems, they entwine their female consorts.

[Along with them] are the female mediums indicative of the  
sensory locations, the sense objects, and the four gates,  
holding their respective insignia.

These are embellished by their twenty-eight attendants,  
concubines, and maidservants, who have their own hand  
emblems

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[Thereupon] the blazing maṇḍala, equal in its extent to the number of atoms, filled the entire expanse.

This completes chapter 17 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities.”

### ***Chapter 18: The Revelation of Genuine Offerings and Generosity***

[Then the Transcendent Lord] uttered these following aphorisms concerning the great offerings that are pleasing: Oneself should be liberated by realization [or from misconceptions], and others should be liberated by compassion.

Once [oneself and the consort] have been visualized as deities and [the being of pristine cognition] has been invited, then through union, pleasure should be conferred by means of this offering.

The five nectars should then be offered to the deities, equated with oneself,

After which food, delicacies, drinks, clothing, and all that is desirable should be offered to the maṇḍala of deities.

The supreme accomplishment and, it is needless to say, the common accomplishments will be achieved, and enlightened activities will blaze forth.

[In this way] the ten directions were pervaded by offerings that are pleasing.

This completes chapter 18 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Revelation of Offerings and Generosity.”

### ***Chapter 19: The Commitments***



[Then the Transcendent Lord] uttered these following aphorisms concerning commitments in order to ensure success: When this [vehicle] is ascertained, deeds and afflictive mental states are not accumulated, while ethical discipline and vows [are perfected].

As many vows as there are, they are all integrated in the supreme commitments.

Resembling a magical display, without objective referent, there is in fact no life to be killed.

Since the two truths are indivisible, the things to be stolen are not extraneous but self-emanated.

There are even no lies about fictitious phenomena.

Sexual conduct, where the nature of attachment is without attachment, is the supremely great attachment.

The [basic] commitments to be attained and guarded are [as follows:] not to abandon [the three precious jewels], to venerate [the spiritual teacher], [to maintain] the mantras, to have loving-kindness, and [not] to divulge [the secret truths]. The five poisons and the five nectars should not be renounced, but accepted.

[The basic commitments] resemble the roots of a tree, and the [ancillary commitments] are the vitality that sustains them.

[The ancillary commitments, which are] not to be renounced and not to be rejected, function as an aid, equivalent [to the basic commitments], and they are hard to transgress.

If one maintains the commitment of union in sameness, one will be united with the three buddha bodies.

Owing to the contagion of meeting those whose commitments have degenerated, the present and next lives of both parties will be brought down.

If [one's basic commitments] have degenerated, all that one would attain will be reversed, and sufferings will emerge.

If one's ancillary [commitments] have degenerated, there will be no [positive] result, and one will fall into lower realms.

The intrinsic nature of the commitments is the identity of all

The numerous nature of the commitments is the identity of all the buddhas.

When classified, the basic [commitments] number thirty, and the others number twenty,

While, in order to train the thoughts of living beings, the commitments are inconceivable.

The abiding nature, without laborious attainment, is inconceivable.

Those who hold the [secret] mantras will be venerated by the foremost mundane gods, such as Brahmā and Śatakratu, and their retainers.

The conquerors and their heirs will intentionally consecrate them. Those who enter that level, abide on that level, and are mature on that level unite with Samantabhadra.

The skillful means that grant instruction and all vows are progressively integrated.

If [the commitments] degenerate, they can be restored by rites of fulfillment—a great distinction.

At these words, the self-manifesting [tathāgatas] paid homage to [the tathāgata] himself.

This completes chapter 19 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Revelation of the Commitments.”

## ***Chapter 20: The Consecration of Spontaneous Enlightened Activity***

[Then the Great Joyous One] uttered these following aphorisms, through which all enlightened activities are accomplished:

When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of wrath, the ritual target will be destroyed.

[The ritual target] should be summoned and absorbed into an effigy.

Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and [the effigy] presented to the assembled host

presented to the assembled host.

Linked together by their little fingers, [the yogins] dance, whereupon [the target] becomes insane, bursts asunder, and is incinerated.

When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of subjugation, [even] buddha speech will be subjugated.

[The ritual target] should be summoned and absorbed into an effigy.

Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and [the effigy] presented to the assembled host.

Linked together by their ring fingers, [the yogins] dance, whereupon all that is desired will come to pass.

When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of enrichment, excellent provisions will increase.

[The ritual target] should be summoned and absorbed into an effigy.

Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and [the effigy] presented to the assembled host.

Linked together by their middle fingers, [the yogins] dance, whereupon all wishes will be fulfilled.

When burnt offerings are presented to the god [of fire] in the fire pit of the rite of pacification, all fears will subside.

[The ritual target] should be summoned and absorbed into an effigy.

Then the ritual spike should be stabbed into it and [the effigy] presented to the assembled host.

Linked together by their index fingers, [the yogins] dance, whereupon negativity will subside.

The residual offerings should then be presented to the hosts, and then their commitments should be proclaimed and

and then their commitments should be proclaimed and injunctions given for them to perform their [respective] rites. May you actualize the rites with which you are charged, just as you have pledged!

The main part of the rite of the wrathful deities is the dance that follows:

By the dance [of the herukas] of the five enlightened families, the supreme and common [accomplishments] and enlightened activities will be achieved.

By [the dance of the *mātarah*] in the cardinal directions, the rites of subjugation and enrichment will be achieved, and by [the dance of the *mātarah*] in the intermediate directions the rites of pacification and wrath will be achieved.

By [the dance of the *piśācī*] in the cardinal directions, [all beings] will be consumed, and by [the dance of the *piśācī*] in the intermediate directions [their entrails] will be extracted.

By [the dance of] the *īśvarī*, hostile forces will be destroyed and all accomplishments bestowed.

The four rites should be performed respectively with clarity, joy, attachment, and wrath, in forests and so forth.

At these words the tathāgatas refined [their realization] in the presence of the tathāgata himself.

This completes chapter 20 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Consecration of Enlightened Activity.”

## ***Chapter 21: Eulogies to the Wrathful Deities***

Then [the wrathful host] intoned this song of joy, with awesome incandescence:

[The buddha body is] most ferocious, ablaze with light, with frowns of wrath and sharp fangs.

The roar [of buddha speech] bellows laughter like a mountain

crumbling and convulses [cruel and māalign beings] with terror.

The pristine cognitions [of buddha mind] endowed with discriminative awareness are the great nondual essential nature.

The wrathful cloud [of buddha attributes sends forth] a cascade of diverse [wrathful forms], permeating space.

[The supreme demons of buddha activities] subdue demons of great egotism and terrify their fearsome hosts.

[The body, speech, mind, and activities of Mahottara Heruka] are respectively like a great rock, a river, a blazing fire, and a hurricane.

This completes chapter 21 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “Eulogies to the Wrathful Deities.”

## ***Chapter 22: That Which Is Pleasing and Retained***

[Then the Great Joyous One] uttered these following aphorisms, indicating that for the sake of [its subsequent] entrustment, [this tantra] should be firmly retained: All phenomenal appearances in the [ten] directions and [four] times constitute this tantra of primordial buddhahood.

The levels apprehended by conceptual thoughts are paths leading toward the *Secret Nucleus*.

The sacred doctrines that grant instruction are never divulged without bringing benefit [to sentient beings].

Anyone who, having realized the secret truth, imparts it, is actually Samantabhadra.

All the conquerors possess nothing other than this secret truth.

Those who explain this [tantra] will become heirs of buddha mind, abiding on the levels, and they will attain manifest buddhahood.

At these words, [the tathāgatas] rejoiced, and they remain present as ornaments of the buddha field.

This completes chapter 22 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the entrustment and retention of this tantra.

### *The Meaning of the Colophon*

[This tantra] is included within the *One Hundred Thousand Chapters of the Net of Magical Emanation*.

All vehicles are diffused from this, the general transmission of the sūtras and tantras.

This completes the supreme root tantra—the unsurpassed result.

## **BOOK 17, PART 2: THE LITANY OF THE NAMES OF MAÑJUŚRĪ**

*The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* contains one hundred sixty-nine stanzas.

Among these, the chapter entitled “The Request” comprises sixteen stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “The Response,” there are six stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “Inspecting the Six Classes [of Individual Practitioners],” there are two stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “Manifest Enlightenment,” there are three stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “[Eulogy to the Maṇḍala of] the Indestructible Expanse,” there are fourteen stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “[The Pristine Cognition of] Reality’s Expanse,” there are twenty-five stanzas, the last of which is incomplete.

In the chapter entitled “The Mirrorlike [Pristine Cognition],” there are ten stanzas with an additional line.

In the chapter entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Discernment,” there are forty-two stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Sameness,” there are twenty-four stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Accomplishment,” there are fifteen stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “Eulogy [to the Five Conquerors],” there are five stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “[The Presentation of] Advantages,” the words take the form of prose.

In the chapter entitled “The [Arrangement of the] Mantras,” there are three stanzas.

In the chapter entitled “Rejoicing,” there are five stanzas.

This completes Book 17 of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, which elucidates the meaning of all the vehicles—concerning the ground, path, and result derived from the diffusion of the wrathful deities [according to the *Secret Nucleus*], along with its entrustment [for the benefit of posterity] and an enumeration of the individual chapters of *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*.

## THE CONCISE COMMENTARY: Books 15 TO 17

### *A Noble Vase of Nectar*

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**Book 15: The exposition of the title of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, the analysis [of its content and words], and [the first three chapters] that constitute its inception**

THERE ARE THREE BOOKS [of *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*] containing the exegesis of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, which is the fundamental tantra of Mahāyoga. **Book [15]** concerns the historical narrative, along with an exposition of its title, an analysis [of its content and words], and the actual inception [of the tantra text, i.e., chs. 1-3]. **Book [16]** concerns the diffusion of the peaceful deities [chs. 4-14]. **Book [17]** concerns the diffusion of the wrathful deities [chs. 15-22], along with the colophon.

Among these, Book 15, explaining the background narrative of the *Secret Nucleus* and so forth, has four main topics: (i) an exegesis of the historical narrative; (ii) an exegesis based on the title alone, which is intended for those of highest acumen; (iii) an exegesis analyzing [the meaning and the words of the tantra], which is intended for those of moderate acumen; and (iv) an exegesis of the introductory words [of the tantra], along with the introductory narrative [ch. 1], the initiation of the discourse [ch. 2], and the establishment [of all phenomena] [ch. 3], based on the arrangement of the actual verses, which is intended for those of lowest acumen.



## *The Framing Narrative*

The first main topic concerns the framing narrative. **Having, in this way, generally presented the four classes of tantra, among the tantras of Mahāyoga,** which emphasize the generation stage [of meditation], **the [cycle of the] *Net of Magical Emanation*, with its one hundred thousand [verses], includes four [primary texts], namely, the *Root Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*—otherwise known as the *Tantra of Vajrasattva from the Net of Magical Emanation*; the *Tantra of Vairocana from the Net of Magical Emanation*; the *Tantra of the Goddess from the Net of Magical Emanation*; and the *Tantra of Mañjuśrī from the Net of Magical Emanation*. Along with these, there are also eight ancillary texts associated with the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, namely, the *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eight Chapters*, which reveals the maṇḍala; the [*Tantra of*] **the *Supreme Spiritual Teacher***, which reveals the empowerments; **the [*Tantra of*] *Supplementary Points***, which reveals the commitments; **the *Tantra of the Ocean***, which reveals the generation stage [of meditation]; **the *Mirror of Vajra[sattva]***, which reveals the deities' body colors and so forth; **the *Tantra in Eighty-Two Chapters***, which reveals the buddha attributes; **the *Tantra in Forty—Six Chapters***, which reveals the buddha activities; **and the *Tantra of Penetration***, which reveals the path of skillful means.**

There is also a set of four exegetical tantras comprising the *Tantra of Supreme Emanational Display from the Net of Magical Emanation*, which immediately presents the path of liberation; the aforementioned [*Tantra of the*] *Mirror [of Vajrasattva]*, which gradually presents the path of liberation; the [*Tantra of*] *Penetration [from the Net of Magical Emanation]*, which immediately presents the path of skillful means; and the [*Tantra of the*] *Ocean [from the Net of Magical Emanation]*, which gradually presents the path of skillful means.

[This cycle also includes] the *Tantra of the Attainment of the Mighty Lords of Yoga through the Power of the Precious Wrathful Deities* and the *Kingly Tantra concerning the Power of the Wrathful Deities*. In addition, there are seventeen other tantras [of Mahāyoga] that are in conformity with it.

Those tantras that were [initially] delivered in the Akaṣiṣṭha realm were compiled by Vajrapāṇi, who conferred them on five noble beings on the summit of Mount Malaya. Consequently, the texts were inscribed by the ogre Matyaupāyika and concealed in space.

Then, in accordance with the seven dreams that occurred to **King Ja**, a cascade of books including all the eighteen tantra sections [of Mahāyoga] spontaneously and naturally fell upon the roof of the royal palace, along with an image of Vajrapāṇi.

By making offerings and prayers to [these books and the statue], the king beheld the visage of [Vajrapāṇi], the Lord of Secrets, and attained spiritual accomplishments. He conferred the teachings on Kukkurāja and a mass of one hundred thousand followers, and then attained liberation. Kukkurāja conferred the teachings on Indrabhūti the Younger and his retinue of ten thousand, and then attained liberation. The latter in turn conferred the teachings on Siṃharāja and his retinue of one thousand, and then attained liberation. He conferred the teachings on Uparāja and his retinue of five hundred, and then attained liberation. He in turn conferred the teachings on Gomadevī, daughter of King Indrabhūti [the Younger], and her retinue of one hundred, and then attained liberation. All of these [lineage holders] practiced the teachings along with their specific retinues, and they attained the level of the awareness holders; from then on, **their lineage** has continued to **descend in succession**.

### *An Exegesis Based on the Title of the Cycle*

The second main point is the exegesis based on **the definition of** [the expression] *Vajrasattva, from the Net of Magical*

**Emanation**, which is offered in order that those individuals of highest acumen might understand [the content of the tantra] merely through the exposition of its title.

[First,] with regard to the term *Vajrasattva*, **in terms of the ground**, [Vajra] denotes the continuum of the ground—the seed of buddha nature, which is indestructible and imperishable like a vajra. *Sattva* means that the enlightened attributes of buddha body and pristine cognition are unchanging and steadfastly present. In terms of **the path**, [Vajra] denotes the unchanging and conclusive vehicle of indestructible reality which is the enlightened intention of the Conqueror, whereby all things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are revealed to attain primordial buddhahood. [Sattva] denotes the volition that definitively accords with its purpose, and the heroic steadfastness that is maintained in appropriate conduct. In terms of **the result**, **Vajrasattva** denotes the conclusive goal, free from obscurations—the genuine all-pervading lord (*vibhu, khyab bdag*) in whom there is no difference between the teacher and the oceanic retinue. Briefly stated, the title is designated as such because it is the pure enlightened intention of this tantra text to reveal that cyclic existence, nirvāṇa, and the path—all three—are primordial buddhahood in the nature of Vajrasattva.

As for the expression **Net of Magical Emanation**, it denotes both the *Net of Magical Emanation* of **definitive meaning**, in which the emptiness that is the expanse of discriminative awareness and the naturally present pristine cognition that is the awareness of skillful means are coalesced, **and** the *Net of Magical Emanation* of symbolic **provisional meaning**, in which the male and female deities indicative of that [coalescence] are themselves coalesced in union. Through the impartial causal basis of the five material elements that manifest like a **magical** display, the five psychophysical aggregates **emanate** in all ways. These form a **net** because they combine cause and result **and the two truths**. Alternatively, **magical** denotes the provisions of realization, while **emanation** denotes the deities, and **net** denotes the

intrinsic nature in which these are integrated without duality.

Second, concerning **the greatness** that is denoted by the title [of the tantra], [the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*] is the universal [tantra] among all the scriptures. That is to say, all the crucial points contained in all the sūtras and tantras are revealed in this text. Just as all rivers flow into great oceans, all these [other scriptures] are perfected herein because all these [other teachings] are revealed in order that this [fruitful goal] might be realized.

Third, concerning **the encapsulation** [of the actual meaning in the title], the tantra] is designated as such because it is important that the title should appear at the beginning, insofar as anyone who does not know the title cannot communicate it. These **are the three points regarding the designation [of this text]**.

### *An Analysis of the Content of the Secret Nucleus*

The third main point [is the exegesis analyzing the content and words of the tantra]. This has two parts, of which the first [the analysis of its content] has five subsections. The first of these **is the introductory narrative**, which is **the causal basis** for the emergence **of the tantra** that is the object of the discourse. When [this introductory narrative] is analyzed, there is an **uncommon** secret interpretation, applied in the context of the path of skillful means, **and** there is also a **common** [interpretation]. The latter comprises the narrative of the buddha body of perfect resource, the narrative of the wrathful deities, and the narrative of all the teachings in general.

The second subsection concerns the **initiation of the discourse**—the object of the discourse being **the actual content of the tantra**, and its initiation taking the form of an exhortation to engage in discourse. This is because it functions as the condition for the emergence of the teaching. The **uncommon** initiation of the discourse has three aspects: those that originate from skillful means, from discriminative

awareness, **and** from their nonduality. The **common** [initiation of the discourse] refers to the arising of the teacher's compassionate spirituality in consequence of the retinue's request that he explain the tantra for the sake of others, at which point he proceeds to teach [the discourse] either directly or indirectly.

The third subsection [concerns the comprehensible meanings of the term *tantra*]. This has two parts, among which the former comprises **the continuum of the ground or causal basis, which is the goal to be realized; the continuum of the path or skillful means, through which [the result] is realized and reached; and the continuum of the result, wherein the goal is perfected. The term *tantra* denotes these three continua.** Generally speaking, the term *tantra* denotes "continuity." The latter are **the ten aspects of tantra that** facilitate the path. These **comprise** a **view** of reality, determinate **conduct, maṇḍala** array, successive gradation of **empowerment, commitment** that is not transgressed, **offerings** given according to circumstances, **mantra** recitation accompanied by the sealing hand gestures that bind [the practitioner to realization], unwavering **meditative stability, enlightened activity** that is displayed, **and attainment** for which one should strive. Each of these ten aspects is considered in terms of its essential nature, etymology, and classification.

The fourth subsection concerns the interrelated purposes of the tantra: In this context, **the expressed meaning** denotes the continuum of the natural [ground] that is illustrated [in this tantra text]. The "expressive words" denote the tantra text itself, which is composed of illustrative syllables in order that the meaning might be comprehended. **The purpose** is to understand the expressed meanings dependent on the expressive words. The subtle **innermost purpose** is to attain the common spiritual accomplishments by experientially cultivating the meanings one has understood in that manner. The supreme **innermost purpose** is to actualize the supreme spiritual accomplishment. Now, the expressed meaning and the

expressive words are interrelated, respectively as the object of knowledge and the means of knowing. The expressive words and the purpose are interrelated as skillful means arising from skillful means. The purpose and the innermost purpose are interrelated as one arising from the other. The innermost purpose and the expressed meaning are interrelated on the basis of their essential identity. These are **the four interrelated aspects**.

The fifth subsection concerns **the instruction and entrustment**. These are so called because the instruction is imparted **without vacillating** from the continuum of the natural [ground], **and** because entrustment is **conferred** with the words “Retain it **without lapsing** from the continuum of the path!”<sup>1078</sup> When classified, this has two aspects, among which the first concerns the instruction. Here, the two verses commencing [ch. 22:2]: “O! O! These natural expressions of the ten directions and four times [are the essence of the tathāgata]” suggest that the entire content of this tantra text is subsumed in four modes of vision, namely, the vision of bewilderment, which is to be purified; the vision of the ground, which is to be known; the vision of the path, which is to be traversed; and the vision of the result, which is to be attained. In this way, the instruction [of this tantra] is imparted without vacillating from the continuum of the natural [ground].

[Second,] the entrustment is conferred **upon three** kinds of recipient: its historical compilers, those individuals of the future endowed with the eye of the doctrine, as well as the *mātaraḥ* and the *ḍākinī*.

### *An Analysis of the Words of the Secret Nucleus*

The second part [of the exegesis analyzing the meaning and words of the tantra] concerns the classification [of the tantra] based on its actual words. **Words** are formed from the aggregate **of syllables, and** [syntactically bound] **phrases** from the aggregate of words. Verses, prose, and chapters are

formed from the aggregate of phrases. This process continues sequentially until a whole volume takes shape. Such are the literary **tantras** or verbal tantras. They **include tantras that manifest** as [nonverbalized] words, that is to say, the tantras composed of words, phrases, and syllables, through which the meaning of tantra arises in the form of “word universals” in the minds of trainees; **the tantras that verbally resonate**, that is to say, their expression in speech; and the **tantras that are symbolic**, functioning as an expressive support for the [verbal tantras], in which the representations of the letters are externally arranged **in book form**. Why, you may ask, is the term *verbal tantra* so designated? *Verbal* implies that the actual expressed meaning resonates as expressive sound, and *tantra* suggests either that there is a continuity to the versified textual composition or that the five component parts of the text, commencing with the introductory narrative, are interrelated in the manner of primary causes, secondary conditions, and results.

When classified, [this cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation*] includes both root tantras and exegetical tantras. Among them, [in this case] **the root tantra includes the prologue, the main text, and the conclusion. The prologue includes both the title and the translator’s verses of homage. The main text includes the inception and two modes of diffusion**, that is, the diffusion **of the peaceful** and the diffusion of the **wrathful deities**, each **comprising** the three [continua] of **ground, path, and result. The inception** comprises three chapters **including** the first, which concerns **the introductory narrative**; the second, which concerns **the initiation of the discourse**; and the third, which concerns **the establishment** [of all phenomena]. **Within the section on the diffusion, the ground of the peaceful deities has seven chapters**, including the fourth, which concerns the maṇḍala array of the cloud mass of letters; the fifth, which concerns the attainment [of the *Net of Magical Emanation*]; the sixth, which concerns the maṇḍala of buddha mind or meditative stability; the seventh, which concerns the maṇḍala of buddha speech or

mantra; the eighth, which concerns the maṇḍala of buddha body or gestures of sealing; the ninth, which concerns the maṇḍala of illustrative imagery; and the tenth, which concerns the conferral of empowerment. **The path has three** chapters, including the eleventh, which concerns the generation stage of meditation; the twelfth, which concerns the accumulation of the communion ceremony; and the thirteenth, which concerns the perfection stage of meditation; **and the result has one** chapter: the fourteenth, which concerns the eulogy [to the peaceful deities]. **In the section on the wrathful deities, the ground has one chapter**, the fifteenth; **the path has five** chapters, including the sixteenth, which concerns the mantras; the seventeenth, which concerns the maṇḍala; the eighteenth, which concerns offerings; the nineteenth, which concerns commitments; and the twentieth, which concerns enlightened activities. **The result has one** chapter: the twenty-first, which concerns the eulogy [to the wrathful deities]. **Together with** [the final chapter on] **the instruction and entrustment, the text altogether has twenty-two chapters.**

### *The Title*

The fourth main topic [of Book 15], which **now follows**, has three parts: [the meaning of the title, the meaning of the verse of homage, and the meaning of the actual text]. Within this **extensive interlinear exegesis, which is intended for the sake of those of lowest acumen**, first there is **the meaning of the title**, which has seven aspects:

(i) The term **glorious** refers to **all that is perfect**—the spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies along with their pristine cognitions, enlightened attributes, and activities.

(ii) The term **secret** denotes the abiding nature, the actual truth, where cyclic existence and nirvāṇa abide in sameness because they are naturally pure from the beginning. Since this reality is profound and hard to fathom, it is most difficult to realize. As for the modalities of secrecy, there are both hidden



and **concealed meanings**. *Hidden* implies that although the tantra of the natural [ground]—the abiding nature and actual truth—is naturally present, in and of itself, it has not been realized; it has been obscured by obscurations and thoughts and is therefore unperceived, just like a treasure buried underground beneath the house of a pauper. *Concealed* implies that the perfect view of the unsurpassed way of secret mantra, along with its marvelous modes of conduct, should be concealed from unworthy recipients, such as practitioners of the lower vehicles.

(iii) The term **nucleus has three meanings**: it implies that this tantra is the emanational ground of all teachings, it implies that it is the culmination of all paths, and it implies that this establishment of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa in sameness is the intrinsic nature of all things.

(iv) The term **real nature has three meanings**: it denotes the real nature of the causal basis when one settles into the self-originated pristine cognition, where appearances and emptiness are indivisible, uncontrived by the meditating intellect; it denotes the real nature of the result because this reality is naturally present in the fruitional maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition; and it denotes the real nature of the common savor of cause and result because there is no other phenomenon to be known or accomplished apart from this natural pristine cognition of the indivisible truth.

(v) The term **definitive refers to the conclusive [teachings]** because they present the meaning, just as it was comprehended by the conquerors, for the sake of fortunate beings, rather than those that present the provisional meaning for the sake of those of low fortune.

(vi) The term **tantra has three meanings** because it denotes the interconnecting thread between the continuum of the ground, the continuum of the path, and the continuum of the result.

(vii) **And** the term *kingly* implies that [this tantra] **is the pinnacle or king among** all the **vehicles** of sūtra and tantra.

The second part [of the extensive interlinear exegesis

concerns the verses of homage]: [Buddhas such as Samantabhadra] are **endowed with** excellence of **renunciation** because the four demonic forces have been abandoned, **and** excellence of **realization** because the [various modalities of] buddha body and pristine cognition are possessed without conjunction or disjunction. **Transcending conceptual elaborations** of acceptance and rejection, or being and nonbeing, they give rise to the extraneous glory, associated with the buddha body of form which is **spontaneously perfect**, without straying from the buddha body of actual reality. This intrinsic nature [of Samantabhadra] is present **at all times** (*samanta*) as the inexhaustible wheels of adornment, the buddha body, speech, and mind, in the spontaneous Bounteous Array, and it is **positive** (*bhadra*) because it is perfect in great resources that manifest in and of themselves. **This homage** offered with body, speech, and mind by the translator who resorts to the **supreme** object [of refuge, Samantabhadra] **completes the prologue**.

# Chapter 1: The Introductory Narrative

The third part [of the extensive interlinear exegesis concerns the inception of the tantra. This comprises chs. 1-3, commencing with ch. 1, which is entitled] “The Introductory Narrative.” This also has three sections [a brief introduction to the introductory narrative, an extensive commentary, and a synopsis].

[The first of these concerns the introductory phrase “Thus, at the time of this explanation.”] Here the term “thus” (*'di skad*) refers to **the excellence of the sacred doctrine**—the extensive [words of] the tantra text that follows. The words “of this explanation” (*bshad pa'i*) are held to denote the excellence of the teacher, that is, the compiler [of this tantra text], and the words “at the time of ” (*dus na*) denote **the excellence of time**, the nature of which is the pristine cognition of sameness, [unchanging] throughout the four times, without duality between cyclic existence and nirvāṇa. **The introductory narrative is endowed with** these excellences.

The second section [of the introductory narrative—the extensive commentary] also has two parts [a brief introduction and an extensive exegesis]. As to the former, **at the outset there is a brief introduction to the** essential nature of the teacher, the buddha body of **perfect resources** which are the embodiments of the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the conquerors of the ten directions and four times. This is the intrinsic nature in which all buddhas without exception are indivisible.

As for the latter, [the extensive exegesis] has three parts [comprising the excellence of the location, the teacher, and the retinue]. Among these, the first [the excellence of the location] also has three sections [the field of the buddha body of perfect resource, the celestial palace, and the excellent array].

First [with regard to the field of the buddha body of perfect resource], **in the limitless buddha field of Akaniṣṭha, the ground assumes the form of a wheel**, distinct with four

limitless spokes and axle.

Second [with regard to the celestial palace], upon it **the celestial palace**, ablaze with jewels, **is fashioned as a square**, adorned **with buttresses** of pristine cognition **and a spire**, which is **bulbous** because all maṇḍalas of the buddhas without exception are of a single essential nature.

Third [with regard to the excellent array], this includes both [the ornaments and the thrones]. As to the former, the actual ornaments, **it has garlands** of diverse gems, **silken drapes**, an ornamental balustrade, and a dense cloud mass of offerings, indicative of the **desirable attributes** of the five senses, including sights, sounds, fragrances, savors, and tactile sensations. **And** it has **gates**, indicative of the four approaches of liberation, **with pediments** indicative of the eight aspects of liberation. As for the latter, the thrones, the palace contains a **lion** throne of assurance, an **elephant** throne of spiritual power, a **horse** throne of miraculous abilities, a **peacock** throne of absolute control, **and** a [*cīvaṃcīvaka*] throne of unimpeded nature, **along with sun** and **moon** cushions of natural inner radiance, symbolizing that skillful means and discriminative awareness are without duality, **and lotus** cushions untainted by defective flaws. [Thus the buddhas] sit on seats formed of precious gems, in which all these desirable attributes are found.

The second part [of the extensive exegesis concerning the excellence of the teacher] also has two sections, the first [of which concerns the shared attributes of their posture, arms, and heads]. The bodies of the principal deities are endowed with **the** uncommon thirty-two **major and** eighty **minor marks**, while their legs assume **the posture** indicative of skillful means and discriminative awareness; their **six arms**, indicative of the six pristine cognitions, have hand emblems fashioned of the gems of pristine cognition; **and** their **three heads** are indicative of the inconceivable [adornments] of buddha body, speech, and mind. The second section [of the excellence of the teacher] has two parts, the first of which concerns **the** [male buddhas] **of the five enlightened**

**families**, the tathāgatas who represent [the inherent purity of] **the five psychophysical aggregates**—the kings of the consciousness, physical forms, feelings, perceptions, and formative predispositions. These **are in union with the five female buddhas**, who represent **the five material elements**—space, earth, water, fire, and wind. The second section [concerns their undifferentiated retinue]: **On account of such intrinsic nature, they are endlessly pervasive** throughout the entire expanse of actual reality.

The third part [of the extensive exegesis concerning the excellence of the retinue] has three sections, the first of which concerns **the four** great [inner male] bodhisattvas, who **represent indestructible vision, hearing, fragrance, and savor; and the four** queens [or inner female bodhisattvas], **who represent the corresponding sense objects**—sights, sounds, fragrances, and savors. The second section concerns **the four** great [outer male] bodhisattvas, who **represent the indestructible eyes, ears, nose, and tongue, while the four** queens [or outer] **female** [bodhisattvas] **represent the four times**. The third section concerns the four male gatekeepers, the great subjugators who **represent indestructible contact, the contacting subject, the contacted object, and the consciousness of contact, while** the queens [or female gatekeepers] represent the negation of eternalism, nihilism, egotism, and substantialism, along with **the four immeasurable aspirations**.

The third section [of ch. 1, “The Introductory Narrative,” is the synopsis, which] has two parts. The former concerns the essential nature of this array, according to which **the secret verses expressing these secret maṇḍalas are self-originated**. The latter [the modality of this array] has three parts, the first of which [concerns the disposition through which this self-manifesting maṇḍala is arrayed]: **Holding sway over** the essential nature that is the buddha body of actual reality and **the expanse that is real, this** maṇḍala of the buddha body of perfect resource along with its fivefold pristine cognition **diversely manifests** in and of itself. The second

[concerns the manner in which it manifests]: **This self-manifestation is a pure and radiant reflection** of meditative stability, a magical display. The third [concerns the recognition of its abiding nature]: **The genuine abiding nature**, the excellence of unblemished enlightened attributes, **is expressed in these secret words. This completes chapter 1 of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, entitled “The Introductory Narrative.”**

## ***Chapter 2: The Initiation of the Discourse***

This chapter has two parts [the initiation of the discourse through genuine enlightened intention and the dynamic of compassionate spirituality for the sake of unrealized sentient beings].

The former has three sections [the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of Samantabhadra, the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of Samantabhadri, and the initiation of the discourse through the enlightened intention of their nondual union].

Among these, the first also has two aspects [the cause that induces Samantabhadra’s enlightened intention to initiate the discourse and his actual initiation of the discourse]. As to the former, Samantabhadra, **the active male subject**, who represents the mental faculty, engaged with Samantabhadri, **the passive female object**, who represents mental phenomena, **and** this intrinsic nature of his unique enlightened intention, **indivisible from all the conquerors** of the ten directions and four times, **is the cause that gives rise to the following aphorism.** As for the latter [his actual initiation of the discourse], the aspects of **the psychophysical aggregates**—the five including consciousness, in which actual reality and apparent reality [are coalesced]—are the five perfect buddhas. The twelve sense fields and **the** eighteen **sensory elements** are the eight male bodhisattvas and the eight female bodhisattvas. **The five** outer and inner **material elements** are

the five female buddhas—earth and water are respectively Buddhalocanā and Māmakī; fire and wind are respectively Pāṇḍaravāsini and Samayatārā; and space is Dhātviśvari. The three planes of existence **are primordial buddha** fields. All phenomena of **cyclic existence and** the realities of **nirvāṇa** without exception, that is to say, all things of phenomenal appearance that there are, are not extraneous to the buddhas themselves. Phenomena of cyclic existence, endowed with independent characteristics, have not been found by the buddhas themselves, even to the extent of an atomic particle.

The second section also has two aspects [the cause that induces Samantabhadri's enlightened intention to initiate the discourse, and her actual initiation of the discourse]. As to the former, Samantabhadri, **the passive female object** to be ascertained, representing [the inherent purity of] self-manifesting mental phenomena, **united indivisibly with** Samantabhadra, **the active male subject**, representing the pristine cognition that is awareness, **and** then she **uttered the following aphorisms concerning** this abiding nature of **actual reality**, emptiness. As for the latter [her actual initiation of the discourse], **the entire trichiliocosm** of the ten directions, illustrated by this self-manifesting world system, **the world and its inhabitants, is primordially empty** and isolated from the senses. The three planes of existence abide in the intrinsic nature of Akaṣiṣṭha, the primordially pure buddha field, and the five degenerations through which bewilderment appears as the five poisons also essentially abide as the naturally present pristine cognitions—supremely blissful states. The five psychophysical aggregates of living beings themselves are manifestly perfect buddhas. Therefore, the supreme nucleus of all phenomena is sameness—the **great** intrinsic nature of the mind set on **enlightenment**—and apart from this, the conquerors do not seek the doctrine elsewhere. Though sought, no such doctrine is found by the conquerors.

The third section also has two aspects [the cause that induces their nondual enlightened intention to initiate the discourse and their actual initiation of the discourse]. As to the

former, their Supreme Identity in whom awareness and emptiness are without duality then spoke as follows concerning **the mind that is also cultivated as** naturally present **pristine cognition** because cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are both **endowed with buddhahood** in their **primordial** sameness. As for the latter [their actual initiation of the discourse], *Emaho* is an exclamation of great astonishment. **This** reality that is the wondrous and marvelous abiding nature of all things is the profound secret of all the perfect buddhas. Through the disposition of the uncreated original actual reality, **all** things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa appear to be **created** as in a magical display. But **at** the moment when their creation itself manifests, actually it is **without creation**. This is the essential nature—the expanse of actual reality—and the intellect that realizes it is the pristine cognition of reality’s expanse. Similarly, through the unceasing actual reality, all that diversely appears ostensibly ceases, but at the moment when their cessation itself manifests, there is no **cessation**. This is the mirrorlike abiding nature, and the intellect that realizes this is the mirrorlike pristine cognition. Through the disposition in which all things are nonabiding, all phenomena that diversely appear ostensibly abide, but at the moment when abiding itself becomes manifest, actually there is no **abiding**. This is sameness, and the intellect that realizes this is the pristine cognition of sameness. Through the disposition in which the natural purity of the mind is nonreferential and signless, all conceptual thoughts that arise are ostensibly referential in terms of refutation, proof, and so forth, but at the moment when objective reference diversely manifests, it is baseless, and in fact it is **without reference**. This is discernment, and the intellect that realizes this is the pristine cognition of discernment. Through a disposition in which all things are without movement, appearances and awareness seem to move diversely, but at the moment when movement itself occurs, the intrinsic essential nature abides, **without movement**. This is the accomplishment of activity, and the intellect that realizes this is the pristine cognition of



accomplishment.

The latter part [of the second chapter reveals the dynamic of compassionate spirituality for the sake of unrealized sentient beings]. This has four sections [concerning sentient beings' lack of realization, bewilderment in cyclic existence, the truth devoid of bondage and liberation, and the diffusion of compassionate spirituality].

Among these, the first section has two aspects [the cause that induces compassionate spirituality and the object in respect of which it is induced]. With regard to the former, **the male** [tathāgatas], **with the assembled host of their female consorts, then uttered these following aphorisms.** With regard to the latter, **this** is a **primordially secret** reality for sentient beings who have not realized that all phenomena are buddhahood. Things that diversely manifest abide in the actual reality of the three buddha bodies, but they are **naturally secret** because they are perceived as bewildering phenomena. The intrinsic nature of these things is even more secret **owing to the essential nature** of actual reality, **and it remains most secret** because it is not seen to be present in oneself—**even though it is not extraneous** to the nature of one's own mind.

The second section has two aspects [the cause of compassionate spirituality and the actual modality of bewilderment]. With regard to the former, all buddhas and all phenomena are indivisible in the essential nature of primordial buddhahood. However, the conceptual thoughts of living beings **ripen into the** inconceivable strata of the five classes of living beings who are bound within **cyclic existence**, through **fundamental ignorance.** Great **compassionate spirituality is then generated** for their sake, and the following aphorisms are uttered. With regard to the latter, **through** their own **conceptual thoughts** [bewilderment] is emanated from the seed of buddha nature, in the manner of a causally effective dream. Living beings differentiate the diverse **corporeal forms, resources,** abodes, and the experiences of happiness and suffering and so forth which manifoldly appear, apprehending the concept "I" as a possessor **and** concepts

such as “my things” as being **possessed**.

The third section [concerns the truth that is devoid of bondage and liberation from the very moment when bewilderment manifests]: **Though** they are **unfettered** by anyone, fettering is nonexistent, and there is not an object to be fettered by the egotistical grasping of their own **conceptual thoughts**, it is as if they persistently tie and **untie** many **knots in the sky**.

The fourth section [concerns the diffusion of compassionate spirituality in order that this reality might be revealed]: In order **to show that** in this reality of the buddhas which is primordial, spontaneous, and perfect, **there is neither fettering nor liberation, the diffusion of diverse** skillful means and compassionate spirituality **is emanated. This completes chapter 2 of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, entitled “The Initiation of the Discourse.”**

### ***Chapter 3: The Establishment of All Phenomena***

The establishment of [all phenomena] has three parts [the context, the commentary, and the conclusion]. As for the first of these, **the six sages, embodiments of awareness and compassionate spirituality, then came forth** from the indestructible body, speech, and mind of the tathāgatas.

Second, [the commentary] has three parts [a general presentation of the modes of emanation that accord with the four kinds of instruction, a detailed exegesis of the nature of the living beings who are the object of these instructions and of their doctrines, and a synopsis of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as self-manifestations of mind and pristine cognition].

The first of these includes both [a general introduction and an extensive exegesis]. As to the former, once they have come forth, **they** each act on behalf of the five classes of living beings through four kinds of instruction, **instructing** them in each **trichiliocosm of the infinite and limitless six worlds** of the ten directions.

The latter [the extensive exegesis] has four sections, with regard to the first of which **they demonstrate the twelve great activities** associated with the great merit **of the buddha body**. Second, **they instruct by means of the six great supernormal cognitive powers of buddha mind**, namely, knowledge of the four times, knowledge of the continuum of the minds [of all beings], absolute vision of everything, absolute hearing of everything, the absolute performance of beneficial acts, and the perfection of the conduct of Samantabhadra. Third, **their miraculous abilities comprise the buddha body** which is inconceivable to all, along with the **buddha mind, buddha visage, and buddha speech**. Such countless forms, **which are inconceivable**, are manifested in the ten directions.

Fourth [concerning their instruction by knowledge conveyed in the five vehicles of buddha speech], this has three aspects [the classification of the vehicles, their respective antidotes, and their meaning]. Among these, the first [the classification of the vehicles] entails **the vehicle of the gods and humans, the vehicle of the pious attendants, the vehicle of the hermit buddhas, and the vehicle of the bodhisattvas, as well as the unsurpassed vehicle**. As for the second, their teachings **constitute the sacred doctrine with its eighty-four thousand antidotes** for the eighty-four thousand afflictive mental states. As for the third, **these** [vehicles] **encompass** the following attributes: The vehicle of pious attendants applies an antidote for the subjective apprehension of the self because it is understood that external objects are devoid of self and that the inner mind is also devoid of self. The vehicle of hermit buddhas additionally entails meditation on the processes of outer and inner dependent origination. The vehicle of the bodhisattvas actualizes the two aspects of selflessness because the mind that subjectively apprehends the self is itself an objectification of **bewilderment**. The vehicle of gods and humans teaches that causal deeds—positive and negative—and **the fruition of deeds**, which individually ripen, are not squandered. The vehicle of the unsurpassed way of secret

mantra is the conclusive realization, revealing the abiding nature, because the three media [of body, speech, and mind] are understood to be the three primordial maṇḍalas [of buddha body, speech, and mind], that is to say, the body is unsullied, the speech will not be sullied, and the mind **is never sullied** by substantialist deeds or the results of deeds.

The second part [of the commentary on this chapter, the detailed exegesis of the nature of the living beings who are the object of these instructions and of their doctrines] has two sections [a demonstration that the nature of cyclic existence is actual reality and a demonstration that the nature of the sacred doctrine is inexpressible].

The former has six aspects, among which the first concerns [the context]: **The tathāgatas then uttered the following aphorisms.** The second concerns [the appearance of cyclic existence]: All **the phenomena of mundane bewilderment**, as many as they are, cycle through both outer and inner **dependent origination owing to the subject-object dichotomy** of ideation, [arising from] fundamental ignorance, and they endure the diverse **experiences of happiness and suffering**, which are disharmonious appearances. The third concerns [the actual reality of those appearances]: The intrinsic nature [of this cyclic existence] is the genuine abiding nature that does not degenerate from actual reality. **From the very moment when** relative appearances **manifest**, dualistic in a merely illusory manner, there is no difference between the possessor who is subject to cyclic existence and the possessed objects of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **but they are** a primordial modality, **at one with the pure** actual reality, in the pure and self-manifesting **expanse**. The fourth [teaches that bewildering appearances are the miraculous display of the mind]: The [notions of] self and others, [which arise] owing to the subjective apprehension of the possessor and the possessed, apart from being one's own mere **misconceptions and bewildering appearances**, do not actually exist. When these are investigated, there exists neither subtlety nor subtle attributes, and there is no reality endowed with profundity that

separately exists, distinct from them. For the nature of misconception abides as **actual reality**. There is an interaction between the dreamlike apparitional nature and the misconceptions themselves, but indeed they **do not stray from** that actuality.

The fifth [concerns the baseless and groundless nature of bewildering ideation]: Despite the **continuity** of those **misconceptions** in terms of their causes and results, this [apparent continuity] abides in **the baseless and groundless** expanse of actual reality, and the diversity [of ideation] that arises has the nature of distinct indivisible moments of time. Furthermore, because even these mere indivisible moments of time do not exist, they **are** [of the nature of] awareness—a **modality** that abides as the essential **nature of the** primordially **pure expanse** of reality. The sixth [teaches that conceptual thoughts are the emanational display of pristine cognition]: The **emanational display of** subjective intelligence diversely arises in relation to this actual reality, and all transformations occur in relation to **pristine cognition** itself. Thus, the apprehension of self and others, along with the entire **continuity of ideation** that arises as refutation and proof, are the emanational display of pristine cognition. Indeed, this is the supreme attribute of the **pure** unsurpassed vehicle.

The latter part [of the commentary is the demonstration that the nature of the sacred doctrine is inexpressible]. This also has six sections, among which the first [concerns the demonstration that the unsurpassed vehicle is the result of having attained emancipation through the four vehicles]: **Having attained emancipation from** the sufferings of cyclic existence and debased actions **through the four vehicles, one is united** on and abides in the buddha level, that is to say, **in the fruition of the single** unsurpassed **vehicle**, where the natural Great Perfection is encountered. This is the intrinsic nature in which actual reality is realized. The second concerns [the demonstration that all things are a miraculous display without independent existence]: **When** this has been well **investigated** with awareness **by** a yogin who has genuine

**realization** of the meaning of the abiding nature, anything at all may become present, through the circumstances of its apparitional modality, arising from that disposition of the abiding modality, where there is no inherent existence. **This resembles**, for example, a **magical display** or a reflection, **which appears but does not exist**. The third concerns [the demonstration that although the teacher and teaching do not change, they instruct each according to his or her needs for the sake of those to be trained]: The buddhas **do not pass into nirvāṇa**. Their doctrines also **do not decline**. **But in order to instruct** ignorant sentient beings through acts of maturation and liberation, the buddha bodies of emanation emerge and then **they demonstrate the passing into nirvāṇa**. The fourth concerns [the demonstration that the natural *Secret Nucleus* is the emanational basis of all vehicles]: The Vinaya, Sūtras, and Abhidharma; [the tantras of] Kriyā, Caryā, and Yoga; the tantras of buddha body, tantras of buddha speech, and tantras of buddha mind—all [those teachings] that are **renowned** as genuine doctrines **within the nine** sequences of the **vehicles** and throughout the buddha fields of the ten directions **emanate from this Secret Nucleus**, the abiding mode [of reality], the nature of the Great Perfection. The fifth concerns [the demonstration that this text is the general commentary on all the sūtras and tantras]: **This natural Secret Nucleus is the source of all the sūtras and tantras**. Indeed it is **the supreme** [vehicle] **that establishes** all [others]. The sixth concerns [the demonstration that all these, apart from being mere names, words, and labels, are nonexistent in the abiding nature]: **All these phenomena** are actually nonexistent. Thus, they **are** simply **names** that **have been** designated and **applied**, corresponding provisionally to the meanings of relative truth, by teachers who **merely** designate names **and words** and then give teaching. **But**, having made such designations, from the very moment that the teachers give teaching, these names and words **have no entity**.

The third [part of the commentary is the synopsis of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as self-manifestations of mind and

pristine cognition]. This comprises both [a description of the causal basis that revealed this self-manifestation and the actual manner in which it was revealed]. As to the former, this secret description of [cyclic existence and nirvāṇa] where skillful means and discriminative awareness are nondual, **the teaching that mind and pristine cognition are self-manifesting, then came forth** as follows from the indestructible buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities. The latter has two parts [demonstrating the bewildering appearances of sentient beings to be the self-manifest nature of the mind and demonstrating the appearances of the buddha fields to be the self-manifest nature of pristine cognition]. With regard to the first, all the disadvantages that form the basis of the rebirth process have issued from egotistical and possessive ideation. **The** different perceptions **of the six classes of** living beings experience births, [deaths due to] cessation, **abodes, corporeal forms,** resources, **and** the cycle of bewilderment that generates **sufferings,** and so forth, but these **are** not actually differentiated apart from **the nature of** bewilderment —**misconception.** With regard to the second, the buddha mind endowed with emptiness, selflessness of the individual and phenomena, primordial knowledge, and individual **intrinsic awareness** overpowers phenomena that appear to it **through** the recollection of **pristine cognition, without dualizing** between the externally apprehended objects, and the internal apprehending mind. It **is present in** none other than **the self-manifesting nature** of pristine cognition, including the wondrous and marvelous three buddha bodies, their buddha speech of great pristine cognition which manifests as the vehicles, the buddha mind with its two kinds of knowledge, the immeasurable buddha attributes, the spontaneously accomplished buddha activities, and the inconceivable buddha fields. Pristine cognition **itself appears** in that manner, **as the buddha** bodies and **fields.** Such were the words of the secret indestructible reality that emerged.

Third [there is the conclusion of the chapter]: The tathāgata

himself knew that the teachings spoken by countless emanations of the six sages and by all the tathāgatas are indeed gathered in these [verses]. Indeed, **all the teachings** of the buddha body of emanation that instructs living beings and those of the self-manifesting buddha body of perfect resource **are gathered in this** teaching of **inexpressible nature. This completes chapter 3 of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, entitled “The Establishment of All Phenomena.”**

Here ends Book 15 from *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, which elucidates the meanings of all the vehicles. It contains the exegesis of the title of the *Secret Nucleus*, along with its classification and the three chapters forming the inception [of the peaceful deities], that is, the introductory narrative, the initiation of the discourse, and the establishment [of all phenomena].

### **Book 16: The presentation of the ground, path, and result in respect of the diffusion of the peaceful deities, according to the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus***

Commencing from this sixteenth [book], there follows a presentation of the diffusion of the maṇḍalas of both the peaceful and wrathful deities. This has two parts: a presentation of the spontaneously present maṇḍala of the peaceful deities [chs. 4-14] and an exegesis of the emergent maṇḍala of the wrathful deities [chs. 15-21].

The former [the spontaneously present maṇḍala of the peaceful deities, which is the subject matter of Book 16] has three main topics: the generation of and empowerment in the maṇḍala of the ground [chs. 4-10]; a presentation of the generation and perfection stages of the path [chs. 11-13]; and a eulogy to the intrinsic nature of the fruitional buddha bodies and pristine cognitions [ch. 14]. The first of these main topics comprises both [a general presentation of the nature of the three maṇḍalas (chs. 4-9) and a detailed exegesis of the skillful means through which the empowerments are conferred (ch.



10)]. The former has three parts [a presentation of the maṇḍala of the cloud mass of letters (chs. 4–5), a presentation of the maṇḍala of meditative stability (chs. 6–8), and a presentation of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery (ch. 9).] Of these, the first comprises both the establishment of the maṇḍala of the cloud mass of letters [ch. 4] and the sequence of attainment in relation to it [ch. 5].

#### ***Chapter 4: The Cyclical Array of the Garland of Letters***

The former [ch. 4] has three parts [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion]. With regard to the first of these, **having presented the inception** [of this tantra in Book 15], **there follows** the revelation of **the ground, path, and result of the peaceful deities**: Then all the tathāgatas became of a single enlightened intention, and in the expanse of indestructible reality—a modality of great sameness, **the** so-called cyclical **garland** of letters in which all things originally abide simply as nominal syllables—**emerged** from the indestructible buddha body, speech, and mind, without straying from the meditative stability **whereby all things manifest buddhahood in the** essential nature of the **letters**.

The second part [of this chapter, the explanation of the verses] has three sections [a general presentation of the nature of the wheel of letters, a detailed and distinct exegesis of them in conjunction with their respective deities, and a summary of these two sections]. The first of these also has three subsections [the meditation on the letters, the diffusion of the cloud mass of letters, and an exegesis of the nature of the letters].

The first of these [the meditation on the letters] includes both [the actual meditation and a demonstration of its advantages]. With regard to the former, one should be equipoised in a disposition where the letter **AḤ** emerges extremely static and unmoving on a lotus and moon cushion—clear and resplendent in its intrinsic nature. Therefrom countless tiny letters **A**, white

in color, are diffused, radiating the form of the letter A throughout phenomenal existence with their light rays and completely filling all world systems of the ten directions. It then reabsorbs all of them, causing them to vanish, and yet this letter a itself remains static, without increase or decrease. From that syllable A, the cluster of thirty-four consonants beginning with KA, along with the vowels, then radiate in the form of letters, [illuminating] all the sentient beings with light that diffuses throughout the ten directions, and they blaze forth as a single mass of light rays. Thereafter, these are reabsorbed and vanish into the letter A; then, issuing forth again, they are all diffused and reabsorbed as before, in the same manner. With regard to the latter [the demonstration of the advantages of this meditation], this modality is the causal basis of pristine cognition, through which the intrinsic nature of all the spiritual accomplishments of Samantabhadra, the indestructible reality of the body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities of all the buddhas, firmly emerge, just as they are desired.

Second, [the diffusion of the cloud mass of letters] comprises both [the diffusion of the letters and the wondrous extraordinary signs that appear]. With regard to the former, the letter A, the vowels, and the consonants all have their distinct places of articulation. Emerging from within, all letters indeed arise as attributes of the syllable A. Thus, the ground of speech is the syllable A. Moreover, through the formative conditioning of speech, there are three basic syllables that emerge: the syllable A itself, I which is flat, and U which is low. E is formed by the phonetic conjunction of A and I, and O is formed by the phonetic conjunction of A and U. The syllable R is formed by tension [of A], and the syllable L is formed by relaxation [of A]. Each of these [seven] vowels has long and short forms, so that there are fourteen vowels, or sixteen with the addition of the nasalized AṂ and the aspirated AḤ. [As for the velar consonants,] KA derives from the contact of this same syllable A with its place of articulation in the velum. KHA derives from that same [place of articulation] but is slightly lower pitched and has partial cerebral contact. GA is slightly lower

pitched than that. GHA has contact with the chest, and ÑA has contact with the nose. All these [velar consonants] emerge from the vase of the buddha throat. [As for the palatal consonants,] CA, CHA, JA, JHA, and ÑA emerge from the buddha tongue through the contact of this syllable A with the hard palate and the blade of the tongue. The [retroflex consonants] ṬA, ṬHA, ḌA, ḌHA, and ṆA emerge from the tip of the buddha tongue because they are cerebral sounds derived from the contact of the syllable A with the edge of the palate, close to the tip of the tongue. The [dental consonants] TA, THA, DA, DHA, and NA emerge from the tip of the buddha tongue and the buddha teeth because they derive from the contact of the syllable A with the tip of the tongue and the teeth. The [labial consonants] PA, PHA, BA, BHA, and MA emerge from the buddha lips because they derive from the contact of the syllable A with the lips. The particular [modulations of pitch] within these phonetic classes are similar to those [of the velars], beginning with KA.

[The semivowel] YA and [the sibilant] ṢA are classified as palatals. [The semivowel] VA is classified as labial. [The semivowel] RA and [the sibilant] ṢA are classified as cerebral [or retroflex]. [The semivowel] LA and [the sibilant] SA are classified as dentals. The syllable HA is classified as velar, and the syllable KṢA is included within the velars and the cerebrals.

With regard to the latter [the wondrous extraordinary signs that appear]: **Through their emergence**, the infinite ten directions of **the six realms vibrated** in six ways, further vibrated, and absolutely vibrated, whereupon all things were transformed into mere nominal characteristics.

Third [the exegesis of the nature of the letters] has six parts, of which the first [describes the causal basis for the enunciation of the syllables]: **The tathāgatas then uttered these following aphorisms concerning the cloud mass of letters.**

The second [demonstrates that the wheel of the uncreated letters denotes the buddha body of actual reality]: The syllable A does not exist as an extreme emptiness because, as the

source of the letters, its mere apparitional modality is not abandoned. Nor does it even refer to nonemptiness because it is without entity or sign. Indeed, it does not objectively refer even to their middle ground—the nonduality of these two natures. So it is that all things are merely [names] and are otherwise unexpressed. This denotes the enlightened intention of the buddhas—the reality that abides in the disposition of the buddha body of reality as the garland of letters itself.

The third [demonstrates that the manifestly perfect letters are the buddha body of perfect resource]: The syllable **A** itself has a nature that diversely manifests through conditions in the forms of the letters. The king of primordial, manifestly perfect enlightenment manifests buddhahood in the buddha body of reality, which is the uncreated syllable **A**, subsuming all that can be nominally expressed in terms of vowels and consonants—the forty-two starting with **KA**. Just as the syllable **A** represents the manifestation of buddhahood, these forty-two letters that are diffused from the disposition of the syllable **A** too are all ascertained to represent the manifestation of buddhahood. For they are an emanational display of that single essential nature. Actually, the syllable **A** is the expanse of Samantabhadri, and the forty-two letters are the forty-two buddhas. Their intrinsic nature demonstrates that the letters denote the buddha body of perfect resource.

The fourth [which demonstrates that the letters are themselves the buddha body of emanation] comprises both [the demonstration that the letters are the source of words and the proliferation of the emanational display of the letters]. With regard to the former, this wheel of the cloud mass of letters is astonishing because it abides as the essential nature—the buddha body of actual reality. It is wondrous because it appears as natural expression, the buddha body of perfect resource; and it is amazing because it arises as compassionate spirituality, the buddha body of emanation. This is the great miraculous display, comprising the cluster of the forty-five [symbols], the basis upon which all **names and words** are apprehended without exception. They are the source of all

words and meanings because they verbalize and **demonstrate** to others the **supreme meanings**—the **diverse** doctrines associated with the [diverse] vehicles. With regard to the latter [the proliferation of the emanational display of the letters]: Without existing as coarse entities, the natural expression of the syllables is the inwardly radiant, intrinsic nature of mind. This is the selflessness of individual persons and of phenomena, free from extremes of conceptual elaboration, and it cannot be objectified as an entity. Yet the shapes of the letters appear and **abide**, without inherent existence, **within the buddha body and** within **the** energy centers of the **subtle body** of sentient beings. With respect to their colors also, **the vowels** are naturally **red and** the **consonants** naturally **white**. In the context of the buddhas, through a proliferation of names and words, [these letters] emanate an emanational display in all ways **and demonstrate the sacred doctrine**. So the cloud mass of letters indeed abides in this emanational nature.

The fifth [demonstrates the expression of the perfect nature of the forty-five maṇḍalas]: The body maṇḍala of the naturally present being of pristine cognition, which is the mystery of all the buddhas, emerging in the ten directions and four times, comprises the body aspect of buddha body, the speech aspect of buddha body, and the mind aspect of buddha body, and with the addition of the attribute aspect and the activity aspect, these each have five aspects, making fifteen aspects [of the body maṇḍala] in all.

Similarly, the speech and mind [maṇḍalas] each have their fifteen aspects. Altogether, these comprise the **forty-five maṇḍalas** of the five enlightened families, which **are** themselves **perfectly present in the** letters—commencing **from** the initial syllable **A to** the final syllables **KṢA and o**. However many aspects there are of the maṇḍala of the enlightened families, they are all complete and gathered in the wheel of the letters itself. This is the basis of all maṇḍalas.

The sixth [the exegesis of the etymological definitions of the

letters] has three parts, of which the first [demonstrates the meaning of the uncreated letter that represents the nature of mind]: **The intrinsic nature of mind**, inner radiance itself, **is the** letter, spontaneously present in **nature**. **The letter** itself **is without** existence, either as an **entity** or as a sign. The second [concerns the spontaneous presence of buddha attributes consequent on their appearance as letters]: The ultimate syllable, **which** is the nature of mind, without objective referent, owing to the proliferation of the elements of inner radiance, manifests in and of itself and therefore **summons forth the maṇḍala** wheels of inexhaustible adornment—the body, speech, and mind of all the buddhas, comprising the most **wondrous, supreme** wheel of supportive **buddha body**, the supreme wheel of communicative buddha **speech**, and the supreme wheel of equipoised buddha **mind**. Together these constitute the great miracle—the amazing enlightened intention of buddha body and pristine cognition, without conjunction or disjunction, because the buddha attributes are spontaneously present. The third [concerns the manner in which those letters, without duality of appearance and emptiness, are written and arranged]: **These** [letters] are **written** primordially **in the** disposition of the unchanging **expanse** of reality **by the expanse** of pristine cognition, spontaneously present and **effortless**. The designation “letter,” which denotes actual reality, has not been newly fabricated. On this basis, the cyclical cloud mass of spontaneous letters is expressed as **abiding** primordially and effortlessly throughout the entirety of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.

The second part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter is the detailed and distinct exegesis of the letters in conjunction with their respective deities]. This has three sections [a general presentation of the meaning of the three punctuation marks, a detailed exegesis of the meaning of the forty-two syllables, and a synopsis].

With regard to the first, the initial punctuation mark (𑖀) resembling the trunk of an elephant, represents the unerring indestructible reality of buddha mind that reveals skillful

means and discriminative awareness without duality. In the manner of a wagon driver [about to steer a wagon along a track], it renders the lines functional. The medial punctuation circles, [rendered in Tibetan as] *tsheg*, as in the letter AḤ (ཨ), resemble the eyes of Maheśvara and represent the discriminative awareness and emptiness indicative of the indestructible reality of buddha speech. Their function is to differentiate and express entities as nouns. The final punctuation stroke, shaped like the straight line of the letter A (ཨ) and resembling an arrow (༩), represents the great miracle of skillful means, the indestructible reality of buddha body. These three respectively denote the dispositions of buddha mind, buddha speech, and buddha body. The function [of the last] is to demarcate phrases out of distinct syllables.

The second section [the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the forty-two syllables] has five aspects [concerning the syllable indicative of the expanse along with those of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families, the syllables of the inner bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers, the syllables of the outer bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers, the syllable of pristine cognition along with those of the sages, and the syllables of the protectors of the gates, along with that of the wrathful deities].

Among these, the first has three aspects [the syllable of Samantabhadri, the syllables of the male buddhas, and the syllables of the female buddhas]. With regard to the first, the syllable A is the nature of the expanse of the real in which all things are uncreated—the great Samantabhadri, transcendent perfection of discriminative awareness.

With regard to the second [the syllables of the male buddhas], among the retroflex set beginning with ṬA, ṭha is the seed syllable of Vairocana, the indestructible reality of consciousness or buddha mind—he whose essential nature of diversified magical emanation, without arising from the expanse [of actual reality], illuminates the skillful means that comprehends the real nature of consciousness. ṬA is the seed syllable of Akṣobhya, he whose magical emanation is

apparitional. ḌA is the seed syllable of Ratnasambhava, he whose magical emanation is wish-fulfilling. ḌHA is the seed syllable of Amitābha, he whose magical emanation is pure. ṆA is the seed syllable of Amoghasiddhi, he whose magical emanation is omnipresent. Together, these are the seed syllables that represent the conquerors, the male buddhas of the five enlightened families.

With regard to the third [the seed syllables of the female buddhas], among the dental set beginning with ṬA, ṬHA is the seed syllable of Ākāśadhātviśvarī (the Queen of the Expanse), she whose net, representing the union of skillful means and discriminative awareness without duality, in the nature of space, manifests perfect enlightenment. ṬA is the seed syllable of Buddhacānā, she whose net manifests stability. ḌA is the seed syllable of Pāṇḍaravāsini, ḌHA is the seed syllable of Māmakī, and ṆA is the seed syllable of Samayatārā. Together these are the seed syllables that represent the five female buddhas.

Second [as for the syllables of the inner bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers], this has two aspects, among which the first [concerns the syllables of the inner male bodhisattvas]: The velar set beginning with KA represents the inner male bodhisattvas. That is to say, KA is the syllable of the supreme Kṣitigarbha, the buddha mind of buddha eye. KHA is the syllable of the supreme Vajrapāṇi, the buddha mind of buddha ear. GA is the syllable of the supreme Ākāśagarbha, the buddha mind of buddha nose. GHA is the syllable of the supreme Avalokiteśvara, the buddha mind of buddha tongue. And ṆA is the syllable of Yamāntaka, [gatekeeper of] buddha mind and also the destroyer, representing the purity of attachment to body, speech, and mind.

The second [concerns the syllables of the inner female bodhisattvas]: The palatal set beginning with CA represents the [inner] female bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense objects. That is to say, CA is the syllable of Lāsyā, the buddha body of buddha eye, who represents the purity of visual forms. CHA is [the syllable of] Gitā, the buddha body of buddha ear, who



represents the purity of sounds. JA is the syllable of Mālyā, the buddha body of buddha nose, who represents the purity of odors. JHA is the syllable of Nartī, the buddha body of buddha tongue, who represents the purity of tastes. And ÑA is the syllable of Mahābala, [gatekeeper] of buddha body and also the destroyer, representing the purity of the sense objects.

Third [as for the syllables of the outer bodhisattvas along with their gatekeepers], this has three aspects. Among them the first [concerns the syllables of the outer male bodhisattvas]: The labial set beginning with PA represents the [outer] male bodhisattvas, indicative of the sense organs. PA is the syllable of Maitreya, the buddha speech of buddha eye, who represents the purity of the sense organ [of the eyes]. PHA is the syllable of Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, the buddha speech of buddha ear, who represents the purity of the sense organ [of the ears]. BA is the syllable of Samantabhadra, the buddha speech of buddha nose, who represents the purity of the sense organ [of the nose]. BHA is the syllable of Mañjuśrī, the buddha speech of buddha tongue, who represents the purity of the sense organ [of the tongue]. And MA is the syllable of Hayagrīva, [gatekeeper] of buddha speech and also the destroyer, representing the purity of egotism.

The second [concerns the syllables of the outer female bodhisattvas]: The semivowel set beginning with YA represents the four [outer] female bodhisattvas, indicative of the purity of the four times. YA is the syllable of Dhūpā, who represents purity with respect to the creation of things past. VA is the syllable of Puṣpā, who represents purity with respect to the abiding of things present. RA is the syllable of Ālokā, who represents purity with respect to the destruction of things future. LA is the syllable of Gandhā, who represents purity with respect to the emptiness of sameness throughout the [four] times.

The third [concerns the syllables of the four female gatekeepers]. The spirant set beginning with ŚA represents the four female gatekeepers, indicative of the purity of the four extremes. ŚA is the syllable of Aṅkuśā, who represents purity

because eternalism is without inherent existence. ṢA is the syllable of Pāsā, who represents [purity] because nihilism is without inherent existence. SA is the syllable of Sphoṭā, who represents [purity] devoid of the extremes of eternalism and nihilism and without self. HA is the syllable of Ghaṇṭā, who represents [purity] devoid of signs.

Fourth [as for the syllable of pristine cognition along with those of the sages], KṢA represents Samantabhadra, the buddha mind of buddha mind, while I is the syllable of Śakra, the sage of the gods, numerous as the atomic particles. Ī is the syllable of Vemacitra. U is the syllable of Śākyamuni. Ū is the syllable of Sthirasimha. E is the syllable of Jvālamukha. AI is the syllable of Dharmarāja. Together these represent the six sages.

Fifth [as for the syllables of the protectors of the gates, along with that of the wrathful deities], **O represents the wrathful [gatekeeper] Amṛtakunḍalin**, the destroyer of all signs and all conceptual elaborations of body, speech, and mind. **From AUM**, the syllable endowed with the five pristine cognitions, **the main and peripheral wrathful deities sequentially emanate.**

The third section [of the detailed and distinct exegesis is the synopsis]: This great cloud mass, the wheel of **letters**, **subsumes** all the garlands of **pristine cognition and the body**, speech, and mind of all **buddhas** in a disposition **without conjunction or disjunction.**

The third section [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter is the synopsis of the preceding two sections, the general presentation and detailed exegesis of the wheel of letters]. It comprises both [the manner of its emergence and the actual synopsis]. With regard to the former, **the following most secret description of the cloud of letters then emerged.** With regard to the latter, arising from a disposition of skillful means or compassionate spirituality and discriminative awareness or emptiness, **this** wheel of letters embodying the teacher [the male-female Samantabhadra] is a wheel of **causes and conditions** that forms a joyous cloud mass, the excellent provision of enlightened mind, and its

result, which is primordially obtained, ripens into the forty-two conquerors. Therefrom the wondrous nominal cluster of forty-two letters becomes manifest, emerging spontaneously for the sake of living beings. Its essential nature is the spontaneously present reality which is not compounded and from which compassionate spirituality manifests, so that the wheel of [the letters] is then arrayed in a compounded manner. While it is essentially unchanging, this genuine indestructible reality does not transgress its commitment to disclose the forty-five maṇḍalas and so forth—both the self-manifesting maṇḍala [of the buddha body of perfect resource] and the maṇḍala [of the buddha body of emanation] that trains living beings powerlessly arise. *Aho* is exclaimed because these maṇḍalas manifest owing to the mighty force of diverse, **accumulated** causes—that is, the cloud mass of letters—and conditions, that is, the appearances of pristine cognition and of beings to be trained. Furthermore, this [synopsis concerning] the wheel of letters may also be explained in accordance with two other modalities, whereby it **abides within the [subtle] body and [is cultivated through] the path**, comprising the path of **skillful means and** the path of **liberation**. Such are the words that disclose this secret indestructible reality.

Third [is the conclusion of the chapter]: **All phenomena and the conquerors were then transformed in a single savor where buddhahood is manifested in [the wheel of] letters. This completes chapter 4 [of the Tantra of] the Secret Nucleus, entitled “The [Cyclical] Array of the Garland of Letters.”**

### ***Chapter 5: The Meditative Stabilities That Attain the Net of Magical Emanation***

The latter [part of the maṇḍala of the cloud mass of letters] concerns the sequence of attainment that accords with it. This has three parts [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion], among which, with regard to the first, **the**

**tathāgatas then uttered these following aphorisms concerning attainment in which skillful means and discriminative awareness are without duality.**

The second part has three sections [the sequence of spiritual accomplishments that are to be attained, the nature of the cloud mass of letters through which these are attained, and a demonstration of the actual skillful means in accordance with which these are attained].

The first of these sections has four aspects, among which the first [demonstrates the primordially pure nature of mind, which is the basis of spiritual accomplishment]: **The nature of mind**, without basis, is the **basis of all things**. The nature of mind is the intrinsic nature of **the letters**. The nature of mind, comprising the letters, forms a **cloud mass** of precious wish-fulfilling gems.

The second aspect [concerns the supreme spiritual accomplishment that derives from it]: In the disposition of the inner radiant nature of mind, the essential nature of **the** forty-two **letters** that form the maṇḍala of Magical Emanation is the actual reality of primordial manifest perfection in the maṇḍala of the Net, free from extremes. **Through the experiential cultivation of** these [letters], all maṇḍalas perfect in the unique enlightened intention of all **the buddhas of the** ten directions and **four times will be completely accomplished.**

The third aspect [concerns the common spiritual accomplishments]. It has three sections [a demonstration of the spontaneous accomplishment of the four rites, an exegesis of the means of attaining the consummation of the five elements, and a description of the attainment of the eight lesser rites].

With regard to the first of these, **through the accomplishment of the** mirrorlike **pristine cognition**, even poison will turn into medicinal nectar and come forth for the benefit of oneself and others, thereby alleviating all the four hundred four ailments and enhancing well-being. Through the accomplishment of the pristine cognition of sameness, the resources of the celestial treasure store will spontaneously emerge and fulfill hopes. Through the accomplishment of the

pristine cognition of reality's expanse, the obscurations of the lower realms of existence will be purified, and they will be established in blissful realms. Through the accomplishment of the pristine cognition of discernment and the pristine cognition of accomplishment, the metamorphosis of all things will be accomplished, whatever their appearance. Through such [pristine cognitions], **the four rites will be spontaneously accomplished.**

With regard to the second, **the consummation of the five elements will be accomplished through the purification of the five psychophysical aggregates.** Owing to the purity of the aggregate of physical forms, the meditative stability of the consummation of the earth element will cause space to emerge as the terrain of indestructible reality. Owing to the purity of the aggregate of feelings, the body will blaze with fire and then even the hottest inferno of the sentient denizens of hell will be incinerated, releasing them from that suffering. Owing to the purity of the aggregate of perceptions, all appearances will turn to water, sink into the ground, and demonstrably cascade in a flow of water, alleviating sufferings in the same manner as the action of the fire element. Owing to the purity of [the aggregate of] formative predispositions, this world system will be dispersed into atomic particles. Owing to the purity of [the aggregate of] consciousness, all world systems will be emptied and the sun and moon will collapse to earth.

With regard to the third, owing to the purity of the eight modes of consciousness, [lesser rites] may also **be accomplished.** These include the rites of **summoning**, which draws [a target] into one's presence; **expulsion** elsewhere; **bondage**, which fetters thieves; **liberation**, which offers release from imprecations; **alleviation**, which dispels poison; **killing**, which eliminates opposing foes and obstructors; **vanquishing**, which defeats hostile factions; **and conquering**, through which one's own faction triumphs. Such [rites] will be activated by means of this meditative stability.

The fourth aspect [concerns the similes that illustrate these

attainments]: There are [outwardly visible] reflections of this accomplishment through which pure pristine cognition naturally arises. Through the experience of the forms of the letters, represented by names and words, and so forth, [the accomplishments associated with] this wheel of letters—whereby the result may be achieved at will—**resemble a light** that shines in the dark, rendering visible all that is desired. They will transform the outer and inner poisons into **nectar**, without renouncing them—thus resembling the catalyst in the **alchemical transmutation** [of base metals] **into gold, and** they will act in the manner of a **medication** that pacifies and alleviates distempers, right where they are.

The second part [of the explanation of the verses of chapter 5, concerning the nature of the cloud mass of letters through which these accomplishments are attained] comprises both [the individuals by whom these are attained and the essential nature that is attained]. With regard to the former, to persevere in making offerings to teachers who are masters of indestructible reality and to the deities of the maṇḍala; to have clear realization of the deities and the letters; to keep the commitments; to recite the mantras correctly; and to understand the four seals—understanding and executing their **branches** without defect—**those who maintain the six** requisites, including the [appropriate] places and times for practice, **will become accomplished, and those who lack them will be** unsuccessful and **lost**.

With regard to the latter, the supreme fruit and **the nucleus** of supreme and common accomplishments, comprehended by the conquerors of the three times, **is the** wheel of **letters**. This is **the** genuine wish-fulfilling **treasury of the three buddha bodies, inexhaustible** in time because all that is desirable emerges. The proliferating display of the buddha body of emanation emerges from the disposition of the buddha body of actual reality, which is without increase, and the buddha body of perfect resource, which is without decrease. From the immaterial buddha body of actual reality, there is a material cloud of appearances, comprising the buddha bodies of form,

that proliferates enlightened activity and transforms into a spontaneously emanational display. This is the essential nature of the cloud mass of letters.

The third part [of the textual exegesis of chapter 5, demonstrating the actual skillful means in accordance with which these accomplishments are attained] has three parts [a brief introduction to meditative stability, an extensive demonstration of its nature, and a synopsis of the unique meditative equipoise]. With regard to the first, from the very moment that [the cloud mass of letters] appears as entities, the reality of all these things is uncreated. This intrinsic nature of **nonentities** is to be known in the context of the primordially pure perfection stage [of meditation]. For **this** meditative stability of the wheel of letters **entails** the **refinement** of realization **with regard to the diffusion and absorption** of the letters **and** the emanational display of its **mastery** in awareness.

With regard to the second [the detailed exegesis of meditative stability], this comprises both [the meditative stability that is a meditation on discriminative awareness and the meditative stability that is a meditation on skillful means].

The former is also twofold, comprising [a general presentation of the instruction on the nonreferential truth and a detailed exegesis of nondual pristine cognition]. As for the first, since any individuals **ignorant** of the nonreferential **do not know this** expanse of actual reality, it is said that **they should know** the nonreferential reality **through investigation** once the entire subject-object dichotomy has been destroyed. For the **appearances** that are entities **and even the mind** that conceives of them as nonentities do not exist. As for the second [the detailed exegesis of nondual pristine cognition], **the nature of mind**, groundless and baseless, is neither male nor female nor neuter, nor is it indeed signless, and it is **without** race, **class, shape, or color**. It is not an abode, nor is it anything at all. The abiding nature of this pure pristine cognition of **the actual expanse** [of reality] acts as the causal basis for executing the seals of skillful

means, and it acts as the causal basis giving rise to all discriminative awareness.

The latter [part of the detailed exegesis of meditative stability, concerning the meditative stability that is a meditation on skillful means] comprises both [a presentation of the meditative stability of the deities according to the generation and perfection stages of meditation and an exegesis of phenomenal existence as the seal of Samantabhadra].

With regard to the first, from this skillful means, which **is the nature of mind**, the letters forming the [secondary] skillful means then emerge, and the skillful means derived from that becomes inconceivable. Though these are actually **undifferentiated**, at the time when one meditates on the containing celestial palace and buddha field that are differentiated, one meditates internally that **the deities and the mantras** manifesting as the letters **are diffused and absorbed**, and externally on the countless, inconceivable maṇḍalas generated by the mind. However, all these constitute the emanational display in which self-manifesting pristine cognition is itself arrayed. With regard to the second, **this diffusion and absorption of the letters is none other than the nature of mind**. It is secured by the supreme seal of primordial buddhahood—the fearless Samantabhadra.

The third section [of the demonstration of the actual skillful means in accordance with which these accomplishments are attained, comprising a synopsis of unique meditative equipoise]: Once **those whose minds** resemble an inebriated elephant **have been tamed** by means of meditative equipoise, if they have then meditated through the generation and perfection stages [of meditation] on the nondual pristine cognition **and have** resolutely **relied on** the intrinsic nature of **the mantras** and the seals, they **will, without exception, attain this** amazing great **accomplishment**, the nature of Samantabhadra.

The third section [is the conclusion of the chapter]: **Saying that all things abide in the cloud mass of letters, [the tathāgata] was delighted. This completes chapter 5** of the



*Tantra of the Secret Nucleus, entitled “The Attainment of the Letters.”*

### ***Chapter 6: The Diffusion of the Maṇḍala***

The second section [of the general presentation of the nature of the three maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind] is the presentation of the maṇḍala of meditative stability [that derives from the cloud mass of letters]. It comprises both a general presentation of the maṇḍala of meditative stability [ch. 6] and a detailed exegesis of its branches, namely, the maṇḍalas of the mantras and seals [chs. 7-8].

The first of these [ch. 6] includes both [a description of the causal basis for the diffusion of the maṇḍala and an exegesis of the actual maṇḍala that is diffused]. With regard to the former, **willing the maṇḍala of meditative stability to emerge**, [the tathāgata] **then uttered these following aphorisms**.

The latter has three parts [a general presentation of the natural and spontaneous maṇḍala of the ground, a detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of meditative stability that forms the path, and a synopsis of the maṇḍala of the fruitional great pristine cognition].

As for the first, since the five poisons and so forth are present as pristine cognition, this is designated in accordance with the schemata of the four directions and center. That is to say, the maṇḍala in which **the five material elements** essentially abide as **the five female buddhas**, the five psychophysical **aggregates** as **the five male buddhas**, and the five **poisons** as **the five pristine cognitions** is inconceivable. It constitutes the natural Great Perfection inasmuch as all things of phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, are spontaneously present within it from the beginning. May the yogins who realize this conduct themselves in the great maṇḍala of pristine cognition, natural in origin, where all things are neither renounced nor accepted!

As for the second, this has two parts [the actual maṇḍala of

meditative stability and an exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala]. The former also has two sections [the maṇḍala of the supporting celestial palace and the maṇḍala of the supported deities]. The first of these, in turn, has three aspects [the celestial palace, its ornaments, and its thrones].

With regard to the first of these, [the celestial palace comprises an inner] **wheel** with four spokes along with its white perimeter rim; its **walls** are entirely **square**, adorned **with four corners**; and it has an [internal] courtyard **and four entrance gateways**. With regard to the second, it has a diverse display of trappings—parasols, victory banners, and so forth, densely arrayed like **billowing clouds of offerings**, and it is adorned with **forty-two** maṇḍalas forming the **individual seats** of the [peaceful] deities. With regard to the third, the great thrones that rest respectively upon [animal figurines] **of the lion, the elephant, the horse, the peacock bird, and the cīvaṃcīvaka have** [stacked cushions representing] the **sun**, the **moon**, and the **lotus**; these are all supported by throne legs fashioned of gemstones.

The second section [of the actual maṇḍala of meditative stability concerns the maṇḍala of the supported deities]. This has six aspects, the first of which [concerns the postures of the forty-two peaceful deities]: On these seats the tathāgatas [with their consorts] are **seated in the manner of kings**, the male and female bodhisattvas are seated in the manner of **ministers**, and the gatekeepers are seated in the manner of **generals**, assuming an outward gaze.

The second [concerns which deities are present in which locations]: At the hub and on the four spokes of the central wheel **there are the five enlightened families**—the five male buddhas or kings and the five female buddhas or queens. As for **the** eight male and female **bodhisattvas**, starting from the right in the southeastern direction, at the four intermediate spokes, there are located respectively Kṣitigarbha, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] vision; Vajrapāṇi, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] hearing; Ākāśagarbha, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] fragrance; and Avalokiteśvara,

the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] savor, along with the assembled host of their queens, namely, Lāsyā, Mālyā, Gītā, and Nartī. Similarly, in the four corners between these, starting from the southeast, there are respectively Maitreya, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] eyes; Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] ears; Samantabhadra, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] nose; and Mañjuśrī, the [bodhisattva] of [indestructible] tongue, along with the assembled host of their queens, namely, Dhūpā, Puṣpā, Ālokā, and Gandhā. [All of these] eight are seated in union. In the outer courtyard are **the six sages**, that is to say, in the southeast is [Śakra, sage of] the gods, in the south is [Śākyamuni, sage of] the human beings, in the southwest is [Jvālamukha, sage of] the anguished spirits, in the northwest is [Sthirasimha, sage of] the animals, in the north is [Vemacitra, sage of] the demigods, and in the northeast is [Dharmarāja, sage of] the hells. **Samantabhadra**, the active male subject, and Samantabhadrī, the passive female object, are revealed to be located to the front and rear, within the heart of the principal deity. **The eight gatekeepers**, comprising the four subjugators (Yamāntaka, Mahābala, Hayagrīva, and Amṛtakunḍalin) and the assembled host of their queens (Aṅkuśā, Pāśā, Sphoṭā, and Ghaṇṭā), are located at the four entrance gateways.

The third [concerns their symbolic hand emblems]: As for the hand emblems that they respectively hold, in his main right hand Vairocana holds a **vajra**, Akṣobhya holds a wheel, Ratnasambhava holds a gemstone, Amitābha holds a lotus, and Amoghasiddhi holds a sword. In their main left hand, they each hold the bell, embracing their consort. The female buddhas hold the same hand emblems as their respective male buddhas. As for the symbolic hand emblems of the male bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī holds a **blue lotus**, Maitreya holds an orange bush, Kṣitigarbha holds a gemstone seedling, Vajrapāṇi holds a vajra, Ākāśagarbha holds a sword, Avalokiteśvara holds a lotus, Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin holds a gemstone chest [of books], and Samantabhadra holds a gemstone grain sheath. Their consorts,

the female bodhisattvas, hold delightful implements in a beautiful manner. Among them, Vajralāsyā holds a **mirror**, Mālyā holds a garland of gems, Gitā holds a lute, Nartī holds a vajra and bell, Dhūpā holds a censer, Puṣpā holds a basket of flowers, Ālokā holds a butter lamp, and Gandhā holds a doctrinal conch. As for the six sages, Śakra holds a **lute**, Vemacitra bears armor and a sword, Śākyamuni holds a monk's staff and a begging bowl, Sthirasimha holds a book, Jvālamukha holds a gemstone chest, and the ox-headed Dharmarāja holds fire and water. As for the four male gatekeepers, Yamāntaka holds a skull-topped **club**, Mahābala holds a vajra, Hayagrīva holds a skull and snake, and Amṛtakunḍalin holds a crossed vajra. The four female gatekeepers [Ankuśā, Pāśā, Sphoṭā, and Ghaṇṭā] respectively hold an iron hook, a lasso, an iron chain, and a bell.

The fourth [concerns their body color]: **There are twenty-five** [deities] **who partake of the five body colors** [corresponding to those of the five enlightened families]—blue, white, yellow, red, and green—**and** there are **seventeen** of diversified color.

The fifth [concerns their demeanor]: Their bodies have a demeanor that exhibits **five essential attributes**—that is to say, they are supple and physically attractive, slender, handsome, upright or erect, and youthful, **and** they have **four subsidiary attributes**, in that they are radiant in hue, lustrous in complexion, resplendent, and brilliant.

The sixth [concerns their diffusion of light rays]: The great mass of light rays that diffuses **lights** in the ten directions from the **six** great **energy centers** within the bodies of these deities—their crown protuberance, the point between the eyebrows, the throat, the heart, the navel, and the soles of the feet—and from all their pores, is manifest without limitation. The **six colors** of these lights are respectively blue, yellow, red, white, madder, and crystal, **and the light** rays **from their pores** are pervasive, without limit. The male and female gatekeepers are present in an awesome guise in the midst of a densely blazing ring of fire, within a blazing aureole. One should meditate that,

manifesting in this way, pervasive in the expanse of space, without extremes or center, this maṇḍala of meditative stability is inconceivable and spontaneously present.

The second section [of the detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of meditative stability is the exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala accomplished through the maṇḍala of meditative stability]. This has four aspects [the arising of the fruitional buddha body, the consequent performance of buddha activities, the consequent liberation of living beings, and the manifestation of wondrous indications]. Among these, as for the first, the accomplishment of the supreme great seal—the intrinsic nature of **the buddha body of reality's** expanse—is that, without straying from actual reality, the real expanse, it acts as the ground from which the other buddha bodies arise. As such it **reveals** the buddha body of form that confers genuine release from the two obscurations—including **the buddha body of perfect resource** adorned by excellent major and minor marks, **and the buddha bodies** [of emanation], which proliferate in a **diversified** manner, in conformity with the aspirations of living beings, in order to tame their minds individually.

The second aspect has two parts [the similes that suggest the manifestation of buddha activities without straying from the expanse of actual reality and the actual manifestations of buddha activities for the sake of trainees].

As for the first, this revelation resembles a magical display or optical illusion in that its pure disposition does not waver from the expanse of actual reality, but when, **without wavering**, [the buddha body of] **emanation** manifests its diversified forms, its various dissimilar forms become manifest corresponding to the distinct classes of beings, **training each according to need**. Although [this buddha body of emanation] does not waver from the expanse of the real, even so it appears distinctly through the residual inheritance of the past deeds of living beings. As such, it **resembles**, for example, the reflection of one's face in a mirror or **the moon reflected in water**.

With regard to the second aspect, concerning **its**

**manifestations**, at the same time when buddhahood is manifested in the spontaneous Bounteous Array, [the buddha body] also reveals itself to all the ordinary six classes of living beings, manifesting as the six sages including Śatakratu, in forms that bring them to renounce the negativity of their minds. For the sake of pious attendants, the buddha body reveals itself in the form of arhats. For the sake of hermit buddhas, it reveals itself in the rhino-like manner of the solitary [hermit buddhas]. Moreover, in accordance with the degrees of acumen of those who espouse the supreme vehicle, in the supreme unsurpassed abode of Akaniṣṭha, the buddha body assumes the appearance of Vairocana, who, to retinues of bodhisattvas on the tenth level, does not divulge the sacred doctrines in speech in the manner in which the buddha body of emanation verbally teaches the doctrine, but rather discloses the sacred doctrines that are encountered face to face, by means of this buddha body.

The third part [of the exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala accomplished through the maṇḍala of meditative stability is the consequent liberation of living beings]. This has two sections [the refinement of obscurations according to the causal path and the supreme attainment of the fruitional buddha bodies and levels].

The former includes both illustrative and meaningful aspects. As to the first of these, this [refinement of obscurations] is reminiscent of the way in which all sallowness of one's actual complexion, tainted by blemishes, can be cleansed and removed while the stains of one's complexion are visible once the face has been exposed in a mirror. [As to the second,] in the same way, when the retinue of bodhisattvas of the tenth level beholds the buddha body in that exemplary manner, the depth of their obscurations to enlightenment, which are difficult to estimate and cannot be measured, becomes visible on the buddha body of perfect resource, just as blemishes are visible in a mirror. Once the blemishes of the ten levels have been sequentially refined, unsurpassed enlightenment will genuinely be attained.

As for the second section [the supreme attainment of the fruitional buddha bodies and levels], this has three aspects [a general presentation of the perfection of the buddha bodies and pristine cognition in the spontaneous Bounteous Array, a detailed exegesis of the perfection of the levels, and a synopsis of the spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies].

The first of these has two sections, of which the first [concerns the attainment of the three buddha bodies without conjunction or disjunction]: The three buddha bodies respectively comprise the buddha body of actual reality, which is intellectually inestimable and verbally inexpressible; the buddha body of perfect resource, which is an **inexhaustible** treasure of wish-fulfilling gems; **and** the buddha body of emanation, which diffuses **inconceivable** forms—ten million times one hundred billion in number.

The second [concerns the presence of the three buddha bodies as great self-manifesting spontaneity]: Since the buddha body of perfect resource is **perfect in all the major** and minor **marks**, and appears as **the maṇḍala within** the entire **perceptual range**, it also displays **the two great provisions, perfectly** and with great spontaneity in that self-manifesting nature.

The second aspect [concerns the detailed exegesis of the perfection of the buddha levels]: These comprise **the eleventh** level of skillful means, named Universal Light, the **twelfth** level of discriminative awareness named [Unattached] Lotus Endowed, **and** the **thirteenth** level, supreme among **levels**, named the Great Cyclical Mass [of Letters]. **Associated with** these [fruition levels] and so forth, **the three buddha bodies** are immeasurable, inconceivably supreme, and entirely perfect.

The third aspect [concerns the synopsis of the spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies]: [More specifically,] when these levels have been obtained, all the five buddha bodies are also perfectly attained. Among them, **the buddha body of actual reality** is the eternal buddha body, without birth or death. **The buddha body of emanation**, emerging from the buddha body of perfect resource, abides and performs acts of

benefit in the fields of instruction inhabited by all sentient beings distressed by afflictive mental states. **The buddha body of perfect resource**, the basis from which the buddha body of emanation arises, is a treasure, inexhaustible in its enlightened attributes. **The buddha body of indestructible reality** is the unchanging awareness holder of indestructible reality—the intrinsic nature in which these three buddha bodies are present without conjunction or disjunction. **The buddha body of awakening**, in which all attributes are inseparable in sameness, comprises the pristine cognition that definitively knows [the view] and the pristine cognition that quantitatively knows phenomena.

The fourth aspect [concerns the manifestation of wondrous indications]: **Emanating** in the ten directions of the six realms, **the maṇḍala then became radiant** and manifested **in as many fields as there are atoms**.

The third part [of the exegesis of this actual maṇḍala is the synopsis of the maṇḍala of the fruitional great pristine cognition]. This comprises both [the manner in which it is enunciated and the essential nature of the verses that are enunciated]. With regard to the former, **then** there **emerged the following supreme and secret** [synopsis] of these maṇḍalas wherein the male and female buddhas are **without duality**.

With regard to the latter, the exclamation *Aho!* denotes wonder. The inconceivable maṇḍala of the natural **ground**, inestimable by the intellect, is purified of referenced objects, is purified of referencing intelligence, and is also without reference in terms of pristine cognition. The maṇḍalas of pristine cognition—intrinsic awareness—through which one meditates [on the visualized deities] are diverse in form and inexpressible. Their essential nature is characterized by the sameness of cyclic existence in actual reality and by dissimilarity because nirvāṇa is quiescent of references. This natural expression of the actual truth, without the dichotomy of pervader and pervaded, is the reality—the actuality of the expanse pervaded by the Great Perfection. It constitutes the



maṇḍala of the **path** in which the generation and perfection stages are attained without even apprehension of the generation and perfection stages. **And** then in terms of the **result, the maṇḍala wheel of the buddha body of emanation is diffused from the buddha body of perfect resource**, which is primordially and universally radiant. However, the intrinsic nature [of these three maṇḍalas] is **the ground** that is not conceptually elaborated. Such were the secret words of indestructible reality that emerged. **This completes chapter 6** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **entitled “[Diffusion of] the Maṇḍala of Meditative Stability.”**

### ***Chapter 7: The Absorption of the Maṇḍala and the Secret Mantras***

Second, with regard to the maṇḍalas of the mantras and of the seals or hand emblems, there are two parts. The former [concerning the maṇḍalas of the mantras is the subject matter of ch. 7]. This has three parts [a description of the causal basis for the emergence of the maṇḍala of buddha speech, the revelation of the actual maṇḍala of secret mantras, and the establishing of its nature]. With regard to the first, **the following maṇḍala of the secret mantras then emerged.**

The second has two sections [the mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala and the mantras that confer empowerment]. Among them, the first has four aspects [the mantra that visually generates the celestial palace, the mantras that visually generate the deities, the mantras that completely perfect buddha activities, and the appearance of wondrous indications].

With regard to the first aspect, **BHRUM and so forth is the mantra that visually generates the supporting celestial palace** upon the wheel. The words “and so forth” denote the remaining mantra syllables, among which **VIŚVA** means “diversity,” indicating all that appears as the phenomena of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, and **VIŚUDDHE** means “naturally

pure.”

The second aspect has six categories, among which the first [concerns the mantras of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families]: There are ten seed syllables and ten essential mantras indicative of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families. Among them, the generative seed syllables of the five [male buddhas] are respectively HŪṂ, OM, SVĀ, ĀṂ, and HĀ. Their [corresponding essential mantras] are as follows: [VAJRADHṚK] is the essential mantra of Akṣobhya, VAJRA indicating the indestructible reality where appearance and emptiness are without duality, and DHṚK indicating that Akṣobhya is the holder of that reality. JINAJIK, meaning “conqueror among conquerors,” is the essential mantra of Vairocana, indicating that the expanse [of actual reality] free from conceptual elaboration conquers the mass of nonvirtuous actions and that the present and future physical forms that arise from it are also [inherently] pure in the body of the Conqueror [Vairocana]. RATNADHṚK is the essential mantra of Ratnasambhava, RATNA meaning “precious gemstone” and DHṚK meaning that Ratnasambhava holds it because he grants all that is desirable to living beings. ĀROLIK is the essential mantra of Amitābha, indicating that he is attracted toward those who are to be trained, and PRAJÑĀDHṚK is the essential mantra of Amoghasiddhi, indicating that he holds diverse modes of discriminative awareness for the sake of those to be trained. As for the mantras of the female buddhas, their generative seed syllables of unerring basis are respectively MŪṂ, LĀṂ, MĀṂ, PHYĀṂ, and TĀṂ. MŪṂ DHĀTVĪŚVARĪ is the essential mantra of Dhātvīśvarī, the natural purity of the expanse. LĀṂ DVEṢARATI is the essential mantra of Buddhacalanā, who is the female councillor of all the buddhas. MĀṂ MOHARATI is the essential mantra of Māmakī, the caretaker or possessor of sentient beings. PHYĀṂ RĀGARATI is the essential mantra of Pāṇḍaravāsīnī, indicating that she is not covered by defective blemishes, and TĀṂ VAJRARATI is the essential mantra of Tārā, indicating that she liberates sentient beings from cyclic existence.

The second category [of the mantras that visually generate

the deities] comprises the mantras of the male and female bodhisattvas of buddha mind: The four seed syllables or root mantras of the [inner] male bodhisattvas are respectively **KṢIM**, **TRĀM**, **HRĪḤ**, and **JIM**. **HI RĀJĀYA** is [the essential mantra of Kṣitigarbha], the king who acts on behalf of sentient beings, nurturing them like the earth and the eyes. **Ā GARBHAYAḤ** is [the essential mantra of Ākāśagarbha], the nucleus from which all desirable necessities emerge. **HA HŪM PADMĀBHATAMAḤ** is [the essential mantra of Avalokiteśvara], who has a lotus-like face because he is without attachment and captivates the minds of those to be trained, and **KURUPĀṆI HRĪḤ** is [the essential mantra of Vajrapāṇi], who acts on behalf of sentient beings in an indestructible [or vajra-wielding] manner. The root mantras or seed syllables of the corresponding female [bodhisattvas] are respectively **HŪM**, **TRĀM**, **HRĪḤ**, and **ĀḤ**. As for their essential mantras, **LĀSYE SAMAYAS TVAM** is [the essential mantra of Lāsyā], meaning “May I, endowed with a sensual demeanor, receive the commitments of all buddhas.” **MĀLYE SAMAYA HOḤ** is [the essential mantra of Mālyā], meaning “I should maintain the commitments of all the buddhas through mnemonic incantation and meditative stability.” **GĪTI RĀGO’HAM** is [the essential mantra of Gītā], meaning “I am attracted toward sentient beings, like a sweet melody”; and **NṚTI RĀGAYĀMI** is [the essential mantra of Nartī], meaning “I must attract sentient beings through enlightened activities such as dance.” These foregoing seed syllables along with their mantras are indicative of the eight male and female bodhisattvas of buddha mind.

The third category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities] comprises the mantras of the male and female bodhisattvas of buddha speech. The seed syllables or root mantras of the male bodhisattvas are respectively **MAI**, **THLĪM**, **HŪM**, and **MŪM**. **DHARAṆĪ** is [the essential mantra of Maitreya], who accepts sentient beings with loving-kindness. **svāhā** means “may the ground be established.” **NISĀRAMBHAYA SVĀHĀ** is [the essential mantra of Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin], who dispels obscurations that are obdurate or hard to purify. **SARĀJAYA SVĀHĀ** is [the essential mantra of Samantabhadra], the all-positive

king whose intrinsic nature does not abide in the duality of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, and ŚRĪ ĀṂ RĀGĀYA SVĀHĀ is [the essential mantra of Mañjuśrī], the glorious one who is attracted toward sentient beings, without abiding in duality.

The root mantras or seed syllables of the four corresponding female bodhisattvas are respectively JAḤ, HŪṂ, VAṂ, and HOḤ. As for their essential mantras, DHŪPE PRAVEŚĀ is [the essential mantra of Dhūpā], the fragrance of ethical discipline that permeates the minds of those to be trained. PUṢPE ĀVEŚĀ is [the essential mantra of Puṣpā], the extensive cascade of the flowers of enlightenment into the minds of those to be trained. DĪPA SUKHINĪ is [the essential mantra of Ālokā], who dispels the darkness of fundamental ignorance with the lamp of pristine cognition, and GANDHE CITTA HOḤ is [the essential mantra of Gandhā], who satisfies the minds of those to be trained with her flowing stream of nectar. These foregoing seed syllables along with their mantras are indicative of the eight male and female bodhisattvas of buddha speech.

The fourth category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities] comprises the mantras of the male [and female] gatekeepers. The seed syllables of the four male gatekeepers are respectively HŪṂ, HŪṂ, HŪṂ, and HŪṂ. Through the sound of these syllables there comes about a convergence (*saṃharaṇa*) whereby cruel and malign beings are overpowered or the enlightened attributes of greatness are established in the minds of those to be trained. Also, through the sound of their final syllable PHAṬ, there comes about a diffusion or dispersal (*āspharaṇa*) in which cruel and malign beings are dispersed. YAMĀNTAKṚT is [the essential mantra of Yamāntaka], who apprehends and puts an end to the form of Yama, lord of death. VIGHNĀNTAKṚT is [the essential mantra of Mahābala], who subdues or puts an end to obstructive impediments. PADMĀNTAKṚT is [the essential mantra of Hayagrīva], who is not covered by the mire of cyclic existence, and PRAJÑĀNTAKṚT is [the essential mantra of Amṛtakuṇḍalin], who subjugates the demonic force of afflictive mental states. The corresponding female gatekeepers have OM as their initial syllable and PHAṬ as

their final syllable, as above. MAHĀVAJRADHARO MAHĀKRODHĪŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪṂ is [the essential mantra of Aṅkuśā], the great retainer of indestructible reality, the mighty and fiery wrathful mistress. Similarly, the same mantra substituting RATNA [for VAJRA] is [the essential mantra of Pāsā], the wrathful mistress who is [the retainer of] gemstones. With the substitution of PADMA it becomes [the essential mantra of Sphoṭā], the wrathful mistress [who is the retainer] of the lotus, or *padma* in the original Sanskrit; with the substitution of KARMA, it becomes [the essential mantra of Ghaṇṭā], the wrathful mistress who is [the retainer of] buddha activity. These foregoing seed syllables along with their mantras are indicative of the eight male and female gatekeepers.

The fifth category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities] comprises the mantras of the male and female Samantabhadra. The mantra of the male aspect Samantabhadra has three initial syllables HŪṂ, HŪṂ, HŪṂ, indicating the three pristine cognitions or purities in the minds of sentient beings within the three world systems. VAJRACITTA OM is [the essential mantra of Samantabhadra], whose nature embodies the compassionate spirituality of all the buddhas. The mantra of the female aspect Samantabhadrī has the three initial syllables A, A, A, indicating that the three media of body, speech, and mind, the three times, and the three expanses respectively are uncreated. VAJRĪBHADRASAMANTĀ AḤ is [the essential mantra of Samantabhadrī], indicating that this reality is the pure nature of Samantabhadrī. These foregoing seed syllables along with their mantras are indicative of the male and female Samantabhadra.

The sixth category [of the mantras that visually generate the deities] comprises the mantras of the six sages. OM indicates that the consecrated cluster of mantra syllables is the natural expression of the five pristine cognitions. MUNE means “sage” (literally, one who has capability). KRIM, meaning “creator,” is the seed syllable of the [sage of] the exalted gods, because he creates the desirable attributes of the senses. TRUM, meaning “array of armor,” is the seed syllable of [the sage of] the

demigods. SRUM, meaning “essence” or “great focal point,” is the seed syllable of [the sage of] human beings. PRAM, meaning “stooping,” is the seed syllable of [the sage of] the animals. KṢAM, meaning “affliction,” is the seed syllable of [the sage of] the anguished spirits, who are afflicted by the transformation of actual appearances. ye is the seed syllable [of the sage of] the denizens of hell, which is transformed in all respects into a state of redness owing to its dullness. These syllables and so forth are the six heart mantras of the [sages of] the six classes of beings. SVĀHĀ means “May the ground be established!”—so that these classes of living beings and their propensities might be pacified.

The third aspect [of the mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala concerns the mantras that completely perfect buddha activities]. These form three groups, the first of which comprises the mantras of invitation and absorption: OM EHY EHI BHAGAVĀN MAHĀKĀRUṆIKA DRŚYA HOḤ SAMAYAS TVAM means “Come here! Come here, Transcendent Lord endowed with great compassionate spirituality! Look [upon us] with compassion! May we receive the commitments!” The words and so forth here denote JAḤ HŪM VAM HOḤ—the mantras that respectively summon with the iron hook [of Aṅkuśā], bind with the lasso [of Pāśā], tie with the iron chain [of Sphoṭā], and overpower with the bell [of Ghaṇṭā].

The second group [comprises the mantras that scatter the offering flowers of one’s own awareness]: OM, ĀḤ, HŪM, and SVĀHĀ are the five seed syllables indicative of the five enlightened families and the five pristine cognitions. The [five] syllables VA, JRA, SA, MA, and YA, which are recited separately here, should be combined with the five [aforementioned] seed syllables preceding and following them, in this way: OM VAJRA SAMAYA OM indicates that buddha body is attained through the commitments of buddha body. ĀḤ VAJRA SAMAYA ĀḤ indicates that buddha speech is attained through the commitments of buddha speech. HŪM VAJRA SAMAYA HŪM indicates that buddha mind is attained through the commitments of buddha mind. svā vajra samaya svā indicates that buddha attributes are attained

through the commitments of buddha attributes, and HĀ VAJRA SAMAYA HĀ indicates that buddha activity is attained through the commitments of buddha activity.

The third group [of the mantras that completely perfect buddha activities comprises a prayer for spiritual accomplishment]: The expression “oṃ King of pristine cognition” constitutes an appeal to the Transcendent Lord, saying, “Equiposed now in the commitments and most wondrous spiritual accomplishment of the buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities of all the tathāgatas, may I unite, right here and now, with the great seal of the deities’ body, speech, and mind!” Oṃ VAJRA SAMAYA HŪṂ timely summons the commitments of buddha body; Oṃ VAJRA SAMAYAS TVAṂ [timely] summons the commitments of buddha speech; and Oṃ VAJRA SAMAYA HOḤ [timely] summons the commitments of buddha mind. JAḤ HŪṂ VAṂ HOḤ brings about integration and stability in the nondual nature.

The fourth aspect [of the mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala concerns the appearance of wondrous indications]: With these words, the maṇḍalas of the secret mantras of buddha speech resounded **pervasively** with **the great sound of mantra** in all the ten directions of the six realms; they further resounded by **conferring maturation** on all the minds of sentient beings; **and** they **absolutely resounded** by conferring **liberation** on them. One should know that these [three resonances] also refer respectively to (i) the secret mantras of buddha body, speech, and mind, along with their sound; (ii) the rays [of light] that are emitted from them; and (iii) the great apparition that is diffused in all the rays.

The latter part [of the teaching on the actual maṇḍala of secret mantras] concerns the mantras that confer empowerment]. This has two aspects, the first of which concerns the manner of their enunciation: Once the [aforementioned] mantras that visually generate [the deities] had been revealed, then the Transcendent Lord vanished into that maṇḍala of buddha speech where Samantabhadra, the indestructible active male subject indicative of the mental faculty, and Samantabhadri, the indestructible passive female

object indicative of mental phenomena, are nondual. **Vanishing** therein, **then** Samantabhadra, the Supreme Identity of all the tathāgatas of the ten directions and four times, **brought forth these following** secret **mantras** [of empowerment] **that** are said to subsume all the excellent pristine cognition and **splendor** of their great accomplishment, that is, the identity of the body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities of all the buddhas. This emerged, naturally arisen through blessings, from the *Net of Magical Emanation*, the nature of indestructible reality where the buddha body, speech, and mind of the male and female teachers [Samantabhadra and Samantabhadrī] are nondual and where skillful means and discriminative awareness are coalesced.

The second aspect [concerns the actual mantras that confer empowerment. These fall into three groups, the first of which concerns the conferral of empowerment through the five pristine cognitions, which cleanse defilements]: OM MAHĀ ŚŪNYATĀ JÑĀNA VAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM means "I am the identity that is the essential nature of indestructible reality, the great pristine cognition of emptiness." When [the words of this mantra] are similarly correlated [with the other pristine cognitions], ĀDARŚA indicates the mirrorlike pristine cognition, PRATYAVEKṢAṆĀ indicates the pristine cognition of discernment, SAMATĀ indicates the pristine cognition of sameness, and KṚTYĀNUṢṬHĀNA indicates the pristine cognition of assiduous accomplishment. JÑĀNAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM means "I am the identity of the indestructible reality of pristine cognition." The foregoing are the mantras through which empowerment is to be conferred by means of the five pristine cognitions. The significance is that, at this juncture, [the deities] are crowned by the lord of their own particular enlightened family, a full inch in size.

The second group [of the actual mantras that confer empowerment concerns the mantras through which power is introduced and blessing conferred by the five enlightened families]: The following are the mantras through which the five tathāgatas are visualized in the five centers [of the deities'



bodies] and blessings then conferred. OM SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀKĀYAVAJRA SVABHĀVĀTMAKO'HAM means "I am the intrinsic nature of the indestructible reality of the buddha body of all the tathāgatas." Similarly, VĀGVAJRA indicates the indestructible reality of buddha speech, CITTAVAJRA indicates the indestructible reality of buddha mind, ANURĀGAṆAVAJRA indicates the indestructible reality of buddha attributes, and PŪJĀVAJRA indicates the indestructible reality of enlightened activity.

The third group [of the actual mantras that confer empowerment concerns the appearance of the blessings that originated from those mantras]: **By the indivisible dissolving of this empowerment and blessing**, the afflictive mental states radiated as the essential nature of the pristine cognitions, whereupon **the psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and** sense fields **blazed forth light** as the maṇḍala of the deities.

The third part [of this chapter is the establishing of the nature of the secret mantras]. It has five sections [the inexpressible essential nature of buddha speech, its inconceivable natural expression, its originally pure abiding nature, its supreme apparitional nature, and its mode of being, which does not deviate from the expanse of actual reality].

As to the first, *Emaho!* is an exclamation of wonder. This wondrous and marvelous reality is the **buddha speech** of all genuinely perfect buddhas. This essential nature [of buddha speech] is wondrous in that it **transcends language** and all the names **and words** that are applied to phenomena, **but**, at the same time, it is wondrous because it clearly **emerges as diverse** and immeasurable **languages**, corresponding to the perception of living beings.

As to the second, the unique buddha speech forms an authentic maṇḍala of **sixty modulations**, but its aspects are inconceivable in number, pervasive in all world systems. **Though known** and understood **in conformity with** distinct languages and their manifestation as distinct names and words, all these languages actually converge in the **inexpressible** supreme seal of buddha speech.

As to the third, though the nuances of buddha speech emerge, endowed with [interim] benefits and [ultimate] bliss, from the *Net of Magical Emanation*, supreme among all tantras, all these things are primordially present in the lotus-like disposition, untainted by blemishes. For this reason, the **positive language** associated with the vehicles that indicate the path of liberation or release [from cyclic existence] **and** the **negative** language of cyclic existence, however they are expressed, all of these constitute the natural expression of supreme buddha speech. All language associated with the higher and lower vehicles and the languages of all sentient beings without exception including those of the errant inferior realms **are** actually subsumed in **the** inexpressible **buddha speech**, the primordially **uncreated indestructible reality** or enlightenment.

As to the fourth, from the disposition of this inexpressible summation, a prolific number of doctrines are proclaimed in the ten directions. This doctrinal language is itself enunciated in its unborn primordial disposition, in conformity with the perception of those to be trained, but at those times when it is enunciated, the words abide as the inexpressible essential nature **of buddha speech. Being inexpressible**, this abiding **nature is** the source of diverse languages that are expressed, so that **a single expression resonates** in common **to all** those who require training, **but its nuances are differently appraised.** For example, though it is **not enunciated in isolation from the actual truth**, the single expression “removal of numbness” may be differently understood by some to mean the removal of numbness caused by poison, by some to mean the removal of numbness caused by pins and needles, and by others to mean the removal of numbness caused by gnostic mantras. Similarly, all things corresponding to the thoughts of different sentient beings may be interpreted in accordance with the language employed in a single expression of buddha speech. This is the intrinsic nature of the genuine supreme buddha speech—the king of all languages.

As for the fifth [the modality of buddha speech that does not

deviate from the expanse of actual reality], this has three parts, the first of which [demonstrates that although buddha speech manifests as the different vehicles, its essential nature remains unspoken]: Although there are inconceivable higher and lower vehicles that appear to be enunciated, **they are not enunciated** at all **in isolation from the actual truth. Although** the words of buddha speech are **heard differently** according to the enumerations of doctrine, owing to the skillful means that grants instruction for the sake of those to be trained, and although all scriptures of the tathāgata included in the twelve branches are ostensibly expressed according to the manner in which the lamp of the five aforementioned vehicles is arrayed, if appraised according to the abiding nature of the actual truth, they are unspoken.

The second [concerns the appearance of the indestructible buddha speech for the sake of living beings through its disposition of compassionate spirituality]: **Though** the unwritten abiding nature and its manifestations as buddha speech **do not resonate from the tip of the buddha tongue**, yet, **owing to** the blessing of the buddha speech of the conquerors' **compassionate spirituality**, diverse words and meanings **are** individually **distinguished for the sake of living beings**, corresponding to their volition.

The third part [exemplifies buddha speech that appears to be spoken although it is not spoken]: This clarity [of word and meaning] that becomes manifest to the ears of those to be trained through **the provisions of** the buddhas' **compassionate spirituality and the volition** of sentient beings is the genuine supreme indestructible buddha speech. The actual truth of the doctrine is such that the meanings of **buddha speech** that emerge for the sake of living beings become manifest in and of themselves and indeed do not waver from the disposition of the expanse of actual truth. **Like** the sound of **an echo**, [buddha speech] manifests in the form of the doctrine. **This completes chapter 7** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **concerning the mantras of the different** [deities].

## ***Chapter 8: The Consecration of All Limbs as the Maṇḍala and the Subsequent Diffusion of the Sealing Hand Gestures***

The latter part [of the detailed exegesis of the branches of the maṇḍala of meditative stability] concerns the maṇḍala of the seals or hand emblems indicative of buddha body. This comprises both [a brief introduction to the diffusion of this maṇḍala and an extensive exegesis of its nature]. As to the first, [the tathāgatas then] **uttered these following aphorisms, which consecrated the limbs of the body.** The second has three parts [a general presentation of the maṇḍala of seals which forms the spontaneously present ground, a detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of sealing hand gestures through which the path is attained, and a synopsis of the maṇḍala of seals which is the fruitional supreme pristine cognition].

With regard to the first of these, **all things** attain manifestly perfect buddhahood in the essential nature of the *Net of Magical Emanation*. All things **are** secured by the seal of **Samantabhadra**, the supreme enlightenment. **Primordially secured by the seal** of the nucleus of unchanging reality, the kingly *Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real*, this reality cannot be transgressed, and it is hard to deviate from that invariably unchanging disposition.

Second, [the detailed exegesis] has three parts [the causal basis for the emergence of the sealing hand gestures, the general sealing hand gesture, and the sealing hand gestures and hand emblems of the different deities].

As to the first, the five limbs of the body [including the head] and the ten fingers that are their appendages are identified with the ten male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families. On the tips of the five fingers of the right hand, [symbolizing] Akṣobhya, on solar disks, there are arrayed respectively the syllables HŪM, OM, SVĀ, ĀM, and HĀ, which are the five [seed] syllables [of the five male buddhas] representing

skillful means. And on the five fingers of the left hand, [symbolizing] Ratnasambhava, on five lunar disks, there are respectively arrayed the five syllables MŪṂ, LĀṂ, MĀṂ, PĀṂ, and TĀṂ, which are those of the female buddhas representing discriminative awareness. Their union in the sealing hand gesture of the “indestructible palms,” which comes about through the respective joining of those two sets of five fingers, is the causal basis for the subsequent emergence of the sealing hand gestures [and emblems] associated with the different deities.

As to the second [the general sealing hand gesture], THE TWO SYLLABLES—the OM that is visualized on the index finger of the right hand **and** the MŪṂ on the middle finger of the left hand —**are conjoined directly at their [finger]tips, and the remaining eight seed syllables of the right and left hands are respectively crossed, so that their tips touch.** As such, they form the sealing hand gesture that grants in this very lifetime the supreme bliss of spiritual accomplishment in which all conquerors of the five enlightened families are essentially equipoised.

As to the third [the sealing hand gestures and hand emblems of the different deities], there are four seals, among which **the great seal refers to the illusion-like meditation that entails the visualization of oneself as the deities; the doctrinal seal refers to the meditation on the seed syllables upon the fingers of the hands; the commitment seal refers to meditation on the symbolic hand emblems such as the vajra, which emerge from those [seed syllables]; and the action seal refers to the movements and embrace of the right and left hands.**

This section on the sealing hand gestures of the different [deities] has five parts, of which the first concerns [the sealing hand gestures of] the principal male and female buddhas [Vairocana and Dhātviśvarī. The great seal is applied] when one meditates on oneself as the body of the principal deity [Vairocana]. From this disposition, the binding commitment seal is applied when the four other seed syllables apart from

the syllable HŪṂ are concealed on [the respective fingers of] his right hand, which is clenched in the sealing hand gesture of the indestructible fist; and the raised middle finger extends upward, its back toward his heart. The doctrinal seal is then applied when HŪṂ is visualized at the center of a solar disk on the tip of his raised middle finger, which is essentially identified with the syllable HŪṂ. The visualized commitment seal is applied when this syllable HŪṂ melts into light, which then transforms into a five-pronged vajra that blazes forth light. The action seal is applied when his left hand forms the sealing hand gesture of the indestructible fist. Drawn together within it are the syllables on their lunar disks—the five concealed seed syllables representing the female buddhas, which are visualized holding a bell with their indestructible fist. [The fingers of the left hand then] clasp his female consort [Dhātviśvarī]. With an embrace, they rest the bell on Amitābha, that is, on the left thigh of his female consort, who represents “reality,” and they support it upon her hip. This is the seal of the male buddha through which the male buddha [Vairocana] makes offerings to the female buddha [Dhātviśvarī]. Then after the release of the gesture of sealing on his left side, the visualized doctrinal seal is applied when his symbolic hand emblem [the vajra] dissolves into the heart of his female consort, giving rise to delight. The expressed doctrinal seal is then applied when he utters HŪṂ VAJRADHRK.

These seven steps may also be subsumed within the four seals: Both the visualized commitment seal and the binding commitment seal are included in the commitment seal. Both the visualized doctrinal seal and the expressed doctrinal seal are included in the doctrinal seal. The other [seals] should be known as they have been described here.

As for the sealing hand gesture of the female buddha [Dhātviśvarī], the great seal is applied when one meditates on oneself as the female buddha Vajradhātviśvarī. The commitment seal is applied when, from this disposition, the other four seed syllables apart from the syllable MŪṂ are concealed within the lunar disks of her left hand, clenched in

the indestructible fist, and the middle finger extends upward, [its back] toward her heart. The visualized commitment seal is applied when, on the [raised] tip of the middle finger, which is designated as MŪṂ, one visualizes her syllable MŪṂ upon its lunar disk, and a ringing bell blazes forth. The action seal is applied when, on the solar disks of her right hand, the five seed syllables representing the male buddhas are placed upon the right thigh of the male consort and embrace “activity” [Amoghasiddhi]. In this embrace, with her head slightly bowing toward her male consort, she looks upon his face with a smiling demeanor. Then after the release of the gesture of sealing on her right side, the “expressed doctrinal seal” is applied when she utters MŪṂ DHĀTVĪSVARĪ, and her symbolic hand emblem [the bell] is then visualized dissolving into the heart of her male consort. In all these contexts, the meaningful symbols, such as the vajra and the wheel, illustrate the five pristine cognitions.

The same procedure that has been outlined here, solely in the context [of the principal male and female buddhas], also applies extensively to the other [peaceful deities], but since that would be too extensive, it will not be elaborated in the [present] commentary on the root verses. In the case of the others [Akṣobhya, Buddhalocanā, and so forth], the description generally accords with the above. However, in particular, the right hand of each male deity holds toward his heart the appropriate hand emblem that manifests from the corresponding seed syllable, and the left hand of each female deity [does likewise], holding [the bell] toward her heart. The left hand of the male deity should rest [a bell] upon the left thigh of the female deity, which represents “reality,” and the right hand of the female deity should embrace the right thigh of the male deity.

The third part [of the detailed exegesis of the nature of the maṇḍala of seals is the synopsis of the maṇḍala of seals, which is the fruitional pristine cognition]. This comprises three parts [a general presentation of the natural seal of the abiding nature, a detailed exegesis of the seals that provisionally appear, and action on behalf of living beings through the seal

that is the conclusive result].

As to the first, the essential nature of mind is the disposition of the great seal, **the abiding nature** of reality, whereby the amalgam of ideation primordially abides as the supreme provision of pristine cognition. **If, realized** through the kindness of the spiritual teacher, this is encountered in a mind that is partial to the natural liberation of discriminative awareness and the objects that constitute apparitional skillful means, there will be neither stirring of the body nor movement of the limbs. Indeed, **all physical conduct** in its entirety abides and is gathered within the disposition of **this great seal**, so that no artificial seals need be applied.

As to the second [the detailed exegesis of the seals that provisionally appear], this has four steps, the first of which [concerns the seals of the forty-two limbs]: The limbs of the body [of the principal deity] partake **of the forty-two deities**, and the benefit of realization will then emerge. After one visualizes oneself as the male and female buddhas Vairocana [and Dhātviśvarī], the male buddhas of the five enlightened families are located respectively in his crown, throat, heart, navel, and secret center; the four inner male bodhisattvas are respectively located in the right eye, the right ear, the right nostril, and the right side of his tongue; and similarly the four outer male bodhisattvas are located in the left eye, the left ear, the left nostril, and the left side of his tongue. The four male gatekeepers are located in his four limbs, and the six sages are respectively located in the crown, throat, heart, navel, secret center, and the soles of the feet. Thus, there are **twenty-three male deities included** [within the body of Vairocana]. Meanwhile, the five female buddhas are located respectively in the five centers of the principal female buddha [Dhātviśvarī]. The four female deities [indicative of the sense objects]—Lāsyā and so forth—are respectively located in her left eye, left ear, left nostril, and the left side of her tongue, and similarly the four female deities indicative of time are respectively located in the four corresponding organs of her right side. The four female gatekeepers are located in her four limbs. Thus, there



are **seventeen female deities** visualized within [the body of] the female consort [Dhātviśvarī]. With the addition of the two basic male and female deities [Vairocana and Dhātviśvarī], there are altogether forty-two deities.

The second step [concerns the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the thousand buddhas]: In the hearts of these forty [deities], there are located the corresponding beings of pristine cognition similar to them in appearance. These **deities of discriminative awareness** from which [the aforementioned deities of] the limbs are diffused are also forty in number. Then, with the exclusion of the two basic male and female deities from **the** forty-two deities of **skillful means**, the others also number **forty**. These are multiplied through the threefold diffusion of the deities of **buddha body, speech, and mind**, making one hundred twenty deities. Each of **those** [one hundred twenty] also has the five [male buddhas] as their crown ornament, making six hundred, and they also number a further three hundred sixty because those deities consecrated by buddha body, speech, and mind are themselves multiplied by three. Then, with the addition of the [aforementioned] forty deities of discriminative awareness, this altogether **constitutes** a maṇḍala of **one thousand** buddhas, who are to be refined [on this path].

The third step [concerns the visualization of the maṇḍala of the twenty-one thousand buddhas]: Exemplified by the supreme [pair of] principal deities, the male and female Vairocana [and Dhātviśvarī], who are endowed in this manner [with the thousand buddhas], the four [other] enlightened families of conquerors and Samantabhadra the supreme conqueror are also estimated to be similarly endowed, so that makes six thousand. Similarly, the twelve [surrounding pairs]—namely, the eight pairs of male and female bodhisattvas and the four pairs of male and female gatekeepers—are also endowed in the same manner, so that these number twelve thousand. There is also a further sixfold diffusion of blazing light, which denotes the six sages, who have no female consorts. So, more elaborately, the maṇḍala to be refined [on this path] constitutes

an enumeration of **twenty-one thousand three hundred twelve deities**.

The fourth step concerns [the refinement of the maṇḍala of inconceivable buddhas]: Since each of these buddhas who partake of such modality is visualized as constituting **twenty-one thousand** deities, the maṇḍala [of deities] that is to be refined **becomes inconceivable**.

The third part [of the synopsis of the maṇḍala of seals, concerning actions undertaken on behalf of living beings by means of the conclusive seals] has five sections. The first of these [reveals their diversity for the sake of those to be trained]:

By having meditated in that manner during the circumstances of the path, consequently, during the time of fruition, **in the** inconceivable buddha fields subsumed within the **ten directions and four times**, the purposes of these seals that **train each according to need are differently revealed** in forms that act on behalf of living beings.

The second [concerns the modalities of appearance that accord with the Buddhist teaching]: [These seals] **manifest** everywhere, training each according to need, **in conformity with** their distinctive **volitions**, in all the vehicles—high and low, among the erroneous **non-Buddhist** extremists, among the inconceivably numerous ordinary **Buddhists**, and among all the great assemblies, including those of the peaceful deities and wrathful forms, such as Māra.

The third [illustrates that although the seals diversely manifest, they do not deviate from their unitary state]: **As in the case**, for example, **of a single dancer** who assumes the guise of the manifold peaceful and wrathful deities, the **diverse emanations** of the peaceful and wrathful deities are **revealed** spontaneously and through compassionate spirituality, but these are not projected in isolation from the unique body of pristine cognition.

The fourth [teaches that on account of those to be trained, the seals are indefinite in number]: In general, **the number of seals is indeterminate owing to** the past deeds of **those**

**who are to be trained**, and all the seals cannot be described exclusively as “such-and-such,” but they are multiplied twice owing to skillful means and discriminative awareness, and thrice owing to buddha body, speech, and mind, and they are also diffused in the four rites of enlightened activity and so forth. This is because all movements of the body and all extensions of the limbs in the gestures of sealing are inherent in the actuality of the deities’ seals.

The fifth [concerns the gathering of all physical movements in the great seal of the abiding nature]: **In brief, all movements and dynamics** of the limbs in their entirety abide in the disposition of **the great seal**. They abide in primordial reality, but they are not apprehended as and do not abide in impurity because the three media [of body, speech, and mind] are [pure] maṇḍalas. Such verses as these were explained by [Samantabhadra], the supreme buddha endowed with the excellence of discriminative awareness, in whom the two obscurations are pure. **This completes chapter 8** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **concerning the diffusion of the sealing hand gestures**.

### ***Chapter 9: The Secret Commitment of the Indestructible Array***

The third section [of the general presentation of the nature of the three maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind] concerns the maṇḍala of reflected imagery. This has two parts [a brief introduction to the enunciation of this maṇḍala and an extensive exegesis of its nature].

As to the former, [then the tathāgata] **uttered these following aphorisms concerning the maṇḍala of secret commitment**. The latter has three parts [the empowerment into the supreme maṇḍala for those of highest acumen, the empowerment into the maṇḍala of colored sand for those of lower acumen, and a synopsis concerning those on whom empowerment is conferred]. The first of these has two parts

[the empowerment into the female maṇḍala and the empowerment into the male maṇḍala].

The first of these [the empowerment into the female maṇḍala] has three aspects [the projection of the maṇḍala and the rites of burnt offering, the making of offerings that appear but lack inherent existence, and the actual entrance into the maṇḍala and conferral of empowerment].

The first of these aspects includes both [the projection of the maṇḍala and the rites of burnt offering]. Among these, the former comprises [the revelation of the maṇḍala and the exhibition of the offerings].

The first of these has five sections, of which the first [concerns the location in which the maṇḍala is projected]: The supremely secret great bliss is a most subtle topic, and it is the supreme commitment. Accordingly, owing to its great bliss, **this maṇḍala in which empowerment is conferred is located** in the expanse of **the pure pudendum** or “palm” of a **female medium**, endowed with the signs from which [that accomplishment] arises and whose body is fully developed.

The second section [concerns the circumference of this maṇḍala]: **This maṇḍala, indicative of buddha mind, should be four finger-widths in its circumference, naturally expressing the four delights.**

The third section [concerns the pitching of the lines]: **It is endowed with the** five seeds or **five poisons**, the five incenses or five **pristine cognitions**, the five gems or five psychophysical **aggregates**, the five essences or five **buddha bodies**, the five medicines or five **enlightened families**, and the five nectars, that is, the nature of mind wherein the fivefold buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities are indivisible **inner radiance**. This [maṇḍala] is said to be exceedingly level—indicating that all those attributes are present and known to be present. Knowing this, while the mental continuum of the female consort is visualized as supreme pristine cognition, the pure Brahmā lines should be clearly pitched.

The fourth section [concerns the drawing of this maṇḍala]:

**The pudendum of the female consort** is visualized as **the celestial palace**. In the middle, it is endowed with a central axis and radial lines, the essential nature of which comprises the four channel branches within the pudendum. Outside this four-spoked wheel and perimeter, there should be visualized a lotus courtyard that **assumes the form of** a square, with four right-angled corners.

The fifth section [concerns the array of its symbols]: In that location [i.e., the pudendum] of the deity, there is visualized a cushion composed of **the disks of sun and moon**, the size of a round fingernail, illustrating the essential nature of the white and red residual impurities, upon which there is a **lotus seat**, the size of a split pea, upon which, in turn, there is the form of **the syllable HŪM**, the size of a mustard seed, exceedingly clear in its essential nature. **And** emerging therefrom, **the vajra** emblem symbolic of this nondual intrinsic nature, the size of a sesame seed, is **visualized** to be drawn.

Second [concerning the exhibition of the offerings associated with the female maṇḍala], provisions and **ornaments** of offering should then be made, **comprising** diverse garments of manufactured silk and cotton; diverse ornaments; diverse **garlands; foods and beverages** surrounded by savories, such as meat, cheesecake, and cheese; along with a diverse cloud mass of **songs**; eulogies; **dance** steps; gestures of the hands; and **music**. Moreover, [the maṇḍala] should be adorned with the female consort on whom these offerings are conditional, delightful maids who grant what is wished, and youthful female bodhisattvas who generate delight in this blissful union and generate delight in the vision of this **sensory contact**. Worthy **offerings** of these three kinds **should be made**, just as they are desired.

The latter [concerning the rites of burnt offering associated with empowerment in this female maṇḍala] has two sections, of which the first is a general presentation of the burnt offerings of the four rites: The hearth is endowed with fully distinct characteristics of shape, round and so forth, and also color, such as white. The intrinsic element of Agni, the god of fire, is

transformed therein into a mouth, and the supramundane deity of fire is summoned and invited into his stomach. Offerings should then be made with provisions of food, drink, and savories including melted butter; along with these, **the sacraments of burnt offering associated with the four rites, including pacification**, should be presented **in conjunction with their** respective **mantras** and meditative stabilities.

Second [there is a detailed exegesis of the burnt offerings presented to wrathful deities]: **These** rites **should be similarly applied in respect of the** maṇḍala of **wrathful deities**. That is to say, the yogin who has refined the subtlest and most profound essentials should also perform these [four rites] in respect of **other** inconceivable maṇḍalas of deities, as indicated in the appropriate rituals. It will suffice if these are properly assessed on the basis of [the yogin's] own intelligence.

The second aspect [of the conferral of empowerment in the female maṇḍala concerns the making of offerings that appear but lack inherent existence]. This comprises both [mental offerings of meditative stability and secret offerings of supreme bliss]. Among these, the former comprises both [offerings of relative appearance that are illusory and offerings of ultimate pristine cognition that pertain to the perfection stage]. The first of these also has two aspects, of which the former [concerns the array of the cloud mass of the offerings of meditative stability]: The great seal **through** which **offerings** are made to the maṇḍalas by means of mentally emanated **meditative stability** comprises all world systems and buddha fields of the ten directions, adorned with provisions that form **a cloud mass of** wish-fulfilling gems, the projection of one's own mind. Their ground, which is ornately bedecked with manifold ornaments and arrays, pliant, soft, and pleasant to touch, is beautifully designed with diverse gems in the manner of a checkerboard. It has a mountain blazing forth light—a mass of the seven precious things that are the source of all that is desired. It has shapely lotus lakes and pools, with water possessed of eight excellent qualities—most delicious to taste,

cool, and so forth. It has a multitude of gemstone mansions, adorned with diverse details, garlands in the form of gemstone ornaments, groves of divine wish-granting trees, melodious songs, and the resonance of sweet poetic verses, all naturally arisen. It has canopies, victory banners, parasols, divine robes, and so forth. It has midlength necklaces, shoulder straps, long necklaces, and other such [ornaments], diverse kinds of food and drink, and diverse silken garments studded with gems. It has the bodies of all sentient beings naturally appearing as male and female deities, ornamented beautifully with the raiment, ornaments, and so forth that are appropriate to themselves, equal in number to and as numerous as atomic particles. All of these [deities] are pleasing, with their inconceivable dance steps of the feet, gestures of the hands, and so on. This cloud of offerings completely fills the entire space of the ten directions and **is then presented** individually and extensively **to all [the three] maṇḍalas** of ground, path, and result.

The latter aspect [of the offerings of relative appearance that are illusory concerns the ways in which these are to be presented]: **Owing to** distinctions of **nonclarity and clarity** in the meditative stability **of** fortunate yogins, they should be equipoised in the expanse of actual reality **either in a gradual or in an immediate manner**, and then these offerings **should be presented**.

The second aspect [of the mental offerings of meditative stability concerns the offerings of pristine cognition, which is the ultimate reality of the perfection stage of meditation]: **Then the great seal** should be cultivated **through which offerings are made, with** essential **purity in respect of the three spheres**, namely, the object of offering, the subject of offering, and the act of offering.

The latter aspect [of the offerings that appear but lack inherent existence is the secret offerings of supreme bliss]. This comprises both [the offerings of skillful means comprising supreme bliss and the offerings of discriminative awareness that does not abide in the two extremes].

Among them, [the offerings of skillful means] also have two aspects [the actual offerings and their beneficial attributes]. As to the former, when [the female medium] is endowed with clarity of meditative stability or, if lacking that, with [the yogin] visualizing her as the deity, **the pudendum** should be consecrated and so forth. Then, like the trichiliocosm compressed in a mustard seed, **the maṇḍalas** of the conquerors **should be invited and** absorbed from the expanse of actual reality **into** the maṇḍala of the white and red pure essences on the tip of her lotus, the size of mustard seeds. [When the yogin is] aroused by the signs of this union, **offerings** should be made through the bliss that is displayed. Visualize that **once** the deities of the maṇḍala **have been pleased** thereby, the rank of the supreme commitment of inconceivable **accomplishment will be attained**.

The latter, describing the beneficial attributes of these [offerings of the supreme bliss of skillful means] comprises both [provisional benefits and conclusive benefits]. Among them, the provisional benefits are of two sorts, the first of which [are those pleasing to all the buddhas]: **All maṇḍalas of the buddhas in whom the outer** ten directions and four times **and the inner** aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields are primordially present **will, without exception, be pleased** with the offerings of bliss when the Supreme Identity is in union with the pristine cognition of intrinsic awareness. All living beings possessed of feelings and the amalgam of ideation subsumed within the three realms of rebirth will be permeated with the supreme inner radiance of the four delights.

Second [with regard to the conclusive benefit or result, which is the attainment of buddhahood], through stability in this [offering of skillful means], illustrated by the ten signs associated with the *Net of Magical Emanation*, the result is that the intrinsic nature of all maṇḍalas of the buddhas without exception who emerge in the ten directions and four times **will become manifest** as the pristine cognition that perceives the living beings of the three world systems—with **the aggregates, the sensory elements,** and the three media of



**body, speech, and mind arising as deities.**

Second, [there are the offerings of discriminative awareness that does not abide in the two extremes]: The [yogin's] own body, speech, and mind and those of the female consort, along with all outer and inner phenomena indicative of bliss, do not abide in any respect and are nonreferential in every respect. In that disposition, **in the manner of an optical illusion, which is nonexistent, they should meditate** that male and female are indivisible **and united**, and thereby they should meditate on the space of the unimpeded pristine cognition within the space of the uncreated [expanse], equipoised and reveling in this [experience].

The third aspect [of the empowerment into the female maṇḍala] comprises both [the actual entrance into the maṇḍala and the conferral of empowerment]. With regard to the former, having performed all these requisites that precede the ritual, the mighty lord, **the master** of indestructible reality, **should enter into the maṇḍala** with awareness, **and then the disciples should be ushered in** to the maṇḍala.

The latter [concerning the conferral of empowerment] comprises both [the presentation of the offerings for empowerment and the actual empowerments commensurate with the degrees of the disciples' acumen]. The first has two sections, of which the former [concerns the actual presentation of the offerings]: Then these supreme children of enlightened heritage **should offer** to the spiritual teacher the kingdom and **their own bodies, children, spouse, and prized possessions, including riches, which are most cherished and pleasing.**

The latter [concerns the beneficial consequences of this presentation]: If **offerings** of the five kinds of desirable resources are made **to the** master of indestructible reality who is a mighty **spiritual teacher**, offerings are made to all maṇḍalas. It is therefore needless to say that **the** meditational **deities** in the present maṇḍala **will be pleased** with the offerings! In this way **all defects** pertaining to the commitments and vows **will be thoroughly purified.**

The second section [concerns the actual empowerments

commensurate with the degrees of the disciples' acumen]: **Then**, if [the disciples] are known to have the good fortune whereby faith and the ascetic discipline of diligence are well understood, **the ten empowerments of beneficence and the five empowerments of ability should be** given sequentially and **conferred** with unsurpassed compassion, and these should be retained in the minds of the disciples, such that they are not unproductive.

The second part [of the conferral of empowerment into the supreme maṇḍala for those of highest acumen is the empowerment in the male maṇḍala]: Alternatively, the male should fold his hands together and, visualizing the body of the deity as the great seal, upon his lap, between the index fingers, there is **the maṇḍala** of the secret vajra, indicative of **skillful means**, a full finger span in length. **Dependent on** this method, an expert [yogin] **may also** confer empowerment on the disciples by means of the pure essence, in accordance with the ritual in which the **empowerment is received**.

The second part [of the detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery is the method of conferring empowerment in the maṇḍala of colored sand for those of low acumen]. This has three sections [the drawing of the maṇḍala, the attainment of the maṇḍala, and the result of this attainment].

The first of these [the drawing of the maṇḍala] also has three sections [the rituals appropriate for the drawing of small maṇḍalas, of intermediate maṇḍalas, and of large maṇḍalas].

The first of these [the drawing of small maṇḍalas] has two parts, of which the first [concerns the geomantic ritual]: Alternatively, [with regard to the maṇḍala of colored sand] **one should purify the surface by visualizing that it has already been purified** in accordance with the geomantic ritual. The second [concerns the actual drawing of small maṇḍalas]: **Measuring one full cubit, one body length**, that is, a fully extended double arm span, **or three body lengths**, these [small maṇḍalas] have ritual spikes that guard [them from impediments], along with threads, colored sand of five distinct hues, and so forth. An attractive assistant beautified

with robes and fine ornaments should hold one end of the threads, while the master of indestructible reality, **a supreme expert** in the rites of the maṇḍala, **should** with concentration **perform the excellent ritual whereby both the lines** of pristine cognition and action **are pitched**.

The second section [of the drawing of the maṇḍala concerns the drawing of intermediate maṇḍalas, which may also be of three sizes]: Alternatively, the small form of **the intermediate [maṇḍala] should measure sixteen** cubits, the intermediate form **twenty** cubits, and the large form **twenty-five cubits**. Meditate on the colored lines as the five maṇḍalas of the enlightened families, visualizing that they dissolve into the colored lines. The appropriate forms indicative of buddha body, speech, and mind should also be arrayed in the locations of the respective deities.

The third section [of the drawing of the maṇḍala concerns the drawing of large maṇḍalas, which may also be of three sizes]: Alternatively, the small form of **the large [maṇḍala] should measure one reach of hearing**, the intermediate form should measure **one yojana**, or else the large form should extend as far as **the inconceivable expanse of space**. Therein, the empowerments should be conferred, while one is meditating on the diverse enlightened families of the maṇḍalas of the buddhas. In order to disclose to deluded, unseeing beings the five pristine cognitions, which are present in themselves but have been obscured by fundamental ignorance, the maṇḍala should be drawn with **colored sand** of twenty-five hues, or if all these twenty-five colors are lacking, with colored sand of five hues. As to the drawing [of this maṇḍala], a perceptive lineage holder should draw it according to the tradition of the specific ritual in which instruction is given.

The second section [of the method of conferring empowerment in the maṇḍala of colored sand concerns the attainment of the maṇḍala]. It has three parts [the generation of the maṇḍala, the invitation to the beings of pristine cognition, and their dissolving in a nondual manner].

As to the first, [this maṇḍala of colored sand] is generated

through the supreme infinite display of meditative stability, reaching the limits of the expanse of space. It is endowed with the locations of the respective deities, the corresponding seed syllables beginning with ṬHA, the drops [of colored sand], the heart mantras or hand emblems including the vajra, or perfect representations of buddha body, speech, and mind. All this is said to be generated and consecrated as the maṇḍala of pristine cognition. As to the goals achieved thereby, the amazing four rites and the wondrous accomplishment of the maṇḍala will be attained—this is the commitment of all the buddhas. If even when the forms of the hand emblems of buddha body, speech, and mind have been fashioned from materials including clay and wood, enlightenment—the sequence of liberation corresponding to the fortune of respective trainees—will be obtained, it is needless to say that one who has been refined through the meditative stability of pure pristine cognition will attain buddhahood. This mind itself is the buddha.

Second [as for the invitation to the beings of pristine cognition], all the actual maṇḍalas of the beings of pristine cognition, **as desired, should then be invited from the disposition of the buddha body of reality**—the maṇḍala of nonreferential buddha mind, which is the supreme identity of the maṇḍalas of the ten directions and four times.

Third [as for the dissolving of the beings of pristine cognition in a nondual manner], the maṇḍala of meditative stability and the natural spontaneous maṇḍala of the ground both abide indivisibly in a self-manifesting manner. That is to say, when **the maṇḍala of the beings of pristine cognition** which has been invited **into the natural maṇḍala of the** [visualized] **beings of commitment** enters and **dissolves indivisibly** therein, it is owing to that defining characteristic that they dissolve into union. Thus it was that all [the buddhas] who emerge from all the ten directions and four times formerly recited an aspiration prayer, in consequence of which the maṇḍala of their enlightened activity manifests and perfectly approaches the maṇḍala of the beings of commitment. This

absorption is their supreme commitment.

The third section [of the method of conferring empowerment in the maṇḍala of colored sand concerns the result attained through the maṇḍala]. This has three parts [an establishment of the acceptance that spiritual accomplishments emerge from the mind, a demonstration of the skillful means through which these are attained, and a description of the result accomplished by that skillful means].

The first of these also has three aspects, of which the first concerns the examples illustrative [of this establishment]: **All desirable things that emerge from the wish-granting tree and the wish-fulfilling gemstone are indeed illustrative**, but these are not substantial existents—entities with true existence. They ripen into those steadfast appearances as the result of the [former] merits present in one's own mind.

The second [concerns the actual meaning that is established]: This wondrous, marvelous, astonishing, and amazing reality, including the four rites and so forth, is the genuine abiding nature of the nature of mind. It does not come forth after existing elsewhere, but rather, it naturally emerges and appears as buddha body and pristine cognition in the dispositions of such persons who have mastered the generation and perfection stages [of meditation]. For **the supreme and common accomplishments are attained through the cultivation** and refinement of nonduality with respect to **the perfection stage** of discriminative awareness, derived from a disposition that is steadfast in the cultivation of **the generation stage** of skillful means. From the disposition of the buddha body of reality, which is the actual truth of the expanse of reality or discriminative awareness, the seal of skillful means itself transforms into the buddha body of form—a display of pristine cognition. Thus, the pristine cognition of the buddha body of form revels in the pristine cognition of the buddha body of actual reality, and it is from this disposition that the play of the pristine cognition of the buddha body of emanation is itself said to come together—in the manner of the moon's reflection in water—without straying from its [source].

The third [concerns the benefit for the sake of others which emerges through this establishment]: The conquerors **then** emerge in the guise of the six sages, **instructing** and granting protection to **living beings**, corresponding to their volition. They confer blessing whereby they appear from the disposition of the buddha body of actual reality as the buddha body of perfect resource, and thence the buddha body of **natural** emanation also becomes visible as the buddha body of perfect resource endowed with the five enlightened families. Manifesting in the same manner as the [aforementioned] illustrative gemstone, it **emerges through compassionate spirituality and merit**. Thereupon, the buddha body of emanation arises of its own accord as a display of the brilliance of compassionate spirituality, capable of performing acts of benefit for the sake of living beings. The magical display of pristine cognition, the intrinsic nature of this indestructible reality of buddha body, speech, and mind, is the best of genuine mighty potentates because it holds sway over all things.

The second part [of the result that is attained through the maṇḍala is the demonstration of the skillful means through which it is attained]: **When the five rituals** (comprising acceptance by a spiritual advisor, the receiving of empowerments, the keeping of commitments, expertise in the pith instructions, and great perseverance) **have been perfected** in the mind, **and** when one is perfectly endowed with **the five requisites** (comprising hermit-age, assistant, necessities, sacraments of accomplishment, and sacraments of commitment) along with **the five aspects** of attainment (comprising the actual truth with respect to oneself, the deity, the secret mantra, the recitation, and the diffusion and absorption of light), one will not degenerate from the provisions that are the appropriate conditions [for spiritual attainment]. This accomplishment will swiftly occur if one perseveres to undertake one's practice and has renounced lethargy with respect to attainment.

The third part [of the result that is attained through the

maṇḍala is the description of the result accomplished by that skillful means]. It comprises both [provisional results and conclusive results].

As to the former, the genuine **accomplishment** of the awareness holder who is empowered with control over the life span **will be achieved** by those of highest perseverance **within six months**, or literally six times thirty days, **or** by those of mediocre acumen in **twelve** months, or by those of inferior acumen in **fourteen**, **or** even by the basest in **sixteen months**. On the basis of this attainment of power over the life span, one will obtain buddhahood in the number of years or time frame comprised by sixteen contiguous life spans. That is to say, within the duration of sixteen births, one will obtain the spontaneously perfect buddhahood endowed with the five buddha bodies.

The latter [concerns the conclusive result, which is the attainment of the awareness holder of spontaneous presence]. This has three sections [the accomplishment of self-manifesting buddha body and pristine cognition in the spontaneous Bounteous Array, the presence of the inwardly radiant field of the buddha body of actual reality, and the reemergence of the buddha body of emanation in the world systems].

The first of these has two subdivisions, of which the former [concerns the attainment of the five buddha bodies]: The pristine cognition in which the nature of mind attains primordial buddhahood is the unique vital essence. Therein pristine cognition, purified of adventitious stains, is mingled in a single savor. The appearances of the nature of this vital essence are inconceivable and infinitely supreme because it is **spontaneously present as the five buddha bodies. The supreme accomplishment will be established** because there is a manifestly perfect awakening, indivisible from the body, speech, and mind of conquerors throughout space and time.

The latter [concerns the appearance of the buddha fields]: **The buddha field** of the spontaneous Bounteous Array is inconceivable and pure. The foundation of its celestial palace—

unlimited and beyond comprehension—is in the form of a wheel, with ornaments, lavish provisions of display, and **the maṇḍalas** of the five enlightened families, **pervading space**. Spontaneously present inner radiance is the intrinsic nature of all these inconceivable attributes, without exception. When seen as an object of pristine cognition, the ground of these resources **will be** actually **mastered**, and it will manifest for the benefit of living beings in the form of extensive buddha speech. This denotes the pristine cognition harmonious with ground, path, and result. However, this field is the pristine cognition of buddhahood, manifesting in and of itself.

The second aspect [of the conclusive result concerns the buddha body of actual reality]: **When that** buddha field **dissolves** into the field of the buddha body of actual reality, **its cognition** as inner radiance **remains unimpeded**. This intrinsic nature is the actual truth of the buddha body of actual reality, free from the single and the multiple, and without extremes or middle. In that expanse where all conceptual elaborations are quiescent, this aspect of the buddha body of perfect resource is such that even the buddhas do not see one another. That is to say, the subtle, naturally present pristine cognition appears within an expanse of quiescence, without abiding anywhere at all, and it **resembles the moon of the darkest night**.

The third aspect [of the conclusive result concerns the reemergence of the buddha body of emanation in the world systems]: Purified of obscurations imagined through misconceptions, that same pristine cognition is not extraneous but identical to the buddha body of actual reality. So it is that immeasurable emanations **manifest** and perform acts of benefit **in all times and abodes**, in conformity with the six classes of living beings **without exception, establishing connections** in a nonconceptual manner between the object and subject **through** great **compassionate spirituality**.

The third part [of the detailed exegesis of the nature of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery is the synopsis concerning those on whom empowerment is conferred]: Whether **the** supreme



**empowerments** are conferred in the maṇḍala of supreme bliss in association with the two spouses, male and female, or else when the five-colored sand maṇḍala has been constructed, if **those** disciples **who** are faithful enter therein, the desirable and agreeable accomplishments that they obtain will equal those that others **have received** in the past. The great pristine cognition, equal to the fortunate ones who **keep their commitments** will be actualized as a great accomplishment in this very lifetime by those who assiduously cultivate it, and its intrinsic nature—the most amazing supreme **accomplishment**, buddhahood itself—will certainly emerge and be **attained** on the basis of their having [previously] attained power over the life span. **Whereas**, if **those** lacking faith **who have degenerated** in their commitments engage in these practices, disparate unwanted circumstances will emerge in this life, and in the next life they will be born in the lower realms of existence. In this way, **they will be ruined**. Such were the aphorisms they uttered.

**This completes chapter 9 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the commitments associated with the maṇḍala of reflected imagery.**

## ***Chapter 10: The Conferral of the Empowerments***

The latter part [of the generation of and empowerment in the maṇḍala of the ground is the detailed exegesis of the skillful means through which the empowerments are conferred]. This comprises both [a brief introduction to the empowerments and an extensive exegesis of the nature of the empowerments]. As to the former, [the Great Joyous One then] **uttered these following aphorisms concerning the conferral of empowerment as a king of the sacred doctrine.**

The latter has three parts [the empowerments of ability, the empowerments of beneficence, and their advantages]. The first of these also has three parts, of which the first [is the general presentation of the empowerments of profundity]: When the empowerments of ability have been conferred and the female consort has been consecrated, the male who is the seal of skillful means becomes equipoised in union with the female who is the seal of discriminative awareness, and derived from that union, the generative fluid—blissful in nature—[appears as] the syllable HŪṂ, which emerges from the pathway of the secret vajra in a stream visualized as a mass of seeds. This nectar converges in the lotus of the female, whence it is offered to the disciples and dissolves into them from the tip of the tongue. Blessings are then gathered through the diffusion and absorption of the maṇḍala of the principal deity. These transform the hearts [of the disciples], whereupon the empowerments of profundity are conferred.

The second part [of the empowerments of ability is the detailed exegesis of the actual empowerments of ability]. This has five sections, of which the first [concerns the empowerment of the listener]: The disciples are visualized as Ratnasambhava. Within the ears of that deity there are clearly visualized the celestial palace, derived from the seed syllable TRĀṂ, on a wheel-shaped base with four spokes that derives from the syllable BHRUṂ. Therein, the sense organ of the ear is

present in the nature of an utterly translucent vital essence that sustains its ability to hear sound and consists of five pairs or ten single syllables TRĀṂ along with four syllables HŪṂ and the syllables JAḤ, HŪṂ, VAM, HOḤ. These syllables constitute the supreme assembly of the doctrinal seal of buddha speech. They melt into light, and therefrom the maṇḍala of Ratnasambhava is radiantly generated, with [the being of pristine cognition] emanating in a similar manner and dissolving therein. “TRĀṂ! One should receive the empowerment of the listener from a [qualified] master with respect to all secrets of the inner vehicles, namely, Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and the Great Perfection, which are respectively secret, most secret, and supremely secret, and also of the outer tantras. One should cultivate, inquire into, and examine this secret meaning itself and otherwise not proclaim it, because it should not be divulged to others!”

The second [concerns the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of the meditator]: The heart, which is a radiant wheel, is visualized as the celestial palace, and within it, the nature of the radiant vital essence constitutes the supreme assembly of the garland of letters HŪṂ. These [syllables] melt into light, and therefrom the maṇḍala of the enlightened family of buddha mind is radiantly visualized. The being of pristine cognition then emanates and dissolves, so that obscurations are purified, melt into light, and are transformed into the deity. “OM Great child of the conquerors of the three times, you should grasp [the empowerment of] the meditator with respect to the deities, mantras, and meditative stabilities, conferred respectively in association with the body, speech, and mind of all the buddhas! You should make offerings that please all the conquerors and attain the rank of one who is united with all the conquerors!”

The third [concerns the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of enlightened activities]: The consciousness of contact is clearly visualized within the wheel-shaped celestial palace of the hands. The nature of its vital essence constitutes the supreme assembly of the seal of the syllable

HĀM. Therefrom the maṇḍala of enlightened activity is radiantly generated, causing [the being of pristine cognition] to emanate and dissolve, and so forth. “OM Child of enlightened heritage, you should be Amoghasiddhi, embodying the enlightened activity of indestructible reality. You should perform all acts without exception that respectively benefit sentient beings and make offerings to the buddhas. Thereby, the assemblies of the multitude of intermediaries, who are emanations of buddhas, should confer accomplishment through their inward absorptions and attain enlightened activities through their outward diffusions. They should meet all your requirements!”

The fourth [concerns the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of the expositor]: The vital essence is clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped celestial palace within the tongue, and its nature constitutes the assembly of the seal, naturally expressed as the syllable hrīḥ. Therefrom the maṇḍala of Amitābha, the enlightened family of the sacred doctrine of buddha speech, is radiantly visualized, and [the being of pristine cognition] emanates and dissolves therein: “OM You should satisfy faithful persons who receive the empowerment of the expositor, through which all the unsurpassed nectars of the doctrine associated with the outer, inner, and secret vehicles are conferred upon others. Corresponding to the degrees of acumen—superior, mediocre, and inferior—the secrets should be differently proclaimed, but they should not be proclaimed glibly to others.”

The fifth [concerns the meditative stability associated with the empowerment of the myriad precepts of the king of indestructible reality]: The sense organ of the body is clearly visualized in the wheel-shaped celestial palace within the five limbs [of the body, including the head], which are indicative of great movement. The natures of their vital essences respectively constitute the syllable HŪM on the right shoulder, the syllable OM on the head, the syllable svĀ on the left shoulder, the syllable ĀM on the left leg, and the syllable HĀ on the right leg. One should meditate that therefrom the five maṇḍalas of the five enlightened families arise, along with the

protective circle outside them and the ring of the wrathful deities. “OM You, Samantabhadra—indestructible reality of the body, speech, and mind of all buddhas of the ten directions and four times—are the progenitor of all maṇḍalas of the myriad conquerors. May you therefore enact or bestow the genuine gift of the empowerment of the precepts of all supreme maṇḍalas!”

The third part [of the empowerments of ability concerns the defects of not possessing these empowerments]: **Those who would attempt to listen to the secret mantras and to practice them or explain them to others, and so forth, without pleasing the master and without obtaining the empowerments in their minds, will have no result in this lifetime, and they will be ruined** in evil existences.

The second part [of the extensive exegesis of the nature of the empowerments concerns the empowerments of beneficence]: With regard to the empowerments [of beneficence], which are conferred **through ten sacraments**, the empowerments of the crown ornament, the diadem with its silken ribbons, the garland of flowers, the armor, the victory banner, the seals of the five enlightened families, the parasol, the vase, the food and drink, and the five essences should be conferred and their symbolism should be understood.

The third part [of the extensive exegesis of the nature of the empowerments concerns the advantages of having obtained these empowerments]: Henceforth, after perfectly obtaining those empowerments at this time, you will become an heir of the conquerors. That is to say, **having received the [three] empowerments of the regent of the buddhas, [the four] of excellence for the sake of others, [the two] of excellence for the sake of oneself, and [the one] of nonduality, you will not fall into lower existences**, all sufferings will be nonexistent, and **you will attain** the excellent happiness of **longevity** and genuine mastery of wealth. And [in the next life], you will be born among the gods and humans of the higher realms **and** become a master of liberation, achieving both **the buddha** bodies of actual reality and form!

**This completes chapter 10 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the conferral of the empowerments.**

### ***Chapter 11: The Maṇḍala of the Communion***

The second main topic [concerning the revelation of the spontaneously present maṇḍala of the peaceful deities] is the presentation of the generation and perfection stages. This has two parts: the generation stage [chs. 11-12] and the perfection stage [ch. 13]. The former comprises both [a presentation of the maṇḍala of communion according to the generation stage of skillful means (ch. 11) and a detailed exegesis of its branches (ch. 12)].

The first of these [the presentation of the maṇḍala of communion according to the generation stage of skillful means] has three sections: the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion. As to the first, [Samantabhadra then] **uttered these following aphorisms that reveal all things as the path to liberation.**

The second comprises both [the maṇḍala of the spontaneous ground, which is to be known, and the maṇḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness, which are to be experientially cultivated according to the path].

With regard to the former, all of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa partakes of the **single basis**. Originally and at the present moment their uncreated essential nature abides in **the manner of the seed syllable A**. Their intrinsic nature, in which appearances and emptiness are without duality, is endowed with the pure **blessing** whereby buddhahood is primordially attained. The psychophysical aggregates, the sensory elements, and the amalgam of ideation are visible to **direct perception** in the essential nature of the deities. **Owing** to these **four axioms** of excellent realization that concern the abiding nature of the ground, all things are **realized** to be the great king of primordial, manifestly perfect enlightenment.

The latter [concerning the maṇḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness, which are to be experientially cultivated according to the path] has three sections [the maṇḍala in which all that appears is pristine cognition, the maṇḍala of communion that is enjoyed, and the ancillary aspects of the means for attainment]. The first of these includes both [a general presentation of the maṇḍala in which appearances and mind are indivisible and a detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala in which the paths of union and liberation are indivisible].

The first of these also has three parts [the maṇḍala of the male deities who represent the apprehending subject, the maṇḍala of the female deities who represent the apprehended object, and the maṇḍala of their indivisible enjoyment].

The first of these also has two sections, and with regard to the first, **the five limbs** of the body [including the head], the five **sense organs**, and the modes of consciousness are all to be known not as ordinary phenomena but as the syllable OM, the intrinsic nature of the five pristine cognitions; one **should meditate on them as the nature of the maṇḍala of** perfect resource, comprising the **peaceful** male deities of the five enlightened families. With regard to the second, alternatively, one should meditate on all these as the maṇḍala of the **wrathful male deities**.

Second [with regard to the maṇḍala of the female deities who represent the apprehended object], **the desirable attributes of the senses and the** appearances of the **five material elements**—including sights, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangibles—are to be known not as ordinary phenomena but as the syllable MŪM, the nature of nondual pristine cognition, and **one should meditate on them as the nature of the maṇḍala of peaceful** female deities, including the female gatekeepers, female bodhisattvas, **and** the five female buddhas. Alternatively, one should meditate on them as the maṇḍala of **wrathful female deities**.

Third [with regard to the maṇḍala of their indivisible enjoyment], the **raiment, ornaments, food and drink**, songs,

expressive verses, dance steps of the feet, gestures of the hands, and the great cloud mass of all the provisions, whichever are employed, are known as the syllable HŪM, the reality of nondual supreme bliss. So when these desirable attributes of the senses have been enjoyed as the nature of the six **offering goddesses**, the result is that these **are bestowed on** and please the buddhas themselves, present as the psychophysical aggregates and sensory elements of **the body maṇḍala** in which the intrinsic nature of wondrous supreme and common [accomplishments] emerge. Consequently, the most bounteous of beneficial attributes—the accomplishment of enlightenment—is obtained.

The second part [concerns the maṇḍala in which the paths of union and liberation are without duality]. This has three sections [the maṇḍala of great bliss or supreme enlightenment in which the rites of union are inherently pure, the maṇḍala of the secret great skillful means in which the rites of liberation are inherently pure, and the maṇḍala of magical pristine cognition untainted with respect to union and liberation].

As to the first [the practice of union], with regard to **the object** [or female medium] with whom the yogin enters into union, he should do so either with or without discrimination between the good and bad qualities of twelve-year-old mediums (*lha mo, devī*), sixteen-year-old mediums (*klu mo, nāginī*), and twenty-year-old inferior mediums. With regard to **the manner** of this engagement, this entails ritual service through which the mind of the female medium is refined and generative essences enhanced, further ritual service that includes glancing at and touching [the female medium], rites of attainment that include the embrace, and rites of great attainment that experience the four delights. With regard to **the essential nature** of this engagement, the yogin should visualize that in the maṇḍala of the lotus of the female consort, the clusters of buddhas forming the maṇḍala of buddha mind—the intrinsic nature of supreme bliss—are diffused, visually generated, and [the beings of pristine cognition] dissolve therein, whereupon the offering of this union is made to all



cloud masses of the maṇḍalas of the buddhas without exception who are present. Consequently, through the great supreme offerings of joy and equanimity, the deities who have been invited and all the deities of the body maṇḍala respectively dissolve therein. By virtue of this, the accomplishment of supreme bliss is obtained. With regard to the receiving of **accomplishment**, those essences that are the sun and moon fluids of the pudenda, activated by the four branches of ritual service and attainment, are drawn by the tonguelike secret vajra into the maṇḍala of the four energy centers, permeating the body. Then, with regard to **the result** of that attainment, one will become a sky-farer and, through supernormal cognitive power, experience the radiant realization of all things. Ablaze with meditative stability, one will traverse the levels and paths. With one's longevity equal to that of sun and moon, the eight common accomplishments will be attained and one will become a sovereign of the wish-fulfilling clouds. Inasmuch as buddha body and pristine cognition are without conjunction or disjunction, the **twofold** benefit will be spontaneously accomplished.

As to the second [the practice of ritual liberation], with regard to the targeted object that is to be ritually liberated, there are those who have become fields of compassion, comprising gods and human beings—the denizens of supreme exalted realms and living beings of the three lesser or lower realms. When classified, there are ten such fields [of compassion], who should be ritually liberated in order that they might be freed from sufferings. With regard to the skillful means through which these beings are to be ritually liberated, one who is skilled in the rite of liberation should place an effigy upon solar and lunar disks, within a triangular burning pit. There are five ways in which [yogins] are skilled: They may be skilled in the view that liberates by nature; they may be skilled in meditation that liberates by meditative stability; they may be skilled in conduct that liberates beings in accordance with their acumen, place, and time; they may be skilled in the oral instructions that liberate by the secret mantra of great skillful

means; and they may be skilled in the deeds and conduct that ritually liberate [the consciousness of the target] by means of profound wrathful sorcery. Then [as for the actual liberation and ejection of the target's consciousness], endowed with the pride of a great warrior, one should visualize the ten fingers of the hands and the ritual spike as deities. Meditate that with movement [of the hands], it thrusts into the effigy, whereupon the actual liberation of the target takes effect and the offering is made. Then the consciousness [of the deceased] is transformed into the syllable HŪṂ, so that all past deeds and propensities are purified. This same syllable HŪṂ is ejected into the expanse, and its superscript crescent and bindu become a vajra—the symbolic emblem of buddha mind, blazing forth rays of light. One should then meditate that this becomes the body of Vajrasattva, brilliant through the proliferation of light rays. One should meditate that on the crown of his head there is a thumb-size Samantabhadra image, as a sign of this triumph over cyclic existence, and this is ejected by the sound of PHAṬ to Akaniṣṭha. With regard to the beneficial consequences, this wondrous skillful means that liberates and releases negative beings from lower realms is particularly sublime.

The third part [of the maṇḍala in which the paths of union and liberation are without duality concerns the maṇḍala of magical pristine cognition untainted with respect to union and liberation]: Since the abiding nature is the primordially **uncreated** reality, relative appearances manifest as **magical apparitions**, but in the manner of an optical illusion they are undetectable. Although all **the practices of union and ritual liberation** may have been performed, they **are without defect because** there is nothing with independent characteristics that has actually been performed, even to the extent of an indivisible atomic particle.

The second part [of the maṇḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness concerns the maṇḍala of communion that is enjoyed]. This comprises both [a brief introduction to the communion offerings of Samantabhadra and an extensive exegesis of the nature of the different maṇḍalas].

As to the former, the five material elements that comprise the environment are [naturally] pure as the five female buddhas. The sentient beings who comprise its inhabitants and who are subsumed in the five psychophysical aggregates are [naturally] pure as the five male buddhas, while their sense organs, sense objects, and the modes of consciousness of their minds are pure respectively as the male bodhisattvas, the female bodhisattvas, and the gatekeepers. These constitute **the three purities**. Also, the environment is the celestial palace, its inhabitants are the deities, and their individual mind streams are realized to be pristine cognition. In addition, there are two modes of sameness—in that all things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are ultimately the same in their uncreated disposition and relatively the same in the manner of a magical apparition—and [two] modes of superior sameness, in that the five psychophysical aggregates are equated with the buddhas and the eight modes of consciousness are equated with the pristine cognitions. These constitute **the four modes of sameness**. Owing to these [axioms], the maṇḍala in which all things are without acceptance and rejection is identified with the field of Samantabhadra. Then, once all conduct has been perfectly transformed through the innate force of the two great provisions, **if the yogin** who has not degenerated in the five branches of mantra, who possesses the five requisites, who completely knows the five rituals, and who is **endowed with these three sets of five has** pleasingly **achieved** the requisites of the communion by means of the maṇḍala of communion, **that person will** certainly **become accomplished** in the provisional status of the three kinds of awareness holder and the conclusive enlightenment that is the definitively excellent objective.

The second part [of the maṇḍala of communion is the extensive exegesis of the nature of the different maṇḍalas]. This comprises both [the nature of the supporting maṇḍala and the corresponding sequence of attainment]. The former includes both [the maṇḍala of the peaceful deities and the maṇḍala of wrathful deities].

The first of these, in turn, has three sections comprising [the maṇḍala of the fivefold cluster, the maṇḍala of the threefold cluster, and the maṇḍala of the single cluster of deities]. With regard to the first, one should meditate on the form of the **deities who constitute the fivefold cluster**, deriving from [the five male buddhas] **in union** with the female buddhas—the fields of the five enlightened families. These **are** arrayed, **fifty** in number—that is, ten male and female deities derived from the five primary male and female pairs, along with ten others belonging to each of the other four [peripheral] enlightened families. **Along with** them, the **ten wrathful** male deities and the ten wrathful female deities are arrayed outside them, on the ten radial spokes of the [maṇḍala] wheel, forming a circle that protects [the maṇḍala] from obstacles.

With regard to the second, one should meditate on the deities **who constitute the threefold cluster**, the **thirty** deities **representing the three** mysteries—the Buddha family, the Vajra **family**, and the Padma family, each of which is naturally expressed as ten male and female deities. **Along with** them, on their periphery, are the host of wrathful deities, namely, **the eight** male and female **gatekeepers**.

With regard to the third, one should meditate on the eighteen deities **who constitute the** single **cluster**—a maṇḍala of **ten** deities, **along with the host of wrathful deities**, namely, **the eight** male and female gatekeepers. Among all the enlightened families, this [cluster] **represents** the enlightened family of Samantabhadra, the actual truth, where the principal deity of the maṇḍala of the five enlightened families is Vairocana. When the maṇḍala of the tathāgata is divided into its five enlightened families, this one denotes the mind aspect of buddha mind—the supreme aspect of **buddha mind**.

The second part [of the nature of the supporting maṇḍala concerns the maṇḍala of wrathful deities]: The supreme and common accomplishments, the **provisional and conclusive** enlightened intention, **will be attained through** the assembled hosts of **the fifty-eight blood drinkers**, including the ten male and female pairs who form the great assembly of

the wrathful male and female buddhas, along with their intermediaries (the eight *mātarah*), representing the seats [of sensory consciousness]; their retainers (the eight *piśācī*), representing the [corresponding] sense objects; and their obedient attendants (the twenty-eight *īśvarī*), who perform the rites. Rites such as these will be perfected.

The latter part [of the detailed exegesis of the nature of the different kinds of maṇḍala concerns the corresponding sequence of attainment]. This has four sections [the attainments corresponding to the single cluster, the threefold cluster, the fivefold cluster, and the maṇḍala of the indestructible expanse].

With regard to the first, the accomplishment to be attained by a yogin (one who unites with the objective, the fundamental nature of mind) or *mantrin* (one who holds the commitments of the mantras) comprises the supreme and common accomplishments, which are spontaneously present in their disposition of sameness and great perfection. Through one's abiding in this state without subjective attachment, through conduct without acceptance and rejection, **accomplishment will be attained through the realization that all things** are primordially **indivisible**, intrinsically unimpeded, **and** without attachment in all respects. Since the maṇḍalas of all enlightened families **are gathered within the Vajra family**, indicative of buddha mind, [the yogin or *mantrin*] should excellently meditate that all the deities and their celestial palace diffuse light rays and are ablaze with splendor, after which the deities should be delighted by means of the divine offerings, without attachment to or fixation on the desirable attributes of the senses, and then [the visualization] should be dissolved. The result is that they will be transformed into the buddha body of actual reality, without duality, and obtain the rank of the great seal.

With regard to the second, alternatively, they should attain the nature of the maṇḍalas of buddha body, speech, and mind since all buddhas without exception, when subsumed, **are gathered in** the maṇḍalas of **buddha body, speech, and**

**mind.** This also entails meditative stability in which the forms of the deities radiate, diffusing rays of light ablaze with the major and minor marks, and perform acts of benefit for the sake of sentient beings. Meditating on the desirable attributes of the senses as the female consorts, visualize that these are enjoyed in nondual [union], whereupon they dissolve in a disposition free from conceptual elaboration. The result is that the accomplishment of the awareness holder of spontaneous presence will be obtained, and all maṇḍalas without exception will blaze with the glory of enlightened attributes, the **suffering** of afflictive mental states experienced by sentient beings **will be alleviated**, and then the enlightened activity will be achieved, establishing that they will be born into the Vajra family.

With regard to the third, for genuine accomplishment the yogin or *mantrin* **should meditate on the fivefold maṇḍala cluster along with the ring of wrathful deities** by all ritual means, **endowed with skillful means** and discriminative awareness. Without attachment to the desirable attributes of the senses, these should be dissolved, free from grasping and attachment to the dichotomy between the object of offering and the act of offering, and in accordance with the dissolution of deity into deity. The result is that the nucleus of **supreme** accomplishment, the awareness holder of spontaneous presence, **will then be achieved.**

With regard to the fourth, in order to attain the maṇḍala of indestructible expanse, **yogins** should visualize the five tathāgatas and their five female consorts, who respectively partake of the intrinsic nature of skillful means and discriminative awareness. They **should then meditate perfectly on the maṇḍala of the forty-two peaceful conquerors** and meditate on the sense organs and the amalgam of ideation as the nature of the male and female bodhisattvas, along with the male and female gatekeepers.

The third part [of the maṇḍalas of skillful means and discriminative awareness that are to be experientially cultivated according to the path concerns the ancillary aspects

of these means for attainment]: The respective mantras, seals, and aspects of **meditative stability** that are applied according to circumstances should be visualized individually and correctly. The [yogins] **should have a suitable location** for spiritual attainment and adequate resources, while the facilitating conditions should be without degeneration. The **mind** of the practitioner endowed with highest acumen should be **steadfast** from the start, in accordance with whatever commitments have been pledged. They should cultivate perseverance, without laziness, idleness, or languor **with regard to the auspicious times and dates** [for practice]; if they practice without hesitation, all maṇḍalas of attainment will be accomplished, and the supreme secret of indestructible reality, the genuine buddha body of actual reality, will be obtained. The days over which the practice should be undertaken, the dates for commencing the practice, and so forth are explained according to the description found in the tantra.

The third part of the chapter is the conclusion: **Through these secret words, [the tathāgata] held meaningful discourse with himself.**

**This completes chapter 11 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], concerning the maṇḍala of communion.**

## ***Chapter 12: The Attainment of the Communion***

The latter section [of the presentation of the generation stage of meditation is the detailed exegesis of] the branches of that [maṇḍala of communion]. This has three parts [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion].

As to the first, [replete with] **the supreme resources of the communion** ceremony, [the Great Joyous One then] **uttered these following aphorisms.**

The second has three parts [a general presentation of the meditative stability of the communion along with the beneficial consequences, a detailed exegesis of the results attained

through the communion, and a synopsis of the great all-gathering maṇḍala that supports the communion]. The first of these comprises both [a brief introduction and an extensive exegesis]. As to the former, the supreme and common **accomplishments will be achieved through** firm **meditative stability** and experience **in the** manifestly perfect **maṇḍala of** male and female deities, where male and female are united in the essential nature of **the *Net of Magical Emanation***.

The latter has five sections, the first of which [concerns the meditative stability of dance steps and hand gestures along with its beneficial consequences]: If, when visualized as the deity, the absorption and diffusion of **the diverse seals**, including **the dance steps** of the feet **and gestures** of the hands, do not transgress [the nature of] the deity, **by** performing the steps and gestures, **one will sink within the earth or traverse the heavens** unimpededly and overpower the gods and so forth.

The second [concerns the sealing by means of songs, along with their beneficial consequences]: **By the seals of songs, lyrics, and resonance, one will achieve** the accomplishment of **the buddha speech of the sacred doctrine**.

The third [concerns the sealing of ornaments and raiment, along with their beneficial consequences]: After one has donned the **ornaments and raiment**, these resources are then enjoyed **by** means of **the seals of** offerings that are made to the deities. [As a result] **one will** become a bodhisattva ablaze with major and minor marks and **achieve the** kingly buddha body, with mastery of **the ten powers that cannot be matched** by anyone.

The fourth [concerns the seals of food and drink along with their beneficial consequences]: **By the seals of food and drink, one will achieve** a buddha body like the wish-fulfilling gem, and the supreme savor of buddha speech will become **the nectar of all that is desired**, endowed with a hundred savors.

The fifth [concerns the seals of the rites of union and liberation, along with their beneficial consequences]: **By the**



**seals of the “vowels”—the rites of union** that confer the offering of supreme bliss—**and** of the “consonants” that confer **liberation**, [the deities] should be pleased. [As a result] **one will achieve all the supreme and common accomplishments, along with all the rites.**

Second, [the detailed exegesis of the results attained through the communion] has three aspects [the causal basis through which the status of an awareness holder is accomplished, the provisional results accomplished thereby, and the conclusive result of one who has reached the goal].

As to the first, retention, based on the understanding [that all things] attain buddhahood primordially, coalesces the generation and perfection stages [of meditation] characteristic of engagement in practice. This is the condition that ripens into the four fruitional awareness holders. Those **awareness holders who become** particularly **potent and powerful through** the experience of **this** [theoretical] **basis and** [practical] **condition are** themselves the fields that give birth to the conquerors, and they are also renowned **in the fields of the conquerors.**

As to the second, although among these awareness holders there are some who have assumed a pure birth in the abodes of **humans**, the **gods** of the world system of desire, the Brahmā realms, and so forth, it is said that the **causal and fruitional levels are all subsumed in the extraordinary levels** because they all completely acquire in their minds the ten transcendent perfections—the essential nature of the ten levels.

The third part [of the particular exegesis of the result attained through the communion concerns the conclusive result that partakes of the eleventh level, named Universal Light]: **Then the eleventh** level, Universal Light, indicative of conclusive skillful means; the **twelfth** level, named Unattached Lotus-Endowed, indicative of the supreme interconnectivity of discriminative awareness and skillful means, [which manifests as] the buddha field of the spontaneous Bounteous Array; **and the thirteenth level**, the field of the buddha body of actual reality, indicative of the most superlative of **supreme**

discriminative awareness, **will be spontaneously perfected** without being sought.

The third part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter is a synopsis of the great all-gathering maṇḍala that supports the communion]. This has three sections [the revelation of the generation and perfection of Samantabhadra, the accomplishment of all maṇḍalas thereby, and the result untainted by the slightest defect]. As to the first of these, one should meditate that on a lotus seat with cushions of sun and moon in the expanse of the clear maṇḍala of the sky, Samantabhadra, the king of pristine cognition, is in union with his consort. Through meditation on **the** single pair—the **male and female Samantabhadra—all the maṇḍalas** of the conquerors **are** indeed **gathered** therein, and one comes to meditate without exception on them all. From any of the four times and ten directions, the perfect buddha will not be found apart from the mind. The nature of **mind is the perfect buddha**. Do not search elsewhere for the buddha!

As to the second, one should be well united in and experience the generation and perfection stages [of meditation], with reference to **the unique** maṇḍala that is Samantabhadra, **through** which **all maṇḍalas will be accomplished, just as when the sun and moon are present there will be light**.

As for the third, through the understanding that the intrinsic nature of mind is **without dichotomy, whether the intricate rituals are excessive or incomplete**, flaws are themselves pure and **there are no defects**.

The third section [of this chapter is the conclusion]: [Thus were the tathāgatas] **pleased by this meditative stability, which shines without obscuration**.

**This completes chapter 12** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **concerning the attainment of the communion**.

### ***Chapter 13: The Nucleus of Most Secret Pith Instructions***

The second part [of the presentation of the generation and

perfection stages of the path pertaining to the peaceful deities] concerns the perfection stage. This has three parts [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion]. As to the first, [the Great Joyous One] **then uttered the following aphorisms concerning the spontaneous presence of all things in the primordial Great Perfection.**

The second comprises both [a general presentation on the presence of this secret truth in the mind of the master of indestructible reality and a detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection].

The former has three sections, of which the first [concerns the recognition of that truth]: **There are** the basic vehicle of **gods and humans**, which has no understanding of genuine reality; **the** extremist **non-Buddhist systems**, which have wrong understanding; **the lesser** [vehicle] of the pious attendants and the hermit buddhas, who have partial understanding of genuine reality; **the great vehicle** of causal characteristics, which does not entirely understand genuine reality; **the outer** tantras of Kriyā and Caryā, which discipline misconduct, and of Yoga, which emphasizes the enlightened intention; **and** the **inner tantras of Mahāyoga**, which reveals the mysteries [of buddha body, speech, and mind], and the Great Perfection, which reveals the marvelous naturally secret truth. So it is that the modalities of the different [vehicles] encompass the reality that is to be understood.

The second section [reveals the disposition in which this truth abides]: Verses (*śloka*) are formed **by compounding phrases**, dependent on **nouns** and nominal clusters derived from **syllables**, sounds, **and** conventional designations. Since **the points of the texts are disclosed** in this manner, they are well disposed; that is to say, they are well illustrated.

The third section [concerns the one by whom this truth is revealed without error]: **The concealed** point that all things attain buddhahood primordially **and** the **points hidden** by means of symbolic language and so forth are contained within these individual texts and their words. Manifestly extracted from the texts, these meanings of tantra **are retained in the**

**mind of the spiritual teacher**—the master of indestructible reality **who reveals them**. So it is the teacher through whom these are accessed.

The latter part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter is the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection]. It has three sections [a presentation of the actual profound meaning of the nucleus, its superiority over other teachings, and a teaching concerning the worthy recipients to whom it should be given].

The first of these has three aspects [a brief introduction, an extensive exegesis, and a synopsis]. The first of these also has three aspects, of which the first [concerns the generation stage of skillful means]: Realizing that all living beings primordially partake of the intrinsic nature that is effortlessly **endowed** with the maṇḍala of the spontaneous ground, **one should meditate**, through the maṇḍala of meditative stability, on that primordially present maṇḍala, as the maṇḍala that is known to be present and **possessed**. One should know this to resemble **the manner in which gold ore is smelted and refined**. The second [concerns the perfection stage of discriminative awareness]: The maṇḍala of **bliss, radiance, and nonconceptualization** emerges from the maṇḍala **in which** the amalgam of ideation is perceived as afflictive mental states and sustained through skillful means. Since these partake of the intrinsic nature of purity, right where they are, **without being renounced**, this is **the maṇḍala of buddha mind, supreme** among all maṇḍalas. The third [concerns the stage of inner radiance where these generation and perfection stages are without duality]: By experientially cultivating **the amazing secret** vital essence that abides as **buddha body and pristine cognition within the heart center** [of the subtle body], this is [identified with] **the expanse in which** all the **maṇḍalas** of buddha body, speech, and mind—the inexhaustible wheels of adornment—emerge.

The second part [is the extensive exegesis], which itself has three sections [the outer generation stage, the inner perfection stage, and the secret stage of inner radiance].

The first of these also has two parts, among which the first [concerns the determination of the generation stage by means of the view]: Manifesting as **the** five external **material elements**, the pure abiding nature appears as Prajñāpāramitā and is present as the female buddhas or the emanational display of reality—the enlightened families without inherent existence. That is to say, the appearances of reality and actual reality are indivisible. The five psychophysical aggregates, signified by the term “great elements,” are the actuality of the five male buddhas of **the enlightened families**—the intrinsic nature of empty forms, similar to reflections in a mirror. **The awareness** or enlightened mind, without ground or basis and nonconceptual, is the intrinsic nature of indestructible reality, [identified with] the communion of the male-female Samantabhadra. **The sense organs** such as the eyes, **the sense objects** such as visual forms, the times, and the modes of awareness including visual consciousness **are** [inherently] **pure as the deities**—the male bodhisattvas, the female bodhisattvas, and the gatekeepers—and they primordially abide as the maṇḍala [of Samantabhadra], which is positive because all phenomena are of a single savor **in emptiness**, without inherent existence in all respects. To understand phenomena in this manner is the [genuine] view.

The second part [of the outer generation stage concerns the experiential cultivation of this view through meditation]: The essential nature of mind, **free from conceptual elaborations and without grasping** or fixation, is the superior profound enlightened intention of the male-female Samantabhadra, the Supreme Identity. One should behold and completely master **the five pristine cognitions** of buddha mind that **are** present in the disposition of this nonduality of **objects and awareness**.

The second part [of the extensive exegesis concerning the inner perfection stage] has two sections, of which the first [concerns the offerings of bliss]: Through the supremely secret emanational display of the pristine cognition of bliss and emptiness that is obtained when the essential generative essences are united at the tip of the vajra and of the lotus,

**offerings are made to the deities** who have been invited into **the maṇḍala of the pudendum**. And then, when these [essences] are inducted upward [within the central channel of the subtle body], offerings of bliss and emptiness are presented to the deities **within the body and to** the nature of one's own **mind, which is** utterly **ecstatic** owing to the pristine cognition of supreme bliss. The second [concerns the result of this practice]: Through the merit of these offerings that have been made, free from contamination, **the result is that** the [status of the] provisional awareness holders and **the eight** [common] **accomplishments will be attained**, and conclusively one will attain the immeasurable emanational display that manifests buddhahood in and of itself as a magical display of pristine cognition, along with the inconceivable maṇḍala of **the buddha body of perfect resource**—the five enlightened families—**and the** supreme **buddha body of reality**.

The third part [of the extensive exegesis concerning the secret stage of inner radiance] has three sections, of which the first [concerns the recognition of the nature of the ground that is inner radiance]: The maṇḍala of buddha body and pristine cognition, **the secret vital essence of the heart center** [within the subtle body], **is** the actual expanse of reality, the abode of **Akaṇiṣṭha**, primordially and spontaneously present as **the essential nature of all the conquerors**.

The second [concerns the recognition of the visionary appearances of pristine cognition that accord with the path]: **Through the visionary appearances** of light, vital essences, and so forth, the identity of all the maṇḍalas of the body, speech, attributes, activities, and mind of all the buddhas without exception, who have attained manifestly perfect buddhahood in the ten directions and four times, is then **perceived face to face**. This mastery through meditative stability of buddhahood, the nature of mind, is most sacred and supreme of all attributes. By abiding in the maṇḍala generated through meditative stability, one meditates on the maṇḍala of self-manifesting inner radiance. Since this itself is spontaneously present in the maṇḍala of great pristine

cognition—the perfection stage of discriminative awareness—increasingly higher paths are perfected. In the centers within the energy channels [of the subtle body], all maṇḍalas of the individual deities without exception are encountered as ornaments of awareness, the natural expression of pristine cognition, and these are embellished with one thousand **enlightened attributes and** so forth. The result is that, through the nondual union of the maṇḍala of **perfect** resource in the maṇḍala of the buddha body of actual reality, the emanational maṇḍalas of compassionate spirituality entirely emerge in a great spontaneous presence. Through **the** power of the **buddha body of form**, one becomes a protector by whom the maṇḍalas of the six realms [of sentient beings] within the ten directions of space and the four times without exception **are trained**, and one engages in enlightened activities that liberate all the illusory maṇḍalas without exception from the ocean of cyclic existence, but from the very moment when this manifests, the sentient beings who are the object to be liberated and the buddha bodies of emanation—the subject that brings about this liberation—are all without true existence. So it is that one will be able to engage with such maṇḍalas in the manner of a phantom emanation.

The third part [of the description of the actual profound meaning of the nucleus is the synopsis]: All things abide in the maṇḍala that is perfect in pristine cognition. **Through** one's **understanding, meditating** on, and practicing the union of the generation and perfection stages that integrate study, reflection, and meditation, as a result the self-originated **pristine cognition** will be obtained in a spontaneously **present** manner, **along with the enlightened activities** that satisfy all through compassionate spirituality. This is revealed as the supreme commitment that does not transgress the intrinsic nature in accordance with which all buddhas unfailingly attain buddhahood.

The second part [of the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection concerns its superiority over other teachings]. This has three sections, of which the first [concerns

the greatness of its individual practitioners]: **Those who merely aspire toward this vehicle are deemed** by all the maṇḍalas **of all the conquerors** of the ten directions to be **the close heirs** to this marvelous secret [inheritance]—its intrinsic nature being that all genuine maṇḍalas without exception **throughout space and time** will be served and swiftly attained in the mind.

The second section [concerns the greatness of its path of means for attainment]. This has four parts, the first of which [concerns its greatness as the result of all paths]: **This** vehicle of Atiyoga **is the most secret result attained by those who have** excellently **refined** and become established in **all** the causal **vehicles over aeons** of time **equal to the number of atoms in the buddha fields**, and toward which they must strive so as to perform the ritual service and attainment of all maṇḍalas of the secret mantra without exception. All of them depend upon this path for the attainment of buddhahood.

The second [reveals that this is the track along which all conquerors have passed]: In the ten directions of the six realms, **all** maṇḍalas without exception of **the conquerors of the three times**—past, present, and future—**have** relied on and **mastered this path and** then spontaneously **perfected the five buddha bodies**.

The third [reveals that this is the path of all yogins]: **All yogins of the three times**—past, present, and future—in their entirety **will accomplish** buddhahood as awareness holders of **spontaneous presence through this** path.

The fourth [concerns its superiority over the causal vehicles]: **This** is the **definitive** pith instruction **through which the most secret result** is actualized. Since the result is made into the path in this very lifetime, this is the **sacred doctrine** through which buddhahood **has been actualized**.

The third section [of the superiority of the Great Perfection teaches that there are no other paths superior to this one]: **Since**, for all the maṇḍalas of the conquerors without exception, **there is apart from this no** other secret **definitive meaning, even though sought**, none is found by



the conquerors. **None will be found.**

The third part [of the detailed exegesis of the meaning of the natural Great Perfection indicates the recipients to whom this instruction should be given]. This has two sections, of which the first [concerns the fortunate recipients to whom it should be given]: The secret great seal of all the buddhas is **this** most secret *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*. It should be retained by **those** individuals **endowed with** the eyes of **discriminative awareness who are well refined** in study, reflection, and meditation. The **disposition of** those worthy recipients of the [*Secret*] *Nucleus* is noble and therefore unchanging and **steadfast. It should be given** completely **to** those whose own bodies and resources are **dedicated** to the sacred doctrine.

The second section [reveals the unfortunate recipients to whom it should not be given]: Otherwise, it should never be given to unworthy recipients. **If it** has been **given to those who are deluded** and to those who commit negative actions because their body, speech, and mind are agitated and uncontrolled, **one's life may come to an** untimely **end** owing to the punishment of the *ḍākinīs*, **and** then in the next life, one will be roasted by the fires and parched by the blizzards of **the hells**. Thereafter, **one may come to dwell in** such states for a long time—twenty thousand aeons and the like.

Third [as for the conclusion of this chapter], **such were the aphorisms that** [the tathāgata] **himself uttered to** [the tathāgata] **himself**.

**This completes chapter 13** of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* **concerning the pith instructions.**

## Chapter 14: The Eulogy Which Pleases

The third main topic [of the spontaneously present maṇḍala of peaceful deities is the eulogy to the fruitional nature of buddha body and pristine cognition]. It has three parts [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion].

As to the first, [Samantabhadra] **then sang this song of joy to the maṇḍala of** [all the tathāgatas] **themselves.**

The second part comprises both [a general eulogy to the five buddha bodies along with the five pristine cognitions and a particular eulogy to the mighty male and female lords of the maṇḍala].

The former has five sections, among which the first [is the eulogy to the maṇḍala of buddha body]: OM denotes that the indestructible reality of buddha body throughout the ten directions and four times is the intrinsic nature of manifestly perfect buddhahood and the intrinsic nature of the self-manifesting pure pristine cognition of reality's expanse, the mirrorlike [pristine cognition] and so forth. As for the maṇḍalas comprising its aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind, the mind aspect of buddha body is the pure and supreme vital essence, and the body aspect of buddha body is the maṇḍala of excellent appearances that manifest but are without inherent existence, for the provisions of buddha body are inconceivable. The speech aspect [of buddha body] is the essential nature in which appearance and emptiness are without duality—the genuine indescribable and supreme vital essence. The exclamation HOḤ is indicative of joy.

The second is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of buddha speech]: OM denotes the great vital essence that is the intrinsic nature of [the provisions of] merit and pristine cognition. As for the indestructible reality of buddha speech in which appearances and emptiness are indivisible, the mind aspect is endowed with the maṇḍala of the pristine cognition of discernment. The speech aspect of buddha speech is the nondual indestructible reality, infinite in its great resonance. The body aspect of

buddha speech is the genuine self-manifesting indestructible reality, [known as] the king—the vital essence in which appearance and emptiness are indivisible. hoḥ indicates amazement at these aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The third is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of buddha mind]: om denotes Vairocana, the great perfection of buddha body, speech, and mind. As for the indestructible reality of buddha mind, the mind aspect of buddha mind comprises the enlightened attributes and activities that are entirely perfect. The speech aspect of buddha mind is the disposition of Samantabhadra in whom enlightened attributes abide primordially and spontaneously perfect. The body aspect of buddha mind is the great communion indicating the self-manifesting convergence of the maṇḍala of the pristine cognitions—mirrorlike and so forth. Owing to its natural purity, this is the great vital essence. HOḤ indicates that the aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind are spontaneously present.

The fourth is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of buddha attributes]: om denotes the appearance of the spontaneous Bounteous Array which is the expanse of reality—a nonreferential magical emanation. As for the indestructible reality of buddha attributes, the body aspect of buddha attributes is the infinite maṇḍala of deities within that expanse of sameness, which are entirely bedecked with ornamental details, and the diffusion of their diverse light rays. The speech aspect of buddha attributes is the infinite pristine cognition, spontaneously and inseparably absorbed from all directions in the disposition of sameness. The mind aspect of buddha attributes is the possession of the supreme buddha body, speech, and mind, where all the diverse treasures of miraculous ability and supernormal cognitive power that are desired emerge in the manner of the wish-fulfilling gem. HOḤ indicates great amazement at these aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The fifth is [the eulogy to the maṇḍala of buddha activities]: om denotes the engagement in the worlds of the ten directions, numerous as atomic particles. As for the indestructible reality

of buddha activities, the body aspect comprises the objectives of the conquerors, demonstrating in these fields of training the four kinds of enlightened activity, numerous as atomic particles. The speech aspect of buddha activities comprises the training through inconceivable emanations who instruct each according to need and who also equal the number of atomic particles. The mind aspect of buddha activities is the accomplishment of spontaneous presence through which they permeate [those fields] in an instantaneous moment of time for the sake of living creatures. HOḤ is exclaimed owing to amazement at these aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind.

The latter part [of the explanation of the verses is the particular eulogy to the mighty male and female lords of the maṇḍala]: OM. The intrinsic nature of all maṇḍalas, without exception, comprises the buddha body, speech, and mind of all the conquerors—the inexhaustible wheels of adornment. Samantabhadra is the Supreme Identity—the active male progenitor of buddha body, speech, and mind; Samantabhadrī is the passive female object entirely pervaded by buddha body, speech, and mind; and the nonduality of those two male and female aspects is the reality in which the essential nature of buddha body, speech, and mind, encompassing all cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, manifests buddhahood primordially. Being enlightened in that expanse of the great vital essence, [the male-female Samantabhadra] is spontaneously present as the original protector. hoḥ indicates that this eulogy is made with a joyous song.

Third [with regard to the conclusion of this chapter], **thus did he purposefully proclaim to the retinue of the pure and self-manifesting** [field]. **This completes chapter 14** [of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*], **entitled “The Eulogy Which Pleases.”**

Here ends Book 16 from *The Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, which elucidates the meanings of all the vehicles. It contains the interlinear commentary on chapters [4 to 14] of the *Secret Nucleus*, which reveal the ground, path, and result, constituting the diffusion of the peaceful deities.

**Book 17: The presentation of the ground, path, and result in respect of the diffusion of the wrathful deities according to the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, along with its entrustment and *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*.**

***Chapter 15: The Cloud-Like Diffusion of the Natural Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities***

This seventeenth book, concerning the diffusion of the wrathful deities according to the *Secret Nucleus* and so forth, has five main topics: (i) a teaching on the manifestation of the maṇḍala of wrathful deities which is the natural expression of the spontaneously present ground; (ii) an extensive exegesis of the branches of its means for attainment in accordance with which the path is attained; (iii) a description of the eulogies to the fruitional buddha body and pristine cognition; (iv) the entrustment and colophon; and (v) an interlinear commentary on the *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*.

The first of these main topics has two parts [a brief introduction to the emergence of the wrathful deities and an extensive exegesis of their natural expression. As to the former, **the peaceful deities having been revealed, there follows the ground, path, and result pertaining to the wrathful deities.** Then glorious Samantabhadra, the supreme identity of all the tathāgatas, who is the essential nature of all the buddhas, manifested **the buddha body of perfect resource** as the maṇḍala of wrathful deities, without straying from the disposition of the buddha body of actual reality. **One may wonder why this diffusion** in which the wrathful deities are revealed to emanate **from this disposition ensues.**

The latter comprises both [the emergence of the wrathful deities of malign deeds who are to be disciplined and their subjugation by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition who impose discipline]. The first of these comprises [the causal

basis through which wrathful malign forms are generated and the result in which that causal basis is brought to maturation].

With regard to the first of these, through conceptions that are deluded with respect to the selfhood of the individual person and manifest fixation upon all things, which are merely imputed by the intellect, [cruel and malign] beings who are separated from the genuine path, **without an understanding of the hidden secrets**, become manifestly attached to **coarse engagement in the concealed secrets**, such as the skillful means of union and liberation. Acting in that way, they become deluded with respect to virtuous and negative **causes** and pleasant and unpleasant results, in consequence of which those who engage in malpractices are born as Rudra [-type beings].

The second comprises both [the ripening result, which is the experience of suffering, and the result in conformity with that causal basis, which entails the harming of others]. The first of these has two parts, of which the first [concerns rebirth in the hells]: **Consequently**, beings have been cast down by the harsh seeds of the rebirth process and born in Avīci, the **hottest** of hells which is unceasing, **and**, having been afflicted by the excruciating sufferings of intense heat, at the very moment when they think, “Would that I might experience intense **cold** rather than this!” they have been thoroughly numbed and utterly afflicted by severe pains that split [the body] in the manner of a lotus flower. **They have experienced** such sufferings **for twelve thousand great aeons in the hells**—in the eight beginning with the hottest, and in the eight beginning with the coldest—and these have even been prolonged in other world systems. The second concerns [rebirth among the anguished spirits]: **And** then, when that process of maturation has come to an end, they have been severely afflicted by the pangs **of the anguished spirits** and **the** sufferings of **hunger and thirst**. Desirable things became unpleasant and turned into all sorts of poisonous and harsh substances, but even these then became nonexistent. Utterly emaciated and dry, **they have endured** incomplete bodies, limbs, and sense faculties **for six great aeons**.

The second [concerns the result in conformity with that causal basis, which entails the harming of others]: Thereafter, when that process of maturation of the coarse obscurations of their past deeds had gradually diminished, owing to their rebirth in a previous life, they have been reincarnated, assuming the form of an anguished spirit—a mighty **cannibalistic ogre**, extremely **cruel**, fierce, and miraculous, with one body and a hundred heads or diverse heads, or else with a hundred bodies and a single head, or with diverse bodies and multiple limbs or even diverse limbs. Holding diverse harmful weapons and with a multitude of retainers, they have assumed diverse terrifying physical appearances and bellowed diverse terrifying roars—their forms, roars, stench, and bad breath causing all beings to panic in fear. With their black vital energy, which is utterly terrifying and with breath that is cold and hot, they have disturbed all the ten directions, inflicting four hundred four diseases and inducing insanity and debility. Through these powers, they have subjugated the class of *nāgas*, the classes of the demigods, the classes of the gods [of desire], and [the realms of pure form] as far as the realms of Brahmakāyika, Ābhāsvara, Śubhakṛtsnā, and Bṛhatphala. Thus **they have subjugated and subdued the three planes of existence.**

The latter part [of the detailed exegesis of the natural expression of the wrathful deities concerns the subjugation of such cruel and malign beings by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition who impose discipline]. This has two aspects, of which the first [is the observation of those beings to be disciplined]: **Owing to the merit of the service that Rudra** [the archetype of such cruel and malign beings] **had performed** on behalf of a spiritual adviser **in the past**, the omniscient [Great Glorious Heruka] **observed that the time had arrived for him to be disciplined**, and then disciplined him through compassionate spirituality.

The second aspect [of the subjugation of such cruel and malign beings by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition who impose discipline] has three sections [the overwhelming of the

arrogant spirits through the four miracles, the eradication of the cruel and malign spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath, and the taking of the arrogant spirits into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions].

The first of these also has two parts [of which the first concerns equipoise in the meditative stability of the causal basis]: Then, **in order** that he might display the brilliance of great pride **to discipline** [Rudra], **this lord of the three planes of existence** in the ten directions of the six realms, by means of the *Net of Magical Emanation* that is the indestructible array of the tathāgata's greatness, the Transcendent Lord [Samantabhadra], identity of the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas, with great joy, **became absorbed in the meditative stability of the** kingly *Net of Magical Emanation* which diffuses the great **cloud** of the maṇḍala **of wrathful deities**.

The second part [of the overwhelming of the arrogant spirits through the four miracles concerns the miraculous diffusion of the wrathful deities of pristine cognition from within that disposition]: From the expanse of actual reality, the great Krodheśvarī manifested. As she exclaimed “HĪ! HĪ!” with joyous and lustrous incandescence, her secret “lotus” was distended. Then, through the joy of nondual embrace, penetration occurred of the jewel in the lotus, and, consequent on the cloud of generative fluid that emerged, there resounded [the mantra]: HŪṂ HŪṂ HŪṂ VIŚVA VAJRA KRODHA JVALA MAṆḌALA PHAṬ PHAṬ PHAṬ HALA HALA HALA HŪṂ. Thereupon, pervading all the infinite ten directions of the six realms, the maṇḍala forming the assembly of the wrathful deities—the male herukas and their female consorts—came forth as large as the trichilocosm in their extent, and equal in number to the atomic particles of all world systems of the ten directions. Endowed with their fifteen [indications], all the ten directions of the six realms then to a lesser degree rocked, to a middling degree further rocked, and to a greater degree absolutely rocked. [Pearly thunder] to a lesser degree rumbled, to a middling degree further rumbled,



and to a greater degree absolutely rumbled. [Musical instruments] to a lesser degree resounded, to a middling degree further resounded, and to a greater degree absolutely resounded. [Solid entities] were to a lesser degree crushed, to a middling degree further crushed, and to a greater degree absolutely crushed. [Waves] were to a lesser degree disturbed, to a middling degree further disturbed, and to a greater degree absolutely disturbed. Through these indications, they terrified the god Maheśvara, most powerful, most brilliant, and greatest in strength among the denizens of all trichiliocosms of the ten directions of the six realms, who then fainted, further fainted, and absolutely fainted.

The second section [concerning the eradication of the arrogant spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath] has four parts [the array of the foremost maṇḍala of pristine cognition, the actual liberation of the arrogant male spirits, the joyfulness experienced through union with the female spirits, and the consequent diffusion of the maṇḍala of the retinue].

The first of these has two aspects, of which the first [concerns the presence of the principal deity Mahottara]: Then [among them] the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One himself, completely transformed into the body of **the principal deity**—the blood drinker [Mahottara Heruka], who **was dark brown in color**, assuming an utterly terrifying and most awesome guise; diffusing a massive blaze of light that causes panic; endowed with heads, arms, and legs equal in number to the atomic particles of the chiliocosm; and brandishing diverse weapons in his hands. He then gravitated into a form **with three heads, six arms, and** four legs. There he stood, rejoicing in a great charnel ground in the midst of an ocean of blood, upon a mountain of human bones and at the hub of a wheel, in the midst of an aureole massively ablaze, with left [legs] extended and right [legs] drawn in, on a mat comprising the god Maheśvara and the most proud mistress of the charnel ground, husband and wife.

The latter [concerns the array of his retinue, the four enlightened families]: Also, with regard to the cloud masses of

the maṇḍala of wrathful deities, there were some gravitating toward the great glorious Vajra Heruka, who stood in the eastern direction. There were some gravitating toward the great glorious Ratna Heruka, who stood in the southern direction. There were some gravitating toward the great glorious Padma Heruka, who stood in the western direction, and there were some gravitating toward the great glorious universal Karma Heruka, who stood in the northern direction. All of these wrathful **blood drinkers of four enlightened families were arrayed on the spokes** [of the maṇḍala wheel] **in the four directions**, assuming an utterly terrifying guise, with an awesome roar and a blazing aureole. There they stood, with three heads, six arms, and four legs, their [left] legs extended and [right legs] drawn in, upon mats comprising husband and wife couples of *gandharvas*, *yakṣas*, cannibal ogres, *yama* spirits, and so forth. The host of the great blood drinker queens also stood there, embracing the bodies of their respective [herukas].

The second part [of the eradication of the arrogant spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath concerns the actual liberation of the class of proud male spirits]. This has two sections, the first of which [describes the fierce awesome sounds made by the arrogant spirits in their pride]: Then **the** disparate **class of** most arrogant **male spirits** grew enraged, with a cruel and ferocious temper. Displaying their great, diverse, and malignant miraculous abilities, uniformly, **with** one voice and **a malignant roar**, they **bellowed their** harsh and **fierce words**. “Release us, O lords of compassion!” they said. “Why do you act in this manner?” Thus they were angered and enraged, with an absolutely malignant temper.

The second section [concerns the actual liberation enacted through the wrath of compassionate sorcery]. This itself has two aspects, of which the first [concerns the diffusion of a cloud of terrifying and awesome forms]: Thereupon, the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One [Mahottara Heruka] assumed a form with nine heads and eighteen [arms], and with an awesome voice, in accordance with the skillful means that

instructs through compassionate spirituality, he displayed extreme wrath, bellowing HŪṢ HŪṢ HŪṢ HA HA HA **KHĀHI KHĀHI KHĀHI!** The second aspect [concerns the actual liberation of the arrogant male spirits]: [The blood drinkers] then extracted the hearts of the hosts of the most cruel and arrogant spirits such as Maheśvara, and along with these, they extracted all their sense organs, drew out all their entrails, cut off all their limbs, ate all their flesh, drank all their blood, and chewed or enjoyed all their bones.

The third part [of the eradication of the arrogant spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath concerns the joyfulness experienced through union with the class of female spirits]. It comprises both [the miracle of condensing the world and the enjoyment of the great rites of union]. The former also has two aspects, of which the first [concerns the condensing of the inhabited world]: Then, through uttering [the mantra] HŪṢ HŪṢ HŪṢ BHYOḤ E **ĀRALI HRIM HRIM JAḤ JAḤ**, they minutely condensed the inhabited worlds of the ten directions along with space within an area the size of a single mustard seed.

The second aspect [of the miracle of condensing the world concerns their gathering of the sentient inhabitants]: **And** then **they gathered together** the highest queens among the queens of all female elementals, who were the wives of the highest kings, including the Great Arrogant Spirit, among the kings of all the male elementals, without exception. These comprise **the twenty-eight īśvarī**, namely, Mahārākṣasī Manurākṣasī, Brahmāṇī, Raudrī, Indrāṇī, Nārāyaṇī, Kaumārī, Piṅgalā, Amṛtā, Śāntī, Daṇḍī, Rākṣasī, Bhakṣasī, Ratī, Rudhiramadī, Ekacarīṇī, Manohārikā, Siddhikārī, Vāyudevī, Mahāmāraṇā, Agnāyī, Vārāhī, Cāmuṇḍī, Bhujanā, Varuṇāṇī, Mahākālī, Yellow-Red Mahāchāgalā, Dark-Blue Mahākumbhakarṇī, and Dark-Yellow Lambodarā. **Along with** them, they also gathered **their** entourage—**slaves** and slaves of slaves, **and** their **servants** and servants of servants, equal in number to the atoms of their fields.

The latter part [of the joyfulness experienced through union with the class of female spirits concerns the enjoyment of the

great rites of union]. This has two aspects, of which the first [is equipoise in the meditative stability of the causal basis]: Then the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, the great glorious blood drinker, through the skillful means that imposes discipline, again manifested the utterly terrifying forms of the five enlightened families. All these became equipoised through their joyousness in the meditative stability called the emergence of the cloud-like maṇḍala of enjoyment, and the following [mantra] then emerged from their indestructible body, speech, and mind: OM ĀḤ HŪM **VAJRA PRAVEŚAYA** ALALAHO!

The second aspect [concerns the result that is their nondual union]: So saying, the queens of the elemental spirits were excited with extreme desire, and they were attracted to the bodies of the blood drinkers of the five enlightened families, like iron to a magnet. Respectively, Mahārākṣasī Manurākṣasī, Piṅgalā, Ratī, Mahāmāraṇā, Mahākālī, Yellow-Red Chāgalā, Dark-Blue Mahākumbhakarnī, and Dark-Yellow Lambodarā embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the Great Joyous One, the great glorious Vajra Heruka. Brahmāṇī, Raudrī, Indrāṇī, Nārāyaṇī, and Kaumārī embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Buddha Heruka. Amṛtā, Śāntī, Daṇḍī, Bhakṣasī, and Rākṣasī embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Ratna Heruka. Rudhiramadī, Ekacariṇī, Manohārikā, Siddhikarī, and Vāyudevī embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious Padma Heruka. Agnāyī, Vārāhī, Cāmuṇḍī, Bhujanā, and Varuṇāṇī embraced the body of the transcendent lord, the great glorious universal Karma Heruka.

The fourth part [of the eradication of the arrogant spirits through the enlightened activity of wrath concerns the diffusion of the maṇḍala of the retinue of these wrathful deities]. It has five aspects, of which the first [is the union that gives rise to this diffusion]: Then these maṇḍalas of wrathful deities, the transcendent lords and great joyous ones, **uttered the syllable HŪM**, whereby the assembled lotus maṇḍalas tightened and **the vajras entered into union with the lotuses**, so that they closely embraced.

The second aspect [concerns the diffusion of the *mātarah*]: Then, with extreme joy, they **uttered the syllable HA** so that **there came forth** from the cloud of their generative fluid **the eight mātarah**, starting with **Gaurī**, namely, the host of Gaurī, the host of Caurī, the host of Pramohā, the host of Vetālī, the host of Pukkasī, the host of Caṇḍālī, the host of Ghasmarī, and the host of Śmaśānī, each with their respective hand emblems and wondrous guise. Having come forth with their terrifying forms and respective hand emblems, they **assumed their positions in the cardinal and intermediate directions**, forming a circle, upon the ends of the spokes of the wheel of the great blazing [herukas], starting from the eastern direction.

The third aspect [concerns the diffusion of the *piśācī*]: Then with extreme joy they **uttered the syllable HE** so that **there came forth the eight piśācī** starting with Siṃhamukhī, namely, the host of great Siṃhamukhī, the host of great Vyāghramukhī, the host of great Śṛgālamukhī, the host of great Śvānamukhī, the host of great Ṛdhramukhī, the host of great Kaṅkamukhī, the host of great Kākamukhī, and the host of great Ulūkamukhī, each with their respective hand emblems and wondrous guise. Having come forth, they **assumed their positions in the cardinal and intermediate directions**, with an awesome incandescence, forming a circle, starting from the eastern direction, outside the wheel of the great blazing [herukas].

The fourth aspect [concerns the diffusion of the female gatekeepers]: Then with extreme joy, they filled all fields of the ten directions without exception and **uttered the syllable PHAṬ**, whereupon **there came forth the four female gatekeepers**, namely, the host of Vajratejasī, the host of Vajramukhī, the host of Vajrālokā, and the host of Vajravetālī, with their respective hand emblems and wondrous guise. Having come forth, they **assumed their positions** in an extremely awesome form **at the four gates** of the blazing maṇḍala. The fifth aspect [concerns the expulsion of these retinues to their respective abodes]: Then, from that cloud of great joy, **the syllable PHAṬ resounded** throughout the ten

directions without exception, so that all [these deities] were enraged **and all** of them, including **the *mātarah***, were instantaneously **dispatched to their own** respective **abodes**.

The third section [of the detailed exegesis of the subjugation of cruel and malign beings by the wrathful deities of pristine cognition concerns the taking of the arrogant spirits into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions]. This has four sections [a teaching on the vision of the maṇḍala which the arrogant spirits had on being ejected to their appropriate locations, their subjugation that occurred simultaneously throughout all chiliocosms, the acceptance of the arrogant spirits as subjects, and the conferral of empowerments and imparting of injunctions].

As to the first, then these transcendent lords, the great joyous ones, the great glorious blood drinkers, became equipoised in the meditative stability called emergence of nectar through great compassionate spirituality, and the following [mantra syllables] then emerged from their indestructible body, speech, and mind: OM VAJRA MAHĀMRṬA MAHĀKRODHA AM AM AM. Thereupon, all the [cruel and malign] spirits headed by Maheśvara were expelled from the bowels of these transcendent lords, the great wrathful deities, immersed in an ocean of unclean mire. In order that they might be purified, the wrathful deity Ucchuṣmakrodha then emerged from their bowels and drank all the mire, so that they regained mindfulness. And, with regard to the multiple faces of the blazing wrathful deities that were then revealed, they perceived all these hosts of the maṇḍala present within an aureole of the great blazing [flames], with nine hundred heads, eighteen hundred arms, and eight hundred legs.

As to the second, at this time **all the arrogant** Maheśvara **spirits without exception**, in all planes **of the ten directions** of the six realms, **were subjugated simultaneously** by skillful means of discipline that manifested diversely and inconceivably.

The third aspect [concerning the acceptance of the arrogant spirits as subjects] has four sections, of which the first

[concerns the oath of allegiance and offerings they make]: Then their bodies trembled greatly, and in trepidation, with a howl of utter desperation, **they offered themselves as subjects, with body, speech, and mind, and swore an oath** that they would become subjects, saying, “If we do not act persistently as your subjects, with our bodies, voices, and minds, tear our heads and bodies in a hundred pieces! Break our hearts too and cut them up! Burn our putrid and decomposing [bodies] and cast them away! And let us fall into hell! We implore you!” Then they took up their positions as the seats of the maṇḍala.

The second section [concerns the offering of their retainers and the offerings they respectfully make of their crowns]: **They** all offered **their retinues**, saying yet again, with one voice, “Please accept our wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters within the great maṇḍala! Please accept them, heroic deities and lords!” **And** then they **made their offering** respectfully, **saying, “Let us** and all our respective retinues **maintain only the name** of this great maṇḍala of the [wrathful] assembly! May we adopt you **as our blazing crown jewel**, with an attitude that is free from deceit and respectful, and then placing you on our crowns, let us venerate you!” And they continued, **“Let us accomplish the** [four] **rites!** Let us perfectly accomplish without exception whatever their purpose may be!”

The third section [concerns the ritual assistance that they provide, having taken the oath of allegiance]: **They invoked a curse, saying, “If** here in the presence of these heroic ones **we do not do as we have said, may our heads, bodies, and hearts be broken, be severed,** and decompose in pieces!”

The fourth section [concerns the request made by the mighty queens for enlightened activities that they might obey]: The host of their wives, and **all** the hosts of **their mothers, sisters, and daughters then assembled** instantly in the maṇḍala, **and** they all **made** the following **request**, speaking with one voice: “May the great heroic ones accept all the hosts of our retinues in their entirety as subjects! May the great heroic ones grant us [injunctions] **concerning the**

**accomplishment of their rites!”**

The fourth part [of the taking of the arrogant spirits into the fold through compassionate spirituality and the consequent imparting of injunctions concerns the empowerments and injunctions that were subsequently imparted to them]: Then [Mahottara] the Transcendent Lord, the Great Joyous One, **presented the vajra into their hands and conferred the name empowerment upon them, whereupon they were enjoined to perform their respective rites, and they assumed their positions** in the outermost area of the maṇḍala.

**This completes chapter 15** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **entitled “The Diffusion of the Wrathful Deities.”**

### ***Chapter 16: The Diffusion of the Maṇḍala of Buddha Speech of the Great Assembly of Wrathful Deities***

The second main topic [of the diffusion of the wrathful deities] is the extensive exegesis of the branches of its means for attainment in accordance with which the path is attained [chs. 16-20]. This has five parts [the maṇḍala of the secret mantras of the wrathful deities (ch. 16), the maṇḍala of reflected imagery (ch. 17), the presentation of offerings (ch. 18), the sequence of commitments (ch. 19), and the attainment of enlightened activities (ch. 20)].

The first of these has three parts [a brief introduction, an extensive exegesis, and a concluding synopsis]. As to the first, [the Great Joyous One] **then brought forth the following maṇḍalas of buddha speech from the assembly of the wrathful deities.** Second, [the extensive exegesis] has five sections [the mantras for generating the wrathful deities, the mantras for inviting the beings of pristine cognition, the mantras for tossing the flower of awareness, the mantras of supplication for the sake of accomplishment, and the mantras of *torma* offering in respect of the rites of enlightened activity].

The first of these also has five sections, of which the first



concerns the mantras of the ten principal male and female wrathful deities of the five enlightened families: [In the case of Buddha Heruka] OM̐ is auspicious, and it consecrates the mantras that follow. TATHĀGATA means “one who has passed on [to nirvāṇa],” MAHĀ means “great,” ŚRĪ means “glorious,” HERUKA means “blood drinker,” MAHĀCAṆḌA means “great fierce one,” SARVADUṢṬA means “all inimical forces,” and ANṬAKA means “eliminating.” These syllables constitute the root mantra, which summons the transcendent lords. HANA means “strike!” DAHA means “burn!” PACA means “cook!” HŪṀ HŪṀ HŪṀ means “subdue the body, speech, and mind of cruel and malign spirits,” and PHAṬ means “tear into pieces.” These mantra syllables refer to the rites of enlightened activity.

Similarly [in the case of the other male herukas], VAJRA means “indestructible reality”; RATNA means “gemstone”; PADMA means “lotus,” retaining the original [Sanskrit]; and KARMA means “activity.” The other [syllables] are the same as above. Among the mantras of their female consorts, OM̐ SARVATATHĀGATA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ [denotes Buddha Krodheśvarī and] means “Great Wrathful Queen of the Buddha [family].” SARVADUṢṬĀN HŪṀ PHAṬ means “May she gather and shatter all inimical forces!” OM̐ MAHĀVAJRADHARA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ JVALANĪ HŪṀ PHAṬ [denotes Vajra Krodheśvarī and] means “May the Great Wrathful Queen, the Mighty Blazing One, consort of the Vajra [family], gather and tear apart the cruel and malign spirits!” OM̐ MAHĀSŪRYARATNA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ VIDAMĀ [denotes Ratna Krodheśvarī and] means “Great Wrathful Queen, sun of the Ratna [family], who subjugates!” OM̐ HREṢITASAMANTAPADMA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ KHĀHI [denotes Padma Krodheśvarī and] means “Eat! Great Wrathful Queen of the ever-neighing [Lotus family]!” OM̐ SARVĀMOGHA MAHĀKRODHEŚVARĪ VIŚVĀ denotes [Karma Krodheśvarī and] means “Diversified Great Wrathful Queen of the all-accomplishing [Karma family]!”

The second section concerns the mantras of the eight *mātaraḥ*: The syllables OM̐ VAJRA have been explained above. These are headed by GAURĪ, which means “she who is white.” Many earlier texts render this as *ko’u rī*, which means the

same. However, the term has many other connotations, such as “repository,” “skilled,” and “delighting in lotus flowers,” so that it may also be translated as “repository.” CAURĪ means “she who is a thief.” PRAMOHĀ means “she who is deluded.” VETĀLĪ means “she who is a zombie.” CAṄḌĀLĪ means “she who is fierce.” PUKKASĪ means “she who is fragrant.” GHASMARĪ means “she who is voracious and unclean.” ŚMAŚĀNĪ means “she who frequents charnel grounds.” Along with these, the eight [concluding] syllables HA are their seed syllables. When these mantras assume the form OM VAJRA GAURĪ JAḤ [and so forth], the corresponding rites are performed. If the syllable JAḤ is omitted, [the mantra] will be defective. The mantras [of the remaining *mātarah*] should be known accordingly.

The third section concerns the mantras of the eight *piśācī*: These are headed by SIMHAMUKHĪ, which means “she who is lion-faced”; VYĀGHRA-MUKHĪ means “she who is tiger-faced,” ŚRGĀLAMUKHĪ means “she who is fox-faced,” ŚVĀNAMUKHĪ means “she who is wolf-faced,” GRḌHRAMUKHĪ means “she who is vulture-faced,” KAṆKAMUKHĪ means “she who is kite-faced,” KĀKAMUKHĪ means “she who is crow-faced,” and ULŪKAMUKHĪ means “she who is owl-faced.” Along with these, the eight [concluding] syllables HE are their seed syllables. The mantras associated with their rites of enlightened activity are formed as above.

The fourth section concerns the mantras of the four female gatekeepers: ĀRYATEJATEṆ, meaning “the brilliance of the sublime ones,” denotes [Vajratejasī], the horse-headed one. AMOGHĀ, meaning “successful,” denotes [Vajramoghā] the sow-faced one. VAJRĀLOKA, meaning “indestructible illuminator of the world,” denotes [Vajrālokā] the bear-faced one. BHASMĪ VĀLAYAVATĪ, meaning “turning to ashes,” denotes [Vajravetālī] the wolf-faced one. Along with these, the terminations JAḤ, HŪM, VAM, and HOḤ are their respective seed syllables.

The fifth section concerns the mantras of the twenty-eight queens. The seed syllable BHYOḤ is a contraction of *bhagini* (“sister”) and *bhāryā* (“wife”). When the rites [of these twenty-eight queens] are accomplished, bhyoḥ is attached to their

respective mantras, beginning with [the mantra of Manurākṣasī], which is OM MANURĀKṢASĪ BHYOḤ DUṢṬAMĀRAYA HŪM PHAṬ.

The second part [of the extensive exegesis concerns the mantras for inviting the beings of pristine cognition]: RULU RULU HŪM then summons the maṇḍala to which the wrathful deities are assigned. In the past, this [mantra] was consecrated by the Great Glorious [Mahottara Heruka] as a ferocious song in accordance with the commitments of the ogre executors of ritual activity. The remainder [of the mantra] begins with EHY EHI, which means “come here, come here!” ĀNAYA HOḤ means “to this place.” JAḤ HŪM VAM HOḤ are the syllables that summon [the actual deities] to perform their rites on behalf of sentient beings through the four immeasurable aspirations. RAM is the syllable by means of which the beings of commitment and the invited beings of pristine cognition are both present, converging like a volcanic conflagration.

The third part [of the extensive exegesis concerns the tossing of the flower of awareness]: OM VAJRA KRODHA SAMAYA HŪM is the mantra meaning “Be absorbed into the beings of commitment, O wrathful deities!”

The fourth part [of the extensive exegesis concerns the supplication for the sake of accomplishment]: OM In order to discipline pernicious wrathful beings fashioned by [negative] past actions, who are to be disciplined, the natural expression of pristine cognition may appear even more wrathful than them. Since this is the case, O host [of herukas], exceedingly awesome and most glorious among living beings, emanating through your disposition of compassionate spirituality as the wrathful deities who pacify the minds of those to be trained, please confer on me at this present time all the accomplishments of buddha body, speech, and mind without exception; for your buddha body, speech, and mind are endowed with the most amazing blessings, which blaze forth as the natural expression of pristine cognition! SAMAYAS TVAM means “confer your commitments!” SAMAYA PHAṬ means “send forth your commitments!” SAMAYA HOḤ means “these are the

commitments!”

The fifth part [of the extensive exegesis concerns the *torma* offering in respect of the rites of enlightened activity]: ALI and ULI denote food and drink respectively. TĀLĪ and TAPĀLI are their respective branches. DAMṢṬRAGAṆARAUDRA means “canine host of indestructible wrath.” KHAM RAṆ YOGINĪ KHĀHI HOḤ means “Eat! O host of blazing yoginīs.” If one wonders which deities are requested to please consume [these offerings], the syllables HŪM HA HE PHAṬ indicate that they comprise the maṇḍala of thirty deities.

The third part [of this chapter is the concluding synopsis concerning the extraordinary signs associated with these mantras]: **At these words**, the impure entities of the inhabited worlds, comprising all the ten directions of the six realms, along with the host of obscurations of their inhabitants [were transformed as follows]: Among them, the nonvirtuous acts of body **were incinerated**, those of speech were further incinerated, and those of mind were absolutely incinerated. Then, once these ordinary entities along with their obscurations had been incinerated, the apparitional inhabited worlds blazed forth, manifesting as pristine cognition—the three media of those to be trained respectively were **ablaze** as the pristine cognition of buddha body, further ablaze as [the pristine cognition] of buddha speech, and absolutely ablaze as [the pristine cognition] of buddha mind. At this time throughout phenomenal existence, comprising the inhabited world and its inhabitants, confined by the limits of space, all the reaches of space were **filled with** the maṇḍala of **buddha body**, by the host of blazing maṇḍalas who are the natural expression of the five enlightened families. Then, derived from these [buddha bodies], [the limits of space] were pervasively or further filled with buddha **speech**, the natural resonance of secret mantras, reverberating like a thousand peals of thunder. **And** finally, everything was absolutely filled with the nondual intrinsic nature of buddha **mind**—illuminated by its emanations of great compassionate spirituality, light, and brilliance and pervaded by the buddha body of actual reality. Moreover, these

three maṇḍalas [of buddha body, speech, and mind] filled, further filled, and absolutely filled all of space, the earth, and the firmament between them. Even the self-manifesting spontaneous Bounteous Array itself was filled, further filled, and absolutely filled with a corresponding array of light, brilliance, and pristine cognition.

**This completes chapter 16** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **entitled “The Diffusion of the Buddha Speech of the Wrathful Deities.”**

### ***Chapter 17: The Revelation of the Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities***

The second part [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with which the path is attained] concerns the maṇḍala of reflected imagery, which is the support for visualization. This has three parts [a general presentation of the causal basis for the emergence of this maṇḍala, an extensive exegesis of the intrinsic nature of this maṇḍala, and the appearance of its wondrous signs]. As to the first, **then** [the Great Joyous One] **uttered these following aphorisms in order to reveal the maṇḍala of reflected imagery.**

The second comprises both [the supporting celestial palace and the maṇḍala of the supported deities]. The former has three aspects, of which the first [concerns the actual celestial palace]: The **foundation is in the form of a wheel** with four radial spokes, set within an expanse of blazing fire and embellished with four right-angled corners. **Upon** its hub, **the celestial palace is fashioned as a square with four entrance gateways.** It is adorned with two courtyards, outer and inner, of blazing pristine cognition, and raised high upon mighty ramparts of [stacked] skulls.

The second aspect [concerns the ornaments with which it is embellished]: It has walls **fashioned** of skulls, embellished with a plethora of other features, including drainpipes **of**

**skulls and snakes, pillars** of the eight great gods, **beams** of the eight great *nāgas*, and roofs of human corpses, and its **rafters, ceiling boards, and gate panels** are fashioned of **corpses**. It is resplendent with **roof parapets** and ornaments fashioned of the sun, moon, planets, and stars and embellished with shimmering rays of light and multiple rings of blazing flames, from which sparks burst forth.

The third aspect [concerns the distinctive features of its seats]: **The seats** [within the palace] **are supported** [respectively] with their talons **by the** overpowering **bull**, the **buffalo** of brilliance, the cruel and malign **leopard**, the courageous **tiger, and** the fierce **bear**. Thereupon are **the seats fashioned of** [the mighty **gods**] headed by Mahādeva, intertwined in union with their spouses.

The latter [part of the extensive exegesis concerns the maṇḍala of the supported deities]. This comprises both [the presence of the principal deities and the array of their retinue]. The first of these has three aspects, of which the first [concerns their body colors and the appearances of their faces and arms]: Since the five poisons, including delusion, are inherently pure [the herukas are respectively as follows]: the principal deity [Buddha Heruka] is dark **brown**, Vajra Heruka is dark **blue**, and Ratna Heruka is dark **yellow**. Padma Heruka is dark **red**. Karma Heruka is dark **green**. That applies to their basic face. Such terrifying forms are visible in the perception of cruel and malign beings. Moreover, they are endowed **with three faces** representing the three buddha bodies, **six arms** representing the six pristine cognitions and the six transcendent perfections, **and** four legs, which are extended wide apart or bent inward to symbolize that they instruct the four demonic forces.

The second aspect [concerns their ornamental garb and the roaring of their buddha speech]: As for their eight kinds of glorious garb, they wear various **raw hides**—upper garments of elephant hide and human hide and skirts of tiger hide. They have bracelets and anklets fashioned of **snakes** representing the five social classes, garlands including crown ornaments fashioned of **skulls, and insignia of sun and moon** disks,

which diffuse light from their right and left shoulders. The eight accoutrements of the charnel ground therefore comprise raw hides, snakes, skull garlands, solar disks, lunar disks, dry blood, grease, and ash. As for the roaring of their buddha speech, **they roar in a mighty voice**, awesome and terrifying, which reverberates like a thousand peals of thunder.

The third aspect [concerns their symbolic hand emblems and the embrace of their queens]: The first right hand of Vajra Heruka holds a nine-pronged vajra. The second right hand of [all herukas] of the five enlightened families holds a five-pronged vajra, while the second left hand holds a cranium filled with blood. The first right hand of Karma Heruka holds a sword. The first left hand of Buddha Heruka and the last left hand of the Ratna Heruka both hold an ax. The first left hand of Karma Heruka holds a plowshare. The last left hand of Vajra Heruka and the last left hand of Karma Heruka both hold a small drum to represent the chiliocosm and its horizon. The word “including” here implies that the first right hand of Buddha Heruka holds a wheel, that of Ratna Heruka holds a gemstone, and that of Padma Heruka holds a lotus; the last left hand of Karma Heruka holds a *khaṭvāṅga*, the first left hand of Ratna Heruka holds a noose of intestines, the first left hand [of Vajra Heruka and] Padma Heruka holds a bell, and the last left hand of Padma Heruka holds a small drum; while the last right hand of all [the herukas] brandishes a club fashioned of a human corpse. **With their first** [right hands] **respectively holding the five hand emblems, they entwine their female consorts.** The five queens [of these wrathful herukas] of the enlightened families are a terrifying host, with one face and two arms, the right one entwining around the male, and the left one holding and offering a blood-filled skull to the mouth of her lord.

The latter [part of the extensive exegesis of the maṇḍala of the supported deities concerns the array of the retinue]. This has two aspects, of which the first [concerns the array of the twenty wrathful female retainers]: [Along with these herukas and their consorts, the assembly] is embellished by the eight

*mātarah*, who are the female mediums indicative of the sensory locations; the eight *piśācī*, who are the female mediums indicative of the sense objects; and the female mediums of the four gates, holding the hand emblems that are their respective insignia.

The second [concerns the array of the twenty-eight mighty queens]: **These are embellished** and surrounded **by** the host of **their attendants**, wives, intimate **concubines**, and **maidservants**, who serve their particular rites, **twenty-eight** in number, and **who** are present in the retinue, [supported] upon their own respective seats of corpses, with **their own hand emblems**, including fresh skulls, and maintaining a servile guise as they request ritual activities to perform.

The third part [of the maṇḍala of reflected imagery concerns the appearance of their wondrous signs]: At these words, **the blazing maṇḍala, equal in extent to the number of atoms** of that [buddha] field, absolutely **filled** and illuminated **the entire expanse** of the ten directions of the six realms.

**This completes chapter 17 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “The Maṇḍala of Wrathful Deities.”**

### ***Chapter 18: The Revelation of Genuine Offerings and Generosity***

The third part [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with which the path is attained] concerns the presentation of offerings to the [maṇḍala of the wrathful deities]. This has three sections [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion]. As to the first, [then the Transcendent Lord] **uttered these following aphorisms concerning the great offerings that are pleasing.**

The second has three aspects [a general presentation of the offerings associated with the rites of union and liberation, a detailed exegesis concerning the offerings of sacramental substances and the desirable attributes of the senses, and a



description of the advantages—the supreme and common accomplishments that they accrue].

The first of these has two aspects, of which the former [concerns the offering associated with the rites of liberation]: In this regard, genuine offerings and generosity are without dichotomy between the recipient of the offerings and the one who makes the offerings. At the outset, oneself, that is to say, the continuum of **the self, should be liberated by the realization** that the intellect through which one becomes familiar with signs owing to the misconception of the self is uncreated. Then, with an intelligence in which there is no duality between the object to be liberated and the one who undertakes the rite of liberation, one should think, “How pitiable are these sentient beings of negative attitude, including those of the ten fields, who continue [to transmigrate] in the lower realms of rebirth!” **And then others should be liberated** through the realization that although they do relatively appear, ultimately beings are without duality.

The latter [concerns the offering associated with the rite of union]: **Once** oneself and one’s consort **have been visualized** and consecrated **as deities, and** [the being of pristine cognition] **has been invited** and so forth, **then**, as indicated above, the supreme sacrament of offering, comprising the blissful generative fluids associated with the nondual embrace, the essential nature of which arises **through** the **union** of the vajra and the lotus, is pleasing to oneself, and **by means of this same offering, pleasure should be conferred** on all the tathāgatas.

The second part [of the explanation of the verses is the detailed exegesis concerning the offerings of sacramental substances and the desirable attributes of the senses]. This has two aspects, the first of which [concerns the offering of nectar as a sacrament]: The supreme sacraments, including **the five nectars** through which the accomplishment of sameness is achieved with respect to cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, **should then be offered to** the assembly of **the deities** of pristine cognition, who are **equated with oneself**, given that one’s

own psychophysical aggregates, sensory elements, and sense fields are visualized through meditative stability to be primordially radiant as the deities.

The second aspect [concerns the offering of desirable attributes of the senses]: There are sacramental offerings of **food** such as meat and butter, **delicacies** including fruits, **drinks** such as tea and wine, **clothing** such as Sahor cloaks, **and all things that** possess the five resources of the senses, **desirable** by gods and humans. As for the way in which all these **should be offered**, [the recipients of the offering] are visualized as **the maṇḍala of deities**, and the sacraments of offering are then presented in such a way that the divine maṇḍala of the desirable attributes of the senses dissolves therein.

The third part [of the explanation of the verses comprises a description of the advantages that they accrue]: If all the most amazing enlightened attributes of the sugatas who emerge in the ten directions and four times are nothing apart from the experiences of the mind, **it is needless to say that the common accomplishments will also be achieved**, such as coercing gods and ogres and the rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, wrath, and so forth. Yogins who are qualified in meditative stability have perfected the generation stage [of meditation] concerning the great seal of the deity's body. Being entirely without the dualistic mind that subjectively and fixatedly visualizes the disposition of nonsymbolic Great Perfection as some identifiable extreme of conceptual elaboration, they arrive at **the supreme accomplishment**—the enlightened intention of Samantabhadra. The great maṇḍala of the three buddha bodies, without conjunction or disjunction, **and enlightened activities will blaze forth** and be attained.

The third part [is the conclusion]: [In this way] all **the ten directions** of the six realms **were pervaded by** those **great offerings that are pleasing**.

**This completes chapter 18** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **entitled “The Revelation of Offerings and Generosity.”**

## Chapter 19: The Commitments

The fourth part [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with which the path is attained] concerns the sequence of commitments that are attained by those who keep the commitments. This has three sections [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion]. As for the first, [then the Transcendent Lord] **uttered these following aphorisms concerning commitments in order to ensure success.**

The second comprises both [a general presentation of the essential nature of the supreme commitments and a detailed exegesis of the commitments to be attained and guarded].

The former has three sections, the first of which [concerns the superiority of the secret commitments over others]: **When this** most secret unsurpassed **vehicle is** entered, well **ascertained**, and experientially cultivated, even though **deeds and** the five poisons or **afflictive mental states** along with the deeds generated by them may be habitually engaged, they manifest in an illusory manner and are undertaken in such a way that obscurations **are not accumulated.** Furthermore, the two provisions will be perfected owing to the fact that, in the essential nature of this conduct, the points of **ethical discipline** associated with the vows of individual liberation, **and** the vows of the bodhisattvas are complete and perfected, alongside the excellent commitments of the way of secret mantra.

The second section [reveals that all other disciplines and vows are gathered within the secret commitments]: All the attributes of **as many** inconceivable **vows as there are**, including the ethics established in accordance with discipline, the vows of the bodhisattvas, and those of the outer and inner classes of mantra, **are** without exception progressively **integrated in the** most secret unsurpassed **supreme commitments**, and even infringements of those lower [vows]

are purified.

The third section [concerns the systematic presentation of the basic supreme commitments]. This has four parts, of which the first [concerns the killing of life in the context of the rite of liberation]: The extreme of existence, the extreme of nonexistence, and also the middle way free from extremes are **without objective referent**. Although, relatively, the rite of liberation ostensibly occurs with oneself **resembling a magical display** and the [targeted] sentient being an optical illusion, life does not truly exist because sentient beings are without independent characteristics, and **there is in fact no life to be killed** because life lacks inherent existence, in the manner of a dream. Although there appears to be life and living creatures who possess life, these are merely misconceptions, and apart from that they are not actually existent.

The second part [concerns the taking of that which is not given]: **Since the two truths**, ultimate and relative, **are indivisible** in their intrinsic nature, as with the gods in Nirmānarata who enjoy and partake of resources of their own emanation, substances and oneself **are not** different or **extraneous but self-emanated**. Apart from that, there is nothing with independent characteristics **to be stolen** that is not given, because all **things**, including the objects that are stolen and the thief who steals them, are the expanse of the real nature.

The third part [concerns the telling of lies]: The natural expression of **phenomena** is like a magical display, and even though they may be designated by different names and words, they are themselves **fictitious**. When one tells lies **about** objects that are themselves fictitious, **there are no lies** at all, **even** so much as a mere designation, because their essential nature is the uncreated [coalescence of] sound and emptiness.

The fourth part [concerns sexual misconduct]: When emptiness, which is without attachment in any respect, is realized intellectually, there is attachment, but **the nature of attachment** to pristine cognition that occurs when male and female unite through discriminative awareness in a disposition

without abiding in the two extremes **is without** ordinary **attachment**. This **sexual conduct**, the king of pristine cognition, superior to [mundane] desire, **where** there is no duality of bliss and emptiness, **is the supremely pure, great attachment**—the disposition of the Padma family which emerges through compassionate spirituality.

The latter [is the detailed exegesis of the commitments to be attained and guarded]. This has four sections [the essential nature of commitments along with the etymology of the relevant terminology, the advantages and disadvantages associated with the keeping of the commitments, the intrinsic nature and classification of the commitments, and an extensive exegesis of their great advantages].

The first of these comprises both [the essential nature of commitments and the etymology of the relevant terminology]. Among them, the former has two aspects, the first of which [concerns the basic commitments]: The first [basic commitment] is that one should **not abandon** the three precious jewels, which are unsurpassed. The second is that one should **venerate** the spiritual teachers with whom one has a connection through the commitments, and especially the spiritual teachers of the way of secret mantra, [the vehicle of] indestructible reality. The third is that with diligence one should not interrupt **the** flow of the primary **mantras** and the seals that are secured. The fourth is that one should **have loving-kindness** for those individuals who enter the Great Vehicle, [embarking] upon the genuine path. The fifth is that one should not **divulge** the secret truths to outsiders who are unworthy recipients. These are **the** five basic **commitments**. The first three are commitments **to be attained and** the last two are supreme commitments through which contradictions of the buddha mind are to be **guarded**.

The second aspect [concerns the essential nature of the ancillary commitments]: One should not renounce delusion, which is nonconceptualization; desire, which is supreme bliss; hatred, which is supreme radiance; pride, which is supreme arrogance; and envy, which is supreme wrath. **The** ground of

these **five poisons** is primordially pure, and their natural expression emerges as the path of skillful means and arises as the fruitional buddha body and pristine cognition. As for [the commitments] to be acquired, **the five nectars should not be renounced but accepted.** These comprise the pure essences of white generative fluid or semen, red generative fluid or vaginal blood, human excrement, urine, and human flesh, which some hold to be sordid and which the intellect, in conformity with their opinion, knows as things to be renounced. However, these actually form a container that is pure in respect of the sacraments of commitment and bereft [of impurities]. Such are the ten ancillary commitments that should be employed by those who realize the significance of their primordial presence in terms of the three aspects of purity and the four modes of sameness.

The latter [the etymology of the relevant terminology] has two aspects, of which the first [concerns the etymologies pertaining to the basic commitments]: The five commitments to be guarded and attained are basic among the commitments through which the secret mantras are achieved, and they **resemble the roots of a tree.** If they degenerate, one will be deprived of the enlightened heritage of the Great Vehicle, which is the good fortune associated with manifest awakening.

The second [concerns the etymologies associated with the ancillary commitments]: The two groups of [ancillary] commitments, comprising the five **not to be renounced** and the five **not to be rejected, resemble the vitality that sustains** the roots. These are called ancillary commitments because **they function as an aid** for the attainment of the basic [commitments], **and they are equivalent to** them, extremely **hard to transgress.**

The second part [of the particular exegesis of the commitments to be attained and guarded] concerns the advantages and disadvantages [associated with the keeping of the commitments].

This has two sections, of which the first [concerns the advantages of keeping the commitments]: **The** great

**commitment** of sameness is the intrinsic nature **of union** through the skillful means of the path and profound discriminative awareness **in** the truth that all things partake of **sameness** in primordial buddhahood. **If one maintains** this [commitment], **one will** attain buddhahood, the spontaneous Great Perfection, where **the** fruitional **three buddha bodies** are **united with** sameness. Therefore this commitment should be guarded. If one transgresses this commitment, one will not attain buddhahood.

The second section [concerns the disadvantages associated with degeneration of the commitments]. This comprises both [the disadvantages associated with degeneration of the basic commitments and the disadvantages associated with degeneration of the ancillary commitments]. The former also has two aspects, of which the first [concerns the harm that degeneration and obscuration bring to others]: Do not befriend even for an instant, or hold a **meeting** and converse even for a moment with, **those** persons **whose** basic **commitments have degenerated** and who have uncontrollably forsaken their training and vows and who do not try through skillful means to restore their commitments. This is because, **owing to the contagion** that derives from degeneration of the commitments, **the present and next lives of both parties will be brought down** and the defects will be indescribable.

The second aspect [concerns the defects of degeneration that one brings upon oneself]: **If one's basic commitments have degenerated, all that one would attain will be reversed**, as if drought were to occur when it rains, or a magical spell that one has cast were to backfire against oneself, **and** the outcome will be unpleasant and diversified. Against one's will, **sufferings will emerge** as provisional and conclusive results produced by the cause, which is degeneration of the commitments.

The latter [concerns the disadvantages of degeneration in the ancillary commitments]: **If one's ancillary commitments have degenerated**, in this life **there will be** no supreme or common accomplishments—that is to say, there will be no [positive]

**result** of attainment, **and** in the next life **one will fall into lower realms.**

The third part [of the particular exegesis of the commitments to be attained and guarded is the exegesis of the intrinsic nature and classification of the commitments]. This has two sections, of which the first [concerns **the intrinsic nature of the commitments**]: The intrinsic nature of the commitments is the essence of the supreme indestructible realities of buddha body, speech, and mind—**the genuine identity of all the buddhas.**

The second section [of the exegesis of the intrinsic nature and classification of the commitments concerns the classification of the various commitments]. This comprises both [the classification of enumerated commitments and the classification of inconceivable commitments]. As to the former, **when the five basic commitments are classified**, each one of them, including, for example, [the commitment] not to abandon the unsurpassed, is endowed with two basic aspects of skillful means and discriminative awareness, and these two each have the three further aspects of buddha body, speech, and mind, making six; while each of these [six] also has five further aspects corresponding to buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities. Tallied in this way, the subdivisions of [each of the basic commitments] **number thirty.** With regard to **the others**, there are two groups of five ancillary commitments. Each one of these ten, including, for example, the commitment not to renounce desire, also **numbers twenty** subdivisions. For each is endowed with skillful means and discriminative awareness, while skillful means includes five pristine cognitions and their five objects, and discriminative awareness includes five pristine cognitions and their five objects, making twenty altogether.

The latter [the classification of inconceivable commitments] has two aspects, of which the first [reveals that commitments are inconceivable because apparent reality is inconceivable]: These basic and ancillary commitments are wondrous and most amazing. In the ten directions of the six realms **the**



**commitments** are diffused in proportion to the number of **living beings** subsumed in the three planes of existence, **in order to train** their conceptual **thoughts**. Thus they **are inconceivable**.

The second [reveals that the commitments are inconceivable because actual reality is inconceivable]: Moreover, in the sky-like seal in which all things without exception are gathered without duality in the supreme display of effortless Samantabhadra, the supreme conqueror, all the most genuine of all the commitments—their intrinsic nature **without fabrication, laborious attainment**, hope, and doubt—will be achieved, none excepted. Such [commitments] are maintained in the **inconceivable** genuine **abiding nature** of the infinitely supreme Great Perfection.

The fourth part [of the particular exegesis of the commitments to be attained and guarded is an extensive exegesis of the great advantages of the commitments]. This has five aspects, of which the first [concerns praise and veneration by mundane beings]: **Those who hold the** supreme secret **mantras** and hold the awareness of the conquerors and keep the commitments **will be** praised, **venerated**, and honored **by the foremost mundane gods, such as Brahmā and Śatakratu, and their retinues**.

The second aspect [concerns the consecration granted by sublime beings]: Among all living beings, the principal and genuinely supreme beings who are **the conquerors and their genuine heirs will intentionally consecrate them** either as a senior son or as an elder brother.

The third aspect [concerns the advantages of those who have attained the perceptual range of the conquerors]: **Those who enter** the perceptual range of the sugatas as the three awareness holders—namely, those who enter into **that level**, those who **abide on that level**, and those who **are mature on that level**—finally **unite with** and obtain [the nature of] supreme **Samantabhadra**, who is fearless with respect to all things.

The fourth aspect [concerns the advantages of those who

have accrued the enlightened attributes of vows and commitments]: The abiding nature, the sky-like reality just as it is, the meanings of all **the** vehicles or **skillful means that grant instruction** to sentient beings, **and** as many inconceivable **vows** as there are, **are all progressively integrated**, and their enlightened attributes are without exception spontaneously present.

The fifth aspect [concerns the advantages of being able to restore commitments though they have degenerated]: **If the commitments degenerate, they can be restored and perfected by rites of fulfillment.** Such advantages are infinite—a supremely **great distinction.**

Third [there is the conclusion of the chapter]: **At these words, the self-manifesting** [tathāgatas] **paid homage to [the tathāgata] himself.**

**This completes chapter 19** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **entitled “The Revelation of the Commitments.”**

## ***Chapter 20: The Consecration of Spontaneous Enlightened Activity***

The fifth part [of the extensive exegesis of the branches of means for attainment of the wrathful deities in accordance with which the path is attained] concerns the attainment of enlightened activities by those who keep the commitments. This has three sections [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion]. As to the first, [then the Great Joyous One] **uttered these following aphorisms, through which all enlightened activities are accomplished.**

The second has three aspects [a general presentation of the sequence of the four rites of enlightened activity, a detailed exegesis of the concluding injunctions and the benefits of the dance, and the distinctive attributes of the places and meditative stabilities associated with the attainment of the four rites].

The first of these has four aspects [the rite of wrath, the rite

of subjugation, the rite of enrichment, and the rite of pacification]. The first of these has three sections, of which the first [concerns the rite of the incinerating fire]: When the defining characteristics of the rite of wrath that employs a triangular fire pit in the shape of the syllable  $\text{E}$  are complete, once the supreme being of meditative commitment within the maṇḍalas of the respective deities of the assembly has been visualized and [the corresponding being of pristine cognition] has dissolved therein, offerings of wrath and sacramental burnt offerings are presented with an attitude of wrath to the blazing god of fire, who assumes an awesome and ferocious guise. Thereupon, with regard to the ritual target, even the meritorious body of a buddha will be destroyed, let alone ordinary beings!

The second section [of the rite of wrath concerns the rite of the stabbing spike]: **A** symbolic representation of the ritual target should be fashioned from the five nectars or the five edibles including the flesh of fish, along with bodily secretions, and the form of this effigy should be labeled. The target **should be summoned and absorbed into** [the effigy], and **then the ritual spike** of indestructible reality **should be stabbed into it**. As one visualizes that the body and speech [of the target] are reduced to dust particles, the effigy should be **presented** as a burnt offering **to the assembled host** of deities in the fire pit.

The third section [of the rite of wrath concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps]: At the circumference of the maṇḍala of the assembled host associated with the wrathful rite, which is in the [triangular] shape of the syllable  $\text{E}$ , [the yogins] are linked together in a chain by their little fingers. They dance [upon the effigy], holding this seal, their bodies flexing and undulating throughout the ten directions, whereupon the actual target becomes insane, the heart bursts asunder, and the body is incinerated and rendered nonexistent.

Second, [the rite of subjugation] has three sections, of which the first [concerns the rite of the incinerating fire]: When the fire pit is semicircular, in the shape of the syllable  $\text{VAM}$ , the

supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host denotes both the defining characteristics of the fire pit of the rite of subjugation and the maṇḍala of deities. Within it, the god of fire assumes a most brilliant, subjugating guise, blazing intensely and mountainous in stature. Burnt offerings are then presented to the fire with an attitude of attachment, offering those sacraments corresponding to the rite of subjugation. Thereupon, even Amitābha, who embodies indestructible buddha speech, will be subjugated.

The second section [of the rite of subjugation concerns the rite of the stabbing spike]: A symbolic representation should be fashioned with the five nectars or five edibles, imbued with the scent of **the ritual target**, and this **effigy** should have the name and clan attached. The target **should be summoned and absorbed into** [the effigy], and **then the copper ritual spike**, indicative of indestructible attachment, **should be** visualized as Padmakīla and **stabbed into it**. The effigy should then be presented to Padma Heruka and his retinue, **the assembled host** who are indicative of attachment, or to the deities who were previously [visualized] in the pit, until it has vanished indivisibly.

The third section [of the rite of subjugation concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps]: In the maṇḍala of the assembled host associated with the rite of subjugation, which is in the shape of the syllable VAM, [the yogins] are linked together in a chain by their ring fingers and dance [upon the effigy], whereupon even Vajrapadma and handsome Mahendra, through whom living beings are summoned, will become an attendant, let alone others! All that is desired will come to pass.

Third, [the rite of enrichment] has three sections, of which the first [concerns the rite of the incinerating fire]: In the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host which employs the square fire pit of the rite of enrichment in the shape of the syllable MA, [the yogins] visualize that the fire and the god of fire are inwardly absorbed as a mass of blazing light rays so that resources are gathered and outwardly diffused with great

brilliance so that hopes are fulfilled, and the burnt offerings appropriate for the rite of enrichment are presented with an attitude of joy and gladness. Thereupon, the life span, glory, and excellent provisions will increase. Enlightened attributes such as these will be obtained equal to the limits of space.

The second section [of the rite of enrichment concerns the rite of the stabbing spike]: An effigy should be fashioned with the five nectars or five edibles, precious gems, and so forth, of those things that one desires to increase. It should be inscribed and attached with the name and [mantra syllables of the rite of] enrichment. The **ritual target should then be summoned and absorbed into** it, and consequently it should be meditated on and conceived as a treasure of wish-fulfilling precious gems through which the desirable attributes of the senses manifest, as required. **Then the gold ritual spike**, indicative of joyous pride, **should be** visualized as Ratnakīla and **stabbed** into it, and [the effigy] should then be **presented to the assembled host** of Ratna Heruka or to the aforementioned [assembled host] in the fire pit appropriate for the rite of enrichment, so that the great brilliance of indestructible enlightened attributes will multiply.

The third section [of the rite of enrichment concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps]: At the extremities of the fire pit where rites of enrichment are enacted in the maṇḍala of the assembled host [of deities] in the shape of the syllable MA, [the yogins] undulate, linked together in a chain by their middle fingers. Through the light rays of their dance, they then diffuse their meditative stability, causing a cascade of glorious and supreme magical forms of blazing brilliance, and visualize that the poverty of sentient beings is dispelled, whereupon space will become filled with wish-fulfilling gems that bring forth attributes, and all wishes will be fulfilled.

Fourth, [the rite of pacification] also has three sections, of which the first [concerns the rite of the incinerating fire]: When, in the supreme maṇḍala of the assembled host in the shape of the syllable YĀ which employs the circular fire pit of the rite of pacification, the fire and the god of fire are

visualized in a luminous and brilliant peaceful form of inner radiance, the burnt offerings that pacify sickness, harmful forces, and fears are presented to it with an attitude of clarity. Thereupon, even demonic forces of most awesome ferocity and all fears will subside and become lustrous, let alone ordinary beings.

The second section [of the rite of pacification concerns the rite of the stabbing spike]: An effigy should be fashioned, mixing the clothing, scent, and other articles of the ritual target whom one desires to pacify with the five nectars or five edibles, and this should be conceived as the essential nature of hostile, obstructing spirits and so forth, endowed with ferocity in body, awesome voice, and disturbing mind. [The ritual target] **should be summoned and absorbed into the effigy**, and **then the silver ritual spike**, indicative of lustrous radiance, **should be** visualized as Buddhakīla and **stabbed into** this effigy, which should then be **presented** to Buddha Heruka and his retinue, **the assembled host** of glory and blazing luster, or to the god of fire in accordance with the rite of pacification.

The third section [of the rite of pacification concerns the rite of the suppressive dance steps]: At the extremities of the fire pit associated with the rite of pacification, in the maṇḍala of the assembled host in the shape of the syllable YĀ, [the yogins] dance, linked together in a chain by their index fingers, whereupon, through the rite of pacification, they permeate even the blazing fire of anger that engulfs others with the blessing of their luster. All negativity and malicious attitudes and so forth will subside and be rendered undisturbing to the mind.

The second part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter is the detailed exegesis of the concluding injunctions and the benefits of the dance]. It comprises both [the injunctions given to those who are under oath and a teaching on the benefits of the dance]. The former has two aspects, of which the first [describes how injunctions are given concerning the rites]: Offerings **should then be presented** to the

retainers who gather in the maṇḍala and to the wives of the Mahādeva class and **to the hosts** of their concubines and female servants, who wish for **the residual offerings**. **Their respective commitments should then be proclaimed and injunctions given for them to perform their** [respective] **rites**, which are desired.

The second aspect [of the injunctions given to those who are under oath] concerns the actual injunctions that are given: **May you** swiftly **actualize** without impediment **the rites** that you pledged and upheld when in the past the Great Glorious Heruka, most malignant, fierce, and fearful, exhibited most amazing power and blessing, which disciplined you all, without exception. He overpowered Mahādeva and so forth, making you, their retainers, into his *īśvarī* and retainers, and he assigned you your different rites. If you do not act **just as you have pledged**, you will transgress those vows and [commitments] on which you swore an oath. If you transgress these commitments, the Wrathful Yakṣa will sever your very heads, bodies, and hearts into seven pieces. Rather, may you perform the tasks with which you are charged by this yogin who holds the mantras! If you do not actualize these activities as you yourselves have sworn and pledged, you will decompose, burn, and then fall into hell. May you undertake the rites of yogins who keep the commitments, and may you protect our retainers as an only child! You *piśācī* will also obtain accomplishments. May you actualize the rites **with which you are charged!** Such an injunction is to be given.

The latter part [of the particular exegesis of the concluding injunctions concerns the benefits of the dance]. It comprises both [a recognition of the significance of the dance and a more extensive exegesis]. As to the former, **the main part of the rite**, in which the maṇḍalas of the wrathful deities are attained, **is this dance that follows**.

The second [the more extensive exegesis] has four aspects, of which the first [concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the five principal deities]: **By the** great melodic contour of lyrical song and **dance** of the mighty blood drinkers, Buddha

Heruka, and so forth—the male and female deities **of the five enlightened families**—all **the supreme and common** accomplishments **and** whatever **enlightened activities** are desired **will be achieved**.

The second aspect [of the more extensive exegesis concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the eight *mātarah*]: By the great lyrical song and dance of mighty Gaurī and so forth, **in the four cardinal directions**, if one desires subjugation, **the rites of subjugation** will be achieved, **and** if one desires **enrichment**, increase of the life span, luck, and so forth, increase **will be achieved**. By the great lyrical song and dance of mighty Pukkasi and so forth **in the four intermediate directions**, if one desires to illuminate or pacify those spirits who are hostile, obstructive, and so forth, illumination or **the rites of pacification** will be achieved, **and** if one desires to obfuscate and cloud their minds, the rites of **wrath** including obfuscation **will be achieved**.

The third aspect [of the more extensive exegesis concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the eight *piśācī*]: **By** the great lyrical song and dance of the *piśācī* **in the four cardinal directions**, including mighty Siṃhamukhī, the bodies and life breath of all malignant beings and all hostile and obstructing spirits in their entirety **will be consumed**, **and** they will be rendered nonexistent even to the extent of the smallest dust particle. By the great lyrical song and dance of the *piśācī* **in the four intermediate directions**, including mighty Ḡḍhramukhī, the entrails and hearts **will be extracted** from all malignant beings without exception, and the excellence of their vitality and so forth will all be thoroughly depleted.

The fourth aspect [of the more extensive exegesis concerns the benefits achieved by the dance of the twenty-eight *īśvarī*]: **By** the great lyrical song and dance of the retainers, concubines, and female servants, including **the īśvarī**, curses delivered to **hostile forces** by means of a messenger will take effect. All rites through which contradictions are externally rectified and **destroyed**, **and all** rites through which desired **accomplishments** are internally achieved, will be **bestowed**



in their entirety.

The third part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter concerns the distinctive attributes of the places and meditative stabilities associated with the attainment of the four rites]: Amid forests of leafy trees, shrubbery groves, or orchards, near solitary tree trunks and in places touched by fire, that is, **forests** that have been charred by fire **and so forth**, the rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrath should be respectively performed. To that end, these should be **respectively** accompanied **with** an attitude of **clarity, joy, attachment, and wrath**. In this way the “consonantal” rites, that is to say, **the four rites** of [liberating] skillful means, **should be well performed**.

The third part [is the conclusion of the chapter]: **At these words the tathāgatas refined** [their realization] **in the presence of the tathāgata himself**.

**This completes chapter 20** [of the *Secret Nucleus*], **entitled “The Consecration of Enlightened Activity.”**

### ***Chapter 21: Eulogies to the Wrathful Deities***

The third main topic [of the diffusion **of the wrathful deities** concerns the eulogies to the fruitional buddha body and pristine cognition]. This comprises both [a brief introduction to the manner of the eulogies and a more extensive exegesis of the actual eulogies]. As to the former, then [the wrathful host] **intoned this song of joy, with awesome incandescence**.

The latter comprises both [the general eulogies to the five enlightened families and the particular eulogy to Mahottara Heruka]. The first of these has five sections, of which the first [concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha body]: The syllable HŪM introduces [this song], indicating that **the five pristine cognitions** are possessed. The buddha body is most ferocious, ablaze like the inferno that destroys the aeon, and it diffuses light rays of pristine cognition resembling the brilliance of a hundred thousand

suns. Its frowns of wrath that threaten cruel and malign beings flash like a thousand lightning bolts, and it has four sharp white fangs that devour pernicious beings. The syllable hoh, indicating laughter of astonishment, is also appended to the subsequent songs.

The second section [concerns the eulogy to all maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha speech]: The awesome roar of buddha speech is most ferocious like the reverberation of a thousand peals of thunder, and brutal like the crash of a hundred thousand Sumeru mountains crumbling, and it bellows the mighty laughter of A A, HA HA, and ALA HALA. The great hurricane expelled from its breath convulses cruel and malign beings with terror, exceeding the winds at the end of time.

The third section [concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha mind]: The maṇḍalas of **the five pristine cognitions** [of buddha mind] **endowed with** great light rays of **discriminative awareness** that are wrathful to the host of ignorant beings are totally radiant. As such, they overwhelm the energy of afflictive mental states with their individual characteristics—ablaze as the five poisons, but abiding essentially as these pristine cognitions—and yet these [same] pristine cognitions **are** of a single savor in **the great** vital essence, the **nondual essential nature**.

The fourth section [concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha attributes]: **The great cloud** [of buddha attributes] emerging from the **wrathful** kings sends forth a mighty **cascade of** wrathful maṇḍalas through the wrath of buddha mind. Yet, among the **diverse** wrathful forms emanated from the treasures of the maṇḍalas that emerge at will, in the manner of the wish-fulfilling gem, and that instruct each according to need, all of them, **permeating space**, indeed abide in the singular great vital essence, which is the abiding nature [of reality].

The fifth section [concerns the eulogy to all the maṇḍalas in the enlightened family of buddha activities]: Because they **subdue** the power of all four classes of **demons** who are indicative of **great** demonic **egotism**, the supreme demons

even **terrify and** strike fear into **their fearsome hosts**. Yet these supreme [buddha activities] are all present in this great vital essence, naturally free from conceptual elaboration.

The second part [of the detailed exegesis of the actual eulogy comprises the particular eulogy to Mahottara Heruka]: The body [of Mahottara Heruka] **is a great rock** of indestructible reality and a mighty solidifier. The speech and attributes [of Mahottara Heruka] are **a river** of indestructible reality or pristine cognition—a mighty gatherer, satisfying those to be trained. The mind [of Mahottara Heruka] is a luminous **fire** of omniscient pristine cognition, the indestructible reality that dispels the darkness of fundamental ignorance with mighty **blazing** light rays of compassionate spirituality. **And** the activities [of Mahottara Heruka] embody indestructible reality, like **a driving hurricane** that permeates those to be trained, scattering demons, extremists, and so forth. Here the objectives of the four rites are spontaneously present in the Great Perfection. Such was the song that [the tathāgata] meaningfully sang.

**This completes chapter 21 [of the *Secret Nucleus*], entitled “Eulogies to the Wrathful Deities.”**

## ***Chapter 22: That Which Is Pleasing and Retained***

The fourth main topic [of the diffusion of the wrathful deities is the entrustment and colophon]. This comprises both [the teaching of this tantra to genuine beings and its subsequent entrustment, and the meaning of the colophon]. The former [is the subject matter of ch. 22]. It has three parts [the context, the explanation of the verses, and the conclusion]. As to the first, [then the Great Joyous One] **uttered these following aphorisms, indicating that for the sake of** [its subsequent] **entrustment, [this tantra] should be firmly retained.**

The second part comprises both [a teaching that this tantra is the result of all paths and a teaching that this tantra is supreme among all secrets]. The former comprises both [the

nature of the tantra in which instruction is to be given and the greatness of the recipient to whom instruction is given].

The first of these also has three sections, of which the first [reveals that this is the actual continuum of the result]: Following the invocation O! O!, **all** these natural expressions of the things of **phenomenal appearance, cyclic existence** and nirvāṇa, subsumed **in the ten directions and the four times** partake of the essence **of primordial buddhahood** in the maṇḍalas of the peaceful and wrathful tathāgatas. They abide as the *Secret Nucleus* of the ground; exemplified thereby, the *Secret Nucleus* of the path and of the result also **constitute** the essential nature of **this tantra**.

The second [reveals that other paths are steps in its direction]: Those living beings who hanker for conceptual elaboration of the subject-object dichotomy and who then roam through the planes of existence are ensnared **by conceptual thoughts**. For this reason phenomena are differently **apprehended**. With reference to their varying degrees of acumen, hierarchical distinctions are indeed arrayed in **the levels** and the paths of the different vehicles, but these **are all paths** or steps **leading toward the Secret Nucleus**.

The third [concerns the purpose of the many enumerations of the doctrine that have been enunciated]: Although all **the sacred doctrines that grant instruction are divulged** by the buddha body of emanation—the compassionate spirituality of the teacher, Samantabhadra himself, who possesses the infinite, wondrous pristine cognition—this **never** occurs **without bringing benefit** to sentient beings.

The second aspect [of the teaching that this tantra is the result of all paths concerns the greatness of the recipient to whom instruction is given]: This is the most **secret** nucleus of all things of the ground, path, and result, the genuine seal of the body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities of all the tathāgatas. **Anyone who, having realized this truth, imparts it** to other fortunate beings is **actually Samantabhadra**, while the empowerments of beneficence and ability too will be perfected atemporally and spontaneously.

The latter part [of the explanation of the verses of this chapter concerns the teaching that this tantra is supreme among all secrets]. It comprises both [the actual secret meaning and the prophetic declarations concerning the genuine persons who uphold it].

As to the first, **all the conquerors** of the ten directions and four times **possess nothing other than this truth** of the genuine tantra, the **secret** of buddha body, speech, mind, attributes, and activities. Therefore one should retain that which is supreme and genuine. This *Secret Nucleus* has an intrinsic nature quiescent of all conceptual elaborations, including those that apply exaggeration from the extreme standpoint of eternalism and those that employ deprecation from the extreme standpoint of nihilism, as well as those that posit both existence and nonexistence. It is the real nature of all things, brought forth from the definitive expanse of inconceivable, inexpressible reality. This real nature of the ground, path, and result has been brought forth from the definitive expanse, within the expanse of Samantabhadra's buddha mind, and is enunciated for the sake of those to be trained.

As to the second, it is absolutely and definitively prophesied that **those** individuals **who** reveal and **explain this** tantra will attain buddhahood without impediment in a single lifetime. In the words of the [*Tantra of the Mirror of*] *Vajra[sattva]*: "Whoever practices according to this tradition will attain perfect buddhahood in this lifetime." Such individuals **will become** the genuine **heirs** of the mind of all the buddhas because they are born from this amazing secret nature of **buddha mind**. Provisionally, they will enter into the levels, **abide on the levels, and** become mature in the levels, and then, conclusively, they will abide on the highest, excellent level of the conclusive result, known as "holder of indestructible reality," which is also called the "level of supreme skillful means and discriminative awareness" and the "level of the awareness holders." Abiding on that conclusive [level], **they will attain manifestly** perfect **buddhahood**.

The third part [is the conclusion of the chapter]: **At these words**, all the tathāgatas indivisibly **rejoiced**, and in the expanse of sameness throughout the four times **they** continue to **remain** joyfully **present as ornaments of the buddha field** of the spontaneous Bounteous Array, endowed with buddha body, speech, and mind.

**This completes chapter 22** of the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*, **concerning the entrustment and retention of this tantra.**

### *The Meaning of the Colophon*

The latter part [of the fourth main topic concerns the meaning of the colophon]. This has three sections, of which the first [concerns the tantra cycle to which this *Secret Nucleus* belongs]: [This tantra] is more sublime than others because it reveals primordial buddhahood in the indivisible truth. It is **included within** the ***One Hundred Thousand Chapters of the Great Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation of Vajrasattva***, which is the king of realizations because it is said to surpass them all.

The second section [concerns the supplements of this *Great Tantra*]: This [*Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*] is designated as **the general transmission** because it is the source or basis from which all the causal vehicles **of the sūtras and** all the fruitional vehicles of the **tantras** of the way of secret mantra are diffused. It itself is the mystery of the indestructible body, speech, and mind of all the tathāgatas of the ten directions and four times. It is supremely sublime, and it demonstrates topics that are most profound and extensive. Therefore it is called the *Chapter of the Secret Nucleus, Definitive with Respect to the Real* ground, path, and result. **From this, all** the inconceivable **vehicles are diffused** and revealed, without exception. Thus it is the basis of them all.

The third section [concerns the teaching that this tantra is the supreme result]: **This completes the root tantra**, which

is **supreme** among **the unsurpassed** secret mantras indicative of the **result**, included among the inestimable promulgations of the doctrinal wheel, such as the *Net of Magical Emanation in One Hundred Thousand Chapters*, which the conquerors turned for the sake of living beings. Through these words, [this interlinear commentary on the *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*] has been well established.

## **Book 17, Part 2: *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī***

The fifth main topic [of the seventeenth book is the interlinear commentary on *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*] which has three sections. Among them, the first comprises the title and the verses of homage:

In Sanskrit: *Āryamañjuśrī [jñānasattvasya paramārtha]-  
nāma-saṅgīti*

In Tibetan: *'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi don dam pa'i mtshan  
yang dag par brjod pa*

In English: *Sublime [Tantra of **the**] **Litany of the  
Names of Mañjuśrī** [the Supreme Being of Pristine  
Cognition]*

Homage to Mañjuśrī who remains a youthful prince!

The second section concerns the meaning of the text, which has fourteen chapters and **contains one hundred sixty-nine stanzas**.

### ***The Request***

**Among these, the first chapter, entitled “The Request,” comprises sixteen stanzas:** The [cycle of the] *Net of Magical Emanation* has sixteen thousand chapters. Once fifteen

thousand nine-hundred ninety-nine of these chapters had been explained, then Vajrapāṇi, embodying the excellence of the retinue, assumed the buddha body of essential nature in the guise of Vajradhara—he who is endowed with the glory of the buddha bodies of form and the indestructible buddha body of reality, inseparably holding them. Supreme among the tamers of those under the sway of the three poisons who are hard to tame, he is heroic, eradicating cruel and malign beings, and victorious over the three worlds—subterranean, terrestrial, and celestial. He is the mighty lord of the indestructible reality of emptiness and the king of secret mantra, the vehicle of indestructible reality.

Vajrapāṇi has eyes that resemble white lotuses, wide open, with five attributes [or petals], and he is present upon a seat in the form of a wide-open lotus, untainted by the defects of cyclic existence. At his heart, with his hand, indivisible from the real nature, he holds a supreme vajra of pristine cognition, indicative of his understanding, brandishing it repeatedly as an indication that he acts for the sake of others.

Vajrapāṇi and his entourage are endowed with infinite enlightened attributes, such that all the retainers have rippling frowns of wrath, the accoutrements of the charnel ground, and so forth. As heroes acting to train through skillful means those to be trained who are hard to train, they assume a terrifying and heroic demeanor, with lower robes of tiger hide.

Their hands, indicative of the union of skillful means and discriminative awareness for their own sake, brandish vajras with tips that emanate and diffuse from their pores. They are supreme in acting by means of extensive compassion for the sake of others, by perfecting discriminative awareness for their own sake, and by diverse skillful means for the sake of all living beings.

These retainers are filled with thoughts of delight, satisfaction, and utmost rejoicing toward Mañjuśrī, and they are also endowed with terrifyingly wrathful corporeal forms. As protectors acting for the sake of living beings by means of the four rites of buddha activity inasmuch as they are purified of all



obscurations and extensive in pristine cognition, they stood, along with their attendants, bowing humbly.

They paid respectful homage with body, speech, and mind to Śākyamuni, the excellent teacher who is [also known as] the tathāgata, “he who has comprehended the real nature and arrived for the sake of living beings”; the Transcendent Lord, “he who has subdued the four demonic forces, possesses the five pristine cognitions, and transcends eternalism and nihilism”; and the perfect buddha endowed with the ten powers. Then [Vajrapāṇi] folded his palms together and, standing respectfully in the presence of the Teacher, made this following supplication:

O Lord permeating living beings with compassionate spirituality, in order to heal me at all times and treat me with affection, that I might attain nondual pristine cognition for my own sake, may I obtain by whatever means this manifestly perfect great enlightenment, where the net of the magic of skillful means and the emanation of discriminative awareness are without duality! So that all sentient beings—the mass of living beings whose thoughts and minds are agitated by the afflictive mental states of the five poisons and who are sunk within the swamp of cyclic existence due to ignorance of their own nature—may swiftly acquire the provisional and conclusive remedy and the fruit of the unsurpassed three buddha bodies and five pristine cognitions, may the perfect, transcendent lord buddha, the spiritual mentor of living beings, the teacher who accords with the profound and extensive truth, maintaining the great commitment to instruct living beings, and supreme in knowing individually the sensory elements, faculties, and thoughts of sentient beings, reveal by means of the pristine cognition that definitively and quantitatively knows the real nature the supreme litany of the names of the body of reality that is the pristine cognition of the transcendent lord Mañjuśrī, indicative of buddha mind; along with the great protuberance and so forth, indicative of buddha body, which is overwhelming and invisible [to lower bodhisattvas]; and the great mastery of words, possessing the excellence of buddha speech. This body of pristine cognition is self-originated because it is not produced from causes and conditions. It is that of Mañjuśrī (*'jam dpal*), signifying that the buddha body of reality is gentle (*'jam*) because it is untainted by conceptual thought and that the buddha body of form is glorious (*dpal*) to living beings. It is that of Jñānasattva (*ye shes sems dpa'*), heroic (*dpa'*) for the sake of

sentient beings (*sems*) and cognizant (*shes*) of the truth that abides primordially (*ye*).

This litany is unerring; the supreme litany of his names is profound in meaning and extensive in meaning with regard to the view. One who experiences this truth is endowed with the great benefit of self and others, the incomparable buddha body of reality, quiescent of the two obscurations. Its view is virtuous in the beginning, its meditation is virtuous in the middle, and its fruition is virtuous in the end. What, one might ask, is this tantra that was spoken by the buddhas of the past, that will also be spoken by those buddhas of the future, and that is repeatedly spoken by the genuinely perfect buddhas of the present who appear throughout the ten directions?

Please explain clearly and eloquently this chapter extracted from the sixteen thousand chapters of the *Net of Magical Emanation of Mañjuśrī*—one of the four sections of the *Net of Magical Emanation*—most sublime and great among the four classes of tantra. It has been delivered in the form of a song concerning Mañjuśrī, at the insistence of the Vajradharas (*rdo rje 'chang*)—the great buddha bodies of perfect resource who hold (*'chang*) in mind the indestructible reality (*rdo rje*) of emptiness—and of countless, inestimable buddha bodies of emanation, who retain the mind of the buddha body of reality, [coalescence of] the secret mantras.

O Protector of living beings! In order that I, Vajrapāṇi, might by whatever means become a holder of the secrets of the three bodies of all the perfect buddhas, I shall steadfastly maintain this tantra until living beings attain emancipation in nirvāṇa. In order to dispel all the obscurations of afflictive mental states that distress living beings, without exception, separating them from the seed of buddha nature, and in order to abandon and purify all the obscurations of ignorance with respect to the fundamental nature, without exception, please

explain this chapter of song to sentient beings, in accordance with their distinctive aspirations.

Having requested the tathāgata accordingly, Vajrapāṇi, master of secret mantra, stood in the presence of the Teacher, with palms folded and his body bowing respectfully.

### ***The Response***

**In the second chapter, entitled “The Response,” there are six stanzas:** Then Śākyamuni—the perfect buddha, best of human and divine bipeds—extended light rays throughout the ten directions from the noble, long and wide tongue within his mouth.

He displayed a smiling countenance in order to illuminate all the three world systems, to tame the hostile forces of the four demons—namely, the divine prince of desire, the lord of death, the afflictive mental states, and the psychophysical aggregates—and to cleanse the three lower realms of sentient beings and the sufferings of cyclic existence. Filling all realms of the three world systems with the sweet and pleasant voice of Brahmā, he [the Teacher] replied to Vajrapāṇi, Lord of Secrets, the most mighty and powerful master of secret mantra, as follows:

“Vajrapāṇi, since you possess great compassion, it is most important that you, O Vajrapāṇi, should just recite the litany of the names of Mañjuśrī—he who is endowed with the body of pristine cognition in order to benefit living beings.

“It is most excellent that you persevere to hear correctly from me, the Teacher, [this litany] that purifies the two obscurations and dispels all negativity, and it is excellent that you, O Vajrapāṇi, glorious Vajradhara, request it for the benefit of others.

“Since you have made this request, O Lord of Secrets, in order to benefit living beings, I, the Teacher, will therefore demonstrate this path and its fruit excellently to you. Therefore you should listen well, with one-pointed mind!”

“Very well, Transcendent Lord!” he replied.

### ***Inspecting the Six Classes [of Individual Practitioners]***

**In the third chapter, entitled “Inspecting the Six Classes of Individual Practitioners,” there are two stanzas:** Then the transcendent lord Śākyamuni inspected the different classes to which those retinues belong: (i) He inspected some individuals partaking of the class of the secret mantra for whom the deities are in union. [Among them] he inspected some within that great class who had the good fortune to partake of the perfection stage [of meditation], and he inspected some individuals who partook of the generation and perfection stages [of meditation] in their entirety. (ii) He inspected some individuals partaking of the class that maintains both secret mantra and gnostic mantra, who delight in solitary deities. (iii) He inspected those partaking of the three classes indicative of buddha body, speech, and mind. He inspected (iv) the mundane class that is designated according to its wrong understanding and the supramundane class whose bewilderment has ended. (v) He inspected the class of extremists who illuminate the world, the great class who have attained the transcendent perfections, and the supreme class who have realized the truth of the great seal, the permeation of emptiness. (vi) [Finally] he inspected the most distinguished individuals partaking of the “precious protuberance” who cannot be overwhelmed.

### ***Manifest Enlightenment***

**In the fourth chapter, entitled “Manifest Enlightenment,” there are three stanzas:** The Teacher, the Master of Words, then proclaimed the following verses in the form of a chapter of song, along with the six sections of [mantra], commencing with a, which are associated respectively with the [six] kings of

secret mantra in union. This is a modality in which the letters emerge from the relative nonduality of vowels and consonants and the ultimate nonduality of awareness and emptiness—the nonarising ultimate truth and the appearances of relative truth being indivisible. [Here] these are revealed in the context of the exegesis of the tantra concerning the excellence of the framing narrative.

Now when the actual tantra is revealed, [one recites the seed syllables] A Ā I Ī U Ū E AI O AU AM AḤ. In this regard, there are exegeses that accord with the six transcendent perfections and the vehicle of secret mantra. As to the former, the letters A and Ā are indicative of the transcendent perfection of generosity. The letters I and Ī are indicative of the transcendent perfection of ethical discipline. The letters U and Ū are indicative of the transcendent perfection of tolerance. The letters E and AI are indicative of the transcendent perfection of perseverance. The letters O and AU are indicative of the transcendent perfection of meditative concentration. The letters AM and AḤ are indicative of the transcendent perfection of discriminative awareness. These are also known to have mundane and supramundane aspects, in accordance with the distinction between the long and short vowel forms. Among them [for example] mundane generosity is dispensed with reference to the trichotomy of the donor, the recipient, and the material things to be donated, whereas supramundane generosity is completely pure in respect of these three spheres. According to [the exegesis of] the secret mantra, the letters A and Ā are indicative of the mirrorlike pristine cognition; I and Ī are indicative of the pristine cognition of sameness; U and Ū are indicative of the pristine cognition of discernment; E and AI are indicative of the pristine cognition of accomplishment; O and AU are indicative of the pristine cognition of reality's expanse; AM is indicative of the emptiness of these pristine cognitions; while AḤ is indicative of the indivisibility of pristine cognition and emptiness.

When one meditates on the meaning of the nonduality of emptiness and pristine cognition [one recites the mantras:

STHITO HRDI JÑĀNAMŪRTIR AHAM BUDDHO BUDDHĀNĀM  
TRYADHVAVARTINĀM / OM VAJRATĪKṢṂA DUḤKHACCHEDA  
PRAJÑĀJÑĀNAMŪRTI JÑĀNAKĀYA VĀGĪŚVARA ARAPACANĀYA TE NAMAḤ].

Here, STHITO means “situated,” HRDI means “in the heart,” JÑĀNA means “pristine cognition,” MŪRTIR means “embodiment,” AHAM means “I,” BUDDHO means “BUDDHA,” BUDDHĀNĀM means “of the buddhas,” and TRYADHVAVARTINĀM denotes the indivisibility of the three buddha bodies.

OM means “endowed with the five pristine cognitions,” VAJRATĪKṢṂA means “sharpness of indestructible reality,” DUḤKHACCHEDA means “cutting off suffering,” PRAJÑĀJÑĀNA means “pristine cognition of discriminative awareness,” MŪRTI means “embodiment,” JÑĀNAKĀYA means “body of pristine cognition,” VĀGĪŚVARA means “lord of speech,” A means “the view of unproduced buddha mind,” RA means “supreme bliss that has been experientially cultivated,” PA means “view and meditation untainted by any flaws,” CA means “liberation through the practice of the generation and perfection stages in common,” NĀYA means that all things are to be known as unproduced, TE means “the spontaneously present fruit” [lit. “to you”], and NAMAḤ means “unerring [homage].” Through these comments, the meaning of tantra subsumed in the mantras is revealed.

### ***Eulogy to the Maṇḍala of the Indestructible Expanse***

**In the fifth chapter, entitled “[Eulogy to the Maṇḍala of] the Indestructible Expanse,” there are fourteen stanzas:** In this way the perfect transcendent lord buddhas, encompassing the three buddha bodies, have all originated from the syllable a, which represents the uncreated reality. a indicates that the ultimate emptiness and the foremost of all the seed syllables, which are relative phenomena, are indivisible. When one has experientially cultivated this, great associated benefits will emerge for one’s own sake and for the sake of others. This syllable is sacred and the best of paths. This [syllable], indicative of the nonduality of all phenomena, emerges from

the chest [as a vocal pulse], but actually it is uncreated, free from verbalization and beyond objects of thought. It is not an object of the intellect. This uncreated [syllable] is the foremost cause of all expressions, the modality through which everything arises from the uncreated. Since the mass of syllables arise from the syllable A, it elucidates all words and meanings.

Mañjuśrī, you are the great repository of the objects of offering, endowed with great attachment for the sake of sentient beings clinging to desire, satisfying and delighting all sentient beings. You are endowed with aversion that is great selflessness, recognizing this to be a great offering. Since emptiness is the mighty foe of all afflictive mental states, you destroy them.

You are endowed with great discriminative awareness—the great offering and intrinsic purity of delusion that dispels the mind of delusion and the thoughts arising from fundamental ignorance, which are permeated by delusions. Mañjuśrī, you are endowed with great wrath in respect of dualistic apprehension, the great object of offering that is most wrathful because you are free from thoughts of differentiation, and you are a mighty foe because you dispel all thoughts.

Mañjuśrī, you are endowed with great attachment in respect of living beings, the great offering that dispels all fixations and attachments. You are endowed with great desire that purifies the places of birth, great bliss that indicates the buddha body of reality, great delight that indicates the buddha body of perfect resource, and great joy that indicates the buddha body of emanation.

You are endowed with a great physique, and your body, which effects training, is also great, acting for the sake of diverse living beings. You are endowed with the finest complexion, and your body is large, endowed with the major and minor marks. Your names are also great because you are renowned, and extensive because they permeate everywhere. Your maṇḍala is vast and most spacious because you act on behalf of living beings by means of many approaches.

Holding the great sword of emptiness and discriminative



awareness, Mañjuśrī, you possess the supreme hook of compassionate spirituality which extracts [sentient beings] from the vast swampland of afflictive mental states. With great renown among all those to be trained, and great reputation because you are perfect in enlightened attributes, you permeate them with the great light of the buddha body of perfect resource and possess the great radiance of the buddha body of reality.

Adroitly acting for the benefit of living beings, you maintain the benefit of living beings through great magical emanations that entail diverse skillful means: You accomplish the two benefits, relying on the extensive diffusion and absorption of magical emanations that refine the [visualization of] deities according to the generation stage [of meditation]. Your coemergent buddha body of reality delights through the delight of pristine cognition—the great bliss of magical emanation that refines the energy channels, vital essences, and winds according to the perfection stage [of meditation]. You are endowed with activities that benefit living beings, resembling an optical illusion, through the great magical emanations of the combined generation and perfection stages.

Mañjuśrī, you are the great hero, the supreme, principal master of nonreferentiality with respect to the four modes of generosity. You are the supreme holder of great nonreferentiality with respect to the three modes of ethical discipline. Mañjuśrī, you are the steadfast maintainer of great nonreferentiality with respect to the three modes of tolerance. You are the zealous refiner of cyclic existence through great nonreferentiality with respect to the three modes of perseverance.

Mañjuśrī, you abide in the meditative stability of great nonreferentiality with respect to the two meditative concentrations. You maintain the body of great nonreferentiality with respect to discriminative awareness concerning causes and results. You are great due to nonreferentiality with respect to the ten powers, and you are great due to nonreferentiality in respect of skillful means—the

diverse approaches of the vehicle. You are ocean-like in aspiration through which the benefit of living beings emerges, and in inexhaustible pristine cognition.

The intrinsic nature of your great loving-kindness is immeasurable because it apprehends inestimable living beings. Your great compassion imparts the supreme boon because it apprehends the world systems of living beings who partake of diverse intelligence, and you reveal to trainees of great intelligence the nature of discriminative awareness, which is great emptiness. Supremely adroit, you are endowed with great and diverse skillful means.

You are endowed with great miraculous abilities, with power to go everywhere without impediment, with great strength that subdues the powers of others, and with great speed that swiftly acts for the sake of living beings. Endowed with these great miraculous abilities and renowned as unrivaled, Mañjuśrī, you overwhelm and tame other trainees through your great powers.

Shattering fundamental ignorance—the great mountain of rebirth—firm in the indivisibility of awareness and emptiness, and maintaining great indestructible reality that comprehends its meaning, Most Wrathful One, you are endowed with great ferocity because you tame [beings] by means of wrathful rites. You are the great terrifier of egotism, who terrifies [beings], having revealed the pristine cognition free from extremes.

You are the protector of living beings—great because you are supreme among the five types. You are the spiritual teacher (*bla ma*)—a mother (*ma*) dispensing the unsurpassed (*bla na med pa*) enlightened intention, whose secret mantras are great and supreme, free from extremes. Abiding in the modality of the path and fruit of the bodhisattvas who uphold the Great Vehicle, you are supreme in the ways of teaching the path of the Great Vehicle.

### ***The Pristine Cognition of Reality's Expanse***

**In the sixth chapter, entitled “[The Pristine Cognition of]**

**Reality's Expanse," there are twenty-five stanzas, the last of which is incomplete:**

You are the buddha body of reality, Vairocana (*rnam par snang mdzad che*), he who embodies the great activities (*mdzad che*) of the illuminating (*rnam par snang*) buddha body of perfect resource, and you are endowed with great sapience because you partake of the enlightened attributes of the Great Sage, Śākyendra, the buddha body of emanation. You are endowed with the outer way of secret mantra in which one meditates on an individual deity, with the great inner way in which one meditates on the deities in union, with the profound generation stage in which one meditates on the energy channels and winds [of the subtle body], and with the perfection stage in which one knows that all these lack inherent existence. You are endowed with the three buddha bodies arisen from these [practices], integrating the generation and perfection stages of the great way of secret mantra in common.

Having attained the ten transcendent perfections, you act for the benefit of living beings, while abiding in the ten transcendent perfections. Pure due to your indivisible realization of the ten transcendent perfections, you demonstrate the way of the ten transcendent perfections to living beings.

O Protector Mañjuśrī, you are the genuine lord of the ten levels. Without dwelling in the ten levels, you are an agent for the benefit of living beings. You embody the ten pure aspects of knowledge, namely, knowledge of phenomena, knowledge of subsequent understanding, knowledge of the minds of others, knowledge of relative appearances, knowledge of suffering, knowledge of the cause of suffering, knowledge of the cessation of suffering, knowledge of the path, knowledge of the cessation [of contamination], and knowledge that it will not subsequently arise. You know that the ten aspects of knowledge of the pious attendants are without inherent existence, and you maintain purity with respect to the ten aspects of knowledge.

The ten aspects [of egotistical view] comprise the apprehension of the self as singularity, the apprehension of the self as cause, the apprehension of the self as a consumer, the apprehension of the self as an agent, the apprehension of the self as autonomous, the apprehension of the self as permanent, the apprehension of the self as afflictive mental states, the apprehension of the self as purification, the apprehension of the self as a yogin, and the apprehension of the self as unliberated and liberated. You are the all-pervading lord since you know these, along with the meaning of the ten topics [that are antidotes for such] extremist views, and you act for the benefit of living beings through the ten powers of Munīndra—he who overpowers the four demonic forces. You enact the benefits of all living beings without exception, and you are mighty in your possession of the ten aspects of control, namely, control over the life span, control over past actions, and so forth.

Beginningless due to your familiarity with emptiness, you are the lord free from conceptual elaboration because you are without faults. You are the lord of the actual truth, empty of inherent existence, the buddha body of perfect resource and master of purity, speaking the truth. As the teacher of the Great Vehicle with unchanging words and a retinue of tenth-level bodhisattvas, you act just as you speak.

Without the duality of the two truths, and teaching their nonduality to living beings, you abide in the incontrovertible finality of existence. Selflessness resembles, for example, one growling with the roar of a lion who terrifies the feeble deer of extremism.

With power that is effective because you act for the sake of sentient beings everywhere in space and time, with alacrity resembling the mind of the tathāgata in acting for the benefit of sentient beings, you, Mañjuśrī, are endowed with great diverse powers, in the manner of a conqueror, victorious over pious attendants, a buddha triumphant over the foes of enlightened mind, and a universal monarch.

As Munīndra, master of the host of pious attendants,

foremost master of the host of hermit buddhas, protector of the three enlightened families, as Vairocana who is ruler of the hosts of bodhisattvas, and as the lord of hosts—the buddha body of reality which is pristine cognition—you, Mañjuśrī, are empowered. Endowed with great occult power, Mañjuśrī, with compassionate spirituality you caringly accept those beings to be trained, without forsaking them, and you do not look for help or depend on other predispositions apart from the great way of the Great Vehicle.

As the buddha body of emanation, the ruler who teaches words of provisional meaning, and as the buddha body of perfect resource, master of the words of the Great Vehicle, you are adroit in speech, infinite in words. Empowered with regard to all words and their meanings, you reveal infinite words to others. Your words are true and you speak truthfully to living beings, demonstrating to living beings the four truths.

Endowed with the irreversible fruit of not being subject to rebirth [within cyclic existence], of which the pious attendants partake, O Guide Jñānasattva, you dwell alone, as a hermit buddha, in the manner of an [isolated] rhinoceros. Then, in addition, you cultivate the provisions associated with the thirty-seven aspects of enlightenment, which offer diverse ways of emancipation, and through your aspiration to benefit living beings, you assume the primary physical elements. As such, you are endowed with the singular causal basis of enlightened mind.

Having emanated as a fully ordained monk, an arhat whose contaminants have ended, you act for the sake of living beings, and with sense faculties outwardly controlled because you are devoid of attachment, you have attained fearlessness with respect to the four demonic forces by acquiring the bliss [of nirvāṇa]. Since your passions have cooled due to freedom from fixation, you are without the turbulence of obscuration.

Endowed with awareness, associated with the training of meditative stability, and conduct, which is associated with the training in ethical discipline and discriminative awareness, O Sugata Jñānasattva, you are supreme in knowing the minds of

mundane trainees. In your own mind you are without possessiveness and without egotism because you are free from conceptual thoughts, abiding in realization where the modalities of the two truths are indivisible.

Having gone to the far shore of cyclic existence and having reached the end of the path of insight and the eleventh level, you abide on the dry land of nirvāṇa because you have perfected the two provisions. Having elucidated the unique cognition that knows [phenomena], in order to benefit living beings, you have eradicated substantial entities with the sword of discriminative awareness, emptiness.

Endowed with meditation to clarify, without grasping, the sacred doctrine of the view, O King of the Doctrine, you diversely illuminate mundane appearances but are foremost in conduct, engaging them without fixation. Mighty lord of all phenomena of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, O King of the Doctrine, Jñānasattva, you are the preceptor of the two truths constituting the path of excellence.

Having successfully fulfilled your own objective and fulfilled aspirations for the benefit of others, you have abandoned all grasping after imagination. The expanse without conceptual thought is endless, without increase or decrease, and the genuine enlightened attributes of reality's expanse are inexhaustible.

Since you are endowed with supreme merit, you are great in [talents] that originate from the provision of merit, and in the provision of pristine cognition that is the source of the enlightened attributes of pristine cognition. Endowed with the pristine cognition that knows [phenomena], you know all limits of existence and nonexistence. You are the accumulator of the provisions, comprising the two provisions.

Eternal, triumphant over all cyclic existence, yogin united in the fundamental nature of reality, endowed with the intelligence of discriminative awareness through which the meditative concentrations of calm abiding and higher insight are to be contemplated, you are the foremost, superior to [bodhisattvas] of the ninth level. The individual intrinsic

awareness is unwavering in your mind. First in supreme intrinsic awareness, you maintain the three buddha bodies.

Embodiment of the three buddha bodies and the five buddha bodies, and acting for the benefit of living beings, O All-Pervading Lord, you are the embodiment of the five pristine cognitions. Wearing the diadem of Vairocana, lord of the five buddhas, you maintain without attachment the five eyes, namely, the eye of flesh, the eye of the gods, the eye of the doctrine, the eye of the buddha, and the eye of discriminative awareness.

Progenitor of all the buddhas, you are also their father and mother, and you are the foremost of the genuine bodhisattva heirs of all the buddhas. Owing to discernment and realization, you are without any place of birth among living beings—the locations that originate from the three planes of rebirth. Since the source of all things that originate from dependent origination is actually uncreated, you dispel the entirety of the rebirth process.

In the uncreated essential nature it is accepted that you are the embodiment of indestructible reality, the emptiness that is unique and solid. No sooner born, you reach the enlightened intention of the lord of living beings—buddha among pious attendants and hermit buddhas. It is said that you are unoriginated from causes and conditions, but originating from space. You are the self-originated pristine cognition of awareness—discriminative awareness, a mighty inferno that burns conceptual thoughts of differentiation!

Vairocana, endowed with the great light that is the natural incandescence of pristine cognition, the shining light of great pristine cognition, the lamp of living beings, naturally radiant, and torch of pristine cognition, O ultimate Mañjuśrī, you are of great splendor and inner radiance.

Sovereign of supreme mantra, the uncreated syllable A, king of gnostic mantra empowered in all mantras, you are the king of secret mantra, achieving the supreme objective where the deities are in union. Endowed with the marvelous protuberance—the great protuberance that overwhelms through charisma—

O Mañjuśrī, lord of emptiness or space, you teach living beings in diverse ways.

Embodiment of all the buddhas of the three times, you yourself have the foremost of bodies. Endowed with the eye of pristine cognition that delights all living beings, you act on behalf of living beings in diverse physical forms. Progenitor of pristine cognition, you are the great sage, the buddha who is most respectfully worthy of offerings and worthy of eulogy.

Maintaining the three enlightened families of buddha body, speech, and mind with skillful means and discriminative awareness, and endowed with the most secret mantra, you keep the great commitments and encourage others to hold the commitments of the secret mantra. Foremost one, sustaining the three precious jewels on the crown of the head, you teach the three supreme vehicles of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas to living beings.

Securing the most purposeful benefit of living beings with the noose of compassionate spirituality, you are triumphant over cyclic existence. You are the great apprehender, holding [living beings] with compassionate spirituality and then snaring them with a noose of emptiness, indestructible reality, and compassion. The gatekeepers are symbolized respectively by the indestructible hook, noose, chain, and mighty bell.

### ***The Mirrorlike Pristine Cognition***

**In the seventh chapter, entitled “The Mirrorlike Pristine Cognition,” there are ten stanzas with an additional line:**

Vajrabhairava, terrifying the five poisons by means of your thirteen-deity [assemblage], transforming them into the five pristine cognitions, O King of Wrath, six-faced youth Ṣaḍānana, with six eyes and six powerful arms, forming a terrifying maṇḍala and baring skeleton-like white fangs. . .

Benefiting living beings by means of the maṇḍala of the hundred-faced Halāhala, O Yamāntaka (*gshin rje gshed po*)—you who are the slayer (*gshed po*) of the ruler of death (*gshin*



*rje*) and lord of death, triumphant over the host of obstructing spirits—you terrify cyclic existence with the great force of emptiness, the indestructible reality devoid of inherent existence. Renowned because you arise diversely from indestructible reality, which is emptiness, you are the indivisible nucleus of indestructible reality.

Endowed with a great indestructible abdomen, indicating that magical emptiness and diversely arising emanations are indivisible, you assume the body of a wrathful deity, an embodiment of indestructible reality arising from indestructible reality—the play of emptiness in emptiness. O Nucleus of Indestructible Reality, similar, for example, to space, the hair of your head is steadfast without moving, piled in a single tuft.

Wearing an upper garment of moist elephant hide, bellowing the mighty roar of HĀ HĀ which reveals skillful means to others, terrifying those who have familiarity [with you] in their own minds by the roar of HĪ HĪ, you are endowed with laughter because your joyous mighty laughter is delightful.

Loudly bellowing indestructible laughter, Vajrasattva (*rdo rje sems dpa'*)—heroic (*dpa'*) teacher of emptiness, in whom both the indestructible reality (*rdo rje*) of emptiness and the mind (*sems*) or awareness are indivisible—you are the great being, acting on behalf of others, the indestructible king endowed with the great bliss of the buddha body of perfect resource, wrathful body of indestructible ferocity, and great joy.

Bellowing the HŪṂ of Vajrahūṃkāra—gateway to the seed syllables indicative of buddha speech, holding an indestructible arrow as a weapon and severing [all things] without exception with an indestructible sword, gateway to the hand emblems indicative of buddha mind—you possess a vajra that secures the buddha body of indestructible reality, the gateway indicative of buddha body.

As you vanquish foes in battle with the unique vajra that is emptiness, endowed with the dreadful eye of indestructible blaze that is pristine cognition, the hair of your head is also ablaze with fire—the blaze of indestructible reality. You are the great ingress—the one who establishes the ingress of

indestructible reality.

Endowed with a hundred eyes, which are eyes of indestructible reality, indicative of inconceivable pristine cognition, your body is endowed with pores indicative of the intrinsic nature of indestructible reality—the indestructible hairs of your entire body indicating that the body is unique. Your fingernails are growing sharp, like the tips of a vajra.

Endowed with the thick skin of the indestructible nucleus, wearing a garland of vajras, and glorious, you are beauteously adorned with ornaments of blazing indestructible reality, your voice definitively bellowing the overpowering laughter of HĀ HĀ.

The indestructible sound of the six-syllable mantra ARAPACANĀYA and the great resonance of the names of mighty Mañjuḥoṣa reverberate the sound of the doctrine in unison throughout the limitless expanse of space, because there is nowhere in the three world systems that they are unheard. This is the best of those possessed of the predisposition, sound.

### ***The Pristine Cognition of Discernment***

**In the eighth chapter, entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Discernment,” there are forty-two stanzas:**

Genuinely endowed with the selflessness of phenomena and the selflessness of the individual, the actual truth, and the finality of existence, you are devoid of syllables, having annihilated [wrong] views, eclipsed conventions, and rendered all philosophical systems inconspicuous. Supreme teacher, leader of bulls expounding emptiness, O Mañjuśrī, you resonate the profound doctrine of secret mantra and the extensive doctrine of the transcendent perfections for the sake of those to be trained.

As the conch of the sacred doctrine, you are endowed with the great sound that reveals the profound [teachings]. As the gong of the sacred doctrine, you are endowed with the great sound that reveals the extensive [teachings]. Attainer of the nonabiding nirvāṇa, free from extremes, essential nature of

Jñānasattva, you demonstrate the mighty drum of the sacred doctrine in the particular fields of the ten directions.

You are the buddha body of reality, devoid of physical forms; the buddha body of perfect resource, endowed with genuinely noble form; and the glorious buddha body of emanation, illuminating the diverse corporeal forms made of thought and all physical forms, the sustainer of all reflected imagery, without exception.

Invincible in all ways and greatly renowned because you are all-pervasive, you are the mighty lord in possession of the three world systems. Endowed with the eightfold noble path and abiding on the highest eleventh level, you are the pinnacle of the great banner of enlightened attributes, indicative of the entire doctrines of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.

With the body of youthful Mañjuśrī, unique in the three world systems, you benefit living beings as an elder, a senior arhat, a lord of living creatures, and so forth. Maintaining the thirty-two excellent major marks and adorned with the eighty beautiful minor marks, you are handsome throughout the three worlds.

Knowing the cyclic world to be without inherent existence, master of the excellence of nirvāṇa which is without inherent existence, O Mañjuśrī, fearless and foremost master of the world of living beings, ancient protector, savior, and handsome befriender of the cyclic world, O Mañjuśrī, you are the unsurpassed refuge of trainees and defender of the means of training. Endowed with resources suitable for training living beings who fill the limits of space through diverse means, performing oceanic acts of benefit for the sake of living beings through the pristine cognition that quantitatively knows all things, bursting and eliminating the eggshell of the obscuration of ignorance, you are the destroyer of the fundamental ignorance of the net of rebirth.

Pacifying the amalgam of ideation associated with afflictive mental states without exception, reaching nirvāṇa—the far shore of the ocean of cyclic existence—and possessing the diadem indicative of the attainment of the empowerment of pristine cognition, you have the perfect buddhas as your

adornments.

Pacifying and released from the eight sufferings encompassed in the three aspects of suffering, which are associated respectively with formative predispositions, change, and actual suffering, you dispel the threefold [mundane] body, speech, and mind and attain the pure and endless three modes of liberation associated with the three buddha bodies. Emancipated from all the twofold obscurations, you abide in the meditative equipoise of sameness, which resembles space.

Having transcended the stains of afflictive mental states [during meditative equipoise], you understand the three times and timelessness during postmeditation. As the buddha—mighty *nāga* among all sentient beings—O Mañjuśrī, you are the summit of those tenth-level bodhisattvas who themselves partake of the summit of enlightened attributes.

Liberated from all the five attributes of the senses which are the objects of the afflictive mental states, established in the truth of emptiness, the path of space, bringing forth all that is desired in the manner of those holding the great wish-fulfilling gem, all-pervading lord, Jñānasattva, you are the best of all precious things.

Bringing forth the extensive benefit of living beings, in the manner of a mighty wish-granting tree, you are the greatest because you act for the benefit of living beings in the manner of a noble vase [that grants all wishes]. Although you achieve your own benefit, you also act for the benefit of all sentient beings, and you exhibit fond affection and love for sentient beings because you seek the benefit of living beings.

Knowing, through your compassionate spirituality, those students who are excellent and poor recipients, and knowing the appropriate times for teaching, all-pervading lord, you know the commitments that benefit living beings, and you keep the commitments without transgressing them. Knowing the appropriate times for imparting training, you know those sentient beings of sharp and dull acumen, and you are adroit in the three modes of liberation, which are the vehicles of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas.

Endowed with enlightened attributes for your own benefit, you know those enlightened attributes that are for the benefit of others. Knowing [as you do] that all things are without inherent existence, the auspicious view brings forth the auspicious result, the meditation gateway to all that is auspicious, and auspicious conduct. Virtuous is your reputation, auspicious Jñānasattva, renowned among living beings!

Offering great consolation from differentiating thoughts, and with great festivity, bringing delight and joy to those who are to be trained, you are a display of supreme delight, which is great because you guide by diverse skillful means. Adroit and respected by living beings, you are a focal point of excellent service. Delighting in the supreme adamantine meditative stability, you abide on the eleventh level, glorious Jñānasattva, lord renowned in all the tantras.

Endowed with the supreme major and minor marks, you confer the supreme vehicle on bodhisattvas of the tenth level. As their supreme and principal lord, O Mañjuśrī, you are the most sacred and worthy refuge among refuges. Known as the enemy of great fears (*'jigs chen dgra*), you are the excellent and most perfect defender of living beings, the dispeller of all fears of cyclic existence, without exception.

With a matted braid of hair, a topknot fastened with a pin of precious gold, and flowing locks, you wear a diadem indicative of the lord of the enlightened family, its top fastened with a bond of matted rattan-like hair. Acting for the benefit of living beings, you have five faces, each [head] with five braids of hair and five matted topknots bound with floral crests.

With round and shaven head and great ascetic discipline that naturally arises, in the guise of a fully ordained monk, celibate in conduct, you are supreme in the ascetic disciplines of the pious attendants and hermit buddhas and the conduct of the awareness holders. As Śākyamuni, Gautama, at Rājagṛha and elsewhere, you maintain the twelve great ascetic practices through which austerity is perfected, and the sacred vows of purification.

As a brāhmaṇ, a celibate anchorite, and in the guise of a bodhisattva—knower of Great Brahmā and the two truths—you act for the benefit of living beings and attain nirvāṇa, the purity of adamant meditative stability that transcends suffering. You are endowed with the body of a sugata, emancipated and released from cyclic existence and liberated in nirvāṇa. Because you are liberated from thoughts of differentiation, the obscuration of afflictive mental states is quiescent and the obscuration of knowledge is quiescent.

As a bodhisattva endowed with the quiescence of nirvāṇa, as a buddha—one who has attained nirvāṇa—and as an excellent pious attendant or hermit buddha who has almost attained nirvāṇa, having perfected these states in order to transcend and dispel the limits of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, happiness and suffering, you are not an object of the intellect but free from attachment, transcendent of the body composed of contaminants.

Endowed with the four assurances, unconquered, incomparable buddha body of reality, you know the truth that is devoid of extremes. Inconspicuous as an object, unperceived by the intellect as an object, devoid of the distinguishing marks associated with the transmissions, permanent owing to your unchanging embodiment, Jñānasattva, you are the pervader with total access because you appear diversely, subtle, hard to comprehend, devoid of the contaminants of afflictive mental states, and devoid of fundamental ignorance that is the seed of cyclic existence.

Immaculate buddha body of reality, stainless buddha body of perfect resource, taintless buddha body of emanation, Mañjuśrī, devoid of faults and flawless, you are wide awake to the power of aspirations, and a master of wakefulness since you are engaged in benefiting living beings. You are the genuine one in whom all-knowing quantitative knowledge and all-cognizant definitive knowledge are indivisible.

Transcending the phenomenal nature of conceptual thoughts and consciousness, maintaining the modality of pristine cognition in which awareness and emptiness are without

duality, you are the presence of the essential nature, free from conceptual thought and effortless, performing the enlightened activity of the buddhas of the three times.

Uncreated buddha without beginning and without cessation or end, original buddha body of reality, without cause and conditions, stainless buddha body of perfect resource, teaching the Great Vehicle with the unique eye of pristine cognition, you are the tathāgata—the buddha body of emanation endowed with the body of pristine cognition.

Master of words, great adroit expounder of provisional meaning, exemplary expounder of definitive meaning, king of speech, you are the best of expounders, the supreme repository adroit in both provisional and definitive [meanings], the invincible and peerless lion of speech.

Seeing all living beings, you are endowed with supreme delight, giving rise to happiness, with blazing splendor, ornaments, and garlands that are pleasant and beautiful to behold. You manifest the features of your body to living beings, including the glorious eternal knot at the heart, indicative of nonconceptuality and ablaze with fine light, and the light that blazes in your hands.

Supremely great physician, foremost of those alleviating the ailments of living beings, unsurpassed extractor of the pain of afflictive mental states, you are the tree of all medications, without exception, comprising the eighty-four thousand aggregates of the sacred doctrine, the mighty foe and subduer of all ailments, comprising the eighty-four thousand afflictive mental states.

Lovely and preeminent among those who impart training in the three world systems, acting for the benefit of living beings with the circle of glorious constellations, and extending as far as the limitless reaches of space throughout the ten directions, starting with the east, you excellently raise the victory banner of the sacred doctrine.

Unique umbrella, offering shelter from the heat of different afflictions for the sake of living beings, wide and all-pervasive, with a [maṇḍala] circle of both loving-kindness and compassion

that is not separated from living beings, you are the glorious buddha body of form, performing the diverse movements of the [Lotus] Lord of the Dance, untainted by flaws in the manner of a lotus. Great lord, pervading living beings with compassionate spirituality, you are the unique refuge, an excellent umbrella of precious gems.

Great splendor of all the buddhas, manifest to all, holding the three bodies of all the buddhas, great union of the two inseparable truths of all the buddhas, you are the unique one, in the essential nature of the uncreated teaching of all the buddhas.

Endowed with the glory of empowerment through the vajra and gem-stone crown, you are the genuine lord of all masters of the precious gem from which all that is desired emerges; you are Avalokiteśvara, the lord of the world, the master of all who acts on behalf of living beings; and you are Mañjuśrī, the Lord of Secrets, and Vajradhara, ruler of all.

You are the greatness of the mind of all the buddhas, Vajrapāṇi abiding in the mind of all the buddhas, Mañjuśrī, the greatness of the body of all the buddhas, and you are also Avalokita, the speech of all the buddhas.

You are the indestructible sun, with an intense aureole of light, the intrinsic nature of discriminative awareness and the lower palate which facilitates recitation; and the indestructible moon with an aureole of taintless diffusing light, the intrinsic nature of skillful means associated with the upper palate. Once the tongue has been visualized as the natural expression of indestructible reality, the vowels and the consonants emerge. The causal vehicles and so forth are devoid of attachment, and the mantra vehicles are endowed with great attachment, resembling a blazing light that acts on behalf of living beings by means of diverse colors, which are the vehicles.

You are a perfect buddha because you have attained nirvāṇa, seated in the posture of equipoise in indestructible reality, which is emptiness. You maintain the sacred doctrine of the buddha body of form for the benefit of living beings. O lotus-born glorious buddha, untainted by the defects of cyclic



existence, you hold the repository of pristine cognition that knows all things quantitatively and knows them definitively. This verse and the next two lines [of the subsequent verse] reveal that the glorious lotus-born buddha Saroruhavajra or Padmākara is himself indivisible from Mañjuśrī.

King of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, maintaining the diverse magical emanations indicative of manifold skillful means, buddha endowed with qualities of greatness including ten powers, you hold the gnostic mantras of renunciation and realization. You are brandishing a sword with mighty light in the right hand, indicative of sharp indestructible reality or emptiness, and supporting in the left hand a book containing the supreme scripture, indicative of the purity of the uncreated syllable A.

You cut off the sufferings of cyclic existence by means of the path and fruit of the Great Vehicle, brandishing the indestructible sword, which is a mighty weapon, and supporting the book of the indestructible doctrine. With buddha mind of profound indestructible reality, victorious buddha speech, and victorious buddha body, your intelligence that discerns indestructible reality or emptiness knows all things, just as they are.

Having comprehended and perfected all the transcendent perfections and the ten levels, endowed with the ornaments of the eleventh level and the levels of all the pious attendants and hermit buddhas, O Mañjuśrī, you are the purity of ultimate truth, free from phenomena owing to the selflessness of the individual and phenomena, and you are the exquisite moonlight of the buddha body of perfect resource, the genuine pristine cognition of reality's expanse.

Buddha body of emanation, endowed with perseverance, without duality in respect of the net of magical emptiness, arising as diverse emanations, O Supreme Mañjuśrī, you are the master of all tantras since this is the root tantra of all the tantras of word, tantras of meaning, Ubhayatantras, Yogatantras, and Unsurpassed Tantras. You are endowed with the seat that arises from emptiness or indestructible reality,

comprising the lotus, sun, and moon cushions without exception, and you hold the five pristine cognitions, the five buddha bodies and their retinues, without exception.

Acting on behalf of living beings as the bodhisattva Samantabhadra, Mañjuśrī Sumati, Kṣitigarbha, Avalokiteśvara the sustainer of living beings, and so forth, you are endowed with the nucleus of all the buddhas, the great pristine cognition of reality's expanse in which all the five pristine cognitions are indivisible. You become manifest to living beings, holding the various extensive and concise assemblages of deities, the circles emanating from that [pristine cognition].

Supreme and indivisible from emptiness, which is the intrinsic nature of all entities, maintaining by means of meditative equipoise the emptiness that is the intrinsic nature of all entities, you then act for the benefit of living beings because during postmeditation the uncreated doctrine present in meditative equipoise diversely arises, and you hold in your mind the essential nature in which all things are coalesced.

Maintaining in a single instant, through your great discriminative awareness, the comprehension that all things are without inherent existence, you are endowed with the clear realization of all things and liberated from grasping the uncreated. O Sage with supreme intelligence that knows the actual truth, subduing the four demonic forces, this is the finality of the material elements [of existence], liberated from the cyclic world.

Unwavering in acting on behalf of living beings, with an extremely clear disposition for the sake of living beings, perfect buddha holding enlightenment for the sake of others, comprehending the reality of all the buddhas with direct perception, you radiate light, [burning] thoughts of differentiation with the sharp flames of remedial pristine cognition.

### ***The Pristine Cognition of Sameness***

**In the ninth chapter, entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Sameness,” there are twenty-four stanzas:**

Accomplishing the desired objectives of yourself and others, you are the best and supreme one who has perfected the eleventh [level] and purified all lower realms by means of votive terracottas (*tsha tsha*), cremation rites, and so forth. O Protector of living beings, supreme refuge of all worlds, you liberate all sentient beings from all fetters.

Unique Mañjuśrī, heroic in battle against the eighty[-four] thousand afflictive mental states, subjugator of the arrogance of inimical forces, comprising the fundamental ignorance of unknowing, desire, and hatred, you are the buddha body of reality, endowed with intelligence, and the glorious buddha body of perfect resource that transcends cyclic existence. Maintaining a sensuous demeanor, you also assume heroic, wrathful, and unpleasant forms.

Moving all your hundred arms of wrath and performing various dances with the stepping of your feet, you dance, pervading the entirety of space, filling it with your hundred powerful and glorious arms.

With the sole of a single foot, you can press down upon the area covered by the four continents that form the earth maṇḍala, and also, simply with the surface of the nail of your big toe, you can press down upon the realms of Brahmā, from their summit.

Endowed with the meaning of the doctrine, the singular ultimate meaning that is nondual and free from the four extremes, endowed with the ultimate meaning that is free from synonyms and cannot be destroyed by the defects of cyclic existence, you reveal meaningful forms that train in accord with need the various apperceptions of those to be trained. You know and partake of the continuum of diverse minds and consciousnesses.

Delighting in the demonstration that all entities and objects without exception are objects of emptiness, endowed with compassion and intelligence that is attached to those individuals who delight in emptiness, having renounced

attachment to the three planes of existence and so forth in your own mental continuum, you rejoice with great delight in the living beings of the three planes of existence.

White like pure white clouds and so forth, untainted by defects, you are beautiful like the autumn moon and the rising sun, the light of your fingernails copper-colored, intensely red.

Since you are endowed with a diadem and so forth, the excellent major marks including supreme hair, and the minor marks with [the luster of] great jewels, you have the ornaments that reveal the buddha body of emanation throughout the billion worlds with their four continents.

Rousing all the living beings of hundreds of world realms from cyclic existence, endowed with the great power of the four supports for miraculous ability, O Mañjuśrī, you maintain great mindfulness of the actual truth because you possess the five pristine cognitions, and you are endowed with the four applications of mindfulness and the king of adamantite meditative stability.

Fragrant with pleasant flowers since you are adorned with the seven aspects of enlightenment, ocean of the enlightened attributes, including the powers of the tathāgata and the assurances, knowing the modality of the noble eightfold path concerning [correct] view, thought, speech, action, and so forth, you know and comprehend the five paths of the genuine buddha and so forth.

Highly attached since you reveal your emanations to all sentient beings, without attachment since, like space, you are untainted by defects even though you act for the benefit of living beings, engaging with and revealing the buddha body in conformity with the minds of all sentient beings, you are swift [in movement] like the minds of all sentient beings, for the sake of all sentient beings.

Knowing the detailed specification of the dispositions of all sentient beings; delighting and captivating the minds of sentient beings to be trained; knowing the real nature of the five aggregates including physical forms; and understanding that they are impermanent, imbued with suffering, and devoid

of self, you maintain the five pure aggregates that are free from contaminants.

Abiding in the adamant stability that is the conclusion of all modes of emancipation, adroit in all the paths of the modes of emancipation, abiding through your own conduct in the paths of all modes of emancipation, you reveal to living beings all paths of emancipation.

Uprooting the twelve links of dependent origination and the fundamental ignorance that is the basis of the rebirth process, holding the twelve pure aspects corresponding to the twelve links of dependent origination, along with comprehension of the aspects of the four truths, you maintain the pure realization of the eight modes of consciousness.

Endowed with knowledge of the twelve aspects of the four truths, knowing the sixteen aspects of the reality of emptiness, enlightened through the twenty aspects according to which each of the five aggregates is considered in terms of its four modalities—impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness—you are supreme in knowing all the ways in which all phenomena of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa manifest buddhahood.

Sending forth the emanational bodies of all the buddhas, the individual deities, the circles of the maṇḍala, and the inestimable tens of millions of peaceful and wrathful deities, clearly realizing the meanings of reality at all moments, you understand and know all meanings of the minds of all sentient beings in an instant.

Through the skillful means of diverse non-Buddhist and Buddhist vehicles, high and low, unwaveringly realizing the benefit of living beings, you attain emancipation from the sufferings of cyclic existence through the three vehicles and abide in the supreme fruit of the single unsurpassed vehicle.

Lord purifying the afflictive mental states and world systems, terminating the realms of cyclic existence associated with past actions, crossing all oceans, specifically the four rivers of craving, desire, fundamental ignorance, and egotistical view, you emerge from the isolated hermitage of emptiness, united in

the two provisions.

Finally abandoning the five poisons and mistaken view that comprise the [primary] afflictive mental states, along with the twenty subsidiary afflictive mental states, including anger, enmity, annoyance, and miserliness, as well as the mind consumed by all the general afflictive mental states, as well as the substratum consciousness and the propensities, you act purposefully for the benefit of living beings through great compassion, discriminative awareness, and skillful means.

You have abandoned the objective entities that are the apprehension of all symbolic perceptions, and the objective reality of your discriminative awareness that apprehends consciousness brings about the cessation of all external objects. Assuming the form of a deity corresponding to the perceptual range of all sentient beings who are to be trained, you know with your nonconceptual buddha mind the minds of all sentient beings. Your nonconceptual pristine cognition, abiding in the minds of all sentient beings, engages to teach the sacred doctrine in conformity with the minds of all these sentient beings. Satisfying the minds of all sentient beings, you delight the minds of all sentient beings.

Unbewildered in reaching the conclusion of philosophical systems for the benefit of living beings, you have abandoned all the errors of misconception, with an intelligence that is free from hesitation and doubt throughout the three times or three scopes. You are the master because you act for the benefit of all living beings from extremists to bodhisattvas, and you are in control of the three attributes espoused by the non-Buddhists, namely, lightness of being, motility, and dullness or inertia.

You distinguish details in respect of the objects that constitute the five aggregates, which are rendered groundless when the phenomena of the three times are analyzed, and in respect of all the indivisible moments of time, which are also rendered nonexistent when the phenomena of the three times are analyzed. Bringing forth perfect buddhahood in an instantaneous moment of time, progressing from the tenth level to the eleventh, you maintain the adamant meditative

stability that is the intrinsic nature of all the buddhas.

Endowed with the incorporeal buddha body of reality, the corporeal buddha body of perfect resource, and the supreme buddha body of emanation, you are realized in the conclusive goal of the body since you are adroit in the objectives of the three buddha bodies. Everywhere revealing the diverse forms that train each according to need, you bring forth all that is desired, in the manner of the supreme gem, Ratnaketu.

### ***The Pristine Cognition of Accomplishment***

**In the tenth chapter, entitled “The Pristine Cognition of Accomplishment,” there are fifteen stanzas:**

Nonabiding nirvāṇa, which is the unsurpassed enlightenment of the buddhas to be realized by all the buddhas of the three times, devoid of syllables having emerged from the secret mantra without intellectual objectification, you are endowed with the three enlightened families of the great secret mantra, the miraculous buddha body, speech, and mind created from that disposition, which arises diversely.

Progenitor of all objectives of the secret mantra endowed with the four rites, unerring vital essence that is devoid of syllables and great because it permeates everything, great emptiness without inherent existence comprising the syllables of relative appearance that correspond to the five classes of sentient beings, you appear manifoldly as the hundred syllables of phenomenal existence, the expressive energy of this reality constituting the empty vital essence.

Endowed with all aspects of the circle of deities of relative appearance, and without aspects since in the perfection stage the deities lack inherent existence, you master supernormal powers and miraculous abilities because you have experientially cultivated the energy channels, winds, and vital essences [of the subtle body], inasmuch as the sixteen channel branches, the eight [channel branches] that comprise half that number, the four energy centers that are half that again, and

the vital essence or seminal fluid and its light all assume the form of syllables. Then, meditating that these [syllables] transcend all calculations and that they lack the elaboration of subdivisions or words, you partake of the summit of the fourth mundane meditative concentration, which is the particularly exalted emptiness.

Knowing all the meditative concentrations and their branches, including the heroic [meditative stability]; knowing all the mundane and supramundane meditative stabilities; and knowing on the basis of that familiarity the categories of all living beings, Mañjuśrī, you are the one who has a body of realized meditative stability, the best of corporeal forms, king of all apparitional aspects of the buddha body of perfect resource.

Endowed with the buddha body of emanation, the essential nature of which is the inseparability of the three buddha bodies, best of corporeal forms, you reveal and maintain the lineages of the buddha's emanations for the sake of endless beings to be trained, diffusing diverse emanations who impart training according to need throughout the ten directions, and acting diversely for the benefit of living beings, in accordance with the constitution and acumen of living beings.

Viṣṇu, the great god mighty among the gods; Śakra, god among the gods; Brahmā, potentate of the gods; Rāhu, lord of the demigods; Bṛhaspati, guru of the immortal elemental [masters] and the gods; Vemacitra, the destroyer; Daśagrīva, the destructive ten-headed cannibal ogre of Lañkā; and the supreme almighty Mahādeva—O Mañjuśrī, all these are your emanations.

Having crossed over from the state of emptiness, the wilderness that is the intrinsic nature of existence, O unique and peerless teacher, unsurpassed among living beings, with marks renowned throughout the ten directions of the world, you are the great patron, bequeathing the meaning of the uncontaminated sacred doctrine.

Clad in the strong armor of loving-kindness that protects living beings from obstacles, unharmed by hatred, wearing the



chain mail of compassion, brandishing the sword of discriminative awareness along with the bow and arrow in your hands, you have destroyed in battle and annihilated the eighty[-four] thousand afflictive mental states and the fundamental ignorance of unknowing.

Heroic Jñānasattva, unconquerable by others, enemy of demonic forces, taming the obstructing demonic forces, alleviating all fears of the four demonic forces without exception, you defeat the armies of demons and their cohorts, O perfect buddha Mañjuśrī, guide of mundane beings.

Mañjuśrī, you are worthy of offerings, worthy of praise, an object of homage, worthy of veneration at all times, worthy of respect, supreme among those to be worshipped, worthy of obeisance, and best or highest of spiritual teachers.

Taking a single step, you stride across the three worlds in an instant, overwhelming them without limits because like space you are untainted by the defects of cyclic existence, clean and pure because you are untainted in respect of the limits of the threefold knowledge comprising being, non-being, and nonduality. You possess the six supernormal cognitive powers, comprising the supernormal power of clairvoyance and those of clairaudience, knowing the minds of others, death and transference of consciousness, miraculous abilities, and the end of contaminants. And you also possess the six recollections with respect to the buddha, the sacred doctrine, the monastic community, generosity, the god realms, and the spiritual teacher.

Bodhisattva, great spiritual being, intent on the benefit of self and the benefit of others, transcending the world through the four supports for great miraculous ability, abiding in the finality of the transcendent perfection of discriminative awareness born of study and thought, you have attained the adamant meditative stability through the discriminative awareness born of meditation.

Having abandoned through adamant meditative stability the entirety of the subjective and objective dichotomy, that is, the subjective intrinsic awareness and the objective extraneous

awareness, supreme because you arise from that meditative stability as the buddha body of form, as an individual intent on the welfare of all beings, surpassing all comparisons, you are the supreme lord, mastering the awareness or cognition that makes appraisals and the objects of cognition that are appraised.

Foremost patron, granting the supreme sacred doctrine to living beings, revealing the meaning of the four unsurpassed seals, you are the supreme object of respect and veneration among living beings and those who traverse the threefold emancipation of the pious attendants, hermit buddhas, and bodhisattvas.

Pure and glorious because you comprehend the vehicles of ultimate meaning, greatly fortunate because you are endowed with an intelligence that is incontrovertible in the three worlds, you achieve all endowments because you reveal the glorious buddha body that trains living beings according to need. This eulogy is offered to you, Mañjuśrī, best of the glorious ones, by means of the five pristine cognitions, each [chapter of] verse referring to each of the pristine cognitions respectively.

### ***Eulogy to the Five Conquerors***

**In the eleventh chapter, entitled “The Eulogy [to the Five Conquerors],” there are five stanzas:**

Homage to you, supreme Jñānasattva, giver of the best, in whom the pristine cognition of reality’s expanse and the five aspects of the indestructible pristine cognition are indivisible! Homage to you, who have reached the finality of existence, where the intellect has no object! Homage to you, originating from emptiness, created from the uncreated! Homage to you, enlightenment of the buddhas, endowed with the excellence of renunciate [conduct]!

You are the attachment of the buddhas, attached to the welfare of sentient beings. You are the desire of the buddhas, with desire for the welfare of living beings. You are the

rejoicing of the buddhas, rejoicing in the welfare of living beings. You are the play of the buddhas, revealing diverse forms.

You are the smiling buddha, the form associated with the rites of pacification. You are the laughing buddha, the form associated with the rites of enrichment. You are the buddha speech, the form associated with the rites of subjugation. You are the buddha mind, the form associated with the rites of wrath.

You are the emptiness originating from nonexistence, the buddha body of reality originating from the buddhas, its exemplar originating from space, and the five pristine cognitions originating from pristine cognition.

Homage to you, the *Net of Magical Emanation*, in whom bliss and emptiness are indivisible, to you revealing the play of the buddhas, to you partaking of the diverse wrathful forms, all for all, and to you, partaking of the body of pristine cognition itself, which is radiant and nonconceptual in respect of all things of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa.

### ***The Presentation of Advantages***

**In the twelfth chapter, entitled “[The Presentation of] Advantages,” the words take the form of prose.**

The infinite advantages [of chanting this litany] should be known from the scriptures that establish them, as enunciated in the tantra itself.

### ***The [Arrangement of the] Mantras***

**In the thirteenth chapter, entitled “The [Arrangement of the] Mantras,” there are three stanzas.**

[As for the mantra OM SARVADHARMĀ ’BHĀVASVABHĀVAVIŚUDDHĀ VAJRACAṢṢU A Ā AṂ AḤ] OM implies the “five pristine cognitions.” SARVADHARMĀ means “all things.” ABHĀVA means “nonentity.”

SVABHĀVA means “intrinsic nature.” VIŚUDDHĀ means “pure.” VAJRACAṢU means “indestructible vision.” A Ā implies “the uncreated.” AṂ AḤ implies “intrinsically present.”

[As for the mantra PRAKṚTIPARIŚUDDHĀḤ SARVADHARMĀ YADUTA SARVATATHĀGATAJÑĀNAKĀYAMAÑJUŚRĪPARIŚUDDHITĀM UPĀDĀYETI A ĀḤ] PRAKṚTIPARIŚUDDHĀḤ means “intrinsically pure.” SARVADHARMĀ means “all things.” YADUTA means “that is to say.” SARVATATHĀGATA means “all the tathāgatas.” JÑĀNAKĀYA means “body of pristine cognition.” MAÑJUŚRĪ denotes “Mañjuśrī” (*‘jam dpa*). PARIŚUDDHITĀM means “purity.” UPĀDĀYETI A ĀḤ implies “they themselves have partaken of.”

[As for the mantra SARVATATHĀGATAHRDAYA HARA HARA OṂ HŪM HRĪḤ] SARVATATHĀGATA means “all the tathāgatas.” HRDAYA means “heart.” HARA HARA means “Annihilate! Annihilate!” OṂ HŪM HRĪḤ implies “buddha body, speech, and mind.”

[As for the mantra BHAGAVAN JÑĀNAMŪRTE] BHAGAVAN means “transcendent lord.” JÑĀNA means “pristine cognition.” MŪRTE means “embodiment” (in the vocative).

[As for the mantra VĀGĪŚVARA MAHĀPACA] VĀGĪŚVARA means “lord of speech.” MAHĀPACA means “endowed with great ripening.”

[As for the mantra SARVADHARMAGAGANĀMALASUPARIŚUDDHADHARMADHĀTUJÑĀNAGARBHA ĀḤ] SARVADHARMA means “all things.” GAGANA means “sky.” AMALASUPARIŚUDDHA means “stainless and pure.” DHARMADHĀTU means “reality’s expanse.” JÑĀNA means “pristine cognition.” GARBHA means “nucleus.” ĀḤ implies the uncreated.

## ***Rejoicing***

**In the** fourteenth **chapter**, entitled “Rejoicing,” there are five stanzas:

Then the glorious Lord of Secrets Vajrapāṇi, Vajradhara himself, joyful and delighted, folded his palms together and paid homage to the protector of living beings, the Transcendent Lord, the tathāgata and perfect buddha Śākyamuni.

Then the protector of living beings, the Lord of Secrets Vajrapāṇi, together with the wrathful kings and other diverse attendants, having offered their eulogy to this most secret tantra, made this following supplication:

“We rejoice in the words of the teacher, O Protector of gods and humans! Most excellent! Very excellent! These fine words and meanings have been excellently spoken, so that we and unprotected living beings who swiftly seek the fruit of liberation through this great tantra might achieve the supreme aim of attaining the genuinely perfect and unsurpassed enlightenment. This lucidly promulgated *Net of Magical Emanation*, the intrinsic nature of which unites both the ‘magical’ ultimate truth and the ‘emanational’ relative truth as if in a ‘net,’ is supreme among the excellent paths of pure, conclusive meaning.

“Since its words and meanings are profound and it reveals all the vehicles, it is vast. Even a single word is extensive because there are diverse commentarial interpretations. This great objective, provisional and conclusive, within the perceptual range of the buddhas of the ten directions and four times who act for the benefit of all living beings, is extensively explained by all the genuinely perfect buddhas of the three times.”

### *The Conclusion*

The third part [of the fifth topic, comprising Book 17, Part 2] is the conclusion: This completes the litany of the names of the transcendent lord Mañjuśrī, the supreme Being of Pristine Cognition (Jñānasattva), which was spoken by the transcendent lord and tathāgata Śākyamuni.

This interpretation accords with the commentary revealed by Avalokiteśvara to the master Candragomin. However, there are also many other commentarial traditions according to the different classes of tantra; since these are verses of indestructible reality (*vajrapada, rdo rje tshig*), it is permissible to comment upon them in that manner, and so there are many

dissimilar commentarial approaches followed in the Indic texts.

**This completes Book 17 of *The Precious Treasury of Sūtra and Tantra*, which elucidates the meaning of all the vehicles—a commentary on the chapters of the *Secret Nucleus*, which concern the ground, path, and result that derive from the diffusion of the wrathful deities, along with its concluding entrustment and the interlinear commentary on the chapters of *The Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*.**

## THE OUTLINE: BOOKS 15 TO 17

### *A Creeping Plant That Brings Forth Wishes* ---

This outline derives from and is occasionally elaborated on the basis of the synopsis found in the Sichuan edition of the *mDo rgyud mdzod*,<sup>1076</sup> from which the original Tibetan table of contents<sup>1077</sup> has been extracted. Readers will note that there are three distinct categories of numbering. The numbers in the left-hand column represent the nested structure of this synoptic outline, with their initial two digits specifically denoting the book number (15, 16, or 17). The boldface numbers in parentheses, immediately following the text, represent the calculation of the subtopics made by Choying Tobden Dorje for mnemonic purposes, following the sequence of their first occurrence in the original Tibetan, albeit with some modifications that have already been noted. The numbers in the final column denote the pagination of the various subtopics as they appear in the present publication.

## **BOOK 15: SECRET NUCLEUS: THE INCEPTION ('CHAR TSHUL)**

	Verses of homage	5
	Content of Books 15 to 17	5
	Book 15 concerns the historical narrative, along with an exposition of the title [of the <i>Guhyagarbha Tantra</i> ], an analysis [of the content and words of the tantra], and the actual inception [of the tantra text, chs. 1-3] ( <i>lo rgyus mtshan bstan dbye ba 'char tshul</i> )	
	Book 16 concerns the diffusion of the peaceful deities [chs. 4-14] ( <i>zhi ba'i 'phros tshul</i> )	
	Book 17 concerns the diffusion of the wrathful deities ( <i>khro bo'i 'phros tshul</i> ) [chs. 15-22], along with the colophon [of the <i>Tantra of the Secret Nucleus</i> ] ( <i>mjug</i> ) [ch. 23] and a commentary on the [related] <i>Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī</i> ( <i>mtshan brjod 'grel pa</i> ).	
	Summary of Book 15	5
15.1	The framing narrative ( <i>lo rgyus bshad pa</i> )	6
15.1.1	The cycle of the <i>Net of Magical Emanation</i>	6
15.1.2	Compilation and prophetic declaration	9
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1.2.3.2	1
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16.1.1.1. The context ( <i>don gyi 'grel dgod</i> ) (58)	2	1	0
2.1			
16.1.1.1. The explanation of the verses ( <i>tshig gi don bshad</i> ) (59)	2	1	1
2.2			
16.1.1.1. The sequence of spiritual accomplishments that are to be attained ( <i>gang sgrub pa dngos grub kyi rim pa</i> ) (61)	2	1	1
2.2.1			
16.1.1.1. A demonstration of the primordially pure nature of mind, which is the basis of spiritual accomplishment ( <i>ye nas dag pa'i sems nyid dngos grub kyi rtsa bar bstan pa</i> ) (64)	2	1	1
2.2.1.1			
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2.2.1.2			
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2.2.1.3			
16.1.1.1. A demonstration of the spontaneous accomplishment of the four rites, which is a sign that the pristine cognitions have been accomplished ( <i>ye shes grub pa'i rtags su las bzhi lhun gyis grub pa'i dngos grub bstan pa</i> )	2	1	4
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16.1.1.1.	An exegesis of the means of attaining the consummation of the five	2
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16.1.1.1.	The similes that illustrate these attainments ( <i>de dag grub pa'i dpe</i> ) (67)	2
2.2.1.4		1
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16.1.1.1.	The nature of the cloud mass of letters through which these are attained	2
2.2.2	( <i>gang gis bsgrubs pa yi ge'i sprin gyi rang bzhin</i> ) (62)	2
		0
16.1.1.1.	The individuals by whom these are attained ( <i>gang zag gis bsgrubs pa</i> )	2
2.2.2.1	(71)	2
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16.1.1.1.	The essential nature that is attained ( <i>ngo bo gang bsgrubs pa</i> ) (72)	2
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16.1.1.1.	A demonstration of the actual skillful means in accordance with which	2
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16.1.1.1.	A brief introduction to meditative stability ( <i>ting nge 'dzin mdor bstan pa</i> )	2
2.2.3.1	(73)	2
		4
16.1.1.1.	A detailed exegesis of its nature ( <i>de'i rang bzhin rgyas par bstan pa</i> ) (74)	2
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16.1.1.1.	The meditative stability that is a meditation on discriminative awareness,	2
2.2.3.2.1	the buddha body of actual reality or emptiness ( <i>shes rab chos kyi sku</i>	2

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1	5
16.1.1.1. A detailed exegesis of nondual pristine cognition ( <i>gnyis su med pa'i ye</i>	2
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16.1.1.1. The meditative stability that is a meditation on skillful means, the	2
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16.1.1.1. A presentation of the meditative stability of the deities according to the	2
2.2.3.2.2. generation and perfection stages [of meditation] ( <i>bskyed rdzogs lha'i</i>	2
1 <i>ting nge 'dzin du bstan pa</i> ) (80)	9
16.1.1.1. An exegesis of phenomenal existence as the seal of Samantabhadra	2
2.2.3.2.2. ( <i>snang srid kun tu bzang po'i phyag rgyar bshad pa</i> ) (81)	3
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16.1.1.1. A synopsis of the unique meditative equipoise ( <i>mnyam par bzhag pa gcig</i>	2
2.2.3.3 <i>tu don bsdu ba</i> ) (75)	3
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16.1.1.1. The conclusion ( <i>skabs kyi don bsdus</i> ) (60)	2
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1	(82); also entitled A General Presentation of the Maṇḍala of Meditative Stability within the Expanse [of Reality] ( <i>dByings ting nge 'dzin gyi dkyil 'khor spyir bstan pa</i> )	3 5
16.1.1.2.	A description of the causal basis for the diffusion of the maṇḍala ( <i>dkyil 'khor spro ba'i rgyu brjod pa</i> ) (84)	2 3 5
1.1		
16.1.1.2.	An exegesis of the actual maṇḍala that is diffused therefrom ( <i>de las 'phros pa dkyil 'khor nyid bshad pa</i> ) (85)	2 3 7
1.2		
16.1.1.2.	A general presentation of the natural and spontaneous maṇḍala of the ground ( <i>gzi rang bzhin lhun gyis grub pa'i dkyil 'khor spyir bstan pa</i> ) (86)	2 3 7
1.2.1		
16.1.1.2.	A detailed exegesis of the maṇḍala of meditative stability that forms the path ( <i>lam ting nge 'dzin bsgom pa'i dkyil 'khor bye brag tu bshad pa</i> ) (87)	2 3 9
1.2.2		
16.1.1.2.	The actual maṇḍala of meditative stability ( <i>ting nge 'dzin gyi dkyil 'khor dngos</i> ) (89)	2 3 9
1.2.2.1		
16.1.1.2.	The maṇḍala of the supporting celestial palace ( <i>rten gzhal yas khang gi dkyil 'khor</i> ) (91)	2 3 9
1.2.2.1.1		
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16.1.1.2.	Its ornaments ( <i>rgyan</i> ) (94)	2
1.2.2.1.1.		4
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16.1.1.2.	Its thrones ( <i>gdan</i> ) (95)	2
1.2.2.1.1.		4
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16.1.1.2.	The postures [of the forty-two peaceful deities] ( <i>ji ltar bzhugs pa'i tshul</i> )	2
1.2.2.1.2.	(96)	4
1		3
16.1.1.2.	Which deities are present in which locations ( <i>gnas gang du lha gang</i>	2
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16.1.1.2.	The symbolic hand emblems that they hold ( <i>phyag mtshan</i> ) (98)	2
1.2.2.1.2.		4
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16.1.1.2.	The body colors [of the peaceful deities] ( <i>sku mdog</i> ) (99)	2
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16.1.1.2.	The demeanor [of the peaceful deities] ( <i>tshul ji ltar gnas pa</i> ) (100)	2
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5		2
16.1.1.2.	Their diffusion of light rays ( <i>'od zer ji ltar 'phro ba</i> ) (101)	2
1.2.2.1.2.		5
6		3
16.1.1.2.	An exegesis of the fruitional maṇḍala accomplished through the	2
1.2.2.2	maṇḍala of meditative stability ( <i>des grub pa 'bras bu'i dkyil 'khor bshad</i>	5
	<i>pa</i> ) (90)	5

16.1.1.2.	The arising of the fruitional buddha body ( <i>'bras bu sku'i 'char tshul</i> )	2
1.2.2.2.1	(102)	5
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16.1.1.2.	The consequent performance of buddha activities ( <i>de las phrin las</i>	2
1.2.2.2.2	<i>mdzad tshul</i> ) (103)	5
		6
16.1.1.2.	The similes that suggest the manifestation of buddha activities, without	2
1.2.2.2.2.	straying from the expanse [of actual reality] ( <i>dbyings las ma g.yos bzhin</i>	5
1	<i>du phrin las snang ba'i dpe</i> ) (106)	6
16.1.1.2.	The actual manifestations of buddha activities for the sake of trainees	2
1.2.2.2.2.	( <i>gdul bya'i don du phrin las snang ba'i tshul</i> ) (107)	5
2		8
16.1.1.2.	The consequent liberation of living beings ( <i>de las 'gro ba grol tshul</i> )	2
1.2.2.2.3	(104)	6
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16.1.1.2.	The refinement of obscurations according to the causal path ( <i>rgyu lam</i>	2
1.2.2.2.3.	<i>gyi sgrib pa sbyang ba</i> ) (108)	6
1		0
16.1.1.2.	The supreme attainment of the fruitional buddha bodies and levels	2
1.2.2.2.3.	( <i>'bras bu sku dang sa mchog thob tshul</i> ) (109)	6
2		2
16.1.1.2.	A general presentation of the perfection of the buddha bodies and	2
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2.1	<i>bkod par sku dang ye shes rdzogs tshul spyir bstan</i> ) (110)	2
16.1.1.2.	The attainment of the three buddha bodies without conjunction or	2
1.2.2.2.3.	disjunction ( <i>sku gsum 'du 'bral med pa'i thob tshul</i> ) (113)	6
2.1.1		2
16.1.1.2.	The presence [of the three buddha bodies] as great self-manifesting	2
1.2.2.2.3.	spontaneity ( <i>rang snang lhun grub chen por bzhugs tshul</i> ) (114)	6
2.1.2		3



16.1.1.2. A detailed exegesis of the perfection of the levels ( <i>sa'i razogs tshul bye</i>	2
1.2.2.2.3. <i>brag tu bshad pa</i> ) (111)	6
2.2	4
16.1.1.2. A synopsis of the spontaneous presence of the five buddha bodies ( <i>sku</i>	2
1.2.2.2.3. <i>lnga lhun gyis grub tshul du don bsdu ba</i> ) (112)	6
2.3	6
16.1.1.2. The manifestation of wondrous indications ( <i>ngo mtshar gyi ltas snang</i>	2
1.2.2.2.4 <i>tshul</i> ) (105)	6
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16.1.1.2. A synopsis of the maṇḍala of the fruitional great pristine cognition ( <i>'bras</i>	2
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16.1.1.2. The manner in which it is enunciated ( <i>tshul ji ltar gsung ba</i> ) (115)	2
1.2.3.1	6
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16.1.1.2. The essential nature [of the verses] that are enunciated ( <i>ngo bo gang</i>	2
1.2.3.2 <i>gsungs pa</i> ) (116)	7
	0

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16.1.1.2.2	A detailed exegesis of its branches, namely, the maṇḍalas of the mantras and seals [which constitute chs. 7-8] ( <i>de'i yan lag sngags dang phyag rgya'i dkyil 'khor bye brag tu bshad pa</i> ) (83)	2 7 5
16.1.1.2.2.1	Chapter 7: The Absorption of the Maṇḍala and the Secret Mantras ( <i>dKyil 'khor bsdus pa dang gsang sngags kyi le'u</i> ) (117); also entitled The Maṇḍala of the Mantras of Buddha Speech ( <i>gSung sngags kyi dkyil 'khor</i> )	2 7 5
16.1.1.2.2.1.1	A description of the causal basis for the emergence of the maṇḍala of buddha speech ( <i>gsung gi dkyil 'khor 'byung ba'i rgyu brjod pa</i> ) (119)	2 7 6
16.1.1.2.2.1.2	The revelation of the actual maṇḍala of secret mantras ( <i>gsang sngags kyi dkyil 'khor dngos bstan</i> ) (120)	2 7 6
16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1	The mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala ( <i>dkyil 'khor bskyed pa'i sngags</i> ) (122)	2 7 7
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16.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.1	The mantras of the male and female buddhas of the five enlightened families ( <i>rigs lnga yab yum gyi sngags</i> ) (128)	2 7 8

16.1.1.2.2. The mantras of the male and female bodhisattvas of buddha mind	2
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16.1.1.2.2. The mantras of the male and female bodhisattvas of buddha speech	2
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.1.3.2	3 8
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## CONCORDANCE OF TERMINOLOGY

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The following concordance gives precedence to the original Tibetan in the first column, with Sanskrit equivalents in the middle column and English translations or proper names in the third column.

<b>TIBETAN</b>	<b>SANSKRIT</b>	<b>ENGLISH</b>
<i>ka ma dhe ba</i>	<i>kāmadeva</i>	Kāmadeva
<i>ka rma he ru ka</i>	<i>karmaheruka</i>	Karma Heruka
<i>kā tya yā na chen po</i>	<i>mahākāṭyāyana</i>	Mahākāṭyāyana
<i>kang ka'i gdong chen mo</i>	<i>kaṅkamukhī</i>	Kaṅkamukhī
<i>ku ku ra dza</i>	<i>kukkurāja</i>	Kukkurāja
<i>ku dza ra</i>	<i>kujara</i>	Kujara
<i>kun 'gro lnga</i>	<i>pañcasarvatraga</i>	five ever-present mental states
<i>kun gzhi</i>	<i>ālaya</i>	substratum
<i>kun gzhi'i rnam par shes pa</i>	<i>ālayavijñāna</i>	substratum consciousness
<i>kun tu bzang po</i>	<i>samantabhadra</i>	Samantabhadra (bodhisattva)

<i>kun tu bzang po</i>	<i>samantabhadra</i>	Samantabhadra (buddha)
<i>kun tu bzang po'i tshogs mchod</i>	<i>samantabhadragaṇapūjā</i>	communion offerings of Samantabhadra
<i>kun tu 'od [kyi sa]</i>	<i>samantaprabhā [bhūmi]</i>	Universal Light (level)
<i>kun brtags gdon gyi nad</i>		imaginary diseases due to demons
<i>kun btags pa'i ma rig pa</i>	<i>parikalpitāvidyā</i>	fundamental ignorance of the imaginary
<i>kun nas ldang ba</i>	<i>paryutthāna</i>	obsession
<i>kun nas snang ba'i dpal</i>	<i>samantāvabhāsaketu</i>	Samantāvabhāsaketu (bodhisattva)
<i>kun phan gyi rgyan</i>	<i>samāhitālaṃkāra</i>	poetic ornament of coincidence
<i>kun bzang yab yum</i>	<i>Samantabhadra mātāpitarau</i>	male and female Samantabhadra
<i>kun rdzob bden pa</i>	<i>samvṛtisatya</i>	relative truth
<i>ko rlon</i>	<i>carma</i>	raw hide
<i>kyi hud zer ba</i>	<i>huhuva</i>	Huhuva (5th cold hell)
<i>kro ti sva ra</i>	<i>krodheśvara</i>	Krodheśvara
<i>kro ti sva ri</i>	<i>krodheśvarī</i>	Krodheśvarī
<i>klu mo</i>	<i>nāginī</i>	sixteen-year-old female medium of buddha

		speech
<i>klong gi sde</i>	<i>vipulavarga</i>	Spatial Class (of the Great Perfection)
<i>dka' thub mdzas pa</i>	<i>tapah</i>	austerity
<i>dkar mo/ mdzod ldan</i>	<i>gaurī</i>	Gaurī
<i>dkar rtsi</i>	<i>sudhā</i>	white generative fluid
<i>dkon mchog gsum</i>	<i>triratna</i>	three precious jewels
<i>dkor bdun</i>	<i>saptadhana</i>	seven aspects of spiritual wealth
<i>dkrol ba</i>	<i>mokṣa</i>	liberation
<i>dkyil 'khor</i>	<i>maṇḍala</i>	maṇḍala
<i>dkyil 'khor bskyed pa'i sngags</i>		mantras that visually generate the maṇḍala
<i>bka' nyan</i>	<i>ājñākara</i>	obedient attendant
<i>rkan byung gi sde</i>	<i>tālavavarga</i>	palatal phonetic set
<i>rkang mig</i>	<i>akṣapāda</i>	Akṣapāda
<i>rkun mo/ chom rkun ma</i>	<i>caurī</i>	Caurī
<i>skad cig cha med</i>	<i>nirvibhāgākṣaṇika</i>	indivisible time moment
<i>sku</i>	<i>kāya</i>	buddha body
<i>sku mdog</i>	<i>varṇa</i>	body color, complexion (of a deity)

<i>sku gsum</i>	<i>trikāya</i>	three buddha bodies
<i>sku'i dkyil 'khor</i>	<i>kāyamaṇḍala</i>	maṇḍala of buddha body
<i>skye mched</i>	<i>āyatana</i>	sense field
<i>skye gnas</i>	<i>yoni</i>	birthplace, womb
<i>skye gnas bzhi</i>	<i>caturyoni</i>	four birthplaces
<i>skye ba med pa'i ye shes</i>	<i>anutpādajñāna</i>	pristine cognition of nonaris-ing of contaminants
<i>skyes pa'i rim pa gsum</i>		three phases of life
<i>bskal chung</i>	<i>adhamakalpa</i>	lesser aeon
<i>bskal chen</i>	<i>mahākalpa</i>	great aeon
<i>bskal pa bzang po</i>	<i>bhadrakalpa</i>	auspicious aeon
<i>bskangs ba</i>	<i>pūraṇa</i>	rite of fulfillment/reparation
<i>bskor ba'i rgyan</i>	<i>āvṛtti</i>	poetic ornament of repetition
<i>bskyed rim</i>	<i>utpattikrama</i>	generation stage (of meditation)
<i>bskyod ma rdo rje</i>	<i>kṣobhyavajrā</i>	Kṣobhyavajrā
<i>kha bad</i>	<i>viṭapa</i>	roof parapet, eaves
<i>kha khyer</i>	<i>vedi</i>	corner terrace

<i>kha 'bar ma</i>	<i>jvālamukha</i>	Jvālamukha
<i>khams</i>	<i>dhātu</i>	sensory element
<i>khong khro</i>	<i>pratigha</i>	hostility
<i>khyab 'jug</i>	<i>viṣṇu</i>	Viṣṇu
<i>khyab 'jug pa</i>	<i>vaiṣṇava</i>	Vaiṣṇavite
<i>khyi gdong chen mo</i>	<i>śvānamukhī</i>	Śvānamukhī
<i>khyung</i>	<i>garuḍa</i>	garuḍa
<i>khrag 'thung/ he ru ka</i>	<i>heruka</i>	heruka, "blood drinker," wrathful buddha
<i>khri</i>	<i>mañcaka</i>	teaching throne
<i>khru</i>	<i>śaya/ hasta</i>	cubit (measurement)
<i>khrel med pa</i>	<i>anapatrāpya</i>	shamelessness
<i>khrel yod</i>	<i>apatrāpya</i>	shame
<i>khro ba</i>	<i>krodha</i>	anger
<i>khro bo</i>	<i>krodha</i>	wrathful deity, wrathful male buddha
<i>khro bo'i dkyil 'khor</i>	<i>krodhamaṇḍala</i>	maṇḍala of wrathful deities
<i>khro mo</i>	<i>krodheśvarī</i>	wrathful female buddha
<i>khron pa skyes</i>	<i>udāgata</i>	Udāgata

<i>mkha' 'gro [ma]</i>	<i>ḍākinī</i>	sky-farer
<i>mkha' spyod pa</i>	<i>khecara</i>	sky-farer
<i>mkha' gsang</i>		pudendum
<i>mkha' gsang gnyis</i>		male and female pudenda
<i>mkhris pa</i>	<i>pitta</i>	bile, bile disorder
<i>'khon 'dzin</i>	<i>upanāha</i>	enmity
<i>'khor</i>	<i>parivāra</i>	retinue
<i>'khor nyan pa</i>	<i>niṣāda</i>	(elephant-like) base tone
<i>'khor ba</i>	<i>saṃsāra</i>	cyclic existence
<i>'khor lo</i>	<i>cakra</i>	wheel, energy center (of the subtle body)
<i>'khrug mo</i>	<i>raudrī/ pārvatī</i>	Raudrī/ Pārvatī
<i>'khrul snang dag bya</i>		vision of bewilderment to be purified
<i>'khrul pa</i>	<i>bhrānti</i>	bewilderment
<i>gang zag</i>	<i>pudgala</i>	individual person
<i>gang zag gi bdag</i>	<i>pudgalātma</i>	individual self
<i>gang zag gi bdag med</i>	<i>pudgalanairātmya</i>	selflessness of the individual (person)



<i>gangs kyi ri bo</i>	<i>haimavata</i>	Haimavata
<i>gar</i>	<i>nṛtya</i>	dance
<i>gar mkhan</i>	<i>nartakī</i>	dancer
<i>gar gyi cha byad dgu</i>	<i>navanāṭyarasa</i>	nine dramatic airs/ demeanors
<i>go cha</i>	<i>varma</i>	armor
<i>go ma de vi</i>	<i>gomadevī</i>	Gomadevī
<i>gos dkar mo</i>	<i>pāṇḍaravāsini</i>	Pāṇḍaravāsini
<i>gos dmar can</i>	<i>tāmrasatīya</i>	Tāmrasatīya
<i>ghandhe ma</i>	<i>gandhā</i>	Gandhā
<i>ghirti ma</i>	<i>gītā</i>	Gītā
<i>grangs can pa</i>	<i>sāṃkhya</i>	Sāṃkhya
<i>gru chad</i>	<i>koṇa</i>	right-angled corner
<i>grub mo</i>	<i>siddhikarī</i>	Siddhikarī
<i>gru bzhi</i>	<i>catuṣkoṇa</i>	square
<i>grub pa</i>	<i>siddhi</i>	attainment
<i>grub [pa'i] mtha'</i>	<i>siddhānta</i>	philosophical system
<i>grol ba</i>	<i>mokṣa</i>	liberation

<i>grol lam</i>	<i>mokṣamārga</i>	path of liberation
<i>grong khyer rtsa can</i>	<i>kuśīnagara</i>	Kuśīnagara
<i>grong 'jug</i>		resurrection
<i>gling bzhi</i>	<i>caturdvīpa</i>	four continents
<i>glu tshig</i>	<i>gītāpada</i>	lyric, lyrical song
<i>gleng gzhi</i>	<i>nidāna</i>	introductory narrative
<i>gleng bslang [ba]</i>	<i>prastāva</i>	initiation of the discourse
<i>glo bur gi sgrib pa</i>	<i>āgantukāvaraṇa</i>	adventitious obscuration
<i>glo 'bur</i>	<i>avacchādika</i>	buttress, projecting bay
<i>dga' ba</i>	<i>muditā</i>	empathetic joy
<i>dga' ba</i>	<i>rati, ānanda</i>	delight
<i>dga' ba mo</i>	<i>ratī</i>	Ratī
<i>dga' bo</i>	<i>nanda</i>	Nanda ( <i>nāga</i> )
<i>dga' byed dbang phyug</i>	<i>nandikeśvara</i>	Nandikeśvara/ Vaiśravaṇa
<i>dga' rab dbang phyug</i>	<i>kāmadeva</i>	Kāmadeva
<i>dga' ldan</i>	<i>tuṣita</i>	Tuṣita/ Joyful (4th god realm of desire)

<i>dgug pa</i>	<i>akarṣaṇa</i>	summoning
<i>dge rgyas</i>	<i>śubhakṛtsnā</i>	Most Extreme Virtue (9th god realm of form)
<i>dge chung</i>	<i>parītaśubha</i>	Little Virtue (7th god realm of form)
<i>dge ba</i>	<i>kuśala</i>	virtuous action
<i>dge ba'i sems byung bcu gcig</i>	<i>ekadaśakuśalacaitasikā</i>	eleven wholesome mental states
<i>dge sbyong</i>	<i>śramaṇa</i>	virtuous ascetic
<i>dgongs pa</i>	<i>abhiprāya/ sandhi</i>	enlightened intention
<i>dgos 'brel</i>		interrelated purpose
<i>dgos pa'i don</i>	<i>abhiprāyika</i>	implied meaning, implication
<i>dgra bcom pa</i>	<i>arhat</i>	worthy one, arhat, slayer of the foe
<i>bgos pa'i tshig</i>		protective spell
<i>mgo</i>	<i>śīrṣa</i>	initial punctuation mark
<i>mgon po</i>	<i>mahākāla</i>	Mahākāla
<i>mgrin bcu</i>	<i>daśagrīva</i>	Daśagrīva
<i>mgrin byung gi sde</i>	<i>kaṅṭhavarga</i>	velar phonetic set
<i>'gog pa'i rgyan</i>	<i>ākṣepa</i>	poetic ornament of denial

<i>'gying phur</i>		Awesome Kīla
<i>'gyod pa</i>	<i>kaukṛtya</i>	regret
<i>'gro 'dul sprul pa'i sku</i>		emanations that train living beings
<i>'gro ba</i>	<i>gati</i>	living being
<i>'gro ba rigs drug</i>	<i>ṣaḍgati</i>	six classes of living beings
<i>rgan byed mo</i>	<i>cāmuṇḍī</i>	Cāmuṇḍī
<i>rgod pa</i>	<i>auddhatya</i>	mental agitation
<i>rgyags pa</i>	<i>mada</i>	self-satisfaction
<i>rgyang grags</i>	<i>kroṣa</i>	reach of hearing
<i>rgyang 'phen pa</i>	<i>lokāyatika</i>	materialist
<i>rgyan</i>	<i>alaṃkāra</i>	ornament
<i>rgyal</i>	<i>puṣyā</i>	Delta Cancri (constellation)
<i>rgyal po dza</i>	<i>indrabhūti (madhyama)</i>	King Ja
<i>rgyal po'i khab</i>	<i>rājagṛha</i>	Rājagṛha/Rajgir
<i>rgyal ba</i>	<i>jaya</i>	conquering
<i>rgyal ba</i>	<i>jina</i>	Conqueror (= Buddha)

<i>rgyal ba'i rigs lnga</i>	<i>pañcajina</i>	buddhas of the five enlightened families
<i>rgyal byed tshal na gnas pa</i>	<i>jetavanīya</i>	Jetavanīya
<i>rgyal mtshan</i>	<i>dvaja</i>	victory banner
<i>rgyal rigs</i>	<i>kṣatriya</i>	ruling class
<i>rgyas pa'i las</i>	<i>vṛṣṭikriyā</i>	rite of enrichment
<i>rgyas par bstan pa</i>	<i>nirdeśa</i>	extensive demonstration
<i>rgyas par bshad pa</i>	<i>vistara</i>	extensive exegesis
<i>rgyu</i>	<i>hetu</i>	cause, causal basis
<i>rgyu gcig pa</i>		single basis
<i>rgyu mthun pa</i>	<i>niṣyanda</i>	causal affinity
<i>rgyu'i theg pa</i>	<i>hetuyāna</i>	causal vehicle
<i>rgyud</i>	<i>tantra</i>	continuum, tantra text
<i>rgyud gsum</i>		three continua
<i>rgyud kyi dngos po bcu</i>	<i>[tantra]daśatattva</i>	ten aspects of tantra
<i>sgo khyud</i>	<i>niryūha</i>	entrance gateway
<i>sgo lnga rnam shes</i>	<i>pañcadvāra vijñāna</i>	consciousnesses of the five senses
<i>sgo ba</i>	<i>dvārika</i>	male gatekeeper (of the mandala)

		maṇḍala,
<i>sgo ma</i>	<i>dvārikā</i>	female gatekeeper (of the maṇḍala)
<i>sgom pa</i>	<i>bhāvanā</i>	meditation
<i>sgom pa'i dbang</i>		empowerment of the meditator
<i>sgom lam</i>	<i>bhāvanāmārga</i>	path of meditation
<i>sgyu</i>	<i>māyā</i>	deceit
<i>sgyu 'phrul drva ba</i>	<i>māyājāla</i>	Net of Magical Emanation
<i>sgyu ma</i>	<i>māyā</i>	magical display
<i>sgyu ma'i sku</i>	<i>māyākāya</i>	illusory body
<i>sgra</i>	<i>śabda</i>	sound
<i>sgra gcan 'dzin</i>	<i>rāhulabhadra</i>	Rāhulabhadra
<i>sgra spyi</i>	<i>śabdāsāmānya</i>	word universal
<i>sgra'i skye mched</i>	<i>śabdāyatana</i>	sense field of sounds
<i>sgrib gnyis</i>	<i>dvayāvaraṇa</i>	two obscurations
<i>sgrib pa rnam par sel ba</i>	<i>nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin</i>	Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin
<i>sgrub chen</i>	<i>mahāsadhana</i>	great means for attainment
<i>sgrub pa</i>	<i>sādhana</i>	means of attainment

<i>sgrub pa po</i>	<i>sādhaka</i>	practitioner
<i>sgrub pa'i yan lag lnga</i>		five aspects of attainment
<i>sgrub rdzas bco lnga</i>		fifteen sacraments of attainment
<i>sgrub thabs chen po</i>	<i>mahāsādhana</i>	great means for attainment
<i>sgrub thabs</i>	<i>sādhana</i>	means for attainment
<i>sgro 'dogs</i>	<i>adhyāropa</i>	superimposition
<i>sgrol ging</i>	<i>kiṃkara</i>	liberating acolyte/ messenger
<i>sgrol ba</i>	<i>mokṣa</i>	rites of (violent) liberation
<i>sgrol ba'i mchod pa</i>		offering associated with rites of liberation
<i>brgya byin</i>	<i>śakra/ śatakratu</i>	Śakra, Śatakratu/ Indra
<i>brgyud pa</i>	<i>paraṃparā</i>	lineage
<i>brgyud 'dzin</i>		lineage holder
<i>bsgrub bya</i>	<i>sādhya</i>	goal, objective, ritual target
<i>nga rgyal</i>	<i>māna</i>	pride
<i>nga ro</i>	<i>svara</i>	melodic contour

<i>ngag</i>	<i>vāk</i>	speech
<i>ngan 'gro/ ngan song</i>	<i>durgati</i>	lower existence/ realm
<i>ngu 'bod</i>	<i>raurava</i>	Raurava (4th hot hell)
<i>ngu 'bod chen po</i>	<i>mahāraurava</i>	Mahāraurava (5th hot hell)
<i>nges pa</i>	<i>nītārtha</i>	definitive meaning
<i>nges 'byung</i>	<i>niryāṇa</i>	emancipation
<i>nges tshig</i>	<i>nirukta</i>	etymology
<i>ngo bo nyid</i>	<i>svabhāva/ svabhāvatā</i>	essential nature, inherent existence
<i>ngo bo'i sngags</i>	<i>svabhāvamantra</i>	essential mantra
<i>ngo tsha med pa</i>	<i>āhrīkya</i>	lack of conscience
<i>ngo tsha shes pa</i>	<i>hrī</i>	conscience
<i>dngos</i>	<i>bhava</i>	entity
<i>dngos grub</i>	<i>siddhi</i>	spiritual accomplishment
<i>dngos don</i>		actual meaning
<i>dngos [po] med pa</i>	<i>abhava</i>	nonentity
<i>dngos po bzhi</i>		four shocking things
<i>mngon pa'i chos</i>	<i>abhidharma</i>	phenomenology



<i>mngon par dga' ba</i>	<i>abhirati</i>	Abhirati
<i>mngon par 'du byed pa</i>	<i>abhisamṣkāra</i>	formative predisposition
<i>mngon par 'dus ma byas pa</i>	<i>abhyasaṃskṛta</i>	unconditioned, unconditionedness
<i>mngon spyod</i>	<i>abhicāra</i>	wrathful sorcery
<i>mngon byang gi sku</i>	<i>abhisambodhikāya</i>	buddha body of awakening
<i>mngon sum pa</i>	<i>pratyakṣa</i>	direct perception
<i>lnga pa</i>	<i>pañcama</i>	(cuckoo-like) fifth tone
<i>sngags</i>	<i>mantra</i>	mantra
<i>sngags 'chang</i>	<i>mantrin</i>	mantrin
<i>sngags kyi sa bon</i>	<i>mantrabīja</i>	mantra seed syllable
<i>sngags kyi sde dnod</i>	<i>mantrapiṭaka</i>	piṭaka of the way of mantra
<i>sngags kyi yan lag lnga</i>		five branches of mantra
<i>sngon gyi gnas mngon par shes pa</i>	<i>pūrvanivāsābhijñā</i>	supernormal cognitive power of knowing past abodes
<i>ci bgyi</i>	<i>kiṃkara</i>	servant
<i>ci yang med pa'i skye mched</i>	<i>ākīṃcanyāyatana</i>	sense field of nothing-at- all

<i>cod pan</i>	<i>mukūṭa</i>	diadem, tiara
<i>gcig pur spyod ma</i>	<i>ekacāriṇī</i>	Ekacāriṇī
<i>lcags kyu ma</i>	<i>aṅkuśā</i>	Aṅkuśā
<i>lcags sgrogs ma</i>	<i>sphoṭā</i>	Sphoṭā
<i>lcang lo can</i>	<i>alakāvati</i>	Alakāvati
<i>lce'i skye mched</i>	<i>jihvāyatana</i>	sense field of the tongue
<i>lce'i rnam par shes pa</i>	<i>jihvāvijñāna</i>	gustatory consciousness
<i>lce'i dbang po</i>	<i>jihvendriya</i>	tongue, sense organ of the tongue
<i>bca' ba</i>	<i>khāḍya</i>	delicacy
<i>bcing ba</i>	<i>bandhana</i>	bondage
<i>bcings pa dam tshig gi phyag samayabandhanamudrā gya</i>		binding commitment seal
<i>bcom ldan 'das</i>	<i>bhagavān</i>	Transcendent Lord (= Buddha)
<i>chad [pa'i] lta [ba]</i>	<i>ucchedadṛṣṭi</i>	nihilistic view, nihilism
<i>chu</i>	<i>udaka</i>	water
<i>chu bur can</i>	<i>arbuda</i>	Arbuda (1st cold hell)
<i>chu bur rdol ba</i>	<i>nirarbuda</i>	Nirarbuda (2nd cold hell)

<i>chu bo nai randza na</i>	<i>nairañjana</i>	Nairañjana River
<i>chu lha</i>	<i>varuṇa</i>	Varuṇa
<i>chu lha mo</i>	<i>varuṇānī</i>	Varuṇānī
<i>chun 'phyong</i>		silken drape
<i>che mchog he ru ka</i>	<i>mahottaraheruka</i>	Mahottara Heruka
<i>che ba'i yon tan drug</i>		six attributes of greatness
<i>cho ga</i>	<i>vidhi</i>	ritual
<i>cho 'phrul</i>	<i>pratihārya</i>	miracle
<i>chos</i>	<i>dharma</i>	doctrine, phenomenon
<i>chos kyi sku</i>	<i>dharmakāya</i>	buddha body of actual reality
<i>chos kyi skye mched</i>	<i>dharmāyatana</i>	sense field of mental phenomena
<i>chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba</i>	<i>dharmacakrapravartana</i>	turning of the doctrinal wheel
<i>chos kyi bdag med</i>	<i>dharmānairātmya</i>	selflessness of phenomena
<i>chos kyi sdom bzhi</i>		four affirmations of doctrine
<i>chos kyi phyag rgya</i>	<i>dharmamudrā</i>	doctrinal seal (of buddha speech)

<i>chos kyi dbyings</i>	<i>dharmadhātu</i>	expanse of reality, reality's expanse
<i>chos kyi rdo rje</i>	<i>dharmavajra</i>	Dharmavajra
<i>chos can</i>	<i>dharmin</i>	apparent reality, appearances of reality
<i>chos mchog</i>	<i>agradharma</i>	supreme phenomenon (path of connection)
<i>chos nyid</i>	<i>dharmatā</i>	reality, actual reality
<i>chos nyid bar do</i>		intermediate state of actual reality
<i>chos nyid mngon sum gyi snang ba</i>		visionary appearance of actual reality
<i>chos nyid bzhi</i>		four actual realities
<i>chos nyid zad pa</i>		cessation (of cyclic existence) in actual reality
<i>chos nyid zad pa'i snang ba</i>		visionary appearance of the cessation (of cyclic existence in) reality
<i>chos 'phags</i>	<i>dharmodgata</i>	Dharmodgata
<i>chos dbyings kyi ye shes</i>	<i>dharmadhātuñāna</i>	pristine cognition of reality's expanse
<i>chos ma 'dres pa bco brgyad</i>	<i>aṣṭādaśāveṇika dharmā</i>	eighteen distinct attributes of the buddhas

<i>chos srungs pa</i>	<i>dharmagupta</i>	Dharmagupta
<i>mchu byung gi sde</i>	<i>oṣṭhyavarga</i>	labial phonetic set
<i>mched grogs</i>		associate, spiritual sibling
<i>mchod pa</i>	<i>pūjā</i>	offering
<i>mchod rten</i>	<i>stūpa</i>	stūpa
<i>mchog gi dngos grub</i>	<i>uttamasiddhi</i>	supreme spiritual accomplishment
<i>'chad pa po</i>	<i>deśaka</i>	expositor
<i>'chad pa'i dbang</i>		empowerment of the expositor
<i>'chab pa</i>	<i>mrakṣa</i>	hypocrisy
<i>'chal ba'i tshul khrim</i>	<i>dauṣṭīlya</i>	degenerate morality
<i>'chal ba'i shes rab</i>	<i>dauṣprajñā</i>	stupidity
<i>'chi bdag gi bdud</i>	<i>mṛtyupatimāra</i>	demonic force of the lord of death
<i>ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes</i>	<i>yāvadajñāna</i>	pristine cognition that quantitatively knows phenomena
<i>ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes</i>	<i>yathājñāna</i>	pristine cognition that definitively knows the view
<i>'iam dpal</i>	<i>mañjuśrī</i>	Mañjuśrī

<i>'jam dpal grags pa</i>	<i>mañjuśrīkīrti</i>	Mañjuśrīkīrti
<i>'jig rten drug</i>	<i>ṣaḍloka</i>	six realms (of living beings)
<i>'jig rten las 'das par smra ba lokottaravādin</i>		Lokottaravādin
<i>'jig tshogs la/su lta ba</i>	<i>satkāyaḍṣṭi</i>	mundane view
<i>'jigs med ri la gnas pa</i>	<i>abhayaḡirivādin</i>	Abhayaḡirivādin
<i>'jug sred</i>	<i>nārāyaṇa</i>	Nārāyaṇa
<i>'jug sred mo</i>	<i>vaiṣṇavī/nārāyaṇī</i>	Vaiṣṇavī/ Nārāyaṇī
<i>rje'u rigs</i>	<i>vaiśya</i>	mercantile class
<i>rjes gnang</i>	<i>anujñā</i>	permissory initiation
<i>rjes su rnal 'byor</i>	<i>anuyoga</i>	Anuyoga, Subsequent Union
<i>brjod par byed pa</i>	<i>vācaka</i>	expressive words
<i>brjed ngas pa</i>	<i>muṣitasmṛtitā</i>	forgetfulness
<i>brjod pa</i>	<i>vāk/ vyāhāra</i>	description
<i>brjod pa chos kyi phyag rgya</i>		expressed doctrinal seal
<i>brjod par bya ba</i>	<i>vākya</i>	expressed meaning
<i>nyan thos</i>	<i>śrāvaka</i>	pious attendant
<i>nyan thos kyi theg pa</i>	<i>śrāvakayāna</i>	vehicle of pious attendants

		attendants
<i>nyan pa'i dbang</i>		empowerment of the listener
<i>nyams gong du 'phel ba'i snang ba</i>		visionary appearance of ever-increasing experience
<i>nye brgyud gter ma</i>		close lineages of treasures
<i>nye bar 'khor</i>	<i>upāli</i>	Upāli
<i>nye bar bsnyen pa</i>	<i>upasevā</i>	further ritual service
<i>nye bar nyon mongs</i>	<i>upakleśa</i>	subsidiary afflictive mental state
<i>nyi ma</i>	<i>sūrya</i>	Sūrya, solar disk
<i>nyon mongs</i>	<i>kleśa</i>	afflictive mental state
<i>nyong mong gi sgrib pa</i>	<i>kleśāvaraṇa</i>	obscuration of afflictive mental states
<i>nyon mongs yid kyi rnam par kliṣṭamanovijñāna shes pa</i>		afflictive mental consciousness
<i>nyon mongs pa'i bdud</i>	<i>kleśamāra</i>	demonic force of afflictive mental states
<i>gnyags ye shes gzhon nu</i>		Nyak Jñānakumāra
<i>gnyid pa</i>	<i>middha</i>	drowsiness
<i>gnyis med rgyud</i>	<i>advayatantra</i>	nondual tantras
<i>gnyis pa'i rgyud</i>	<i>ubhayatantra</i>	Combined Tantra,

Conduct Tantra

<i>snyigs ma</i>	<i>kaṣāya</i>	residual impurity, degeneration
<i>snying gi 'khor lo</i>		heart center/ cakra
<i>snying rje</i>	<i>karuṇā</i>	compassion
<i>snying rje chen po</i>	<i>mahākaruṇā</i>	great compassion
<i>snying po</i>	<i>hṛdaya</i>	heart (mantra)
<i>snying po</i>	<i>garbha</i>	nucleus
<i>snying po lnga yis dbang bskur</i>		empowerments by means of the five essences
<i>snyoms 'jug</i>	<i>samāpatti</i>	meditative absorption
<i>mnyam bzhag</i>	<i>samasamsthāpa</i>	meditative equipoise
<i>mnyam nyid</i>	<i>samatā</i>	sameness
<i>mnyam nyid ye shes</i>	<i>samatājñāna</i>	pristine cognition of sameness
<i>mnyam gnyis</i>		two states of sameness
<i>mnyan yod</i>	<i>śrāvastī</i>	Śrāvastī
<i>bsnyen sgrub</i>	<i>sevāsādhana</i>	ritual service and rites of attainment
<i>bsnyen pa</i>	<i>sevā</i>	ritual service
<i>tīrthika cde lnga</i>	<i>pañcatīrthika</i>	five schools of



<i>u tu u ka sue tngu</i>	<i>pañcāntika</i>	five schools of philosophical extremism
<i>ting nge 'dzin</i>	<i>samādhi</i>	meditative stability
<i>gtang ba</i>		imprecation
<i>gtad pa</i>	<i>arpaṇa</i>	entrustment
<i>gtan phab</i>	<i>nirṇaya</i>	establishment of all things
<i>gtan tshigs</i>	<i>hetu/ kāraṇa</i>	axiom
<i>gti mug</i>	<i>moha</i>	delusion
<i>gti mug med pa</i>	<i>amoha</i>	nondelusion
<i>gtum mo</i>	<i>caṇḍālī</i>	inner heat, caṇḍālī
<i>gtong ba</i>	<i>tyāga</i>	total renunciation
<i>btang ba</i>	<i>preṣita</i>	expulsion
<i>btang snyoms</i>	<i>upekṣā</i>	equanimity
<i>rta mchog</i>	<i>aśvottama</i>	Aśvottama (= Hayagrīva)
<i>rta babs</i>	<i>toraṇa</i>	pediment
<i>rtaḡ tu ngu</i>	<i>sadāprarudita</i>	Sadāprarudita
<i>rtaḡ pa</i>	<i>nitya</i>	permanence
<i>rtaḡ [pa'i] lta [ba]</i>	<i>śāśvatadṛṣṭi</i>	eternalist view, eternalism

<i>rtag par lta ba sde bzhi</i>		four eternalist schools
<i>rtul zhugs</i>	<i>vrata</i>	ascetic discipline
<i>rten</i>	<i>āśraya</i>	representation (of buddha body, speech, or mind)
<i>rten sku</i>	<i>āśrayakāya</i>	supporting buddha body
<i>rten 'brel</i>	<i>pratītyasamutpāda</i>	dependent origination
<i>rtog pa</i>	<i>vitarka</i>	ideation
<i>rtog tshogs</i>		amalgam of ideation
<i>rtogs pa</i>	<i>adhigama</i>	realization
<i>lta ba</i>	<i>dr̥ṣṭi</i>	view
<i>ltung ba</i>	<i>āpatti</i>	downfall
<i>stag gdong chen mo</i>	<i>vyāghramukhī</i>	Vyāghramukhī
<i>stag tshang</i>		Taktsang
<i>stong gnyis pa bar ma'i 'jig rten</i>	<i>dvisāhasramadhya- malokadhātu</i>	dichiliocosm
<i>stong dang po'i spyi phud kyi 'jig rten</i>		chiliocosm
<i>stong gsum gyi stong chen po 'jig rten gyi khams</i>	<i>trisāhasramahāsāhasra- lokadhātu</i>	great trichiliocosm
<i>stong pa chen po</i>	<i>mahāsūnyatā</i>	great emptiness

<i>stong pa nyid</i>	<i>śūnyatā</i>	emptiness
<i>ston pa</i>	<i>śāstr</i>	Teacher (= Buddha)
<i>stobs bcu</i>	<i>daśabala</i>	ten powers
<i>stobs po che</i>	<i>mahābala</i>	Mahābala
<i>stobs bzang</i>	<i>balabhadra</i>	Balabhadra
<i>brtan ma rdo rje</i>	<i>sthiravajrā</i>	Sthiravajrā
<i>brten [pa'i] ye shes</i>		supported pristine cognition
<i>bstan pa</i>	<i>śāsana</i>	(Buddhist) teaching
<i>bstan pa gtad pa</i>		entrustment of the teachings
<i>bstod pa</i>	<i>stotra</i>	eulogy
<i>thag bzang ris</i>	<i>vemacitra</i>	Vemacitra
<i>thabs</i>	<i>upāya</i>	skillful means
<i>thabs kyi nges pa'i lam</i>		definitive path of skillful means
<i>thabs lam</i>	<i>upāyamārga</i>	path of skillful means
<i>thar pa</i>	<i>mokṣa</i>	liberation
<i>thar pa nag po</i>	<i>kālamokṣa</i>	Tharpa Nagpo, lit. Black Liberation

<i>thal ba</i>	<i>bhasma</i>	ash
<i>thal byed mo/ ro langs ma</i>	<i>vetālī</i>	Vetālī
<i>thig le</i>	<i>bindu</i>	vital essence, generative essence/ fluid
<i>thig le nyag gcig</i>		unique vital essence
<i>thig nag</i>	<i>kālasūtra</i>	Kālasūtra (2nd hot hell)
<i>thugs</i>	<i>citta</i>	buddha mind
<i>thugs kyi dkyil 'khor</i>	<i>cittamaṇḍala</i>	maṇḍala of buddha mind
<i>thugs rje</i>	<i>karuṇā</i>	compassionate spirituality, compassion
<i>thun mong gi dngos grub</i>	<i>sādhāraṇasiddhi</i>	common accomplishment
<i>thub pa drug</i>	<i>ṣaḍmuni</i>	six sages
<i>the tshom</i>	<i>vicikitsā</i>	doubt
<i>theg pa</i>	<i>yāna</i>	vehicle
<i>theg pa chen po</i>	<i>mahāyāna</i>	Great Vehicle
<i>thod phreng</i>	<i>kapālamālā</i>	skull garland
<i>mtha' bzhi</i>	<i>caturanta</i>	four extremes
<i>[mthar gyis gnas pa'i] snyoms par 'jug pa dgu</i>	<i>navānupūrvavihāra- samāpatti</i>	nine serial steps of meditative equipoise

<i>mthar gnas</i>	<i>antaḥsthā</i>	semivowel
<i>mthar lam</i>	<i>antamārga</i>	path of finality
<i>mthong lam</i>	<i>darśanamārga</i>	path of insight
<i>dad pa</i>	<i>śraddhā</i>	faith
<i>dag pa</i>	<i>śuddhi</i>	purity
<i>dam can gyi srung ma</i>		oath-bound protector
<i>dam pa rigs brgya</i>		hundred enlightened families
<i>dam pa'i chos</i>	<i>saddharma</i>	sacred doctrine
<i>dam tshig</i>	<i>samaya</i>	commitment
<i>dam tshig sgrol ma</i>	<i>samayātārā</i>	Samayātārā
<i>dam tshig phyag rgya</i>	<i>samayamudrā</i>	commitment seal (of buddha mind)
<i>dam tshig sems dpa'</i>	<i>samayasattva</i>	being of meditative commitment
<i>dvangs ma</i>	<i>maṇḍa</i>	chyle, pure essence
<i>dhūpe ma</i>	<i>dhūpā</i>	Dhūpā
<i>dug gsum</i>	<i>triviṣa</i>	three poisons
<i>dung chos</i>	<i>śaṅkha</i>	doctrinal conch
<i>dur khrod chas brgyad</i>	<i>aṣṭaśmaśānāṅkāra</i>	eight charnel ground

		accoutrements
<i>dur bya'i gdong chen mo</i>	<i>kākamukhī</i>	Kākamukhī
<i>dus</i>	<i>kāla</i>	time
<i>dus tshigs [nyer bzhi]</i>		twenty-four meteorological phases
<i>dus bzhi</i>	<i>catuḥkāla</i>	four times
<i>de kho na nyid</i>	<i>tattva</i>	real (nature), reality
<i>de bzhin nyid</i>	<i>tathatā</i>	actual truth, real nature
<i>de bzhin [nyid kyi] dbyings</i>	<i>tathatādhātu</i>	real expanse
<i>de bzhin gshegs pa</i>	<i>tathāgata</i>	tathāgata (= Buddha)
<i>de bzhin gshegs pa'i rigs</i>	<i>tathāgatakula</i>	Buddha family
<i>de bzhin gshegs pa'i stobs bcu</i>	<i>daśatathāgatabala</i>	ten spiritual powers of a tathāgata
<i>do shal</i>	<i>hāra</i>	midlength necklace
<i>don thams cad mngon sum du gyur pas 'dul ba</i>		instruction by the direct perception of all meanings
<i>don dam</i>	<i>paramārtha</i>	ultimate reality
<i>don dam bden pa</i>	<i>paramārthasatya</i>	ultimate truth
<i>don bsdu ba</i>	<i>piṇḍārtha</i>	<b>synopsis</b>

<i>don spyi</i>	<i>arthasāmānya</i>	generic concept
<i>don yod grub pa</i>	<i>amoghasiddhi</i>	Amoghasiddhi
<i>dra phyed</i>	<i>ardhahāra</i>	lattice, latticework (motif)
<i>dra mig gseng ma</i>	<i>jāla</i>	lattice window
<i>drag po</i>	<i>ugra, rudra</i>	wrath, violence, Rudra
<i>drag po'i las</i>	<i>raudrakriyā</i>	rite of wrath/ violence
<i>drang don</i>	<i>neyārtha</i>	provisional meaning
<i>drang srong</i>	<i>ṛṣi</i>	anchorite, sage
<i>dran pa</i>	<i>smṛti</i>	mindfulness
<i>drva ba/ dra ba</i>	<i>jāla</i>	net
<i>dri ma/ bsnam par bya ba</i>	<i>gandha</i>	fragrance, odor
<i>dri chu</i>	<i>mūtra</i>	urine
<i>dri chen</i>	<i>viṭa</i>	human excrement
<i>dri med bshes gnyen</i>	<i>vimalamitra</i>	Vimalamitra
<i>dri za</i>	<i>gandharva</i>	“odor-eating” spirit
<i>dri za tam bur</i>	<i>tambura/ bhṛṅgiriṭa</i>	Tambura/ Bhṛṅgiriṭa
<i>dri'i skye mched</i>	<i>gandhāyatana</i>	sense field of odors

<i>dril bu</i>	<i>ghaṇṭā</i>	bell
<i>dril bu ma</i>	<i>ghaṇṭā</i>	Ghaṇṭā, Kiṅkiṇī
<i>drug pa</i>	<i>ṣadja</i>	(peacock-like) sixth tone
<i>dregs pa chen po</i>		Great Arrogant Spirit (= Rudra)
<i>dro ba'i yi ge</i>	<i>ūṣmān</i>	spirant
<i>gdags par smra ba</i>	<i>prajñāptivādin</i>	Prajñāptivādin
<i>gdangs kyi kun bzang yab yum</i>		incandescent male-female buddha Samantabhadra
<i>gdan</i>	<i>pīṭha</i>	seat, sacred place
<i>gdab pa phur bu'i las</i>	<i>kīlakriyā, kīlanavidhi</i>	rite of the stabbing spike
<i>gdams pa</i>	<i>avavāda/ upadeśa</i>	teaching, instruction
<i>gdugs</i>	<i>catrāvalī</i>	parasol
<i>gdul bya</i>	<i>vineya</i>	trainee
<i>gdol rigs</i>	<i>caṇḍāla</i>	outcaste
<i>bdag</i>	<i>ātma</i>	self
<i>bdag gir 'dzin pa</i>	<i>ātmīyagraha</i>	possessiveness
<i>bdag nyid chen po</i>	<i>mahātma</i>	supreme identity
<i>bdag [tul 'dzin [nal</i>	<i>ātmaaraha</i>	egotism



<i>bdag [pa] dzin [pa]</i>	<i>ātmadṛṣṭi</i>	<i>egotism</i>
<i>bdag lta</i>	<i>ātmadṛṣṭi</i>	egotistical view
<i>bdag med</i>	<i>nairātmya</i>	selflessness
<i>bdag med pa gnyis</i>	<i>nairātmyadvaya</i>	two kinds of selflessness
<i>bdud</i>	<i>māra</i>	Māra, demonic force
<i>bdud btul ba</i>	<i>mārajita</i>	subjugation of demonic forces
<i>bdud bzhi</i>	<i>caturmāra</i>	four demonic forces
<i>bdud rtsi</i>	<i>amṛta</i>	nectar
<i>bdud rtsi 'khyil ba</i>	<i>amṛtakuṇḍalin</i>	Amṛtakuṇḍalin
<i>bdud rtsi lnga</i>	<i>pañcāmṛta</i>	five nectars
<i>bdud rtsi mo</i>	<i>amṛtā</i>	Amṛtā/ Sūryā
<i>bde 'gro</i>	<i>sugati</i>	exalted realm
<i>bde ba chen po</i>	<i>mahāsukha</i>	supreme bliss
<i>bde ba chen po'i sa</i>	<i>mahāsukhabhūmi</i>	Supreme Bliss (level)
<i>bde ba'i mchod pa</i>		offerings of bliss
<i>bde gshegs snying po</i>	<i>sugatagarbha</i>	seed of buddha nature
<i>bden pa bzhi</i>	<i>catuḥsatya</i>	four truths
<i>bden par grub pa</i>		independent existence

<i>bden tshig</i>	<i>satyavacana</i>	solemn oath of truth
<i>mdangs</i>	<i>ojaḥ</i>	incandescence, luster
<i>mda' yab</i>	<i>khōḍakaśīrṣa</i>	coping
<i>mdo</i>	<i>sūtra</i>	discourse, sūtra
<i>mdor bstan pa</i>	<i>uddeśa</i>	brief introduction
<i>'du byed kyi phung po</i>	<i>saṃskāraskandha</i>	aggregate of formative predispositions
<i>'du shes</i>	<i>saṃjñā</i>	perception
<i>'du shes kyi phung po</i>	<i>saṃjñāskandha</i>	aggregate of perceptions
<i>'du shes med min gyi skye mched</i>	<i>naivasamjñānāsamjñā-yatana</i>	sense field of neither perception nor nonperception
<i>'dun pa</i>	<i>chanda</i>	will
<i>'dul ba</i>	<i>vinaya</i>	monastic discipline, training, instruction
<i>'dod chags</i>	<i>rāga</i>	attachment
<i>'dod pa'i khams</i>	<i>kāmadhātu</i>	world system of desire
<i>'dod pa'i yon tan</i>	<i>kāmaguṇa</i>	desirable attributes of the senses
<i>'dod snam</i>		offering plinth
<i>rdul phra rab</i>	<i>paramāṇu</i>	indivisible atomic particle

parucie

<i>rdo rje</i>	<i>vajra</i>	indestructible reality, vajra emblem (also used as code word for penis)
<i>rdo rje skyil krung</i>	<i>vajraparyaṅka</i>	posture of indestructible reality
<i>rdo rje khu tshur</i>	<i>vajramuṣṭi</i>	indestructible fist, Vajramuṣṭi
<i>rdo rje 'khor lo</i>	<i>vajracakra</i>	Vajracakra
<i>rdo rje rgyal po [bka' rab 'byams] kyi dbang</i>		empowerment of [the myriad precepts of] the king of indestructible reality
<i>rdo rje rgyal po</i>	<i>vajrarāja</i>	Vajrarāja
<i>rdo rje rgyal mtshan</i>	<i>vajradhvaja</i>	Vajradhvaja
<i>rdo rje chags pa</i>	<i>vajrarāga</i>	Vajrarāga
<i>rdo rje chos</i>	<i>vajradharma</i>	Vajradharma
<i>rdo rje 'chang</i>	<i>vajradhara</i>	Vajradhara
<i>rdo rje 'jig rten ma</i>	<i>vajrālokā</i>	Vajrālokā
<i>rdo rje theg pa</i>	<i>vajrayāna</i>	vehicle of indestructible reality
<i>rdo rje gdan</i>	<i>vajrāsana</i>	Vajrāsana / Bodh Gaya
<i>rdo rje gdong mo</i>	<i>vajrāmoghā/ vajramukhī</i>	Vajrāmoghā/ Vajramukhī

<i>rdo rje bde ma</i>	<i>vajrasukhī</i>	Vajrasukhī
<i>rdo rje gnod sbyin</i>	<i>vajrayakṣa</i>	Vajrayakṣa
<i>rdo rje rnon po</i>	<i>vajratīkṣṇa</i>	Vajratīkṣṇa
<i>rdo rje phur ba</i>	<i>vajrakīla</i>	Vajrakīla
<i>rdo rje'i dbying kyi dkyil 'khor</i>	<i>vajradhātumaṇḍala</i>	maṇḍala of the indestructible expanse
<i>rdo rje 'bebs ma</i>	<i>vajrapraveśā</i>	Vajrapraveśā
<i>rdo rje gzi brjid</i>	<i>vajrasūrya</i>	Vajrasūrya
<i>rdo rje bzhad pa</i>	<i>vajrahāsyā</i>	Vajrahāsyā
<i>rdo rje rin chen</i>	<i>vajraratna</i>	Vajraratna
<i>rdo rje ro langs ma</i>	<i>vajravetālī</i>	Vajravetālī
<i>rdo rje las</i>	<i>vajrakarma</i>	Vajrakarma
<i>rdo rje legs pa</i>	<i>vajrasādhu</i>	Vajrasādhu
<i>rdo rje sems dpa'</i>	<i>vajrasattva</i>	Vajrasattva
<i>rdo rje sgra 'byin ma</i>	<i>vajranāditā</i>	Vajranāditā
<i>rdo rje sgröl ma</i>	<i>vajratārā</i>	Vajratārā
<i>rdo rje smra ba</i>	<i>vajravāk</i>	Vajravāk
<i>rdo rje slob dpon</i>	<i>vajrācārya</i>	spiritual master of the tantras

<i>rdo rje sring 'gro ma</i>	<i>vajratejasī</i>	Vajratejasī
<i>rdo rje gsal bkra ma</i>	<i>vajradyuticitrā</i>	Vajradyuticitrā
<i>rdo rje thal mo</i>	<i>vajrāñjali</i>	hand gesture of the “indestructible palms”
<i>rdo rje'i sku</i>	<i>vajrakāya</i>	buddha body of indestructible reality
<i>rdo rje'i tshig rkang</i>	<i>vajrapada</i>	verse of indestructible reality
<i>rdo rje'i skyil mo krung</i>	<i>vajraparyāṅka</i>	posture of indestructible reality
<i>rdo rje'i gzhon nu</i>	<i>vajrakumāra</i>	Vajrakumāra
<i>rdo rje'i rigs</i>	<i>vajrakula</i>	Vajra family
<i>sdig pa</i>	<i>pāpa</i>	negativity
<i>sdug bsngal</i>	<i>duḥkha</i>	suffering
<i>sdud pa po</i>	<i>saṅgītikāra</i>	compiler
<i>sdud ma rdo rje</i>	<i>valivajrā</i>	Valivajrā
<i>sde snod</i>	<i>piṭaka</i>	scriptural compilation
<i>sde snod gsum</i>	<i>tripiṭaka</i>	three piṭaka
<i>bsdus ba'i dngos po bzhi</i>	<i>catuḥsaṃgrahavastu</i>	four attractive qualities of a bodhisattva
<i>bsdus 'joms</i>	<i>saṃghāta</i>	Saṃghāta (3rd hot hell)

<i>na bza'</i>	<i>vastra</i>	robe (of a deity)
<i>nag mo chen mo</i>	<i>mahākālī</i>	Mahākālī
<i>nang gi skye mched drug</i>	<i>ṣaḍādhyātmikāyatana</i>	six subjective sense fields
<i>nang gi thabs lam</i>		inner path of skillful means
<i>nang rdzogs pa'i rim pa</i>		inner perfection stage
<i>nam mkha'</i>	<i>ākāśa</i>	space
<i>nam mkha' mtha' yas skye mched</i>	<i>ākāśānantyāyatana</i>	sense field of infinite space
<i>nam mkha' lding</i>	<i>garuḍa</i>	garuḍa
<i>nam mkha' lding gi khri</i>	<i>garuḍamañcaka</i>	bird/ garuḍa throne
<i>nam mkha'i gos can</i>	<i>digambara</i>	Digambara Jain
<i>nam mkha'i snying po</i>	<i>ākāśagarbha</i>	Ākāśagarbha
<i>narti ma</i>	<i>nartī</i>	Nartī
<i>nus pa'i dbang bcu</i>		five empowerments of ability
<i>nṛ mgo gdengs</i>		cudgel surmounted by a human skull which is brandished
<i>nor bzang</i>	<i>sudhana</i>	Sudhana
<i>nor smun g</i>	<i>suśumārī</i>	Suśumārī

<i>nor srung</i>	<i>vasurakṣita</i>	vasurakṣita
<i>gnas 'jog</i>	<i>takṣaka</i>	Takṣaka ( <i>nāga</i> , also earth spirit)
<i>gnas brtan</i>	<i>sthavira</i>	elder
<i>gnas brtan pa</i>	<i>sthavira</i>	follower of the Sthavira order
<i>gnas ma bu'i sde</i>	<i>vatsīputrīya</i>	Vatsīputrīya
<i>gnas lugs</i>	<i>sthiti</i>	abiding nature (of reality)
<i>gnod sbyin</i>	<i>yakṣa</i>	sylvan spirit, Yakṣa (name of a specific earth spirit)
<i>mnan pa bro'i las</i>	<i>ākrāntanṛtyakriyā</i>	rite of the suppressive dance steps
<i>mnar med pa</i>	<i>avīci</i>	Avīci (8th hot hell)
<i>rna rnyan chen mo</i>	<i>mahākarṇī</i>	Mahākarṇī
<i>rna'i skye mched</i>	<i>śrotrāyatana</i>	sense field of the ear
<i>rna'i rnam par shes pa</i>	<i>śrotravijñāna</i>	auditory consciousness
<i>rna'i dbang po</i>	<i>śrotrendriya</i>	ear, sense organ of the ear
<i>rnal 'byor</i>	<i>yoga</i>	yoga
<i>rnal 'byor gyi rgyud</i>	<i>yogatantra</i>	Yogatantra, Union Tantra
<i>rnal 'hvor chen no'i ravud</i>	<i>mahāvōaatantra</i>	Mahāvōa Tantra. Great

<i>rnam 'byor chen po rgyan</i>	<i>manajogāna</i>	Union Tantra
<i>rnal 'byor pa</i>	<i>yogin</i>	yogin
<i>rnal 'byor ma</i>	<i>yoginī</i>	female yogin
<i>rnam 'jig</i>	<i>mahāviśāda</i>	Mahāviśāda
<i>rnam rtog</i>	<i>vikalpa</i>	conceptual thought
<i>rnam bden pa</i>	<i>sākāravādin</i>	Sākāravādin
<i>rnam thar sgo gsum</i>	<i>trvimokṣamukha</i>	three approaches to liberation
<i>rnam thar bzhi</i>	<i>caturvimokṣa</i>	four modes of liberation, fourfold approach to liberation
<i>rnam pa mchog dang ldan pa'i stong pa nyid</i>	<i>sarvākāraguṇopeta-sūnyatā</i>	emptiness in all its finest aspects
<i>rnam par thar pa brgyad</i>	<i>aṣṭavimokṣa</i>	eight aspects of liberation
<i>rnam par snang mdzad</i>	<i>vairocana</i>	Vairocana
<i>rnam par phye ste smra ba</i>	<i>vibhājyavādin</i>	Vibhājyavādin
<i>rnam par 'tshe ba</i>	<i>vihimsā</i>	violence
<i>rnam par rig byed ma yin pa'i gzugs</i>	<i>avijñaptirūpa</i>	imperceptible form
<i>rnam par shes pa'i phung po</i>	<i>vijñānaskandha</i>	aggregate of consciousness



<i>rnam smin rig 'dzin</i>	<i>vipākavidyādhara</i>	awareness holder of maturation
<i>rnam rdzun pa</i>	<i>nirākārāvādin</i>	Nirākārāvādin
<i>rnam shes mtha' yas skye mched</i>	<i>vijñānānantyāyatana</i>	sense field of infinite consciousness
<i>rnam shes tshogs brgyad</i>	<i>aṣṭavijñāna</i>	eight modes of consciousness
<i>sna chen mo</i>	<i>bhujanā</i>	Bhujanā
<i>sna tshogs khyung mgo</i>		multiheaded <i>garuḍa</i> motif
<i>sna tshogs rdo rje</i>	<i>viśvavajra</i>	

crossed vajra

*sna tshogs sprul pa'i sku*

*viśvanirmāṇakāya*

diversified emanation

*sna'i skye mched*

*ghrāṇāyatana*

sense field of the nose

*sna'i rnam par shes pa*

*ghrāṇavijñāna*

olfactory consciousness

*sna'i dbang po*

*ghrāṇendriya*

nose, sense organ of the nose

*snang ba*

*ābhāsa*

appearance

*snang ba bzhi* four visionary appearances, four modes of vision

*snang srid* phenomenal appearance, phenomenal existence

*snam phran* *khaṇḍa* perimental band, patch

*snam 'phyang*

ornamental band

<i>snam bu</i>	<i>paṭa</i>	pedimental band, step
<i>padma</i>	<i>padma</i>	lotus (also used as code word for vagina)
<i>padma kī la ya</i>	<i>padmakīla</i>	Padmakīla
<i>padma ltar gas pa</i>	<i>padma</i>	Padma (7th cold hell)
<i>padma ltar cher gas pa</i>	<i>mahāpadma</i>	Mahāpadma (8th cold hell)
<i>padma 'byung gnas</i>	<i>padmākara</i>	Padmākara
<i>padma sam bha va</i>	<i>padmasambhava</i>	

Padmasambhava

*padma he ru ka*

*padmaheruka*



Padma Heruka

*padma'i skyil krung*

*padmaparyāṅka*

lotus posture

*padma'i rigs*

*padmakula*

Padma family

*prasena, gsal snang*

*prasena*

oracular mirror

*pu shu*                      *varaṇḍaka*              corbeled baluster/ bracket

*puṣpe ma*                      *puṣpā*                      Puṣpā

*dpag tshad*                      *yojana*                      4 miles, 950 yards (measurement)

*spang ba*                      *parityāga*

renunciation

*spen pa*

*śanaīscara*

Saturn

*spobs pa*

*pratibāna*

inspiration, brilliance

*spos mchog ma*

*gandhottamā*

censer containing supreme incense

*spyan ras gzigs kyi brtul zhugs*

*avalokitavrata*

Avalokitavrata

*spyan ras gzigz dbang phyug*

*spyi byung gi sde*

*avalokiteśvara*

*mūrdhanyavarga*

Avalokiteśvara



retroflex phonetic set

*spyi'i dam tshig gi rgya*

*sāmānyasamayamudrā*

general commitment seal

*spyir bshad*

*sāmānyanirdeśa*

general exegesis

*spyod pa*

*caryā*

conduct

*spyod pa'i rgyud*

*caryātantra*

Conduct Tantra

*sprin med*

*anabhraka*

Cloudless (10th god realm of form)

*sprul pa'i sku*

*nirmāṇakāya*

buddha body of emanation

*spros pa*

*prapañca*

conceptual elaboration

*dpa' ba*

*śaurya*

heroic steadfastness

*dpal chen 'dus pa*



Palchen Dupa

*dpal chen he ru ka*

*mahāśrīheruka*

Great Glorious Heruka

<i>dpal be'u</i>	<i>śrīvatsa</i>	auspicious knot, glorious eternal knot (motif)
<i>dpe byad brgyad cu</i>	<i>asītyānuvyañja</i> <i>na</i>	eighty minor marks of a great man
<i>dpe gzugs brnyan gyi dkyil</i> <i>'khor</i>		maṇḍala of illustrative imagery
<i>dpung rgyan</i>	<i>aṅgada</i>	

shoulder strap

*dpyod pa*

*vicāra*

scrutiny

*spyir bstan pa*

*utsarga*

general presentation

*pha gu*

*iṣṭakā*

cornice

*pha rgyud*

*pitṛtantra*

father tantra

*pha rol tu phyin pa*

*pāramitā*

transcendent perfection

*phag mo*

*vārāhī*

Vārāhī

*phan pa'i dbang*



empowerment of beneficence

*pham pa bzhi*

*catusparājaya*

four inimical defeats

*phal chen pa*

*mahāsaṃghika*

Mahāsaṃghika

*phal pa'i skad*

*prākṛta*

Prākṛit

*phung po*

*skandha*

psychophysical  
aggregate

*phung po'i bdud*

*skandhamār* demonic force of the psychophysical  
*a* aggregates

*phun sum tshogs pa*

*sampatti*

excellence

*phur bu/ba*

*kīla*

ritual spike

*pho nya*

*dūti*

intermediary

*phyag rgya*

*mudrā* seal, sealing hand gesture, female medium

*phyag rgya gcig pa*

single seal

*phyag rgya chen po*

*mahāmudrā*

great seal

*phyag rgya spros bcas*



elaborate seal

*phyag rgya rig 'dzin mahāmudrāvidyādhara* awareness holder of the great seal

*phyag brnyan*

retainer

*phyag na rdo rje*

*vajrapāṇi*

Vajrapāṇi

*phyag mtshan*

*cihna*

symbolic hand emblem

*phyam gcig*

single equilibrium

*phyal ba*

*kutapa*

apathetic, dull

*phyi bskyed pa'i rim pa*

outer generation stage (of meditation)

*phyi'i skye mched drug ṣaḍbāhyāyatana*

six objective sense fields

*phyi'i rgyud*

*bāhyatantra*

outer tantras

*phyin ci log bzhi*

*caturviparyāsa*

four erroneous views

*phyin ci log spros pa'i mtha' brgyad*

eight extremes of erroneous conception

*phyogs glang*

*dignāga*     Dignāga

*phyogs rtogs pa*



one of partial understanding

*phra men ma brgyad*

*aṣṭapiśācī*

eight *piśācī*

*phrag dog*

*īrṣyā*

jealousy

*phrin las*

*kriyā*

buddha activity

*phrin las kyi dbang*

*kriyābhiṣeka*

empowerment of enlightened activities

*phreng ba*

*mālā*

garland

*'phags pa*

*ārya*

sublime

*'phags pa bden pa bzhi*

*caturāryasatya*

four noble truths

*'pham pa*

*parājita*

vanquishing

*'pho ba*

*saṃkrānti*



transference of  
consciousness

*'phrul dga'*

*nirmāṇara* Delighting in Emanation (5th of the god realms  
*ta* of desire)

*'phrul pa*

*nirmāṇa*

emanation

*'phyugs*

planetary transit

*ba glang spyod*

*aparagodānīya*

Aparagodānīya

*ba dzra he ru ka*

*vajraheruka*

Vajra Heruka

*bag chags*

*vāsanā*

propensities

*bag chags sbyong tshul bzhi*

four methods of purifying propensities

*bag med*

*pramāda*

carelessness

*bag yod*

*apramāda*

vigilance

*bag yod kyi spyod pa*

*apramādacaryā*



conduct of careful restraint

*bang rim*

*jagatī*

terraced steps

*bad kan*

*kapha*

phlegm, phlegm disorder

*bar khyams*

courtyard

*bar do*

*antarābhava*

intermediate state

*bar ma*                      *madhyama*              (crane-like) middle tone

*be con*                      *daṇḍa*                      Daṇḍa

*be con mo*                      *daṇḍī*                      Daṇḍī

*bai ro tsa na*                      *vairocana*

Vairotsana

*bu ddha kī la ya*

*buddhakīla*

Buddhakīla

*bu ddha kro ti sva ri*

*buddhakrodheśvarī*

Buddha Krodheśvarī

*bu ddha he ru ka*

*buddhaheruka*

Buddha Heruka

*bum sna*

*kumbhakarṇa*

Kumbhakarṇa

*bum sna sngo nag chen mo*

*mahākumbhakarṇī*

Mahākumbhakarṇī

*bum pa*

*kalaśa*

vase

*bum dbang*

*kalaśābhiṣeka*

vase empowerment

*bya ba grub pa'i ye shes*

*kṛtyānuṣṭhānājñāna*



pristine cognition of accomplishment

*bya ba'i rgyud*

*kriyātantra*

Action Tantra

*byang chub*

*bodhi*

enlightenment

*byang chub kyi phyogs so bdun*    *saptatṛiṃśadbodhi-pāṅṣika*    thirty-seven aspects of  
dharma    enlightenment

*byang chub snying po*    *bodhimaṅḍa*

point of enlightenment

*byang chub sems*      *bodhicitta*    enlightened mind, mind set on enlightenment

*byang chub sems dpa'*    *bodhisattva*

bodhisattva

*byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa*

*bodhisattvayāna*

vehicle of bodhisattvas

*byang chub gsum*

*tribodhi*

three degrees of enlightenment

*byang sems dkar dmar*

white and red generative essences

*byang sems lnga*

five aspects of the generative essences

*byad ka*

*kākhorda*



imprecation

*byams pa*

*maitrī/ maitreya*

loving-kindness, Maitreya

*byin gyis brlabs pa*

*adhiṣṭhāna*

blessing, consecration

*bye brag tu bshad pa*

*vibhāṣa, vyutpatti*

detailed exegesis

*bye brag pa*

*vaiśeṣika*

Vaiśeṣika

*byol song*

*tiryak*

animal

*bram ze'i rigs*

*brāhmaṇa*

priestly class

*brub khung*

pit

*bla btags/ dvags*

*adhivacana*

nickname, designation

*bla bre*

*vitāna*

canopy

*bla na med pa'i rgyud*

*yoganiruttaratantra*

Unsurpassed Yogatantra

*bla na med pa'i theg pa*

*anuttarayāna*

unsurpassed vehicle

*blo [gros]*

*buddhi*



intellect

*blo gros thabs ldan*

*matyaupāyika*

Matyaupāyika (ogre)

*blo gsal*

*dhaivata*

(horse-like) clear tone

*dbang*

*vaṣita*

subjugation

*dbang [bskur ba]*

*abhiṣeka*

[conferral of] empowerment

*dbang bskur ba'i sngags*

*abhiṣekamantra*

mantras that confer empowerment

*dbang bcu*

*daśavaśītā*

ten kinds of absolute control

<i>dbang phyug</i>	<i>īśvara, maheśvara</i>	Īśvara, Maheśvara
<i>dbang phyug chen po</i>	<i>maheśvara</i>	Maheśvara
<i>dbang phyug pa</i>	<i>aiśvarya</i>	Aiśvarya, follower of Īśvara
<i>dbang phyug ma</i>	<i>īśvarī</i>	īśvarī, mighty queen
<i>dbang po</i>	<i>indriya</i>	

sense organ

*dbang mo*

*indrāṇī*

Indrāṇī

*dbu rgyan*

*mukṣa, kirīṭa, mauli*

crown ornament

<i>dbu ma</i>	<i>madhyamaka</i>	Madhyamaka, Middle Way
<i>dbu ma thal 'gyur pa</i>	<i>prāsaṅgika mādhyamika</i>	Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika
<i>dbu ma rang rgyud pa</i>	<i>svātantrikamādhyamika</i>	Svātantrika Mādhyamika
<i>dbyings kyi dbang phyug ma</i>	<i>ākāśadhātviśvarī</i>	Ākāśadhātviśvarī, Dhātviśvarī
<i>dbyings rnam par dag pa'i ye shes</i>	<i>dharmadhātuviśuddhi- jñāna</i>	pristine cognition of the pure expanse
<i>dbye ba</i>	<i>vibhāga</i>	classification, distinction, differentiation
<i>'byung ba</i>	<i>bhūta</i>	



interlinear commentary

*'brog*

*aṭavī*

Aṭavī

*rbad pa*

*prerita*



curse

*sbos mo/ spos ma*

*sbyin sreg*

*pukkāsī*

Pukkasi

*homa*

burnt offering

*sbyor ba*

*yukti*

rites of union

*sbyor lam*

*prayogamārga*

path of connection

*sbyor lam drod*

*uṣman* stage of warmth (on path of connection)

*sbrul*

*sarpa*

snake

*ma skyes dgra*

*ma rgyud*

*ajātaśātru*

*māṭṛtantra*

Ajātaśātru

mother tantra

*ma chags pa*

*alobha*

nonattachment

*ma chags padma can*

Unattached Lotus Endowed (level)

*ma dad pa*

*aśraddhya*

faithlessness

*ma pham g.yu mtsho*

*manasarovara*



Lake Manasarovar

*ma byin par len pa*

*adattādāna*

stealing

*mā ma kī*

*māmakī*

Māmakī

*ma mo*

*mātarah*

*mātarah*

*ma mo brgyad*

*aṣṭamātarah*

eight *mātarah*

*ma rtogs pa*

*abodha*

no understanding

*ma tshogs ma/ ma mo/ dur khrod ma*

*śmaśānī/ mātaraḥ*

Śmaśānī/ Mātaraḥ

*ma rig pa*

*avidyā*

fundamental ignorance

*man ngag*

*upadeśa*

pith instructions

*mang du thos pa*

*bahuśrutīya*

Bahuśrutīya

*mang pos bkur ba*

*sammitīya*

Sammitīya

*mar me mdzad*

*dīpaṃkara*

Dīpaṃkara

*mālyā ma*

*mālyā*

Mālyā

*mi*

*manuṣya*

human being

*mi bskyod pa*

*mi dge ba bcu*

*akṣobhya*

*daśākuśala*

Akṣobhya

ten nonvirtuous actions

*mi 'jigs pa bzhi*

*caturvaiśāradya*

four assurances

*mi rtag pa*

*anitya*



impermanence

*mi dor ba'i dam tshig lnga*

five commitments not to be rejected

*mi spang ba'i dam tshig lnga*

five commitments not to be renounced

*mi tshangs par spyod pa      abrahmacarya*

sexual misconduct

*mi 'tshé ba*

*ahimsa*

nonviolence

*mi zad pa'i rgyan [gyi 'khor lo]*

inexhaustible [wheel of] adornment

*mi slob pa'i lam*

*aśaikṣamārga* path of no-more-learning

*mig gi skye mched*

*caḥsurāyatana*

sense field of the eye

*mig gi rnam par shes pa*

*caḡsurvijñāna*

visual consciousness

*mig gi dbang po*

*cakṣuḥ indriya*

eye, sense organ of the eye

*mig yor*

*pratibhāsa*

optical illusion, optical aberration

*ming*

*nāma*

noun, name, word

*mi'i theg pa*

*manuṣyayāna*

vehicle of humans

*mu stegs pa*

*tīrthika*

eternalistic/ philosophical extremist

*mur thug pa*

*naiṣṭhika*

nihilistic extremist

*me*

*agni/ tejas*

fire

*me tog mda' can*

*puṣpacāpī/ pārvatī*

Puṣpacāpī/ Pārvatī

*me tog 'phreng*

*puṣpamālā*



flower garland

*me mo*

*agnāyī*

Agnāyī

*me long lta bu'i ye shes*

*ādarśajñāna*

mirrorlike pristine  
cognition

<i>me lha</i>	<i>agni</i>	Agni, god of fire
<i>mos pa</i>	<i>adhimokṣa</i>	resolution, volition
<i>mos bsgom</i>		devotional meditation, willful meditation
<i>maud gal gyi bu</i>	<i>maudgalyāyana a</i>	Maudgalyāyana
<i>mya ngan las 'das pa</i>	<i>nirvāṇa</i>	nirvāṇa
<i>dmangs rigs</i>	<i>śūdra</i>	working class, unskilled class
<i>dmar mo</i>	<i>piṅgalā</i>	Piṅgalā
<i>dmars rtsi</i>		red generative fluid, vaginal fluid
<i>dmigs pa med pa</i>	<i>nirālamba</i>	nonreferential, unobjectifiable
<i>dmigs [par] bya [ba]</i>	<i>ālambya</i>	

referenced object

*dmigs [par] byed [pa]*

*ālambaka*

referencer subject

*dmyal ba*

*naraka*    hells, denizen of the hells

*rma rin chen mchog*

Ma Rinchen Chok

*rmugs pa*

*styāna*

dullness

*rme ba brtsegs pa*

*ucchuṣmakrodha*

Ucchuṣmakrodha

*rmongs mo/ rab tu rmongs ma*

*pramohā*

Pramohā

*sme sha can*

*ghasmari*

Ghasmari

*smon pa med pa*

*apraṇihita*

aspirationlessness

*tṣa ra ka*

*caraka*

Caraka

*gtsug gtor*

*uṣṇīṣa*



crown protuberance

*gtsug gtor gyi 'khor lo*      *uṣṇīṣacakra*      crown center (of the subtle body)

*gtsug gtor 'khor los sgyur ba* *uṣṇīṣacakravar* Uṣṇīṣacakravartin (buddha)  
*tin*

*gtsug lag khang na gnas pa'i mahāvihāravād* Mahāvihāravādin  
*sde*      *in*

*gtso bo*      *pradhāna*      primal matter, principal deity (of a maṇḍala)

*rtsa*      *nāḍi*      energy channel (of the subtle body)

*rtsa nyon drug*      *ṣaṅmūlakleśa*

six primary afflictive mental states

*rtsa 'dab*

channel branch

*rtsa ba'i dam tshig lnga*

*pañcamūlasamaya*

five basic commitments

*rtsa dbu ma*

*avadhūti* central energy channel (of the subtle body)

*rtse mo*

*śikhara*

spire

*brtson 'grus*

*vīrya*

perseverance

*brtson pa'i brtul zhugs*

*vīryavrata*

ascetic discipline of  
diligence

<i>tsha ba tapana</i>	<i>tapana</i>	Tapana (6th hot hell)
<i>tshangs pa</i>	<i>brahmā</i>	Brahmā, brahmā (realms)
<i>tshangs pa chen po</i>	<i>mahābrahmā</i>	Great Brahmā (3rd god realm of form)
<i>tshangs pa mdun na 'don</i>	<i>Brahmapurohi</i>	Priest Brahmā (2nd god realm of form)
	<i>ta</i>	
<i>tshangs dbyangs</i>	<i>brahmaghoṣa</i>	voice of Brahmā
<i>tshangs ma</i>		Brahmāṇī
<i>tshangs ris</i>	<i>brahmakāyika</i>	Stratum of Brahmā (1st god realm of form)
<i>tshad med dge</i>	<i>apramāṇasub</i>	Immeasurable Virtue (8th god realm of
	<i>ha</i>	form)
<i>tshad med 'od</i>	<i>apramāṇābha</i>	Immeasurable Radiance (5th god realm of
		form)
<i>tshad med bzhi</i>	<i>caturaprimey</i>	
	<i>a</i>	

four immeasurable aspirations

*tshig*

*pada*

syntactically bound phrase, verse

*tshig gi don bshad*

*padārthākhyā* explanation of the verses/ lemmata

*tshig bskor ba*

*śabdāvṛtti*



verbal repetition

*tshul khrim*s

*śīla*

ethical discipline

*tshul rol mdzes pa*

*carvāka*

hedonist

*tshe dbang*

*āyurabhiṣeka*

empowerment of  
longevity

*tshe dbang rig 'dzin*     *āyurvaśitāvidyādh*     awareness holders with power over the  
*ara*     life span

*tsheg, tig*     *sūtri [visarga]*     medial punctuation circles (aspirate  
suffix)

*tshogs*     *sambhāra*

provision

*tshogs*                    *gaṇa*                    assembly, host

*tshogs kyi 'khor lo gaṇacakra*                    communion (ceremony), feast offering ceremony

*tshogs bdag*                    *gaṇapati*                    Gaṇapati

*tshogs lam*                    *sambhāramārga*

path of provisions

*tshom bu tshogs sgrub*

attainment of the maṇḍala clusters

*tshor ba*

*vedanā*

feeling

*tshor ba'i phung po*

*vedanāskandha*

aggregate of feelings

*mtshan nyid*

*lakṣaṇa* defining characteristic, dialectic

*mtshan ma*

*nimitta* symbol, symbolic representation

*mtshan ma med pa*

*animitta*



signlessness

*mtshan mar lta ba*

*nimittadr̥ṣṭi*

substantialist view

*mtshan bzang so  
gnyis*

*dvātriṃśanmahāpuruṣa-  
lakṣaṇa*

thirty-two major marks of a great  
man

*mtshams sbyor ba* *anusam̐dhi*

reincarnation

*mtshungs par mi ldan pa'i cittaviprayuktasa* formative predispositions disassociated  
'du byed *ṃskāra* with the mind

*'tshig pa* *pradāśa*

annoyance

*dze ta'i van a*

*mdzad pa*

*jetāvana*

*kārya, kriyā*

Jetāvana

deed

*mdzad pa bcu gnyis*

*dvādaśakārya*

twelve deeds (of the buddhas)

*'dzam bu gling*

*jambudvīpa*

Jambudvīpa

*rdzas*

*dravya*

sacramental substance

*rdzas yod*

*dravyataḥ*

substantial existent

*rdzu 'phrul*

*ṛddhi*

miraculous ability

*rdzu 'phrul rkang bzhi*

*caturṛddhipāda*



four supports for miraculous  
ability

*rdzu 'phrul gyi mngon par*    *rddhiviṣayābh* supernormal cognitive power of  
*shes pa*                            *ijñā*                            miraculous ability

*rdzu 'phrul chen pos 'dul ba*

instruction by great miraculous ability

*rdzun du smra ba*

*mṛṣavāda*      falsehood, lying

*rdzogs pa chen po*

*mahāsandhi*

## Great Perfection

<i>rdzogs rim</i>	<i>sampannakrama</i>	perfection stage (of meditation)
<i>va gdong chen mo</i>	<i>śṛgālamukhī</i>	Śṛgālamukhī
<i>vā rā ṇa si</i>	<i>vārāṇasī</i>	Vārāṇasī
<i>zhag</i>	<i>vasā</i>	

grease

*zhags pa ma*

*zhi gnas*

*pāśā*

*śamatha*

Pāśā

calm abiding

*zhi ba*

*śānta*

pacification

*zhi ba mo*

*śāntī*

Śāntī

*zhi ba'i las*

*śāntikriyā*

rite of pacification

*zhi ba'i lha*

*śāntadeva*

peaceful deity

*zhing khams*

*buddhakṣetra*



buddha field

*zhing rnam pa bcu*

ten fields (of compassion)

*zhe sdang*

*dveśa*

hatred

*zhe sdang med pa*

*adveṣa*

nonhatred

*gzhan 'gyur bzhi*

four variable mental states

*gzhan snang*

extraneously  
manifesting

*gzhan 'phrul dbang* *paranirmittavaśav* Mastery over Transformation (6th god realm  
*byed* *artin* of desire)

*gzhal yas khang* *vimāna*

celestial palace

*gzhi*

*vastu*

ground, basis

*gzhi snang shes bya*

vision of the ground that is to be known

*gzhi yod par smra ba* *mūlasarvāstivāda* Mūlasarvāstivāda

*gzhi'i rgyud*

*āśrayatantra*

continuum of the ground

*gzhu*                      *dhanuḥ*                      bow length (measurement)

*gzhon nu sdong drug*                      *kārtikeya/ ṣadānana*                      Kārtikeya/ Ṣadānana

*gzhon nu me skyes*                      *jyotiṣkakumāra*                      youthful Jyotiṣka

*gzhon nu mo*                      *kaumārī*                      Kaumārī

*bzhad gdong chen mo*                      *ḡḡdhramukhī*                      Ḡḡdhramukhī

*bzhi brgya rtsa bzhi'i nad*

four hundred four ailments

*za ba mo*

*bhakṣasī*

Bhakṣasī

*za hor*

*sahor*



Sahor

*zag bcas phung po*

*sāsravaskandha*

contaminated aggregates

*zag pa zad pa*

*āsravakṣaya*

cessation of  
contamination

*zag pa zad pa'i mngon*      *āsravakṣayā*      supernormal cognitive power of the cessation  
*par shes pa*                      *bhijñā*                      of contamination

*zag pa gsum*                      *āsravatraya*

three aspects of  
contamination

*zad pa'i ye shes*

*kṣayaññāna* pristine cognition of the cessation (of  
contaminants)

*zad par lnga*

*pañcakṛts  
na*

consummation of the five  
elements

*zad par bcu*

*daśakṛtsn* ten consummations of the material  
*a* elements

*zab dbang gsum*

three empowerments of profundity

*zar tshags*

tassels

*zas lnga*

*pañcāhāra*

five edibles

*zil gyis gnon pa brgyad* *aṣṭābhibhava* eight masteries of the material elements

*zung 'jug*

*yuganaddha*



coalescence

*zur chags kyi skad*

Apabhraṃśa language

*zla ba*

*śānta/ saumī/ candra*

Candra, moon, lunar disk

*zla tshe*

*bindu*

bindu

*zlos sngags*

*japa*

mantra recitation

*gzi byin*

*tejah*

brilliance, majesty

*gzi brjid*

*tejah*

brilliance

*gzugs*

*rūpa*

physical forms, visual forms, sights

*gzugs kyi sku*

*rūpakāya*

buddha body of form

*gzugs kyi skye mched*

*rūpāyatana*

sense field of visual forms

*gzugs kyi khams*

*rūpadhātu*

world system of form

*gzugs kyi phung po*

*rūpaskandha*

aggregate of physical forms

*gzugs brnyan*

*pratibimba*

reflection, imagery,  
effigy

*gzugs med pa'i snyoms par 'jug pa  
bzhi*

*caturārūpyasamāpat  
ti*



four formless absorptions

*gzugs mdzes*

*surūpā*

beautiful form

*gzung 'dzin*      *grāhyagrāhaka*      subject-object dichotomy

*gzungs [sngags]*      *dhāraṇī*      retention, mnemonic incantation

*gzeg zan*      *kaṇāda*      Kaṇāda

*bza' btung*      *annapāna*

food and drink

<i>'ug phrug pa</i>	<i>aulūkyā</i>	followers of Ulūka
<i>'ug pa'i gdong chen mo</i>	<i>ulūkamukhī</i>	Ulūkamukhī
<i>'og min</i>	<i>akaniṣṭha</i>	Akaniṣṭha
<i>'og min stug po bkod pa</i>	<i>akaniṣṭha-ghanavyūha</i>	Akaniṣṭha Ghanavyūha
<i>'od chung</i>	<i>parītābha</i>	Little Radiance (4th god realm of form)
<i>'od dpag med</i>	<i>amitābha</i>	Amitābha
<i>'od zer chen po'i dbang bskur</i>	<i>mahāraśmyābhiṣeka</i>	

empowerment of great light  
rays

*'od zer chen mo*

*marīcikā* Marīcikā (realm)

*'od gsal*

*ābhāsvara* Inner Radiance (6th god realm of  
form)

*'od gsal*

*prabhāsva* inner radiance, luminosity  
*a*

*'od gsal rtags bcu*

ten signs of inner radiance

*'od srungs*

*kāśyapa*

Kāśyapa

*'od srungs chen po*

*mahākāśyapa*

Mahākāśyapa

*'od srungs pa*

*kāśyapīya*

Kāśyapīya

*ya kṣa me 'bar*

*jvaladanala*

Jvaladanala

*yab*

*pitr*

male, father

*yan lag gi dam tshig*

*aṅgasamaya*

ancillary commitment

*yan lag gi dam tshig lnga tshan  
gnyis*

two sets of five ancillary  
commitments

*yang sos*

*saṃjīva* Saṃjīva (1st hot hell)

*yi ge 'khor lo*

*cakrākṣar  
a*

wheel of letters

*yi ge 'khor lo tshogs chen*

Great Cyclical Mass of Letters (level)

*yi ge sprin*



cloud mass of letters

*yi ge sprin gyi dkyil 'khor*

maṇḍala of the cloud mass of letters

*yi ge 'phreng ba'i 'khor lo*

cyclical garland of letters

*yi dam*

*iṣṭadevatā*

meditational deity

*yi dvags*

*preta*

anguished spirit

*yig 'bru'i tshul*

modality of seed syllables

*yid*

*manas*

mental faculty, mentation

*yid kyi skye mched*

*mano āyatana*

sense field of the mental faculty

*yid kyi mchod pa*

mental offering

*yid kyi rnam par shes pa*

*manovijñāna*

mental consciousness

*yid phrog ma*

*manohārikā/ lakṣmī*

Manohārikā/ Lakṣmī

*yid byed*

*manaskāra*

attention

*yum*

*māṭṛ*

female, mother

*yum mkha'*



female pudendum

*yul*

*vişaya*

sense object

*yul nges lnga pañcaviṣayaniyata* five object-determining men-tal states

*ye shes jñāna*

pristine cognition

*ye shes kyi tshogs*

*jñānasambhāra*

provision of pristine cognition

*ye shes kyi rlung*

*jñānavāyu*

vital energy of pristine cognition

*ye shes snying po*

*jñānagarbha*

nucleus of pristine cognition

*ye shes mtsho rgyal*

Yeshe Tsogyal

*ye shes sems dpa'*      *jñānasattva*      Jñānasattva (deity name), being of pristine cognition

*yo byad*      *upakaraṇa*      requisite, implement, useful device

*yo byad lnga*      *pañcopakaraṇa*      five requisites (for attainment)  
*a*

*yod par smra ba*      *sarvāstivādin*      Sarvāstivādin

*yon tan*      *guṇa*      buddha attribute, talent

*yongs gtad*      *parīdanā*

perfect entrustment

*g.yung drung*

*śāśvata*



eternal

*g.yeng ba*

*vikṣepa*

distraction

*g.yo*

*śāṭhya*

pretentiousness

*ra kta*

*rakta*

blood, vaginal blood

*ra mgo dmar ser chen mo*

*chāgalā*

Chāgalā

*ra tna kī la ya*

*ratnakīla*

Ratnakīla

*ra ro khrag 'thung smyos ma*

*rudhiramadī*

Rudhiramadī

*rang gi rig pa*

*svasaṃvid*

intrinsic awareness

*rang snang*

self-manifesting

*rang byang chub kyi theg pa*

*pratyekabuddhayāna*

vehicle of hermit buddhas

*rang byung ye shes*

*svayambhūjāna*

naturally present pristine cognition

*rang rtsal*

natural energy

*rang bzhin*

*svabhāva*

natural expression, intrinsic nature,  
nature

*rang bzhin sprul  
sku*

*svabhāvanirmāṇakāy  
a*

emanations of natural  
expression

*rang rig pa'i ye shes*

*ātmaparijñāna* pristine cognition that is intrinsic  
awareness

*rab tu dga' ba*

*pramuditā* Joyful (1st bodhisattva level)

*rab tu rtogs pa rnam bzhi*

*catuśprativedha*



four kinds of excellent realization

*rab tu tsha ba*

*pratāpana* Pratāpana (7th hot hell)

*ral gri*

*khaḍga*

sword

*ri bo ma la ya*

*malayagiri*

Mount Malaya

*ri rab*

*sumeru*

Mount Sumeru

*rig pa*

*vidyā*

awareness

*rig pa can*

*nyayāyik* Nyayāyika  
*a*

*rig pa tshad phebs kyi  
snang ba*

visionary appearance reaching the limit of  
awareness

*rig pa'i skyes bu*

embodiments of awareness

*rig pa'i skyes bu thub pa drug*

six sages embodying awareness

*rig pas 'dul ba*

instruction by knowledge

*rig 'dzin*

*vidyādhara*



awareness holder

*rig 'dzin rnam bzhi*

*caturvidyādhara*

four kinds of awareness  
holder

*rigs*                      *gotra/*      enlightened heritage, enlightened family,  
*kula*                      type

*rigs kyi bu*                      *kulaputra*

child of enlightened heritage

*rīgs ngan mo*

*nīcā* inferior twenty-year-old female medium of buddha

body

*rigs lnga*

*pañcakula*

five enlightened families

*rigs sngags*

*vidyāmantra*



gemstone

*rin chen gyi rigs*

*ratnakula*

Ratna family

*rin chen snye ma*

*ratnamañjarikā*



bejeweled grain sheath

*rin chen rdo rje*

*ratnavajra*

Ratnavajra

*rin chen'phreng ba*

*ratnamālā*

bejeweled garland

*rin chen 'byung gnas*

*ratnasambhava*

Ratnasambhava

*rin chen myu gu*

*ratnapravāla*

bejeweled seedling

*rin chen he ru ka*

*ratnaheruka*

Ratna Heruka

*rin po che*

*ratna*

gemstone

*reg pa*

*sparśa*

contact

*reg bya'i skye mched*

*spraṣṭavyāyatana*



sense field of tangibles

*ro myong bar bya ba*

*rasa*

savor, taste

*ro'i skye mched*

*rasāyatana*

sense field of tastes

*rol pa*

*līlā*

emanational display

<i>rol mo</i>	<i>vādya</i>	musical instruments/ trappings
<i>rlung</i>	<i>vāta/ vāyu</i>	wind, vital energy, wind disorder
<i>rlung mo</i>	<i>vāyudevī</i>	Vāyudevī
<i>rlung lha</i>	<i>pavana</i>	

Pavana

*lam*

*mārga*

path

*lam gyi rgyud*

*mārgatantra*

continuum of the path

*lam gyi rnal 'byor lnga*

fivefold yoga of the path

*lam lnga*

*pañcamārga*

five paths

*lam snang bgrod bya*

vision of the path to be traversed

*las*

*karma*

deed, impact of past actions

*las*

*kriyā*



ritual activity

*las kyi rdo rje*

*karmavajra*

Karmavajra

*las kyi phyag rgya*

*karmamudrā*

action seal, female medium

*las kyi rigs*

*karmakula*

Karma family

*las kyi rlung*

*karmavāyu*

vital energy of past actions

*las kyi srin po*

*karmarākṣasa*

ogre executor of ritual activity

*las chen bzhi*

*caturmahākriyā*

four great rites

*las tshogs*

*kriyākalpa*

integrated ritual activities

*las bzhi*

*catuḥkriyā*

four rites

*lāsyā ma*

*lāsyā*

Lāsyā

*linga*

*liṅga*

*liṅga* effigy

*lu gu rgyud*

*śaṅkalā*



chain

*lung*

*āgama*

transmission

*lung bstan*

*vyākaraṇa*

prophecy/ prophetic declaration

*lus*

*kāya*

body

*lus kyi rnam par shes pa*

*kāyavijñāna*

tactile consciousness

*lus kyi skye mched*

*kāyāyatana*

sense field of the body

*lus 'phags*

*videha*

Videha

*le lo*

*kausīdya*

indolence

*lo rgyus*

*vṛttānta*

background narrative

*lo chen dha rma shrī*

Lochen Dharmaśrī

*log par rtog pa*

*mithyākalpanā* misconception, wrong understanding

*longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku sambhogakāya*



buddha body of perfect resource

*sha chen*

*mahāmāṃsa*

human flesh

*sha za'i skad*

*paśācika*

Paiśācika language

*shad*

final punctuation stroke

*shākyā thub pa*

*śākyamuni*

Śākyamuni

*shar gyi ri bo*

*pūrvaśaila*

Pūrvaśaila

*shang shang*

*cīvaṃcīvaka*

bird-man

*shar bu*

*jāla, sūcikā*

balustrade, lattice window

*shin tu rnal 'byor*

*atiyoga*

Atiyoga, highest yoga

*shes bya'i sgrib pa*

*jñeyāvaraṇa*

obscuration of knowledge

*shes bzhin ma yin pa*

*asaṃprajanya*

inattentiveness

*shes rab*

*prajñā*

discriminative awareness

*shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*

*prajñāpāramitā*

transcendent perfection of discriminative awareness

*shes rab rnam pa gsum*

three modes of discriminative awareness

*shes rab rnam par grol ba'i lam*

*prajñāvimuktimārga*



liberating path of discriminative awareness

*gshin rje*

*yama*

Yama, acolyte of Yama

*gshin rje chos kyi rgyal po*

*yamadharmarāja* Yama Dharmarāja

*gshin rje gshed*

*yamāntaka*

Yamāntaka

*sa*

*bhūmi/ pṛthivī*

level, earth

*sa sgrog rigs kyi sde*

*kaurukullika*

Kaurukullika

*sa bcu*

*daśabhūmi*

ten levels

*sa ston pa*

*mahīśāsaka*

Mahīśāsaka

*sa bdag*

*bhūmipati*

lord of the soil, earth spirit

*sa bdag phag chen*

*mahāvārāha*

Mahāvārāha

*sa 'dzin*

*gāndhāra*

(goat-like third) tone

*sa'i chog*

*bhūmividhi*

geomantic ritual

*sa'i snying po*

*kṣitigarbha*

Kṣitigarbha

*sa la gnas pa'i byang chub  
sems dpa'*

*bhūmigatabodhisa* bodhisattvas who abide on the  
*ttva* (ten) levels

*sang rgyas*

*buddha*

buddha

*sangs rgyas nyid*

*buddhatva*

buddhahood

*sangs rgyas stong rtsa*

*sahasrabuddha*

thousand buddhas

*sangs rgyas pa*                      *budhyate*                      to attain/ manifest buddhahood

*sangs rgyas spyān ma*              *buddhalocanā*              Buddhalocanā

*sangs rgyas shākya thub pa*      *śākyamunibuddha*      Buddha Śākyamuni

*sangs rgyas gsang ba*              *buddhaguhyā*

Buddhaguhya

*si nga ra dza*    *siṃharāja*    Siṃharāja

*sum cu tsa*    *trayastrīṃś*    Heaven of the Thirty-Three Gods (2nd god realm of  
*gsum*            *a*                    desire)

*se mo do*            *ardhahāra*    long necklace (ornament)

*se ral kha*            *vaikakṣya*



shoulder cross strap

*seng ge rab brtan*

*sthirasiṃha*    Sthirasimha

*seng gdong chen mo*

*siṃhamukhī*    Siṃhamukhī

*sems*

*citta*    mind, mentation

*sems bskyed*

*cittotpāda*    cultivation of the mind set on  
enlightenment

*sems kyi sde*

*cittavarga*    Mental Class (of the Great Perfection)

*sems kyi rnam grangs kyi  
mngon par shes pa*

*paracittaparyā  
yābhijñā*    supernormal cognitive power of  
knowing the minds of others

*sems nyid*

*cittatva*

nature of mind

*sems dang mtshungs ldan  
pa'i 'du byed*

*cittaprayuktasa  
ṛskāra*

formative predispositions associated  
with the mind

*sems pa*

*cetanā*

volition

*sems dpa' bcu drug*

sixteen bodhisattvas

*sems dpa'i skyil krung*

*sattvaparyāṅka*

posture of the bodhisattvas

*sems dpa'i rdo rje*

*sattvavajra*

Sattvavajra

*sems byung lnga bcu rtsa gcig*    *ekapancāśaccaitasika*    fifty-one mental states

*sems ma bcu drug*

sixteen female bodhisattvas

*sems tsam*

*cittamātra*

Mind Only school

*ser skya*                      *kapila/ pāṇḍara*                      Kapila, also Pāṇḍara (earth spirit)

*so thams thams*                      *aṭaṭa*                      Aṭaṭa (3rd cold hell)

*so thar gyi dom pa*                      *prātimokṣa*



vows of individual liberation

*ser sna*

*mātsarya*

miserliness

*so byung gi sde*

*dantjavarga*

dental phonetic set

*so so yang dag rig* *catuḥpratiṣaṃ* four kinds of genuine analytic knowledge/  
*pa bzhi* *vid* unhindered discernment

*so sor rtogs pa'i ye* *pratyavekṣaṇā*  
*shes* *jñāna*

pristine cognition of  
discernment

*sor mo*

*aṅgulī*

finger-width (measurement)

*sor bzhag lha mi'i theg pa*

*pratyavasthānadeva-  
manuṣyayāna*

basic vehicles of gods and  
humans

*srid pa*

*bhava*

rebirth process

*srid pa gsum*

*tribhava*

three planes of existence

*srin po*

*rāksaṣa*

cannibalistic ogre

*srin mo*

*rākṣasī*

female cannibalistic ogre

*srin mo chen mo mi srin*

*mo*

*sred med kyi bu*

*srog gcod pa*

*mahārākṣaṣī*

*nārāyaṇa*

*prāṇighāta*

Manurākṣaṣī

Nārāyaṇa



killling

*gsang sngags*

*guhyamantra*

secret mantra

*gsang sngags kyi theg pa* *guhyamantrayāna* vehicle of the way of secret mantra

*gsang ba*

*guhya*

secret

*gsang ba bde ba chen po'i mchod pa*

*guhyamahāsukhapūjā*

secret offerings of supreme bliss

*gsang ba 'od gsal gyi rim pa*

secret stage of inner radiance

*gsang ba'i bdag po*

*guhyapati* Lord of Secrets (= Vajrapāṇi)

*gsang ba'i rdo rje*

*guhyavajra* secret vajra (code word for penis)

*gsung*

*vāk*

buddha speech

*gsung gi dkyil 'khor*

*vāgmaṇḍala*

maṇḍala of buddha speech

*gsung gi yan lag drug cu*

sixty modulations of buddha speech

*gsus po che*

*lambodara*

Lambodara

*gsus 'dzin ser nag chen mo*

*gser 'gyur*

*lambodarā*

*rasāyana*

Lambodarā



alchemical transmutation into gold

*gso ba*

*poṣaṇa*

alleviation

*gsod byed mo*

*bsad pa*

*mahāmāraṇā*

*māraṇa*

Mahāmāraṇā

killling

*bsam gtan*

*dhyāna*

meditative concentration

*bsam gtan gnyis pa*

*dvitīyadhāna*

second meditative concentration

*bsam gtan dang po*

*prathamadhyāna*

first meditative concentration

*bsam gtan bzhi*

*caturdhyāna*

four meditative concentrations

*bsam gtan bzhi pa*

*caturthadyāna*

fourth meditative concentration

*bsam gtan gsum pa*

*ṭṛtīyadhyaṇa*



third meditative concentration

*bsam pa chos kyi phyag rgya*

visualized doctrinal seal

*bsam pa dam tshig gi phyag rgya*

visualized commitment seal

*bsod nams kyis 'dul ba*

instruction by merit

*bsod nams kyi tshogs*

*puṇyasambhāra*

provision of merit

*bsod nams 'phel*

*puṇyaprasa* Increasing Merit (11th god realm of  
*va* form)

*bsrung ba'i sde*

*āvantaka* Āvantaka

*bsrung zhing sgrub pa'i dam*  
*tshig lnga*

five commitments to be guarded and  
attained

*bsreg pa me'i las*

*citānalakriyā*

rite of the incinerating fire

*bslab pa nges rdzogs*

definitively perfect training

*hūṃ mdzad*

*hūṃkara*

Hūṃkara

*lha*

*deva*

god, deity

*lha chen po*

*mahādeva*

Mahādeva

*lha phur bu*

*bṛhaspati*

Bṛhaspati

*lha ma yin*

*asura*

demigod

*lha mo*                      *devī*      twelve-year-old female medium of buddha mind

*lha yi dbang po*              *devendra* Devendra, Indra

*lhag pa kun rdzob bden pa*



superior relative truth

*lhag mthong*

*vipaśyanā*

higher insight

*lhag pa bden pa dbyer med*

superior indivisible truth

*lhag pa don dam bden pa*

superior ultimate truth

*lhag pa'i mnyam gnyis*

two states of superior sameness

*lhag ma med par mya ngan las 'das pa*      *niravaśeṣanirvāṇa*      nonresidual nirvāṇa

*lhan cig skyes pa'i dga' ba/ bde ba*      *sahajasukha*

coemergent delight

*lhan [cig] skyes [pa'i] ye shes*

*sahajajñāna*

coemergent pristine cognition

*lha'i theg pa*

*devayāna*

vehicle of the gods

*lha'i rna ba'i mngon par shes pa*

*divyaśrotrābhijñā*



supernormal cognitive power of  
clairaudience

*lha'i bu'i bdud*

*devaputramāra* demonic force of the divine  
prince

*lha'i mig gi mngon par shes pa*

*divyacakṣurabhi*  
*jñā*

supernormal cognitive power of clairvoyance

*lha'i tshogs*

*devatāgaṇa* assembly/ host of deities

*lhun grub*

*anābhoga*

spontaneous presence

*lhun grub rig 'dzin*

*anābhogavidyādhara*

awareness holders of spontaneous presence

*a chu zer ba*

*hahava* Hahava (4th cold hell)

*āloka ma*

*ālokā* Ālokā

*i ndra bo dhi*

*indrabhūti* Indrabhūti the Great

*i ndra bo dhi*

*śakraputra* Śakraputra

*u pa ra dza*

*uparāja* Uparāja

*u mā de vī*

*umādevī* Umādevī

*ut pal*

*utpala*

blue lotus

*utpal ltar gas pa*

*utpala*

Utpala (6th cold hell)

## ABBREVIATIONS

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- Dg.K The Derge Kangyur (sDe dge bka' 'gyur) xylograph edition. 103 vols. Edited by Situ Chokyi Jungne. Freely accessible online at [www.tbrc.org](http://www.tbrc.org)
- Dg. NGB The Derge xylograph edition of the Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa (rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum). 26 vols. Edited by Katok Getse Gyurme Tsewang Chokdrub. Catalog by Thubten Chodar. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2000.
- Dg.T The Derge Tengyur (sDe dge bstan 'gyur) xylograph edition. 213 vols. Edited by Zhuchen Tsultrim Rinchen. Freely accessible online at [www.tbrc.org](http://www.tbrc.org)
- EIPRB** Karl Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies*, including *Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 AD*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2009; and *Buddhist Philosophy from 350 to 600 AD*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2009. Updated and maintained online by Christine Keyt at <http://faculty.washington.edu/kpotter/>
- GGFTC** Gyurme Dorje, "The *Guhyagarbhatattvaviniścayamahātantra* and its XIVth Century Tibetan Commentary *Phyogs bcu mun sel*." PhD diss., University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1987. Revised introduction available at Wisdom Books online reading room, <http://www.wisdom-books.com/FocusDetail.asp?FocusRef=36>
- KPD** Comparative edition of the Tibetan Kangyur (Kangyur dpe bsdur ma), largely based on the Derge Kangyur, input with annotations and references to alternative woodblock versions. 108 vols. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa'i dpe skrun khang, 2006–2009. The contents are now searchable online at [www.tbrc.org](http://www.tbrc.org).
- MTTWL** P. Pfandt. *Mahāyāna Texts Translated into Western Languages*. Cologne: In Kommission bei E.J. Brill, 1983.

*Mahāvvyutpatti*. Ed. R. Sakaki. Kyoto: 1916–25.

## MVT

## NK

The Collected Transmitted Teachings of the Nyingmapa (rNying ma'i bka' ma). Currently 120 vols. in the most extended edition (*shin tu rgyas pa*), compiled and published by Khenpo Munsel and Khenpo Jamyang of Katok. Chengdu: 1999.

*The Tibetan Tripiṭaka*. Peking edition. 168 vols. Tokyo-Kyoto: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1955–61.

## P

## PZ

Pekar Zangpo, *mDo sde spyi'i rnam bzhag*. Beijing : Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2006. A 16th-century Tibetan-language summary of all the sūtras preserved in the Kangyur

Root Tantra

*Guhyagarbhatattvaviniścayamahātantra (gSang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud chen po, Tantra of the Secret Nucleus Definitive with Respect to the Real)*. Dg.NGB, vol. TA [9], ff. 1–31b; Tingkye NGB, vol. 14; Dg.K. rNying rgyud, vol. KHA, ff. 110b–132a; T 832.

Skt.

Sanskrit

Serie Orientale Roma. Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.

## SOR

## SP

Śatapiṭaka Series. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture.

## T

H. Ui et al., *A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons*. Tohoku University catalog of the Derge edition of the canon. Sendai: 1934.

Tib.

Tibetan

Tingkye NGB

*rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum* (Collected Tantras of the Nyingmapa). 36 vols. Photo-offset edition, based on the gTing skyes rdzong ms. Thimphu, Bhutan: Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, 1973. Catalog by E. Kaneko, Tokyo: 1982. Comparative edition of the Tibetan Tengyur (Tengyur dpe bsdur ma), largely based on the Derge Tengyur, input with supplements, annotations, and references to alternative woodblock versions. 120 vols. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa'i dpe skrun khang. 1994–2008. The contents are now searchable online at [www.tbrc.org](http://www.tbrc.org).

## TPD

## NOTES TO BOOK 17

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756. Palchen Dupa (*dpal chen 'dus pa*) is the principal meditational deity according to the tradition of the *Innermost Spirituality of Longchenpa* (*Klong chen snying thig*).
757. The role of Hayagrīva in the subjugation of Rudra, to which this verse alludes, is examined in Dalton 2011, 20–21; also Douglas and Bays 1978, 26–47, where Rudra is subdued by Hayagrīva and Vajravārāhī. Choying Tobden Dorje here includes an annotation, indicating that these verses of homage “exemplify the poetic ornament of repetition occurring at the beginning, middle, or end of a line” (*padasyādīmadhyāntabhāgayāmaka, chod dang ma chod pa'i zung ldan*). In this case the repetition is inserted identically in each of the four lines of the stanza.
758. *DGD* (p. 321) here suggests that there are 211 subtopics in this book, but an actual calculation suggests that there are 203. Of these, 186 specifically concern the *Wrathful Deities along with the Colophon*. They are all listed in parenthesis in the relevant section of the outline. See pp. 1134–51.
759. Longchen Rabjam offers an extensive exegetical overview of the rampant egotism personified in Rudra, the taming and transformation of which is the objective of the wrathful deities. See GGFTC, 1075–95; see also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 569–82.
760. The three modalities of fundamental ignorance are therefore identified as the fundamental ignorance of belief in individual selfhood (*bdag nyid gcig pu'i ma rig pa*); the fundamental ignorance that is coemergent (*lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa*); and the fundamental ignorance of the imaginary (*kun tu brtags pa'i ma rig pa*). See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 54–57.
761. This is recounted, for example, in GGFTC, 1081–83, and also in Dalton 2011, 159–207, which is based on the *Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*, chs. 20–31.
762. *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*, KPD, vol. 77, p. 443, lines 2–4. The first five and a half lines are identical, but the verses from *brtson par 'gyur* onward are replaced with *gnas par 'gyur shin tu lta ba ngan pa yis 'o dod 'bod pa chen por lhung*. The last line (*mnar med dmyal ba chen por lhung*), however, is reminiscent of p. 444, line 16: *mnar med pa yi dmyal bar lhung*.
763. Avīci is omitted in the text.
764. The root tantra (ch. 15:4) clearly suggests that these hot and cold hells are experienced in pairs, Avīci with Mahāpadma, and so forth. For an appraisal of the sufferings endured in these hells, see Padmakara 1994, 63–71.
765. This citation has not yet been identified in the *Sūtra of the Applications of Mindfulness*, KPD, vols. 68–71.
766. Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Phenomenology*, T 4089, f. 10a (ch. 3, vv. 92c–93c).



- Cf. Pruden 1988–90, 2:479, vv. 92c–93c. For a general view of the Buddhist concept of cosmic aeons, see Kloetzli 1983, 73–76, and Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group 1995, 95ff.
767. On the sufferings endured by anguished spirits (*preta*), see Padmakara 1994, 72–76.
768. That is to say, the duration of Rudra’s stay in the hells was determined entirely by the exhaustion of his past deeds, not by the positive application of an antidote, which under the guidance of Yama (the sage of the hells) would have reduced that period.
769. Vasubandhu, *Autocommentary on the Treasury of Phenomenology*, ch. 9. T 4090, vol. 2, f. 94b. Cf. Pruden 1988–90, 4:1353.
770. Nāgārjuna, *Letter to a Friend*, v. 95, T 4182, f. 45a. See also Jampal *et al.* 1978, 50.
771. The four shocking things (*dnegos po bzhi*), as explained in GGFTC, 1218–22, are identified with the four inimical defeats (*phas pham pa bzhi*), outlined in the Vinaya: killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and falsehood.
772. These hierarchies of the god realms associated with the world system of desire (*kāmadhātu*) and the meditative concentrations of the world system of form (*rūpadhātu*) are illustrated in a chart in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 14–15.
773. The three planes of existence (*srid pa gsum*) comprise aerial, terrestrial, and subterranean environments.
774. Cf. the corresponding causal basis for the diffusion of the peaceful maṇḍala, which is the subject of ch. 2, above.
775. The divine drum (*lha’i rnga bo che*) is the drum of Devendra, the sage of the god realms; it rouses the gods from their complacency and reveals the impermanence of their celestial condition.
776. The self-manifesting appearance of five lights or vital essences, which gives rise to the maṇḍala of the peaceful or wrathful deities, is presented by Longchen Rabjam in his extensive overview on the secret inner radiance. See GGFTC, 1022–44.
777. In Longchen Rabjam’s view, this description refers to the transformation of Mahottara Heruka into the embodiment at the center of the wrathful maṇḍala, where he is known as Buddha Heruka, the wrathful counterpart of Vairocana. According to Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 375, this central figure is identified with Vajra Heruka, the wrathful counterpart of Akṣobhya. Regarding the “seat,” it is significant, as Guenther (1984, 279) has indicated, that the Indian tradition holds Rudra to be the offspring of Mahādeva and Umādevī.
778. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of Enlightened Intention*, pp. 375–76, while recognizing Longchen Rabjam’s view, holds the alternative opinion on the basis of a Sanskrit manuscript that read *ālīḍhapāda*, with reference to the right leg being extended.
779. The enumeration of five includes the retinue of Buddha Heruka at the center.
780. The eight accoutrements of the charnel ground (*dur khrod kyi chas brgyad*), as enumerated below, ch. 17, p. 677, comprise raw hides, snakes, skull garlands, solar disks, lunar disks, dry blood, grease, and ashes.
781. This correct reading is found in Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 472. *DGD* (p. 331) reads “four impediments associated with the modes of birth” (*skye ’gag bzhi*).
782. The four erroneous views (*caturviparyāsa, phyin ci log bzhi*) are to apprehend

impurity as purity, to apprehend selflessness as self, to apprehend suffering as happiness, and to apprehend impermanence as permanence. The four demonic forces (*bdud bzhi*) have already been enumerated above, pp. 44 and 55–56, and note 164.

783. The nine awesome airs of a heruka (*he ru ka'i dgu klong rngams pa*) comprise sensuality (*śrīṅgāra, sgeg pa*); heroism (*vīra, dpa' ba*); ugliness (*bībhatsa, mi sdug pa*); joviality (*hāsya, dgod pa*); ferocity (*raudra, drag shul*); fearsomeness (*bhayānaka, 'jigs su rung ba*); compassion (*karuṇā, snying rje*); awesomeness (*adbhuta, rngam pa*); and calmness (*śānta, zhi ba*). See, e.g., *Tantra of Hevajra*, part 2, ch. 5, v. 26.
784. The nine serial steps of meditative equipoise (*snyoms 'jug dgu*) comprise mental placement (*cittasthāpanā, sems 'jog pa*); perpetual placement (*saṁsthāpana, rgyun 'jog*); integrated placement (*avasthāpanā, bslan 'jog*); intensified placement (*upasthāpanā, nye bar 'jog pa*); control (*damana, 'dul ba*); calmness (*śamana, zhi ba*); quiescence (*vyupaśamana, rnam zhi*); one-pointedness (*ekotīkaraṇa, rtse gcig*); and meditative equipoise (*samaṁsthāpa, mnyam bzhag*). These are contextualized by Jamgon Kongtrul in Dorje 2012, 428–29.
785. The eighteen kinds of emptiness (*aṣṭadaśāsūnyatā, stong pa nyid bco brgyad*) comprise (1) emptiness of internal phenomena (*adhyātmaśūnyatā, nang stong pa nyid*); (2) emptiness of external phenomena (*bahirdhāśūnyatā, phyi stong pa nyid*); (3) emptiness of both external and internal phenomena (*adhyātmabahirdhāśūnyatā, phyi nang stong pa nyid*); (4) emptiness of emptiness (*śūnyatāśūnyatā, stong pa nyid stong pa nyid*); (5) emptiness of great extent (*mahāśūnyatā, chen po stong pa nyid*); (6) emptiness of ultimate reality (*paramārthaśūnyatā, don dam pa stong pa nyid*); (7) emptiness of conditioned phenomena (*saṁskṛtaśūnyatā, 'dus byas stong pa nyid*); (8) emptiness of unconditioned phenomena (*asaṁskṛtaśūnyatā, 'dus ma byas stong pa nyid*); (9) emptiness of the unlimited (*atyantaśūnyatā, mtha' las 'das pa stong pa nyid*); (10) emptiness of that which has neither beginning nor end (*anavarāgraśūnyatā, thog ma dang tha ma med pa stong pa nyid*); (11) emptiness of nondispersal (*anavakāraśūnyatā, dor ba med pa stong pa nyid*); (12) emptiness of inherent existence (*prakṛtiśūnyatā, rang bzhin stong pa nyid*); (13) emptiness of intrinsic defining characteristics (*svalakṣaṇaśūnyatā, rang gi mtshan nyid stong pa nyid*); (14) emptiness of all things (*sarvadharmāśūnyatā, chos thams cad stong pa nyid*); (15) emptiness that is non-apprehension (*anupalambhaśūnyatā, mi dmigs pa stong pa nyid*); (16) emptiness of nonentities (*abhāvaśūnyatā, dngos po med pa stong pa nyid*); (17) emptiness of essential nature (*svabhāvaśūnyatā, ngo bo nyid stong pa nyid*); and (18) emptiness of essential nature in respect of nonentities (*abhāvasvabhāvaśūnyatā, dngos po med pa'i ngo bo nyid stong pa nyid*). See Konow 1941, 30–31, and Sparham 2006–12, 1:107–10.
786. The citation has not yet been identified in the *Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*, KPD, vols. 35–38.
787. The ordinary classes of male and female elementals (*'byung po/mo*), including the *nāga* king Takṣaka, are considered to be of ministerial rank in relation to the host of *īśvara* and *īśvarī*, who are likened to kings and queens. Cf. Lochen Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 378. Note that Mahākarnī, the queen of female elementals, who is of ministerial status, is not to be confused with Mahākumbhakarnī, one of the twenty-eight *īśvarī*,

enumerated below.

788. Cf. GGFTC, 1092–95, where Rudra is viewed in same manner.
789. Despite the inevitable Purāṇic source for much of this material, the Sanskrit names of the twenty-eight spouses have been rendered in accordance with their corresponding mantras, which are given completely in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, P 456, p. 20.4.5–20.4.8. Note that both Manurākṣasī and Raudrī are considered as spouses of Maheśvara, whereas Lochan Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 379, claims Manurākṣasī to be a consort of Daśagrīva the *rākṣasa*, and Raudrī to be a consort of Mahādeva. According to the present description, however, Manurākṣasī appears as the spouse of Rudra, which logically accords with her position at the head of the twenty-eight *īśvarī*.
790. The Purāṇas inform us that Śatakratu adopted this ruse in order to enter the hermitage of Gautama and seduce his wife Ahalyā.
791. For variants on this legend and its Purāṇic sources, see Monier-Williams (1899) 2005, 1196, and Mani 1964, 17.
792. On the significance of this deity in the geomantic rites connected with the construction of a maṇḍala, see GGFTC, 759–60.
793. These peripheral deities include the aforementioned elementals of ministerial class.
794. These syllables appear out of order in *DGD* (p. 336, line 4).
795. Unusually here, Longchen Rabjam assigns the central position to Vajra Heruka, with Buddha Heruka or Mahottara in the east. Lochan Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 381, has Vajra Heruka in the center and Buddha Heruka in the east.
796. Cf. Lochan Dharmaśrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 382. The host of each of the eight *mātaraḥ* numbers twenty-eight.
797. In ch. 17 below, which concerns the visualization of the wrathful deities, and in works of practical instruction such as Karma Lingpa's *Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*, there is no specific reference to the emergence of the *mātaraḥ* from the union of the herukas and the host of *īśvarī*.
798. That is to say, the eight *mātaraḥ* emerge as Gaurī in the east, Caurī in the south, Pramohā in the west, Vetālī in the north, Pukkasī in the southeast, Caṇḍālī in the southwest, Ghasmarī in the northwest, and Śmaśānī in the northeast.
799. *DGD* (p. 338) misreads *thams* for *thabs*.
800. *DGD* (p. 339) misreads *ngo mtshar dang bcas nas*. For the correct reading, see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 481.
801. *DGD* (p. 339) misreads *rol ba* for *ro la*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 481.
802. That is to say, the eight *piśācī* emerge as Siṃhamukhī in the east, Vyāghramukhī in the south, Śrgālamukhī in the west, Śvānamukhī in the north, Ḡṛdhramukhī in the southeast, Kaṅkamukhī in the southwest, Kākamukhī in the northwest, and Ulūkamukhī in the northeast.
803. In the case of Vajrāmoghā (*rdo rje don yod*), there is the alternative reading Vajramukhī (*rdo rje gdong mo*). For Vajratejasī (*rdo rje sring 'gro ma*) an alternative reading, Vajrabhagavatī, is possible.
804. The hundred authentic families (*dam pa rigs brgya*) are those of the forty-two peaceful deities and the fifty-eight wrathful deities combined. The symbolic number of nine hundred heads also corresponds to the enumeration of nine

- hundred attributes arrived at when each of these hundred deities assumes the five pristine cognitions and four rites.
805. Longchen Rabjam discusses the relationship between this subjugation within the self-manifest maṇḍala and its extraneous or emanational appearances in his overview to this chapter, on which see GGFTC, 1083–95.
806. *DGD* (p. 342) misreads *longs spyod kyis* for *longs spyod kyi*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 484.
807. *Vajra* is added to the names of the twenty-eight *īśvarī* to indicate that they have been transformed and incorporated into the wrathful enlightened maṇḍala. In the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, their respective mantras are listed with the prefix *vajra*, but see also below, ch. 16, p. 664 for an alternative description, without the prefix.
808. That is to say, those associated with rites of pacification are in the east, those with enrichment in the south, those with subjugation in the west, and those with wrath in the north.
809. Longchen Rabjam includes a short overview of the procedural unfolding of these meditative and ritual steps in GGFTC, 1147–51; see also Chonam and Khandro 2011, 610–12.
810. *DGD* (p. 344) misreads *sdug bsngal* for *bsdus pa*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 488.
811. This reading of VIDAMĀ (*rnam par ' joms ma*), the female subjugator, corresponds to Longchen Rabjam's interpretation. For an alternative reading, see Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 395, where VIDYĀ (*rig ma*), meaning female embodiment of awareness, is suggested.
812. See below, ch. 20:18 where the name Gaurī is actually rendered in Tibetan as *mdzod ldan mo*, "Great Repository Goddess."
813. *DGD* (p. 345) reads *mnyes par byed pa'o* for *nyes par byed pa'o*, but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 490. This could suggest an alternative reading, "If the syllable JAḤ is omitted, [the mantra] will evoke rejoicing." Rongzompa, *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 211, also adopts this interpretation.
814. It is hard to determine correctly the Sanskrit for this set of mantras. Cf. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 396, where the first is glossed '*phags ma sring 'gro ma 'am ring 'gro ma*. The second is interpreted by him as *gdong mo'am don yod ma*, showing that he is very much aware of the alternative readings—VAJRĀMOGHĀ and VAJRAMUKHĪ. In the case of the fourth, he reads BHASMĪ VALAYAVATU and interprets this to mean "she who pulverizes" (*thal bar byed ma*).
815. The mantras of the twenty-eight *īśvarī* are listed in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 413, without the inclusion of *bhagini* or *bhāryā*. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 396, offers two possible interpretations for *bhāryā*: "wife" or "she who causes terror."
816. *DGD* (p. 346) misreads *gi* for *gis*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 491.
817. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 397, interprets RULU as a compound of RUJ ("destroy") and LŪ ("cut off"). The expression *las kyi srin po*, "ogre executors of ritual activity," denotes the *īśvarī* class of spirits who were entrusted with their rites by the heruka. See below, ch. 20:15, and its commentary, p. 747. Rongzompa interprets this line somewhat differently in his *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 212: *las kyi srin po'i*

*rngam tshig gi gdug pa'i glu dpal chen pos byin gyis brlabs pa yin* (“the Great Glorious One consecrated these syllables as a ferocious song, comprising the awesome words of the ogre executors of ritual activity”).

818. See Rongzompa, *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 213. Longchen Rabjam and Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, pp. 396–97, concur that these mantras contribute to the descent of the being of pristine cognition (*jñānasattva, ye shes pa*) but attribute the function of scattering the flower of awareness to the following mantra.
819. Lochen Dharmasrī interprets these mantras as follows: ALI is drink—ale in particular; ULI is food—meat in particular. TĀLĪ and TAPĀLĪ are sacramental substances including grains and fruit. However, according to Līlāvajra’s *Parkhab Commentary*, TPD, vol. 43, p. 401, TĀLĪ means fruits and tapālī denotes various delicacies (*bca’ ba sna tshogs*). Longchen Rabjam agrees with the latter in his interpretation of ALI and ULI.
820. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 398, interprets KHAM RAM as a harsh injunction.
821. That is to say, these offerings are made to the wrathful deities of the heruka, *krodheśvarī, mātaraḥ*, and *piśācī* classes, but not to the twenty-eight *īśvarī*.
822. On the visualization of the celestial palace of the peaceful deities, see above, ch. 6:2–5.
823. In other words, the preferred reading is *zung* (“union”), whereas some other commentators such as Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 401, read *gzung*.
824. Lochen Dharmasrī (ibid.) adds that Mahādeva and consort are prostrate on the central throne, *gandharvas* are prostrate on the eastern throne, *yama* spirits on the southern one, *rākṣasas* on the western one, and *yakṣas* on the northern one.
825. On the six pristine cognitions (*ye shes drug*), see above, ch. 1, p. 77.
826. This line is included in Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 496, and GGFTC, 1166, but omitted in *DGD* (p. 350).
827. See Guenther 1984, 165–66, regarding the correspondence of these bodily ornaments to the status of the four classes of traditional Indian society.
828. *DGD* (p. 350) suggests “old skulls” (*rnying ba*), whereas Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 496, reads “shrunken skulls” (*rnyid pa*).
829. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 403, adds that the spots of dry blood are between the eyebrows, the grease marks are on the throat, and the dots of human ashes are on the forehead. Cf. Guenther 1984, 166.
830. See Rongzompa, *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 214. All commentators appear to concur that in their first right hand the herukas hold the symbol that designates their particular enlightened family, usually vajra, wheel, gemstone, lotus, and sword.
831. This line is missing in *DGD* (p. 351), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 497.
832. While generally agreeing with this interpretation, Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 404, makes the following exceptions: He allocates the plowshare to Karma Heruka’s last left hand, pointing out that all the exegetical tantras allocate the crossed vajra instead of the sword to Karma Heruka’s first right hand, and he allocates the bell to all their first left hands. He asserts that this description is consistent with

their means for attainment derived from the eight exegetical tantras. However, Longchen Rabjam, on the basis of the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva* (*sGyu 'phrul rdo rje*), offers the following sequence: Vajra Heruka (nine-pronged vajra and bell, five-pronged vajra skull cup, human club and drum); Buddha Heruka (wheel and ax, five-pronged vajra and skull cup, and human club and *khaṭvāṅga*); Ratna Heruka (gemstone and noose of intestines, five-pronged vajra and skull cup, human club and ax); Padma Heruka (lotus and bell, five-pronged vajra and skull cup, human club and drum); Karma Heruka (sword and plowshare, five-pronged vajra and skull cup, human club and drum).

833. *DGD* (p. 351) misreads *la stsogs* for *la sogs*.
834. *DGD* (ibid.) includes the non sequitur *ral gri* (“sword”) as well here.
835. Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 497, attributes this to Buddha Heruka rather than Karma Heruka.
836. Missing in *DGD*, but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 497.
837. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 417, lines 6–12.
838. This paragraph is added by Choying Tobden Dorje in *DGD* and not found in Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*.
839. For the correspondences between the eight *gaurī* and the eight modes of consciousness, which they naturally transform, see the appendix in Dorje 2005, 397–98.
840. See Rongzompa, *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 214, who identifies them with the spatiotemporal locations in general, rather than the sense objects per se.
841. For the correspondences between the eight *piśācī* and the eight objects of consciousness, extending from visual forms to the objects of the substratum consciousness, which they naturally transform, see the appendix in Dorje 2005, 398–99.
842. The gatekeepers represent the closure of the four sensory gates where the activities of consciousness and sense object converge, by means of the four immeasurable aspirations. See the appendix in Dorje 2005, 400; see also Guenther 1984, 170–71. The four pristine cognitions (*ye shes bzhi*) indicated here comprise the four peripheral pristine cognitions, excluding *dharmadhātujñāna*.
843. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 498, and GGFTC, 1171, which read “bear-faced” (*dred gdong*). *DGD* (p. 352) misreads “lion-faced” (*seng gdong*).
844. See the appendix in Dorje 2005, 401–2, which differentiates the clusters of the twenty-eight *īśvarī* in accordance with the four rites: pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and wrathful destruction.
845. *DGD* (p. 353) instead reads: “Vajrā is yellow, drinking blood from a skull” (*rdo rje ser mo dung khrag 'thung ba*), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 499, and GGFTC, 1171, which offer this preferred reading.
846. Also known as Śāntī.
847. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 404, presents a slightly different account of these hand emblems from the standpoint of the “means for attainment” (*sgrub thabs*). Also (pp. 406–7), he explains how the number of deities forming the wrathful maṇḍala may be extended in the course of meditation.
848. *DGD* (p. 353) reads *gsal bar*, but interprets this as *gang bar* in the

commentary that immediately follows.

849. As stated above, note 141, the outer, inner, and secret offerings are differentiated by Jamgon Mipham Gyatso in *Overview Entitled Nucleus of Inner Radiance*, pp. 204–6. See also Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 124–25.
850. See Longchen Rabjam’s remarks on these two interpretations, in the paragraph that follows.
851. The eight extremes of erroneous conception (*phyin ci log spros pa’i mtha’ brgyad*) comprise the extremes of production (*skye*), cessation (*’gag*), permanence (*rtag*), impermanence (*chad*), going (*’gro*), coming (*’ong*), singularity (*gcig*), and difference (*tha dad*).
852. *DGD* (p. 354) misreads “holder of secrets” (*gsang ’dzin*) for “subject-object dichotomy” (*gzung ’dzin*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 500.
853. This citation has not yet been found in the *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB vol. THA, no. 7, ff. 279a–313.
854. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 408, includes both “misconception” (*rtog pa*) and “realization” (*rtogs pa*) in his explanation of this verse.
855. Lochen Dharmasrī clearly comments on this section only in terms of the liberation of oneself and not from the standpoint of the compassionate forceful liberation of others. Longchen Rabjam includes both interpretations.
856. The sentient beings of the ten fields (*zhing bcu lta bu’i sems can*), for whom forceful liberation may be appropriate, have been enumerated above, p. 438. Alternatively, they may include the six species of gods of the world system of desire (*kāmadevaṣatkula*; *MVT* 3078–83), along with humans, animals, anguished spirits, and denizens of the hells.
857. See above, ch. 11, pp. 436–40, and below, ch. 20, pp. 731–35.
858. This refers back to the path of skillful means, as presented in ch. 11, pp. 429ff. See also Longchen Rabjam’s overview in GGFTC, 900–910.
859. These verses are often cited as a *smān chog* offering prayer, but the citation has not yet been located in the Derge version of the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB, vol. 15, no. 6.
860. As explained by Khenpo Thubten of Dzogchen, nectars comprise eight roots, each of which has one thousand branches. It is unclear which tradition differentiates the aspects of nectar on the basis of the five pristine cognitions. In Tashi Gyatso’s *Exegesis of the Resources, Implements, and Musical Instruments pertaining to the Ocean of Awareness Holders of the Indestructible Vehicle according to the Ancient Translation School, Entitled Ornamental Flower of Mantrins* (*sNga ’gyur rdo rje theg pa rig ’dzin rgya mtsho’i long spyod chas rgyan dang rol mo rnam bshad sngags ’chang rgyan gyi me tog*), in *Treatises on the Accoutrements and Music of the Ancient Way of Secret Mantra*, pp. 56–59, five different interpretations are found, according to the writings of Padmasambhava, Buddhagupta, Hūṃkara, Līlāvajra, and Vimalamitra.
861. This rendering of the obscure terms *li chu* and *za ber* is suggested by Khenpo Thubten. As an alternative, “silken cloaks” (*zab ber*) has also been suggested. According to Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 409, the clothing offered is said to be “fine and soft” (*srab ’jam*).
862. *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*, KPD, vol. 77, p. 496, lines 20–21. Note,

- however, that the last verse reads: *tshe'i dam pa* (“the sacred accomplishment of long life”) instead of *che ba'i dam pa*.
863. That is to say, the nonsymbolic Great Perfection (*rdzogs pa chen po*) is directly experienced, without being conceptually elaborated. As is the case elsewhere, Longchen Rabjam emphasizes the *rdzogs chen* interpretation of this verse rather than that of the perfection stage of meditation (*sampannakrama*). Cf. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 410.
864. *DGD* (p. 356) misreads *mtshon bsal* for *mtshon nas*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 503.
865. This citation has not yet been located in the Derge version of the *Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*, Dg. NGB vol. DA (15), no. 6.
866. *DGD* (p. 357) misreads *smon pas* for *smon pa*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 504.
867. At this juncture, Longchen Rabjam includes an important overview concerning the nature of commitments, the distinction between commitments according to the mantras and vows according to the sūtras, and the integration of the three trainings—those of the pious attendants, bodhisattvas, and *mantrins*. See GGFTC, 1189–222, and Chonam and Khandro 2011, 632–57; also Dorje 1991, 71–95.
868. See also Longchen Rabjam’s comments on this paragraph in GGFTC, 1218–19, and Dorje 1991, 90–91.
869. This citation has not yet been identified in the Derge version of the *Sūtra Requested by Rāṣṭrapāla*, KPD, vol. 42, pp. 683–755.
870. *Sūtra Requested by Upāli*, KPD, vol. 43, p. 359, lines 7–15.
871. *Abhidhānottaratantra (mNgon par brjod pa'i rgyud bla ma)*, T 369; KPD, vol. 77. The citation has not been identified in that work. Three of the four verses (omitting the third) are found in the *Single Recension of the Majestic King: The Tathāgata, Arhat, Genuinely Perfect Buddha Who Purifies All the Lower Realms*, KPD, vol. 85, p. 225, lines 8–9.
872. The origin of this citation has not yet been identified.
873. *Tantra of the Red Slayer of Death*, KPD, vol. 83, p. 695, lines 1–2.
874. See Longchen Rabjam’s comments on this paragraph in GGFTC, 1219, and Dorje 1991, 91.
875. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa (dkon brtsegs)* section of the Kangyur (T 45–93) and the KPD (vols. 39–44) has not yet been identified.
876. *Single Recension of the Majestic King*, KPD, vol. 85, p. 225, line 12 (first couplet), and lines 14–16 (second couplet). Our text attributes this citation to the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*.
877. This precise citation has not yet been identified in the *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines*, KPD, vols. 26–28.
878. See Longchen Rabjam’s comments on this paragraph in GGFTC, 1220, and Dorje 1991, 91.
879. *DGD* (p. 360) misreads *'jig rten dag las* for *'jig rten dag la*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 526.
880. *Sūtra Requested by Upāli*, KPD, vol. 43, p. 359, lines 16–21. Note, however, that the final verse ends *la dngos po bstan pa ston*, instead of *las yod dang med ces ston*.
881. *Single Recension of the Majestic King*, KPD, vol. 85, p. 225, lines 15–17.



882. See Longchen Rabjam's comments on this paragraph in GGFTC, 1219–20. Cf. Dorje 1991, 91.
883. This citation from the *Ratnakūṭa* (*dkon brtsegs*) section of the Kangyur (T 45-93) and the KPD (vols. 39–44) has not yet been identified.
884. *Single Recension of the Majestic King*, KPD, vol. 85, p. 225, lines 17–19.
885. The grades of empowerment (*dbang bskur*) according to Mahāyoga, from those of beneficence (*phan pa'i dbang*) to those of profundity (*zab dbang*), were presented in chs. 9 and 10.
886. With regard to the retention and transformation of these afflictive mental states, see GGFTC, 1204–10, and Dorje 1991, 83–84.
887. On the acquisition and importance of these “five nectars,” see GGFTC, 1210–11, and Dorje 1991, 84.
888. These and other alternative readings for this passage have been indicated in GGFTC, 305n24, 1448n32.
889. *DGD* (p. 362) misreads *thams* for *thabs*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 529.
890. These axioms of purity and sameness are explained above, in ch. 11. See note 117.
891. Concerning the distinctions between the enlightened heritage that is innately or naturally present and the enlightened heritage that is nurtured, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 191–205. See also GGFTC, 1234–38; and Chonam and Khandro 2011, 664–67.
892. *Tantra of the Array of Commitments* (*Dam tshig bkod pa*). The source has not yet been identified. The citation is not found in the *Dam tshig bkod pa sa gzhi'i rgyud rin po che spungs pa'i rgyan*. Dg. NGB vol. CA (5), no. 8, ff. 74b–75b.
893. This citation has not been identified in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102.
894. See GGFTC, 1211–12n14 for Lochen Dharmaśrī's analysis.
895. *DGD* (p. 365) reads “five male consorts” (*yab lnga*) for “five objects” (*yul lnga*), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 534, and GGFTC, 1243.
896. Here, *DGD* (p. 365) reads “five female consorts” (*yum lnga*), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 534, and GGFTC, 1243.
897. Each of the ten ancillary commitments has twenty subdivisions, on which see GGFTC, 1212n15 for Lochen Dharmaśrī's analysis.
898. As emphasized by Rongzompa (GGFTC, 1212), the aforementioned enumeration of three hundred sixty is not one of distinct or dissimilar commitments, but rather one comprising the attributes of the ten ancillary commitments.
899. *Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*, KPD, vol. 101. The first eight verses are found in ch. 60, p. 146, line 17–p. 147, line 2, while the ninth and tenth are found in ch. 60, p. 147, lines 6–8. The final nine verses are found in ch. 72, p. 166, line 19–p. 167, line 4, with the exception of the very last line (*'da' nyams bsrung mtshams med pa'i dam tshig yin*), which is missing but is reminiscent of ch. 72, p. 166, line 12, which reads *'da' nyams med pas ched du bsrung ba med*.
900. *Tantra of the Vast Space of the Sky*, Dg. NGB vol KA (1), no. 20, f. 249a, line 3.
901. According to the Tibetan system of dry measures, there are six *phul* in one

- bre*—a square measuring container, twenty of which are equivalent to “one mule load” (*khal gcig*).
902. On the restoration of broken commitments, see GGFTC, 1214–17. Cf. Dorje 1991, 93–94.
903. *DGD* (p. 359) misreads *tshang bas* for *tshang ba'i*. See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 539.
904. The triangular fire pit is in the shape of the Sanskrit and Tibetan letter E. The appropriate sacraments for this rite are described by Longchen Rabjam in GGFTC, 784–86.
905. The compassionate motivation behind the enactment of this wrath is paramount, as stated above in ch. 11, pp. 436–40.
906. That is to say, the liberation will take effect because the inherent buddhahood of sentient beings will be manifest.
907. This could also refer to the name of the target’s life-supporting talisman (*bla gnas*).
908. The wrathful rite is effected by Vajrakīla in the form of an iron *kīla*, in contrast to the following rite of subjugation effected by Padmakīla in the form of a copper *kīla*, the rite of enrichment effected by Ratnakīla in the form of a gold *kīla*, and the rite of pacification effected by Buddhakīla in the form of a silver *kīla*.
909. Although different deities may be visualized in the hearth. Karma Heruka is specifically mentioned here because Vajrakīla corresponds to the Karma family (*karmakula*).
910. Longchen Rabjam’s view is that all three steps occur in conjunction. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 429, considers these rites to have five steps: the preparation of the effigy, the visualization of the maṇḍala deities, the actual rites that are to be attained, the offerings to be made and their attributes, and the rite of dancing in a chain with its attributes.
911. *DGD* (p. 370) misreads “method” (*thabs*) for “hearth” (*thab*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 541.
912. The semicircular hearth in the shape of the Sanskrit and Tibetan letter VAM and its appropriate sacraments are described by Longchen Rabjam in GGFTC, 784–86. Cf. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 434.
913. Vajrapadma and Mahendra are aspects of Hayagrīva. Cf. Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 426, who reads Vajrapāṇi for these two.
914. *DGD* (p. 371) misreads “kingly” (*rgyal po'i*) for “enrichment” (*rgyas pa'i*). See Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 542.
915. The square fire pit in the shape of the Sanskrit and Tibetan letter MA and its appropriate sacraments are described by Longchen Rabjam in GGFTC, 784.
916. The circular fire pit in the shape of the Sanskrit and Tibetan letter YĀ and its appropriate sacraments are described by Longchen Rabjam in GGFTC, 783–84.
917. In his *Rare and Precious Commentary*, p. 243, Rongzompa makes this suggestion to explain why—although, somewhat incongruously, the fire pit corresponding to VAM is semicircular and the fire pit corresponding to YĀ is circular, when their actual shapes would suggest otherwise—the rites of subjugation and pacification are nonetheless etymologically associated with

- those letters because VAM implies the subjugating rites of fettering (*bandhana*) and yā implies the pacifying rites of coming to rest (*layāvati*).
918. The residual offering (*lhag ma*) is gathered during the communion ceremony from each participant and, once consecrated, is offered to those lesser deities of ritual activity, who abide outside the locus of the *gaṇacakra*, either because they are immobile or because their arrival there would cause obstacles.
919. This is a form of Guru Dragpo, here performing the function of a “messenger or intermediary of the rite” (*las kyi pho nya*).
920. *pho nya dgra la rbad cing mngag gzhus las la gtang*. Such incidents are recounted in the life story of Nyak Jñānakumāra. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 601–5.
921. The practices of union, which are clearly distinguished from the present rites, have already been described, from the perspective of the generation stage of meditation in ch. 11, pp. 433–36; in GGFTC, 899–911; and from the perspective of the perfection stage in ch. 13, pp. 504–5, and GGFTC, 1006–21.
922. Here DGD (p. 376) reads “attained” (*bsgrub par gyur to*), although in the root verses immediately above the same phrase is rendered as “refined” (*sbyong bar ’gyur ro*).
923. According to Lochen Dharmasrī, *Ornament of the Enlightened Intention*, p. 445, *zangs yag* is said to be equivalent to Skt. *tīkṣṇa* (“sharp”).
924. On all these categories of pristine cognition (*jñāna*), see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 139–43. Note that the latter presentation is somewhat different in that the pristine cognition of accomplishment (*krtyānuṣṭhānajñāna*) is said to be the perception of the buddha body of emanation (*nirmāṇakāya*), and the pristine cognition that quantitatively knows phenomena (*ji snyed pa mkhyen pa’i ye shes*) is said to embrace that.
925. This is the interpretation that accords with the taming of Rudra in ch. 15 above, pp. 604–28.
926. This phrase is omitted in DGD (p. 380), but see Longchen Rabjam, *Dispelling the Darkness*, p. 551.
927. These eulogies are therefore offered respectively to Vajra Heruka, Padma Heruka, Buddha Heruka, Ratna Heruka, and Karma Heruka, with their corresponding retinues.
928. The expression “wheel of vital energy” (*rlung gi dkyil ’khor*) denotes an energy field or maṇḍala of wind on which, according to Abhidharma, the universe is based.
929. On these and other epithets of Samantabhadra, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 117–22. Concerning the entrustment of this tantra text in particular, see also the explanation of Jamgon Mipham Gyatso in Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 159–62.
930. On the role of Vajrapāṇi as a compiler of Mahāyoga, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 451–60.
931. Dignāga, *Eulogy to Mañjuḥṣa*, T 2712, f. 79b.
932. Candrakīrti, *Introduction to the Middle Way*, TPD, vol. 60, p. 513, lines 8–10. See Padmakara 2002, 59 (ch. 1, v. 3).
933. *zo chun ’phyan ltar rang dbang med pa yi*.
934. This clearly pinpoints Longchen Rabjam’s view of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* as a text representative of the Great Perfection.
935. As explained in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 175–77, renunciation (*spangs pa*) and

- realization (*rtogs pa*) are of two modalities, one a passive fait accompli and the other a dynamic process.
936. *Sūtra Requested by Sudatta (Legs byin zhus pa'i mdo)*. This source and the citation have not yet been identified.
937. Jñānagarbha, *Commentary on the Distinction between the Two Truths*, T 3882, f. 14b. *DGD* wrongly attributes this citation to the *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle (rGyud bla ma'i bstan bcos, T 4024)*.
938. Scriptural authority (*lung, āgama*) is recognized in Buddhist logic as a valid form of appraising objects that are “indirectly evident to an extreme degree.”
939. This citation is not found in Dharmakīrti's *Exposition of Valid Cognition* (T 4210), as *DGD* (p. 382) appears to suggest, although the associated ideas are discussed in Prajñākaragupta's *Ornament of the Exposition of Valid Cognition* (T 4221, f. 109b). The citation is, however, found in Vimalamitra's *Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī Entitled Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of the Title*, T 2092, f. 38a. Note that *nyes pa spangs* is here replaced with *nyes pa zad*, and *smra du mi 'gyur* with *smra du mi byed*. The same verses are repeated also in Avalokitavratā's *Commentary on the Lamp of Discriminative Awareness* (T 3859) but in reverse order.
940. Maitreya, *Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*, ch. 5, v. 19; TPD, vol. 70, p. 977, lines 18–20; Holmes and Holmes 1985, 156 (v. 395).
941. See also the explanation of Jamgon Mipham Gyatso in Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009, 162–65.
942. This quotation has not yet been identified in the *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*, KPD, vol. 77, pp. 426–526. However, it is cited in Buddhaguhya's *Introduction to the Meaning of the Tantra*, T 2501, f. 4b7.
943. Maitreya's *Ornament of Emergent Realization*, TPD, vol. 49, p. 18, line 19–p. 20, line 1.
944. Nāgārjuna, *Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way, Entitled Discriminative Awareness*, ch. 18, v. 9, T 3824, f. 11a. Cf. Padmakara 2008, 84.
945. This citation has not yet been identified in the Derge version of the *Sūtra of the Adornment of Pristine Cognition's Appearance*, KPD, vol. 47, pp. 722–99.
946. *rDo rje* here may refer to other texts within the cycle, since the citation has not been located in the *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102.
947. *Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 487, lines 18–21.
948. Expositors of this tantra who pursue the bodhisattva path are therefore predicted to attain manifestly perfect buddhahood, whether or not they have yet become awareness holders of spontaneous presence.
949. *Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful Means*, KPD, vol. 102, p. 841, lines 12–13.
950. The point is that the concluding words of this text are in harmony with the concept of “indefinite time,” so that the tantra or continuum is deemed to have no cessation.
951. Some versions read *rtog pa* (“ideation”) instead of *rtogs pa* (“realization”). *DGD* (p. 386) in fact has both: *rtog pa* in the root verses and *rtogs pa* in the commentary.
952. Choying Tobden Dorje draws the present interlinear commentary specifically from the treatise of Candragomin, which is entitled *Extensive Commentary on the Sublime Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī (Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti-nāma-mahāṭīkā, 'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa)*. This commentary, which Candragomin is said to have received in a vision from Avalokiteśvara, is contained in the *yogatantra* section of the

Derge Tengyur (rGyud, vol. TSI, ff. 172a–199a, T 2090) and in the *yoganiruttara* section of the Peking Tengyur (P 3363). In the notes that follow I have consulted the TPD edition, vol. 24, pp. 1392–457. The criteria on which the classification of the *Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* as Yogatantra or Yoganiruttaratantra are based have been briefly noted in Davidson 1981, 15, and Wayman 1983, 8–9. Those same translators of the root verses have opted to follow commentarial sources other than Candragomin. Wayman 1983, for example, bases his annotations largely on the treatises of Narendrakīrti (T 1397), Candrabhadrakīrti (T 2535), and Smṛtijñānakīrti (T 2538), while Davidson 1981 utilizes the commentaries of Prahevajra (T 2093), the prolific Mañjuśrīmitra (especially T 2532), Vilāsavajra (T 2533), and Vimalamitra (T 2096), which have primacy within the Nyingma tradition. However, Choying Tobden Dorje and indeed Candragomin both acknowledge (see below, p. 908) that the *vajrapada* of the root tantra lend themselves to multiple levels of interpretation. Those familiar with the earlier published translations and editions of the root tantra will note that, according to Candragomin, the core eulogies of the text (chs. 5–10) are addressed to Mañjuśrī in the second person.

953. This suggests that the *Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* is revered as the culminating, sixteen thousandth chapter of the entire cycle of the *Net of Magical Emanation*, which alone would justify its inclusion at this point. The importance of this text and its extensive commentarial literature have already been mentioned. See note 21.
954. Candragomin’s comments on ch. 1, including a number of parallel passages, can be found in TPD, vol. 24, pp. 1396–402.
955. Here other versions of the text read *padma rgyas ‘dra’i zhal mnga’ ba*, suggesting that his face is like a wide-open lotus. See Wayman 1983, 57, and Davidson 1981, 19.
956. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1397, clearly emphasizes that the expression *rim par ldan* is synonymous with *sogs* (“and so forth”), implying that not only do Vajrapāṇi and his entourage have rippled brows but many other attributes such as “yellow disheveled hair and beard, red eyes, twisting tongues, upper teeth pressing down on the lower lip, large and sagging abdomens, extended limbs, fingers and toes like vajra tips, charnel ground ornaments, blazing weapons, skull garlands, and fiery aureoles.”
957. *Ibid.*, pp. 1397–98.
958. Note the alternative reading for this epithet: *mgon po bcom ldan de bzhin gshes*, as found in Wayman 1983, 58.
959. See the alternative reading for this last couplet: *dpag med rnams kyis dgyes pa yis / rab gsungs gang lags bshad du gsol*, as found in Wayman 1983, 61, which would suggest that the *Litany of Names* was delivered by the aspects of Vajradhara, expressing their delight. Cf. Davidson 1981, 13.
960. Note the alternative reading for the last two lines: *sems can rnams kyī bsam pa yi / khyad par ji bzhin rab bshad bgyi* (Wayman 1983, 61), which does not impact upon the meaning.
961. DGD (p. 394) misreads *gshes lugs*.
962. Cf. Wayman 1983, 62: *gsol btab*.
963. For the source commentary on ch. 2, see Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1402–3.
964. For the source commentary on ch. 3, see *ibid.*, pp. 1403–4.

965. On the basis of this inspection of the diverse types of individual practitioners and their degrees of acumen, varying interpretations of the *Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī* are found. Cf. Davidson 1981, 23n62. Other commentators such as Candrabhadrakīrti, relate these six classes of individual practitioners to the six enlightened families of the peaceful buddhas, with Bodhicittavajra supplementing the other five who appear in the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*. See Wayman 1983, 65.
966. The six kings of secret mantra in union, identified in the present chapter, comprise the six aspects of Mañjuśrī who partake of the six enlightened families and the modalities of pristine cognition. Together they are the focal points of this entire tantra. As such, (1) red Vajratīkṣṇa partakes of Amitabha's pristine cognition of discernment, and his attributes are praised in ch. 8 of the present work. (2) Blue Duḥkhaccheda is a wrathful aspect of Mañjuśrī, akin to Vajrabhairava, partaking of Akṣobhya's mirrorlike pristine cognition, and his attributes are praised in ch. 7. (3) White Prajñājñānamurti partakes of Vairocana's maṇḍala of indestructible expanse, and his attributes are praised in ch. 5. (4) Green Jñānakāya partakes of Amoghasiddhi's pristine cognition of accomplishment, and his attributes are praised in ch. 10. (5) Yellow Vāgīśvara partakes of Ratnasambhava's pristine cognition of sameness, and his attributes are praised in ch. 9. (6) Finally, white Arapacana partakes of Bodhicittavajra's pristine cognition of reality's expanse, and his attributes are praised in ch. 6. (7) In addition, there is the all-embracing Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara maṇḍala, with four-faced Mañjuḥṣa at the center, the presence of whom is implied in ch. 4. His front face is yellow, the left white, the rear red, and the right blue. Wayman (1983, 23-35) summarizes these seven maṇḍalas in accordance with the interpretation of Smṛtijñānakīrti. In this view, the seven core chapters (4-10) are respectively associated with Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara, Nāmasaṅgītimañjuśrī, Arapacana, Trailokyavijaya / Vajrahūmkāra, Vādisiṃha, Vādirāja, and Mañjuvajra. Candragomin, in the introductory synopsis in his *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1394-95, lists fifteen maṇḍalas that this tantra text presents in the course of its successive chapters, namely, those of Vairocana, Śākyamuni, Vajrabhairava, Ṣaḍānana, Halāhala ('Jam dpal gdong brgya pa), Yamāntaka, Mañjuśrīsarvatomukha ('Jam dpal kun tu zhal, gDong lnga gtsug phud lnga pa), the Twenty-Eight Constellations (*nakṣatra*), Viṣṇu, Rāhu, Bṛhaspati, Vemacitra, Daśagrīva, Mahādeva, and four-armed Mañjuśrī Jñānasattva (Mañjuvajra).
967. The source commentary on this first part of ch. 4 is found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1404-5.
968. These vocalic seed syllables imply the presence of the all-embracing Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara, which is one of the maṇḍalas elaborately described in Abhayākaragupta's *Vajrāvalī*. On the two-hundred twenty-one deities constituting this maṇḍala, see Bhattacharya 1981, 86-88; Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons according to the Tibetan Lineages*, p. 544; Wayman 1983, 27-28.
969. These are the names of the six aspects of Mañjuśrī, extolled in the stanzas of the following six chapters (5-10). See Davidson 1981, 22n63, and the source commentary in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1405-7.
970. Wayman (1983, 68) and Davidson (1981, 23) both follow the alternative reading *srog chen po ste skye ba med*, suggesting that the syllable A is

“aspirated.”

971. The actual eulogy of the *Litany of Names of Mañjuśrī* commences at this point in ch. 5, where the following stanzas are addressed to Prajñājñānamurti, the aspect of Mañjuśrī, otherwise known as Nāmasaṅgītimañjuśrī, in whom all forty-nine deities of the expanded maṇḍala of indestructible expanse, headed by Vairocana, are focused. See Wayman 1983, 29–30; Bhattacharya 1981, 85; and Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, pp. 397–98. The source commentary for this chapter is found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1407–11.
972. This stanza pertains to the natures of Amitābha and Akṣobhya within the maṇḍala of indestructible expanse. Cf. Wayman 1983, 69.
973. This stanza pertains to the natures of Vairocana and Amoghasiddhi within the maṇḍala of indestructible expanse. *Ibid.*
974. This stanza indicates the natures of Ratnasambhava and the four male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Akṣobhya, namely, Vajrasattva, Vajrarāja, Vajrarāga, and Vajrasādhu. *Ibid.*
975. This stanza indicates the natures of the four male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Ratnasambhava, namely, Vajraratna, Vajratejas, Vajraketu, and Vajrahāsa. *Ibid.*, 69–70.
976. This stanza indicates the natures of the four male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Amitābha, namely, Vajradharma, Vajratikṣṇa, Vajracakra, and Vajrabhāsa. *Ibid.*, 70.
977. This stanza indicates the natures of the four male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Amoghasiddhi, namely, Vajrakarma, Vajrarakṣa, Vajrayakṣa, and Vajrasandhi. *Ibid.*, 70–71.
978. The four modes of generosity (*sbyin pa bzhi*) are enumerated as bestowing materials, doctrine, fearlessness, and defilements. See Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, p. 807.
979. Various enumerations of the three aspects of ethical discipline (*tshul khrims gsum*) are given in Nordrang Orgyan (*ibid.*, pp. 388–90), including disciplinary vows, gathering of virtuous attributes, and acting on behalf of sentient beings.
980. The three kinds of tolerance (*bzod pa gsum*) comprise the ability to withstand abuse, the ability to disregard hardships, and genuine receptiveness to the sacred doctrine. *Ibid.*, p. 410.
981. Various enumerations of the three modes of perseverance (*brtson 'grus gsum*) are found, including the wearing of protective armor, the engaging in virtuous actions, and the engaging in acts of benefit to sentient beings. On this and other listings, see *ibid.*, pp. 385–87. This stanza specifically indicates the natures of the four female bodhisattvas, Vajralāsyā, Vajramālyā, Vajragītā, and Vajranartī, in association with the first four of the ten transcendent perfections. Cf. Wayman 1983, 71.
982. Different enumerations of the two meditative concentrations (*bsam gtan gnyis*) can be found listed in Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, pp. 165–66, including mundane and supramundane meditative concentration.
983. On the ten powers cultivated by bodhisattvas, see note 657.
984. This stanza specifically indicates the natures of the four female bodhisattvas and the four female gatekeepers, namely, Vajrapuṣpā, Vajradhūpā, Vajrālokā, Vajragandhā, Vajrāṅkuṣā, Vajrapāśā, Vajrasphoṭā, and Vajrāveśā, in association with the remaining eight transcendent perfections. Cf. Wayman

- 1983, 71.
985. This stanza indicates the natures of the four outer male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Akṣobhya, namely, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Gandhahasti, and Jñānaketu. Ibid., 72.
986. This stanza indicates the natures of the four outer male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Ratnasambhava, namely, Bhadrāpāla, Sāgaramati, Akṣayamati, and Pratibhānakūṭa. Ibid.
987. This stanza indicates the natures of the four outer male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Amitābha, namely, Mahāsthāmprāpta, Sarvāpāyañjaha, Sarvaśokatamonirghātamati, and Jālinīprabha. Ibid., 72-73.
988. The five types (*pañcagotra*, *rigs lnga*) here denote the following classes of individual practitioners: pious attendants, hermit buddhas, tathāgatas, vacillating practitioners, and those who are cut off from the Buddhist teachings. See Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, p. 1265.
989. This stanza indicates the natures of the four outer male bodhisattvas in the retinue of Amoghasiddhi, namely, Candraprabha, Amitaprabha, Gaganagañja, and Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin. Cf. Wayman 1983, 73.
990. The aspect of Mañjuśrī extolled in ch. 6 is Arapacana, in association with the Bodhicittavajra family, which has Vairocana as its central deity. Ibid., 30-31; Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, pp. 515, 530; and Willson and Brauen 2000, 288, 384. The source commentary for this chapter may be found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1411-21.
991. See Vasubandhu's commentary on the *Madhyāntavibhāga* in Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2006, 84-87; also Wayman 1983, 75, and Davidson 1981, 24n69.
992. These antidotes concern the aggregates, the sensory elements, the sense fields, dependent origination, fact and nonfact, the sense faculties, time, the truths, the vehicles, and phenomena both conditioned and unconditioned. See Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2006, 85, 88-102.
993. The missing elements of this list have been inserted following Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, pp. 2214-15. Cf. the slightly different enumeration of these ten powers given above, p. 70.
994. See the alternative reading *gnyis med gnyis su med par ston* in Wayman 1983, 75.
995. The category of pious attendants is deemed to consist of four pairs of sacred beings (*skyes bu bzhi*), namely, those who have embarked on entering the stream to nirvāṇa and those who have realized its fruit; those who have embarked on being tied to a single rebirth and those who have realized its fruit; those who have embarked on not being reborn in cyclic existence and those who have realized its fruit; and those who have embarked on arhatship and those who have realized its fruit. The eight kinds of individual (*ya brgyad*) are identical, enumerating these separately rather than in pairs. See Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, p. 495.
996. On the thirty-seven aspects of enlightenment, see note 299.
997. *DGD* (p. 402) reads '*gro ba'i don la ma mos pas* ("without having any inclination to benefit living beings"), following Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1416, whereas I have followed the reading found in the concise commentary (p. 1073): '*gro don mos pas*: "through your aspiration to benefit living beings."
998. *DGD* (p. 402) here reads *rtog pa* ("thought") for *rtogs pa* ("realization"). See



- Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1417.
999. DGD (p. 403) here misreads *dongs pa'i chos*, while the concise commentary (p. 1074) follows Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1417 (*dnogs po'i chos*). Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, p. 54, suggests that “afflictive mental states” (*nyon mongs*) are destroyed.
1000. DGD (p. 404) misreads “thought” (*rtog pas*) for “realization” (*rtogs pas*) but see Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, p. 57, where the preferred reading is found.
1001. Cf. the alternative wording *mchod 'os rjed 'os drang srong che* found in Wayman 1983, 81.
1002. Wayman (1983, 83) comments that the first line of the following chapter (*rdo rje 'jigs byed 'jigs par byed*) should be brought forward here to complete the last quatrain of ch. 6. This divergence of opinion reflects discrepancies in the manuscripts and Indic commentators’ views as to where ch. 6 ends and ch. 7 begins. However, Candragomin’s commentary is consistent with the present arrangement.
1003. This stanza indicates that the four female gatekeepers complete the maṇḍala of Arapacana.
1004. Since Wayman (1983, 83) suggests that this line should conclude the previous chapter, he brings forward the initial line of all the nine succeeding stanzas of ch. 7 to make up full quatrains. This would eliminate the imbalance between the last stanza of the previous chapter, which has only three lines, and the last stanza of the present chapter, which has five lines, but runs counter to Candragomin’s interpretation.
1005. The aspect of Mañjuśrī extolled in ch. 7 is Duḥkhaccheda, where the central deity Vajrabhairava assumes the wrathful forms of Vajrahūmkāra, Ṣaḍānana, Yamāntaka, and so forth. As the commentator states, in the first of these, the maṇḍala comprises thirteen deities, including the nine-headed, eighteen-armed, bull-headed wrathful deity Vajrabhairava, along with a retinue comprising eight aspects of Yamāntaka (*gshin rje gshed brgyad*) and four female consorts (*yum bzhi*). See Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, pp. 330–33. At the same time, Vajrabhairava also manifests in the six-faced, six-armed, six-legged form of Ṣaḍānana, with a retinue of eight buddhas (male and female), alongside the four female gatekeepers. *Ibid.*, pp. 351–52. The six faces are said to indicate the six enlightened families of wrathful deities; the six eyes indicate the six pristine cognitions; and the six arms indicate the six transcendent perfections. See Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, pp. 60–61. For an alternative listing of eleven deities, see Wayman 1983, 32–33, and Bhattacharya 1981, 83. The source commentary for this chapter may be found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1421–23.
1006. Wayman 1983, 83, reads *drag po* for *grags pa*.
1007. Halāhala Lokeśvara (‘Jig rten dbang phyug) is the name of the hundred-faced wrathful emanation of Mañjuśrī (‘Jam dpal gdong brgya pa), as propitiated in Sahajalalita’s *Means for Attainment of Halāhala* (*Ha lā ha la'i sgrub thabs*). The expression *phug cig phug cig* would literally translate as “Pierce! Pierce!” or as “Plow! Plow!” Sanskrit *halahala* means “plowing” or “furlowing,” while *halāhala* is the name of a lethal poison produced at the mythological churning of the oceans.
1008. Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, p. 63,

- suggests that the hand emblem is a crossed vajra (*viśvavajra*, *rdo rje kun*).
1009. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1423, notes that the expression “ingress of indestructible reality” (*rdo rje ’bebs pa*) denotes the consecration (*rab tu gnas pa*) of this maṇḍala.
1010. The aspect of Mañjuśrī extolled in ch. 8 is Vajratīkṣṇa, also known as white Prajñācakramañjuśrī (Shes rab ’khor lo), on whom see Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, p. 538. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this chapter pertains to the maṇḍala of Padmanarteśvara, on which see *ibid.*, pp. 486–87. Wayman (1983, 33–34) further suggests an affinity with Mañjuśrī Vādisiṃha. All these epithets are indeed mentioned in the text. The source commentary for this chapter can be found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1423–36.
1011. According to Narendrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the retinue comprising the five peaceful buddhas. See Wayman 1983, 88.
1012. The eight sufferings (*sdug bsngal brgyad*) comprise birth, aging, sickness, death, disagreeable experiences, dearth of agreeable experiences, inability to obtain a desired objective though sought, and the five acquisitive psychophysical aggregates. See Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, pp. 1826–27.
1013. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Maitreya and Mañjuśrī. See Wayman 1983, 88.
1014. Wayman (1983, 89) reads *gtso bo che* (“great leader”) for *klu chen po* (“great nāga”).
1015. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Gandhahasti and Jñānaketu. *Ibid.*
1016. Wayman reads *lus kun las ni* (“transcending all corporeal forms”) for *nyon mongs kun las* (“transcending all afflictive mental states”). *Ibid.*
1017. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Bhadrapāla and Sāgaramati. *Ibid.*
1018. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Akṣayamati and Pratibhānakūṭa. *Ibid.*
1019. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Mahāsthāmaprāpta and Jñānaketu. *Ibid.*, 90.
1020. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Sarvaśokatamonirghatamati and Jāliniprabha. *Ibid.*
1021. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Candraprabha and Amitaprabha. *Ibid.*
1022. According to Candrabhadrakīrti, this stanza pertains to the bodhisattvas Gaganagañja and Nīvaraṇaviṣkambhin. *Ibid.*, 91.
1023. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1428, suggests that this stanza pertains to the four-faced Sarvatomukha Mañjuśrī (’Jam dpal kun tu zhal), also known as gDong lnga gtsug phud lnga. Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, p. 72, identifies this form with Brahmā.
1024. This stanza pertains to Buddha Śākyamuni. See Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, p. 72, and Wayman 1983, 91.
1025. The words of this stanza suggest a parallel between Buddha Śākyamuni and Mañjuśrī in the forms King of Speech (Vādirāja, Ngag gi rgyal po) and Lion of Speech (Vādisiṃha, sMra ba’i seng ge). On these aspects of Mañjuśrī, see Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, pp. 526–29, 517–21.

1026. Wayman (1983, 94) remarks that this term may also denote the discus carried in the hands of Viṣṇu, although it is clear from Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1431, that this is not intended.
1027. Wayman (1983, 94) suggests the alternative reading for this line: *nyon mongs nad kyī dgra che ba* (“great foes of ailments which are the afflictive mental states”).
1028. On the association of this chapter with the maṇḍala of Padmanarteśvara, see above, note 1010. According to Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, p. 77, this epithet implies that Mañjuśrī assumes diverse skillful emanational forms that act invariably for the benefit of sentient beings. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1432, concurs.
1029. Wayman (1983, 95) suggests the alternative reading for this line: *sangs rgyas kun gyi rgyal po che* (“great king of all the buddhas”).
1030. Narendrakīrti suggests that these emblems denote the five empowerments of the vase (*bum dbang*), pertaining in succession to the five peaceful buddhas. *Ibid.*
1031. The Sanskrit suggests that this last line refers to Sarasvatī rather than Avalokita. *Ibid.* See also Davidson 1981, 31.
1032. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1432–33, remarks that the expressions “indestructible sun” and “indestructible moon” denote two distinct methods of reciting the mantra syllables—the first in relation to the recitation of the letters of the maṇḍala, in the form of a wheel (*dkyil ’khor ’khor lo’i tshul du gdon pa*), and the second in relation to the recitation of the mantra associated with a single deity (*lha rkyang ba’i tshul du gdon pa*).
1033. Wayman (1983, 96) reads *sangs rgyas brjod pa’i chos* for *sangs rgyas ’gro ba’i chos*.
1034. This remark is attributable to Choying Tobden Dorje, since it is not found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1433.
1035. This expression is also translated as *rgyal bas rgyal ba*, suggesting that Mañjuśrī is victorious over the victorious.
1036. Wayman (1983, 97) reads “meaning” (*don*) for “demonstrate” (*ston*).
1037. The aspect of Mañjuśrī extolled in ch. 9 is Vāgīśvara, on whom see Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, pp. 532–35. This pertains to the maṇḍala of Vādirāja, who is flanked by the retainers Sudhanakumāra and Yamāntaka, with Sūryaprabha and Candraprabha respectively to the front and rear, and the four male and female peaceful buddhas in the cardinal and intermediate directions. See Wayman 1983, 34–35. The source commentary for this chapter is found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1436–48.
1038. *DGD* (p. 414) reads “steadfast” (*brtan po*) for “heroic” (*dpa’ bo*), but see Wayman 1983, 99.
1039. Wayman (1983, 99) and Davidson (1981, 33) both read *lag pa’i dbyug pa brgya bskod cing* (“brandishing the hundred clubs of his arms”).
1040. *DGD* (p. 414) reads *bzhi* for *gzhi*, but see Wayman 1983, 100.
1041. Wayman (1983, 100) suggests *stong pa nyid dga’ mchog gi blo* (“endowed with supreme intelligence that is attached to emptiness”).
1042. Wayman (*ibid.*) reads *la sogs ’das* (“transcending [attachment] and so forth”) for *sogs spangs pa* (“having renounced [attachment] and so forth”).
1043. Unusually, the commentary offered for this verse and the next is less complete than the root stanza itself, and it has therefore been expanded to

- include all the words of the root stanza.
1044. The twelve aspects of the four truths (*bden pa bzhi'i don rnam pa bcu gnyis*) comprise the four noble truths in combination either with the three world systems of desire, form, and formlessness or else with the three turnings of the wheel of the sacred doctrine. See Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, p. 2745.
1045. These sixteen aspects of the reality of emptiness (*stong pa nyid kyi de nyid rnam pa bcu drug*) are included among the eighteen aspects of emptiness enumerated in note 785. See also Nordrang Orgyan, *Buddhist Numeric Terms*, pp. 2932–33.
1046. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1441–45, elaborates more extensively on this often-cited stanza concerning the philosophical perspectives of the three causal vehicles and the fruitional vehicle.
1047. Wayman (1983, 105) reads *yiḍ kyi yul* for *yul dang ldan*.
1048. Wayman (*ibid.*, 106) suggests the alternative reading: *grub mtha' 'khrul pa ldan pa min*.
1049. According to Narendrakīrti, Ratnaketu is an epithet of Ratnasambhava. See Wayman 1983, 106. Monier-Williams ([1899] 2005, 864) notes that Ratnaketu is a name common to two thousand future buddhas.
1050. The aspect of Mañjuśrī extolled in ch. 10 is Jñānakāya or Mañjuvajra, who has either three or four faces and four, six, or eight arms. See Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, pp. 539–40. The source commentary for this chapter is found in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1448–55.
1051. Wayman (1983, 107) reads *drug* (“six”) for *brgya* (“hundred”).
1052. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1448–49, elaborates on the distinctive rituals and purposes associated with the four rites. On the five syllables associated with the classes of living beings (gods, humans, animals, anguished spirits, and denizens of hell), see above, pp. 285–86. The hundred syllables are those of the aggregates, elements, modes of consciousness, and so forth, which find their inherent purity in the maṇḍala of the hundred peaceful and wrathful deities.
1053. An interesting explanation of this stanza, pertaining to the sixteen vowels and their symbolism, along with the vital essences and energy centers of the subtle body, can be found in Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo, *Annotated Commentary*, pp. 94–95. Accordingly, there are sixteen aspects of vital essence located in the sixteen channel branches of the crown center, from the melting of which eight descend into the heart center. Half of these again, on melting, descend into the navel center, and half of these in turn descend into the secret center. Cf. the multileveled inner and outer explanations of this stanza given in Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1450–51.
1054. The meditative stability of heroic valor (*śūraṅgama*, *dpa' bar 'gro ba*) is the first of 111 meditative stabilities that are enumerated in the sūtras of transcendent discriminative awareness. See, e.g., Conze 1975, 143–52.
1055. Wayman (1983, 108) reads *lha yi dbang po lha yi lha*.
1056. On the identification of Mañjuśrī with these protector divinities, see *ibid.*; also Davidson 1981, 36n122. Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, pp. 1452–53, explains how Mañjuśrī may manifest in such forms in mundane realms of existence for the benefit of beings with those perspectives but still remain

- untainted by the defects of existence.
1057. These are the four hand emblems specifically associated with Jñānakāya and Mañjuvajra. See the illustrations and text in Jigme Chokyi Dorje, *Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons*, p. 539.
1058. Wayman (1983, 112) reads *snying po* (“nucleus”) for *las byung* (“originating from”).
1059. Narendrakīrti comments that this initial stanza extols Akṣobhya and the pristine cognition of reality’s expanse. Ibid.
1060. Narendrakīrti comments that this second stanza extols Vairocana and the mirrorlike pristine cognition. Ibid.
1061. Narendrakīrti comments that this third stanza extols Amitābha and the pristine cognition of discernment. Ibid., 112–13.
1062. Narendrakīrti comments that this fourth stanza extols Ratnasambhava and the pristine cognition of sameness. Ibid., 113.
1063. Narendrakīrti comments that this final stanza extols Amoghasiddhi and the pristine cognition of accomplishment. Ibid.
1064. A detailed discussion of these advantages in six rounds can be found in Davidson 1981, 39–44.
1065. The text here follows Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1456, who glosses *abhāva* as “uncreated.”
1066. Candrabhadrakīrti comments that this is the approximate heart mantra (*upahṛdaya*) of Vajratīkṣṇa. See Wayman 1983, 114.
1067. The text here follows Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1456, who gives *yaduta* the sense of “uncreated.”
1068. Candrabhadrakīrti comments that this is the approximate heart mantra (*upahṛdaya*) of Duḥkhaccheda. See Wayman 1983, 114.
1069. Candrabhadrakīrti comments that this is the approximate heart mantra (*upahṛdaya*) of Prajñājñāna. Ibid.
1070. The text follows Candragomin, *Extensive Commentary*, p. 1457, who glosses *mūrti* as “crown” (*spyi gtsug*). Candrabhadrakīrti comments that this is the approximate heart mantra (*upahṛdaya*) of Jñānakāya. See Wayman, *ibid.*
1071. Candrabhadrakīrti comments that this is the approximate heart mantra (*upahṛdaya*) of Vāgiśvara. See Wayman, *ibid.*
1072. Candrabhadrakīrti comments that this is the approximate heart mantra (*upahṛdaya*) of Arapacana. Ibid., 115.
1073. For the first three lines of this verse, Wayman (*ibid.*, 116) reads *rnam mang mgon po gzhan rnams dang / gsang dbang lag na rdo rje de / khro bo’i rgyal por bcas rnams kyis*.
1074. Note that in Wayman’s version, the last two lines of this verse and the first two lines of the next verse are inverted. Ibid.
1075. Wayman here reads *rnam dag legs pa’i lam ’di ni* and places it as the third line of the quatrain. Ibid.
1076. *DGD*, vol. 1, pp. 117–34.
1077. *DGD*, vol. 3, pp. 11–33.
1078. This remark paraphrases the actual words of ch. 22:1.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Bibliographical references for this volume are presented in four alphabetically arranged sections: (1) Scriptural Texts: Vinaya, Sūtra, and Tantra; (2) Indic Treatises; (3) Tibetan Treatises and Spiritual Revelations (*gter ma*); and (4) Works in Other Languages.

1. SCRIPTURAL TEXTS: VINAYA, SŪTRA, AND TANTRA *Answers to the Questions of Ratnacūḍa*

Ratnacūḍaparipṛcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa gtsug na rin po ches zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo  
Dg.K. dKon brtsegs, vol. CHA, ff. 210a-254b, T 91; KPD, vol. 44, pp. 589-695.  
Summarized in PZ, pp. 135-37. *MTTWL* 180.

*Collection of Aphorisms*

Udānavarga

Ched du brjod pa'i tshoms

Dg.K. mDo sde, vol. SA, ff. 209a-253a, T 326; KPD, vol. 72, pp. 602-704.  
Summarized in PZ, pp. 491-92. See Brough 2001.

*Diamond Cutter*

Āryavajracchedikā-nāma-prajñāpāramitāmahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa rdo rje gcod pa shes bya ba theg pa  
chen po'i mdo [short title: rDo rje gcod pa]

Dg.K. Shes phyin vol. KA, ff. 121a-132b, T 16; KPD, vol. 34, pp. 327-57.  
Summarized in PZ, pp. 415-18. *EIPRB* 161. *MTTWL* 244. Translated in Red Pine  
2001.

*Enlightened Intention of the Nucleus of Esoteric Instructions*

Man ngag snying gi dgongs pa [rgyal ba'i bka']

Dg. NGB vol. RA (25) no. 7, ff. 35a-49b.

*Exegetical Tantra Entitled Mirror of Vajrasattva. See Tantra of the Mirror of*

*Vajrasattva Exegetical Tantra Entitled Tantra of the Ocean* [from the *Net of Magical Emanation*]. See *Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation Extensive Exegetical Tantra* [of the *Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*] bShad rgyud rgyas pa See *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters Extensive* [*Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Forty-Six Chapters*]. See *Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Forty-Six Chapters Foundation of the Minor Transmissions on Monastic Discipline*  
Vinayakṣudrakavastu  
'Dul ba'i lung phran tshogs kyi gzhi  
Dg.K. 'Dul ba vols. THA-DA, T 6; KPD, vols. 10-11.

*Garland of Lightning*

Glog gi phreng ba [alternative title: rTa mgrin la bstod pa glog gi phreng ba]  
This source has not been identified.

[*Glorious Root*] *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* [dPal rtsa ba'i] rgyud gsang ba'i snying  
po de kho na nyid nges pa  
See *Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*

*Great Mother*

Yum chen mo

See *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in One  
Hundred Thousand Lines Heart Sūtra of Discriminative Awareness*

Bhagavatīprajñāpāramitāhṛdaya

bCom ldan 'das ma shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i snying po

Dg.K. Shes phyin vol. KA, ff. 144b-146a, T 21; KPD, vol. 34, pp. 402-5.

MTTWL 85. Translated in Red Pine 2004.

*Hundred Parables on Deeds*

Karmaśataka



Las brgya tham pa  
Dg.K. mDo sde vols. HA-A, T 340; KPD, vols. 73-74.  
Summarized in PZ, pp. 506-7.

*Intermediate Mother*

Yum bar ma

See *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eighteen Thousand Lines* and *Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines Kingly Tantra concerning the Power of the Wrathful Deities*

[gSang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i] khro bo [chen po] stobs kyi rgyud rgyal Dg. NGB, vol. DA (11), ff. 286a-297b; Tingkye NGB vol. 16, pp. 138-42.

*Pagoda of Precious Gems*  
Ratnakūṭa

dKon brtsegs

Section of the Kangyur, comprising the sūtras T 45-93; KPD, vols. 39-44.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 24-144. *MTTWL* 122. Selected translations in Chang 1983.

*Single Recension of the Majestic King: The Tathāgata, Arhat, Genuinely Perfect Buddha Who Purifies All the Lower Realms* Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatejorājasya tathāgatasya arhato samyaksambuddhasya kalpaikadeśa De bzhin gshegs pa dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas ngan song thams cad yongs su sbyong ba gzi brjid kyi rgyal po'i brtag pa phyogs gcig pa Dg.K. rGyud vol. TA, ff. 86b-146a, T 485; KPD, vol. 85, pp. 278-399.

*Subsequent Tantra of the Emergence of Cakrasaṃvara*  
Saṃvarodayottaratantra  
See *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*

*Subsequent Tantra of the Secret Assembly*  
Guhyasamājottaratantra  
gSang 'dus rgyud phyi ma  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. CA, ff. 148a-157b, T 443; KPD, vol. 81, pp. 584-606.

*Subsequent Tantra [of the Secret Nucleus]*  
dPal gsang ba'i snying po'i rgyud phyi ma [short title: rGyud phyi ma]  
Tingkye NGB vol. 14, pp. 62-67 (5 chs.).

[*Subsequent*] *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*. See *Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas Supreme Commitment*

Dam tshig mchog

See *Tantra of the Supreme Commitment: The Great Array of Pristine Cognition*  
*Supreme Conqueror*

rGyal mchog

This source has not yet been located.

*Supreme Tantra of Clear Expression*

Abhidhānottaratantra

mNgon par brjod pa'i rgyud bla ma [alternative title: Nges brjod bla ma]

Dg.K. rGyud vol. KA, ff. 247a-370a, T 369; KPD, vol. 77, pp. 708-1005.

Partially translated in Kalff 1979.

*Supreme Wheel*

'Khor lo mchog

This source has not yet been identified; it could possibly refer to either the cycle based on the *Tantra of the Wheel of Time* or the *Tantra of Cakrasaṃvara*.

*Sūtra of All-Gathering Awareness*

Sarvatathāgatacittaguhyajñānārthagarbhakrodhavajrakulatantrapiṇḍārthavidyā  
yogasiddhi-nāma-mahāyāna sūtra De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gsang ba'i  
ye shes don gyi snying po rnal 'byor grub pa'i rgyud zhes bya ba theg pa chen  
po'i mdo Dg.K. rNying rgyud vol. KHA, ff. 1b-110a, T 831; KPD, vol. 102, pp. 3-  
246.

*Sūtra of Extensive Play*

Lalitavistarasūtra

rGya cher rol pa

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. KHA, ff. 1b-216b, T 95; KPD, vol. 46, pp. 3-527.

BST 1 (1958). Summarized in PZ, pp. 145-46. *MTTWL* 102. Translated from Foucaux's French version in Bays 1983.

*Sūtra of Extensive Pristine Cognition*

Āryaniṣṭhāgatabhagavajjñānavaipūlyasūtraratanānta-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa bcom ldan 'das kyi ye shes rgyas pa pa'i mdo sde rin po che mtha' yas mthar phyin pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo [short title: Ye shes rgyas pa]

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. GA, ff. 1b-275b, T 99; KPD, vol. 47, pp. 3-667.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 146-47.

*Sūtra of Heroic Meditative Stability*

Āryasūraṅgamasamādhi-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa dpa' bar 'gro ba'i ting nge 'dzin ces bya ba'i theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. DA, ff. 253b-316b, T 132; Kangyur dpe sur ma, vol. 55, pp. 670-821.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 187-89. *MTTWL* 224. Translated in McRae 1998.

*Sūtra of Pristine Cognition at the Moment of Decease*

Āryātajñāna-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa 'da' ka ye shes zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. THA, ff. 153a-153b, T 122; KPD, vol. 54, pp. 384-85.

Summarized in PZ, p. 175.

*Sūtra of Supreme Golden Light*

Āryasuvārṇaprabhāsottamasūtrendrarāja-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa gser 'od dam pa mdo sde'i dbang po'i rgyal po zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo Dg.K. rGyud 'bum vol. PA, ff. 151b-273a, T 556; KPD, vol. 89, pp. 470-43.

*MTTWL* 226.

*Sūtra of the Applications of Mindfulness*

Āryasaddharmasmṛtyupasthāna

'Phags pa dam pa'i chos dran pa'i nye bar gzhas pa

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. YA, f. 82a-vol. SHA, f. 229b (4 vols.), T 287; KPD, vol. 68, p. 238-vol. 71, p. 541.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 462-65.

*Sūtra of the Arrayed Bouquet*

Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra

sDong po bkod pa'i mdo

Contained in Dg.K. Phal chen vol. KA, T 44; KPD, vol. 35

Summarized in PZ, pp. 19-23. *MTTWL* 76. Translated in Cleary 1993, 1135-518.

*Sūtra of the Bounteous Array*

Āryaghanavyūha-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa rgyan stug po bkod pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. CHA, ff. 1b-55b, T 110; KPD, vol. 50, pp. 2-127.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 163-65. *EIPRB* 340.

*Sūtra of the Cornucopia of Avalokiteśvara's Attributes*

Āryakaraṇḍavyūha-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa za ma tog bkod pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. JA, ff. 200a-247b, T 116; KPD, vol. 51, pp. 529-640.

*MTTWL* 90.

*Sūtra of the Descent to Laṅkā*

Āryalaṅkāvatāramahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa lang kar gshegs pa rin po che'i mdo las sangs rgyas thams cad kyi gsung

gi snying po'i shes bya ba'i le'u Dg.K. mDo sde vol. CA, ff. 192a-284b, T 108;

KPD, vol. 49, pp. 507-729.

*BST* 3 (1963). Summarized in PZ, pp. 159-63. *MTTWL* 103. *EIPRB* 137.

Translated in Suzuki 1932.

*Sūtra of the Flash of Splendor*

Jñānāścaryadyuticakrasūtra

Ye shes rṅgam glog gi 'khor lo zhes bya ba'i mdo

Dg.K. rNying rgyud vol. KA, ff. 290b-358a, T 830; KPD, vol. 101, pp. 749-898.

*Sūtra of the Great Bounteousness of the Buddhas*

Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaipulyasūtra

Sangs rgyas phal po che zhes bya ba shin tu rgyas pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. Phal chen, vols. KA-A (1-4), T 44; KPD, vols. 35-38.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 6-23. *MTTWL* 24. Translated in Cleary 1993.

*Sūtra of the Irreversible Wheel*

Āryāvaivartacakra-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa phyir mi ldog pa'i 'khor lo shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. ZHA, ff. 241b-301b, T 240; KPD, vol. 65, pp. 625-768.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 336-40.

*Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stability*

Āryasarvadharmasvabhāvasamatāvipañcita-samādhirāja-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa chos thams cad kyi rang bzhin mnyam pa nyid rnam par spros pa ting

nge 'dzin gyi rgyal po shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo Dg.K. mDo sde vol. DA, ff. 1b-170b, T 127; KPD, vol. 55, pp. 3-411.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 177-79. *MTTWL* 194. Partially translated in Gomez and

Silk 1989, Rockwell 1980, and elsewhere.

*Sūtra of the Lamp of Precious Gems*

Āryaratnolka-nāma-dhāraṇī-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa dkon mchog ta la la'i gzungs zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. PA, ff. 34a-82a, T 145; KPD, vol. 57, pp. 94-207.

MTTWL 190.

*Sūtra of the Ornament of Pristine Cognition's Appearance*

Āryasarvabuddhaviṣayāvatāra-jñānālokālamkāra-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa sangs rgyas thams cad kyi yul la 'jug pa'i ye shes snang ba'i rgyan zhes

bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo Dg.K. mDo sde vol. GA, ff. 276a-305a, T 100; KPD, vol. 47, pp. 722-99.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 428-29.

*Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eight Thousand Lines* Āryāṣṭasāhasarikāprajñāpāramitā

'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa brgyad stong pa

Dg.K. Shes phyin vol. KA, ff. 1b286a, T 12; KPD, vol. 33.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 410-12. *EIPRB* 26. *MTTWL* 22. Translated in Conze 1973.

*Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Eighteen Thousand Lines* Aṣṭadaśasāhasarikāprajñāpāramitā

'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa khri brgyad stong pa zhes bya ba theg

pa chen po'i mdo Dg.K. Shes phyin vol. KA, f. 1b-vol. GA 206a (3 vols.), T 10;

KPD, vol. 29, p. 3-vol. 31, p. 495.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 402-6. *MTTWL* 20.

*Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in One Hundred Thousand Lines* Śatasāhasarikāprajñāpāramitā

Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stong phrag brgya pa

Dg.K. Shes phyin vol. KA, f. 1b-vol. a, f. 395a (12 vols.), T 8; KPD, vols. 14-25.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 395-99. *EIPRB* 52. *MTTWL* 208.

*Sūtra of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness in Twenty-Five Thousand Lines* Pañcaviṃśatisāhasarikāprajñāpāramitā

Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stong pa nyi shu lnga pa

Dg.K. Shes phyin vols. KA-GA (3 vols.), T 9; KPD, vols. 26-28.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 399-402. *MTTWL* 154. Translated in Conze 1975.

*Sūtra Requested by Devaputra*

Devaputrapariṣcchāsūtra

Lha bu'i zhus pa'i mdo

Possibly equivalent to:

Āryasusthitamatidevaputrapariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa lha'i bu blo gros rab gnas kyis zhus pa

Dg.K. dKong brtsegs vol. CA, ff. 285a-309 and vol. CHA, ff. 1b-27a, T 80; KPD, vol.



43, pp. 820-88 and vol. 44, pp. 3-60.  
Summarized in PZ, pp. 106-12.

or:

Āryasuvikrāntacintadevaputrapariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa lha'i bu rab rtsal sems kyis zhus pa

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. BA, ff. 101a-139b, T 161; KPD, vol. 59, pp. 271-363.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 220-21. *MTTWL* 227.

*Sūtra Requested by Druma*

Āryadrumakīṃnararājapariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa'i rgyal po sdong pos/ mjon pas zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i  
mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. PHA, ff. 254a-319a, T 157; KPD, vol. 58, pp. 664-816.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 213-15.

*Sūtra Requested by Jñānottara*

Jñānottarabodhisattva-pariṣcchāparivarta-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

Byang chub sems dpa' ye shes dam pas zhus pa'i le'u zhes bya ba theg pa chen  
po'i mdo Dg.K. dKon brtsegs vol. CHA, ff. 30a-70b, T 82; KPD, vol. 44, pp. 82-  
178.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 113-16.

*Sūtra Requested by Rāṣṭrapāla*

Āryarāṣṭrapālapariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa yul 'khor skyong gis zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. dKon brtsegs vol. NGA, ff. 227a-257a, T 62; KPD, vol. 42, pp. 683-755.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 63-65. *MTTWL* 179.

*Sūtra Requested by Sudatta*

Legs byin zhus pa'i mdo

This work is as yet unidentified.

*Sūtra Requested by the Emanational King*

Āryavikurvānarājapariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa rnam par 'phrul ba'i rgyal pos zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i  
mdo Dg.K. mDo sde vol. BA, ff. 175b-210a, T 167; KPD, vol. 59, pp. 480-562.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 226-28.

*Sūtra Requested by Upāli [from the Pagoda of Precious Gems]*

[Āryavinayavinīscaya] Upālipariṣcchā-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa 'dul ba rnam par gtan la dbab pa nye bar 'khor gyis zhus pa zhes bya ba  
theg pa chen po'i mdo Dg.K. dKon brtsegs vol. CA, ff. 115a-131a, T 68; KPD, vol.  
43, pp.324-62.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 77-82. *MTTWL* 242.

*Sūtra Revealing the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas* Bodhisattvacaryānirdeśa-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. TSA, ff. 96b-105b, T 184; KPD, vol. 61, pp. 263-84.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 247-48. *MTTWL* 42.

*Sūtra Revealing the Diffusion of Light Rays Everywhere*

Āryaraśmisamantamuktanirdeśa-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa 'od zer kun tu bkye ba bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

Dg.K. dKon brtsegs vol. KHA, ff. 195b-255b, T 55; KPD, vol. 40, pp. 554-702.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 51-52.

*Sūtra Revealing the Inconceivable Secrets of the Tathāgata*

Āryatathāgatācintyaguhyānirdeśa-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa'i gsang ba bsam gyis mi khyab pa bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo Dg.K. dKon brtsegs vol. KA, ff. 100a-203a, T 47; KPD, vol. 39, pp. 289-542.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 28-32.

*Sūtra Revealing the Nonemergence of All Things*

Āryasarvadharmapravṛttinirdeśa-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

'Phags pa chos thams cad 'byung ba med par bstan pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo Dg.K. mDo sde vol. MA, ff. 267a-296a, T 180; KPD, vol. 60, pp. 714-85.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 246-47.

*Sūtra Revealing the Three Buddha Bodies*

Āryatrikāya-nāma-mahāyānasūtra

sKu gsum bstan pa'i mdo [alternative title: 'Phags pa sku gsum zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo]

Dg.K. mDo sde vol. YA, ff. 56a-57a, T 283; KPD, vol. 68, pp. 168-70.

Summarized in PZ, pp. 381-82.

*Sūtra That Gathers All Enlightened Intentions*

Sarvatathāgatacittajñānaguhyārthagarbhavyūhavajratantrasiddhiyogāgamasamāja sarva vidyā sūtra-mahāyānā bhisamaya dharmaparyāyavyūha-nāma-sūtra De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi thugs gsang ba'i ye shes don gyi snying po rdo rje bkod pa'i rgyud rnal 'byor grub pa'i lung kun 'dus rig pa'i mdo theg pa chen po mngon par rtogs pa chos kyi rnam grangs rnam par bkod pa zhes bya ba'i mdo [short title: mDo dgongs pa 'dus pa]

Dg. NGB vol. 7, no. 1 (ff. 1-110a); also Dg.K. rNying rgyud vol. KHA, ff. 86b-290a, T 829; KPD, vol. 101, pp. 219-672.

*Tantra of Cakrasaṃvara*

Tantrarājaśrīlaghusaṃvara-nāma

rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal bde mchog nyung ngu zhes bya ba  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. KA, ff. 213b-246b, T 368; KPD, vol. 77, pp. 604-89.  
Translated in Gray 2007.

*Tantra of Embrace*

Sampuṭa-nāma-mahātantra

Yang dag par sbyor ba shes bya ba'i rgyud chen po

Dg.K. rGyud vol. GA, ff. 73b-158b, T 381; KPD, vol. 79, pp. 216-469.

*Tantra of Genuine Pristine Cognition That Reveals the Nature of Mind as Intrinsic Awareness* [Sems nyid rang rig tu bstan pa] ye shes dam pa

A tantra text belonging to the mental class (*sems sde*) of the Great Perfection, it appears to be no longer extant.

*Tantra of Glorious Heruka*

dPal yang dag gi rgyud  
See *Tantra of Heruka Galpo*

*Tantra of Heruka Galpo*

dPal khrag 'thung gal po [alternative title: Gal po che]  
Dg. NGB vol. DZA (19), no. 1, ff. 1-219b.

*Tantra of Hevajra*

Hevajratantrarāja  
Kye'i rdo rje zhes bya ba rgyud kyi rgyal po [short title: brTag gnyis pa]  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. NGA, ff. 1b-30a, T 417.  
Edited and translated in Snellgrove 1959.

*Tantra of Mañjuśrī from the Net of Magical Emanation*

'Jam dpal sgyu 'phrul drva ba  
See *Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*

*Tantra of Penetration from the Net of Magical Emanation*

sGyu 'phrul thal ba['i rgyud chen po] [alternative title: Bya rgyud thal ba]  
Dg. NGB vol. DA (11), ff. 249a-294a; Tingkye vol. 15, pp. 421-538 (26 chs.).

*Tantra of Precious Empowerment*

Rin po che dbang gi rgyud  
This source has not yet been located. The quotation is not found in the *Lha rgyud dbang rin po che'i rgyud*, Dg NGB vol. CA (5), no. 10.

*Tantra of Radiant Expanse*

rGyud kyi rtse rgyal nyi zla 'od 'bar mkha' klong rnam dag rgya mtsho klong gsal gyi rgyud [short title: Klong gsal]  
Dg. NGB vol. KA (1), no. 13, ff. 122a-135a.

*Tantra of Secrets*

gSang ba'i rgyud  
This may possibly be identifiable with the *Ye shes gsang ba'i rgyud*, Dg. NGB vol. CA (5) no. 20, ff. 261b-279b.

*Tantra of Supplementary Points from the Net of Magical Emanation*

sGyu 'phrul le lag [alternative title: sGyu 'phrul le lhag ma]  
Dg. NGB, vol. THA (10), ff. 182b-238a; Tingkye NGB vol. 14, pp. 415-549 (33 chs.).

*Tantra of Supreme Emanational Display from the Net of Magical Emanation*

rGyud sgyu 'phrul rol pa chen po['i thal ba'i rgyud]  
Dg. NGB vol. THA (10), ff. 239a-279b; Tingkye NGB vol. 15, pp. 539-649 (13 chs.).

*Tantra of the All-Accomplishing King*

Sarvadharmamahāsandhibodhicittakūlayarāja

Chos thams cad rdzogs pa chen po byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po  
Dg.K. rNying rgyud vol. KA, ff. 1b-86a, T 828; KPD, vol. 101, pp. 3-189; also  
various recensions of NGB and NK.

The first eighty-four chapters, along with the commentary of Khenpo Zhenphen  
Ozer, have been collated and translated in Valby 2008-14.

*Tantra of the Array of Commitments*

Dam tshig bkod pa[’i rgyud]

Possibly to be identified with *Dam tshig bkod pa sa gzhi’i rgyud rin po che spungs  
pa’i rgyan*, Dg. NGB vol. CA (5), no. 8, ff. 74b-75b; or with *Dam tshig chen po’i  
rgyal po dam tshig bkod pa’i rgyud*, gTing skyes NGB, vol. 12, pp. 560-626.

*Tantra of the Attainment of the Mighty Lords of Yoga [through the Power of the  
Precious Wrathful Deities]*

[gSang ba’i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa’i] khro bo [chen po] rin po che’i  
stobs kyi rnal ’byor dbang phyug sgrub pa’i rgyud Dg. NGB, vol. DA (11), ff.  
294a-296a; Tingkye NGB vol. 16, pp. 142-47.

*Tantra of the Awakening of Vairocana*

Mahāvairocanābhisambodhivikurvitādiṣṭhānavaipulyasūtrendra rāja-nāma-dharma  
paryāya

rNam par snang mdzad chen po mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa rnam par  
sprul pa byin gyis rlob pa shin tu rgyas pa mdo sde’i dbang po’i rgyal po zhes  
bya ba’i chos kyi rnam grangs Dg.K. rGyud vol. THA, ff. 151b-260a, T 494; KPD,  
vol. 86, pp. 436-693.

MTTWL 124. Translated in Hodge 2003.

*Tantra of the Black Slayer of Death*

Śrīkr̥ṣṇayamāritantrarājatrikalpa

dPal gshin rje’i gshed nag po’i rgyud kyi rgyal po rtog pa gsum pa shes bya ba  
Dg.K rGyud vol. JA, ff. 164a-167b, T 469; KPD, vol. 83, pp. 522-31.

*Tantra of the Circle of the Sun*

Śrīsūryacakratantrarāja

dPal nyi ma’i ’khor lo’i rgyud kyi rgyal po

Dg. K. rGyud vol. GA, ff. 227b-229a, T 397; KPD, vol. 79, 668-71.

*Tantra of the Coalescence of Sun and Moon*

Nyi ma dang zla ba kha sbyor chen po gsang ba’i rgyud [short title: Nyi zla kha  
sbyor]

Dg. NGB vol. NGA (4), no. 8, f. 117b-140b.

Partially translated in Orofino 1999.

*Tantra of the Emanational Display of the Supreme Horse*

Sarvatathāgatabuddhānuttaraguhyāśvottamaviṇāsamatamahātantra

De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi dgongs pa bla na med pa gsang ba rta mchog  
rol pa'i rgyud chen po Dg.K. rNying rGyud vol. GA, ff. 77a-129b, T 839; KPD, vol.  
103, pp. 208-327.

*Tantra of the Emergence of Cakrasaṃvara*

Śrīmahāsaṃvarodayatantrarāja

dPal bde mchog 'byung ba zhes bya ba'i rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. KHA, ff. 265a-311a, T 373; KPD, vol. 78, pp. 774-883.

*Tantra of the Goddess from the Net of Magical Emanation*

Lha mo sgyu 'phrul

Dg. NGB vol. DA (11), ff. 1-34b; Tingkye NGB vol. 15, pp. 1-96; Dg.K. rNying rgyud  
vol. GA, ff. 1b-34b; KPD, vol. 103, pp. 3-76 (13 chs.).

*Tantra of the Hidden Vital Essence of the Moon*

Śrīcandraguhyatilaka-nāma-mahātantrarāja

dPal zla gsang thig le zhes bya ba rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. JA, ff. 247b-303a, T 477; KPD, vol. 83, pp. 843-979.

*Tantra of the Indestructible Garland*

Vajramālābhīdhānamahāyogatantrasarvatantrahṛdayarahasyavibhaṅganāma

rNal 'byor chen po'i rgyud dpal rdo rje phreng ba mngon par brjod pa rgyud thams  
cad kyi snying po gsang ba rnam par phye ba Dg.K. rGyud vol. CA, ff. 208a-277b,  
T 445; KPD, vol. 81, pp. 752-917.

*Tantra of the Indestructible King*

Śrīvajrarājamahātantra

dPal rdo rje chen po'i rgyud  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. GA, ff. 237a-238b, T 403; KPD, vol. 79, pp. 704-8.

*Tantra of the Indestructible Peak*

Vajraśekharamahāyogaguhyatantra

gSang ba rnal 'byor chen po'i rgyud rdo rje rtse mo  
Dg.K. vol. NYA, ff. 142b-274a, T 480; KPD, vol. 84, pp. 432-740.

*Tantra of the Lasso of Skillful Means*

'Phags pa thabs kyi zhags pa padma'i phreng zhes bya ba

Dg.K. rNying rgyud vol. KHA, ff. 299a-311a, T 835; KPD, vol. 102, pp. 810-841.  
Translated by Cantwell and Mayer (forthcoming, 84000).

*Tantra of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*

Mañjuśrījñānasattvasyaparamārtha-nāma-saṅgīti

jam apai [gyi] mtsnan [yang dag par] brjod [pa] [also entitled: jam apai sgyu 'phrul dra ba]  
Dg. NGB vol. THA (10), ff. 123a-135b, Tingkye NGB vol. 15, pp. 97-118; Dg.K. rGyud vol. KA, ff. 1b-13b; KPD, vol. 77, pp. 3-31 (14 chs.) Translated in Wayman 1983, in Davidson 1981, and in the present volume.

*Tantra of the Marvelous King*

rMad byung rgyal po'i rgyud [alternative title: Sems nyid ye nas stong pa rmad byung rgyal po'i rgyud]

This corpus comprises three distinct texts that are found in Dg. NGB vol. CHA (6), nos. 43, 45, and 46.

Translated in Guarisco 2013.

*Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva*

Vajrasattvamāyājālaguhyasarvādarśamahātantra

rDo rje sems dpa'i sgyu 'phrul dra ba gsang ba thams cad kyi me long [alternative title: rDo rje me long]

Dg. NGB vol. DA (11), ff. 82b-148a; Tingkye NGB vol. 15, pp. 119-310; Dg.K. rNying rgyud vol. KHA, ff. 132b-198a, T 833; KPD, vol. 102, pp. 340-504 (13 chs.).

*Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation Māyājālamahātantrarāja*

rGyud kyi rgyal po chen po sgyu 'phrul dra ba

Dg.K. rGyud vol. JA, ff. 94a-134a, T 466; KPD, vol. 83, pp. 308-402.

*Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eight Chapters*

[gSang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa] sgyu 'phrul brgyad pa

Dg. NGB vol. THA (10), ff. 114a-123a; Tingkye NGB vol. 14, pp. 549-71 (8 chs.).

*Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Eighty-Two Chapters*

gSang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa [alternative titles: sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa, rGyas pa]

Dg. NGB vol. DA (11), ff. 148b-248b; Tingkye NGB vol. 14, pp. 67-317; Dg.K. rNying rGyud vol. KHA, ff. 198b-298b, T 834; KPD, vol. 102, pp. 534-768 (82 chs.).

*Tantra of the Net of Magical Emanation in Forty-Six Chapters*

[gSang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa] sgyu 'phrul bzhi bcu pa

Dg. NGB vol. THA (10), ff. 145a-182b; Tingkye NGB vol. 14, pp. 317-415 (46 chs.).

*Tantra of the Nondual Victor*

Śrīsarvatathāgataguhyatantrayoga-mahārājādvayasamatāvijaya-nāma-vajra-

śrīvara-mahākālpādi dPal de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gsang ba rnal 'byor chen po rnam par rgyal ba zhes bya ba mnyam pa nyid gnyis su med pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po rdo rje dpal mchog chen po brtag pa dang po [short title: gNyas med rnam rnal kvi rnyid]

མཐོང་ལྷན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐར་ལཱ་ལྷན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐར་  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. CHA, ff. 103a-331a, T 453; KPD, vol. 82, pp. 266-789.

*Tantra of the Ocean from the Net of Magical Emanation*

[Thabs lam rim gyis ston pa] sgyu 'phrul rgya mtsho

Dg. NGB, vol. THA (10), ff. 279b-313; Tingkye NGB vol. 15, pp. 339-420 (22 chs.).

*Tantra of the Ocean of Activity*

Las kyi rgya mtsho'i rgyud

This work has not yet been identified.

*Tantra of the Precious Gems of Pristine Cognition*

Ye shes rin po che'i rgyud [alternative title: gSang ba ye shes rin po che'i rgyud  
kun 'dus]

This source has not yet been identified.

*Tantra of the Purification of All Lower Realms*

Āryasarvadurgatipariśodhanatejorājakaḥ

'Phags pa ngan song thams cad yongs su sbyong ba gzi brjid kyi rgyal po'i brtag pa

Dg.K. rGyud vol. TA, ff. 58b-96a, T 483; KPD, vol. 85, pp. 164-254.

Translated in Skorupski 1983.

*Tantra of the [Red] Slayer of Death Śrīmadraktayamāritantrarāja*

dPal ldan gshin rje gshed dmar po'i rgyud kyi rgyal po

Dg.K rGyud vol. JA, ff. 215a-244b, T 475; KPD, vol. 83, pp. 756-829.

*Tantra of the Rutting Elephant*



Hastigajapadarnatantra  
Glang chen rab 'bog gi rgyud  
Dg. NGB vol. PA (13), no. 5, ff. 252a-285b.

*Tantra of the Secret Assembly*

[Sarvatathāgatakāyavākiccittarahasya] Guhyasamāja-nāma-mahākālpārāja  
De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi sku gsung thugs kyi gsang chen gsang ba 'dus  
pa zhes bya ba brtag pa'i rgyal po chen po [short title: gSang ba 'dus pa]  
Dg.NGB vol. NA (12), no. 3, ff. 89a-147a; Dg.K. rGyud vol. CA, ff. 90a-148a, T 442;  
KPD, vol. 81, pp. 442-578.  
BST 9 (1965). Translated in Fremantle 1971.

*Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*

Guhyagarbhatattvaviniścayamahātantra  
dPal [rtsa ba'i] rgyud gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa  
Dg. NGB vol. TA (9), ff. 1-31b; Dg. NGB vol. DA (11), ff. 60a-82a (22 chs.) Tingkye  
NGB vol. 14, pp. 1-61; Dg.K. rNying rgyud vol. KHA, ff. 110b-132a; T 832; KPD,  
vol. 102, pp. 287-338.  
Edited and translated in GGFTC; also translated in Chonam and Khandro 2011.

*Tantra of the Secret of Pristine Cognition*

Ye shes gsang ba

The citation has not yet been identified, either in *Śrījñānaguhyatantrarāja* (dPal ye shes gsang ba'i rgyud), T 392; KPD, vol. 79; or in *Ye shes gsang ba'i rgyud*, NGB vol. CA (5), no. 20, ff. 261b–297b.

*Tantra of the Secret Vital Essence*

Thig le gsang ba [brda'i rgyud]

Dg. NGB vol. RA (25), no. 8, ff. 49b–53b. However, the citation is not found in the Derge version of that text, nor is it found in the *rDzogs pa chen po thig le gsang ba de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud*, Dg. NGB vol. NGA (4), no. 20, ff. 346a–350a.

*Tantra of the Supreme Commitment: The Great Array of Pristine Cognition* Ye shes

bkod pa chen po dam tshig mchog gi rgyud

This source has not been located.

*Tantra of the Supreme Spiritual Teacher*

[gSang bas nying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i sgyu 'phrul] bla ma chen po

Dg. NGB vol. DA (11), ff. 34b–60a; Tingkye NGB vol. 14, pp. 572–638; Dg.K rNying rgyud vol. GA, ff. 34b–60a; T 837; KPD, vol. 103, pp. 88–146 (13 chs.).

*Tantra of the Vast Space of the Sky*

rDzogs pa chen po lta ba'i yang snying sangs rgyas thams cad kyi dgongs pa nam mkha' klong yangs kyi rgyud [short title: Nam mkha' klong yangs kyi rgyud]

Dg. NGB vol. KA (1), no. 20, ff. 237a–269b.

*Tantra of the Vital Essence of Union*

Śrīsamputatilaka-nāma-yoginītantrarāja

dPal kha sbyor thig le zhes bya ba rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud kyi rgyal po [short title:

Kha sbyor thig le'i rgyud]

Dg.K.rGyud vol. GA, ff. 158b–184a, T 382; KPD, vol. 79, pp. 410–69.

*Tantra of the Wheel of Time*

[Paramādibuddhoddhṛtaśrī]kālacakratantrarāja

[mChog gi dang po'i sangs rgyas las phyung ba] rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo Dg.K. rGyud vol. KA, ff. 22b–128b, T 362; KPD, vol. 77, pp. 57–311.

SP vols. 69–70 (1966). Sanskrit also edited in B. Banerjee 1985. Partially translated in Newman 1987 (ch. 1) and Wallace 2001 (ch. 2) and 2010 (ch. 4).

*Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas*

Śrīsarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinīmāyāsamvara-nāma-uttaratantra

dPal sangs rgyas thams cad dang mnyam par sbyor ba mkha' 'gro ma sgyu ma bde ba'i mchog ces bya ba'i rgyud phyi ma [short title: Sangs rgyas mnyam 'byor]

Dg. NGB vol. DA, no.10, ff. 313b–354; Dg.K. rGyud vol. KA, ff. 151b–193a, T 366; KPD, vol. 77, pp. 426–526.

*Tantra of Vairocana from the Net of Magical Emanation*

rNam snang sgyu 'phrul drva ba  
Tingkye NGB vol. 19, pp. 289–395 (10 chs.).

*Tantra of Vajrakīla: The Root Fragment*

Vajrakīlamūlatantrakhāṇḍa  
rDo rje phur pa rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi dum bu  
Dg.K. rGyud vol. CA, ff. 43b–45b, T 439; KPD, vol. 81, pp. 145–50.  
Translated in Boord 2002.

*Tantra of Vajrasattva: The Great Space* rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che [rgyas pa zhes bya ba rnal 'byor pa'i rgyud]

Dg. NGB vol. RA, no. 23, ff. 286b–302a.

Other related texts include *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyas pa yi ge med pa'i rgyud*, Dg. NGB vol. CHA (6), no. 20, ff. 87a–99b; *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che bram ze rgyas pa'i rgyud*, vol. RA, no 18, ff. 215a–224b; and *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che kun tu bzang po gsang ba'i snying po'i rgyud*, vol. RA, no. 13, ff. 179b–205a.

*Tantra That Clearly Reveals All [Vital Essences]*

Thig le kun gsal gyi rgyud [short title: Kun gsal]  
Dg. NGB vol. NGA (4), no. 12, ff. 213a–278b.  
Also: Rin po che spyi gnad skyon sel thig le kun gsal gyi rgyud  
Dg. NGB vol. KHA (2), no. 17, ff. 313a–315b.

*Transmissions of the Vinaya*

Vinayāgama  
'Dul ba'i lung  
Dg.K. 'Dul ba, vols. KA–PA (T 1–7), KPD, vols. 1–13.

*Verse Summation of the Transcendent Perfection of Discriminative Awareness*

Āryaprajñāpāramitāsañcayagāthā  
'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa sdud pa tshigs su bcad pa  
Dg.K. Shes phyin vol. KA, ff. 1b–19b, T 13; KPD, vol. 34, pp. 3–44.  
Translated in Conze 1973.

2. INDIC TREATISES

Anon

*Exegetical Comments of Unrecorded Authorship concerning the Vows of Individual Liberation* Prātimokṣabhāṣyasampramuṣitasmaraṇamātralekha

So sor thar pa'i bshad pa rnam mi brjed dran byed tsam du bris pa  
Dg.T. 'Dul ba vol. MU, ff. 1b-161a, T 4108; TPD, vol. 86, pp. 649-1064.

Advayavajra (dates unknown)

*Empowerment Ritual Embodying Thirteen Verses of Glorious Cakrasaṃvara*  
Śrīcakrasaṃvaratrayodaśātmakābhiṣekavidhi

dPal 'khor lo sdom pa'i bcu gsum ma'i bdag nyid kyi dbang bskur ba'i cho ga  
Dg.T. rGyud vol. ZHA, ff. 144a-154b, T 1486; TPD, vol. 11, pp. 1417-42.

Ānandagarbha (fl. 9th century)

*Exegesis of the King of Tantras, King of Majesty, the Purification of All the Lower Realms, Entitled Beautiful Ornament*

Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatejorājavyākhyāsundarālamkāra

Ngan song thams cad yongs su sbyong ba gzi brjid kyi rgyal po rgyud kyi rgyal po'i  
rnam par bshad pa mdzes pa'i rgyan Dg.T. rGyud vol. CHU, ff. 1b-219b, T 2626;  
TPD, vol. 34, pp. 3-406.

Avalokitavrata (fl. 7th century)

*Commentary on the Lamp of Discriminative Awareness*

Prajñāpradīpaṭīkā

Shes rab sgon ma rgya cher 'grel pa

Dg.T. dBu ma, vols. WA-ZA (3 vols.), T 3859; TPD, vol. 58, p. 859-vol. 59 end.  
EIPRB 354

Bodhibhadra (fl. 1000)

*Interlinear Commentary on the Compendium of the Nucleus of Pristine Cognition*

Jñānasārasamuccaya-nāma-nibandhana

Ye shes snying po kun las bstus pa zhes bya ba'i bshad sbyar

Dg.T. dBu ma, vol. TSHA, ff. 28a-45b, T 3852; TPD, vol. 57, pp. 856-900.

EIPRB 568.2. MTTWL 89. Partial French translation in Mimaki 1976.

Buddhaguhya (fl. 7th-8th centuries)

*Introduction to the Meaning of the Tantra*

Tantrārthāvatara

rGyud kyi don la 'jug pa

Dg.T. rGyud vol. 'I, ff. 1b-91b, T 2501; TPD, vol. 27, pp. 985-1196.

*Lesser Sequence of the Path*

sGyu 'phrul drva ba'i lam rnam par bshad pa chung ngu [short title: Lam chung]  
NK vol. 81, pp. 759-81.

*Sequence of Light*

Vajrasattvamāyājālaprabhākrama

rDo rje sems dpa'i sgyu 'phrul drva ba'i 'od kyi rim pa [short title: 'Od rim]

P 4731. rGyud 'grel vol. BU, ff. 440a-448b; TPD, vol. 43, pp. 900-917.

*Sequence of the Path [of the Net of Magical Emanation]*

Māyājālapathakrama

sGyu 'phrul lam rim [short title: Lam rim]

P 4736. rGyud 'grel vol. BU, ff. 465b-506b; TPD, vol. 43, pp. 959-1041.

Candrabhadrakīrti (fl. 7th century)

*Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*

Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgītvṛtti-nāma

'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa zhes bya ba'i 'grel pa

Dg. T. rGyud vol. GU, ff. 1b-27a, T 2535; TPD, vol. 32, pp. 815-81.

Candragomin (fl. 7th century)

*Extensive Commentary on the Sublime Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*

Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti-nāma-mahāṭikā

'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa

Dg. T. rGyud vol. TSI, ff. 172a-199a, T 2090; TPD, vol. 24, pp. 1392-457.

Candrakīrti (fl. 7th century)

*Clearly Worded Commentary on the Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way*

Mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā

dBu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba

Dg.T. dBu ma, vol. 'A, ff. 1b-200a, T 3860; TPD, vol. 60, pp. 4-483.

MTTWL 139. Translated in Sprung 1979.

*Extensive Exegesis [of the Tantra of the Secret Assembly] entitled Clarifying Lamp*

Pradīpodyotana-nāma-ṭikā

sGron ma gsal bar byed pa zhes bya ba'i rgya cher bshad pa

Dg.T. rGyud, vol. HA, ff. 1b-201b, T 1785; TPD, vol. 15, pp. 3-676.

## **Introduction to the Middle Way**

Madhyamakāvatāra

dBu ma la 'jug pa

Dg.T. dBu ma, vol. 'A, ff. 201b-219a, T 3861; TPD, vol. 60, pp. 555-96.

EIPRB 321.2. MTTWL 109. Translated in Huntington and Wangchen 1989; also in

Padmakara 2002.

*Seventy Verses on Going for Refuge*

Triśaraṇagamasaptati

gSum la skyabs su 'gro ba bdun cu pa



འདེད་གྲུབ་ལྷན་པོ་འགྲུབ་པའི་གྲེལ་པ།  
Dg.T. dBu ma, vol. SA, ff. 3b-15b. T 3882; TPD, vol. 62, pp. 755-59.  
*EIPRB* 398.4. Translated in Eckel 1987.

Kalyāṇamitra (fl. 7th century)  
*Extensive Commentary on the Questions Pertaining to Monastic Discipline*  
Vinayaprasāṅgikā  
'Dul ba'i dri ba rgya cher 'grel pa  
Dg.T. 'Dul ba vol. SU, ff. 74b-133a, T 4135; TPD, vol. 93, pp. 940-1084.

Kāmadhenupa (dates unknown)  
*Extensive Commentary on the Detailed Kingly Rites Pertaining to the Majestic  
Tantra of the Sublime Purification of All the Lower Realms*  
Āryasarvadurgatipariśodhanatejorāja-nāma-kalparājaṅgikā  
'Phags pa ngan song thams cad yongs su sbyong ba gzi brjid kyi rgyal po shes bya  
ba cho ga zhib mo'i rgyal po chen po'i rgya cher 'grel pa Dg.T. rGyud vol. CU, ff.  
231a-241a, T 2625; TPD, vol. 33, pp. 1467-734.

Līlāvajra (a.k.a. Vilāsavajra, fl. 7th century)  
*Clarification of Commitments*

Samayavivvakti



Dam tshig gsal bkra

P 4744. rGyud 'grel vol. 83 (BU), ff. 574a-580a; TPD, vol. 43, pp. 1190-202.

*Extensive Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī Entitled*

*Perspective on the Meaning of the Secret Mantra 'Phags pa mtshan yang dag*

*par brjod pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa mtshan gsang sngags kyi don du rnam par lta*

*ba Sheng ming deng song guang shi ming hao mi mi zhen yan yi guan*

Dg. T. rGyud vol. KHU, ff. 27b-115b, T 2533; TPD, vol. 32, pp. 71-306.

*Innermost Point of Buddha Mind*

Cittabindu

Thugs kyi thig pa  
P 4723. rGyud 'grel vol. 83 (BU), ff. 411a-412a; TPD, vol. 43, pp. 829-31.

*Parkhab Commentary*  
Mahārājatāntraśrīguhyagarbha-nāma-ṭikā  
'Grel ba spar khab  
P 4718, rGyud 'grel vol. 82 (BU), ff. 29b5-208b3; TPD, vol. 43, pp. 267-425.

Maitreya (dates uncertain)  
*Analysis of the Middle and Extremes*  
Madhyāntavibhāga  
dBus mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'u byas pa  
Dg.T. Sems tsam vol. PHI, ff. 40b-45a, T 4021; TPD, vol. 70, pp. 902-13.  
EIPRB 174.6. MTTWL 112. Translated in Dharmachakra Translation Committee  
2006.

*Ornament of Emergent Realization*  
Abhisamayālaṃkāra-[nāma-prajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstrakārikā]  
[Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos] mngon par rtogs pa'i  
rgyan Dg.T. Shes phyin vol. KA, ff. 1b-13a, T 3786; TPD, vol. 49, pp. 3-30.  
BST 4 (1960). B *Budh* 23 (1929). EIPRB 174.3. MTTWL 2. Translated in Conze  
1954 and Thrangu 2004.

*Ornament of the Sūtras of the Great Vehicle*  
[Mahāyāna]sūtrālaṃkārikā  
[Theg pa chen po] mdo sde'i rgyan zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa  
Dg.T. Sems tsam vol. PHI, ff. 1b-39a, T 4020; TPD, vol. 70, pp. 805-90.  
BST 13 (1970). EIPRB 174.8. MTTWL 129. Translated in Jamspal *et al.* 2004.

*Supreme Continuum of the Great Vehicle*  
Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra  
Theg pa chen po rgyud bla ma'i bstan bcos  
Dg.T. Sems tsam vol. PHI, ff. 54b-73a, T 4024; also TPD, vol. 70, pp. 935-79.  
SOR 33 (1966). EIPRB 932-44. MTTWL 181. Translated in Takasaki 1966; Holmes  
and Holmes 1985.

Mañjuśrīmitra (fl. 6th-7th century)  
*Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*  
Nāmasaṅgīvr̥tti  
'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa zhes bya ba'i 'grel pa Dg. T.  
rGyud vol. KHU, ff. 1b-27b, T 2532; TPD, vol. 32, pp. 3-70.

Nāgārjuna (fl. 2nd century)  
*Fundamental Stanzas of the Middle Way, Entitled Discriminative Awareness*  
Prajñā-nāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā

འདུ་མ་རྩ་པ་འཁྲིལ་ལུ་བྱས་པ།  
Dg.T. dBu ma, vol. TSA, ff. 1b-19a, T 3824; TPD, vol. 57, pp. 3-46.  
BST 10 (1960). EIPRB 47.4. MTTWL 135. Translated in Padmakara 2008.

*Hundred Verses on Discriminative Awareness*

Prajñāśatakaprakaraṇa

Shes rab brgya pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa

Dg.T. Thun mong vol. NGO, ff. 99b-103a, T 4328; TPD, vol. 114, pp. 1292-301.

*Letter to a Friend*

Suhṛllekha

bShes pa'i sprin yig

Dg.T. sPrin yig vol. NGE, ff. 40b-46b, T 4182; TPD, vol. 96, pp. 669-83.

EIPRB 47.8. MTTWL 218. Translated in Jamspal *et al.* 1978 and in Tharchin and Engle 1979.

*Precious Garland*

[Rājaparikathā]ratnāvalī

[rGyal po la gtam bya ba] rin chen phreng ba

Dg.T. sPrin yig vol. GE, ff. 107a-126a, T 4158; TPD, vol. 96, pp. 288-334.

BST 10 (1960). EIPRB 47.7. MTTWL 189. Translated in Hopkins 1998.

Narendrakīrti (dates uncertain)

*Exegesis of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*

Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgītivyākhyāna

'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i rnam par bshad pa

Dg. T. rGyud vol. PHA, ff. 124a-184b, T 1397; TPD, vol. 8, pp. 332-490.

Padmavajra (fl. 8th century)

*Verification of Secrets*

[Sakalatantrasambhavaśāṅcodanīśrī]guhyasiddhi

[rGyud ma lus pa'i don nges par skul bar byed pa] gsang ba grub pa

Dg. T. rGyud vol. WI, ff. 1b-28b, T 2217; TPD, vol. 26, pp. 3-67.

Skt. and Tib. edition in *Guhyādi-aṣṭasiddhi saṃgraha*. Sarnath: Rare Buddhist Texts Project, 1987.

Prahevajra (dates uncertain)

*Elucidation of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*

Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīyarthālokakara-nāma

'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i don gsal bar byed pa

Dg. T. rGyud vol. TSHI, ff. 38b-56b, T 2093; TPD, vol. 25, pp. 101-64.

Prajñākaragupta

*Ornament of the Exposition of Valid Cognition*

Pramāṇavārttikālaṃkāra

Tshad ma rnam 'grel ḥvi ravan

Dg. T. Tshad ma vol. TE, ff. 1b-308a, T 4221; TPD, vol. 99, p. 769-vol. 100, p. 754.

Puṇḍarīka (dates uncertain)

*Taintless Light: A Great [Commentary] on the Wheel of Time*

Vimalaprabhānāmamūlatantrānusāriṇīdvādaśasāhasrikālaghu kāla cakra tantra -  
rāja ṭīkā

bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel bshad rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes  
su 'jug pa stong phrag bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od, also known as Dus 'khor  
'grel chen Dg.K. Dus 'khor 'grel bshad vol. ŚRĪ, ff. 1b-469a, T 845; KPD, vol. 99,  
pp. 3-815.

Skt. ed. in Jagannatha Upadhyaya, Bibliotheca Indo-Tibetica, vols. 11-13. Sarnath:  
Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1986. See Kilty 2004.

Sahajalalita (dates uncertain)

*Means for Attainment of Halāhala*

Ha lā ha la'i sgrub thabs

Dg.T. rGyud vol. MU, ff. 23b-24b, T 3330; TPD, vol. 40, pp. 98-102.

Śāntideva (fl. late 7th-early 8th century)

*Introduction to the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*

Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra

Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa

Dg.T. dBu ma, vol. LA, ff. 1b-40a, T 3871; TPD, vol. 61, pp. 951-1048.

Sanskrit edition by Vidhushekhara Bhattachārya, Bibliotheca Indica, no. 280,  
Calcutta: The Asiatic Society 1960. *EIPRB* 368.1. *MTTWL* 34. Translated in  
Padmakara 1997; commentary in Padmakara 2007.

Saraha (fl. 8th century)

*Treasury of Songs*

Dohākośagīti

Do ha mdzod kyi glu  
Dg.T. rGyud vol. WI, ff. 70b-77a, T 2224; TPD, vol. 26, pp. 193-208  
Translated in Jackson 2004 and Guenther 1970.

Smṛtijñānakīrti (fl. 10th century)

*Commentary on the Secret Twofold Rite of the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī  
Entitled Lamp of Pristine Cognition*

Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgītiguhyakadvividhivṛttijñānadīpa

'Phags pa 'jam dpal mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i gsang ba dang ldan pa'i sgrub  
pa'i thabs kyi 'grel pa ye shes gsal ba Dg.T. rGyud vol. NGU, ff. 107b-150b, T  
2584; TPD, vol. 33, pp. 360-467.

*Exegetical Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī in One Hundred  
Thousand Lines 'Jam dpal mtshan brjod kyi bshad 'bum*

Wen shu shi li ming deng song shi wan shi

Dg. T. rGyud vol. GU, ff. 67b-118b, T 2538; TPD, vol. 32, pp. 990-1121.

Vajrahāsyā (fl. 9th century)

*Exegesis of the Tantra of the Secret Assembly*

Tantrarājaśrīguhyasamājaṭikā

rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rnam par bshad pa

Dg.T. rGyud vol. PHI, ff. 38a-89a, T 1909; TPD, vol. 23, pp. 104-222.

Vasubandhu (ca. late 4th-5th century)

*Autocommentary on the Treasury of Phenomenology*

Abhidharmakośabhāṣya

Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi bshad pa

Dg.T. mNgon pa vol. KU, ff. 26b-258a, T 4090; TPD, vol. 79, pp. 65-630.

EIPRB 175.1. Translated from the French in Pruden 1988-90.

*Treasury of Phenomenology*

Abhidharmakośakārikā

Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi tshig le'ur byas pa

Dg.T. mNgon pa vol. KU, ff. 1b-25a, T 4089; TPD, vol. 79, pp. 3-59.

*B Buddh* 20 (1917, 1930) and 21 (1918-31). EIPRB 175.1. Translated from the  
French in Pruden 1988-90.

Vimalamitra (fl. late 8th-early 9th century)

*Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī Entitled Lamp Illuminating  
the Meaning of the Title* Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgītivṛttināmārthaprakāśakaraṇadīpa

'Jam dpal mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i 'grel pa mtshan don gsal bar byed pa'i  
sgron ma Dg.T. rGyud vol. TSHI, ff. 1b-38b, T 2092; TPD, vol. 25, pp. 3-94.

*Illuminating Lamp of the Fundamental Text*

[Māyājālopadēśa]prakāśadīpa

Khog gzhung gsal sgron  
P 4739. rGyud 'grel vol. 83 (BU), ff. 541a-547b; TPD, vol. 43, pp. 1118-31.

*Short Commentary [on the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus]*

Śrīguhyagarbhapiṇḍārthaṭīkā

'Bras bu'i mchog gi rgyud kyi don bsdus 'grel pa piṇḍārtha [alternative title: gSang  
ba snying po'i 'grel chung]

P 4755. rGyud 'grel vol. 83 (MU), ff. 1a-26a; TPD, vol. 44, pp. 3-55.

*Three Sequences [of the Net of Magical Emanation]*

Māyājālopadేశakramatraya

[sGyu 'phrul dra ba'i man ngag] rim pa gsum pa

P 4742. rGyud 'grel vol. 83 (BU), ff. 554b-566b; TPD, vol. 43, pp. 1173-77.

Vimuktisena (early 6th century)

*Commentary on the Ornament of Emergent Realization*

Āryapañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstrābhisamayālamkāravṛtti

'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stong phrag nyi shu lnga pa'i man ngag  
gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan gyi 'grel pa Dg.T. Shes phyin vol. KA, ff.  
14b-212a, T 3787; TPD, vol. 49, pp. 33-500

Translated in Sparham 2006-12.

### 3. TIBETAN TREATISES AND SPIRITUAL REVELATIONS

Buton Rinchendrub (1290-1364)

*History of Buddhism Entitled Treasury of the Precious Scriptures*

bDe bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po  
che'i mdzod Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1988.

Translated in Stein and Zangpo 2013; also partially translated in Obermiller 1932.

Chenak Hūmchen and Yeshe Ozer Dolma

*An Historical Anthology of the Mantrin Communities of Repkong*

Reb kong sngags mang gi lo rgyus phyogs bsgrigs

sNgags mang dpe tshogs series. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2004.

Dragon Konchok Tenpa Rabgye (1801-1866)

*Doctrinal History of Amdo*

mDo smad chos 'byung [alternative title: Deb ther rgya mtsho; The Ocean Annals  
of Amdo]

Delhi: Lokesh Chandra, 1973 (3 vols.); Lanzhou: Gansu mi rigs dpe skrun khang,  
1982.

Dzogchen Khenchen Jigme Yontan Gonpo (1899-1959)

*Annotated Commentary on the Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī Entitled  
Elucidating Light of the Sun and Moon* 'Jam dpal sgyu 'phrul dra ba'i mchan  
'grel rgyud don rab gsal nyi zla'i snang ba

In *'Jam dpal mtshan brjod rtsa 'grel*, pp. 22-111. Chengdu: Sichuan mi rigs dpe  
skrun khang, 2007; also in *rDzogs chen mkhan chen skyabs rje yongs 'dzin rin  
po che 'jigs med rta mgrin yon tan mgon po'i gsung 'bum*, pp. 325-408.  
Chengdu: Sichuan mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2005.

Guru Chowang (1212-1270)

*Tantra of Union with All the Buddhas* (revelation)

Buddhasamāyoga

Sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor [lcags smyug ma] [alternative title: Slob dpon padma'i  
sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor]

2 vols. Paro: Ugyen Tempai Gyaltzen, 1980; also Potala Archive ms. ed., vol. 5  
(nos. 19-20) (dkar chags, p. 149).

Jamgon Mipham Gyatso (1846-1912)

*Overview [of the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus] Entitled Nucleus of Inner Radiance*  
gSang snying spyi don 'od gsal snying po

NK vol. 69; also in *Collected Works*, vol. 23, pp. 97-320; and Chengdu: Sichuan mi  
rigs dpe skrun khang, 2000.

Translated in Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2009.

Jigme Chokyi Dorje (fl. late 20th-early 21st century)

*Great Anthology of Buddhist Icons according to the Tibetan Lineages* Bod brgyud  
nang bstan lha tshogs chen mo

Xining: Qinghai mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2001.

Jigme Tekchok (b. 1984)

*Successive Hierarchs of Rongpo Gonchen*

Rong bo dgon chen gyi gdan rabs rdzogs ldan gtam gyi rang sgra

Xining: Qinghai mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1988.

Karma Lingpa (fl. 14th century)

*Peaceful and Wrathful Deities: Natural Liberation of Enlightened Intention*

(revelation) Zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol [alternative title: Kar gling zhi khro]  
Partially translated in Dorje 2005.

Lochen Dharmasrī (1654-1718)

*Oral Transmission of the Lord of Secrets*

[dPal gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po sgyu 'phrul  
dra ba spyi don gyi sgo nas gtan la 'bebs par byed pa'i legs bshad] gsang bdag  
zhal lung NK vols. 74-75; Dg. NGB vol. TA (9), ff. 175a-355, and vol. THA (10), ff.  
1-113b. Also in *Collected Works of Lochen Dharmasrī*, vols. 9-10, Dehra Dun:  
1999.



*Ornament of the Enlightened Intention [of the Lord of Secrets]*

[dPal gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud kyi 'grel pa] gsang bdag  
dgongs rgyan NK vol. 76; Dg. NGB vol. TA (9), ff. 31b-174b. Also in *Collected  
Works of Lochen Dharmasrī*, vol. 8, ff. 90-337, Dehra Dun: 1999.

Longchen Rabjam (1308-1363)

*Dispelling the Darkness of the Ten Directions*

[dPal gsang snying gi rgyud gyi 'grel pa] phyogs bcu mun sel

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying  
series, vol. 128, 2009; also NK vol. 68.

Translated in GGFTC and in Chonam and Khandro 2011.

*Four-Part Innermost Spirituality (revelation)*

sNying thig ya bzhi

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vols. 106-17.

*Great Chariot*

[rDzogs pa chen po sems nyid ngal gso'i 'grel pa] shing rta chen mo

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vol. 125, pp. 139-464.

*Innermost Spirituality of the Dākinī* (revelation)

mKha 'gro snying thig

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vols. 110-13, including texts from *mKha' 'gro yang tig*.

*Innermost Spirituality of Vimalamitra* (revelation)

Bi ma'i snying thig

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vols. 106-9.

*Overview of the Glorious Tantra of the Secret Nucleus Entitled Dispelling All Mental Darkness with the Light of Eloquence*

dPal gsang ba'i snying po'i spyi don legs par bshad pa'i snang bas yid kyi mun pa thams cad sel ba Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vol. 130, pp. 52-183.

*Overview of the Mantras Entitled Melodious Thunder of Brahmā*

sNgags kyi spyi don tshangs dbyangs 'brug sgra

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vol. 130, pp. 1-51.

*Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems*

[Theg pa mtha' dag gi don gsal bar byed pa] grub pa'i mtha' rin po che'i mdzod [short title: Grub mtha' mdzod]

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vol. 120, pp. 1-336.

Translated in Barron 2007.

*Precious Treasury of the Supreme Vehicle*

Theg mchog rin po che'i mdzod

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, 2 vols. (series no. 122-23).

*Precious Treasury of Word and Meaning*

Tshig don rin po che'i mdzod

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, 2 vols. (series no. 124-25).

Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang. dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vol. 124.

*Synoptic Outline of the Glorious Tantra of the Secret Nucleus Entitled Dispelling All Darkness of Fundamental Ignorance* dPal gsang ba'i snying po'i rgyud kyi bsdus pa'i don ma rig pa'i mun pa thams cad sel ba Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang: dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying series, 2009, vol. 130, pp. 184-201.

*Mahāvvyutpatti*

Bye brag tu rtogs par byed pa

Dg.T. sNa tshogs vol. cO, ff. 1b-131a, T 4346; TPD, vol. 115, pp. 3-254.

*B Budh* 13 (1911). Sakaki 1916-25; reprint, 1965.

Nordrang Orgyan (b. 1933)

*Compendium of Buddhist Numeric Terms*

Chos rnam kun btus  
3 vols. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2008.

Nubchen Sangye Yeshe (fl. 9th century)  
*Lamp for the Eye of Meditative Concentration*  
bSam gtan mig sgron  
NK vol. 104, pp. 573-1078.

Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa (1504-1566)  
*Scholar's Feast of Doctrinal History*  
Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston  
Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986 (2 vols.), 2006 (1 vol.).  
See Martin 1997, no. 168.

Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798)  
*Catalog of the Ancient Tantra Collection*  
sNga 'gyur rgyud 'bum rin po che'i rtogs pa brjod pa 'dzam gling tha gru khyab  
pa'i rgyan [short title: rGyud 'bum dkar chag]  
In his *Collected Works and Revelations* (gSung 'bum), Derge xylograph ed., vol. 3,  
pp. 7-504.

*Innermost Spirituality [of Longchenpa]* (revelation)

Klong chen snying thig  
In *Collected Works and Revelations*, vols. 7–8.

*Unsurpassed Pristine Cognition* (revelation)  
[gDod ma'i mgon po'i lam gyi rim pa'i] khrid yig ye shes bla ma  
In *Collected Works and Revelations*, vol. 8, ff. 519–618.  
Translated in Chonam and Khandro 2012.

Rongzompa [Chokyi Zangpo, fl. 11th century]  
*Rare and Precious Commentary [on the Secret Nucleus]*  
[rGyud rgyal gsang ba'i snying po] dKon cog 'grel  
*Collected Works*, vol. 1, pp. 31–250; also NK vol. 67.

Situ Chokyi Jungne (1700–1774)  
*Catalog of the Derge Kangyur*  
sDe dge'i bka' 'gyur dkar chags  
Chengdu: Sichuan Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989.

Tashi Gyatso *et al.* (dates unknown)  
*Treatises on the Accoutrements and Music of the Ancient Way of Secret [Mantras]*  
gSang rnying rgyan chas dang rol mo'i bstan bcos  
Gangchen rigs mdzod series, 30. Lhasa: 1996.

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*Maṇḍala Illustrations of the Tibetan Buddhist Nyingma Tradition according to the  
Transmitted Precepts and Revelations* Bod brgyud nang bstan snga 'gyur bka'  
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Bod ljongs mi rigs dpe skrun khang. Lhasa: 2012.

Yungtonpa [Dorjepel] (1284–1365)  
*Mirror Illuminating the Meaning of the Tantra of the Secret Nucleus* dPal gsang ba  
snying po'i rgyud don gsal byed me long  
NK vol. 70, pp. 1–589.

Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol (1781–1851)  
*Autobiography of Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol*  
Zhabs dkar tshogs drug rang grol gyi rang nram  
Xining: Qinghai mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1985.  
Translated in Ricard *et al.* 1994.

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Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo  
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Zhabkar Tsodruk Rangdrol, *Autobiography of Zhabkar Tsokdruk Rangdrol* Zhopong

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