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A LAMP TO ILLUMINATE THE FIVE STAGES

Teachings on
GUHYASAMĀJA TANTRA

TSONGKHAPA

Translated by Gavin Kilty

A Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages

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

A Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages
Tsongkhapa Losang Drakpa (1357–1419)

Tsongkhapa's *Lamp* presents one of the most comprehensive and detailed presentations of the highest yoga class of Vajrayana Buddhism, especially the key practices—the so-called five stages (*pañcakrama*)—of the advanced phase of Guyhasamāja tantra. Beginning with a thorough examination of all the relevant Indic literature, Tsongkhapa draws particularly from the writings of Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Candrakīrti, and Nāropa to develop a definitive understanding of the Vajrayana completion stage. Traditionally the work belongs to a class of "hidden texts" that are to be read only by those who have received initiations.

The teachings and practices in this volume follow on from those contained in the *sādhana* volume (volume 13). Whereas in the generation stage, meditators visualize the Buddha in the form of the Guhyasamāja deity residing in a mandala palace, in the completion stage discussed in the present volume, meditators transcend ordinary consciousness and actualize the state of a buddha themselves. In the course of presenting these practices, Tsongkhapa's work outlines the subtle human physiology manipulated by the tantric adept, especially the network of channels and cakras, as well as the wind energies and vital drops that flow through them. Other topics, such as the Tibetan Buddhist understanding of the process of death and dying, the intermediate state of existence, and rebirth—central concepts of which find their origin in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*—as well as theories of human psychology, such as the scope and dynamic of the emotions, dream states, and near-death experiences, are also addressed in detail.

This text was Tsongkhapa's last major work, which he completed in 1419, the year of his death. Its impact on the course of tantric practice in Tibet has been definitive for the Geluk school and profound for Tibetan Buddhism as a whole.

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Thupten Jinpa, General Editor

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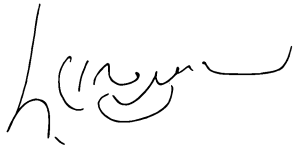
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Message from the Dalai Lama

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

It is for this reason I am delighted that the Institute of Tibetan Classics in Montreal, Canada, is compiling a thirty-two-volume series containing the works of many great Tibetan teachers, philosophers, scholars, and practitioners representing all major Tibetan schools and traditions. These important writings will be critically edited and annotated and will then be published in modern book format in a reference collection called *The Library of Tibetan Classics*, with their translations into other major languages to follow later. While expressing my heartfelt commendation for this noble project, I pray and hope that *The Library of Tibetan Classics* will not only make

these important Tibetan treatises accessible to scholars of Tibetan studies, but will create a new opportunity for younger Tibetans to study and take interest in their own rich and profound culture. Through translations into other languages, it is my sincere hope that millions of fellow citizens of the wider human family will also be able to share in the joy of engaging with Tibet's classical literary heritage, textual riches that have been such a great source of joy and inspiration to me personally for so long.



The Dalai Lama
The Buddhist monk Tenzin Gyatso

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THE INSTITUTE OF TIBETAN CLASSICS expresses its deep gratitude to Nita Ing and the Ing Family Foundation for generously funding this monumental translation project, bringing to the English-speaking world a much-revered and acclaimed work of the Tibetan Vajrayāna tradition. This is the first of many volumes from *The Library of Tibetan Classics* to appear whose translation has been sponsored by the Ing Foundation. As per the wishes of Nita Ing, the publication of this volume, Tsongkhapa's *Lamp Illuminating the Five Stages*, is dedicated to the good health and long life of Kyabjé Lama Zopa Rinpoché.

The Institute also thanks Ganden Shartse Dro-phen Ling, Singapore, for their generous donation that provided the initial funding for the project, and the Hershey Family Foundation for its generous support of the Institute of Tibetan Classics' projects of compiling, editing, translating, and disseminating key classical Tibetan texts through the creation of *The Library of Tibetan Classics*.

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General Editor's Preface

A Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages is a profound exploration of tantric Buddhism's vision of human nature and its potential for full awakening. Framed within the notion of five stages as developed in a seminal tantric work of the Indian mystic Nāgārjuna, *Lamp* is the last major work of Tsongkhapa, one of the greatest masters of Tibetan Buddhism. Reading this important text, we encounter his authoritative voice, coming face to face with his profound personal experience borne of years of learning and meditative practice. Every now and then, especially when Tsongkhapa describes complex physiological and psychological states that arise from specific meditative practices, we feel these could become a reality even for someone like ourselves, if only we devoted sufficient time to the path.

The Vajrayāna practices presented in *Lamp* belong to what is known as the Guhyasamāja cycle of tantra, and Tsongkhapa was a key proponent of this cycle of teachings. In fact, he explicitly refers to himself as "a yogi of glorious Guhyasamāja" and saw the clarification and propagation of this tradition in Tibet to be an important personal mission. The publication of this volume is a milestone in making key classical Tibetan texts available in contemporary languages. In particular, it provides a valuable resource for those who seek to engage deeply with the Tibetan Vajrayāna teachings, either as their personal spiritual practice or as a resource for exploring the deeper human potential. It is therefore a source of both joy and honor to be able to offer to the world, in a rigorous and lucid English translation, this precious treasure of the Tibetan tradition.

Two primary objectives have driven the creation and development of *The Library of Tibetan Classics*. The first is to help revitalize the appreciation and the study of the Tibetan classical heritage within Tibetan-speaking communities worldwide. The younger generation in particular struggle with the tension between traditional Tibetan culture and the realities of modern consumerism. To this end, efforts have been made to develop a comprehensive

yet manageable body of texts, one that features the works of Tibet's best-known authors and covers the gamut of classical Tibetan knowledge. The second aim of *The Library of Tibetan Classics* is to help make these texts part of global literary and intellectual heritage. In this regard, we have tried to make the English translation reader-friendly and, as much as possible, keep the body of the text free of unnecessary scholarly apparatus, which can intimidate general readers. For specialists who wish to compare the translation with the Tibetan original, page references of the critical edition of the Tibetan text are provided in brackets, and these Tibetan texts are available online.

The texts in this thirty-two-volume series span more than a millennium—from the development of the Tibetan script in the seventh century to the first part of the twentieth century, when Tibetan society and culture first encountered industrial modernity. The volumes are thematically organized and cover many of the categories of classical Tibetan knowledge—from the teachings specific to each Tibetan school to the classical works on philosophy, psychology, and phenomenology. The first category includes teachings of the Kadam, Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyü, Geluk, and Jonang schools, of miscellaneous Buddhist lineages, and of the Bön school. Texts in these volumes have been largely selected by senior lineage holders of the individual schools. Texts in the other categories have been selected primarily in recognition of the historical reality of the individual disciplines. For example, in the field of epistemology, works from the Sakya and Geluk schools have been selected, while the volume on buddha-nature features the writings of Butön Rinchen Drup and various Kagyü masters. Where fields are of more common interest, such as the three codes or the bodhisattva ideal, efforts have been made to represent the perspectives of the four major Tibetan Buddhist schools. *The Library of Tibetan Classics* can function as a comprehensive library of the Tibetan literary heritage for libraries, educational and cultural institutions, and interested individuals.

It has been a profound honor for me to be part of this important translation project. I wish first of all to express my deep personal gratitude to H. H. the Dalai Lama for always being such a profound source of inspiration and an exemplary embodiment of the best of the Tibetan tradition. I thank Gavin Kilty for his masterful translation of this important Tibetan work into English with such care, respect, and clarity. To the following individuals and organizations, I owe my sincere thanks: to David Kittelstrom at Wisdom for his incisive editing; to my fellow Tibetan editors in Sarnath, especially

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Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Nita Ing and the Ing Family Foundation, who most generously provided the funding for this translation project. I also acknowledge the initial funding toward this project received from Ganden Shartse Dro-phen Ling, Singapore, which helped launched the project. Without this support, no amount of dedication on the part of the Institute or the depth of talent and skill on the part of the translator would have resulted in such successful conclusion of the project. I would also like to thank the Hershey Family Foundation for its longstanding support of the Institute of Tibetan Classics, without which the task of creating *The Library of Tibetan Classics* simply would not have gotten off the ground, and Pierre and Pamela Omidyar, who have enabled me through a special grant to continue overseeing the classics translation project as its general editor.

It is my sincere hope that the translations offered in this volume will benefit many people. Through the efforts of all those who have been involved in this noble venture, may all beings enjoy peace and happiness.

Thupten Jinpa
Montreal, 2013

Translator's Introduction

Tantra

Buddhist tantra of the kind found in Tibet and other Himalayan regions was mostly brought from the Indian subcontinent between the eighth and eleventh centuries in two great waves known as the early and late translations. These tantras were gathered by a few brave souls who made the perilous journey from Tibet to India to locate them. Sometimes they were translated in India with the help of experienced Indian pandits. Occasionally, Indian pandits traveled to Tibet to assist in translation. A few Indian Buddhist masters journeying to Tibet brought tantras with them that were then rendered into Tibetan.

So what is a tantra, and how does it differ from that other genre of Buddhist teachings known as *sutra*? All Buddhist teachings are designed to lead the disciple from the unsatisfactory state of existence, known as *samsara*, in which we are prone to a host of unwanted experiences grouped under the term "suffering." The essential component of samsara, the "cycle of existence," is that we are not in control of our destiny but languish under the sway of various mental afflictions that bring about this suffering. The teachings of the Buddha are designed to place us on the path that leads to the cessation of suffering (*nirvana*) or to the higher state of the enlightenment of buddhahood. For practitioners on the bodhisattva path of the Mahayana, there is also no difference between sutra and tantra in terms of the motivation animating the practice; in both cases, the practitioner is compelled by a special mind called *bodhicitta*, the wish for complete enlightenment in order to be best able to liberate all beings from samsara.

The practices that lead to the cessation of suffering and especially to enlightenment can be grouped under the headings of method and wisdom. *Method* deals with goal-oriented, aspirational practices such as the development of love and compassion, patience, perseverance, and so on, while *wisdom* concentrates on penetrating the depths of reality. Method and wisdom

are said to be the two wings of the bird that flies to enlightenment. Two wings are needed because the goal of buddhahood is essentially twofold: the resultant and enlightened state known as the *dharmakāya*, or "wisdom body," which refers to the unencumbered knowledge of a buddha, the enlightened mind, and the resultant embodiment of that enlightened mind, known as the *rūpakāya*, or "form body." The wing of method accomplishes the rūpakāya, and that of wisdom accomplishes the dharmakāya.

The reality or final truth of all phenomena, which is obscured by our omnipresent unknowing state of mind, is sought out by the practices grouped under the category of wisdom. This reality is not something invented by the Buddha or added by later Buddhist commentators. In that sense, it is not a Buddhist truth; it is the actual way phenomena exist, and has existed, since time immemorial. Because of this, any Buddhist wisdom practice—sutra or tantra—aimed at discovering this truth is seeking out the same reality. There is no difference between sutra and tantra in terms of the ultimate truth.

However, the practices of method in tantra are generally recognized to be superior to those of sutra. This is especially true in the highest class of tantra, known as *highest yoga tantra* (*anuttarayoga tantra*). There, *method* refers to two exclusive practices not found in nontantric Buddhist practice. First, *method* can refer to the *type* of mind that focuses on the ultimate truth, or emptiness. Normally, a mind dedicated to the perception of emptiness belongs to the wisdom side of practice as mentioned above. But in tantra this mind is combined with a great bliss that is produced by bringing the inner winds, or energies (*vāyu*), into the central channel (*dhūtī*) of the body. This manipulation of the bodily winds is achieved by a variety of methods, described in the present text. The bliss and the consciousness focused on emptiness are united as one. Such a bliss-consciousness is a very powerful and fast method to develop the wisdom that understands emptiness. The bliss consciousness also is transformed through yogic practice into the form of the deity of the tantra. This is method, and the mind cognizing emptiness is wisdom. Because these two are essentially one entity, method and wisdom in tantra are said to be of one mind. This is not found outside of tantra. In sutra practices, wisdom is supported and supplemented by method practices such as compassion, and method is accompanied by the wisdom practices of understanding impermanence and the nature of phenomena, but they are never of one entity.

The other type of method found in tantra is the development of a form known as the *illusory body*. This body is created from the subtle inner winds

and is in the aspect of the resultant buddha form that is the goal of the practice. This illusory body is the exclusive cause of the form body of a buddha, the rūpakāya. Alongside this practice is the wisdom development of the mental state of clear light. This is in the nature of a very subtle level of mind and is the exclusive cause for the enlightened mind, or dharmakāya. These two practices are explained in great depth in the text and are not found in the sutra path. Tantra, therefore, is a fast method for gaining the two enlightened forms and is characterized by exclusive method practices.

Generation stage

The practice of tantra follows an order of two stages: the generation stage and the completion stage. This work deals exclusively with the five stages of the completion stage. The generation stage, which must precede the completion stage, is characterized by the repeated visualization or imagination of yourself and your personal environment as enlightened forms. The purpose of these complex practices, known as *sādhanas* or *self-generation practices*, is to displace the ordinary view of yourself and personal environment and to replace it with a divine or enlightened view. This is only an imagined process and not an actual transformation; the generation stage is a preparatory ripening before the completion stage, during which these imagined enlightened forms are made real.

Generation-stage practices, therefore, consist of sequenced visualizations, usually beginning with a dissolution of the ordinary self and environment. From that state of emptiness arises a Sanskrit syllable, which by way of a few more transformations arises as an enlightened form such as a deity or a mandala. These transformative processes are repeated many times during the recitation and practice of the sādhana. In the form of the deity, many enlightened activities such as initiations and blessings take place, all performed to reinforce the imagined transformation of yourself from an ordinary being to a divine one. Repeated practice ripens you for the higher completion-stage practices, in which these imagined processes are made real though manipulation of the inner winds and psychic penetration of various vital points in the body known as *cakras*, or channel wheels.

Completion stage

This text begins at the point where the yogi, or practitioner, has been ripened by prolonged practice of the generation stage, which itself has to be preceded by an empowerment or initiation (*abhiṣekha*) into the practice of that

particular tantric deity by a qualified master. The completion stage completes or perfects what was begun on the generation stage.

The completion stage itself is subdivided into stages. Commonly there are five, giving us the "five stages" (*pañcakrama*) in the title of this book, but the first one is itself divided into two, giving us six in all: body isolation, speech isolation, mind isolation, illusory body, clear light, and union. Another way of dividing the completion stage is in terms of the "six yogas." These are described in the eighteenth and final chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, which is also classified as a separate work called the *Guhyasamāja Later Tantra*. These six yogas are also the means by which the completion stage of the unique *Kālacakra Tantra* is taught.[1] Tsongkhapa spends a lot of time correlating the six yogas with the five stages.

The Five Stages

The three isolations

The three isolations of body, speech, and mind are so called because through their practices the yogi isolates body, speech, and mind from ordinary perception. This is different from the imagined transformation from the ordinary to the divine found in the generation stage because the completion stage is characterized by the yogic practice of bringing the winds into the central channel, or *dhūtī*. These inner winds are of vital significance in the realm of tantra. The winds exist within the human body and were first created at conception alongside the other components of the physical body. They are classified into five major, or root, winds and five secondary winds. Classification is according to function. These functions essentially concern the inner mobility of the human body and include such things as breathing, digesting food, and expelling waste. They also have their areas of the body in which they primarily operate. The main wind is called the *life-sustaining wind* (*prāṇa*), or just *life wind*, which as its name suggests is the most vital wind of the body. Imbalances in this wind can cause serious illness and even death.

As mentioned above, the winds are formed through a gradual process at conception and birth. Likewise, at death they follow the reverse process, dissolving gradually into the center of the heart cakra. In this process of creation and dissolution, or *withdrawing*, the winds carry with them various conceptual states of mind. These states of minds, which are called *intrinsic natures* (*prakṛti*), become increasingly coarse as they are created in the womb and increasingly subtle as they withdraw at death. Winds and the mind, or

consciousness, are together like a horse and its rider. The horse is equated with the winds and the rider with the mind, because like the horse, the winds carry the mind to where it is directed. Mind has no power to move without the accompanying horse of the winds. The natural arising and withdrawing of the winds is used in tantra to achieve its aims. In fact, many of the body's natural functions are harnessed to various tantric practices.

As the winds and conceptual states of mind withdraw during the death process, so the winds and consciousness become subtler. The subtle mind and subtle wind are ideal for the development of the respective causes of the dharmakāya and rūpakāya of a buddha. Therefore it makes sense to use them for this purpose by recreating such subtle states while still alive and employing them on the completion-stage path. Just as the winds withdraw into the central channel at death, so completion-stage practices, such as the three isolations, bring the winds from the two side channels into the central channel through the psychic penetration of the cakras, which loosens the channel knots there. Such a practice brings forth the subtle mind accompanied by the subtle wind, and this mind is then focused on the nature of reality, or emptiness, as described above.

Therefore, although body isolation involves similar practices to the generation stage in its visualization of various parts of the body as different deities, it is characterized by the bringing, or the ability to bring, the winds into the central channel. Nevertheless, as Tsongkhapa points out, there are good arguments for including body isolation at least partly within the generation stage.

Speech isolation is not an isolation of actual speech in the sense of separating the articulated sounds of the vocal cords from ordinary existence. It refers to practices called *vajra repetition* and *prāṇāyāma*. These make use of the inner winds and breath, which are often regarded as the root cause of speech. *Vajra repetition* refers to the exclusive form of mantra repetition on the completion stage, which is not vocalized chanting but an identification of the tones of the movement of the inner breath with the three fundamental syllables—*oṃ*, *āḥ*, and *hūṃ*. *Prāṇāyāma* was a yogic practice well known in ancient India. It involved manipulation of the breathing process as a way of increasing lifespan and promoting good health. In Buddhist tantra the manipulation of the breath is an integral part of prāṇāyāma practice, but as this work shows, the goal and purpose are vastly different. Speech isolation follows body isolation because mantra recitation exclusive to the completion stage has to be recited by a practitioner who has gained the *body vajra* of body isolation.

The final isolation, isolation of mind, is practiced because in order to attain enlightenment, the practitioner must understand the nature of mind in tantric terms and use that mind to focus on ultimate reality by way of the exclusive tantric methods described above. This practice involves understanding the intrinsic natures and making use of the processes of withdrawing the winds, accomplished in vajra recitation, to develop the wisdoms associated with each stage of the withdrawal process.

This withdrawal process corresponds to the normal withdrawal process at death, during which various signs and appearances occur as the consciousness passes through the process of death. The same process is initiated in life by the experienced completion-stage practitioner who deliberately withdraws the inner winds to the heart center. If practitioners are unable to perform this during life, they will make use of the process as it naturally occurs at death.

The first signs to occur are those indicating that the four elements are withdrawing into each other. The elements withdraw in the order: earth, water, fire, and air. The signs accompanying these withdrawals are appearances resembling a mirage, smoke, lights in the sky, and a flame, respectively. The last sign, the flame, is the sign of the air element withdrawing into the consciousness. After this process the consciousness itself goes through a process of withdrawal whereby it becomes increasingly subtler. There are four stages to this withdrawal of consciousness, each resulting in a particular appearance. These four appearances resemble the whiteness of moonlight known as *appearance*, the reddishness of sunset known as *increase*, the darkness of night known as *close-to-attainment*, and the clarity of a cloudless sky at dawn, known as *clear light*. These four are also known as the *four empty states*—first empty state, the very empty state, the greatly empty state, and the all-empty state. The last of these is known as *death clear light* in the ordinary dying process and *illustrative clear light* when activated in meditation. This clear-light mind represents the subtlest level of consciousness and is the ideal mental state to use for focusing on emptiness, or ultimate truth.

The union of the two truths

The last three stages involve the practice of uniting the *illusory body* with the *clear light* to form the final stage of *union*. This indivisible union is the second type of method-and-wisdom union described above. "Method and wisdom united" refers either to the union of bliss and emptiness, as was done earlier, or to this type of union in which the illusory body is method and the state

of clear light is wisdom. Method illusory body is also referred to as *conventional truth* and wisdom clear light as *ultimate truth*. In sutra teachings, the two truths are levels or modes of existence, but in tantra they are also the two causes for the two enlightened forms. *Conventional-truth illusory body* is the exclusive cause of the rūpakāya, and *ultimate-truth clear light* is the exclusive cause of the dharmakāya.

The creation of an illusory body is necessary because without it the yogi would have no exclusive or substantial cause of the rūpakāya, or form body. It is an exclusive cause because it is formed from the subtle wind within the body, and the form body too must be a product of the subtle wind. They are therefore in a direct causal chain. The illusory body is also a nonexclusive or cooperative cause of the dharmakāya, which is in the category of wisdom. The exclusive cause of the dharmakāya is the following stage of clear light. Therefore the illusory-body stage comes before the clear-light stage. This subtle wind from the illusory body is activated or induced through the processes of withdrawing the coarse winds in the isolation meditations. Although this illusory body is separate from the coarse body, and can even travel outside, it is not a separate identity.

In a normal death process, the consciousness withdraws through a series of stages, during which various appearances occur, as described above, until it reaches the death clear light. This is a very brief state, often not even noticed by the dying person. After it passes, the person, now officially dead, passes into the intermediate state, or *bardo*, in the form he or she will adopt in the next life, which is determined by the karma that has ripened at that time. This intermediate-state physical form is not one of flesh and blood or even matter but is constructed of the same subtle wind that creates the illusory body. The intermediate-state body is even said to be a *kind* of illusory body. It is these normal life and death processes that are manipulated in completion-stage practice. Therefore, during the death process, yogis will replace the intermediate state with a deliberately created illusory body in the form of the deity of the tantra they are practicing. Moreover, as mentioned, the advanced completion-stage practitioner does not have to wait for death but can recreate the same illusory body during meditation in life. The often-repeated statement that in tantra you can attain enlightenment in one life is based on the fact that if you achieve an illusory body in life, you will attain enlightenment in that life or at death.

The illusory body is generated to enhance the potency of the wisdom of clear light, which will eradicate the final hindrances to enlightenment

known as the *obscurations to omniscience* (*jñeyāvaraṇa*). This is done by withdrawing the illusory body into the clear light. As we saw, an actualization of clear light occurs naturally in the death process. Many instances of clear light are also manifested by yogic practices on the earlier stages, where they are used to focus on the reality of phenomena, or emptiness. However, here *clear light* refers to the direct realization by innate bliss of the very subtle reality. When the illusory body withdraws into this clear light, the illusory body itself disappears, but the remaining clear light is known as the *actual* clear light, as opposed to the *illustrative* clear light found on earlier stages. Only when the illusory body itself is purified by the clear light will the illusory body remain and not disappear. This is achieved by using the withdrawing and creating processes, which correspond to the processes of death and the intermediate state. The clear light is first achieved by the withdrawal, or dissolution, of the illusory body, and in the subsequent process of creation corresponding to the arising of the intermediate state, the illusory body is again produced, but this time in a purified form. This purified illusory body will not vanish when the actual clear light is actualized. This is the beginning of union, the last stage.

The stage of union represents the union of method and wisdom, conventional and ultimate truth, pure illusory body and actual clear light, and when perfected, the indivisible union of the rūpakāya and dharmakāya of the enlightened state. These two wings of practice run alongside each other throughout tantra—and in sutra practice too. Complementing and supporting each other, they reach their zenith when inseparably joined as bliss and emptiness or as illusory body and clear light. The development of these two is the very essence of all Buddhist practice, but in tantra they take on a special significance, becoming fast and powerful methods for attaining the state of a buddha.

The Guhyasamāja Tantra

The topic of this great work by Tsongkhapa is the completion stage of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*. This tantra belongs to the highest yoga tantra class, which means it contains special methods for attaining the two enlightened forms described above that are not found in the three lower classes of tantra. For the three lower classes of action (*kriyā*), performance (*caryā*), and yoga tantras do not contain methods for bringing the winds into the central channel. The Sanskrit *guhyasamāja* means "a gathering of secrets." According to

one tradition, this refers to a gathering or bringing together of the secrets of the body, speech, and mind of the enlightened state. According to another tradition it means a place where the meanings of all other tantras are gathered. "Secrets" does not mean something deliberately withheld but something so difficult to comprehend that its meaning is not apparent.

The *Guhyasamāja Tantra* holds a special place in the tantric tradition. It is referred to as the root of all other classes of tantra. Tsongkhapa says, "In the *Root Tantra*, in the section on the title, it states that every secret of the body, speech, and mind of every tathāgata is contained within this tantra." He devotes a whole section on its merits. There he recounts how just to read, study, or even come into contact with this tantra is of immense benefit, and that as long as the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* remains, the teachings of the Buddha remain also, because "it is the amulet carrying the Buddhadharma."

The tantra itself still exists in the original Sanskrit and was translated into Tibetan during the second wave of translations in the tenth century, although it may also have been translated during the early translation period.[2] It consists of seventeen chapters with an eighteenth chapter, the *Later Tantra*, classified as a separate work. The chapters describe the various practices and rituals of the generation stage and stages. Each tantra will have its own main deity and own "residence," or *mandala*, which also usually contains a number of other deities. Depending on the tradition, the main deity of the Guhyasamāja generation stage is either Akṣobhyavajra or Mañjuvajra, and the number of deities is thirty-two or nineteen. According to tradition, most tantras were taught by the Buddha in his tantric form of Vajradhara or as the main deity of the mandala. It is also accepted traditionally that some were taught by the Buddha in his lifetime and others by way of various manifestations after he had passed away. The *Guhyasamāja Tantra* is one of those taught by the Buddha in his lifetime. The Buddha is present throughout the whole tantra, teaching and revealing the secrets to the large assembly.

Explanatory Tantras, Commentaries, and Traditions

As mentioned above, tantra is known as "secret practice" not due to some parsimonious attitude of not wanting to share it but because its subject matter is profound and difficult to access. Because of the way it makes use of various bodily processes, such as those involved in sexual practice, and of its attitudes toward matters generally regarded as "unclean," it is also open to misinterpretation and denigration by those who know very little about it. Moreover, and maybe because of this reason, much of the writing in the

tantras is enigmatic and subject to interpretation. Some of the phrases have varying levels of meaning. Because of this opacity, explanatory tantras often coexist with the tantras. These are also accepted as tantras taught by the Buddha. The eighteenth chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, for instance, is viewed as an explanatory tantra of the first seventeen chapters. One tantra can have many explanatory tantras—the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* has up to five.

Still, even the explanations in these explanatory tantras need elucidating, and so there arose a corpus of commentaries by Indian masters. Because of its prominence, many commentaries on the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* appeared in India. This led to commentarial traditions being formed, united by the similarity in their presentations of the Guhyasamāja path. The two main traditions were known as the Ārya tradition and the Jñānapāda tradition, each named after the initiator of the tradition. "Ārya" refers to Nāgārjuna and "Jñānapāda" to Buddhaśrījñāna. Both masters' seminal works on the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* spawned traditions of subcommentaries.

Nāgārjuna, of course, is well known in the Buddhist world as the influential author of several philosophical works on the ultimate nature of phenomena. According to tradition, he also composed works on Guhyasamāja and other tantric practices. Some deny that the sutra Nāgārjuna and the tantric Nāgārjuna are the same person because the dating of the two developments does not add up unless you accept that he had an abnormally long life. However, the sutra Nāgārjuna was a towering figure, and his philosophical heirs such as Āryadeva and Candrakīrti are also credited with works on the Guhyasamāja in keeping with the interpretation of their master. Nāgārjuna is said to have reached the stage of an *ārya*, or "exalted one" in his spiritual practice, meaning he had attained the level of a direct, nonconceptual cognition of ultimate truth. It is for this reason Nāgārjuna's tradition is called the Ārya tradition. Nāgārjuna heard the Guhyasamāja from the yogi Saraha, but apparently the latter did not compose any specific works on this tantra and therefore is not credited as the tradition's founder. Instead, Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages* became the authority for the Ārya tradition of interpretation.

Buddhaśrījñāna received his teachings on the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* in a vision directly from Mañjuśrī, the personification of the wisdom of the Buddha. He then composed several influential works on the tantra. Tsongkhapa says that Buddhaśrījñāna in his main work, *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*, concentrates on the *Later Tantra*, which explains the tantra using the six-branch yoga rather than the five stages. Of the two traditions, Tsongkhapa clearly favors the Ārya tradition, and this work focuses on that tradition.

The *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, along with the *Later Tantra*, most of the explanatory tantras, and much of the commentarial literature from these two traditions, was translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan during the later translation period, as described above. It is because of this great accomplishment of translation that Tsongkhapa and many other Tibetan masters were able to study and investigate the Indian teachings on the Guhyasamāja generation stage and fivefold completion stage.

Practice or teaching lineages of Guhyasamāja require an actual transmission of the texts and the oral tradition in the form of face-to-face teachings from an Indian master. According to Tsongkhapa seven Guhyasamāja teaching lineages appeared in Tibet by way of the great Tibetan translator Marpa (1012–97), who traveled more than once to India and Nepal to collect teachings. He received teachings and transmissions on both the Ārya and Jñānapāda traditions of Guhyasamāja from seven masters, although his main teacher in India was the Indian pandit Nāropa. Subsequently, the widespread Marpa Guhyasamāja tradition in Tibet relied on the works and teachings of Nāropa, especially his *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*.

The eleventh-century translator Gö Khukpa Lhetsé traveled to India twelve times, where he studied the Ārya tradition of the Guhyasamāja literature from nine Indian teachers. He brought back to Tibet not only textual explanations of the classic texts but also the collections of core teachings that had developed around the classic texts. Tsongkhapa makes it clear that he holds the lineage of Gö in high regard. There was also an oral-tradition lineage of the five stages that was transmitted by the Indian master Jñānākara to the Tibetan master Naktso (1011–64). Tsongkhapa mentions that there were, apparently, other Guhyasamāja traditions in Tibet in the early days, started by one or two Tibetan translators but that they did not last. The *Blue Annals* states that the Buddhaśrījñāna Guhyasamāja tradition was introduced into Tibet by the great translator Lochen Rinchen Sangpo and subsequently by the pandits Smṛti and Śūnyaśrī.

According to the *Blue Annals* and the Sakya master Amé Shap's *History of the Guhyasamāja*,[3] the Marpa tradition and the Gö tradition were transmitted eventually to the great scholar Butön Rinchen Drup (1290–1364). Also, the *Blue Annals* states that many masters of the Marpa Guhyasamāja tradition studied the Guhyasamāja of the Gö tradition. These include Tsurtön Wangi Dorjé, an actual disciple of Marpa, and Tsurtön's own disciple Khön Gepa Kīrti. Tsongkhapa received the Marpa Guhyasamāja tradition from Khyungpo Lhepa Shönu Sönam, who had received it from Butön Rinpoché.

He received the Gö tradition from Khyungpo Lhepa as well as from Rendawa Shönu Lodrö, who was one of his main teachers.

Tsongkhapa's Guhyasamāja Legacy

Tsongkhapa then went on to become one of the most influential figures in the reform and subsequent development of the Guhyasamāja tradition in Tibet. He saw the Guhyasamāja tradition in Tibet as being in a state of decline, and he took on the responsibility of reforming it. He speaks of "the darkness of unknowing and misunderstanding surrounding the five stages," and says, "The teachings in general, and specifically the Ārya tradition, have for a long time been severely weakened," and concludes, "With a pure motivation for the severely weakened Guhyasamāja Ārya tradition to be restored and remain strong for a long time, I composed this work." He felt empowered to take on this task because, as it says in the colophon, he received "special signs of permission to compose this work." His confidence in approaching such a mammoth task derives too from his identity as a "Guhyasamāja yogi." Driven by this reformist motivation, the tone and structure of the work is very much one of a close examination of the Indian and Tibetan Guhyasamāja literary traditions followed by conclusions based on reasoning and scripture. Therefore Tsongkhapa's rejections and refutations of presentations of various aspects of the tantra put forward by a few Indian and Tibetan commentators, and sometimes of entire compositions, is done not to further his own views but in the spirit of restoring the tantra to an uncorrupted state. In this sense the work is far more than just a presentation of the fundamentals of the tantra.

The importance Tsongkhapa gave to the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* can be seen from the number of works he composed on this topic. Even after composing his groundbreaking work on the tenets of tantra in general, *Great Exposition of Secret Mantra*, he set out to write several works covering the path of Guhyasamāja. These ranged from annotations to commentaries on the initiation procedure, explanatory tantras, Indian compositions, and the generation and completion stages of the Guhyasamāja path. Although generally he leaned toward the Gö tradition, he brought out and developed parts of the Marpa tradition too. These include composing a short work entitled *Explicit Instructions for the Five Stages Complete on One Seat*, which is based on the Guhyasamāja teachings of Nāropa. In this present work also he expands on and evaluates aspects of the Marpa tradition, such as the instructions on the nine mixings.

Tsongkhapa's significance in the development of the Guhyasamāja teachings in Tibet cannot be overestimated. The *Blue Annals* states: "Generally, the master Tsongkhapa was of immense benefit to the doctrine, and specifically he was the one who spread the Guhyasamāja in this land."[4]

In the lineage list provided by Amé Shap, the Guhyasamāja lineages received by Butön made their way into the Sakya tradition. He states that of the two main Guhyasamāja lineages, the Sakya masters hold the Gö lineage as their main tradition. Marpa is regarded as the father of the many offshoots of the Kagyü school of Tibetan Buddhism, and clearly the Marpa Guhyasamāja tradition became its main Guhyasamāja practice lineage. Tsongkhapa also received the Marpa and Gö Guhyasamāja lineages, and as he clearly favored the Gö tradition, it would seem that the subsequent spread of the Guhyasamāja in the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism, of which Tsongkhapa was the founder, relies more on the Gö tradition. The main seat of Geluk Guhyasamāja practice is in the Upper and Lower Tantric Colleges, the centers of Geluk tantric instruction. There a tradition of teaching the Four Commentaries combined[5] is followed.

The Guhyasamāja continues to be a main tantric practice of the Geluk school today. Despite the above declaration from the *Blue Annals*, it is not practiced today in the Nyingma school. In the Sakya school the practice of Guhyasamāja has declined. This is also true in the Kagyü tradition, although recently the head of the Karma Kagyü, the Karmapa, assigned different tantras to various monasteries in an attempt to revive them. The Guhyasamāja was among these tantras.

Structure of the Book

A Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages, as its title suggests, is a work on the Guhyasamāja completion stage. Its aim is to arrive at a conclusive presentation of its five stages by way of a thorough examination of all the available Indic and Tibetan material on this tantra. At that time, there were evidently many differing and contradictory assertions on the practice and theory of the five stages among the traditions in Tibet and in the works of Indian masters. There was even doubt as to which Indian works were valid authorities on Guhyasamāja. In general terms, there was disagreement on what intrinsic characteristics delineated the class of highest yoga tantra into *father tantra* and *mother tantra*. It was this mass of seeming confusion that Tsongkhapa faced when he composed this work—his last, incidentally, before he died.

Tsongkhapa therefore begins this work with an examination of the criteria

for dividing highest yoga tantra into mother and father tantras. His approach here, and in all sections of this book, is to take prevailing assertions of the time, examine them using reasoning and the support of valid scripture, and come to a decisive position, which he then takes as his own position. In doing so, he avoids being dogmatic and is a reformer in the best sense of the word.

He then moves on to the Guhyasamāja father tantra and cites reasons and scripture for it being praised as the king of tantras. Part 1 of the book ends with a detailed and thorough investigation of Indic Guhyasamāja literature. This includes research into the tantra itself and its subsequent explanatory tantras followed by the commentarial traditions, with a special emphasis on the Ārya tradition and its main proponents. Tsongkhapa does not shy away from rejecting an Indian text as misleading or falsely attributed if it does not stand up to reasoning.

Part 2 begins with an account of how the Guhyasamāja traditions arrived in Tibet. This has been briefly described above. This is followed by Tsongkhapa asserting the importance of the student training well in the sutra path of bodhicitta and understanding emptiness before entering the path of the Vajra Vehicle. He then describes the necessity of following the prescribed sequence of initiation, maintaining pure tantric vows and pledges, and training well in the generation stage before embarking on the completion stage. It seems that there were misconceptions at that time questioning how necessary it was to prepare for completion-stage practice with prior generation-stage training, and Tsongkhapa devotes some space to addressing this point.

Part 3 deals with the essential components of completion-stage practice. This mainly concerns the union of bliss and emptiness, and the practice of focusing the mind and winds at particular vital points on the body in order to bring about this innate bliss. These are concepts that distinguish highest yoga tantra from sutra practice and lower classes of tantra and make essential reading for anyone who wants to understand this core component of this class of tantra.

In part 3 Tsongkhapa discusses the five stages in general terms, but he begins with an examination of the corpus of literature on Guhyasamāja known as *core instructions* (*man ngag*, *upadeśa*). This term is often applied to the oral teachings on sutra and tantra given by Indian and Tibetan masters that are then passed on, either orally or in writing, to become a lineage or transmission. In the tantric vehicle the purpose of these instructions is that they should open up the often inaccessible meanings of the tantras. In that sense they form an indispensable link in the chain leading from the root tantra to a good understanding planted in the mind of the disciple. Therefore

any core instruction on a tantra must have its source in the tantra itself. However, over time it can be seen that the link between the core instruction given by a lama and the tantra it supposedly explains could become stretched and even broken. It is this concern that Tsongkhapa addresses in this chapter. Clearly there were at that time some core instruction texts that had no basis in the great tantric works of India, and Tsongkhapa points this out.

Parts 4 through to 9 are the body of this work and deal with the five stages in order. Tsongkhapa also examines to see which of the six yogas correlates with each of the five stages. These chapters contain encyclopedic information on completion-stage practice and phenomena associated with it. For example, the chapter on speech isolation contains a lengthy presentation on the inner winds that includes descriptions, locations, functions, and associations. The mind-isolation chapter describes the four appearances and lists the eighty intrinsic natures. These phenomena are not restricted to Guhyasamāja but are found in much tantric literature. Part 8 establishes how all sutra paths must eventually join the tantric path if they are to lead to enlightenment, and part 9 deals with the final stage of union.

Part 10 breaks off from the order of the five stages and deals with the practice of *tantric activities*. This is a practice found on both generation and completion stages. It involves physical reenactment of the visualized practices found in the two stages and involves, for the most part, the staging of elaborate ritual activities involving other people as well as the main practitioner. Often these other participants mirror the number, position, and activities of the deities in the Guhyasamāja mandala. Hence masks and costumes play an important part. Not all tantric activities involve elaborate rituals. One type labeled *completely unelaborated* involves only the yogi. Since all such a yogi's activities are totally inward, outwardly he or she may appear to be someone whose only activities are sleeping and eating. Part 10 also deals with enlightenment from a tantric perspective.

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Geshé Thupten Jinpa, president of the Institute of Tibetan Classics, for giving me the opportunity to translate this remarkable composition. In the time that I have spent working on this translation, my life has been enormously enriched by its wealth of wisdom and knowledge. I feel privileged that I was asked to translate this great work and can only hope that my efforts have done it credit.

For resolving queries relating to the actual text, I turned to two friends

who were classmates of mine during my fruitful time as a student at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, Dharamsala, India. Gen Gyatso is now a teacher at the institute and known for his erudition and down-to-earth common sense. Ven. Tashi Döndrup now spends his life in retreat within the confines of the Dalai Lama's palace behind the institute. These good friends willingly gave of their time to help me resolve queries I had on the text. I also managed to see Ven. Jhado Rinpoché, former abbot of Namgyal Monastery in Dharamsala, to ask him some questions, but his busy schedule curtailed this to only two visits.

I really have to acknowledge the huge debt of gratitude I owe to David Kittelstrom, senior editor at Wisdom Publications. David, with assists from Lea Groth-Wilson, Laura Cunningham, and Andrew Francis, carried out his editorial duties with his usual efficiency and eye for detail. The look of the book on the printed page, and not a small amount of its readability, are the result of his conscientiousness. Moreover, because I have little or no academic training, much of the work outside of actual translation, such as annotation and this introduction, are woefully inadequate by modern academic standards. For the introduction especially, I had little idea of what information to include and at what readership level to pitch it, and David went out of his way to help me with these topics, for which I am humbly grateful.

I have to acknowledge my gratitude to Geshé Losang Chödar of the Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, India. Geshé-la was responsible for producing the critical edition of the Tibetan text. Consequently, it was his task to track down the origin of each and every citation in this work and render the name of the source text, its location, and the citation folio and page numbers as endnotes. This was task that required a lot of time and not an inconsiderable amount of patience. I am so grateful to him for taking this on.

Finally I want to thank David Reigle, a true Sanskrit scholar. Whenever I had a query concerning the finding and reconstructing of Sanskrit names, spelling, and so on, David always replied quickly and happily. Needless to say, his replies were thoughtful, detailed, and trustworthy.

Technical Note

THE TIBETAN TITLE of the volume translated here is *Rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i man ngag rim pa lnga rab tu gsal ba'i sgron me*, which means *Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages: Core Teachings on the Glorious Guhyasamāja, King of Tantras*. This edition of Tsongkhapa's work was prepared specifically for *The Library of Tibetan Classics* and its Tibetan equivalent, *Bod kyi gtsug lag gces btus*. Bracketed numbers embedded in the text refer to page numbers in the critical and annotated Tibetan edition published in New Delhi in modern book format by the Institute of Tibetan Classics (2012, ISBN 978-81-89165-15-1) as volume 15 of the *Bod kyi gtsug lag gces btus* series. In preparing our translation, the Institute of Tibetan Classics edition served as our primary source, with reference also to other editions.

The conventions for phonetic transcription of Tibetan words are those developed by the Institute of Tibetan Classics and Wisdom Publications. These reflect approximately the pronunciation of words by a modern Central Tibetan; Tibetan speakers from Ladakh, Kham, or Amdo, not to mention Mongolians, might pronounce the words quite differently. Transliterations of the phoneticized Tibetan terms and names used in the text can be found in the table on page 567. Sanskrit diacritics are used throughout except for Sanskrit terms that have been naturalized into English, such as samsara, nirvana, sutra, stupa, Mahayana, and mandala.

Except in some cases of titles frequently mentioned, works mentioned in the translation have typically had the author's name added by the translator for ease of reference by contemporary readers. It should be noted, therefore, that these names, although appearing without brackets, are not always present in the original Tibetan.

Pronunciation of Tibetan phonetics
ph and *th* are aspirated *p* and *t*, as in *pet* and *tip*.
ö is similar to the *eu* in the French *seul*.

ü is similar to the *ü* in the German *füllen*.
ai is similar to the *e* in *bet*.
é is similar to the *e* in *prey*.

Pronunciation of Sanskrit
Palatal *ś* and retroflex *ṣ* are similar to the English unvoiced *sh*.
c is an unaspirated *ch* similar to the *ch* in *chill*.
The vowel *ṛ* is similar to the American *r* in *pretty*.
ñ is somewhat similar to the nasalized *ny* in *canyon*.
ṅ is similar to the *ng* in *sing* or *anger*.

A Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages

Core Teachings on the Glorious Guhyasamāja, King of Tantras

Tsongkhapa Losang Drakpa
(1357–1419)

1. Homage and Introduction

I prostrate with reverence to the lotus feet of Bhagavan Mañjuśrī, lord of all tathāgatas.

Sambhogakāya ablaze with the glory of the wondrous marks and features,
unceasingly enjoying the one-taste union of bliss and emptiness,
with nonapprehending compassion that leaves behind the extremity of peace,
I prostrate to the great conqueror possessed of the seven features.

To the compiler Vajrapāni, who gathered together the secret teachings,
to Indrabhūti, Nāgaḍākinī, Viśukalpa, glorious Saraha, Vajra Nāgārjuna,
Āryadeva, Nāgabodhi, Śākyamitra, Mātaṅgī, Candrakīrti,
and to others of the guru lineage who attained the supreme stage
by the path of Guhyasamāja, the king of tantras,
I prostrate with great joy.

I prostrate constantly to the lotus feet of Guru Mañjuśrī,
who made clear the path of Guhyasamāja, which when understood
brings supreme and fearless confidence in all other scriptures.

Driven by a great force of merit built from prayers
to preserve the teachings of the Buddha and so on,
they traveled with great hardships to the noble land
and spread this practice in the land of snow mountains.
I bow to Rinchen Sangpo, the eyes of the world,
to Lhodrak Marpa, keeper of the treasury of secrets,
to Tanak Gö Lotsāwa, supreme translator, learned in untold scripture.

I will explain this wondrous path of Guhyasamāja,
not clearly understood, no matter how hard they try,
by those who are satisfied with minimal instruction,
who look upon sutra and tantra with blinkered eyes,
for whom scriptural tradition does not arise as instruction,
who seek refuge merely in scripture,
never understanding the subtle path of reasoning
as presented by the adornments of the world,[6]
the sole entrance into understanding the profound transmissions.

You who are interested in teachings that have arisen from
the bringing together of the *Root Tantra* and all explanatory tantras
on the path of scripture and reasoning,
through the instructions of the second great Vajradhara,
think how fortunate you are to enter this great secret path [2]
traveled by Indrabhūti, Sukhanātha, Saraha, Nāgārjuna, and so on,
by Nāgayoginī and millions of other ḍākas and ḍākinīs,
and with a radiantly joyful face lit by a smile,
free yourself from distraction of the three pot-like faults,
and listen.

Of all the wonderful teachings that Bhagavān Buddha, the sole beacon of light in the three worlds, supreme guide of gods and men, the source of all excellent teachings, revealed in keeping with disciple's capacities, the most exalted, the greatest, and the most important is on the glorious Guhyasamāja, a true jewel in this world. The stages of the path that leads to supreme enlightenment for the fortunate person who practices this particular teaching is the topic that will be explained. There are six main outlines:

1. Presentation of the two types of tantras
2. The greatness of Guhyasamāja
3. Commentarial traditions on the meaning of Guhyasamāja
4. Scriptural account of the Ārya tradition
5. How its instructions were transmitted in Tibet
6. The true meanings of these precious teachings

Part 1

Divisions of Highest Yoga Tantra

2. The Two Types of Tantra

Presentation of the two types of tantras

1. Ways of naming highest yoga tantra
2. Division of tantra into two types in keeping with the meanings of the names
3. Specific explanation of method tantra

Ways of naming highest yoga tantra

There are many ways of categorizing highest yoga tantra into two. The *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* talks of *yoga* and *yoginī tantras*:

> The number of yoga tantras
> is ascertained at 60 million;
> Likewise, the number of yoginī tantras
> is said to be 160 million.[7]

The *Buddha Skull Tantra*, *Vajra Canopy Tantra*, and others use the same terminology. The term *yoga tantra* applies to both method and wisdom tantras, but using *yoga tantra* for method tantras is to use the general for the specific. For example, the term *child* is the basis for the divisions "boy" and "girl," but to use *child* for a boy is to use a general for a specific. The term *ḍākinī tantra* is also often used for yoginī tantras. Puṇḍarīka's *Stainless Light Commentary* and others talk of method tantra and wisdom tantra. Nāgabodhi and Candrakīrti also refer to mother tantra as "wisdom sutra." Tibetan lamas who have taken the name "yoginī tantra" and then created the terms *mother tantra* and *father tantra* are in keeping with the *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra* when it says:

> The *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra*
> is the grandmother of all ḍāka mother and ḍāka father tantras.[8] [3]

Division of tantra into two types in keeping with the meanings of the names

1. Points of doubt
2. Individual assertions

Points of doubt

If highest yoga tantras are divided into method tantras and wisdom tantras, then are these two types of tantras those in which method and wisdom are nondual or not? If they are, this could not be correct because the meaning of the term *method and wisdom tantras* refers to tantras partial to either method *or* wisdom. Nondual tantras, on the other hand, are tantras that combine method and wisdom equally. If it is asserted that these two types of tantras are not tantras in which method and wisdom are nondual, that too would be wrong because the meaning of *yoga* in the term *highest yoga* as found in the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* is:

> Method and wisdom in union
> is what is meant by *yoga.*[9]

Thus it refers to method and wisdom equally combined without partiality to either. Therefore it has to be correct to say that highest tantras combining method and wisdom equally are nondual tantras. If this is the case, should it not be explained whether method and wisdom tantras on one hand and nondual tantras on the other are mutually exclusive or not?

Individual assertions

1. Others' assertions
2. Our own position

Others' assertions

Some Tibetan masters divide highest yoga tantras into three individual categories: method, wisdom, and nondual. They say that method and wisdom individually is what determines a tantra to be a method or wisdom tantra, whereas tantras that exhibit both are nondual tantras. They assert the *Hevajra*

Tantra to be a nondual tantra because it says, "A tantra with the nature of method and wisdom,"[10] and they also say that the fact that the *Hevajra Tantra* states that it is a yoginī tantra is not contradictory because a nondual tantra must also be a wisdom tantra. If that is the case, they would have to say that a nondual tantra also has to be a method tantra. Therefore they must explain how this does not contradict their own position of dividing highest yoga tantra into three separate categories and maintaining that method and wisdom individually determine method and wisdom tantras, whereas nondual tantras are those that exhibit both together.

Some Tibetan masters say that the "three-classification" tradition asserted that a tantra beginning with the words "This I have heard" was method tantra and one that began "Made joyful by the supreme secret"[11] and so on was mother tantra, as asserted by Kṛṣṇācārya. Therefore, because the Hevajra root tantra contains the former, its explanatory tantra *Vajra Canopy* contains the latter, and its other explanatory tantra *Saṃputa Tantra* contains both, the *Hevajra Tantra* is a nondual tantra. In this way they are differentiating three kinds of tantras by the words they contain. [4] The Cakrasaṃvara root tantra,[12] however, contains the latter phrase, while its explanatory tantras such as *Later Exposition Tantra*, begin "This I have heard," and the *Later Exposition Tantra* actually contains both phrases. This would mean that Cakrasaṃvara also becomes a nondual tantra, in which case we must critically ask, "Where is the mother tantra?"

They reply that their position is that a tantra may teach from both the vast method aspect, the profound wisdom aspect, and so on, but that mother and father tantras are determined from a position of one of them being dominant. This means that they think the two types of tantra and nondual tantras are mutually exclusive and shows that there is no analysis of what exactly is the difference between the method and wisdom that is nondual, and the method and wisdom of father or mother tantras.

Other Tibetan scholars maintain that dividing highest yoga tantras into method, wisdom, and nondual is a provisional position, but that definitively all highest yoga tantras are nondual. They also say that a tantra exhibiting both of the criteria that establishes method and wisdom tantras individually, or exhibiting something that is neither of those two criteria, is a nondual tantra. If that is so, positing three differing criteria for the establishment of the three types of tantra, while at the same time asserting the definitive position that both method and wisdom highest yoga tantras are nondual, and positing as an example of a nondual tantra one particular tantra that you have

strong liking for, is simply contradictory. If you do not accept mother and father tantras in your tradition, then this contradicts your own assertions as well as scripture. If you do accept them and say that these two types of tantra are not nondual, then that would contradict your assertion that these two tantras are nondual from a definitive position. If you accept them and say that they are nondual, then it would contradict positing three dissimilar criteria for the three types of tantra.

In all probability this thinking comes from believing nondual tantra to be superior to mother and father tantra, and to this end they forcefully establish the tantra they have the greatest liking for as nondual while positing all others as belonging to the two types of tantra.

Our own position

1. How to understand tantras of nondual method and wisdom
2. Understanding tantras of method and wisdom individually

How to understand tantras of nondual method and wisdom

1. Actual point
2. Resolving doubts

Actual point

In the terms *tantras of nondual method and wisdom* and *tantras of method and wisdom individually*, the phrase "method and wisdom" is the same. This has led to the error of believing the meaning of both terms to be the same also. Therefore, because of thinking there is only one "method and wisdom," this has resulted in the conclusion that those tantras combining method and wisdom equally and those tantras that are partial to either method or wisdom must be mutually exclusive. [5] It is from this understanding that the division of highest yoga tantra into three distinct categories has arisen. Therefore these two phrases should be differentiated.

It has been taught that the term *yoga* in *highest yoga* and *highest yoginī* means method and wisdom combined equally, without partiality to either. *Method* refers to the innate bliss, and *wisdom* refers to the mind that cognizes the reality of no-self emptiness. This point is made often and is known as one of highest yoga's great qualities. The nature of this method and wisdom of

bliss and emptiness is that they are united indivisibly, and on that basis all classes of highest yoga tantra are similar insofar as they all take this point as their highest theme. Therefore, in terms of how all highest yoga tantras are in their very nature, they exist as nondual tantras. Therefore the term *method and wisdom* as used in this way does not determine tantras partial to either method or wisdom. Nondual tantras in this sense are the basis for the division into father and mother tantras, but they are not to be held as a division in their own right. The *Stainless Light Commentary* says:

> By their natures they are all yoga tantras possessing the nature of method and wisdom.[13]

Likewise the *Hevajra Tantra* states:

> The syllable *he* is great compassion; *vajra* means wisdom.
> A tantra with the nature of method and wisdom
> I will explain, so listen.[14]

Therefore the *Hevajra Tantra* does not become a "wisdom" tantra because it does not say, "Listen to this wisdom tantra." Also the *Guhyasamāja* says:

> "Wisdom and method in union"
> is stated to be the meaning of *yoga*;
> *samāja* is taught to mean "coming together,"
> referring to all the buddhas.[15]

Therefore this tantra does not become a "method" tantra. This is also taught in the *Primordial Buddha*:

> By the body of method it is not yoga,
> nor is it by wisdom alone;
> method and wisdom in union
> the Tathāgata has said to be *yoga*.[16]

Vajragarbha's *Commentary* makes similar comments.

Saying that Guhyasamāja does not become a method tantra and that Hevajra does not become a wisdom tantra is a refutation of these two tantras being method and wisdom tantras in terms of understanding method and

wisdom as bliss and emptiness, but according to our own position, it is not an assertion that they are not a father tantra and mother tantra respectively. Mention is made of these two tantras because among mother and father tantras they are the most well known. This is also not an assertion that we do not accept method and wisdom tantras other than these two.

Resolving doubts

Compared to yoginī tantras such as Hevajra in which much is taught about bliss, not much is actually written in the Guhyasamāja corpus about bliss, whereas much is explained by way of the four types of emptiness. [6] However, do not, on account of this, hold the thought that great bliss is an exclusive feature of mother tantras and that father tantras do not take great bliss as the actual path. Mahāsiddha Kṛṣṇācārya said:

> That spoken in yoga tantras
> beginning "This I have heard"
> is of no separate nature
> to that of yoginī tantras,
> like "fire is otherwise straw;"[17]
> this the Mind Vajra has said.[18]

This means that the preface beginning "This I have heard," found in method tantras, whose actual meaning is bliss and emptiness indivisibly combined, also mirrors the meaning found in yoginī tantras. Therefore the Conqueror has said that there is no difference in the nature of the union of bliss and emptiness of those two tantras. In particular, in determining the meaning of the Guhyasamāja preface beginning "This I have heard," the *Guhyasiddhi* says:

> Devoting himself to *tattva*,[19]
> even without special practices,
> the practitioner will have attainments.
> Though he follows a hundred special practices,
> if *tattva* is lacking, there is no attainment.[20]

Also:

> Also *tattva* is a feature of the tantras;
> the glorious *Guhyasamāja* makes this clear.[21]

Also:

> Creator of the tantra is the Mind Vajra;[22]
> the speaker and the spoken are the same.
> Other than this there were none.
> Therefore nothing other than great bliss was taught.
> With the lines "This I have heard" and "was dwelling,"
> the possessor of the Mind Vajra taught all buddhas.
> Concerning the excellent words "was dwelling,"
> just as Śrī Mahāsukhanatha has explained
> in what manner they are excellent,
> likewise, I too will speak a little on that.
> Supremely and briefly taught on one occasion,
> that spoken by the supreme one
> was the true meaning of the tantras of the Buddha
> and had the nature of great bliss.[23]

Therefore he praises *tattva* in terms of what exists if it is present and what does not exist if it is not present, and more than once he explains that *tattva* refers to bliss and emptiness inseparably in union. This work was composed by Ācarya Mahāsukha, whose other name was Padmavajra. It is also quoted as a source several times in Āryadeva's *Lamp of the Compendium of Practice* and is, therefore, in accord with the Ārya corpus. It points out again and again that bliss and emptiness united as the actual path is the significance of Guhyasamāja. Therefore, for those who follow the Ārya tradition, this is something to definitely understand.

Therefore, insofar as all highest yoga tantras take bliss and emptiness in indivisible union as the actuality of the path, there is no difference between any of them. With such an understanding, know that whichever of the two types of tantra we enter, it is indispensable to develop in the mind an indivisible bliss-and-emptiness method and wisdom. Moreover, do not have a superficial understanding of bliss and emptiness; it is essential that you discover the very subtle points of exclusive bliss and emptiness. [7]

Understanding tantras of method and wisdom individually

1. The position of *Stainless Light* and so on
2. The position of the *Vajra Canopy Tantra* and so on

The position of Stainless Light *and so on*

If we now understand the meaning of "method and wisdom" in tantras of nondual method and wisdom, then what is its meaning when used to describe tantras of method and wisdom individually? Let us first of all look at how it is settled in *Stainless Light*:

> Whatever the tantra, in terms of worldly truth, the categories of method and wisdom come through the divisions into mirror-like wisdom, the purity of the aggregates and elements, and so on. The Tathāgata has said these exist because of the faculties of those with duller minds.[24]

Therefore, from the purity of the aggregates come the male gods posited as method, and from the purity of the elements come the goddesses posited as wisdom. By this process individual tantras are established as being method or wisdom tantras. Such a method and wisdom, when compared to the previous ultimate method and wisdom, is conventional truth. Moreover, they exist because of the faculties of duller disciples. On how tantras are asserted as being method or wisdom by way of gods and goddesses, the same work says:

> Conventionally, wherever the yoginīs move and the principal deity does not, that is a yoginī tantra. Wherever the method moves and the wisdom does not, that is a method tantra.[25]

Therefore, in performing the activity of drawing in the wisdom beings into the samaya beings and so on, if the goddesses act and the male deities do not, this is a wisdom tantra. If the reverse occurs, it is said to be a method tantra. Vajragarbha's *Commentary* explanation is similar. In that case then Kālacakra must be a method tantra, but does that not contradict *Stainless Light* when it says, "The ascertainment of the yoginī tantras is by the division of three years," because in this section on the number of deities of yoginī tantras as determined by the number of central-channel days in three years,[26] Kālacakra is explained as being a yoginī tantra? Using the criteria of male and female deities to establish the two types of tantra is made on the basis of predominance, but it is not definitive. In method tantras, such as the Guhyasamāja according to the Ārya, there are activities of drawing in the wisdom beings, settling, and so on that are not performed by male deities. Also there are

authentic mother tantras in which drawing in, settling, and so on are not performed by female deities. Moreover, it is not contradictory for some tantras, whose presentations are shared by both types of tantra, to teach both ways of drawing in and so on. Therefore, just as the *Vajra Garland* is an explanatory tantra for both types of tantra yet by its nature it is taught to be a method tantra, the Kālacakra teaches features from both types of tantra and yet by its nature I think it is a yoginī tantra. [8]

Some say that this is the very reason these types of tantras are determined to be nondual tantras. They may wish to designate these tantras as nondual, but this ignores how nondual tantras are determined in keeping with the thinking of *Stainless Light*, which explains that nondual tantras are determined on the basis of ultimate method and wisdom, as explained previously, and that method and wisdom in terms of moving or unmoving is determined on the conventional basis of the mental capacity of those with dull faculties. This is teaching that the method and wisdom determining mother and father tantra by way of the male and female deities meditated upon is posited on the basis of the mental capacity of those with dull faculties. It is not teaching that this applies to all levels of method and wisdom determining mother and father tantras.

The following has been said:[27] *Stainless Light* teaches that in method tantras mother and father deities in union each have the same number of faces and hands representing the purity of the equinoxes, and that in wisdom tantras mother and father deities in union each have a different number of faces and hands, representing the purity of the times between the equinoxes. These are used as criteria for determining the two types of tantra. On the strength of that, where the main mother and father deity have a different number of hands and faces, and the entourage mother and father deities have equal numbers of hands and faces, we arrive at the establishment of nondual tantra. I do not see this as being a good explanation. This merely teaches the reason for there being an equal or unequal number of hands and faces in the two types of tantra. It is not a criterion for determining method and wisdom tantras because there are no defining aspects of method and wisdom, or male and female, in these passages at all.

Furthermore, determining a tantra to be nondual arises from a wish to establish it as superior to other tantras, and establishing tantras as nondual tantras using the above reason is nothing special. Even if it were the case that the main mother and father deity had a different number of hands and faces, and the entourage mother and father deities had equal numbers of hands and

faces, that alone is hardly a profound point. This way of thinking should be applied to other similar kinds of spurious proofs.

The position of the Vajra Canopy Tantra *and so on*

1. Refuting the positions posited by others
2. Establishing the best position

Refuting the positions posited by others

1. The position of others
2. Refutation

The position of others

The positions of some Tibetans are as follows. In chapter 4 of *Vajra Canopy Tantra* it says:

> This is the sacred ḍākinī assembly
> of all the buddhas,
> and to establish the five ḍākas,
> the ḍākinī tantra was taught.[28]

Also:

> For those keen on killing living beings,
> those gone astray from the view,
> and in order to gather in women,
> a tantra easy to understand, not extensive,
> of little text but vast in meaning, [9]
> and featuring mantras that will bring
> understanding to those of lesser minds,
> the essence of all tantras, the ḍākinī tantra, was taught.[29]

According to some Tibetans the first four lines indicate that when the Tathāgata showed himself in the form of a ḍākinī and was the central deity in female form, or because he was surrounded mainly by an entourage of women, the tantra taught was a mother tantra. Likewise, they assert that when the Tathāgata showed himself in the form of the lords of the five

buddha families and was surrounded mainly by an entourage of men, the tantra taught was a father tantra. This is because they think that the verse directly teaches the former and so indirectly teaches the latter.

Likewise, on the basis of the second citation they maintain that mother tantras were taught in order to tame those non-Buddhists who enjoy killing, hold wrong views, and are on wrong paths, and on the strength of that, father tantra was taught in order to tame those of our own doctrine who possess the right view and thereby desire to gain enlightenment. They assert that these are the two features that distinguish the two types of tantra.

In chapter 13 of *Vajra Canopy Tantra* it says:

> In order to tame men
> ḍāka tantras were taught;
> in order to gather women,
> ḍākinī tantra was taught.[30]

Therefore some assert that two types of tantra were taught for these two needs, and it is this that determines the two types of tantra.

In *Illumination of the Secret Reality* it says:

> Of the processes arising from generation and completion,
> ḍāka is taught to be generation,
> and completion is asserted as ḍākinī.[31]

Therefore others assert that father tantras teach the realities of the generation stage and mother tantras teach the realities of the completion stage.

Refutation

The meaning of the first citation is that the *Ḍākinī Vajra Canopy Tantra* was taught in order to establish the mandalas of the five classes of ḍākas who are surrounded by a host of ḍākinīs that make up the entourage of every buddha of the five families. This is made abundantly clear from the preceding text, and so it is not for identifying the nature of a mother tantra. On the five classes of ḍākas, the previous lines state:

> The five mandalas are spoken of:
> those of Vajrin, Nitya, Vajratejas,
> Padmanṛtśvara, and Hayarāja.[32]

These are the five lords of the buddha families themselves, and so even the principal deities of the mandala are not manifest in female form. Therefore the explanation of the first citation is incorrect.

The explanation of the second citation is also not right. Just before this citation Akṣobhya and the other tathāgatas ask the bodhisattvas why yoginīs and ḍākinīs were being gathered within this vajra canopy, and in answer Maitreya and the other bodhisattvas reply:

> In the beginning Vajradhara
> first made a prayer for enlightenment,
> vowing, "I will free those born from eggs
> and every other living being." [10]
> If that is so why should women be excluded?
> For those keen on killing living beings . . .[33]

And so on up to "the ḍākinī tantra was taught." Therefore, in order to gather in women, this essence of ḍākinī tantra was taught, and because the question concerned a vajra canopy, that tantra was the *Vajra Canopy Tantra*. Just before this citation the text reads:

> From the 500,000 Hevajra
> has this essence been compiled.[34]

Therefore it is called "essence of *all* tantras." These lines are not criteria for a general determination of mother tantra. This can also be understood from the phrase, "of little text."

But what is the meaning of the answer to the question on why women were being gathered inside the vajra canopy? Other scriptures teach that there is no actual attainment of buddhahood in the form of a woman. This question here, however, was on the basis of the teaching that in highest yoga tantra, someone who practices in that form can achieve the highest siddhi. The answer reminds us that the pledge made during the first generation of bodhicitta is to bring all living beings to enlightenment, and therefore, it would be improper to cast women aside. Beings can attain the highest siddhi by relying upon this path in that form, as can those of great wickedness, as illustrated by the line "For those keen on killing living beings," and those who for the time being have wrong views. Therefore it was in order to gather these beings that the *Vajra Canopy* was taught. So how can it be said to teach the criteria for determining a tantra to be mother tantra?

Concerning the explanation that the two types of tantra were explained in order to tame men and to gather women, in this tantra mother tantras are also referred to as *yoga tantras*. Also, it is in consideration of the fact that the *Vajra Canopy* was taught to attract women that it says, "the ḍākinī tantra was taught."

> The Hevajra yoga tantra,
> taught first by the Conqueror,
> was later compiled into yoginī tantra
> to attract those of female form.[35]

Therefore, like the previous citation, this states that first the extensive five hundred thousand tantra was taught and later condensed to be taught as the yoginī tantra *Vajra Canopy* in order to attract women. In both the *Vajra Canopy* and the two-chapter *Hevajra Tantra*, Hevajra is said to be a mother tantra. Therefore calling it a yoga tantra here is done in terms of yoga tantra being the basis for the division into father yoga and mother yoga tantra. It is not that it is yoga tantra juxtaposed with yoginī tantra.

The way that *Vajra Canopy* was taught for the purposes of attracting women is explained above, and the third citation can also be explained that way. Alternatively, it can also be explained on the basis of both father tantra and mother tantra as follows: The principal form needed for jewel-like beings to attain the supreme siddhi by way of highest yoga tantra can be male or female. In the tantras and their commentaries, however, there are many descriptions of the practitioners mostly as men and the consorts (*mudrā*) as being the four types of women. [11] In these cases not only the man but the consort, too, is described as being a practitioner, because it said many times that just as method is liberated by the circumstance of wisdom, so the wisdom female is liberated by the circumstance of method. Such methods are explained in both types of tantra, but the definitions of a consort, their types, the ways to examine them, how to rely upon them, and how exalted wisdom is produced in reliance upon them are not as extensively explained in father tantras as they are in yoginī tantras. Therefore, in this way, the citation is saying that the two kinds of tantras were taught in order to tame those men and women. Moreover, this citation merely explains the need for the two types of tantra; it is not defining the criteria for determining father tantra and mother tantra. For example, the Guhyasamāja was taught primarily for the jewel-like disciple, but that is not what makes it a father tantra. If this were not the case, then the fact that ḍākinī tantras were taught to bring understanding to

those with lesser minds should be the criterion for determining them to be mother tantras.

The explanation of the citation from *Illumination of the Secret Reality* is also not correct. This work states:

> . . . and coupling, these are the four aspects.
> Coming together is taught to be of two aspects—
> namely, processes of generation and completion.
> Yoga teaches generation,
> and completion is spoken of in yoginī.
> Two organs in meditative union
> is the meaning of "coming together."[36]

This passage is saying that of the four tantras of gazing, laughing, holding hands, and coupling, for the fourth of these, which refers to tantras that involve the coming together of the organs, yoga and yoginī tantras were taught. The first teaches a process arising from generation and the second a process arising from completion, but this is not a description of the generation and completion stages. Just before the above citation, *Illumination of the Secret Reality* says:

> The path of glorious Guhyasamāja,
> whose nature is that of the two stages;
> the beautiful Guhyasamāja,
> prime source of all tantras.[37]

This, therefore, contradicts any notion that yoga tantras such as Guhyasamāja do not primarily teach the points of the completion stage but mainly teach the points of the generation stage.

Some claim that Kṛṣṇācārya asserts that the tantra introduction "This I have heard" was for father tantra and the introduction "Made joyful by the supreme secret," and so on, is for mother tantra. This is not his assertion. He is saying that the phrases "This I have heard" found in yoga tantras and the substituted phrase "Made joyful by the supreme secret" found in some mother tantras are no different in terms of the actual union of bliss and emptiness. He is not saying that these two phrases are criteria for determining the two types of tantra. The actual citation has already been quoted. [12]

Many other ways of determining the two types of tantras have been put forward by Tibetans and some Indians. For the most part, however, their

criteria contain no defining aspects of male and female, or method and wisdom, that could be used to determine method and wisdom tantras. Moreover, when they state "mainly teaching method and mainly teaching wisdom," there is no explanation of what method and wisdom actually refer to and no explanation of the difference between mainly teaching and mainly not teaching. Also, their explanations of criteria for determining the two types of tantras merely look at what is conducive to each of the the two types of tantra. Therefore it is not difficult to understand how they are incorrect, and I will not write about them here.

Establishing the best position

So what is the way to determine father and mother tantras? Although you can posit that a differentiation could be commonly made based on the generation-stage collections of the two types of tantras, the differences have to be established primarily from the completion stages. On the basis of method and wisdom being bliss and emptiness, it has been explained previously the way to establish the two types of tantras as nondual tantras without necessarily determining them to be individually tantras of method or wisdom. Even in terms of method and wisdom being bliss and emptiness, a greater emphasis on one or the other is also not acceptable as criteria. This is because the greater emphasis on bliss found in the mother tantra Hevajra and others is not found in the Guhyasamāja, and so it would erroneously follow that the Hevajra was a father tantra and the Guhyasamāja was a mother tantra.

Therefore, concerning method and wisdom spoken of in terms of tantras being method or wisdom by way of the completion stage, *wisdom* is the ultimate exalted wisdom of great bliss, and *method* is the conventional illusory body. Establishing a tantra as a yoginī tantra by way of the first criteria, chapter 13 of the *Vajra Canopy* says:

> "Bhagavān, how are they named yoginī tantras?"
> The holder of the vajra spoke,
> "The method of the perfection of wisdom
> is spoken of as being the yoginī.
> Because of which, by engaging in that reality
> through the yoga of mahāmudrā,
> they are called yoginī tantras."[38]

This passage succinctly determines mother tantra in general terms. Its meaning is as follows: They teach the way to "engage" in the ultimate "reality" of emptiness by way of the yoga of mahāmudrā. "Because of which" tantras such as the *Vajra Canopy* "are named yoginī tantras." This reason that determines such tantras as mother tantras is expressed in the two lines beginning "The method of the . . ."

To explain that in more detail: The *kunda*[39]-like bodhicitta descends from the crown to the jewel in the *descending* process, [13] and it is followed by the bodhicitta returning to the top of the head in the *stable ascent* process to produce the four joys. Stages of increasing insight arise from engaging in the ultimate reality of emptiness by way of the mahāmudrā of innate bliss inseparably united with emptiness. A tantra that primarily teaches the above, and does not primarily teach the method of creating the conventional illusory body from the five-light wind acting as the mount for the exalted wisdom of great bliss, is a yoginī tantra. This is because this innate perfection of wisdom, which is the method of accomplishing the dharmakāya, is a *yoga* involving the inseparable union of bliss and emptiness, and as creator of the dharmakāya, it is primarily the wisdom aspect on the side of emptiness. Therefore it is *mother.*

Establishing a tantra as being a father tantra by the second criteria, the *Ḍākā Ocean Tantra* says:

> In the yogas, in the kings of tantras,
> know the divisions of the various rituals.
> With the clear light and the illusory,
> I have taught the illusory to the world.[40]

The meaning of this is as follows: The verse says, "have taught." Taught where? In the "king of yoga tantras." Taught what? The "illusory" body. To whom? To "the world," meaning to his disciples. Taught by whom? "I", the Teacher. How was it taught? By the methods of accomplishing the illusory body through the stages of the four empty states, consisting of "clear light" and the preceding three. By what will it be accomplished? By knowing well the "divisions," or features, "of various rituals" taught in these tantras.

This can be explained in more detail. A tantra that primarily teaches the following processes is designated a father yoga tantra: The winds gradually withdraw into the heart, which is the location for the arising of the clear light. From this process the four empty states arise in forward order. After

this, in the emerging process, the four empty states appear in reverse order, from which the exalted wisdom of the empty states is created. From the five lights of the wind of the clear light, the conventional illusory body will be achieved. Such a tantra is a father yoga tantra because it teaches a *yoga* that inseparably combines the body produced from the winds with the exalted wisdom of the empty states, and it is *father* because it teaches the causes for accomplishing the form body, primarily the method aspect on the side of appearance.

Concerning the meaning of the citation above from *Illumination of the Secret Reality*, the "generation" of the illusory body, which is the "process arising from" the four empty states, and the process arising from the ever-increasing engaging in the reality that is "complete,"—that has existed, in other words, since time without beginning—are the two processes primarily taught by the two tantras. Therefore its message is similar to the other two citations.

The phrases "primarily teaching" and "primarily not teaching" indicate whether the respective tantra does or does not explain the above with particular emphasis on one or the other and do not indicate merely whether they are taught at all.

If these two differentiating characteristics can be observed in the main father and mother tantras as explained by authentic masters, then other method and wisdom tantras are branch tantras to be included in these two main types of tantras. Therefore even those tantras in which this process is not evident should be explained in terms of one of these two categories. Consequently, this method of distinguishing tantras applies to all mother and father tantras.

3. Specific Explanation of Guhyasamāja Method Tantra

[14] *Specific explanation of method tantra*

1. Division of method tantra into three
2. Specific explanation of Guhyasamāja

Division of method tantra into three

The *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra* divides method tantras into three types: those of desire, of anger, and of ignorance. On the first of these it says:

> There is more to explain.
> The tantras of the great method of desire:
> whoever knows them well
> will in this life be granted siddhi.
> The one thousand of the Guhyasamāja,
> the three hundred thousand *Vajra Garland*,
> the four thousand *Explanation of the Intention*,
> the hundred and seventy of the *Four Goddesses*,
> the two hundred and eight of the *Uttaratantra*,[41]
> its explanatory tantra, the fifty-five of the *Mahāsamaya*,
> the one thousand *Five Vajra Assembly*,
> the hundred thousand *Samuccaya*,
> the *Samatāvijaya* in two hundred and ten,
> the seventeen hundred *Moon Secret Drop Tantra*,[42]
> the one hundred and twenty *Vajra Underground*,[43]
> the seven hundred and five *Crown Vajra*,
> *Wrathful Moon* in five hundred thousand,
> the *Vajravijaya* in one hundred and ninety eight,[44]
> the *Samatāguhya* in five thousand,
> the *Vajra Secret Ornament* in five thousand,

the seven thousand *Vajra Secret Treasury*,
Drops of the Secret Jewel in one hundred thousand,
the *Vairocana Illusion* in one thousand one hundred,
the one thousand *Vajra Secret Ornament*,
the *Vajra Skull* in two hundred and eight,
the *Hundred Thousand Tattva* in seven hundred thousand,
the *Samaya Abhivaraṇa* in three thousand,[45]
the *Mañjuśrī Vīra* in one hundred thousand,
the *Rahasyasamāja* in one hundred and fifty,
the *Jewel Trunk* in nine hundred and seven,
Drop of Time in one hundred and eighty,
the *Goddess Treatise* in five hundred and seven.
These I perfectly teach according to their specific intentions.
They are taught as divisions of tantra
employing the union of embrace.[46]

Also:

All anger and desire tantras
should likewise be known.[47]

The tantra goes on to say that together with the twenty-seven named here, there are 507 desire tantras. According to Tibetan scholars, anger tantras include *Yamāntaka* and so on, and ignorance tantras include the *Vajrārali Tantra* and so on.

The general enumeration of two types of tantras is discussed in the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* and can be known from the citation quoted previously.[48]

Specific explanation of Guhyasamāja

1. Understanding the *Root Tantra* and the *Later Tantra*[49] and the catalog of the explanatory tantras
2. The teachings of the explanatory tantras

Understanding the Root Tantra *and the* Later Tantra *and the catalog of the explanatory tantras*

The commentary to the *Vajra Garland*[50] explains that the Guhyasamāja has an extensive tantra of 25,000 verses and a condensed tantra of 1,800 verses in eighteen chapters. [15] The numbers that are listed in thousands refer to verses. Therefore the line from the above list, "The one thousand of the Guhyasamāja," is an approximate count of the condensed tantra.

What is the understanding of the *Root Tantra*, the *Later Tantra*, and the explanatory tantras? The *Root Tantra* can be divided into the extensive tantra and the short or condensed tantra. This is because in the beginning the tantra was taught very extensively, but later disciples, compared to the earlier disciples, had shorter lives, less intelligence, and so on, and were therefore unable to comprehend the tantra easily. For them a version distilled from the extensive was taught. These two are distinguished only by the number of words in the tantra. They are both root tantras and therefore ought not to be regarded as earlier and later root tantras.

The term *root* in "root tantra" has three explanations. Just as the trunk of a tree can be called a root when compared to its branches, a tantra is a root tantra compared to its branch tantras. Just as the first owner is called the root owner, a tantra is a root tantra compared to its later tantra in terms of time. Just as we say "root and commentary," a tantra is a root tantra when compared to its explanatory tantras. The first of these meanings is illustrated in *Illuminating Lamp* when it calls Guhyasamāja the root of all other categories of tantras.[51] The way that it is a root tantra in this sense will be explained later. It is a root and it is a tantra, and so it is called a *root tantra*. It cannot be said that every work possessing these two qualities will have *root tantra* as its actual name.

Concerning the second explanation of *root*: The first seventeen chapters of the Guhyasamāja, which were taught first, are designated *root tantra* when compared to the eighteenth chapter, which was taught subsequently. Following this thinking, Nāropa called the *Compendium of Reality* a root tantra, the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra* a later tantra, and its eighteenth chapter a later tantra of that later tantra.[52]

The term translated as "later"[53] also has the meaning "superior" and "highest," or in other words, "supreme," and it is acceptable to translate it as either "later" or "supreme." Here some have translated it as "supreme," but Lochen Rinchen Sangpo's translation of "later than the later" is better. The

commentary also explains this term to mean "later." Designating the *Compendium of Reality* as a root tantra in comparison to the Guhyasamāja is also the thinking in Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice.*

It is not sufficient to designate the *Compendium of Reality* as a root tantra in comparison to the Guhyasamāja simply because it was taught earlier. So what is the actual reason? The Guhyasamāja is evidently not yoga tantra when that term is being used to describe one of the four classes of tantra, but in general it is often spoken of as a "yoga tantra." Therefore the Guhyasamāja and the *Compendium of Reality* both appear in the same category of "yoga tantras."[54] Moreover, the *Compendium of Reality* is a method tantra, because if "method" and "wisdom" are applied to main-deity father and consort mother, then according to Jñānamitra's *Commentary on One Hundred and Fifty Principles*, the *Compendium of Reality* is in the main-deity father category.[55] [16] Furthermore, *Illuminating Lamp*, commenting on the sixteenth chapter, says that some points on initiation and so on in the Guhyasamāja can be known from the *Compendium of Reality.*[56] Therefore it could be that the *Compendium of Reality* is regarded as a kind of initial foundation for the Guhyasamāja and that is why it is described in this way, but this is something to investigate further.

It could be asked, if a later tantra is categorized on the basis of being a subsequent explanation to points that were made previously, then these and other flaws would follow. For instance, the first chapter of the Guhyasamāja would then be a root tantra in comparison to the following sixteen chapters because it gives a synopsis of the tantra that is subsequently expounded on by the remaining sixteen chapters. Moreover, those sixteen chapters would have to be a later tantra in comparison to the first chapter. Furthermore, each preceding and succeeding chapter could be similarly designated. Still, if later tantras are not determined in this way, where is the boundary that demarcates a later tantra?

There are many ways of determining what makes a *later tantra*, but here I will explain the criteria determining the *Guhyasamāja Later Tantra.* The eighteenth chapter is a part of the Guhyasamāja tantra, but it was taught after the teaching of the *Root Tantra.* It takes the points made in common by all seventeen previous chapters as well as the difficult points of each chapter and clarifies and explains them. Therefore it is known as "later Guhyasamāja." In this way the flaw of individual succeeding chapters becoming later tantras of preceding chapters does not arise.

The Ārya master and his son-like disciples[57] have mentioned five Guhya-

samāja explanatory tantras. Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages*[58] lists the *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses*, *Explanation of the Intention*, and the *Vajra Garland*. Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* also lists the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* as an explanatory tantra.[59] Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*, when commenting on the first two syllables of the introduction, mentions by name *Tantra Requested by Indra*[60] as reference. In commenting on the remaining syllables, when it says "From the explanatory tantra . . . ," it would seem to be referring to this tantra. Therefore the *Tantra Requested by Indra* is spoken of as an explanatory tantra. This was not translated into Tibetan.

The Ārya master and his disciples speak of the eighteenth chapter as a later tantra but do not refer to it as an explanatory tantra. Nonetheless, just as Thagana and Jinadatta have asserted it to be an explanation of the *Root Tantra*, it should be asserted as being an explanatory tantra. Some assert the *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra* and *Illusory Net Tantra* to be explanatory tantras, but although these two tantras are in accord with Guhyasamāja, they are not explanatory tantras. Concerning the *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses*, its commentary[61] states that it is the later tantra of a tantra called *Supreme of All Secrets*[62] in one thousand verses. The commentary to the *Vajra Garland* states that there is a twelve-thousand-verse *Vajra Garland* and a condensed *Vajra Garland* and that the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* also has an extensive and a short form.[63] [17] In a citation above it was explained that there exists a *Vajra Garland* in three hundred thousand verses. The *Explanation of the Intention* is an explanatory tantra up to the twelfth chapter of the *Root Tantra*, but the remaining chapters were not translated.

The teachings of the explanatory tantras

1. The explanations of the *Later Tantra* and the *Explanation of the Intention Tantra*
2. The explanations of the *Vajra Garland* and the other two explanatory tantras

The explanations of the Later Tantra *and the* Explanation of the Intention Tantra

Other Guhyasamāja explanatory tantras are explanatory tantras of that tantra, but they are not Guhyasamāja tantra. The *Later Tantra* is both. The way it explains the *Root Tantra* is: The explanations of points that are common

to the tantra as a whole include: the meaning of the "Glorious Guhyasamāja Yoga Tantra" title of the tantra, the divisions of method tantra, and the general principles of the tantra, all of which are in the form of questions and answers. The rest of the text deals with the seventeen chapters individually, also in question-and-answer form.

The "connections" mentioned in the question about the connections[64] within the tantra are the perfect arrangement of all points of the tantra as elucidated by the *Later Tantra*. It is this that Nāropa describes as being the meaning of "glorious." In its answer to this question, the *Later Tantra* explains how four groups of four chapters from the second through to the seventeenth teach the four branches of approach (*sevā*) and accomplishment (*sādhana*). Nāropa says[65] that the first chapter teaches the tantra in synopsis, the remaining sixteen teach the branches of approach and accomplishment, while the eighteenth teaches the hidden core teachings[66] within them all. Without designating generation or completion stage, these chapters teach the four branches common to both stages. When teaching the divisions of method tantra, however, it explains the four branches in relation to each of the two stages.

Each of the explanatory tantras explain the *Root Tantra* with its own special emphasis. For example, the *Later Tantra* explains the *Root Tantra* in terms of the four branches of approach and accomplishment that are spoken of in chapter 12 of the *Root Tantra*. Within the answer to the question on the meaning of "glorious" in the title of the tantra, which refers to the "connections" within the tantra, it explains how the sixteen chapters teach the four branches. Therefore, within that answer are included answers to questions on the individual chapters. The answers to the questions on the divisions of method tantra are the answers to the meaning of the title. Moreover, general principles of the tantra are included within the answers to questions on the title. Therefore, if the text of the main body of the *Root Tantra* is applied in the main to the explanation of the text of the title of the tantra, it will generate a true sense of wonder and amazement.

It is difficult to perceive how groups of four chapters explain the four branches of approach and accomplishment. Therefore it is necessary to have a tradition that knows how to explain the *Root Tantra* in ways that brings this out clearly, that has determined the boundaries of the four branches within each of the two stages, and in particular, that has understood the explanations of the six branches of approach and so on within the completion stage. [18] You should rely upon Nāropa's commentary to understand that the Ārya tradition knows how to explain the *Later Tantra* in this way.

The *Explanation of the Intention* follows the *Root Tantra* according to the order and number of the chapters. In each chapter it mostly cites the *Root Tantra* and explains the difficult points of that chapter. This tantra states that the points taught in the seventeen chapters of the *Root Tantra* are in brief form, it explains that the Guhyasamāja is not to be taken literally, and it proceeds to bring out the hidden definitive meanings of those passages taught provisionally. It also clarifies the metaphorical expressions that are exclusive and seemingly contradictory.[67] In most chapters it brings out again and again instances of vajra repetition being taught in a hidden way within the *Root Tantra*. Therefore this is the particular emphasis that this work puts on its explanation of the *Root Tantra*. In Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*, when it uses explanatory tantras as reference, this tantra is quoted the most, and it is cited as expressing the definitive meaning.

The explanations of the Vajra Garland *and the other two explanatory tantras*

In the condensed *Vajra Garland* there are three different ways of dividing up the text of the nineteenth and twentieth chapters. According to the *Vajra Garland* commentary,[68] chapter 19 begins:

> Now I will explain more:
> occasions of the diverse, and so on.[69]

And only runs for nine lines up to:

> Desiring the diverse.

After this, it is explained, "the end of the text of chapter 19 is not available and so will be left uncommented." It then designates chapter 20, beginning "Now, I will explain more," up to "will be known from the transmission of guru." As a whole the commentary covers sixty-eight chapters.

The *Vajra Garland* translation by Lha Lama Shiwa Ö[70] follows the above up to the line "Desiring the diverse." After that come the lines:

> . . . will experience the joy
> of looking, calling, gesturing,
> and kissing on the lips.

Up to:

> Experiencing the innate joy
> is the occasion called *free of definition*.

These lines constitute chapter 19 on the types of occasions. This is followed by:

> Now I will explain more:
> the definitions of the four joys.

Up to:

> In the emanation cakra
> the innate joy is experienced.

After this the text runs, "The great space of all three channels" up to "will be known from the transmission of the guru." All these constitute chapter 20 on the definition of the joys. The whole tantra takes up sixty-eight chapters. [19]

The translation made by Shiwa Ö and revised by Darma Tsöndru (1117–92) follows the above versions up to the line "Desiring the diverse." After that:

> Now I will explain more:
> the definitions of the four joys.

Up to:

> In the emanation cakra
> the innate joy is experienced.

After this comes:

> looking, calling, gesturing . . .

Up to:

Experiencing the innate joy
is the occasion called *free of definition.*

After this, it runs, "The great space of all three channels" up to "will be known from the transmission of the guru." All of this constitutes the nineteenth chapter on the types of joy. As a whole, this edition has sixty-seven chapters.

It can be seen that there are many discrepancies, but the Indian work by Pandit Māntrakalaśa[71] and the chapter division as translated by Sujana Śrījñāna and Shiwa Ö[72] appear to be closer to the meaning of the tantra. This is because the four instances explained in forward and reverse orders and the four joys explained in forward and reverse orders constitute two separate topics of the text, and the section verse on "looking, calling, gesturing" clearly follows on from "Desiring the diverse." Also the words "Now I will explain more" are used many times in this text as the opening line of a new chapter.

In this tantra Vajrapāṇi wishes to ask questions, by way of the *vajra garland*,[73] on the two stages that were only taught briefly, and therefore unclearly, within the Guhyasamāja. He begins with the plea to teach primarily by way of the completion stage and asks questions on the meaning of the term *vajra garland* and so on up to the section on the definitions of the winds and their destruction. Mostly the answers cover many topics from the Guhyasamāja, as well as from yoginī tantras such as the *Hundred Thousand Abhidāna Tantra*,[74] and thus form a supplement to conclusively determine the various topics within the Guhyasamāja. The questions are said by the commentary to number eighty-two.

Which parts of the Guhyasamāja text does this tantra elucidate? While this text elaborates on the meditation of the mustard seed–sized jewel on the tip of the nose spoken of in the third and sixth chapters of the root text, the primary focus is on the forty syllables of the introduction, *e*, *vaṃ*, *ma*, *yā*, and so on. In Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*, these are said to summarize the entire tantra. In the *Vajra Garland* they are taught in forty verses, beginning "*e* is the sacred wisdom,"[75] each verse explaining one of the syllables. These passages mainly teach body isolation, speech isolation, mind isolation, and illusory body. [20] Elsewhere, clear light and union are taught in abundance. Therefore the completion stage is covered in its entirety. It also arranges the themes of the completion-stage path into the five stages:

By the yoga of vajra repetition,
knowing the characteristics of the winds,
the winds of conceptualization are severed,
and you gain focus upon the mind.

By the stage of self-consecration,
you gain the eight siddhis.
Knowing the types of appearances,
you attain the stage of mastery.

Dwelling in the state of union,
the composite of every siddhi
in this very life will, without doubt,
be gained by the yogi.[76]

The guide and protector Nāgārjuna's compilation of the completion stage into five stages follows this tantra. Also, his presentation of the three samādhis, the four yogas, the thirty-two deities, and so on within the generation stage are based on this tantra. Therefore, in his *Condensed Sādhana*,[77] when the venerable one as the churner talks of having churned the ocean of the hidden waters of the Guhyasamāja with the churning rod of the *Vajra Garland* to discover the Guhyasamāja sādhana, it should not be taken as referring solely to the generation stage.

It also clarifies the stages of creation and dissolution of the body beginning from the stationary channels, the moving winds, and the placed drops. This acts as secondary material helping to ascertain and determine the outer and inner prāṇāyāma practices, such as the secret outer mudrā desire practice, vajra repetition, and so on, from which the four empty states and the illusory body are induced. It then goes on to explain the appearance of the levels of insight arising from these two methods and so on, as well as many other points.

The *Vajra Garland* also compiles into twenty rituals the themes of the initiations that render a person fit for the path. It teaches the themes of the generation stage and determines with certainty the order of the two stages. In particular, in chapter 6, it shows the places where you open up the channel knots of the heart by the practice of prāṇāyāma vajra repetition. The manner in which untying the channel knots of the heart is superior to untying the channel knots at the other cakras is explained in chapter 22, which deals

with the definitive mantra compilation of the three syllables. All of the above is well brought out by using few words.

The way this tantra concentrates specifically on Guhyasamāja is as follows: By explaining the forty syllables of the introduction, it brings out clearly points that are hidden in the Guhyasamāja. The other explanatory tantras are secondary for the clarification of these difficult points of the Guhyasamāja, and to understand how this is the case requires explanations based on knowing how this tantra defines the two stages. In the translator's colophon of the *Vajra Garland* it says, "No explanatory tantra better than this has appeared before." This is still the case. [21]

The *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* explains extensively and primarily the points of prāṇāyāma. The *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* teaches the seven ornaments,[78] which represent the ultimate core teaching for explaining the highest yoga tantras as exemplified by the Guhyasamāja. In doing so, its explanation of the three empty states and how the illusory body is developed from them is clearer than in other explanatory tantras. An extensive description of how these two tantras explain Guhyasamāja can be found in the extensive commentaries[79] to these two tantras, and so I will not go into detail here.

Therefore extensive familiarization with the texts containing the core teachings of the venerable one and his disciples is the key that brings out the essential points of the tantra. That key together with the explanatory tantras will open that door of the *Root Tantra* sealed by the four modes and six sides. When that happens, you will become a fearless holder of instructions within this tantra. With such an understanding, you will know how to apply this reasoning to other tantras and thus become learned in all classes of tantra.

4. Praise of Guhyasamāja

The greatness of Guhyasamāja

In the *Root Tantra*, in the section on the title, it states that every secret of the body, speech, and mind of every tathāgata is contained within this tantra. This is saying that every essential secret point of the Vajra Vehicle is contained within it. The *Later Tantra* also says:

> *Emaho*! So difficult to find,
> this method of gaining enlightenment,
> the supreme of supreme tantras,[80]
> the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.[81]

Because it is so hard to find, and of such great significance, it is said that those who practice its four-session yoga, who listen to it, copy it, recite it, and make offerings to it, are to be regarded as being like Bodhivajra or Vajradhara and worthy of prostration. Also, those who merely see, hear, remember, or come into contact with master practitioners of this tantra, or even those who have faith in them up to those who hold just a part of this tantra, all are also to be regarded as being like Vajradhara and are objects of prostration. The *Later Tantra* says:

> Those who practice the vajra of the four sessions,
> accomplish the powers of invisibility and so forth—
> the various siddhis, supreme and ordinary—
> and, by the kindness of their guru,
> find here the unmistaken path
> are regarded as being like Bodhivajra,
> and prostrations are made to them.
>
> Whoever listens to, recites, reads, contemplates,
> makes offering to, writes, or encourages others to write

the supreme tantra of Guhyasamāja
are regarded as being like Bodhivajra,
and prostrations are made to them.[82]

Also:

Of the prime practitioners,
those who see, touch, and remember them, [22]
who just hear their name, who have faith,
and those who merely possess a part,
are regarded as being like Bodhivajra,
and prostrations are made to them.[83]

Also it is praised in *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*;

The tantra that gathers every buddha—
great secret, so secret, so very secret—
a teaching of which there is none higher.[84]

This work also says that the presence of the very heart of the doctrine depends upon this tantra being in existence:

At the time its meaning enters the ears,
at that place the precious doctrine of the Buddha
is said to abide there also.
When its transmission is cut,
the doctrine of the Buddha will cease.
This all should know.[85]

Such praise is not only found in the corpus of this tantra, but other tantras also give it praise. The *Red* and *Black Yamāri Tantras* say:

The ultimate tantra, the Guhyasamāja—
without it, they will not arise.[86]

The *Guhyasiddhi* also:

No tantra is higher than glorious Guhyasamāja:
a jewel among the three worlds,

the essence of even the essence,
the highest of high tantras.
Where its doctrine and teachings exist,
there exist the stages of the complete yoga.
Those who do not know the Guhyasamāja,
how will they gain siddhi?
It cuts all doubt and clears away the murkiness of ignorance.
It is the amulet carrying the doctrine of the Buddha.
Having completely abandoned the Guhyasamāja
and conceptualizing with many a thought,
the fool hoping to gain siddhi like this
is punching the air with a fist
and drinking the water of a mirage.[87]

Illuminating Lamp also cites:

From the letters *ya*, *ra*, *la*, and *ha*,
to those ending in *ka*, *kha*, and *gha*,
those ending in *ṇa* and *ja*, in *da* and *dha*, and in *ma*,
it is their three-letter root.

Of the eighty-four thousand Dharma categories
spoken by the mighty one,
this glorious Guhyasamāja is the container;
therefore, it is the pinnacle of the tantras.[88]

Therefore the Guhyasamāja is the root of all other classes of tantra, and because it is the amulet holding all the sutras, it is the pinnacle of all classes of tantra. *Vajra Wisdom Compendium*[89] explains that there are a thousand tantras for each of those tantras ending with *ka*, and so on, and that this is being asserted on the basis of all four classes of tantra. Also, stating that the Guhyasamāja is the root of all tantras ending in consonant forms is just an illustration, and thus both Ācarya Bhavyakīrti[90] and Kumāra[91] explain that Guhyasamāja is also the root of tantras ending in vowel forms.

Concerning the "three letters" in the phrase "three-letter root," Nāropa[92] explains them as the three seed syllables, but earlier Tibetans asserted them to be the three syllables *sa mā ja*. [23] For the former assertion, the three secrets to be gathered in the term *gathering of secrets* (*guhyasamāja*) is explained by the *Later Tantra* as referring to the enlightened body, speech, and mind.

In this sense "gathering" here refers to what is gathered.[93] Not applying this to the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* itself but to all tantras gathered into the three vajras in the form of the three letters is to lose the context here, because the previous citation is teaching that the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* is the root of all other classes of tantra. As for the meaning of *root*, a tree may have many branches, leaves, and so on, but the place where they all gather is the trunk. Likewise, there are many different meanings taught in the types of tantra, but all their essential points are ultimately gathered in the path of Guhyasamāja. In this way it is comparable to the basket of sutras. The above is saying that if this path is understood and explained completely, there is nothing superior elsewhere.

In a passage cited previously, Kṛṣṇācārya praised the extraordinary path of Guhyasamāja in both stages and called it the most important of all tantras.

Within the highest yoga tantras there are no greater or lesser tantras in terms of there being different categories, as there are in the three lower classes of tantra. Nonetheless, it is not the case that there are no greater or lesser tantras in terms of there being some differences between them. For example, in the teaching of the two stages by one particular group of tantras, there will be greater and lesser texts, but these two types of texts are not greater and lesser by virtue of belonging to different categories.

5. Commentarial Traditions

Commentarial traditions on the meaning of Guhyasamāja

No works composed by Indrabhūti the Great, Nāgayoginī, and King Viśukalpa have appeared. Śrī Mahāsukhanātha composed the *Guhyasiddhi*, which ascertains the meaning of the Guhyasamāja. On the actual text of the Guhyasamāja, the *Guhyasiddhi* principally ascertains the meaning of the preface. For the stages of the path of the Guhyasamāja, first it describes the generation stage involving the placement of the syllables. Second, it teaches how the reality of your actual nature is revealed through reliance upon a karma consort. Third, it teaches the meditation to stabilize that understanding by relying upon a wisdom consort. And fourth, it explains the meditation on perfecting the mahāmudrā consort, together with a section on tantric activities. The assertion that "in this work the number of deities in the mandala is seventeen" comes from merely considering a citation from that work that states: "It is definitely completed by the arrangement of the seventeen bodhisattvas."[94] The statement from Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* that says, "Because of the number by which the deity assembly is completed in that work, that particular number is taught,"[95] comes from the section on the preface, and so there is no need for a thirty-two-deity mandala. [24] The meaning of this statement is that "by the number" of the assembly of male tathāgatas, female tathāgatas, male bodhisattvas, and female bodhisattvas, "by which the deity assembly is completed in that work, that particular number is taught" in the preface. The meaning of the *Guhyasiddhi* citation is that with the exception of the five buddha families, the assembly of deities actually mentioned in the preface section is referred to as "the bodhisattvas," and this completes the assembly of actually mentioned bodhisattvas.

This *Guhyasiddhi* is reputed to be the mother text of the other six siddhi collections, which are known as the *Essential Collections of the Siddhas*.[96] It is also the mother text of Saraha's *Treasury of Songs* from the *Essential Collections*. This is because it is a very important text for understanding the innate

exalted wisdom of bliss and emptiness in union, the very essence of all highest yoga tantras.

No particular commentary on Guhyasamāja by Ācārya Saraha has appeared. After him the great being Nāgārjuna wrote commentaries on the meaning of Guhyasamāja, and the way that this tradition explains the Guhyasamāja will be described later. Ācārya Lalitavajra[97] explained only the preface to the tantra, and so there is no separate tradition on the paths of the two stages.

Lalitavajra's disciple was the great ācārya Jñānapāda, to whom the meaning of Guhyasamāja was explained by the venerable Mañjuśrī, the stages of which are known as the Jñānapāda tradition. In this path, in the generation stage of the two stages, Mañjuvajra is the principal deity with nineteen deities in the mandala, as is explained in Buddhaśrījñāna's *Samantabhadra Sādhana*[98] and in *Four Hundred and Fifty Verses.*[99] The completion-stage teachings come from *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* spoken by Mañjuśrī and from *Drop of Freedom* written by the ācārya himself.

Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī explains in condensed form the first practice of the completion stage as being the meditation on the indestructible drop at the heart, followed by meditation on the secret drop at the vajra jewel. This is known as the *branch of stopping the breath* and refers to the branch of prāṇāyāma. By meditating on this, the *branch of apprehending* is generated. This is followed by meditation on the sixteen recollections, which is the branch of recollection. This is followed by the meditation known as *emanation drop*, which refers to vajra repetition. Then you again meditate on the indestructible drop at the heart this time solely on the basis of innate exalted wisdom.

It can be seen that this work explains the last four of the six-branch yoga taught in the *Later Tantra*, leaving out the two branches of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption. From this explanation it is clear that he intends the branches of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption to be included in the generation stage, and the works of the Jñānapāda tradition on the six-branch yoga do teach individual withdrawal and meditative absorption as being generation-stage practices. For this tradition, the statement from the *Later Tantra* that the ordinary approach practice is the four vajras and the supreme approach practice is the six-branch yoga does not mean that the supreme approach practice and the generation stage are mutually exclusive. [25] In the section on the completion stage this work takes the *Later Tantra* as its basis and also draws on the *Tantra Requested by the Four*

Goddesses and the *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra*. Of the followers of this tradition who have explained the *Root Tantra*, there are not many who do not explain the *Later Tantra*. However, there are not many explanations of the *Root Tantra* by way of the other explanatory tantras. In particular, the core teachings that arise from *Oral Teachings* and *Drop of Freedom* show how several passages from the *Root Tantra* teach the completion stage, but this is not explained by these followers. Moreover the last four branches of the six-branch yoga of the *Later Tantra* can be suitably explained to accord with *Oral Teachings* and *Drop of Freedom*, but this is also not done.

Concerning the explanations of Ānandagarbha, ascribing the *Great Commentary on Guhyasamāja* translated by Trarak as being by this master is the statement of someone who has not examined this commentary and is therefore not valid. Concerning the commentary attributed to Ānandagarbha and translated by the great Lotsāwa Rinchen Sangpo, an explanation of its fifth chapter is to be found in the Vimalagupta commentary and is a valid reference.[100] In this work it says that all descriptions concerning the use of a karma consort are only for gathering those followers of Viṣṇu tantras, who are desire-driven practitioners that cannot abandon the pleasures of the senses; that all statements on commitment to the pledge of eating and drinking excrement and urine and so on were only made for those who engaged in demonic and perverse tantras; and that all these statements were not made for the sake of the best disciples. Also, Ānandagarbha does not talk about meditation on the inner channels, winds, and drops, and so on, which elsewhere are described as belonging to the completion stage. All this has led Tibetan masters to conclude that "Ānandagarbha commented on Guhyasamāja as yoga tantra." This way of explaining highest yoga tantra is at odds with the explanations of many great Indian masters.

Ācārya Śāntipa explains[101] that the first chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches the tantra of "the result that arises from the method," and that there are four tantras of "method to achieve that result," which are explained by the remaining sixteen chapters. Four *tretā* chapters teach the branch of approach. Four *dvāpara* chapters teach the branch of close accomplishment. Four *catur* chapters teach the branch of accomplishment. And four *joy* chapters teach the branch of great accomplishment.[102] These are clarified by the eighteenth chapter. For the generation stage he describes nineteen deities, with Akṣobhya as the main deity. His explanation of the way to meditate on the six branches of the completion stage after the solid grounding of the generation stage differs from that of the Ārya, the Jñānapāda, and the Kālacakra traditions. [26]

Based on the explanations of the eighteenth chapter, he says that these stages are the intent of chapter 7.

Commentators other than the above appear to follow Jñānapāda in their explanations. There may be one or two in whose works it is not clear whether they follow Jñānapāda or not, but as their writings are not greatly significant, they will not be discussed here. Therefore the pioneers of the glorious *Guhyasamāja Tantra* commentarial tradition are the Ārya tradition and the Jñānapāda tradition.

Scriptural account of the Ārya tradition

1. Texts composed by the Ārya father and son
2. Texts composed by the three other disciples
3. Texts composed by followers of the above

Texts composed by the Ārya father and son

Ārya Nāgārjuna

Concerning the texts composed by Ārya Nāgārjuna on Guhyasamāja, *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp*[103] states that he composed the *Condensed Sādhana*, *Meditation on the Generation Stage of Glorious Guhyasamāja Related to the Sutra*, *Vajrahūṃkāra Sādhana*, *Five Stages*, *Commentary to the Guhyasamāja Tantra*, and others. One Guhyasamāja commentary existing these days that is attributed to the Ārya is said by Tibetan scholars to have actually been written in Tibet by an Indian pandit. It quotes from Daṇḍin's *Mirror of Poetics*, Vasubandhu's *Principles of Explanation*, his *Treasury of Abhidharma*, and so on. In its colophon it says:

> Awakened by meditating on the great conquering Sugata,
> in my abode dwelled the great protector Jñānapāda and others.[104]

Also, in its explanation of the tantra there are many points that do not conform to the works of the Ārya and his sons. Therefore it is simply a work attributed to the Ārya.

On the generation stage Ārya Nāgārjuna composed the *Condensed Sādhana* and *Meditation on the Generation Stage of Glorious Guhyasamāja Related to the Sutra*. A work called the *Twenty-Verse Ritual on the Guhyasamāja Mandala* was also asserted by earlier masters to be composed by the Ārya. Bhavyakīrti's

Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp refers to a mandala ritual composed by the Ārya, and the earlier masters were probably thinking of this. Later Tibetan scholars say that this particular work shows many discrepancies with the *Twenty-Verse Ritual on the Guhyasamāja Mandala* by Nāgabodhi, which has been authenticated by many Indian pandits, and that it is also at odds with the works of Ācārya Nāgārjuna himself. Therefore their assertion that it is a work merely ascribed to the Ārya is thus correct.

Of his works on the completion stage, the compositions on the stages of vajra repetition and so forth are very well known. [27] He also composed *Commentary on Bodhicitta* as a commentary to the text spoken by Vairocana on bodhicitta in the second chapter of the *Root Tantra*. There is a commentary to this by Smṛtijñānakīrti that is quoted by many pandits, such as Abhayākaragupta. The works on the five stages of vajra repetition and so on have been grouped together into one text of five chapters known as *Five Stages* in the Rinchen Sangpo translation.

The second stage has been ascribed to Śākyamitra. Similar ascription occurs in the commentary by Lakṣmī[105] and in *Garland of Jewels*.[106] Chak Lotsāwa has even made the five stages into five separate works. However, in *Five Stages* self-consecration is the third stage, the stage of mastery is the fourth, and after the stage of union comes the dedication for composing it. Therefore there are definitely five stages composed by the Ārya. Still, the commentaries by Abhayākaragupta and Samayavajra also say that the second stage was composed by Śākyamitra, a disciple of the Ārya. Therefore they have had to assign the *Condensed Sādhana* as one of the stages in order to assert all five stages. Muniśrībhadra takes the same position. The commentary by Lakṣmī puts forward two positions. His own position is that the name of the ācārya as a siddha was Nāgārjuna and his name as a monk was Śākyamitra, and therefore the second stage was composed by the ācārya. The other position is that some assert that it was composed by the ācārya but that he put the name of his disciple Śākyamitra to the work because it gave his disciple so much joy. The *Garland of Jewels* says, "It could be the former position or the latter," thereby leaving it as a choice.

Three of the stages have verses of homage and a promise to compose but no dedication. The colophon of the last stage carries a dedication common to all stages, and the *Condensed Sādhana* has its own separate dedication. In the vajra repetition stage, in the synopsis section, synopses of all five stages are given. In keeping with all that, it would seem that the five sections on the completion stage were composed by the Ārya.

So what is to be made of the statements asserting that Śākyamitra composed the second stage? Just after the second-stage chapter there is a separate dedication containing the line "By the kindness of Ārya Vajra I have heard many tantras." Explanations of this line as something other than its literal meaning are not acceptable. Also, if the whole of this second stage were composed by the Ārya, it would not be correct for the many points that are explained in the sections on clear light and union to appear in this chapter. Therefore the whole of the second stage was not composed by the Ārya. On the other hand, if this stage were composed in its entirety by Śākyamitra, the Ārya's disciple, it would be incorrect to speak of the completion stage being compiled into five stages, and so on, by the Ārya. [28] Moreover, it would be inappropriate for Āryadeva to cite twice from this section beginning with the words "From the highest of minds . . . " Therefore I think that the first part was composed by the Ārya and then it was passed on to Śākyamitra, who was encouraged to compose the remainder, but those of great intelligence should look into this thoroughly.

If you accept this position, then *Five Stages* becomes a single work with five chapters, including the first part of the second stage, and of the two names occurring in the second stage, "the highest of minds" is a name given to the Ārya by Āryadeva. If you do not accept this position, saying the *Condensed Sādhana* is a separate work and the second stage is by another author, you can no longer maintain that *Five Stages* is a single work. Also, it would not be right to ignore the citation, "The stage of vajra repetition is the first."

Whatever position you take, the fact that the Ārya categorized the completion stage into five stages, making focus on mind the second stage, can be seen from the stage on vajra repetition. This appears to be the position of Nāgabodhi's *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana.*

Concerning other compositions, Tibetan scholars have stated that *Determining the Meaning of the Four Initiations*, said to have been composed by the Ārya, is not a valid work. Statements that *Presentation of the Four Mudrās* is the work of the Ārya is refuted by Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* and by Padmavajra's *Boat Commentary*. However, Guru Mitra and his followers assert it to be by the Ārya.

Āryadeva

His commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages* called the *Compendium of Practice* is very well known. His *Stage of Self-Consecration* is quoted by Ācārya Abhayākaragupta as a reference, and his *Chapters on Removing the Veils of the Mind* is explained as being a commentary on mind isolation. It is a work

of tantra teaching primarily about the mind and is not especially a work on Guhyasamāja. This work is also cited as a reference by Abhayākaragupta. According to Tibetan masters the assertion that *Stage of Mastery* was composed by this ācārya is open to question. Since it does indeed have many discrepancies with the *Compendium of Practice*, it is therefore in all likelihood a false attribution. Also, ascribing to this ācārya the verses that begin *ya*, *ra*, *la*, *wa*, and so on as being the four means, as well as the work *Burning the Dead*, is "something to be investigated" according to Tibetan scholars. The first of these discusses the two verses beginning "Up to the letters *ya*, *ra*, *la*, and *ha*" in Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* and then cites a passage in the *Compendium of Practice*. It ascribes the *Vajra Peak Tantra*, the *Vajra Garland Tantra*, and *Explanation of the Intention* as root tantras and extracts Kuladhara's comments on *ya*, *ra*, *la*, *wa*, and so on as the four means in his commentary on *Illuminating Lamp*.[107] Therefore it makes no sense to say that it was composed by Āryadeva. Attributing to him the latter work, *Burning the Dead*, also appears to be invalid.

Texts composed by the three other disciples

Nāgabodhi[108]

[29] His *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana*, which primarily teaches the generation stage but also the completion stage, is very well known. His *Twenty-Verse Ritual on the Guhyasamāja Mandala* is cited by many pandits, including Rāhulaśrīmitra, Abhayākaragupta, Karuṇaśrī, and Muniśrībhadra. His *Analysis of Karma*, determining the four empty states, is used as reference in Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*. In the present-day translation of this work, in the short introductory explanation, it mentions one hundred and sixty intrinsic natures,[109] but in the later extensive explanation, the eighty intrinsic natures are incomplete, whereas the summary speaks of fifty-four intrinsic natures. Therefore it seems that either the Tibetan text is faulty or there is an error resulting from the translation of a faulty Indian text.

Because so many works are attributed to this ācārya, there are three commentaries on the *Five Stages* said to be composed by him. They are the *Garland of Jewels*, *Elucidating the Meaning of the Five Stages*, and *Core Teachings Compiled into Stages*. Many Tibetan masters take the first of these as a legitimate reference, but later scholars have said that both this work and *Elucidating the Meaning* are wrongly attributed. The explanation of Guhyasamāja in *Garland of Jewels* contains many points that do not agree with the works of

the Ārya and his sons. Moreover, it presents passages by Buddhajñāna, who was a disciple of Ācārya Haribhadra, who in turn took Candrakīrti as reference, while Candrakīrti cites Nāgabodhi as reference. Moreover, it cannot conclusively decide whether the second stage was written by Nāgārjuna or his disciple Śākyamitra.[110] It must simply be a work that is falsely attributed to him. The assertion that *Elucidating the Meaning* is by him is also a false attribution.

Concerning *Core Teachings Compiled into Stages*, Tibetan scholars claim it is by Nāgabodhi, but Chak Lotsāwa maintains it was composed by someone with a similar name. This work begins by saying that in Maitreya's *Ornament of Realization* all six perfections are compiled into each of the six, and likewise here all six stages from the generation stage to union are compiled into each of the six stages. When explaining this compilation process, the five stages to be compiled into the path of meditation of each stage are laid out, but there is not always a definitive description of that process. For example, in the stage of mind isolation where the teachings on the generation-stage practice of generating the deity from the moon disc, vajra, and so on are asserted as being the generation stage of mind isolation, there are many instances where no differentiation is made between the explanations for that particular stage and the compilation of the other stages into the practices of that stage. It does appear, however, that this work and *Garland of Jewels* were composed by Indians.

Ācārya Śākyamitra

[30] The topic of the text of the second stage has been discussed previously. To say that the commentary to Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*[111] was composed by Śākyamitra is acceptable if it simply refers to someone with a similar name, but it is in no way acceptable if it refers to the Śākyamitra who was a disciple of the Ārya.

Candrakīrti

Illuminating Lamp is very well known. His *Six-Branch Yoga Commentary* is extracted from chapter 12 of *Illuminating Lamp*. The *Vajrasattva Sādhana* has commentaries on it by Tathāgata Rakṣita and Lalitavajra. The Magadha pandit Muniśrībhadra also states that this work is by Candrakīrti. The root text *Guhyasamāja Insight Sādhana* and its commentary[112] are said to have been composed by Candrakīrti, but Tibetan scholars have said that this is something to be investigated. If this work and its commentary were composed by

someone with a similar name then that is acceptable, but ascribing them to the composer of *Illuminating Lamp* is simply false attribution.

Āryadeva, Nāgabodhi, and Śākyamitra are well known to be disciples of the Ārya. Followers of the Marpa Guhyasamāja tradition also hold Mātaṅgī to be a disciple of the Ārya. As for Candrakīrti, Venerable Gö Lotsāwa and other early masters claim that he was also a disciple. Some Tibetan followers of Madhyamaka point to the statement in the colophon of Candrakīrti's *Clear Words* that says, "The works composed by the Ārya and his disciples have been in decline for a long time, and so these days the textual tradition is not clear and precise." Therefore, they say, Candrakīrti had no contact with the Ārya. This reasoning is not conclusive. It is stated in the works of Vajrāsana as reproduced in the historical narratives of Patsap Lotsāwa[113] that Candrakīrti attained vidyādhara powers and lived for a long time. Therefore, for the disciples and texts of the Ārya to have diminished in the latter part of his life and yet for him to have had contact with the Ārya are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, just as the glorious Atiśa explained Candrakīrti to be a disciple of Nāgārjuna, I agree with those Tibetans who say that he is a disciple of the Ārya. Also, he says in *Illuminating Lamp* that he got the meaning of Guhyasamāja from Nāgārjuna:

> That which has been sealed by every buddha
> with the principles of the two stages
> has been gotten from Nāgārjuna.
> Having prostrated to the all-pervading glorious Vajrasattva,
> this will be explained accordingly by Candrakīrti.[114]

Bhavyakīrti also says:

> Saying "gotten from Nāgārjuna" indicates that he was an actual disciple in the presence of Nāgārjuna and not a lineage disciple.[115] [31]

Also, when explaining how brahman Rāhulabhadra Saraha taught Nāgārjuna and how he in turn taught Candrakīrti, together with their respective excellent qualities his commentary to *Illuminating Lamp* says:

> He first dwelt in the town of Koṅkaṇa,
> on the mountain of Śrīparavata,

in an area devoid of people,
and like the lord of gods and men,
he taught a supreme Dharma.
May the words of Rāhula reign in this world.

From him, having attained the level of joy,
through the yoga of the Mahayana path,
he strove to attain other levels,
may glorious Nāgārjuna reign.

From him, having gained the jewel state,
he became famous in the world,
and crossed the ocean of Guhyasamāja,
may the illumination of Candrakīrti reign.[116]

In this connection, Pandit Kumāra, a disciple of the scholar Lakṣmiṃkarā, says:

> This teaches that he was a disciple in the presence of Nāgārjuna and taught with the oral transmission.[117]

Therefore Nāropa, Abhayākaragupta, Karuṇaśrī, Kashmiri Lakṣmī, Muniśrībhadra, Bhavyakīrti, Kumāra, Kuladhara, Tathāgata Rakṣita, Lalitavajra, and all others who have commentated on the Guhyasamāja by following the Ārya master and his disciples hold Candrakīrti in as great esteem as they do the Ārya master.

Texts composed by followers of the above

Concerning works on Guhyasamāja in accordance with the Ārya and his sons composed by other Indian masters, *Lamp for all Secrets*,[118] a commentary on the *Later Tantra*, is credited as being by the master Nāropa in some editions and by Yaśobhadra in others. In the colophon it says, "Samantabhadra, Ākāśagarbha, Yaśobhadra, Nāropa, and Jñānasiddhi, and Tsashé[119] are synonyms," and that it was translated by Smṛti, who was a disciple of both Nāropa and Jñānagarbha.

There is a large work called *Teachings on Guhyasamāja: The Five Stages* and a smaller work called *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* said to be composed

by Nāropa and translated by Marpa. The first contains many coarse errors that contradict Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages* and Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*, such as the description of a path for those of weak and intermediate faculties who are to be led gradually like ascending the steps of a staircase and a path of immediate ascent for those of sharp faculties. This is clearly a case of some Tibetans falsely ascribing a work to Nāropa.

The second, *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, is used as reference by both lineages of the Guhyasamāja instructions of the Marpa tradition passed on from Tsur.[120] [32] Most of Lama Marpa's instruction teachings contain shorter Indian works. There was no separate shorter Indian work for the instructions on the five stages, however, and this work has been given that scriptural authority. It also encompasses the meanings of the great texts of the Ārya tradition, and therefore, it is to be asserted as being the root text for the Marpa-tradition instructions on the five stages. In its colophon it states:

> The glorious tantra of Guhyasamāja
> explained by the Ārya and his sons,
> its meaning was found by Nāropa
> but not understood by its commentator;
> this short explanation of the tantra alone, therefore,
> is exclusive to this blessed path.[121]

The somewhat critical aside aimed at Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* in this piece has been inserted by someone who is attempting to praise Nāropa but who clearly does not know how to, because Nāropa in his commentary to the *Later Tantra* says:

> Having followed the *Illuminating Lamp*,
> this clarification of the *Later Tantra*
> is an explanation of the teachings of Nāgārjuna.[122]

Also:

> I have done this by relying upon the teachings
> of Ācārya Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Nāgabodhi,
> Śākyamitra, Candrakīrti, and others.[123]

There are many who hold in great esteem the system of *Commentary on the Tantra Alone* by Tsur's disciple Khampa Ronyam Dorjé, whose explanations contradict Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*. The above citations can be seen to refute their assertions that it represents the final teachings of Nāropa.

The commentary on the first forty-four and a half chapters of the explanatory tantra *Vajra Garland*[124] by Alaṃkaladeva, also known as Alaṃkakalaśa, follows the Ārya master and his disciples. The commentary to Nāgārjuna's *Condensed Sādhana* called *Precious Garland*[125] and said to have been composed by Śāntipa is claimed by Tibetan scholars to be falsely attributed, and unless it is someone with a similar name, that seems to be the case. *Commentary on the Condensed Sādhana* was composed by Vibhuti. There are three commentaries on the *Five Stages* in which the *Condensed Sādhana* is included. They are, *Light of the Moon* by Abhayākaragupta, the commentary on the difficult points by Samayavajra, and the commentary on the difficult points by Bhavyakīrti. A commentary on the four stages—omitting the second stage—and the *Condensed Sādhana* called *Captivating the Mind of the Yogi* was composed by Muniśrībhadra. A difficult-points commentary on the five stages was composed by Vīryabhadra. A commentary on the five stages was composed by the Kashmiri scholar Lakṣmī. Together with the attributions mentioned earlier, this makes up the Ārya tradition collection.

Commentaries on the *Compendium of Practice* and on Candrakīrti's *Vajrasattva Sādhana* have been discussed previously. Commentaries on Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* include Bhavyakīrti's *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp*, Kumara's *The Essential Mirror: A Short Explanation of Illuminating Lamp*, an explanation of *Illuminating Lamp* by Karuṇaśrī, [33] a treatise by Kuladhara on the *Illuminating Lamp* in which root and commentary are combined,[126] and the *Explanation of the Difficult Points of the Illuminating Lamp* by someone called Bhāvaviveka, but is a work written by someone with the same name as the author of *Lamp of Wisdom*. The commentary on *Illuminating Lamp* ascribed to Āryadeva is by someone with a similar name and not the actual Āryadeva. This work and *Elucidating the Meaning of the Five Stages*, wrongly attributed to Nāgabodhi, appear to be Tibetan works.

The explanation of the vajra-repetition practices of the *Explanation of the Intention* and *Explaining the Seven Ornaments*, both composed by Śrāddha, the *Secret Ambrosia Instructions* by Ekādaśasvara, the mandala ritual composed by Rāhulaśrīmitra,[127] and the mandala ritual and *Vajrasattva Offering*, both composed by Samayavajra, all belong to the Ārya tradition as well.

At a time when this earth bore the treasures
of thousands of scholars and practitioners,
their excellent teachings were taken
with great dedication in their actual presence.
Because of the times, that practice declined,
but the very essence of their minds
was written down in the form of many texts,
refined by the core teachings of the gurus,
and taken in this way as a replacement for them;
this the wise should know.
In this way the demarcation of true and false paths
was perfectly accomplished.

These are verses to mark the end of this section.

Part 2

The Path of Guhyasamāja

6. Training in the Guhyasamāja

How the Guhyasamāja core instructions were transmitted in Tibet

In Ngari the glorious Atiśa taught Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*, and the teachings on the five stages were gradually passed on. The great being Rinchen Sangpo made basic translations and revisions of the *Root Tantra*, the *Explanation of the Intention Tantra*, and many works of the Ārya master and his four disciples, but the teaching tradition did not last long.

There are reputedly seven Guhyasamāja teaching traditions coming from Lama Marpa. Together with Ākarasiddhi he studied *Illuminating Lamp* under Nāropa, but he did not initiate a teaching tradition of the *Illuminating Lamp* in Tibet. Nevertheless, the teachings on the five stages became widespread.

The master Gö[128] traveled to India twelve times and devoted himself to seventy pandit gurus in all and two ḍākinī gurus. In particular, while investigating the Ārya tradition of Guhyasamāja, he relied upon the Bengali scholar Abhijña, the Zahor scholar Yoṣa, the Koṅkaṇa scholar Meghavegin, the Kashmir scholar Candrahari from Srinagar,[129] [34] the scholar Jñānākara who had been blessed by Mañjuśrī, Cahadu from central Nepal, Nāgakoṭi from the Fort of Nepal, pandit Saraha, the Vajrāsana scholar Kṛṣṇasamayavajra, and the Vikramala scholar Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna (Atiśa). The latter two he studied with in Tibet. Under them he studied and determined the textual explanations based on the works of the five masters of the Ārya tradition, as well as the initiation and core teaching collections. He held Abhijña, Yoṣa, and Kṛṣṇasamayavajra as his main gurus, and his textual explanations and instructions mainly follow the traditions of these three.

Guhyasamāja enlightened activity had entered this lama, and he nurtured many disciples who preserved his teaching tradition, such as the three groups of four scholars from the early, middle, and later parts of his life. The lineage of his teaching tradition survives to the present day.

There are oral tradition teachings of the five stages passed from Jñānākara

to Naktso.[130] Also Patsap Lotsāwa studied the Guhyasamāja Ārya collection and translated many texts. There were probably also teachings initially by those translators who translated the commentaries to *Illuminating Lamp* and so on mentioned previously, but their traditions did not last long. Shüpu Lotsāwa[131] and Chak Lotsāwa trained in the teaching tradition of Gö, and having also made contact with pandit gurus, they established a Guhyasamāja teaching tradition from the Ārya collection.

In this way, while many Guhyasamāja tantra teachings belonging to the Ārya tradition may have come from India to Tibet, it is evident that the teaching tradition of Gö Rinpoché is supreme.

The true meanings of these precious teachings

1. Training nonexclusively in the two Mahayana paths or in the general path
2. Training exclusively or specifically in the Guhyasamāja path

Training nonexclusively in the two Mahayana paths or in the general path

Concerning the basis for initially entering the Vajra Vehicle, the *Vajra Garland Tantra* says:

> What qualities will a disciple need
> to become a vessel for yoga tantra?[132]

The answer:

> Having faith and respect for the guru,
> dwelling always in virtuous activities,
> abandoning bad thoughts,
> being well learned in scripture,
> abandoning killing and harming,
> with the thought of saving living beings,
> being full of enthusiasm, and so forth:
> well endowed with these qualities
> is the good disciple of great faith.[133] [35]

If teachings are given to someone lacking the qualities of a suitable vessel, the disciple will be ruined in this and future lives, and for the master any siddhis that would be gained by swiftly developing the path in his mind will be delayed for a long time:

> Just as you would not pour
> lion's milk into a mere earthenware pot,
> likewise do not give the great yoga tantras
> to those who are unsuitable vessels.
> The disciple will die that instant,
> destroyed in this and future lives.
> If teachings are given to unsuitable vessels,
> siddhi for the master is likewise destroyed.[134]

Clearly, characteristics of the disciples' physical make-up do not have to be newly developed, but good mental qualities such as faith in the Dharma, respect for the guru, always dwelling on the path of the ten virtuous activities, being learned in the scriptural Dharma, and enthusiasm in all such actions driven by a fierce intention to rescue living beings, and so forth, are features not innately present in beginners on the path and must therefore be newly created by mental training. This occurs in the suitable vessel from the beginning and is not something to be developed once you have entered the Mantra Vehicle. Therefore these criteria for becoming a suitable vessel are qualities to be developed through mental training on a path shared by both Mahayana Vehicles. The *Vajrapāṇi Initiation Tantra* says:

> "Great bodhisattva, you have taught this mandala of the great mantra, so vast, so profound, difficult to fathom, more secret than secret, so very rare, and not to be taught to those of a wicked nature. If it has not been heard before, what kind of living being should it be explained to?"
>
> Vajrapāṇi replied, "Mañjuśrī, those who have entered the meditation on bodhicitta and have developed that bodhicitta, at that time, Mañjuśrī, they will practice the actions of the bodhisattva. Those bodhisattvas who practice through secret mantra should be led into the mandala of the great mantra to be initiated into the great exalted wisdom. Those who have not completed the development of bodhicitta should not be led inside. They should not

> even look at the mandala. They should not be shown the mudrās or taught secret mantra."[135]

This teaches that those not completely trained in bodhicitta are not suitable for initiation.

Fifty Verses on the Guru also says:

> The disciple with a pure mind,
> goes for refuge to the Three Jewels;
> and the way of following the guru
> should be given as a recitation.
> Then, by giving mantras and so forth,
> the disciple becomes a vessel for the supreme Dharma.[136] [36]

One "with a pure mind" refers to a mind trained in bodhicitta. The disciples who have the uncommon refuge are given the method of devoting themselves to the mantra guru through thought and application by way of the *Fifty Verses* and are then made into suitable vessels through initiation.

The *Compendium of Practice* also states:

> The stages are as follows: First, train in the thinking of the Vehicle of the Buddha. When you have trained in the thinking of the Buddha Vehicle, then train in single-thought[137] samādhi in the new vehicle.[138]

Having established that entrance into the path of Guhyasamāja is through stages of training and not immediate, this passage explains the way to train: "First, train in the thinking of the buddha," refers to training in bodhicitta, which is the thinking of the Mahayana.

The complete method for training in the aspiration and engaged bodhicitta can be found in the oral teachings passed on from the master Atiśa. In these teachings, you initially devote yourself properly in thought and deed to a fully qualified Mahayana spiritual friend. These teachings also talk about the great significance of the opportunity we now possess and how difficult it is to find. Training the mind in this way, a great desire to extract the essence of this opportunity is born, and the best way to take this essence is by actually entering the Mahayana. The way to enter the Mahayana is through bodhicitta, and if bodhicitta is truly in the mind, such a person is a natural and uncontrived Mahayanist. If it is mere words, that person is a Mahayanist in

words only. Therefore the wise should gradually eliminate the obstacles to the development of this mind and develop an authentic and complete bodhicitta.

In connection to this, if at first you do not turn the mind away from this life, such an attitude will become a hindrance on the paths of both the Great and Lower vehicles. Therefore remember death by thinking how you do not stay long in this life, how you will wander among the lower realms after death, and turn your mind from this life. Then think on the faults of samsara in its entirety, invalidate the mind that longs for the glories of future lives, and turn the mind toward liberation. After that, in order to turn away from the mind that thinks only of your own peace and happiness, train for a long time in the development of bodhicitta with love and compassion as its foundation until you develop a natural and uncontrived bodhicitta. Then, learn about the practices of the bodhisattva and develop the desire to practice them. When you have the ability to take on the responsibility of the practices of the children of the Conqueror, take the vows of bodhicitta and practice its commitments. When you have the ability to take on the responsibility of the pledges and vows of the Vajra Vehicle, listen to the *Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion*, devote yourself to a guru through pure methods, and enter the practice of mantra.

It is with this developmental process in mind that the great Guhyasamāja Ārya tradition follower Rāhulaśrīmitra says: [37]

> The procedure is as follows:
> At a time auspicious by date and constellation,
> the disciple bows with hands placed together,
> confesses all wrong deeds, holds the three refuges,
> devotes himself to the bodhi mind,
> takes the lay practitioner vows,
> the bodhicitta vows, and purification vows.
> A similar procedure is followed
> for devoting oneself to the vajra master,
> but as it is taught in many texts,
> I will not write of it here.
> With this accomplished, he requests the guru,
> "Grant me the initiation."[139]

Therefore, before the initiation you take the vows of liberation, generate bodhicitta and take those vows, and then make requests to the guru for initiation. This passage is written for lay practitioners, and their purification is

through the day-long vows. The monastic who enters mantra, however, must maintain the purity of the vows of novice ordination and so on. This point is made in the *Vajra Peak Tantra*:

> Abandoning killing, stealing, and sexual conduct,
> together with lying and intoxication,
> and dwelling in the householder vows,
> they will become masters of mantra knowledge.
> Should they become ordained,
> they dwell purely in the three vows,
> those of liberation, those of bodhicitta,
> and those of the bearers of mantra knowledge,
> which are supreme.[140]

If you do not train well in the stages of the paths common to both vehicles as explained above, you will not cut the attachment to this life, and no firm desire to practice Dharma will arise. Sincere faith will not develop, and consequently you will not give yourself completely to the objects of refuge. You will not find a true conviction in cause and effect, and any guarding and protecting of whatever vows you may have becomes coarse and superficial. There will be no genuine turning away from the attachment to samsara, and "striving for freedom" simply becomes an academic understanding. An uncontrived bodhicitta built on love and compassion will not grow, and you will be a Mahayanist in name only. There will be no strong desire to practice the activities of the bodhisattvas in general, and consequently there will be no genuine generation of the bodhisattva vows. There will be no pure understanding of mental quiescence and special insight in general, and therefore you will become prone to error on even the smallest *samādhi* and will not find any right conviction concerning the view of no-self. Therefore, if you wish not to go this way, you should train in the path common to both Mahayana vehicles.

The master Atiśa has asserted that this path is represented by the teachings of three streams combined, which flow from Maitreya to Asaṅga, from Mañjuśrī to Nāgārjuna, and from Mañjuśrī to Śāntideva, and that they have to be practiced regardless of whether you enter the Perfection or the Vajra Vehicle. Do Tibetan gurus of Guhyasamāja assert the same? The master Gö also says that having the view of emptiness and being trained in bodhicitta, [38] with love and compassion as its foundation, as the prerequisite to the

generation and completion stages is the meaning of the previous citation from the *Compendium of Practice*. The *Four-Point Teachings*[141] from the five stages of the Marpa tradition also says that you must practice by going for refuge to the Three Jewels as the basis for practicing the path, having belief in the ripening of cause and effect, being practiced in the ten virtues, taking the vows of liberation with the common refuge as a preliminary, possessing the aspiring and engaged bodhicitta with the uncommon refuge as a preliminary, and by being a yogi with the complete initiation. That which shows in great detail how the mind is to be guided in this way is given the name *graded path*. Therefore, among the earlier masters who practiced the Guhyasamāja, none did not follow this tradition. To gain a good understanding of the entirety of the path and then to practice it is to completely possess the foundation for traveling the path to its completion and is therefore irreplaceable. The way to train in the shared path has been extensively explained elsewhere.

7. The Two Stages

Training exclusively or specifically in the Guhyasamāja path

1. Becoming a suitable vessel for the two stages
2. As a suitable vessel, keeping the vows and pledges pure
3. The way to meditate on the path with pure vows and pledges
4. The way to actualize the results at the end of meditation on the path[142]

Becoming a suitable vessel for the two stages

By way of the rituals of initiation, which are taught in the tantras and whose meanings have been explained by qualified teachers, the qualified master initiates the suitable disciple, thereby opening the way for mantra. Because the cause-and-effect process of developing the path in the mind and attaining the fruits of the path has been arranged without error, after becoming a suitable vessel for entering mantra, the disciple is made into a suitable vessel for the second time by the pure initiation, this time in order to be able to listen to teachings on the path of mantra and so on. These procedures have been explained extensively elsewhere.

As a suitable vessel, keeping the vows and pledges pure

Before meditating on the path, it is essential you fully comprehend the ways to protect the vows and pledges you swore to uphold during the initiation in the presence of the guru with all the buddhas and bodhisattvas called there as witnesses. The way to do this has been extensively explained in Aśvaghosa's *Fifty Verses on the Guru*, in texts on taking the vows and declaration of the vows, [39] and in explanations of the root downfalls and faults. If you have gained conviction that the pure initiations and the practices surrounding the pledges are preliminaries to being guided through the two stages,

then practices such as guru yoga, the hundred-syllable mantra, and mandala offerings designated as preliminary practices will be incidental practices. If you have conviction only in these latter practices, it means that you have no understanding of the former, and you should make efforts to understand them.

The way to meditate on the path with pure vows and pledges

1. Ascertaining the order of the two stages
2. How to meditate on the two stages ascertained in that order
3. Tantric activities: Methods for enhancing the two stages[143]

Ascertaining the order of the two stages

A person who wishes for the supreme attainment is not someone who does not meditate on the generation stage and is instead someone who enters the completion stage after having first trained well on the generation stage. *Five Stages* establishes this order:

> Well established in the generation stage,
> they desire the completion stage.
> This method, like that of a ladder,
> the enlightened buddha has taught.[144]

To expand on this point, the *Compendium of Practice*, which explains the meanings of *Five Stages*, says:

> "Because ordinary beings like us are attached to various external phenomena, we dwell in attachment to conceptuality caused by the natural imprints concerning existence and nonexistence, one and many, dual and nondual, not existing and not nonexisting, eternal and noneternal, and so on. If we are to train in the meditations of the completion stage, should we train in accordance with the stages, or, relying solely upon the guru's instructions, will those stages appear instantaneously?"
>
> The vajra master replied, "You should practice in stages, not all at once."[145]

The question is asked: If those who are attached to objects because they have been under the power of the imprints of attachment to the four extremes since time without beginning were to practice the completion stage, would they have to practice it in stages right from the beginner's level, or is that not necessary and with just the profound instructions of the guru could they practice it all at the same time? The reply is that you can only enter by practicing in stages and that there is no entrance for an all-at-once practice. After this passage the *Entering Laṅka* and *Śūraṅgama* sutras are cited as references to establish this point.

Therefore, even for the best or jewel-like disciples to enter this path, if there were no time when they were beginners, it would erroneously follow that they were liberated right from the beginning without having to rely upon a path. Therefore a beginning stage has to be asserted. [40] On this point the *Compendium of Practice* cites:

> For those who are beginners
> to enter the supreme path,
> this method, like that of a ladder,
> the enlightened buddha has taught.[146]

This is the way to practice.

To advocate all-at-once practice by referring to certain powerful beings who in many previous lives trained on the lower paths and no longer needed to be led along those lower paths but were able to begin from the higher paths is as ridiculous as, examining whether or not the paths of accumulation and preparation must precede the development of the path of seeing, declaring that this is not necessary because once the path of seeing has been attained, they are no longer prerequisites.

Therefore, just as you can discard the boat when you arrive at the far bank of the river but have to rely upon it to get you there, likewise the attainments of the natural and uncontrived completion stage will mean the discarding of the generation stage, but to attain them you will need the contrived generation stage. Thus, for the beginner, the generation stage is worthy of great praise and very important. The *Vajraḍāka Tantra* says:

> To gain the insights of the natural yoga,
> you undertake the meditations of the contrived

and perform the recitations of the contrived.
With the realization of the natural yoga,
the contrived yoga will be external,
so having realized the natural yoga,
you do not perform the contrived.
For example, you take a boat across the river,
and when you arrive, you leave the boat.
The contrived is similar to this.
The activities of the mandala and so forth,
all undertaken with the contrived mind,
are activities clarifying the external
and for the beginner are worthy of praise.
As all those siddhis are found there,
the reality of the conqueror is not known.[147]

Buddhaśrījñāna's *Drop of Freedom* and *Drop of Spring* say the same. The line "Striving in the contrived will not bring freedom and is solely an exercise in suffering"[148] in these texts means that striving on that path alone without meditating on the completion stage will not bring about that result. It does not mean that those who seek enlightenment should not rely upon these activities, as is evidenced by the example of the boat. Therefore do not make the scriptural quote about abandoning the boat on the farther shore into a reference meaning abandoning the boat at the near shore.

It is fitting that ascertaining the order of the two stages should be established by quotes from tantras, but what does it mean to find the same point established by quotes from the sutras? This has been done to make it known that although sutra and tantra represent slow and fast paths, respectively, as far as progressing in stages and beginning from the path of a beginner, they are alike.

For a tantra reference proclaiming that the two stages are successive, the *Vajra Garland Tantra* states:

At that time begin with the six yogas.
With the knowledge of the yoga,
practice to the very supreme. [41]
Then perform extensive recitation
of the soundless letter *ha*.[149]

It is explained that "six yogas" here refers to the four initial practices of yoga, subsequent yogas, and so forth,[150] together with the sovereign mandala and sovereign activities to make six. The recitation of the soundless letter *ha* refers to the practice of vajra repetition. The *Guhyasiddhi* says:

> Of the four meditations on progressively higher paths
> illuminated in the glorious Guhyasamāja,
> spoken of by the guide of all beings,
> the first is the placement of syllables;
> dwelling well in the generation stage,
> the powerful practitioner meditates.
> Second is the nature of oneself.
> Third, in supreme celestial phenomena,
> you meditate upon the wisdom consort.
> Fourth, and taught as the highest,
> you meditate upon the mahāmudrā consort.[151]

Many texts, such as the *dohas*,[152] in the sections on meditation upon the main goal of innate wisdom that has arisen by traveling through the stages of the path, negate the need for the elaborations of the generation stage. Misunderstanding this has led to the position of asserting that the tradition of the great brahman Saraha follows an all-at-once method and that that of Nāgārjuna follows a gradual method. Therefore any presentation stating that the way to enter this path from the very beginning is with a gradual method for those of low or intermediate intelligence and with an all-at-once method for those of high intelligence is contradictory to all tantra and soundly sourced scripture. A more extensive presentation of this topic can be found in *Stages on the Path of the Great Vajradhara*.[153]

How to meditate on the two stages ascertained in that order

1. The way to meditate on the generation stage
2. The way to meditate on the completion stage

The way to meditate on the generation stage

1. The amount of generation stage you have to meditate upon
2. Training in its stages

The amount of generation stage you have to meditate upon

The four branches of generation-stage approach and accomplishment taught as chapter 12 of the *Root Tantra*[154] are explained by Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* as beginning from meditation on the ground of exalted wisdom up to the completion of the sovereign activities and sovereign mandala. Also, *Illuminating Lamp* says that the following lines on the generation stage from that same chapter teach the generation stage in brief:

> Alternatively, by way of the four vajras,
> those of solid conduct should practice approach.[155] [42]

These four are explained by this verse in the *Later Tantra*:

> First, the emptiness enlightenment,
> second, that condensed into a seed syllable,
> third, the body complete,
> fourth, the placement of the syllables.[156]

Nāropa's commentary explaining the above as beginning from the ground of exalted wisdom up to the sovereign mandala is based on the extensively described creation by the four vajras, and the condensed version runs from the ground of exalted wisdom up to the placement of the vajra and lotus syllables. As this represents just the actual words of the tantra, the practices of subtle yoga,[157] mantra recitation, and so on should be added. *Illuminating Lamp* commenting on the eleventh chapter[158] describes the practice of *single-thought of the six families*, beginning from the ground of exalted wisdom up to the stack of the three *sattvas*[159] and says that if this is practiced in four sessions it will ripen the mind. This is identical to Nāgārjuna's *Condensed Sādhana*.

Apart from this dividing of the sādhana into condensed and extensive versions, no other sādhana division is explained in the tradition of the Ārya and his disciples. Therefore, in this tradition, there is no way of ripening the roots of virtue necessary to produce the complete insights of the completion stage merely by meditating on deity and consort in union. It can only be accomplished if you follow these practices whereby you are led first to a single heroic deity such as Vajradhara, develop a stable visualization in that practice, and then are guided through the rest of the sādhana. Therefore, for some of the Marpa tradition to say that the entire mandala assembly is necessary for the attainment of the collection of powerful feats[160] but as a preliminary

to the completion stage it is sufficient to meditate on the exalted-wisdom body of the deity and consort in union instantaneously produced from the sphere of emptiness, and that the line cited previously, "dwelling well in the generation stage," teaches only this meditation, runs counter to authentic texts in the Ārya collection. It also contradicts their own tradition, because *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* says:

> Training well in this generation stage,
> whose deity form with supreme mandala
> of the complete buddha is made apparent,
> will lead to its completion.[161]

The instruction to produce the exalted-wisdom body as a preliminary to the completion-stage meditation conflicts with the *Compendium of Practice*, which says that the exalted-wisdom body is produced from the development of the illusory body onward, because from the generation stage up to mind isolation there is no bodily form of the deity. In particular, in this tradition the question of whether the generation stage is divided into mantra body and exalted-wisdom body is not one that is considered.

In conclusion, by seeing how much meditation upon the generation stage is necessary for the ripening of the mindstream for the production of the insights of the completion stage, it becomes very clear how important it is to begin meditating with the generation stage. [43] Also, in the commentary on the thirteenth chapter of the *Root Tantra*, it says that to protect the mind of a beginner from distraction, it is necessary to do four sessions of meditation on the protection wheel.[162]

Training in its stages

The order of training in the generation stage is taught in Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*, where it says that when you have trained in the thinking of the Vehicle of the Buddha, you should train in single-thought samādhi.[163] Having trained in that practice, train in the conceptual yoga,[164] and when you are trained in that practice, dwell in the samādhi of beginners. The commentary to the *Compendium of Practice*[165] states that *single-thought practice* is training for a single instance in the generation stage and that *conceptual yoga* is training for many instances. This is wrong because *Illuminating Lamp* describes the creation from the five enlightenments involving Vairocana and so on[166] as a single-thought practice.[167]

Also, *Illuminating Lamp*, on the eleventh chapter, describes the individual creations of Vairocana and so on as a single-thought practice; this has led some to say that initial training in one deity is single-thought and training in the whole sādhana is to train in the conceptual yoga. This is also incorrect because that description of the creations of Vairocana and so on as single-thought also refers to meditation on the mandala of imagined deities. Therefore the term *single-thought* does not mean thinking of the deities one time or thinking of just one deity; rather it means thinking of the deities together as one, or thinking of yourself and the deities together as one. Generally, you engage in this practice in meditations of both coarse and subtle deity yoga, but here it refers to deity yoga of the coarse supporting mandala and coarse supported deities.

The *Compendium of Practice* says that like learning archery, where you first train with a large target and then, when fully competent in that, train with a smaller target, you should practice on this path likewise. Therefore, when training in the generation stage, the development of the samādhi on coarse appearances comes first, and this continues up to the sovereign mandala. Once you have mastered that practice, you practice the conceptual yoga, in which you meditate on the mandala being inside a small drop and so on. *Conceptual yoga* is a general term for the generation stage, but here the general name is being used for the subtle yoga in the same way as *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter refers to meditation on subtle yoga as "training in the conceptual yoga."[168]

"The samādhi of beginners" refers to the yoga of the first stage. "Dwell" means a stable or perfected samādhi.

The generation stage possesses a whole host of excellent qualities. For example, within it lie profound auspicious features that correspond to future production of the insights of the completion stage. The mindstream becomes blessed by the conquerors and their noble children, and in all lives you are cared for by the great deities. You are never separated from remembering the Buddha. [44] You easily complete the accumulation of merit through the practices of offering and praise. You are never harmed by hindrances. You will be able in this life to attain many siddhis—those of pacification and so on. Therefore, whether you are focusing on subtle or coarse supported and supporting mandala, it is essential that you train until whatever you wish to arise arises and whatever you do not wish to arise does not arise, and you are able to remain with a single-pointed mind for a long time.

Anything not explained here has been explained elsewhere, so I will not elaborate.

8. Explanation of Evāṃ and of Bliss and Emptiness

The way to meditate on the completion stage

1. Brief explanation of the two syllables *e* and *vaṃ*, the principal components of the completion stage
2. Extensive explanation of *evaṃ*
3. Explanation of the completion stage of this tantra[169]

Brief explanation of the two syllables e *and* vaṃ, *the principal components of the completion stage*

In general, all the essential points of highest yoga tantra are contained within the meaning of the forty syllables: *e*, *vaṃ*, and so on. The introduction and, in turn, the principal points of those are found within the meanings of the first two syllables. The *Vajra Garland* says:

> "This I have heard" and so forth
> spoken at the beginning of the tantras,
> what are their meaning?
> These first words,
> what is their extensive meaning?[170]

The first question asks how the meaning of the introduction found at the beginning of tantras such as the Guhyasamāja is found within *e* and *vaṃ*. The second question asks if each of the syllables—*e*, *vaṃ*, and so on—were to be extensively explained, what their meaning would be. The answer to the second question is given with one verse for each of the syllables.[171] As an answer to the first question three types of *evaṃ* are taught: resultant *evaṃ*, which is to be achieved, path *evaṃ*, which achieves the result, and gender *evaṃ*, which leads to the result.

For resultant *evaṃ*, it is taught that the syllable *e* refers to the place in

which the teacher dwells and from which he teaches. In some tantras this is the secret place, in others it is the sphere of space, the *bhaga*,[172] the source, lotus, or lion throne. The syllable *vaṃ* refers to the teacher who taught the individual tantras under the names of Vajradhara, Vajrasattva, Yamāntaka, Vajreśvara, Heruka, Kālacakra, Adibuddha, and so on. The *Vajra Garland* states:

> The letter *e*, the secret place, sphere of space,
> the *bhaga*, the source, lotus,
> and the yoga lion throne;
> from there the glorious teachings given
> under the names Vajrasattva, [45]
> Vaṃvajra, Yamāntaka, Īśvara,
> Heruka, Kālacakra, Adibuddha, and so on.[173]

Furthermore, the definitive meaning of "secret place" and so on is emptiness, and the definitive meaning of Vajrasattva is great compassion. Therefore *evaṃ* teaches the inseparability of emptiness and compassion:

> *Evaṃ* is the seal of the Tathāgata,
> illustrating nonduality.
> Emptiness and compassion inseparable;
> wherever that is spoken of,
> there lies the seal of the Tathāgata,
> illustrating the nondual exalted wisdom
> that is taught in the introductions of all tantras.[174]

The meaning of the letter *e* of the path *evaṃ* is the wisdom of emptiness. The meaning of *va* is the method of great compassion. The meaning of *ṃ* is method and wisdom inseparably joined. It is the seal of the great Dharma king representing in condensed form the main points that pervade the 84,000 categories of teachings. The *Vajra Garland* says:

> *E* is taught to be emptiness,
> *va* is the great compassion,
> the drop[175] arises from those two joined,
> a glorious joining of these two.
> It is the seal of Dharma, the condensed form
> pervading the 84,000 teaching categories,

the seal of the great king
spoken first in the tantras.[176]

Wherever such a nondual exalted wisdom is taught within a tantra, there the supreme reality is present. But where it is not taught, such a reality does not exist:

The condensed meaning of every tantra,
emptiness and compassion inseparable,
wherever that is taught,
there lies the seal of the Tathāgata.
The two syllables *e* and *vaṃ*,
wherever they are not found,
there is found no true reality.[177]

The *Guhyasiddhi* also says:

Placed at the beginning of tantras,
supreme essence of essence
taught by the great-bliss guide
as the true reality of the secret,
bringing happiness to buddhas,
bodhisattvas, and all living beings,
abiding in the glorious Guhyasamāja,
master tantra of the secret thoughts:
to the pure syllables *e* and *vaṃ*,
the three realms bow with respect.[178]

Also:

In the "spheres of space,"
like pods of sesame,
are seen as many tathāgatas
as grains of sand in the Ganges.
By the method of relying upon
the reality of those syllables,[179]
buddhas and bodhisattvas
achieve the highest level.[180]

In these passages the meaning of the two syllables is praised as being the essence of the path to becoming a buddha. Therefore it also says:

> Here, these two syllables
> are not asserted as not being
> at the beginning of tantras.[181]

This is saying that these two syllables must be present in the introductory section at the beginning of all higher yoga tantras. In other words, even when the syllables *e* and *vaṃ* are not actually present, their definitive meaning must be present. [46]

The *e* of the gender *evaṃ*, the third kind of *evaṃ*, is the supporting *bhaga* of the mother consort. The *va* is the father's vajra supported by that *bhaga*. The drops contained within the supported vajra are the foundations of the bliss of the greatly blissful Vajrasattva Mahāsukha, and others who exhibit various manifestations:

> Letter *e* has characteristics of the *bhaga*,
> known as the supporting lotus.
> That which is supported is called the vajra.
> The forms of drops contained within
> the supported Vajradhara
> exhibit various manifestations;
> they are the basis of every bliss
> for the greatly blissful Vajrasattva Mahāsukha.[182]

This teaches the method of initiating the path *evaṃ* by joining the deity and consort-gender *evaṃ*. As a method to initiate the path *evaṃ* from penetration of the vital points in the inner body, a gender *evaṃ* placed on the vital points is taught in the *Saṃputa Tantra*:

> Cakras at crown and navel
> exist as the form of the letter *e*;
> existing at heart and throat,
> the letter *vaṃ* is likewise.[183]

The shapes of the cakras of the crown and navel are the triangular *e*, and the shapes of the cakras at the heart and throat are the circular *va*.[184] Here, *gender* is the gender taken from the symbolism of the shapes.

Having well comprehended the resultant *evaṃ*, if you wish to achieve it, you learn the method of combining *e* and *vaṃ* of the path as taught in the two types of tantra. You become skilled in the methods to initiate that path, which are the outer gender *evaṃ* of entering into union with a consort and the inner gender *evaṃ* of penetration of the cakra points. All the main points of the two types of tantra are included in the methods for inducing that path. Therefore, if you understand the procedures of all the tantras as being the meaning of the two syllables and their branches, you will come to understand the great praise found in the tantras for the two syllables that represent the meaning of the essential points.

Extensive explanation of evaṃ

1. Extensive explanation of the definitive meaning of *evaṃ*
2. For the creation of the definitive meaning of *evaṃ* showing the necessity of penetrating the vital points by way of the gender *evaṃ*

Extensive explanation of the definitive meaning of evaṃ

The various meanings of *evaṃ* are the principal components of all tantras, but if its definitive meaning is emptiness and compassion, then what is the explanation of these two? This has two headings:

1. The emptiness and compassion of inseparable bliss and emptiness
2. The emptiness and compassion of the inseparable two truths [47]

The emptiness and compassion of inseparable bliss and emptiness

The shape of the letter *e* and a *dharmodaya*[185] are both three-sided and symbolize the reality of no-self. In this context, the three sides also symbolize the three gateways to liberation.[186] Therefore the entities, causes, and results of phenomena, which are empty of existing by way of their nature, without signs or aspirations respectively, is the significance of the letter *e*. In this way, without a decisive and authentic view on emptiness, the meaning of the letter *e* is incomplete. Even if it is complete, if the great bliss that arises from the penetration of the vital points of the inner and outer body is not present, the meaning of the *va* letter is incomplete. Even if these two are present, if there is no understanding of how to develop the view of emptiness into the bliss of melting, and how to combine bliss and emptiness, in which the emptiness is the object and the bliss is the

subject flawlessly ascertaining that emptiness, then the meaning of the *ṃ* is incomplete.

Therefore, if you wish to understand the meaning of the *evaṃ* of bliss and emptiness, you need to understand these points. This is dealt with under three headings:

1. The meaning of emptiness
2. The meaning of bliss
3. How bliss and emptiness are united

The meaning of emptiness

1. Identifying the root of samsara
2. How traditions that seek the view of no-self that cuts samsara are similar
3. Refuting the assertion that the above traditions are dissimilar

Identifying the root of samsara

In the *Compendium of Practice* it says:

> Therefore, because living beings lack spiritual guides, they do not know the nature of their own minds. They focus on grasping to me and mine, on living and accumulating, and involve themselves in virtuous and nonvirtuous activities and so have experienced suffering in samsara since time without beginning.[187]

Therefore, by the apprehension of a true existence, which does not comprehend the reality of the mind, living beings hold to self and "mine" and therefore circle in samsara, as established in sutras such as the *Eight Thousand Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* and the *Severing the Continuum of Karmic Obscurations Sutra*. The meanings of these sutra passages have been elucidated by the words of the master and guide Nāgārjuna:

> If all this is empty and no birth is a reality,
> then how does karma bring about
> this happiness and suffering?
> As soon as there is ignorance of self,
> there is thinking with the contaminants of desire and so on,

and you are under the control of another.
All this is just the nature of mind
arising in the form of an illusion.
Then, with acts virtuous and otherwise,
you are born in high and low realms.[188] [48]

Anaṅgavajra, a student of Mahāsukha, also says:

From this comes extensive birth and death,
a cycle of so much suffering
for the mind grasping to that which is untrue.
Those of little intelligence,
so long as they hold to reality,
for that long do they remain in the prison of existence.[189]

Therefore, through the power of holding to true existence, which apprehends the untrue as true, you circle in samsara, and as long as you hold to reality by this apprehension, you will not be liberated from samsara. On this point, *Precious Garland* says:

As long as you hold to the aggregates,
you hold to self.
As long as you hold to self, there will be karma,
and from karma, birth.[190]

Therefore, if you do not negate holding to true existence with regard to the aggregates, you will not be able to stop birth because of the force of karma and affliction.

How traditions that seek the view of no-self that cuts samsara are similar

Consequently, not only is it necessary to have a realization of emptiness that perceives the aggregates to be without nature in order to remove completely the imprints of holding to true existence, the root of samsara, but even to cut the chains of circling in samsara because of the force of karma and affliction, it is essential to possess the wisdom that perceives no nature. Therefore śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha practitioners who have cut the chains of

samsara have also previously meditated on this topic. This has been explained extensively elsewhere.

Therefore in the *Commentary on Bodhicitta* it says:

> Those who do not know emptiness
> have no basis for liberation.
> In the prison of existence
> of the six types of being,
> those ignorant ones will wander.[191]

Anaṅgavajra also says:

> Therefore the three kinds of beings
> who wish for happiness and joy,
> who wish to free themselves from error,
> should abandon holding to reality
> by relying upon the spiritual friend.[192]

As these passages indicate, not only for those of the Philosophical Vehicle[193] but also for those who enter the Vajra Vehicle, it is necessary to search for an understanding of the view that has insight into the no-self emptiness and then to meditate upon its significance in order to abandon holding to reality, the root of samsara. The *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra* also states:

> Having understood one yoga,
> staying in solitude and making effort,
> those of evil deeds will become enlightened in this life;
> meditating upon the no-self of phenomena,
> they will come to know of omniscience.[194]

Here it is explained that the one yoga to be understood and meditated upon in solitude, which brings enlightenment in this life, is the meditation on the no-self of phenomena. There are many similar examples.

To abandon holding to true existence and to realize no-self, it is necessary to refute the object in the way it is being held by the consciousness that holds to self and to realize that it does not exist. Just withdrawing the mind from the object held as truly existing is not sufficient. The master logician says:

> Without refuting the object,
> it cannot be abandoned.[195] [49]

Āryadeva also says:

> If you see the no self upon the object,
> the seeds of samsara will cease to be.[196]

Also *Entering into the Middle Way*:

> Having seen that all the faults of mental affliction
> arise from the view of the transitory collection,
> and realizing that the self is the object of this view,
> the yogi negates that self.[197]

The initial procedures to generate an understanding of the decisive view of no-self in the explanations found in the texts on mantra and Madhyamaka are the same. *Commentary on Bodhicitta* says:

> Those bodhisattvas who practice by the way of secret mantra should generate the bodhicitta that has aspiration as its nature, and which is conventional in its aspect, and then through the force of meditation they should generate the ultimate bodhicitta. Therefore I will talk of that.[198]

After this passage the text goes on to negate the self of persons asserted by other traditions, and the self of phenomena as posited by those of our own tradition, such as the śrāvakas who assert a truly existing separation of apprehending consciousness and apprehended object, and the Yogācāra school, who assert a truly existing mind that is empty of apprehending consciousness and apprehended object as separate entities. The passage then goes on to establish no-self. Therefore it is saying that for those within secret mantra to develop the ultimate bodhicitta through the force of meditation, the way they initially seek the view of no-self is in accordance with what is taught in the texts on Madhyamaka.

The two śrāvaka schools who posit the existence of external phenomena assert a truly existing separation of apprehending consciousness and apprehended object, but ārya śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas make no such

assertions. Also, for ordinary beings who have entered these śrāvaka paths both the above assertions are possible.

Refuting the assertion that the above traditions are dissimilar

Some quote *Short Assertions on Our Views*:

> The emptiness of examining the aggregates
> is, like the plantain tree, without essence.
> Emptiness endowed with supreme characteristics
> is not like that.[199]

They say is it not true that analyzing with discriminating wisdom the object of a consciousness holding to self and meditating on the emptiness ascertained is a tradition not found in mantra? For you to assert that meditating on the ascertained meaning of no-self that was determined through scripture and reasoning is a meditation devoid of essence shows you to be of great intelligence![200] The meaning of that citation is found in the fifth chapter of the *Stainless Light Commentary*:

> The emptiness that comes from examining the phenomena that are collections of subtle atoms is far from an emptiness of nonexistence.[201]

Not having reached the stage where the object of logical negation in Madhyamaka is well comprehended, they analyze logically the aggregates and think that creation, cessation, and so on not existing at all is the meaning of nonature. It is this nonexistence kind of emptiness that is being refuted here. It is not a case of analyzing with discriminating wisdom and then negating everything. [50] If that were so, it would contradict the *Stainless Light Commentary* on the second chapter:

> Consciousness existing ultimately,
> this the wise do not assert;
> lacking nature as one or many,
> like a lotus in the sky.[202]

Here, using the reasoning of one and many and the example of a sky flower, the aggregate of consciousness is analyzed to be devoid of nature. The text continues, "This is known by the Mādhyamika." Also:

> The establishment of no-self and so forth has been taught here in brief. A more extensive explanation can be known from the great scriptures.[203]

This is saying that the no-self taught briefly in this text can be better understood from other works, such as those of the Mādhyamikas. The previous assertion would contradict this passage also.

Furthermore, the *Stainless Light Commentary* says:

> "Vajra" is the inseparable, the great uncuttable. As a vehicle it is the Vajra Vehicle, and in it the way of mantra and the way of the perfections, the resultant and the causal, are joined as one.[204]

This is saying that the view of emptiness in the causal Perfection Vehicle and the great bliss of the resultant Mantra Vehicle are joined as one. Therefore, to say that the Kālacakra tradition has a view determined in a way that is incompatible with the view determined from the Perfection Vehicle is wholly wrong.

Determining the view of emptiness is taught many times in the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra*. In the second chapter, however, Vairocana says:

> Devoid of all phenomena;
> aggregates, constituents, sources,
> apprehending and apprehended all abandoned;
> with the equality of the no-self of phenomena,
> your mind, unborn from the beginning,
> is the nature of emptiness.[205]

This is the emptiness part of the teaching on bodhicitta,[206] which is settled in Nāgārjuna's *Commentary on Bodhicitta*. The first line refutes the self that is conceived by outsiders. The next two lines refute the true existence of a separate apprehending consciousness and apprehended object as is conceived by the two proponents of external existence. The remainder of the passage refutes the truly existing mind that is conceived by the Cittamātrins.[207] Nāgārjuna's text continues:

"Phenomena" is a concept.[208]
The lack of concepts is emptiness.
Where concepts appear,
how can emptiness be there?
The mind of concepts and conceptualizing
is not known by the Tathāgata.
Where there are concepts and conceptualizing,
there is no enlightenment there.[209]

"Concept" here means:

The bodhicitta of the buddhas is not obscured
by the conceptualizing of
self, aggregates, and so forth
and is forever characterized by emptiness.[210]

"Concept" refers to what has been described as the three types of concepts, such as concepts of the self of persons and so on, but it does not refer to every type of concept. [51]

The meaning of all things being like dreams in the fifteenth chapter of the *Root Tantra* is taught in the self-consecration stage of the five stages. The way that discriminating wisdom analyzes is described in the *Explanation of the Intention* explanatory tantra commenting on the ninth chapter of the *Root Tantra*, where it says that when not analyzed, effects do arise from causes, but when analyzed they are nowhere to be found.[211] The sixteenth chapter of the *Vajra Garland* talks about dividing each of the three times into three and analyzing accordingly.[212] The method tantra *Ornament of Vajra Essence*, which is of the same thinking as Guhyasamāja, examines material phenomena by looking at the directional sides of their particles and examines mind by dividing instances of mind into three, thereby determining emptiness.[213] Thus, they describe a way of seeking a view of emptiness similar to that of the Perfection Vehicle.

The *Guhyasiddhi* also states:

In terms of being of a nature that is one or many,
these three realms are analyzed to be
phenomena without nature.[214]

Also:

> In all of the three worlds
> as far as the peak of existence,
> when examined with the discrimination of the path,
> aggregates are seen to be without truth.
> Those with discriminating wisdom,
> whatever they analyze here,
> will strive solely in this,
> and for as long as they analyze,
> for that long all is clear light.[215]

These verses are not talking about the initial seeking of the view but the later time of meditation. During the time of bliss and emptiness united, which occurs when *innate joy*, which is the fourth type of joy, and *clear light*, which is the fourth empty state, arise, it is true that you do not employ discriminating wisdom to repeatedly analyze but you do in the post-meditation session after rising from meditative equipoise. In order to cultivate special insight in meditative equipoise, those still on the stages of faith analyze again and again with discriminating wisdom. This is taught in the Perfection Vehicle and these two practices of discriminating wisdom are no different.

To summarize, the views on emptiness found in the great texts can be graded into four levels ranging from inferior to superior. These are the no-self of persons as determined by the Sautrāntika and accepted by all Mahayana proponents of the tenets with the exception of the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka; the emptiness posited by the Yogācāra, which is the emptiness of the imputation of the apprehending consciousness and apprehended object as being separate entities, and with regard to phenomena, the emptiness of the imputation that is an existence by way of self-characteristics imputed upon the nature and features of these phenomena; third, the emptiness asserted by the Svātantrika Mādhyamikas, who conventionally do not refute mere existence by way of characteristics but who have refuted all true existence apart from that; and the no-nature view of Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas, who have refuted existence by way of characteristics of both truths. [52]

Of these four tenets, the emptiness of *bliss and emptiness united* taught on the basis of the best and jewel-like disciple of Highest Yoga Mantra Vehicle is that of the fourth tenet. Concerning the emptiness of bliss and emptiness united for other types of disciples, the views of Cittamātra and Svātantrika

can both occur depending on the type of disciple. These four tenets are classified as lowest, intermediate, best, and best of the best on the basis of their views on no-self. While it is true that in tantric commentaries there is a tradition of explaining united bliss and emptiness on the basis of the Cittamātra position, there is no tradition of explaining this union merely on the basis of the view of the no-self of persons as explained previously. Therefore, concerning emptiness in *bliss and emptiness united*, you should at the very least have ascertained an emptiness that is the emptiness of apprehending consciousness and apprehended object as separate, as posited by the Vijñānavādin. An extensive presentation of these points can be found elsewhere.

The meaning of bliss

What is the bliss of *bliss and emptiness united*? By developing just the samādhi of a single-pointed mind, the mind becomes completely adaptable, and this causes the winds of the body to become very serviceable, producing a complete adaptability of the body itself. Because of this there is bodily pleasure and mental joy. This is taught in Asaṅga's *Stages of Yogācāra*. This bliss occurs in the long-term cultivation of placing the mind in a nonconceptual state, which is a practice common to Buddhists and non-Buddhists, Great and Lower vehicles, and sutra and tantra. This has been taught together with authenticating scripture in [my] *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*. That kind of bliss is not the bliss of bliss and emptiness.

Furthermore, the practice in the Philosophical Vehicle of meditating on the incoming and outgoing breath, and the meditations taught in the *Later Dhyāna* action tantra and the *Vairocana Enlightenment* performance tantra of preventing the breath from leaving the body and holding it inside, which is taught as "prāṇāyāma guru-yoga meditation," will also produce samādhis that create bliss in body and mind. They are not wind yogas involving the penetrating of the vital points at the cakras of the body, however, and so this is not the bliss of the bliss and emptiness found in the Highest Yoga Vehicle. These are not to be confused with wind vajra repetition and prāṇāyāma pot yoga. Ācārya Buddhaguhya assigns the practice of preventing the breath from leaving, holding it inside, and meditating on the deity to yoga tantra also. [53]

Apart from the above, the presentation of a pot yoga in a commentary to the *Heart Sutra* and vital-point penetration techniques of higher tantras described by some commentators in some sections of the lower tantras

are just fabricated by those who do not properly understand the differences between the paths of sutra and tantra and higher and lower tantras, and are therefore unreliable.

In short, in the three lower tantras from yoga tantra downward and within the Philosophical Vehicle, there are descriptions of many instances of uncontaminated and nonworldly bliss achieved through meditating without error on the significance of emptiness. Nevertheless, they do not describe the bliss of the melting bodhicitta brought on by the blazing caṇḍālī ignited by the force of the winds entering the dhūtī from the practice of penetrating the vital points of the channel cakras in the body, and therefore, such bliss does not fulfill the criteria of being the bliss of bliss and emptiness united.

Sheaves of Instructions says:

> "It is taught, however, that those who have gained the first samādhi experience a bliss like that of a cakravartin emperor. Therefore what need to mention the bliss of those who have realized the two types of no-self? Also, is not the first level known as *great joy* so named because of its special and exceptional joy?" That is true, but such bliss is not innate bliss and therefore is not great bliss. Moreover, at the beginner stage there is no method for the attainment of such bliss. The hole in the eye of a needle may be a hole of space, but that alone does not make it equal to space.[216]

It has been taught that even in the attainment of the first samādhi with no realization of no-self, there is a generation of enormous bliss. If that is so, then what need to mention the generation of great bliss from the meditation on emptiness in a practitioner of the Perfection Vehicle who perceives without error the two types of no-self and then meditates on it over a long period of time? The first level called *great joy* is so called because of the exceptional joy experienced on that level. Therefore, you might wonder, "In terms of bliss, maybe the Highest Yoga Vehicle is not superior to the Perfection Vehicle." The reply: It is true that there is great bliss that comes from meditating on emptiness, but it is not innate bliss and so it is not the great bliss referred to in highest yoga tantra. Furthermore, in the Perfection Vehicle no method for inducing innate bliss is taught in the beginning stages. Therefore the vehicle of highest yoga is still superior in terms of great bliss.

The same text says:

> But in the perfection of wisdom does it not talk of "the bliss of the highest and perfect enlightenment"? It is true that it does, but it does not teach a method to achieve that because it does not teach the method for achieving innate great bliss. Therefore it is only at this level of practice that it can be known.[217]

The Perfection Vehicle does not teach the causal innate bliss of the path as the method for the attainment of the resultant bliss of enlightenment. Therefore, although the great bliss of the resultant stage can be spoken of, there is still a great difference between the two vehicles. [54]

The *Guhyasiddhi* says:

> Furthermore, the *tattva* abiding in the tantras
> is clear in the glorious Guhyasamāja,
> much elaborated in great detail,
> and elsewhere taught in a hidden manner.
> In the action and performance divisions
> and in the scriptural baskets of sutra,
> the one supreme joy abides in many forms.
> In the vessel of the precious aggregates,
> living beings with specific sensibilities
> strive for the *tattva*, which was hidden,
> and then presented by the protector Buddha.[218]

The *tattva* of the innate bliss was hidden and not taught in the lower tantras and sutras. Therefore the statement that the one supreme joy abides in them in many forms means that you are gradually led to the *tattva* of supreme joy and taught it in many different forms. It is not saying that this *tattva* is actually taught there. If it were, then the higher initiations would have to be taught there, too, because without the conferring of the secret initiation and so on, teachings on the *tattva* of great bliss are prohibited.

This supreme teaching on innate bliss as an exclusive feature not found in other vehicles and other tantras is described in all highest yoga tantras and their authentic commentaries, but for fear of excessive words, I will not write of that here. Nonetheless, for those well trained in this topic, the fact that there are many instances of bliss that are uncontaminated and arise from meditation that follows on from having correctly ascertained emptiness but that are not the innate bliss can be known from a rough knowledge of the

Perfection Vehicle. Also, such a bliss that is assigned to a very stable and firm deity-yoga meditation can be understood as not being that of highest-yoga completion stage from a rough understanding of the scriptures of the lower tantras. Because their mental capacity remains at a very weak level, however, there are very many who hold even the first of the types of bliss explained earlier as being the great bliss of bliss and emptiness united. Therefore the bliss spoken of as "bliss and emptiness united" is innate joy, and its initial development arises from bringing the winds of the left and right channels into the *avadhūti*[219] to ignite the *caṇḍālī* fire, which then causes the bodhicitta to melt. That bliss and the types of bliss described previously may have the same name but the differences between the two are vast. Therefore they should be clearly distinguished.

This bliss is also called *nonapprehending compassion*. [55] *Sheaves of Instructions* says:

> The method is nonapprehending compassion, working for living beings, and possessing the nature of innate great bliss.[220]

There are many such references.

How bliss and emptiness are united

1. Main body
2. Refutations

Main body

How is the bliss that is the nonapprehending compassion inseparably united with emptiness? On this the *Saṃputa Tantra* says:

> That with the nature of nonfabrication
> is known as wisdom,
> and that which is like a wish-fulfilling jewel
> working for all living beings is compassion.
> Wisdom abiding in nonapprehension
> and nonapprehending compassion
> dwell together in the mind,
> like space into space.[221]

The meaning of this is found in *Ascertaining Method and Wisdom*:

> With consciousness and objects of consciousness separated,
> when examined with application,
> phenomena are without nature;
> this is said to be *wisdom*.
> That which drives away the entire ocean of suffering
> and the causes of suffering
> is compassion attached to living beings
> and is therefore called *desire*.[222]

Separating form and mind and examining them to ascertain no-nature is wisdom, and the innate bliss or the desire that brings about the welfare of living beings through various methods is compassion. The text continues:

> Bringing those two together
> with the yoga of nonduality,
> like water mixed with milk,
> that is known as *method and wisdom*.[223]

Therefore it is a coming together like water being mixed with milk.

As bliss is inseparable from its own reality, by merely coming into existence bliss is already an inseparable entity with its own emptiness, and so there is no need to develop them into an indivisible yoga. Also, this union of bliss and emptiness is not a case of a separate mind cognizing an emptiness and being sealed by bliss, or a case of developing bliss and subsequently sealing it with a separate view of emptiness, because that emptiness and that bliss do not individually become the entity of the other. For example, giving and other practices may be grasped by a view of no-self, but they are not generated into the entity of the view.

So how is it to be developed? The subject consciousness is developed into the entity of innate bliss and unerringly perceives its object of emptiness. This uniting of subject and object is the inseparable joining of bliss and emptiness. At the time of the development of actual innate bliss, object and subject become of one taste, like milk poured into water, and even the subtlest dualistic appearance is removed. [56] Before the actual innate bliss is developed, the reality of phenomena is not perceived directly, and you have to engage with that reality through conviction.[224] Thus there is only the conviction of these two being of one taste.

This is the way of uniting nondualistically with the object of emptiness. Therefore the way that the mind cognizing emptiness and the bliss are inseparably united as an entity is that these two minds are generated into one existence not separated in nature.[225]

For the definitive understanding of emptiness, there is nothing beyond what is found in Madhyamaka. There is no higher or lower with respect to the view of emptiness found in this vehicle and in the Perfection Vehicle. The object to be ascertained is the same, but here in this vehicle, the mind doing the ascertaining is the innate bliss, which, in terms of possessing the power to ascertain emptiness, is unlike any other consciousness. So, although there is no difference in terms of the object, it is taught that in terms of the method of bliss, this vehicle is superior.

Without ascertaining the definitive emptiness that is no-self, there can be no freedom from samsara. Without developing the ascertaining mind of innate bliss, the vital principle of the supreme path of mantra is missing. That is why it is taught that having one or the other is not sufficient and that both are necessary. As Saraha says:

> Dwelling in emptiness devoid of compassion,
> such persons have not found the supreme path.
> But those meditating on compassion alone
> will not become free from abiding in this samsara.
> Those who bring these two together
> will not abide in samsara or nirvana.[226]

Since he explains in his *Treasury of Songs* that the innate exalted wisdom is the essence of the path, then "compassion" here must refer to innate bliss.

If you develop the kind of innate bliss described above, all rough conceptualizing is turned away, and the mind naturally falls into a state of stillness. Because of this, if it is thought that mere meditation in nonconceptuality, without the mind moving out to any object at all, is what is meant by meditation on emptiness, then it would be incorrect to state that meditation on compassion alone will not bring freedom from samsara. Therefore it is necessary to cultivate a state of ascertainment that has properly established the meaning of no-self.

Refutations

It might be asked, "If the cultivation of an ascertaining consciousness consisting of an innate bliss that has ascertained the meaning of no-self is meditation on emptiness, then does that not contradict the following passage from the *Saṃputa Tantra*, which says to not meditate by holding on to emptiness or non-emptiness?"

> Do not meditate upon emptiness;
> do not meditate upon non-emptiness.
> Not abandoning emptiness, the yogi
> does not abandon non-emptiness.
> Holding to emptiness and non-emptiness,
> more than a little conceptualization will occur.
> To abandon is to conceptualize;
> therefore abandon those two.[227]

The meaning of this citation is explained in Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* in the following manner: [57] Form and so on are empty of existing ultimately, and thereby the extreme of permanent existence is abandoned, but they are not empty of existing conventionally, and thereby the extreme of nonexistence is abandoned. Therefore these lines refute meditation that holds to the emptiness of conventional existence and to the non-emptiness of ultimate existence. Form and so on, which ultimately are of no nature, are conventionally in the nature of form and so on. Thus this text explains that it is not right to abandon a reality that is ultimately empty and conventionally not empty. Therefore, holding them not to be empty ultimately and to be empty in the sense of not existing conventionally produces all the conceptualizations of holding to extremes. If being ultimately empty is abandoned, you develop the conceptualization that falls to the extreme of permanence. If being non-empty conventionally is abandoned, you develop the conceptualization that holds to the nonexistence of cause and effect. This is the meaning of the passage. It is not as you[228] explain it. Moreover, just before this passage in the same text, it says:

> The great equality of the dharmadhātu,
> to be held like the plantain tree.[229]

Here it talks about holding phenomena to be without essence. Moreover, the same work says:

> Wishing to put an end to all suffering
> and to gain the supreme bliss of complete enlightenment,
> make the mind firm, strive to analyze,
> and see its nature as non-phenomena.[230]

Therefore, diligently analyzing and ascertaining no-nature is the cause that ends all suffering and achieves supreme happiness.

"Holding to non-emptiness" could also mean holding to the true existence of phenomena, while "holding to emptiness" could mean that although phenomena do not truly exist, you hold to the true existence of the emptiness that refers to being empty of truly existing phenomena. *Ascertaining Method and Wisdom* states:

> Those with a spiritual friend wishing to dispel confusion
> abandon holding to phenomena.
> Even though the mere names may be different,
> in conceptualizing they are not separate.
> The learned, therefore, abandon holding to phenomena,
> not conceptualizing on non-phenomena.
> A flame can be extinguished
> but when extinguished nothing can be done.
> Holding to phenomena can be treated likewise,
> but holding to non-phenomena cannot.[231]

Holding to the true existence of phenomena is abbreviated here to "holding to phenomena." That has to be abandoned. Likewise, this holding to true existence may have a different name from the holding to the true existence of the emptiness of truly existing phenomena, but in terms of the conceptualizing of true existence, they are no different. Therefore it too must be abandoned. The lines beginning "A flame . . ." mean that with regard to phenomena being held as truly existing, if it is shown that there is no true existence, then it is not difficult to negate holding to true existence. If, however, the emptiness of phenomena as truly existing—which is the refuter of the true existence of phenomena—is *itself* held to be truly existing, then you become possessed by an incurable view, identical to that taught in the Madhyamaka scriptures;

this is very much like taking indigestion medicine that immediately becomes indigestible itself. [58] On this point the *Commentary on Bodhicitta* says:

> That spoken of as "unborn," "emptiness,"
> and "no-self" are all emptiness.
> Meditation on anything less
> is not meditation on that.[232]

This too should be understood as refuting meditation that holds to the unborn and no-self as truly existent. *Praise of the Transcendent* says:

> The nectar of emptiness was taught
> to remove all false conceptualization,
> and so you denigrate
> those who cling to it.[233]

These kinds of passages are found throughout the words of the Buddha and the explanatory commentaries. Also the many references to regarding phenomena as empty, without self, unborn, and so on and meditating on them should be understood in this way as being noncontradictory, and not creating obstacles to producing the ascertainment of no-self that will cut the root of samsara. Such an ascertainment at the levels of an ordinary being is not the kind of nonconceptual mind that is divorced from the subtlest conceptual thought, but it is very analogous to nonconceptual exalted wisdom, and meditating upon it will produce the nonconceptual. This is clearly taught in the Guhyasamāja commentary, Ratnākaraśānti's *Handfuls of Flowers*, as well as Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions*, and Buddhaśrījñāna's *Entering into Self Sādhana*. This topic has been extensively taught elsewhere, and for fear of too many words I will not write of it here.

To summarize, ascertaining that in the phenomena that make up samsara and nirvana, there is absolutely nothing you can focus on that fulfills the necessary criteria for an apprehension of true existence, and yet seeing, within that reality, all activities of cause and effect and dependent origination as totally valid is what is meant by being free from the two extremes. On that basis, the realization of emptiness ascertained through the power of valid cognition has limitless benefits, which are spoken of many times in the teachings and commentaries. Even the generation of a valid doubt concerning emptiness has the ability to tear samsara apart. On top of that, the Vajra Vehicle says

that such a realization is ascertained by a very special consciousness of innate joy and that this great-bliss consciousness brings immeasurable benefits, both immediate and ultimate, such as being granted the supreme siddhi in this very life. Therefore the discerning should engage in the decisive core teachings on the view that ascertains the definitive meaning of no-self and on the method that induces the exclusive great bliss and then strive in the search for the innate exalted wisdom of bliss and emptiness inseparably united.

The *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* asks what is the meaning of *bodhicitta* as taught in the *Root Tantra* and replies that bodhicitta is emptiness and compassion inseparable.[234] Commenting on the teachings on bodhicitta in the second chapter of the *Root Tantra*, [59] Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* speaks of clear light and the stage of union as being two kinds of ultimate bodhicitta. The former is the actual innate clear light. Therefore it is not the case that the emptiness and compassion bodhicitta of inseparable bliss and emptiness is not taught in the Guhyasamāja tradition. *Five Stages* also says:

> Of the 84,000 Dharma categories
> taught by the mighty Buddha,
> that with the characteristics of stage of mastery
> is taught to be the essence of the essence.[235]

The "stage of mastery" of actual clear light, spoken of as being the essence of even the essence, also refers to the bodhicitta of the actual innate inseparable bliss and emptiness.

In some highest yoga tantras and their authentic explanatory commentaries, the presentations on bliss are clear, but the methods for cognizing emptiness are not that clear. In others the way to cognize emptiness is clearly presented, while the presentation on bliss is not. But even these works should be regarded as being for the purposes of combining bliss and emptiness. Do not make the mistake of regarding them as teaching these two phenomena individually. The phrase "bliss and emptiness inseparable" is as widespread as the wind, but knowing great bliss distinct from the types of bliss, ultimate emptiness distinct from the types of emptiness, and the way these two are united is very rare. With this in mind Saraha says:

> In house after house they talk about it,
> but there is no complete knowledge
> of the principles of great bliss.[236]

Therefore, do not be easily satisfied with partial knowledge, but make long and sustained effort to understand the meaning of this, which is even more secret than secret.

The emptiness and compassion of the inseparable two truths

1. Actual point
2. The necessity of such a presentation

Actual point

If the emptiness and compassion of inseparable bliss and emptiness is the meaning of *evaṃ* as described above, how is the bodhicitta that is the emptiness and compassion of the inseparable two truths presented as being the meaning of *evaṃ?* Many commentators of the yoginī tantras, when commenting on the bliss and emptiness described above, speak of a bliss-and-emptiness stage of union and a two-truth stage of union. The meaning of *union* in the Ārya tradition can also be understood this way. However, the position of Master Nāgārjuna's tradition is that *union* should not be ascribed to the actual innate bliss and emptiness alone. Also, the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* says:

> Without beginning, without end, and at peace,
> phenomena and non-phenomena unending and prime,[237] [60]
> emptiness and compassion inseparable,
> this is *bodhicitta.*[238]

The bodhicitta described here is the bodhicitta of the stage of union from the two types of bodhicitta explained above, and it is this that will be explained. Emptiness is referred to as "non-phenomena," while compassion is referred to as "phenomena." These two are also spoken of as method and wisdom. In the section explaining that method and wisdom in meditative union is the meaning of *yoga*, the *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra* says:

> That which is *non-phenomena* is wisdom.
> Method has the characteristics of *phenomena.*[239]

In the section on the sixth yoga of the six-branch yoga, when the *Later Guhyasamāja* speaks of the meaning of method and wisdom in meditative union, Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* describes the joining of conventional-truth

method with ultimate-truth wisdom as the "stage of union." Generally, there are many types of method and wisdom, but here the *union* of method and wisdom is being singled out. The actual meaning of *ultimate truth* is the noncomposite reality of dharmas, but here when referring to the clear-light exalted wisdom of ultimate truth and great bliss dwelling together in one taste, often no differentiation is made between ultimate truth as subject consciousness and ultimate truth as object.

This actual, innate, exalted wisdom is found on occasions of actual clear light on its own, and at the occasion of the stage of union. The first of these is the stage of mastery, or clear light, taught as being the fourth of the fifth stages. The second is one part of the stage of union. Therefore the mere actual innate clear light of bliss and emptiness inseparable that is taught elsewhere is clear-light ultimate mode from the two types of ultimate mode found in the four modes,[240] but as there is a stage-of-union ultimate mode above that, it has not yet reached that stage.

If the ultimate side of the stage of union is as described above, what is the conventional truth part of union? Other works explain conventional truth differently. Here in this tradition it is explained again and again that *conventional truth* refers to the pure illusory body, which has become one entity with the exalted wisdom of emptiness, and which is adorned with the marks and features of enlightenment formed from the substantial cause of the exalted-wisdom five-light wind acting as the mount of the exalted wisdom of emptiness. At the end of the three kinds of empty states during mind isolation, there arises the conventional illusory body formed from the five-light wind. This is the illusory body known as the *self-consecration stage* or the third stage of the five stages. These illusory bodies will be extensively explained later.

Thus, the actual clear light described previously and the completely pure illusory body, with which it is to be inseparably joined, is the meaning of the letters *e* and *va*. The former as mind and the latter as body joined as one entity is the meaning of *ṃ*. This is because the second meaning of *evaṃ* is the ultimate union. [61] The Guhyasamāja explanatory tantra, the *Tantra Requested by Indra*, states:

> Within these two letters *e* and *vaṃ*,
> omniscience abides in illusion.
> At the beginning of the sacred teachings, therefore,
> *evaṃ* is taught.[241]

The "illusion" mentioned here refers to the stage of union and therefore describes the second meaning of *evaṃ*. There are two levels of the stage of union: that of practice and that of no further practice. For the stage of union, the Ārya tradition also uses the terminology *wisdom and compassion*. *Five Stages* states:

> Understanding wisdom and compassion as one,
> to engage in that is known as *union*,
> and this stage is the activity field of a buddha.[242]

From the time of the third stage of self-consecration onward, the union of illusory body and exalted wisdom of emptiness carries the meaning of *evaṃ* because this is *evaṃ* in its hidden meaning.[243]

Within the traditions, teachings on the four kinds of emptiness are replaced in the yoginī tantras and their explanatory commentaries by teachings on the four joys. In the present tradition, there is a description of the illusory body formed from winds and mind arising between the third and fourth empty state; there is no such description of an illusory body arising between the third and fourth joy in the body of yoginī tantras. Also, in this tradition there is the description of an illusory body formed merely from winds and mind occurring after the actual clear light, while in the other tradition after the actual innate joy, there is no such description. Therefore the clear description of the illusory body formed from the winds found at the stage of practice union, which acts as an immediate cause for the resultant form body, and the clear description of the illusory body formed from the winds and air at the third stage acting as an immediate cause for the former illusory body are a peerless feature of this supreme tradition.

The necessity of such a presentation

If it is absolutely necessary to teach a way of achieving such an illusory body in highest yoga tantras, then the above assertion is true. Where, however, is it said that a way to attain such an illusory body should definitely be taught? You of intelligence, listen. I will settle this most difficult of points with authentic proofs, of which there are four:

1. Proof by way of the exclusive cause of the form body
2. Proof by way of the exclusive principles of the basis of purification
3. Proof by reliance upon the principle of deity generation

4. Proof by reliance upon the principle of the inseparable entity of method and wisdom

Proof by way of the exclusive cause of the form body

Ornament of Realization states:

> Generation of the mind of enlightenment
> is the wish for perfect and complete enlightenment
> for the sake of others.[244]

For those tormented by thirst their main focus will be the search for something to drink, [62] but for that they will need a container. Likewise, for those of the Great Vehicle who are moved by a great compassion that is unable to bear living beings being tormented by suffering and deprived of happiness, their main focus will be striving for the welfare of others. They realize that, however, without becoming a buddha there is no way to accomplish that perfectly. In this search for complete enlightenment as the way to accomplish the welfare of others, the two Great Vehicle paths of Mantra and Perfection are similar because there is no difference in their bodhicitta. In that case, actually appearing before sentient beings and then accomplishing their needs is to be performed by the form body (*rūpakāya*) from the two types of enlightened bodies and not by the dharmakāya. Therefore the main focus of their endeavor is the form body. Because of this, a special cause that is similar in type to the form body, that is used as a method for achieving the form body, and that is a special and peerless feature not found in other vehicles, other classes of tantra, and in the generation stage has to be present in the completion stage. If, however, this feature does not contain the wisdom that cognizes emptiness, there can be no attainment of the freedom that is a release from the chains of samsara. Such a wisdom is present in the Hinayana, but because the complete causal method for the form body is lacking there, no matter how much they meditate on emptiness, although they gain liberation from samsara, they will not gain the state of omniscience. Therefore cognition of emptiness is essential within the causal methods for the attainment of the form body. Similarly, for that cognition of emptiness to become a special cognition that travels to the dharmakāya, meditation on the complete method side is also essential. This is the position of both Mahayana traditions.

The Mahayana Perfection Vehicle presents meditation on a path analogous to the dharmakāya, but as there is no deity-yoga meditation analogous to the form body, there is a difference in superiority among the methods for achieving the form body. This point, and the way in which both Mahayana traditions are fundamentally in agreement on whether or not meditations on the two paths analogous to the two bodies are necessary, and the fact that such a presentation has to be asserted for the paths of all four classes of tantra, together with other related points, have all been explained more extensively in *Vajradhara Graduated Path*,[245] and so I will not elaborate here.

Compared to highest yoga tantra, the deity yogas of the three lower tantras are only distant causes of the form body. The deity yogas of the first stage of highest yoga tantra merely ripen the roots of virtue necessary for the insights of the completion stage. This means that the deity yogas of the completion stage, which are far superior to the previous yogas, must be causes for the form body in general, and specifically, at the end of the paths of practice of the completion stage, they must be causes that are similar in type to the body adorned with marks and features of enlightenment and that act as the substantial cause for the resultant form body. On this point, in the Perfection Vehicle, the general causes for the form body are the numerous accumulations of merit. Specifically, for the causes of the individual marks and features of enlightenment, [63] such as escorting the guru, for example, you have to accumulate merit over many lives. Once the ārya levels have been attained, a body is created that corresponds to the resultant body adorned with marks and features of enlightenment. This is developed as you pass through the higher levels until, at the last moment of samsara, you gain the final marks and features of the Perfection Vehicle path of practice. When actually becoming a buddha, these previously gained marks and features of enlightenment of that very body form the similar-in-type causes for the marks and features of the resultant body. This is what the Perfection Vehicle teaches. It does not say that there is no previous formation of a body adorned with the marks and features of enlightenment or that the body just spontaneously transforms into the resultant form body.

Similarly, even when becoming a buddha in a single lifetime on the paths of highest yoga tantra, it is not taught that from the moment your body is formed it has to be adorned with the marks and features of enlightenment. If there is no attainment of a body adorned by these marks and features on the paths of practice, there will no similar-in-type cause, and consequently there will be no spontaneous transformation of that body. It is necessary to

produce a body adorned with the marks and features of enlightenment while on the completion-stage paths of practice. This coarse body of ripened karma will not develop into a body adorned by the marks and features of enlightenment through deity-yoga meditation, and the body created by just the mind meditating on the body of a deity, as is done on the generation stage, is not sufficient. You need a very special deity yoga that will achieve a body distinct from these, and that is adorned by the marks and features of enlightenment. The substantial cause of a such a body can be none other than the winds. Therefore a method to achieve an illusory body from the winds is definitely necessary.

Furthermore, using the *Vajra Garland* explanatory tantra and the *Explanation of the Intention*, it will be established later that the bodies of living beings in the basic state possess a coarse temporary body and a primordial body formed from mind and winds. Just as it is asserted that during this state the innate primordial mind forms the substantial cause for the exalted-wisdom dharmakāya, likewise it is similarly necessary that the form body too is created from a substantial cause that is a primordial body formed from mind and winds alone. This will be explained later.

Proof by way of the exclusive principles of the basis of purification

The higher yoga tantras teach the process of newly creating the "container" of the supporting celestial mansion and the special "contents" of that container, which are the supported deities. For the creation of the container, it is agreed generally, and is the thought of this tantra too, that this is carried out in correspondence with the process of the creation and destruction of the world. From this it can be understood that the procedure for creating the contents, or the deities, must accord with the birth, death, and intermediate states of sentient beings in the basic state. This is not only to be done in the generation stage but must be performed in the completion stage also. At such times, after the clear light has become manifest in accordance with the death process, the coarse aggregates separate from the old body, [64] and the process of an intermediate-state body, formed solely from mind and winds, is accomplished. Similarly, at the end of the clear-light process, the process of an illusory body formed solely from mind and winds has to be accomplished. This has been explained in great detail in the commentary to glorious Nāgabodhi's *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana*,[246] and so I will not elaborate here. The presentation found in the *Vajra Garland* on

how completion-stage procedures correspond to the above will be explained later.

Proof by reliance upon the principle of deity generation

Tantras from the action class of tantras onward teach that when the ritual of deity generation is being performed, there is a subsequent arising in the form of a deity after entering into emptiness. Here too, eventually, in the completion stage after entering into emptiness, the yogi has to arise in the form of a deity that, unlike the above, is not created by mere imagination. At that time, if it is known how to accomplish the illusory body, such a form will arise. If this were not the case, there would not be the teachings mentioned above. Therefore it can be said that after entering the clear light in correspondence with the death process, the body of a deity formed from winds and mind has to be created, as is done in the intermediate state. Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* asks, if there is no deity form between the generation stage and body isolation, or in speech and mind isolation, how is the exalted-wisdom body generated? The answer basically describes the creation of the illusory body formed from the winds. Although the text speaks about entering emptiness and subsequently arising in the form of a deity right from the beginning of the generation stage, there is no tradition of producing a deity form at these stages that is not a deity form created by mere imagination. After those stages, as the answer to the question indicates, the way to produce deity form is through the illusory body.

Proof by reliance upon the principle of the inseparable entity of method and wisdom

After completing the generation stage and becoming well trained in the completion stage, you will become suitable for entering into tantric activities. When performing these activities, you have to conceptually perform the various elaborated activities, such as making and receiving gestures and so on, as described. In post-meditation sessions you analyze the no-nature of dharmas and so on. Apart from these practices, acts involving shrines, scripture reading, mandala offerings, and so on, and other forms of accumulating merit usually performed in the post-meditation sessions and taught in the three lower tantras and in the Perfection Vehicle, are prohibited here. The *Guhyasiddhi* explains:

Do not pay homage to deities
made of wood, stone, or clay.
Instead, worship the body,
making gestures of respect to the guru.
Do not engage in activities
concerning scriptures or shrines
made of wood, stone, or clay.
Even in dreams do not engage in hand gestures
with regard to mandalas and so forth.
Do not pay homage to those
dwelling in the three vehicles.[247] [65]

Many other tantras say the same. In particular, it is taught that while engaged in the completely unelaborated activities, apart from functions such as eating, defecating, and urinating, all elaborations are to be abandoned, and you simply meditate upon the clear light itself by the processes of initiating the clear light.

In the *Ten Levels Sutra*, on the discussion of the eighth level, it says that when all afflictions and their seeds have been brought to an end, you meditate solely upon the ultimate forbearance that is focused upon the meaning of reality. Rising from that meditation, the Buddha says, "Still you do not have my form, my exalted wisdom, or immeasurable buddha realms. Make efforts to accomplish these, and do not abandon this gateway of forbearance."[248] Thus not encouraging them to meditate solely upon the nonconceptual exalted wisdom, the Buddha instead urges them to accumulate merit as causes for the form body in the post-meditation sessions.

If the intelligent examine these two systems, it is clear that as well as meditating on innate joy and the fourth type of emptiness, or clear light, as taught in the highest yoga tantras, there are the exclusive similar-in-type causes for the two kinds of enlightened bodies. In the Perfection Vehicle, within the nonconceptual exalted-wisdom meditation, the cooperative cause for the form body is present, although the substantial cause is clearly incomplete. As for how this cause is complete in highest yoga, it is not difficult to understand the innate joy or exalted wisdom of great bliss as the substantial cause for the dharmakāya, and the formation of the substantial cause for the form body can be clearly seen in the illusory body created from the five-light wind that abides as a single entity with the exalted wisdom of emptiness. In this

way method and wisdom exist as a single inseparable entity on the basis of being the substantial causes for the two bodies. Any other explanation would be very difficult to sustain.

Moreover, this is taught at the time for practicing the tantric activities as enhancement practices of the completion stage, when, as was explained earlier, you are well trained in the common paths, have truly received the initiations, have guarded well the pledges, and have completed the generation stage. They are not taught elsewhere. To say that there is a quick path not involving any of these practices and to obstruct these activities that amass vast merit is to degenerate oneself and others. The *Treasury of Songs* and other works of the great brahman [Saraha] take as their essence the collections of teachings on the high paths of innate exalted wisdom in which all other elaborations have been cast aside, as described previously, and they give instructions on how it should be developed. To imagine that it teaches a spontaneous tradition for the intelligent disciple right from the first moment of entering the path is mistaken. It is necessary to examine especially the *Essential Collections of the Siddhas* with great precision. [66]

If you understand, by way of the points explained above, that the method and wisdom of inseparable bliss and emptiness taught in other works, which make up one part of the union of the two inseparable truths as asserted by the Ārya tradition, is a union taught as the meaning of *evaṃ*, then this is very important for gaining a complete understanding of other traditions. The essential meaning of "All the secrets of all the tathāgatas gathered" according to the four modes of explanation is the third stage of the illusory body according to the hidden explanation, and the body of union according to the ultimate explanation. Therefore this secret, most secret, and greatly secret point is not clearly taught elsewhere except in this tradition. Also, though you train for a long time in this tradition, it is difficult to gain even a correct coarse understanding of its meaning. Therefore those of intelligence should make intense efforts to understand it through the kindness of a learned spiritual teacher that you have pleased for a long time.

9. The Necessity of Penetrating Vital Points on the Body

For the creation of the definitive meaning of evaṃ *showing the necessity of penetrating the vital points by way of the gender* evaṃ

1. The necessity of penetrating the vital points on the body in order to create the innate arising of inseparable bliss and emptiness
2. The necessity of penetrating the vital points on the body in order to create the union that is the inseparability of the two truths

The necessity of penetrating the vital points on the body in order to create the innate arising of inseparable bliss and emptiness

1. General explanation of the two methods
2. Explanation of each method

General explanation of the two methods

As explained previously, on the presentations of searching for the understanding of the ultimate meaning of the reality of no-self, there is nothing in mantra that is any higher than the Perfection Vehicle. Without destroying the focus of holding to true existence by way of a thorough logical refutation of the apprehended object held by the mind that is holding to true existence and merely withdrawing the mind inside instead does no damage whatsoever to holding on to true existence because such a mental state does not counter the mode of apprehension of holding to true existence. Also, concerning the object whose refutation will lead to no-self, when any system coarser than that taught by the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka is employed and no-self is sought, any holding to true existence from a subtle level will not be refuted, and therefore there will still be something remaining of holding to true existence. If the refutation involves anything subtler than that taught

by the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka, [67] there will be no place for the power of valid cognition to induce the certainty of dependent origination upon that object, and it will fall into an emptiness of nonexistence.

Therefore there is no difference between the two vehicles in terms of the way the meaning of no-self is determined. When meditating upon this no-self, however, if the winds of the left and right channels are induced into the dhūtī, where they dissolve and cause the caṇḍālī fire to blaze, thereby melting the bodhicitta and initiating the great bliss that ascertains and then meditates on emptiness, there is no other consciousness like this innate mind with the power to swiftly remove the imprints of obscurations. It is essential, therefore, to produce this bliss. This, however, cannot be achieved without penetration of the vital points of the body, and with that in mind, two methods for doing this were taught. These are the method of reliance upon a consort and the method of meditation upon the inner channels, winds, drops, and so on.

For the first of these, the lower tantras, when focusing on a consort with the activities of laughing, gazing, and so on, do not even speak about performing these practices with a mind of desire, let alone performing them with actual karma consorts. They do, however, describe meditations that focus on goddesses who are not in union with oneself involving the activities of laughing, gazing, holding hands, and so on. Therefore these tantras are known as *laughing tantras* and so on.

Highest yoga tantras talk of a method involving union with goddesses as karma consorts and as wisdom consorts. These tantras are therefore known as *tantras of union.* Those tantras that do not teach the method of inducing great bliss by union with a karma consort will not teach union with a wisdom consort. They will, however, also not teach the method of inducing great bliss through the melting of the bodhicitta by meditation upon the channels, winds, and drops. Wherever the first is taught, the other two are taught also. In tantras that teach the method of penetration of the vital points within the body, union with the two kinds of consort is also taught. This is because these methods are alike in bringing the winds of the left and right channels into the dhūtī, where they dissolve to induce the great bliss. Therefore their purpose is to develop, where there was none before, an innate joy acting as a special consciousness for the ascertainment of emptiness or to maintain the continuum of one already developed and increase it.

Explanation of each method

1. The mudrā consort method
2. The method involving meditation on the inner channels, winds, and so on

The mudrā consort method

If methods for penetrating the vital points of the body are methods for bringing the winds of the left and right channels into the dhūtī, then it can be rightly said that meditation upon the inner channels, winds, drops, and so on will accomplish this. [68] But union with the two types of consort cannot do that, and so isn't it incorrect to state that all the above methods are capable of producing this result? For reliance upon a karma consort to be capable of producing such a result the qualifications for both object and basis[249] must be completely met. Because that is so rare, it was not taught to other beings. For those who meet the qualifications, the *Sheaves of Instructions* says:

> With method in meditative union with wisdom, the winds from the *lalanā* and *rasanā* channels will enter the *avadhūtī*, and the caṇḍālī fire will blaze. The aggregates and so forth burn, and the moon melts.[250]

Therefore, by entering into union with a karma consort, the winds from the left and right channels enter the dhūtī, and the caṇḍālī blazes, causing the bodhicitta to melt. Tathāgatavajra explains that at this time the flow of breath through the nostrils is halted. Therefore the two winds are absorbed within the dhūtī, and this method is an outer prāṇāyāma. In highest yoga tantras, there are none that do not teach this path of prāṇāyāma,[251] and in many of those that do, the reasons why this method brings the winds into the dhūtī are very difficult to comprehend. If you can gain a rough understanding of this point, however, it becomes a very important element for understanding many tantras.

Whatever arises from the process of reliance upon a karma consort, the same can arise from the reliance upon a wisdom consort, which is almost a mirror image of the karma consort as long as it is clear and stable. Reliance upon a wisdom consort also offers the opportunity for the winds of the left

and right channels to be brought into the dhūtī. This in turn depends upon knowing the teachings on the lower gateway prāṇāyāma, which is one of the three types of prāṇāyāma taught in the *Later Tantra*.

The method involving meditation on the inner channels, winds, and so on

The *avadhūtī* is successively entwined by the left and right channels to form cakras. At the center of each of these vital-point channel wheels in the body is a gateway through which the winds of the left and right channels are brought. The methods for bringing them are many, including the wind yogas of vajra repetition, pot yoga, and so on, the two Guhyasamāja traditions, the many drop yogas such as those explained in the works of Ghaṇṭapāda, and caṇḍālī meditations such as those found in the works of Dombi Heruka and Kṛṣṇācārya.

In the Kālacakra body of teachings, the wind yoga of the pot yoga is performed in the area of the navel cakra, and in the Dombhi Heruka and Kṛṣṇācārya traditions, the focus of the caṇḍālī meditation is at the navel. Therefore, in those traditions, the vital point of the navel is the first to be penetrated. The Jñānapāda tradition asserts that first the vital point of the heart is penetrated, followed by that of the secret place, then the heart again. In the Ārya tradition, the secret place is penetrated first, followed by the heart cakra. [69] The assertion made by some that the yoginī tantra tradition definitely begins from the navel cakra is incorrect. Ghaṇṭapāda begins from the heart with drop-yoga meditation; Kukkuripa, relying on the *Great Illusion Tantra*, begins with prāṇāyāma vajra repetition at the heart; and Saroruha in his *Hevajra Sādhana*[252] speaks of withdrawing all elaboration into the heart and then entering the clear light.

Therefore each gateway taught by a genuine master is also found in the corresponding tantra, and each has its own individual features. Among these various traditions some clearly state in their respective works that these are methods for bringing the winds of the side channels into the dhūtī, but there are many where the explanation is not that clear. Also, for the actual meditation, description of the visualized placement of the three channels and so on is minimal. Consequently, it is difficult to understand how the teachings on the drops and letters placed in the centers of the cakras, wherever they are located, the subsequent meditation upon them, and so on will lead to bringing the winds of the left and right channels into the dhūtī. Therefore, learn

these things by careful examination, such as by comparing clearer explanations, tantras, and many sound treatises.

Although there are various gateways through which to bring the two winds into the dhūtī, the two kinds of tantras agree that these methods will cause the caṇḍālī fire to blaze and the bodhicitta to melt, thereby producing the result of the exalted wisdom of the four joys or four types of emptiness, followed by the recognition and the cultivating of the continuum of the innate joy or clear light. Nevertheless, because there are many differences in the various features that make up the causes, there are also many internal differences in the features of the resultant innate wisdom and clear light.

Thus, understand and then meditate on these exclusive meditation traditions that focus upon the syllables, drops, and so on placed at the most important points of the body, such as in the center of the cakras or at the lower entrance of the dhūtī, and so on. By doing so, if you then realize that because mind and wind work in tandem, holding the mind in these places—even though it is not actual wind meditation—is the reason why they are methods for bringing the two winds into the dhūtī, then, with a good knowledge of the principles of many reputable completion-stage texts, you will find certainty in these different presentations.

If you are able to understand clearly and individually the special strengths of each of these different gateways for bringing the two winds into the dhūtī, then, although these different texts are not identical in their presentations, they nevertheless ascertain the ways to bring about the exalted wisdom of the four joys and the four types of emptiness from bringing the two winds into the dhūtī and hold as the essence of the path the cultivation of the continuum of the united bliss and emptiness of the innate mind and clear light. When this has been definitively ascertained by the flawless essentials found in the instructions, [70] you will gain a fearless confidence in the definitive meanings of the tantras. With this in mind Saraha says:

> Eating, drinking, the joy of conjoining,
> again and again fill the cakras.
> With this Dharma you will transcend the world.
> Trample on the head of the world of ignorance and go.
> Where the winds and the mind do not flow,
> there the sun and moon do not engage.
> Penetrate with the mind those places of unknowing.
> Saraha, having taught all the core teachings, has gone.[253]

This says that through the method of penetrating the vital points inside and outside the body, the sun and moon winds are brought into the dhūtī, where they dissolve. Because of this, the caṇḍālī blazes and the molten bodhicitta fills the body to produce the bliss and emptiness union, which in turn cuts the root of ignorance, and this is the essence of all instruction.

If all this is not comprehended as explained above, and these individual gateways to the creation of the innate mind do not appear as essentially the same, you will think that they are mutually contradictory. Also, some meditate on the praiseworthy qualities of their own instruction tradition and on the basis of one tradition maintain that it is incorrect to explain that all traditions are the same. Others ignore traditions other than those they have great attachment to.

The necessity of penetrating the vital points on the body in order to create the union that is the inseparability of the two truths[254]

1. The necessity that the paths of the completion stage correspond to the stages of birth, death, and the intermediate state
2. The way to penetrate the vital points of the body by following the above

The necessity that the paths of the completion stage correspond to the stages of birth, death, and the intermediate state

The intention of highest yoga tantra is to correlate the creation of the supporting and supported mandalas of the generation stage to the stages of creation and destruction of the container world and its contained sentient beings. This is not found in the lower tantras. This process is presented so that the paths are developed according to those stages. Moreover, the generation stage is meditated upon as a facsimile of the features of the completion stage and is merely the ripening of the roots of virtue necessary for producing the completion stage. Therefore its prime purpose is the creation of the paths of the completion stage corresponding to the birth and death of sentient beings. A clear presentation of this process is found in the Guhyasamāja literature. The *Vajra Garland* states:

> Just as fire burns and nothing is left,
> there is no cause, just dissolution and leaving.

Again the life wind arises,
karmic winds together with consciousness,
and again there is existence in the three realms.
From this comes karma, from this comes birth,
from this comes desire, and so on, and imprints,
and from this again comes death.
Like this, you circle like a wheel.
The previously described vajra repetition and so on
become these divisions in order.[255] [71]

This is the answer to a question on the destruction process of the winds at death. When fire burns, the wood is reduced to nothing. Likewise, at the time of death, the winds, up to the life-sustaining wind, gradually dissolve and the person dies. Again, from the death clear light, the karmic winds appear, and together with the consciousness, they take birth in the three realms. From these karmic winds are created the conceptual minds of desire and so on. These in turn gather good and bad karma leading to death again and birth again, thereby circling like a wheel. The previously described five stages consisting of vajra repetition and so on become the divisions of the stages of birth and death in the basic state.

The way they become these divisions is as follows: The continuum of breath entering and leaving is the basis for vajra repetition. The *Vajra Garland* says:

Those living beings of the three realms,
unaware of the repetition of the secret mantra king
founded upon the prāṇāyāma,
abandon the study of samādhi.[256]

At the end of the constant repetition of the breath, day and night, comes death. The winds entering and leaving are stopped, and all arising winds are one by one dissolved, and the experiences of appearance, increase, and close-to-attainment arise. This is the stage of mind isolation. At the end of close-to-attainment, the death clear light arising is the stage of clear light. This is also known as *base dharmakāya*. At the end of the death clear light, the body of the intermediate state, which comes into existence solely from the winds and mind that dwell within the old aggregates, and which separates itself from the old body, is the stage of the illusory body, which is also referred to as

the *base sambhogakāya*. In the basic state there is not a division into pure and impure illusory bodies, but it will be explained later how this form illustrates both types of illusory bodies of the path. This base sambhogakāya, which is not an object of sight for the ordinary fleshly eyes, is born into existence, where it becomes an object of sight for ordinary eyes and becomes the *base nirmāṇakāya*. On this process *Five Stages* says:

> The conventional-truth illusion,
> the complete sambhogakāya,
> is the *gandharva*[257] sentient being
> and also the vajra body.[258]

The third-stage illusory body is explained as being the intermediate-state *gandharva* sentient being. Therefore the illusory body of the path is being labeled as the intermediate state, and the base intermediate state is labeled as the illusory body of the path. The reason for describing these states in this manner is that the winds and mind that arise as the intermediate state for those devoid of the skillful core teachings will arise as the illusory body or complete sambhogakāya for those who do possess the skillful core teachings. The *Compendium of Practice* says: [72]

> For the ordinary being, the intermediate state of existence becomes a cause for samsara. For those possessed of the core teachings of all the tathāgatas passed on by the gurus, it is known as *self-consecration*. Like a picture on a wall or on a cloth that is reflected in a mirror, you manifest with the entity of the vajra body, a body possessed of every supreme feature, insatiable to gaze upon, adorned by the thirty-two marks and so on of a great being.[259]

On the strength of that description of the intermediate state by the master and his disciple, then also birth and death for those who do not possess the core teachings is simply birth and death that turns the wheel of samsara. Whereas for those in possession of the instructions, that which would arise as death becomes the dharmakāya and that which would arise as the ordinary taking of birth appears as the nirmāṇakāya. This is why the names of the two bodies of the path are found in the basic state and why the two bodies of the path are also given the names of the two phenomena of the basic state.

Nāgabodhi's *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana* also says that by

dwelling in vajra repetition, you come to know the second stage of *focus on the mind*, and with the two meditative absorptions you actualize the clear light in correspondence with the stages of death. Followers of the Gö tradition describe creation and destruction as the purification basis for the second stage but do not ascribe the three bodies and the five stages to the basic state. *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* says, however:

> . . . explained and applied in a single sitting
> to birth existence and a single day.[260]

Therefore the Marpa tradition assigns the terminology of the three bodies to birth, death, and intermediate state and employs the terminology of the five stages, of vajra repetition, and so on for the basic state. This is excellent because these descriptions show that the paths are to be generated in the mindstream in correspondence with the stages of the basic state of birth and death and are therefore necessary. If this terminology is used but its purpose not understood, and these core teachings on death as the dharmakāya and so on are taught as referring to practices performed only at the time of death and at the time of the intermediate state, or if the terminology of the five stages of the basic state is understood in a way other than the above, that is not correct.

Concerning the correspondence of the five stages to a "single day," some from the Marpa tradition say that the in and out breaths of a single day is vajra repetition. The dissolution of the intrinsic conceptual minds[261] into the heart is focus on the mind. Sleep is clear light, the arising of a dream is illusory body, and waking is union.

Generally when the instructions on sleep and dreams are looked for in the Ārya tradition's instructions, apart from what can be learned from the explanation in Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*, no clear explanation is found anywhere in the Ārya tradition. Even though Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* has a citation from the *Compendium of Practice* at this point, it is left just as a citation. [73] To explain these instructions according to the thinking of the *Compendium of Practice*, vajra repetition is as described above. From the beginning of sleep until the arising of a dream, the first three of the four kinds of emptiness arise, and that is the stage of focus on the mind. The fourth emptiness is clear light, and this is also known as *sleep dharmakāya*. "Dream" does not refer merely to the arising of a dream but to a special dream body. This is the stage of illusory body, also known as the *dream*

sambhogakāya. This can symbolize the illusory body of both the third and fifth stages. "Waking" is the nirmāṇakāya, and this too is not merely waking but refers to a special way of waking. The other Indian followers of the master and his four main disciples, who were listed earier, do not teach the five stages within creation and destruction, the three bodies of the basic state, and the five stages of a single day. The relevant explanations from the core teachings of Nāropa, however, expresses the thinking of the texts listed above, and therefore such teachings are necessary. If it is understood how the basic-state five stages are arranged throughout the basic state, this will generate great conviction in the important points within the instructions on the mixings. Therefore I have explained this here.

The way to penetrate the vital points of the body by following the above

As described, the two types of illusory body formed solely from the winds and mind correspond to the formation of the intermediate-state body. Therefore before that, the four kinds of emptiness must also be produced in correspondence with the four kinds of emptiness occurring at the time of death. On this the *Vajra Garland* says:

> The supreme setting of the winds,
> how is it to be perfectly known?
> From the characteristics at the moment of death,
> where they gather into one another
> and dissolve like the stages of birth.[262]

In keeping with the stages of arising at birth, the winds dissolve in reverse stages at death. The same text also says:

> The life wind of the afflicted mind forever travels,
> and when newly migrating,
> it has the form of a fish.[263]

The text explains that in the first period of a new migration, the life-sustaining wind is formed, and from that the nine winds—the evacuative wind and so on—are formed in the proper order. The text also says, "The life wind dwells at the heart."[264] Because the life-sustaining wind abides at the heart, the winds

will gather there at the time of death. Ārya Asaṅga says that the place where the consciousness first enters the parents' sperm and blood becomes the heart and from that the rest of the body develops, and that finally at death the consciousness emerges from the heart. That assertion agrees with this tantra. This does not contradict the *Saṃputa Tantra* and other tantras that state that at the time of death, the consciousness migrates through the nine openings of the eyes, ears, and so on.[265] This is because the prime support of the mind is the heart, and until it emerges from the indestructible place at the heart, the consciousness will not migrate through any of the nine openings. Also, the core teachings on migration from those tantras discussing this point, [74] such as is taught in Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions*, says that you train in the yoga of bringing the consciousness out from the heart.

Therefore the whole process follows the five stages of the basic state. You meditate on the indestructible drop at the heart. Focusing on the heart you perform vajra repetition on the arising, entering, and abiding winds. On its completion the winds are turned away from moving in and out of the body and gradually dissolve into the heart. From this arise the four kinds of emptiness, after which a very subtle illusory body is formed solely from the winds and mind that abide within the coarse body. After the development of the actual clear light, this illusory body is the body of union. After the development of the illustrative clear light, this is the impure illusory body. The sambhogakāya cannot be seen by all eyes. Only when it is contained within a body of coarse aggregates does it become an object for fleshly eyes. Then that is the nirmāṇakāya.

Thus for the Ārya tradition, the supreme place for the practice of penetration of the vital points of the body is the center of the heart cakra, and so you should take this as an important point.

This ultimate skillful means takes the revolving wheel of samsara turned by the chains of the basic states of birth, death, and the intermediate state and transforms death into the dharmakāya, intermediate state into the sambhogakāya, and birth into the nirmāṇakāya. Its method is the king of prāṇāyāma, accomplished by the mere application of its core teachings to the arising and entering of the winds that abide naturally within all sentient beings. This represents the core teachings of the great Vajradhara Nāgārjuna to bring you face to face with the three bodies.

The way to penetrate the vital points of the body using the practices of the five stages in a single day, for example, will be explained later.

Part 3

The Divisions of the Completion Stage

10. The Core Instructions

[75] *Explanation of the completion stage of this tantra*

1. The ultimate way to decisively ascertain the core teachings
2. How other core teachings of previous masters must accord with the above
3. Actual stages on the path of the completion stage

The ultimate way to decisively ascertain the core teachings

The ultimate source of the core teachings on the five stages is the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra*. Therefore that work is the ultimate text of the core teachings. In that tantra, however, the completion stage of the five stages is sealed and is not evident. In order to remove the seal and to make that which is hidden evident, the explanatory tantras were taught. Nevertheless, without an explanation from a qualified master who explains the complete meaning of the tantra by joining root with explanatory tantra, it is said that even the jewel-like disciple will not fully understand the tantra. Hence, rely on the instructions of the guru. *Five Stages* says:

> In the glorious Guhyasamāja Tantra,
> these points that are sealed
> will be known from the words of the guru,
> following the explanatory tantras.[266]

Thus this is the meaning of the statement that whatever is "sealed," or hidden, in the tantra is to be understood from the words of the guru. It does not mean zealously cherishing what is written in the tantra and therefore not presenting it, assigning that task instead to the oral transmission of the gurus. To understand it in such a way would be to create an obstacle to developing

the highest respect for the root and explanatory tantras. In this life you will not discover the meanings of the tantras, and in future lives you will follow a similar pattern. These hidden phenomena are actually taught in the tantra in which they are hidden but are hidden in the sense of not being evident. However, the *Vajra Garland* states:

> The very clear reality of mantra,
> the supremely secret reality,
> I have not explained elsewhere.
> Because of minds lacking merit,
> it remains hidden in the tantras.
> This I will teach, so listen.[267]

Therefore practices such as vajra repetition, for example, not explained anywhere in the lower tantras are said to be hidden in the sense of not being taught at all in those tantras. Such practices will not be found in their relevant core teachings but will have to be sought elsewhere. Therefore distinguish these two ways that something can be "hidden." In this connection the *Vajra Garland* says:

> Some ignorant people wanting to travel
> to the far shores of the four oceans
> do not ask the way but travel as they wish.
> Likewise, practitioners lacking the teachings
> get into great difficulties, and without results,
> though they may be learned, they become angry; [76]
> through one instance of that anger,
> they gain no results and go the wailing hell.
> Therefore, with all effort and great faith,
> practice the teachings from the guru transmission.[268]

From this citation, you might think that it is not correct to say that the root and explanatory tantras are the ultimate texts of the core teachings, because these verses speak of the disadvantages of being learned in the root and explanatory tantras but lacking the core teachings of the gurus. "Learned" in this passage, however, means being learned in other fields of knowledge but lacking the teachings of the gurus. They are in fact not learned in the root and explanatory tantras, because if they lack the core teachings, then they cannot be truly learned in the root and explanatory tantras. Also, in this

section of the tantra, Vajrapāṇi asks what these core teachings are, and as a reply, teachings are given that clearly come from the tantra. Also, the necessity for teachings from the guru given by combining root and explanatory tantra in no way conflicts with the root and explanatory tantra also being the supreme instruction.

Having first gained a good knowledge of the paths to be traveled from the level of a beginner up to the level of the buddhas from the texts of the tantra and then, instead of following the instructions, to blindly set out on the path is said to be like wanting to travel to the far shore of the ocean and to set out blindly without first determining the way from someone familiar with the journey. Therefore understand this citation as being the source of the necessity of having a good understanding of the core teachings texts before embarking on their practices.

Having realized that those gurus who teach by employing root and explanatory tantra conjoined would be rare in later times, and that if the core teachings coming from such gurus were written down they would last for a long time, the Ārya master and his disciples composed many texts, such as Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages* and Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*, which concern the core teachings of the two stages. These contain the ultimate points of the core teachings that have to be understood from the mouths of gurus who have discovered the meaning of the tantra. Although they are actually the ultimate instructions on these matters, the fact that they do not appear as such to later beings is owing to the powers of the mind becoming gradually weaker in later times and is not that the ultimate points of the core teachings are unclear in these texts. It is not only that the meanings in those texts are not hidden, in the sense of being not evident as they are in the tantra, but even the hidden meanings are clearly taught. Due to the influence of time, however, the minds of beings have become unclear, and because of that, the texts too have become unclear. Therefore, so that they may be understood, these works have word commentaries written on them, making their text very clear. Also, ancillary works to the core teachings, which do not comment directly on these works but are helpful in comprehending their meanings, have also been composed. [77]

How other core teachings of previous masters must accord with the above

If we are to decisively evaluate the stage-by-stage guidance given by Tibetan masters, which are the instructions on these core teachings, it has to be done

by combining all root and explanatory tantras, by training for a long time in works of the Ārya master and his four disciples together with secondary material, and by training well in all works ancillary to the core teachings.

Venerable Gö Lhetsé composed an extensive explanation, known as the *Great Overview*, of the core teachings on the two stages of this tantra. These days, however, the tradition embodying the instructions from Nāropa passed on through the venerable Marpa seems to be more influential. In this tradition, there is a guidance text on the five stages called *Revealing the Sun Rays of the Guru's Speech*[269] ascribed to Lama Marpa that validates the false tantra *Triumph of Nonduality*[270] and bears a resemblance to Khampa Ronyam Dorjé's *Commentary on the Tantra Alone*. It clearly bears no resemblance to the works containing authentic instruction of the Marpa tradition, however, and was certainly not composed by this master.

There were also the two lineages that passed from Tsurtön to Gepawa.[271] Of these, the guidance texts of Serdingpa[272] and the commentaries on Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* from the other lineage are internally consistent. The root text of the core instructions in the Marpa tradition, as explained previously, is *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, and Serdingpa evidently relied upon it also. In the works on the core instructions on Guhyasamāja composed by Serdingpa, there are meditations on the practice of *entering the household*,[273] consciousness transference, and the caṇḍālī practice, all taken from yoginī tantras. Each of these has its reference in *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, and the reasons why these practices are taught in this text will be explained later.

There are many other Guhyasamāja core instruction works of differing levels of profundity, but the main ones are *Five Points of the Five Stages*, *Four Points*, *Five Stages Complete on One Seat*, and *Five Stages with Mantra Circle*.[274] These works are guidance texts that cover all five categories of the five stages of this tradition. Therefore it is not the case that masters of the past relied upon an oral tradition without complete written guidance texts. In the first four points of the *Five Points of the Five Stages*, the actual text of the core instructions is elsewhere, and the points are therefore just listed in that text as headings and not explained. All that is taught is the fifth point on meditation on the two stages at one sitting together with teachings on signs of the path. Thus it is a core instruction on meditation on the five stages in one sitting.

Four Points describes the four categories of practitioner, place, companions, and actual instructions. The section on actual instructions is similar in content to the previous work. [78]

Five Stages Complete on One Seat is also known as the *Quintessence of Father Tantra*. It says:

> The instructions are under six headings:
> meditation on generation and completion on one seat,
> severing ignorance by forward and reverse practice,
> taking bliss as the path, the caṇḍālī,
> consciousness transference, and entering the household.[275]

Although this work teaches the complete corpus of the Marpa tradition of instructions on Guhyasamāja through these six categories, the main category is meditation on the five stages on one seat.

Mantra Circle teaches the five stages, but it is named after the meditation on the mantra circles at the heart, and it is known as "core instructions on the five stages with mantra circle completed in a single sitting."

Meditating on the mantra circle at the heart is found in all four core instructions, and therefore, from this aspect, they could all be called *Mantra Circle*. Meditation on the instructions of the five stages with mantra circle completed in a single sitting is what is meant by *five stages complete on one seat*. Therefore all four works are core instructions on the five stages complete on one seat. In *Four Points*, Gepawa promises to pass on the core instructions to Jakhangpa. In the subsequent listing of those instructions, these four works are not mentioned by name, but the listing "Direct Guidance on the Five Stages Complete on One Seat" refers to these four texts.[276]

The reason for this name can be found in *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, where it says that the five stages are meditated upon on in a single sitting:

> Various vehicles, wisdom gone beyond,
> birth, existence, the place, and so forth,
> because of the vagaries of time,
> are meditated upon in a single sitting.[277]

Venerable Nāropa passed on to Lama Marpa four special teachings based on four exalted tantras. Of these four, the statement "based on the Guhyasamāja, he gave instructions for the complete meditation on the five stages on one seat" refers to the above.

Later Tibetan scholars have said, "The Guhyasamāja oral core instructions

transmitted within the Marpa tradition were written down." This refers to the fact that with the exception of one or two, some holders of the core instructions of this tradition split them up and wrote them down. Others evidently compiled teachings taken from the six works of Nāropa. Therefore, although such a compilation had not been attempted previously, it is not the case that these works had never been written down at all. Also, it is not the case that they were not written down before the authentic guidance texts of the Marpa tradition. The four instruction texts on the five stages complete on one seat were all written down by the same author, but I wonder if they originate from different gurus or from different teachings over time, or maybe there were differences in the author's thinking over time, because there are many discrepancies among these works and they contain many textual errors that have been transmitted over a long period.

Therefore the way that these works explain Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* should be compared with the core teachings that were passed on from Nāropa's disciple Jñānākara to Naktso [79] and with instructions from other Marpa transmissions to see if they connect to the meanings of *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*. All of them should be placed alongside the root and explanatory tantras and the undisputed works of the Ārya master and his four disciples to see if they are directly governed by these works or not. Furthermore it should be explained how those texts that are not directly governed by those great works but are nonetheless valid works bring out the correct meaning. Having been transmitted over long periods, the intentions of the original instructions may be a little distorted, and where this has occurred, the errors should be pointed out. If all this is done, I can see that it will bring out the full power of the instructions of the Marpa Guhyasamāja tradition. Therefore it should be done.

11. The Five Stages

Actual stages on the path of the completion stage

1. Divisions of the completion stage
2. Determining the order of the stages
3. Determining the number of stages
4. Description of each division

Divisions of the completion stage

1. Actual division
2. How the six-branch yoga is compiled within the five stages

Actual division

If you wonder how many stages there are within the completion stage, the *Root Tantra* as translated by Patsap Lotsāwa states:

> Contemplation on mantra with body,
> with speech urged to the mind,
> the supreme to be accomplished, siddhi,
> the mind joyful and satisfied.[278]

The commentaries explain that "Contemplation on mantra" refers to speech isolation. "With body" refers to body isolation, as explained by the commentary, "a manifested body that accomplishes vajra repetition." The resulting speech isolation is "urged" toward—meaning "takes as an object"—the Vajrasattva dwelling in the "mind," or heart. By this the "supreme"[279] and the other three—siddhi, joy, and satisfaction—will be accomplished in the continuum of the yogi. Here "supreme" refers to the mind isolation coming from speech isolation. "Siddhi" refers to self-consecration. "Mind joyful" refers to the ultimate truth clear light that purifies the illusory body. "Satisfied" refers

to union and the form of the great Vajradhara. Therefore here there are six stages, beginning with body isolation. On this part of the tantra and commentary, the new translations are better.[280]

In the *Compendium of Practice*, this verse is cited in the later *one family* section on body isolation, and there its meaning is explained as follows: Having become the body vajra, you enter the speech vajra formed from the palate, tongue, and lips, [80] and the mind vajra "urges" you toward that. From these three together, you will accomplish the siddhi of the joyful and satisfied mind.[281] The former explanation, however, does not contradict this, because a single vajra word allows for many different explanations. For example, in the seventh chapter it says that if the hosts of tathāgatas are killed, you will gain the supreme siddhi. The master Nāgārjuna applies this to withdrawing the imagined[282] deities into the clear light, while Āryadeva explains it as referring to entering the completion-stage clear light.

In Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* on the first chapter, the generation stage is asserted as being one of the five stages, with the completion stage comprising the other four—*focus on the mind* and so on. On this point, when *Illuminating Lamp* says, "It incorporates the points of every tantra,"[283] this is a way of referring to the incorporation of every *principal* point without applying the five stages to one particular part of the tantra. Ācārya Bhavyakīrti and others also explain "Creating the body of secret mantra" as referring to vajra repetition. The assertion by Tibetan scholars, however, that body isolation and speech isolation are here combined in *focus on the mind* is good because it accords with the *Vajra Garland Tantra* when, in the explanation of the hidden within the introduction of the tantra, it describes the first two isolations in the section on hidden mind. Ārya Nāgārjuna in his synopsis to *Five Stages* speaks of there being five stages to the completion stage with vajra repetition as the first. This follows the last chapter of the *Vajra Garland*, which does likewise. The *Compendium of Practice* talks about the "five points," which are similar, and in its extensive explanation, it devotes one chapter to body isolation, thereby also describing six stages. Nāgabodhi's *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana* talks of "the stage of vajra repetition" and therefore includes it as a separate stage. It describes focus on the mind as the second stage, and therefore, like the synopsis in *Five Stages*, it counts five stages.

Ārya Nāgārjuna in the "Third Stage"[284] mentions the name of body isolation when he says merely, "body is isolated," and does not clearly describe this practice. It is extensively explained in the *Compendium of Practice*, and in that work this practice is described before speech isolation practice, so why has Nāgārjuna not done the same? On this Kashmiri Lakṣmī and Bhavyakīrti

explain that the line "Well abiding in the stage of generation"[285] teaches both the generation stage of the three samādhis[286] and body isolation. Therefore they assert that Nāgārjuna also teaches body isolation before speech isolation. The assertion that the words "stage of generation" teach body isolation must also be accepted by those who maintain body isolation to be in the generation stage in commentaries such as Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon*.

In Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* [81] it says that Nāgārjuna asserts the generation stage to be complete within the illusory body and that therefore he did not teach body isolation. In Serdingpa's *Four Points* it says that the generation stage is included in the illusory body and is assigned to be a preliminary practice. These statements evidently maintain the method of developing the deity form of body isolation and the method of developing the illusory-body Vajradhara to be one and the same and that both of them are generation-stage practices. Therefore, although they say that the generation stage is included within the illusory body, because they say that the body-isolation illusory body is included within the generation stage, this must mean there is no body isolation taught separately from the generation stage. This is in complete disagreement with the genuine works of the Ārya tradition and is evidently an explanation that does not understand Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*.

Our own position is that body isolation is in two parts spread across the generation and completion stages, and the fact that the Ārya does not place the body isolation of the completion stage before speech isolation is because it is included within the stage of vajra repetition. Therefore the first two isolations are included in the stage of focus on the mind, and so the completion stage has four stages. To take vajra repetition out as a separate stage and to include body isolation within it to make five stages, and again to separate out body isolation to make six stages, is simply a process of expanding and contracting the divisions and is in no way contradictory.

In the *Later Tantra* it says:

> Within the six branches of accomplishment,[287]
> you will accomplish the supreme.
> Accomplishments by other means
> do not become the supreme siddhi.
> Individual withdrawal, meditative absorption,
> prāṇāyāma, and apprehending,
> recollection, and samādhi:
> This is the six-branch yoga.[288]

Therefore the supreme meditations of the completion stage consist of the six-branch yoga—the branch of individual withdrawal and so on. The first four lines state that without practicing for the supreme attainment by way of these six branches, you will not achieve the supreme siddhi. Therefore in highest yoga tantra the six branches must be present within the practices for the supreme attainment. The ways of explaining these six yogas in the different traditions, however, do not have to be identical. If that were not the case, then all completion-stage practices would have to be the same. The same reasoning could also be applied to all generation-stage practices, which would mean that the teaching of limitless tantras for the sake of the many different types of disciples would be meaningless because the teaching of just one tantra would suffice. Therefore most sādhanas of the generation stage are similar in that they can all be condensed into the practices of the three samādhis—initial yoga, and so on—but there is much divergence on what needs to be done to accomplish these three. Likewise, with the completion stage there is unanimity that there has to be a system of the six-branch yoga, but there are many different presentations of it. It is not the case that presentations with similar sounding names such as *individual withdrawal* have similar content. [82] There are countless instances in sutra and tantra of one term with many different meanings and one meaning with many different names.

How the six-branch yoga is compiled within the five stages

1. Presentation of different traditions
2. Examination of the validity or nonvalidity of those traditions

Presentation of different traditions

1. The commentarial traditions
2. Tibetan traditions

The commentarial traditions

Here the compiler is the six stages, which includes body isolation as a separate stage, and that to be compiled is the six-branch yoga. The six yogas from the tradition of the *Three Bodhisattva Commentaries*, Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* tradition and its followers, Ratnākaraśānti's *Handfuls of Flowers* tradition, Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* tradition,

and the explanations of Tathāgatavajra that follow Cakrasaṃvara Lūipa all use the same terms but employ very different meanings. Therefore I will not explain how they are to be compiled but will teach how the six yogas as taught in the *Later Tantra* and whose meaning is explained in Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* are compiled into the six stages.

Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon* commentary states that the "brief stage," or generation stage, comprises the yogas of *individual withdrawal* and *meditative absorption*. Individual withdrawal involves meditation on the deity. Focusing by conventional and ultimate analysis makes up the *conceptualization* and *analysis* branches of meditative absorption. Approaching an engagement with reality is *joy* and *bliss*, and the mind focused solely on emptiness is *single-pointed mind*. These comprise the five branches of the yoga of meditative absorption. The withdrawing of the winds into the indestructible drop is *prāṇāyāma*. Although it is not explained as being incorporated into the five stages here, prāṇāyāma is incorporated into vajra repetition. The branch of *apprehending* is the illusory body and clear light because the text explains:

> In the nature of illusion, the form of the vajra holder, possessing the entity of clear light, is *apprehending*.[289]

After the clear light, in an instant, the complete form of the vajra holder is *recollection*. Meditation on that as the entity of union is *samādhi*, and so the last two branches are explained as union. Abhayākaragupta's text says this is "an explanation that follows and is the essence of *Illuminating Lamp*."

For Bhavyakīrti's *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp*, individual withdrawal and meditative absorption are mind isolation. Prāṇāyāma is vajra repetition, apprehending is clear light, and recollection and samādhi are included in the stage of union. Kumāra's *Essence Mirror* also follows this listing. These two works also follow the tradition of incorporating the six yogas into the five stages as taught in the *Illuminating Lamp*. [83]

For Ekādaśasvara, the verse beginning "The ten senses," which explains the yoga of individual withdrawal, is said to be the basis of body isolation. The next four verses, beginning "The five objects of desire," explain meditative absorption as the actual body isolation. In this text the two lines beginning "Tantra of secrets" are missing.[290] Then the next two verses beginning "Five exalted wisdoms," which teach prāṇāyāma, are speech isolation. The

two verses beginning "The powerful," which teach the branch of apprehending, are asserted as being mind isolation. Illusory body is taught by the line "created from individual appearance" because "in order for wisdom to break the pride, it is hidden at the end of the fifth branch."

The method of *held-as-a-whole*[291] for actualizing the clear light is taught by the line "Method and wisdom meditatively joined," referring to the union of the vajra and lotus of father and consort. *Subsequent dissolution*[292] is taught by the two lines "All phenomena, if condensed, are condensed into a mass." The creation of the signs that occurs at this time is taught by two and a half verses beginning "The mind becomes the vajra cessation." Clear light is the great secret and is therefore explained as being spread across the fifth and sixth yogas. "The mind becomes the vajra cessation" and so on teaches the fifth branch, and the three lines beginning "Method and wisdom meditatively joined" are asserted to be the text on the sixth branch.

The stage of union is said to be taught by the five lines beginning with "The supported." Illusory body, clear light, and union are said to be divisions of the branch of recollection. The three lines beginning "In the middle, form," which teach the branch of samādhi, are explained as being the spontaneous path. The three lines that teach the sixth branch also teach the clear light as explained previously, and therefore he has to assert that one part of clear light is contained within the sixth branch. Although this work does not actually quote *Illuminating Lamp* as its reference, it is evidently an explanation of the six-branch yoga in reliance upon the *Later Tantra* and as explained in *Illuminating Lamp*, and it therefore follows that tradition of incorporation.

Tibetan traditions

The scholar Len,[293] an early follower of Gö, says that all six yogas can be condensed into the samādhi on reality and its corresponding tantric activities. Individual withdrawal teaches tantric activities during the phase of the illusory body, while the remaining five yogas teach samādhis. The *conceptualization* and *analysis* branches of meditative absorption are body isolation. The branch of *joy* is the benefit of body isolation. [84] Prāṇāyāma is speech isolation, while the branch of *bliss* is its benefit. The branch *single-pointed mind* is mind isolation. The benefits of meditative absorption, as illustrated by the line "the actuality of every buddha,"[294] refers to illusory body. Apprehending is clear light. Recollection and samādhi are the stage of union. This too

follows the tradition of incorporating the six yogas as taught by *Illuminating Lamp*.

Some in the Marpa tradition assert that individual withdrawal is incorporated into body isolation, meditative absorption into mind isolation, prāṇāyāma into vajra repetition, apprehending into mind isolation, and recollection into illusory body. They say that clear light and union are incorporated into samādhi, and evidently they are saying that the last is incorporated into the previous two. They maintain that this is the Kālacakra tradition of incorporating the six yogas.

Some later Tibetan scholars[295] state that Abhayākaragupta's assertion of the yogas of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption as generation-stage practices is completely wrong because it contradicts the *Later Tantra*, which explains that the approach practice of the four vajras of the generation stage produce the ordinary siddhis and that an accomplishment other than an accomplishment by way of the six-branch yoga will not be an accomplishment of the supreme state.[296] Therefore the six branches are the exclusive approach practices for achieving the supreme state, and the generation stage is not able to achieve that state. They also maintain that Len's assertion that individual withdrawal teaches tantric activities and that meditative absorption teaches body isolation is completely wrong. This is because to include tantric activities in the first of the practices to gain the supreme state contradicts the order, and because the benefits of the cessation of the arising of both knowable phenomena and knowing consciousness do not occur in body isolation. They maintain that individual withdrawal and meditative absorption are incorporated into illusory body because the *Stainless Light Commentary* says:

> *Self-consecration*
> is the signs of seeing
> the three realms in the emptiness.[297]

Also the *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* says:

> Here *self-consecration* refers to seeing the conventional truth, smoke and so forth, in individual withdrawal.[298]

Prāṇāyāma is vajra repetition and apprehending is clear light. Recollection is illusory body from the aspect of seeing a pure image similar to that

seen during individual withdrawal, and is mind isolation from the aspect of the path of experiencing the dissolution experienced at that time. This is because mind isolation is regarded as being the appearance, increase, and close-to-attainment of the path, and these are synonymous with the three joys. Samādhi is explained as being union. This they maintain is how the six yogas of the Kālacakra tradition are incorporated into the five stages.

Examination of the validity or nonvalidity of those traditions

1. Examination of the commentarial traditions
2. Examination of the Tibetan traditions

Examination of the commentarial traditions

For refuting the assertion that individual withdrawal and meditative absorption are generation-stage practices as found in Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon*, [85] the quote, produced above, that the generation stage produces common siddhis and the six branches accomplish the supreme siddhi, is not effective. If it were effective in refuting this assertion, this would contradict the fact that one path can produce both siddhis, in which case it would follow that the paths of the completion stage could not produce the common siddhis. In the statement that an accomplishment other than an accomplishment by way of the six-branch yoga will not be an accomplishment of the supreme state, the phrase "other than an accomplishment by way of the six-branch yoga" means if it is not accomplished by the six-branch yoga, it is not an achievement of the supreme. It is not at all saying that paths other than those of the six branches are not causes that produce the supreme siddhi. It is true that an accomplishment by way of the generation stage alone will not be an accomplishment of the supreme state, but how is it contradictory to say that the generation stage is a cause for the supreme siddhi? If it were otherwise, the same could be said for the completion stage.

As the individual branches of the completion stage cannot produce the supreme, we would have to say that they too are not paths that produce the supreme. If the generation stage were not at all suitable to be a cause for achieving the supreme, then how would that not contradict the statement that there are common and supreme approach practices and that *common* means being causally common in the sense of being a cause for both siddhis? Also, it would mean that everything explained in the sādhanas of Bhagavan

Akṣobhya, Cakrasaṃvara, and so on would be uncertain, and it would contradict all the statements made in the section explaining the benefits of meditating upon these sādhanas that such meditation is a cause for becoming a buddha.

If both paths are methods for achieving both siddhis, you might wonder what it means to describe these two individually as creators of ordinary and supreme siddhis. Even without relying upon the completion stage, the common siddhis will be produced by the generation stage. Therefore it is the producer of the common siddhis. The generation stage ripens the roots of virtue for generating the insights of the completion stage, but the main path for producing the supreme siddhi is the completion stage. Therefore it is said to be the producer of the supreme. In terms of being producers of the siddhis, however, these two are not mutually exclusive.

Other authentic works describe individual withdrawal and meditative absorption by way of the completion stage. The thinking of Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* is that it would have to ascribe them to the generation stage. Therefore, generally, you should not assign individual withdrawal and meditative absorption as a whole to either generation stage or completion stage but accept that there are two sides to this. Specifically, whichever side your own scriptural tradition takes, follow accordingly. In that case, if they are described as being on the completion stage side, as the Ārya tradition does, I think that is correct.

I cannot see describing apprehending as the illusory body as being correct, but this will be explained later. On the question of whether the explanation of incorporation found in Bhavyakīrti's *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp* is correct, if this is dealt with later after identification of the six branches, it will be easier to understand.

Ekādaśasvara's explanation of individual withdrawal as the basis for body isolation [86] comes from his understanding of *Illuminating Lamp*'s description of individual withdrawal as being the basis of purification and meditative absorption as the purifier. The two verses beginning "The powerful," which teach the branch of apprehending, are asserted as being mind isolation. Illusory body is taught by the line "created from individual appearance," the three lines that teach the last branch refer to the two meditative absorptions, and union is taught separately from the branch of samādhi. The last three lines teach the "spontaneous path" as separate from union. These assertions are not correct, and the reasons why will be easier to understand if they are dealt with later in the section on the texts of the six branches.

Examination of the Tibetan traditions

Some Tibetans when refuting Len for asserting that individual withdrawal teaches tantric activities say that to put tantric activities at the beginning of the practices to gain the supreme state contradicts the order. But that reasoning could also be applied to their own assertions. Their assertion that individual withdrawal and meditative absorption teach illusory body is incorrect, because to say that the illusory body appears at the beginning of the practices to gain the supreme state is even more contradictory. If you reply that being mentioned first does not mean it appears first, well then the same argument could apply to Len's assertion on tantric activities. If you are talking about errors in the order, then this must apply equally to the six branches and the five stages. Therefore, to assert that the illusory body of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption is created before the prāṇāyāma vajra repetition, and that after the clear-light branch of apprehending the mind isolation of recollection and the third-stage illusory body of recollection are created, is totally contradictory. Furthermore, in the five stages, the paths of prāṇāyāma, mind isolation, and illusory body are without question generated in that order. Therefore it would follow that in Kālacakra, also, the vajra repetition of prāṇāyāma and the mind isolation of recollection would have to come before the illusory body of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption, and that one part of recollection would have to come before apprehending, because you accept that these are all synonyms.[299]

This kind of error comes from emphatically declaring phenomena that cannot possibly be synonymous to be synonymous. Likewise, you assert that illusory body is the eleventh level, clear light is the twelfth, which, when counted from the stage of belief,[300] becomes the thirteenth. Therefore twelve of the levels are ārya levels. In that case, the illusory body of the eleventh ārya level would be achieved at individual withdrawal, the very beginning of the creation of the supreme siddhi, and other similar contradictions would follow.

There is also the following contradiction: The branch of samādhi from the Kālacakra tradition would begin from the stage of ordinary being and yet it is taught as the stage of union. Concerning the statement "The benefits of the cessation of the arising of both knowable phenomena and knowing consciousness do not occur in body isolation," which was put forward as the reason why it is incorrect to say that meditative absorption teaches body isolation, the previous proponent is asserting that the single-pointed mind focused upon the cessation of the arising of both knowable phenomena and

knowing consciousness is mind isolation. Therefore the criticism does not apply. [87]

Although *self-consecration* and *conventional truth* are found both in the Ārya master and disciples tradition and in the Kālacakra corpus and have the same names, they have different meanings. For example, in the five stages as explained by Ghaṇṭapāda, meditation on the drop inside the heart is said to be self-consecration. There are many such examples. Explanations by other Tibetan masters incorporating the Kālacakra six yogas into the six stages also seem to fall into the position of explaining them as if they were similar in meaning. Their invalidity can also be understood by the above presentation.

Nāropa too, in his commentary on the *Later Tantra*, explains the six yogas of the *Later Tantra* in keeping with the explanation found in *Illuminating Lamp*, but in his *Commentary on a Short Teaching on Initiations*, he explains them according to Kālacakra. Therefore it is not right to treat them as synonymous, but it is perfectly acceptable to examine them and find how they can act as alternatives, because such an analysis will bring about a decisive understanding of each tradition.

I will explain this point a little. The individual withdrawal and meditative absorption of Kālacakra are purifiers of the dhūtī and act as preliminaries for the prāṇāyāma, which brings the winds into the dhūtī. So although you do not meditate exactly as it is taught in that tradition, since it is evident that the dhūtī is to be purified before the winds are induced into it, they can act as alternative practices. Similarly, Kālacakra prāṇāyāma brings the winds into the dhūtī. Holding that intake of winds firmly at the center of the cakras is *apprehending*. Therefore you do not meditate on prāṇāyāma and apprehending as explained there, but if such explanations clearly exist as methods to accomplish those needs, then they can be employed as alternative practices.

Likewise, through the power of meditation built on the previous practice, the caṇḍālī fire blazes, melting the bodhicitta, which falls to the tip of the secret place, producing the experience of joy. This is *recollection*. The unchanging bliss of the bodhicitta being prevented from emission is *samādhi*. Again, you do not meditate exactly as taught in that tradition, but if they are seen to exist as paths with the ability to accomplish these needs, they can be alternatives.

Therefore, for the sake of being able to accomplish those needs, if other paths such as the five stages are examined and they are asserted as not being identical, these paths may be mutually incorporated, and what is needed at a particular time will still be accomplished. In this way, you will gain a fearless

confidence in the points of a particular path of any tantra you engage in. This way of thinking should be applied to other paths too. You should regard this as a way to analyze exclusively for those of great intelligence.

As for Len ascribing individual withdrawal to tantric activities, they may share similar features, [88] but the *Later Tantra* teaches these activities quite separately from the six branches. Putting that aside, if the six-branch yoga is to be applied to the six stages of the completion stage, assigning individual withdrawal and meditative absorption to body isolation, as Ekādaśasvara has done, is correct. In the explanations from *Illuminating Lamp*, there are three kinds of prāṇāyāma involving meditation of the three "tips of the nose."[301] Thus there are prāṇāyāma practices that are not actually speech isolation or vajra repetition. If speech isolation and vajra repetition are labeled, however, as prāṇāyāma because of being the main prāṇāyāma practices, then the others can be incorporated into these two. By sharing similar characteristics with the single-pointed state of the branch of meditative absorption, and with the three kinds of empty states preceding the entrance into clear light, mind isolation may be compared to meditative absorption, but nowhere is this written. Apprehending is described in *Illuminating Lamp* as being synonymous with clear light. Therefore it is not right to say that it teaches mind isolation and illusory body. Recollection refers to the arising of the appearances that occur in the clear-light reversal process, and samādhi is union, as *Illuminating Lamp* makes perfectly clear. Any other interpretation makes no sense. This will be explained in detail later.

The illusory body of the third stage may compare to the illusory body of the stage of union by having similar features, but there are no actual words stating this in the explanations commenting on texts dealing with the six branches. It will be explained later that it makes no sense to say that the line "All the buddhas in reality" is teaching the illusory body. When these points are explained in greater detail, the illusory body and mind isolation will emerge, and so there is no fault of not incorporating within the six branches important completion-stage paths that produce the supreme siddhi.

Determining the order of the stages

In Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages*, the two stages of generation and completion are said to be like the steps of a stairway. It is similar with the five stages of the completion stage because the text says that by abiding in vajra repetition you attain focus on the mind, that the illusory body is purified by the ultimate

reality[302] that is clear light, and that arising from that state you achieve the nondual union. From this we can also understand that by abiding in focus-on-mind you also attain the illusory body. This is also an order, therefore, in which the latter arises in dependence upon the former.

What is not extensively taught in *Five Stages* on this order is explained more extensively in Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*, which talks about a sequence of "trained in the thinking of the Buddha Vehicle," meaning developing the two kinds of bodhicitta followed by the coarse single-thought deity yoga, the subtle conceptual yoga, and the stages from body isolation to the stage of union, whereby you train in the preceding level in order to move on to train in the succeeding level. Also, beginning from body isolation, it states that without the preceding level, the succeeding level will not arise. Therefore this definitive order has to be accepted. [89] Apart from this particular explanation, the root and explanatory tantras and the works of the five, the Ārya master and his disciples, do not offer any clear teachings on the reasons for the establishment of this order. Kashmiri Lakṣmī says:

> First the ordinary body has to be purified. This is performed by the generation stage from the first yoga up to the body isolation of the hundred families. Then comes speech isolation for purifying speech followed by mind isolation for purifying the ordinary mind. Then, in order to bring previous prayers to fruition, to cast aside the doctrine of nihilism as taught by Maheśvara, to be able to work for living beings until the end of the eon, and to abandon the truth of cessation as found in the enlightenment of the śrāvakas, the illusory body is taught. If there is attachment to that, there will be apprehension of it. Therefore, for its purification, this is followed by clear light. In order to abandon the extreme of nihilism with respect to the clear light, union is taught.[303]

An earlier Tibetan scholar says:

> Until the inside of the lute is thoroughly cleaned, no sweet sound will emerge. Likewise, until the body is isolated from its basic state by the body-vajra samādhi, speech isolation will not emerge. If it is isolated, however, it will emerge. Until you gain control over the horse-like winds, the mount of the mind, you will not gain control over the rider-like mind. From gaining control over

> the winds through speech isolation comes mind isolation. In mind isolation, if there is no awareness of all phenomena as being merely the entity of the natural-awareness state of mind, which is the coarsest level of mind isolation, then there will be no awareness of the conventional as just an illusion, which is the subtlest level. Alternatively, if there is no samādhi on the bliss of natural awareness, the illusory body will not emerge because the illusory body is brought about by just that. Without analytically discerning a pot, its characteristic of impermanence cannot be discerned. Similarly, until the illusory body, which is the possessor of characteristics, is completed, the clear light of its dissolution by way of the two meditative absorptions will not emerge. Without the preceding non-appearance clear light, the union of inseparable emptiness and appearance cannot be understood. For example, in order for the mind to discern the inseparable emptiness and appearance of an image in a mirror, it first has to discern that the image lacks the reality of being a face.[304]

Some from the Marpa tradition describe the order as follows: The first two stages are similar to the description by Lakṣmī. Then, to show that body and speech are incorporated into mind, mind isolation is taught. To abandon the apprehension of the reality of mind isolation, illusory body is taught. To abandon the apprehension of that as just an illusion, clear light is taught. And to abandon the extreme of nihilism, union is taught.

In the first of these three traditions, the three isolations purify the taints of the three gateways of body, speech, and mind, [90] and these taints are to be removed in order, beginning with the coarsest. Therefore it is thought that this is how the order is ascertained. Also, it is asserted that the extreme of nihilism occurs in mind isolation, and so to remove it, the accomplishment of the illusory body is taught. Then to remove any perception that holds to the extreme of permanence with regard to that illusory body, clear light is taught. And to abandon any nihilism with regard to the clear light, the stage of union is taught. It is not explained here that a preceding isolation necessarily induces a following isolation. Also, the path that is being taught in order to abandon the extreme of nihilism will develop into the extreme of permanence, and the path to abandon that will develop into the extreme of nihilism. That would be like washing an elephant.[305] Therefore this is not suitable to be a true path.

The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Without realizing the conventional truth, you cannot actualize the ultimate truth.[306]

This is saying that before actualizing clear light, you have to "know"—meaning "achieve"—the illusory body. Therefore this must be presenting a reason from the standpoint that actualizing the clear light has to be preceded by the creation of the illusory body. How can it possibly be saying that in order to abandon apprehending with regard to the illusory body you have to enter the clear light? The reasons for the sequence that runs mind isolation, illusory body, clear light, and union must be similarly explained. I cannot see sense in any other explanation. Furthermore, to say that mind isolation is taught to generate the understanding that body and speech are incorporated into mind is an error that reveals a none-too-subtle analysis of the generation of the aspect and focus of mind isolation. The *Compendium of Practice* says that having precisely understood the truth of the mind, you enter into the practice of the illusory body.[307] Therefore it makes no sense to say that in mind isolation any doubts concerning holding to true existence are severed later by the illusory body, because it is taught that right from the time of the generation-stage meditations, the meaning of emptiness has to be well ascertained.

The second position above states that speech isolation brings the winds under control, the power of which will induce mind isolation; that mind isolation acts as the foundation for the creation of the illusory body; that the clear light has to be actualized by the power of the two meditative absorptions bringing the illusory body into the clear light; and that to accomplish one component of the stage of union, the clear light must necessarily precede it. The reasons for determining this order are excellent. Nonetheless, giving the example of the lute as a reason for the order of the first two isolations does not establish the correspondence between the example and what it is supposed to signify.

Determining the number of stages

1. Main point
2. How other paths are incorporated

Main point

[91] The *Compendium of Practice* explains the sequenced training on the path as described above and then states that once the stage of union has been attained, there are no further stages of training on the path. *Five Stages* also says:

> Dwelling in the samādhi of union,
> there is no further practice at all.[308]

Therefore there is nothing that is not included in those stages of the path. It is also taught that these are the stages you have to train in, and so other paths not included in those stages are not needed. This negates there being any higher number of stages. Without this number of stages, the result could not be attained, which negates the number of stages being any lower. Therefore this determined number of stages has to be accepted. Nevertheless, clear reasons for determining this number are not actually stated in the two tantras or by the master and his disciples. On this point, Lakṣmī says that the three isolations isolate—meaning *purify*—body, speech, and mind. Clear light isolates, or purifies, the conventional and the ultimate truth. Union achieves the Vajradhara state of the one taste of the two truths. Beyond that there is nothing more to practice, and so six stages are unnecessary. By precisely the number of practices described above, your wishes will be fulfilled, and so there are not just four stages. Rather, the number is determined to be five.

Bhavyakīrti follows the above description of the sequencing of the first three stages. Then with the three gateways purified comes the attainment of self-consecration in order to work for living beings. Any actual apprehension to that is removed by the clear light. Any nihilistic views regarding clear light are removed by the stage of union. Beyond that, there is nothing more to practice; therefore a sixth stage does not exist. Without these two, however, the wishes of self and others could not be fulfilled, and so there are no fewer than five.

Earlier Tibetans established six stages on the basis of suppressing the manifest obscurations and of completely uprooting the seeds. The suppressing of manifest mental afflictions and conceptualizations are presented as the three isolations. Mental quiescence as the foundation of bliss and emptiness is body isolation. Bringing the winds under control resulting in no arising of conceptualization is speech isolation. These two are conditions for the suppression. Mind isolation is the actual suppression because bliss and emptiness is

generated in the continuum through dependence on a consort. With illusory body the emptiness of objects is realized, and so the seed of object conceptualization that grasps a self-continuum of those objects is abandoned. With clear light, the emptiness of mind is realized, and so the seed of consciousness conceptualization that grasps the apprehending mind is abandoned. In union, the seed of grasping the two truths as separate is abandoned. Beyond these, there is nothing else to be abandoned.

The first two positions above may have different wording but are essentially the same, and their validity, or lack of it, has already been examined. In the way that the third position is expressed, from the perspective of what is to be abandoned, we would have to say that this path alone would suffice. [92] However, if you express the path of suppressing as emptiness and bliss united, you are not accepting that although the emptiness to be focused upon is similar to that of the Perfection Vehicle, the way of meditating on mental quiescence and special insight is not. Therefore you cannot establish two separate paths for mental quiescence and special insight. For the three latter paths also, it is not established that they are individually antidotes to these three kinds of conceptualization, and so I think this explanation is incorrect.

So what is it that determines the number of stages? It is determined by the final attainment. This is done by realizing that to reach that attainment these stages are necessary and anything not included in them is not necessary. This final attainment is that of the exclusive and resultant stage of union that brings together the exalted-wisdom dharmakāya and its basis, the form body. This has been described previously and will be described again later.

To attain such a union, you have to produce a path-of-practice union, in which the ultimate clear light of the exalted wisdom of great bliss directly engaged in the meaning of reality comes together with the completely pure, conventional-truth illusory body produced from the cause of the five-light wind, which acts as the mount of the exalted wisdom. The two parts of this union of the two truths must be first produced individually. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Without realizing the ultimate truth, you cannot actualize the stage of union.[309]

It also says that without first attaining the conventional illusory body, you cannot actualize the clear light. Thus, as a basis for directly engaging in the clear light, the illusory body must be developed first. The reasons for this will be explained later. Third-stage illusory body and fourth-stage clear light are

not present at the time of union. Therefore they are not actually the two parts of this union. In general, however, conventional illusory body and ultimate clear light can be considered to be the parts of union, and I am explaining here on the basis of the former two being the latter two.

The foundation for the formation of such an illusory body is the wind and the mind. The mind is that of mind isolation with its three exalted wisdoms, which has been created from the process of the winds dissolving into earth and water and gradually gathering into the heart, from the dissolution process of the winds that move the conceptual minds of the eighty intrinsic natures, and so on. *Wind* refers to the mount of that mind. Therefore mind isolation has to precede illusory body. In order to perform this special dissolution process at the heart through this method, you have to practice the two meditations of the outer prāṇāyāma of union with a karma consort and a wisdom consort, and the inner prāṇāyāma of meditating on winds, drops, and so on. Therefore, before mind isolation, you have to accomplish the stage of speech-isolation vajra repetition.

Speech isolation and vajra repetition are the names of one aspect of prāṇāyāma. [93] The general name for this stage is prāṇāyāma, the third of the six branches, as mentioned in the *Later Tantra*. There are three kinds of prāṇāyāma: meditation on the substance drop at the lower nose-tip,[310] on the indestructible mantra drop at the heart nose-tip, and on the light drop at the tip of the nose on the face. Of the two nose-tips of the lower gateways of method and wisdom, you meditate on the substance drop of the wisdom, and therefore this is teaching union with the two types of consorts. There are two occasions for prāṇāyāma union with the two types of consort: one before vajra repetition is completed and one after completion.

Generally, why it is necessary to produce as the foundation for the creation of the illusory body the mind and wind that arise from the gathering and dissolution of the winds in the dhūtī at the heart has already been explained. Precise reasons why and the way that the two consorts become methods for gathering the winds in the heart will be explained later.

To achieve this prāṇāyāma path, which is the special gathering process that brings the winds to the heart, it is first necessary to meditate by focusing on other vital points of the body. It is necessary to meditate on the practice of body isolation, in which, generally, you meditate on bringing the two winds into the dhūtī, where they dissolve to induce the innate bliss. Whatever appears is regarded as the play of that bliss and meditated upon as being an aspect of the deity. There is no definitive cakra assigned for these other

vital points of the body, but here the dissolution begins from the meditation on the drop at the lower gateway.

To bring to maturation in your continuum the roots of virtue necessary for the creation of the entire completion stage, first the generation stage has to be meditated upon. This stage purifies the mental continuum by taking birth, death, and the intermediate state as the three enlightened forms and comprises the coarse single-thought yoga and the subtle conceptual yoga on the mandala in four sessions. To become a suitable vessel for the meditations of the two stages, you have to receive a complete and pure initiation and guard the pledges and vows you have taken. To become the complete and definitive vessel for receiving an initiation and guarding the pledges, you have to practice the stages of the common paths, which exercise the two types of bodhicitta and its supplementary branches, as explained previously. Enhancement activities are taught and illustrated by outer prāṇāyāma.

This clarifies the number of all paths of the two stages, and of the stages of the second stage. From this you can also know the order of the stages and that all are necessary for a single person to become a buddha. Therefore Lakṣmī, Bhavyakīrti, and others are correct when they say that a single person needs all five stages and that the individual stages are not for different beings. [94]

Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon Commentary* states, however, that the last two stages are for the best person, the third and fourth stages are for the intermediate person, the generation stage and vajra repetition are for the lesser person, and those two plus verbal recitation are for the lesser of the lesser. It also says that the position of others is that this gradation of best, intermediate, and lesser refers to successive periods of development within the mind of a single person and that its own position is that it refers to distinct and separate persons. This contradicts the works of the Ārya master and his disciples that teach the order of the stages. It even contradicts Abhayākaragupta's *Garland of Perfected Yoga.*

When applying this determination of the number of stages to other tantras, the last three stages should be approached as explained above. For the *Cakrasaṃvara* five stages and Kukkuripa's instructions on the *Mahāmāyā Tantra* and others that actually teach the dissolution process at the heart, it is easy to understand how they are incorporated as described above. Even for the paths of those tantras that do not teach dissolution process at the heart but speak about penetrative focusing upon the vital point at the navel and so on, understand how they are finally incorporated into a dissolution at the

heart. Other tantras do not mention body isolation by name, but if they contain its essential meaning, they are also similar. Even those tantras that do not contain the essential meaning of body isolation are not contradictory for the reasons already explained. These, too, understand as following the dissolution at the heart, which is easier to perform. The above reasoning should be applied to the generation stage also. The common paths are the same for all.

How other paths are incorporated

Illuminating Lamp says:

> This is the supreme branch of accomplishment,
> a compilation of all tantras.[311]

The meanings of all tantras are compiled into these five stages and the generation stage. Do not take this to mean only "all Guhyasamāja tantras." They incorporate all tantras. The same passage states that Guhyasamāja is the root of all classes of tantra and is the basket that contains all sutras. Therefore the following quote from this work should also be seen as referring to all tantras and not just to Guhyasamāja:

> Of the divisions of these stages,
> there are many elaborations;
> whoever knows how they are perfectly compiled
> knows tantra.[312]

What does it mean to say that the stages of the paths of other tantras are elaborations of this tantra and that knowing how they are compiled here is to know the meaning of tantra? As explained previously, they are not compiled in the sense of being the same but by way of having similar functions. The way that the stages from body isolation to union are all necessary has been described previously. In that connection, know that the prime inducer of mind isolation is the dissolution process performed at the heart, and even for those tantras that do not actually teach the dissolution process at the heart but talk of gathering the winds at other places, such as the navel, [95] know how such a process will eventually culminate at the heart. For fear of becoming too wordy, however, I will not write of that now. Even for generation-stage practices that do not conform exactly to the Guhyasamāja,

if it is understood how they ripen the roots of virtue to create the completion stage in its entirety, then, from the perspective of their essential meaning, they all can be understood as being similar. Hence, a good understanding of how these paths are incorporated will produce a fearless confidence with regard to all points of the tantras.

In this connection, some people comment on the citation from *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* that comes after the verse ending "meditated upon in a single sitting," quoted previously, and which says:

> In order to understand this,
> the five-stage supreme path
> is explained and applied in a single sitting
> to the birth existence and a single day,
> and to the Perfection Vehicle, and various vehicles.[313]

They assert that this means: In the Perfection of Wisdom sutras, the Teacher sitting with upright body illustrates the generation stage. The millions of light rays radiating from his body teach vajra repetition. The eighteen varieties of emptiness express focus-on-mind. His words "Forms are like illusions" and so on teach the illusory body. "Form is without nature" and so on teach clear light, and "Nondual, never to be made dual" and so on teach union.

When applied to "various vehicles," the meaning is: The Śrāvaka Vehicle is incorporated into the generation stage, because the coarse appearance arising from the gathering together of subtle particles, as asserted by the śrāvakas, corresponds to the generation-stage conceptual yoga. The Pratyekabuddha Vehicle is incorporated into vajra repetition, because the vajra-repetition practice of the twelve wind shifts is correlated to the twelve links of the pratyekabuddhas. The Cittamātra Vehicle is incorporated into the stages of focus on the mind because both concentrate on the mind. The illusion-like state of Madhyamaka is included in the illusory body, because for both all phenomena are illusions. The nonabiding state of Madhyamaka is incorporated into clear light, because for both all phenomena are empty. All Secret Mantra Vehicles are incorporated into the stage of union, because all views found in mantra are the one-taste union of the two truths. This explanation is taken from *Five Points*. The same can be found in *Five Stages with Mantra Circle* and *Quintessence of Father Tantra*.[314]

In *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* the five stages are "explained and applied" to the Perfection of Wisdom Vehicle and various vehicles. The

meaning of "applied" here is not like the five stages of the basic state being applied to birth and death existence and to a "single day" as was explained previously. The teachings of the various Great and Lower vehicles generally, and the essential points of all the profound Perfection of Wisdom sutras specifically, are incorporated into the Guhyasamāja tantra, and the essential points of the Guhyasamāja path are incorporated into the five stages. It is to express this point that they are "explained and applied" accordingly. [96] The same work states:

> The path endowed with the five stages
> will illustrate the various words of the sutras
> that teach the dharmas belonging to enlightenment,
> the three hidden meanings, and the ultimate.[315]

Therefore the meanings of the various words of the sutras that teach the dharmas belonging to enlightenment and of the tantras that teach the three hidden phenomena[316] and the two ultimate phenomena are illustrated and explained as the five stages. The paths as they are actually taught in those other texts are not explicitly taught here; that is not the way that they are incorporated. Instead, the essence of these paths, which is gaining the freedom of liberation from samsara and accomplishing the level of omniscience, and more than that besides, are complete within the path taught here. Also, those other paths must finally culminate here. This is why it is the root of those other paths.

The reasons given by other traditions for other paths being incorporated into this path are uncertain and not established.



Part 4

Body Isolation

12. Identifying Body Isolation

Description of each division [97]

1. Training in the samādhis of the three isolations
2. Training in the samādhis of the two truths

Training in the samādhis of the three isolations

1. Training in the samādhi of the body-vajra body isolation
2. Training in the samādhi of the speech-vajra speech isolation
3. Training in the samādhi of the mind-vajra mind isolation

Training in the samādhi of body-vajra body isolation

1. Examining which of the two stages body isolation belongs to
2. The sequence of generation stage and the special body isolation
3. Identifying body isolation
4. Divisions of body isolation
5. How body isolation becomes the branches of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption
6. The way to practice body isolation

Examining which of the two stages body isolation belongs to

1. Presentation of individual traditions
2. Examining their validity
3. Presentation of our own tradition

Presentation of individual traditions

There is divergence as to which of the two stages body isolation belongs. Abhayākaragupta, Muniśrībhadra, Lakṣmī, Bhavyakīrti, and many others explain body isolation as generation stage. Guru Yoṣa and Abhijña assert it to be completion stage. Kṛṣnasamayavajra asserts that the body isolation of a hundred families, five families, and three families is generation stage, but the body isolation of a single family is completion stage.[317] This is explained by Gö Lhetsé in his *Great Overview*. Some of the Marpa tradition say that Nāropa also asserted it to be generation stage, but this is not so because in Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, these two are explained separately.

This disagreement has arisen for the following reasons: Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* says that by training in the single-thought and conceptual yogas, you abide in the samādhi of beginners, and that having dwelt in that, you then train in body isolation. It also says, "Beginning from the generation stage until the completion of body isolation . . ."[318] Therefore, as these two citations talk of generation stage and body isolation individually, body isolation is established as being within the completion stage. "Beginners" is asserted by this tradition as ranging from the initial meditations on the generation stage up to its completion. [98] *Five Stages* says:

> By the initial yogic practices,
> the eighth level is gained.[319]

And in the *Compendium of Practice*:

> In this Vajra Vehicle, from training in the generation stage, you gain the eighth level.[320]

The same work also states:

> The aggregates, constituents, and sources as just explained are for body isolation. Placing deities there is common to all and is the coarse yoga.[321]

Following on from this, the text goes on to say that speech isolation is not an object employed on the generation stage because it is far too subtle. From this it can be inferred that "common to all" means common to both stages,

and so body isolation has parts within both stages. Those who posit body isolation as solely generation stage seem to think that the process of meditating upon the aggregates and so on as deities is identical to the meditation on the purity of the individual deities of the generation stage.

For those who assert body isolation to be generation stage, at what point on the generation stage does it occur? Abhayākaragupta maintains that just the imagined[322] form of Vajradhara produced on the generation stage is body isolation taught in the generation stage. Therefore it is applied to the imagined main deity, for example. Although nothing clearer than that is explained, when other imagined deities are placed upon the body, they must also be imagined to be inseparable from the aggregates and so on, and so it seems that these practices also must be regarded as body isolation. He explains these as being created only by imagination, and so it would seem that he does not assert the body mandala created from a seed syllable to be body isolation.

Muniśrībhadra states only that body isolation is explained by the generation stage taught in Nāgārjuna's *Condensed Sādhana*, but he does not clarify how it is taught. The other two pandits[323] assert that having trained in the three samādhis, as taught in the *Condensed Sādhana*, you train in body isolation. Therefore they assert it to be generation stage, but they do not assert it to be the generation stage taught in the *Condensed Sādhana*.

Most Tibetan followers of the Gö tradition assert body isolation to be completion stage. Len asserts a coarse body isolation in which there is no detailed division of the aggregates and so on into groups of five, which is considered the branch of conceptualization, and a well-analyzed body isolation ranging from the hundred families to the single family, which is ascribed to the branch of analysis. The former he explains as generation stage and the common body isolation because the generation-stage practitioner meditates in this way in the higher yoga[324] part of the generation stage. The latter he asserts as the uncommon body isolation of the completion stage.

Examining their validity

So which of these different traditions should be followed? If you assert that the whole of body isolation is found in the generation stage taught in the *Condensed Sādhana*, you would not be able to resolve the fact that this contradicts the *Compendium of Practice* when it states that having trained in the samādhi of beginners, [99] you then train in body isolation. To posit body

isolation as being a separate generation-stage practice not included in the three samādhis taught in the *Condensed Sādhana* would be totally wrong, because apart from a few generation-stage practices at the occasion of accomplishing the feats, the three samādhis of the *Condensed Sādhana* teach all generation-stage practices that have to precede the completion stage. Also, having perfected both coarse and subtle generation stages of the *Condensed Sādhana*, it is not possible to point to a meditation on the appearance of deities of a body-isolation generation stage that has not already been experienced. Moreover, a body-isolation practice other than meditation on the forms of deities does not appear in these three samādhis.

To assert that the whole of body isolation is within the completion stage is also wrong because it is stated that body isolation is "common to all" whereas speech isolation is singled out as being a practice not employed by the generation stage. Also, it is taught that something is determined to be "common" or "uncommon" depending on whether it is coarse or subtle. Therefore "Placing deities there" is teaching the placement of deities on the aggregates as being common to both stages. Also, it is not possible to say that it does not teach that body isolation is common to both stages. Consequently, body isolation is divided across both stages.

Nevertheless, you should not make the kind of division Kṛṣṇasamayavajra has done, as described above. The *Compendium of Practice* states that body-isolation practices from a hundred families to three families are all incorporated into the body isolation of a single family. Therefore it is not right to assert that that which is to be incorporated is generation stage while that into which these are incorporated is completion stage.

If this body-isolation meditation on the aggregates as deities is a meditation on the appearance of the forms of deities, then once you have completed the generation-stage practice in which the complete supporting and supported mandala is held with total clarity and stability within a drop the size of a mustard seed, to say that then you have to meditate on such a body-isolation practice would mean that there would be no experience that could emerge in such a practice that had not emerged already. Therefore it would not be correct that having trained in that generation-stage practice, the stages of the path of training in this practice are then explained separately.

The division of the aggregates into groups of five may not be described clearly in the first stage of body-isolation practice. Nonetheless, once the coarse and subtle generation stage has been perfected, you can focus the mind on whatever appears and have the ability to generate immediately a

clear and stable appearance of it as a deity. Therefore it is not possible to say that "you cannot generate a detailed division," and for that reason I cannot see how Len's way of dividing body isolation over the two stages is correct.

Some say that the generation-stage practitioners newly generate deities while the body-isolation practice of meditating on the aggregates as deities [100] is completion-stage deity meditation in which they hold the view that they have been deities since time without beginning. This is evidently a statement that does not differentiate between the two kinds of deity generation of mantra body and exalted-wisdom body found in the two stages. Although it is not the kind of mental focusing on syllables, drops, and so on, found in the generation stage, the practice of focusing exists in the completion stage too. Because such a practice will create an uncontrived completion stage without the need for intervention from other different types of focusing, it is included in the completion stage, whereas thinking that the aggregates are primordially deities cannot create such a state. Moreover, such a way of meditating on the aggregates as deities is even greater than that of the generation stage in its mental contriving and analyzing. Therefore these two ways of viewing deities cannot be used to divide the two stages.

Likewise, even if completion-stage body isolation is designated as the objective aspect[325] of the mind realizing emptiness appearing as a deity, that too cannot be separated out from the generation stage, because this occurs within the generation stage when it is taught that before generating the deity, all is purified into emptiness through the mantra beginning *oṃ śūnyatā*. Moreover, the essential meaning of this practice should not be applied to the mere withdrawal of appearances without a good understanding of the view of emptiness.

Presentation of our own tradition

How is body isolation divided among the two stages? Within the body-isolation practice of holding the aggregates and so forth as deities, there are two modes of meditation: the objective aspect of the mind realizing emptiness appearing as the deity and not appearing as the deity. In the mode where it does appear as a deity, there is that which is realization of emptiness by the exclusive bliss and that which is not. In the realization of emptiness by the exclusive bliss, there is that which arises from the winds of the left and right channels entering and dissolving in the dhūtī and that which is not. Of these, body-isolation practices of the aggregates appearing as deities by way of the second meditation mode of the first pairing, the realization of emptiness that

is not cognition of emptiness by the bliss of melting, and the second of the third pairing are all found within the generation stage. Body-isolation practices of the aggregates and so forth appearing as deities by way of the first kind of meditation of the third pairing are found in the completion stage itself. Body-isolation practices of the generation stage in which the aggregates and so forth are meditated upon as deities are taught during the practices of gathering the imagined deities into the body mandala, dissolving the mandala, and regarding all appearing objects as Vajradhara. This also illustrates the teaching on the method and wisdom purity whereby the generation-stage practitioner regards the five objects as male and female deities. Training in such body-isolation practices occurs during the practices of the generation stage, and so the instruction that having trained in the samādhi of beginners, you then train in body isolation refers to completion-stage body isolation.

So where is the body isolation meditating on the aggregates and so forth as deities by way of great bliss explained? [101] It is taught by way of a citation from the *Tantra Equal to Space*, quoted in the *Compendium of Practice* in the section on the body-isolation meditations upon the five buddha families:

> All these beings, the nature of the five buddhas,
> appearing like dancers and beautiful paintings,
> everywhere the one "great bliss"
> dances with many an expression.[326]

A single dancer performs with a variety of masks and costumes. A single color such as blue appears in a number of different forms. Similarly, the single great bliss dances by way of a variety of expressions. This teaching is not to be taken as referring solely to Vajradhara but applies to all instances of great bliss on the path and at the resultant state. In that case, the meditation on the one great bliss appearing as the play of the five buddha families and others occurs during the body-isolation practices also. Moreover, this is not performed by focusing on the great bliss in the mind of another while lacking the great bliss in your own mind but is meditated upon by having developed the great bliss in your own mind. Therefore the *Compendium of Practice* at this point says that not from focusing on the form of an external deity, but by striving in bodhicitta, do you practice yoga with the deity:

> Not from images, molten metal, and so on
> does the yoga arise

but from striving in bodhicitta
does the yogi become the deity.
I am every buddha and every hero is me.
Therefore, by yoga with the deity,
I will practice.[327]

The bodhicitta mentioned in this citation from the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* is the bodhicitta of indivisible bliss and emptiness.

The *Hevajra Tantra* also says:

Definitively, the purity of all phenomena
is spoken of as their reality.
Outwardly, their individual divisions
are spoken of as the purity of the deities.[328]

Also:

Purity is the nature of self-perception;
freedom is not by another purity.
Because objective phenomena are pure,
the self-perceived great bliss . . .[329]

There are three purities. All external and internal phenomena being determined as empty of existing by way of their own nature is known as the purity of their reality and is the general purity. Meditation on the individual aggregates of form and so on as deities is the individual-deity purity. The great bliss perceived by the individual yogi is the purity of self-perception. On the second of these purities the same tantra says:

In the practices of the generation stage,
this purifies the aggregates.[330]

Therefore the individual-deity purity that does not involve meditation on deities by way of great bliss is said to belong to the generation stage. Great bliss is the completion-stage purity, while purity of reality is common to both stages. [102]

Therefore, if you do not understand the body-isolation deity-meditation practices of the completion-stage practitioner as explained above, there will

be no deity-meditation method to produce the exalted-wisdom body at this time, and although it may be posited as a completion-stage practice, the result cannot be differentiated from the method of producing the deity of the mantra body, and consequently it will not be an insight of this crucial point.

The great bliss of this stage is not established on the generation stage, however, and between the completion of the generation stage and the start of body isolation, there is no evident method for its development. Even during the time of body-isolation practice, there is no apparent method for its development. So how is great bliss produced at this time? Because this is a very difficult point within this topic, it will be explained by describing the sequence of attainment.

The sequence of generation stage and the special body isolation

What is the definitive sequence from the body-isolation practices of the generation stage to that of the completion stage? Generally, a complete meditation on the coarse and subtle generation stages acts as a ripening of the roots of virtue needed for the development of all the completion stages. Therefore it also acts as a ripening for the development of the completion-stage body-isolation practices. Specifically, the meditation on the deity implement or subtle drop within the jewel is a method of gathering the winds from the left and right channels into the dhūtī. Then, when the great bliss, as described above, is induced through this practice, it becomes an actual meditation on body isolation and is related in this way to subtle generation stage.

Where is it taught that the subtle meditation involving the lower gateway acts as a method for gathering the two winds into the dhūtī? Prāṇāyāma as taught in action and performance tantras is unable to gather the two winds into the dhūtī, as was explained previously. In prāṇāyāma meditation taught in highest yoga tantras, the Kālacakra corpus teaches many times that *prāṇa* refers to the two winds of the right and left channels, and *āyāma* means to stop these winds from flowing in the right and left channels and to bring them to the dhūtī. Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* and others do not explain the meaning of prāṇāyāma in that way, but the effect of its meditation is the same. Therefore, when commenting on the statement from *Later Tantra* that the subtle meditation on the secret tip is prāṇāyāma, *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* states:

> In the manner of *rajas*, *tamas*, and *sattva*,[331]
> the drop descends from the lotus of the heart

to abide within the center of the jewel.
Think of it in the supreme form of the five elements,
possessing the nature of the five wisdoms,
blazing with the five rays of light,
the subtle implement of your own deity.[332]

Then, as a summary:

Breath is stopped, the branch of the empty state. [103]

Therefore the inhaling and exhaling of the breath at the nostrils is halted, and this is the branch of creating the empty state of that process. This teaches that the branch of prāṇāyāma and the branch of halting the breath are one and the same.

Tathāgatavajra also says:

In the nature of the five elements, the life wind descends, condensed into the form of a bodhicitta drop the size of a mustard seed, and reaches the tip of the vajra. Meditate upon it with individual withdrawal, spoken of above, and with meditative absorption and its five branches. This is also drop yoga and is for stopping the breath emerging to the outside. Because of this, in the *Guhyasamāja Later Tantra*, it is called *prāṇāyāma*. This is only an illustration. The meditative absorption of the yoga of the subtle vowels and consonants at the navel or of the drops at the heart and so on will also fulfill the function of stopping the breath from emerging and is also known as *prāṇāyāma*. Specifically, by the power of these types of meditative absorptions, the life wind is stopped from flowing through the left and right channels, and so the endeavor (*āyāma*) of the *prāṇa* wind within the dhūtī, wherever it will flow, is known as *prāṇāyāma*.[333]

Therefore, through subtle meditation on the lower gateway, the winds flowing from the left and right channels to and from the nostrils are halted and brought into the dhūtī, and therefore in the *Later Tantra* this is called *prāṇāyāma*. That is only a partial illustration, because meditation involving focus upon drops and syllables at the navel, heart, and so on is clearly explained as being prāṇāyāma and fulfills the very same function. This explanation should also be applied to all completion-stage teachings on placing

syllables at places where cakras are situated. Concerning the mention of meditation by way of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption, he asserts these two to be generation stage, and so these are understood as meditations on the generation stage. One particular Indian text from the Jñānapāda tradition on the six yogas also explains it this way.

Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* mentions an eight-petal lotus within the jewel, and *Short Teaching on Initiations* speaks of "the lotus of the jewel." These also refer to the above, and by subtle meditation at these places, the winds can be brought to the dhūtī. In Abhayākaragupta's *Vajra Garland Mandala Procedures*, when it says, "Looking at the place within the jewel," "jewel" is changed to "lotus" when speaking of women.[334] This is similar to what is being described here, and therefore this practice refers to the female form too.

The Ārya tradition teaches that first you practice subtle meditation in the jewel. When that is stable you meditate upon the mandala within the drops sent into the lotus of the mother. Therefore generation-stage practitioners can meditate to a level of great stability on the subtle mandala, [104] but except for those winds that are easy to gather, they will find it difficult to dissolve the two winds inside the dhūtī. Thus, in all probability, when the subtle mandala has become stable and practitioners enter the body-isolation practice, they do meditate upon the drop or implement within the jewel, but after the two winds have entered the dhūtī, they meditate on the union of bliss and emptiness and so on of actual body isolation.

The teaching from the *Later Tantra* on the prāṇāyāma of meditating on the drops at the heart and lower gateway is explained as being the branch of halting the breath by Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*; the meaning of this is clearly explained by two Indian texts. In particular, they explain that all the meditations on drops and letters placed at the sites of the cakras and so on become causes for gathering the winds into the dhūtī, thereby making prāṇāyāma vaster in its scope. This is a truly wonderful teaching. If you do not know this, prāṇāyāma becomes much smaller in its scope, and you will not understand the need to apply the prāṇāyāma of the six yogas taught in many highest yoga tantras. Moreover, if you do not understand the point of the meditation involving clearly visualized cakras and the placing of drops and syllables, you will not understand the point of the meditations involving the placement of drops and syllables at places where the cakras are not clearly visualized, such as can be found in the two Guhyasamāja traditions, the five-stage practices of Ghaṇṭapāda, and so on. Therefore you will clearly

not develop any great ascertainment of the ultimate points of the instructions. On the other hand, if you do understand this process, it will without doubt lead to a wonderful ascertainment of the essential points of the instructions on these practices.

Not knowing precisely how to meditate on the completion-stage body isolation of this tradition comes from the fault of not understanding how the meditation on the subtle drops acts as a prāṇāyāma practice for gathering the two winds and how that is able to induce the great bliss.

Having completed the coarse and subtle generation stages, you can cause the bodhicitta to descend from the crown to the tip of the secret place by relying upon a wisdom consort, and with a strong and stable focus you will be able to halt it with the syllable *phaṭ*. Through this you will be able to develop the four joys. This, however, does not arise from the two winds having been gathered within the dhūtī and dissolving there, and so this cannot be said to be the great bliss of the completion stage. Therefore meditating on the aggregates and so on as deities by way of this kind of bliss-and-emptiness union is not asserted as the body-isolation practice of the completion stage.

Identifying body isolation

1. The tradition of others
2. Our own tradition

The tradition of others

Many Tibetan lamas assert four kinds of body isolation, explained as follows. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> This formation of a body exists as a heap. A portion of flesh . . .

and so on up to:

> . . . eyes, limbs, and so forth collected together are known as a *heap*.[335] [105]

This collection of thirty-six unclean substances is the *body*, which is explained as meaning a "heap." Therefore this section teaches body isolation in terms of its form, and its "isolation" from the superimposition of it as clean and in

a state of happiness as asserted by outsider and others is an understanding shared by the śrāvakas.

> Just as gathered grains, such as rice or barley, are called a *heap*, the collection of the five aggregates, the four elements, the six sources, the five objects, and the five wisdoms gathered within the limbs and trunk of the body are known as a *heap*.[336]

This teaches body isolation in terms of its nature because it is a collection of aggregates, elements, sources, and so on and is isolated from the single self imputed upon it. This is an understanding shared by the Perfection Vehicle.

> Because the constituents of discernment, views, mind, ignorance, imprints, desires, and mental afflictions come together in a continuum, it is called an *accumulation*. The collection or heap of consciousness cannot be focused upon because it dwells nowhere.[337]

This teaches body isolation in terms of consciousness because consciousness cannot be focused upon and is therefore isolated from the apprehending consciousness and the apprehended object. This is an understanding shared by the Cittamātrins.

> The aggregates, constituents, and sources from time without beginning dwelling with the pride of the ordinary are taught to have the nature of being produced from the atoms of every tathāgata.[338]

This teaches body-isolation samādhi because the body, empty of the two kinds of self, is divided among the hundred deity families and so on and so is endowed with the pride of being produced from the atoms of every tathāgata. This is the understanding exclusive to secret mantra.

Our own tradition

The explanation of the first three of the above assertions as types of body isolation is not found in any translated Indian text. Also, this is not the intention of the *Compendium of Practice* passage. So what is this passage conveying? First, it identifies the body as the basis of the isolation, and then

that is established as something to be isolated. The meaning of *body* is given as "accumulation," "heap," and "collection." This has three aspects. First, the way that the ordinary inner material body is heaped together is by way of the coming together of "a portion of flesh" and so on. This is expressed by the first passage. The *Vajra Garland* says the same. Then, the way that the body is described as a heap in the section listing the twenty-five constituents, such as the five aggregates heaped together, is that just as gathered grains, such as rice or barley, are called a *heap*, so the collection gathered within the limbs and trunk of the body are known as a *heap*. [106] Within the twenty-five are primary minds and states of mind, but their way of being "heaped" is different from the way form possesses its own individual status, which is like rice and so on. Therefore, to point out a quite different mode of accumulating, the passage continues with "Because the constituents come together . . ." and so on. This means that because the constituents of the sensory powers such as the eyes and the objects such as form come together, the mind as the six primary collections and states of mind such as discernment will arise. The way that these become accumulations, collections, or heaps is by the coming together of an unbroken continuum of many preceding and succeeding moments and not by a coming together at one particular time of many constituents possessing their own individual status. This is its meaning because by saying, "a continuum is called an *accumulation*," it is singling out a continuum. The line "the collection or heap of consciousness cannot be focused upon because it dwells nowhere" teaches that because consciousness has no bodily form, it does not exist as an object in the east and so on and therefore is not a coming together of many constituents possessing their own individual status. This does not negate the apprehending consciousness and apprehended object as separate substantial entities.

Just what this body as the basis of body isolation is isolated from is taught by "from time without beginning dwelling with the pride of the ordinary." The antidote to meditate upon is expressed by "are taught to be in the nature of having been produced from the atoms of the tathāgatas."

The ways that the mode of isolation is explained above, along with many other explanations, I do not see as having much meaning.

13. Types of Body Isolation

Divisions of body isolation

1. Body isolation of the hundred sacred families
2. Body isolation of the five reality families
3. Body isolation of the three secret families
4. Body isolation of the one greatly secret family

Body isolation of the hundred sacred families

1. The five aggregates division
2. The four elements division
3. The six sense powers division
4. The five objects division

The five aggregates division

The *Root Tantra* says:

> In brief, the five aggregates
> are proclaimed as the five buddhas.[339]

The body that is the isolation basis for the *aggregates* body isolation here is the five aggregates of form and so on. Meditation on these as the five buddhas is this particular body isolation.

The form aggregate as Vairocana is divided as: (1) inner, outer, and both inner and outer shapes, such as long and short; (2) aspects such as self, other, and both; (3) outer and inner colors, such as blue; (4) appearances such as the inner and outer sun and moon; (5) the five nonrevelatory forms. [107] Respectively these are the five families of Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, and Akṣobhya within this category of Vairocana.

The feelings aggregate of Ratnasambhava is divided as: (1) equanimity,

(2) feelings arising from phlegm and wind, (3) feelings of happiness, (4) feelings of suffering, (5) feelings arising from bile and a combination of the humors. These feelings within the Ratnasambhava category are those of Vairocana and so on.

The recognition aggregate of Amitābha is divided: (1) recognition of the unmoving and unchanging, (2) recognition of the four-legged, (3) recognition of those with no legs, (4) recognition of the many-legged, (5) recognition of the two-legged. These recognitions within the category of Amitābha are those of Vairocana and so on.

The formations aggregate of Amoghasiddhi is divided: (1) the body, (2) the three worlds, (3) speech, (4) freedom, (5) mental formations. These within the category of Amoghasiddhi are those of Vairocana and so on.

The consciousness aggregate of Akṣobhya is divided among the five consciousnesses from visual to bodily consciousness. These are those of Vairocana and so on within the Akṣobhya category.

The four elements division

The *Root Tantra* says:

> Earth is Locanā, water element is Māmakī,
> fire is Pāṇḍaravāsinī, wind is Tārā.[340]

The "body" that is the basis of the *elements* body isolation here is the four elements of earth and so on. These four meditated upon as deities is explained as being elements body isolation.

Earth-element Locanā is divided as follows. Of the inner and outer earth elements, the inner consists of the following: (1) hair, bones, excrement, liver, and heart; (2) body hair, nails, pus, and heart; (3) teeth, skin, flesh, and heart; (4) ligaments, muscle, ribs, and heart; (5) waste products, intestines, bile, and heart. As a source for there being five "hearts," at this point the *Compendium of Practice* cites the *Vajra Garland*:

> As for hearts, there are five
> arising as the five continua,
> endowed with the five winds,
> and enjoying the five objects of desire.[341]

As for the meaning of the second line, it is to be taken as found in the *Vajra Garland* translated by Darma Tsöndrü, which says, "arising from the five sense powers," because immediately after the line "enjoy the five objects of desire" it says:

> From whatever path of the senses
> the practitioner finds the objects.[342]

Also, the *Vajra Garland* says:

> In the heart's center, a phenomenon of bliss,
> a buddha sun of clear light,
> by the forms of the apprehended and apprehending,
> it becomes the twelve rays of light.[343]

The twelve winds arising from the center of the heart become the six winds of the apprehending consciousness and the six winds of the apprehended objects in dependence upon the paths of the sense powers. Therefore five hearts are posited because the seat of the five winds of the senses is in the heart, and the division is made on that basis.

The outer earth element is divided into five: Mount Meru, the southern, western, northern, and eastern continents. The five categories of inner and outer are divided among the five buddha families: Vairocana of earth-element Locanā and so on.

Water-element Māmakī is divided internally into phlegm and tears, menstrual blood, ordinary blood, saliva, and urine. Outer water elements are divided into waterfalls, rivers, [108] springs, ponds, and oceans. These too are divided into Vairocana of the water-element Māmakī and so on.

Fire-element Pāṇḍaravāsinī is divided internally into the heat of the head, navel, all the limbs, stomach, and heart. The outer is divided into heat from stones, fire crystal, wood, forests, and the continual fire.[344] These are divided into Vairocana of fire-element Pāṇḍaravāsinī, and so on.

Wind-element Tārā is divided internally into the pervading, evacuative, upward-flowing, fire-accompanying, and life-sustaining winds, and externally into the upper, southern, western, northern, and eastern winds. These are divided into Vairocana of wind-element Tārā and so on.

Counted individually, the inner and outer divisions of the four elements

make up two lots of twenty, but each outer and inner division is counted as one division, thereby making twenty divisions.

The six sense powers division

The *Root Tantra* says:

> The vajra sources also
> are the supreme mandala of the bodhisattva.[345]

The bases of isolation for the body isolation of the inner sources are the *six sense powers*, and meditation upon them as being bodhisattvas is this particular body isolation.

The eye-sense-power Kṣitigarbha is divided as: (1) the eye holding the three types of forms, (2) the whites of the eyes, (3) form of the eyes looking sideways, (4) eye movements, and (5) the eye sense power, which is the size of a grape. These are the Vairocana and so on of eye-sense-power Kṣitigarbha.

The ear-sense-power Vajrapāṇi is divided as: (1) the entity of the ear, (2) the ear apprehending the three types of sound, (3) the aperture of the ear, (4) the base of the ear, and (5) the ear sense power, which is like a twisted and torn piece of birch bark.[346] These are the Vairocana and so on of ear-sense-power Vajrapāṇi.

The nasal-sense-power Ākāśagarbha is divided as: (1) the entity of the nose, (2) the inside center of the nose, (3) the nose apprehending the three types of smell, (4) the nostrils, and (5) the nasal sense power, which is like a small eye-medicine spoon. These are the Vairocana and so on of nasal-sense-power Ākāśagarbha.

The tongue-sense-power Lokeśvara is divided as: (1) the entity of the tongue, (2) the base of the tongue, (3) the tip of the tongue, (4) the apprehending of the three tastes, and (5) the tongue sense power, which is shaped like a half moon. These are the Vairocana and so on of tongue-sense-power Lokeśvara.

The bodily-sense-power Viṣkambhi is divided as: (1) the bodily sense power, (2) the bones of the body, (3) the entity of flesh, (4) the entity of skin, (5) the apprehending of tactile phenomena. These are the Vairocana and so on of bodily-sense-power Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin.

The mental-sense-power Mañjuśrī, which is gathered into the three occasions of appearance, increase, and attainment, is divided into the five

wisdoms of mirror-like, equality, individual discernment, accomplishment, and dharmadhātu. These are the Vairocana and so on of mental-sense-power Mañjuśrī.

These five wisdoms are: (1) knowing all phenomena simultaneously like reflections in a mirror; (2) knowing that all four types of living beings—those who move without legs, with two legs, and so on—are merely mind, thereby understanding everything in one aspect; (3) [109] dividing and analyzing all outer and inner phenomena to understand that each is the entity of a buddha, while individually conceptualizing and knowing without doubt[347] that all parts of all phenomena are like the petals of a lotus; (4) accomplishing the physical, mental, and verbal activities for self and others; (5) having purified all obscurations of body, speech, and mind, and, being free of karma and mental afflictions, all imprints of virtuous and nonvirtuous deeds are cleansed. This is the description of the wisdoms in Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* from the resultant perspective.

In Nāgabodhi's *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana*, the first four wisdoms are described from the perspective of the dissolution process: (1) objects appearing clearly like reflections clearly appearing in a mirror; (2) a single-type equality with regard to the experience of the three feelings; (3) remembering the individual names of beings, such as your mother and father; (4) remembering worldly deeds and needs. The fifth wisdom is applied to the nature of the mental sense power, which is suitable for transformation if the stains are removed.

At this point the *Compendium of Practice* states, "This has been the explanation of the Mañjuśrī samādhi,"[348] and then the explanation of the five wisdoms comes after the description of the five deities—Rupāvajrā and so on taught below. It is not right, however, to think that the Mañjuśrī explanation should be an aside and the five wisdoms are to be explained separately. This is because, apart from the ten wrathful beings, Maitreya, and Samantabhadra taken from the thirty-two deities, each of the remaining deities is divided up into the five families. Also, the five wisdoms counted as the five families within the hundred families are compiled within the mental consciousness, and in the other sources, also, there are many instances of phenomena that may not be actual sources but that are included at that time.

The five objects division

The *Root Tantra* says:

> Form, sound, and so forth the mantra practitioner
> continually meditates upon as deities.[349]

The bases of isolation for the *objects* body isolation are the five sense objects, and the meditation upon them as Rūpavajrā and so on is this particular body isolation.

The moving wind that assists in the seeing of the five types of form depends upon the eye, and the seen form is Rūpavajrā, divided up as follows: (1) form seen generally by the coming together of the three conditions; (2) form desired; (3) form attractive, not attractive, and neutral; (4) form that accomplishes actions; (5) posed, playful, and seductive form. These are divided between Vairocana and so on of form Rūpavajrā.

The roving wind that assists with the hearing of sounds depends upon the ear, and this heard sound is Śabdavajrā. It is divided as follows: (1) sounds in the ears and sounds of the hair and head; (2) songs and continual sounds; (3) sounds of the palate, lips, and voice; (4) sounds of the forest and of rivers, musical sounds such the clapping of hands, and the sound of clay drums; [110] (5) peaceful and forceful sounds of *hūṃ*. These are the Vairocana and so on of sound Śabdavajrā.

The perfectly flowing wind that assists with the experiencing of smells depends upon the nose, and the experienced odor is Gandhavajrā. It is divided as follows: (1) odors in general, (2) branches of odor, (3) the three specific odors, (4) odors of tastes, and (5) unending odors. These are the Vairocana and so on of odor Gandhavajrā.

The intensely flowing wind that assists with the experience of taste depends upon the tongue, and this taste is Rasavajrā. It is divided into sweet, astringent, salty, hot and pungent, and bitter. These are the Vairocana and so on of taste Rasavajrā.

The definitively flowing wind that assists with the experience of tactile sensations depend upon the body, and these phenomena are Sparśavajrā. It is divided as follows: (1) the tactile sensation of sitting on a seat, (2) the tactile sensation of embracing, (3) the tactile sensation of kissing, (4) the tactile sensation of sucking, (5) the tactile sensation of the meeting of the two organs. These are the Vairocana and so on of tactile-sensations Sparśavajrā.

In this way each of the twenty is divided into five, and the way the deities appear is that Vairocana, for example, appears in five different colors and so becomes five deities but retains the normal number of faces and hands for Vairocana.

Having explained twenty of the thirty-two deities, why are the remaining twelve not explained here?[350] This is based on the fact that the *Root Tantra* clearly describes how the twenty phenomena from form aggregate to tactile sensations are to be meditated upon as deities but does not clearly describe how the ten limbs, the joints, and the channels and ligaments are to be meditated upon as the ten wrathful beings and the two remaining bodhisattvas. At the end of each of the four main sections, the text says, "This has been an explanation of the meaning of the treatise," referring to the *Root Tantra*. The same point is demonstrated in the verse cited in the *Compendium of Practice*, using the *Moon Secret Drop Tantra* as a source for the hundred families, their abridgement into five, and further abridgement into three. It is also taught in the *Later Tantra*:

> Explained as five realities, as three secrets,
> the extraordinary deity, the great secret,
> the sacred families in a hundred aspects.[351]

The explanatory tantra *Vajra Garland* also talks of the hundred families, and in that tantra's section on the body-isolation practices described in the hidden explanation of the Guhyasamāja introduction, the ten limbs are described as the ten wrathful beings,[352] and in the section describing the eye sense power as "Kṣitigarbha and so on," the phrase "and so on" includes Maitreya and Samantabhadra. All thirty-two deities are to be completed, because this is taught in other contexts when describing the meditation on the body as deities. Also, it is not possible to separate twenty deities that are suitable to be divided into the five families from twelve deities that are not. Nor is it possible to differentiate them in terms of being suitable and not suitable for body isolation.

Therefore those of the past—for fear of exceeding the number of one hundred deities if the teachings on the ten wrathful beings were accordingly assigned to the body-isolation practices—explained them as being hidden phenomena of desire, but they do not fit with hidden phenomena of desire. [111] Also it is not correct to create an obstacle to an explanation that employs all thirty-two deities. Therefore they should all be included in the body-isolation category.

Body isolation is accomplished from these twenty categories. The hundred divisions of these twenty are expressed as deities belonging to the classes of the five families. Therefore it is said that the body is "produced from the

atoms of every tathāgata," as cited above. Here "atom" refers to the name given to each deity for each hundredth part of the body.

Body isolation of the five reality families

The hundredfold sacred family is condensed into the five reality families. Here the five kinds of "body" as the basis of the body isolation refers to the four elements—earth and so on—and the element of consciousness. The twenty deities from the Vairocana of the form aggregate to the Vairocana of tactile-sensations Sparśavajrā are included in the element of earth. Similarly, the twenty Ratnasambhava families are included in the water element, the twenty Amitābha families are included in the fire element, the twenty Amoghasiddhi families are included in the air element, and the twenty Akṣobhya families are included in the consciousness element.

Here, the *Compendium of Practice* explains this section using the element-derived phenomena[353] of the aggregates of form and so on. The form aggregate, not including the four elements and the form of mental phenomena, is an actual element-derived phenomenon. The other four "name" aggregates exist solely in dependence upon the arisen body and are just labeled as element-derived phenomena. It is excellent practice to assign these five elements that comprise the hundred families to the five tathāgata families.

Body isolation of the three secret families

The compilation into the five reality families is further abridged into the three secret families. Ratnasambhava is included in the family of body-vajra Vairocana. Amoghasiddhi is included in the family of speech-vajra Amitābha, and Vajradhara, as the sixth member, is included in the family of mind-vajra Akṣobhya. Here the buddhas and bodhisattvas from the hundred families to the five families are gathered into your own body, speech, and mind as explained by the *Compendium of Practice*. This does not contradict the previous descriptions of the division into a hundred, however, which included phenomena associated with the minds of those other than the practitioner as well as many phenomena of the inanimate world associated neither with the practitioner nor with others. This is because the way phenomena are included into the three secret families is not exactly like the way the four elements are included in the form aggregate, for example. This will be explained later.

The "body" that is the basis of this isolation refers to body, speech, and mind.

Body isolation of the one greatly secret family

If the compilation into the family of the three vajras is further abridged, it becomes the one greatly secret family. This means that the three vajras are posited as the enlightened body, speech, and mind, which become the sixth member and supreme deity Vajradhara posited as the indivisibility of the three vajras. This is the ultimate body isolation.

14. How Body Isolation Is Incorporated into the Six Yogas

[112] *How body isolation becomes the branches of individual withdrawal and meditative absorption*

1. How individual withdrawal is incorporated into body isolation
2. How meditative absorption is incorporated into body isolation

How individual withdrawal is incorporated into body isolation

The *Later Tantra* says:

> In all the places of the natural engagement
> of even the ten sense powers,
> desires are individually withdrawn,
> thus it is known as *individual withdrawal.*[354]

Generally, "desire" can refer to either someone desiring or something desired. Here it is the latter. Because it is desired and sought after, it is a "desire," and so it refers to the five objects of form and so on. The sense powers "individually," or repeatedly, "withdraw," or take, these objects. Therefore it is known as *individual withdrawal.* Here the objects also go by the name of sense powers, hence there are "ten sense powers." The five sense powers of the eyes and so on are by nature engaged in apprehending, and the five objects of form and so on are by nature engaged in terms of being apprehended, hence "natural engagement." Abiding there, they are in their "places of engagement." The word "all" denotes places specified as superior, middling, or inferior. "In" is a preposition and so *in* all these places the senses operate. The Chak Lotsāwa translation just has "the ten sense powers," and in the commentary, too, the word "even" is not explained.[355]

The word "individual" is a translation of *prati*, which *Clear Words*, in the context of dependent origination, describes as meaning "meet" and "repeat."[356]

The term "individual liberation" is a translation of *pratimokṣa*, which *Treasury of Abhidharma* explains as meaning "initially liberation."[357] *Pratīccha* is explained as meaning "accept individually." Here in this context it is taken to mean "repeat," in the sense of "again and again." In the section that includes the line "I will hold firm individually," it is also explained by other commentaries as meaning "repeatedly." Therefore do not take this term only to mean "separately" or "singly." The explanation from *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp*, which says that the meaning of individual withdrawal of form and so on is "engaging in form and so on, one by one,"[358] is not accepted here.

The term *withdrawal* also has many meanings, but here it means "to take" in the sense of "taxes withdrawing into the tax collector." The phenomena to be "withdrawn" are spoken of as being the five objects of desire. Therefore the sense powers enjoy the five objects.

When the shared approach yogas of the four vajras have been completed, the five senses of the yogi, who has entered the supreme approach practices, take enjoyment in the five objects. Nevertheless, that alone is not the path of meditation upon individual withdrawal, [113] because that path must involve the mental consciousness. Therefore *Illuminating Lamp* on the fifteenth chapter says:

> In the statement "the samaya of excrement and urine are to be eaten," the term "excrement" refers to the objects—form and so on. "Urine" refers to the sense powers—eyes and so on. Their "samaya" is their coming together by way of being objects and subjects. To eat those means that they are experienced by the stages of individual withdrawal and so on.[359]

The sense powers engaged in their object is the "eating." Individual withdrawal is the "eater." Therefore, in the way that the sense powers of the aforementioned yogi enjoy the five objects, there may well be some aspects that accord with the etymology of individual withdrawal. However, for the individual withdrawal that is a branch of the six yogas, when the sense powers enjoy the objects, it becomes a yoga of enjoyment that has been sealed by the bliss and emptiness of the great bliss of the body-isolation meditative state. Therefore individual withdrawal is the body isolation cultivated in the post-meditation session.

So what is the meaning of the line from *Illuminating Lamp*, "In order to

train in individual withdrawal, the second branch was taught"? Individual withdrawal and meditative absorption are alike in that they both take as the path of practice the sensory powers engaging the objects of desire. Still, the way these are meditated upon as deities and enjoyed in meditative absorption is not found in individual withdrawal. This is the meaning. Nevertheless, this does not mean that individual withdrawal does not qualify as the practice of body isolation, because great bliss is the definitive deity, and meditation sealed by that great bliss is a great isolation from ordinary concepts.

How meditative absorption is incorporated into body isolation

On meditative absorption, the *Later Tantra* states:

> The five desires condensed and joined to the five buddhas,
> such meditation is explained as meditative absorption.
> Meditative absorption has five aspects:
> conceptualization, analysis, and joy,
> as well as bliss and single-pointed mind.
> These five comprise meditative absorption.
> They are fully explained
> in many ways in every secret tantra;
> three secrets arising is conceptualization,
> enjoyment of that is analysis,
> contact with joy is the third,
> that gathered by bliss, the fourth,
> your mind at the cessation of the arising of
> consciousness and object of consciousness is the fifth.
> The actuality of every buddha is peace,
> dwelling in every object of desire.[360]

On this passage, *Illuminating Lamp* states:

> The five desires, such as form, sounds, and so on, "condensed" means becoming as one with the sense powers.[361]

The "sense powers" are included with their objects and object possessors, and so this phrase refers to both sense powers and their objects. The text continues:

> The "five buddhas" are the eyes and so on. Their being "joined" is to be joined perfectly, and so they are "joined to the five buddhas." [114] Therefore forms and so on also are buddhas.

The text should read "The five buddhas, their being joined to the eyes and so on," but the translation is a little wrong. These five, the eyes and so on, are "joined perfectly" to the five buddhas from Vairocana to Akṣobhya. Therefore forms, sounds, and so on are also joined to the five buddha families. In this way, the sense powers and their objects "are buddhas" in the sense of being regarded as completely pure deities, and such "meditation" is meditative absorption. This branch has the five divisions of conceptualization and so on.

At this general explanation stage, the description of meditative absorption involving meditation on the sense powers and their objects as deities is merely an illustration. This is because the aggregates and so on are also to be meditated on as deities, as described in the section on body isolation. Moreover, this should not be understood as meditation solely upon the form of the deities, because the necessity of meditating upon the reality of the deities can be known from the extensive explanation as well.

To explain the five desires as being those of the five secret nectars, or the five aggregates, which have many internal divisions but are here condensed into five, is not the meaning of "condensed" in this line.

The sense powers, the objects, and the sensory consciousnesses are the "three secrets," and conceptualization of these three sets of five as the nature of the five buddha families is *conceptualization*. The rendering "Three secrets are conceptualization," as found in the Patsap and Chak translations, is better because the commentary makes no comment on "arising."

The "enjoyment of that" conceptualization is the discriminating analysis of a particular object, and dwelling there is *analysis*. *Analysis* has been described as the extensive and secret dividing of and meditation upon the nectars. Therefore the branches of conceptualization and analysis are distinguished by being respectively nondetailed and very detailed divisions, and these two are body-isolation practices developed in the post-meditation session.

In this way, initially, you train in individual withdrawal by regarding the phenomena of objects, sensory powers, and so on as being expressions of great bliss. When that becomes stable, you train in the meditative absorption of that expression of great bliss in the form of various deities.

At this point *Illuminating Lamp* says:

> Having analyzed in this way, you engage reality, and whatever has the characteristics of mental happiness, that is *contact with joy*. Having actually entered reality, whatever bliss you gain that has the characteristics of a flexibility of the body and so forth that is *gathered by bliss*.[362]

Joy is mental happiness, *bliss* is body flexibility, while the phrase "and so forth" comprises mental flexibility. The former, joy, is gained by "engaging reality" the latter, body flexibility, by "having actually entered reality."

The Patsap translation has "While analyzing in this way." The Chak translation has "From analyzing in this way." The two older translations have "Having analyzed in this way." This means having analyzed with the branches of conceptualization and analysis as explained previously. This summarizes the previous section. [115] Stating that by having entered reality you will gain joy and bliss is expressing the way to achieve the following two branches. Engaging reality and entering reality are similar in meaning, and the way they achieve joy and bliss is as follows: First, you generate great bliss by way of the subtle meditation focused upon the lower gateway, and with that bliss you ascertain the meaning of reality. By meditating upon it you "contact," or gain, a special mental bliss that realizes emptiness. You will also achieve the bliss of a flexibility of body and mind that realizes emptiness. Actual body flexibility is a very special tactile sensation in which the body has become very supple. Therefore the flexibility being described here is not that sensation but is the bliss of a great flexibility that acts to make the body and mind very supple. It is a state of mind[363] associated by way of time and characteristics with the previous mental bliss. "Training,"[364] or developing, "in this way," as was explained previously, "you reach the ultimate finality," as will be explained later.

"Arising of consciousness" refers to the six consciousnesses—the primary visual consciousness and so on. "Object of consciousness" refers to the six objects—form and so on. Their "cessation" refers to "emptiness" because the "mind's apprehending and object apprehended" is cast far away. Therefore "the single-pointed mind with the characteristics of exalted wisdom is 'your mind.'" At this point, the Chak translation of the root text has:

> The nature of every buddha is peace,
> perfectly dwelling in all space.

And in the commentary:

> Such a mind of the yogi is peace, the nature of every buddha.

Therefore, because concepts of apprehended objects and so on are pacified, there is "peace" and there is "just that appearance." The text, "all that will finally become one with emptiness," as rendered in earlier translations is good, but the later Patsap translation, "becomes the finality of all emptiness alone," is better. "That mind," referring to the single-pointed mind mentioned earlier in the verses, enters emptiness, the nature of every buddha. The word "just" eliminates the presence of all conceptualization at that time. That is the meaning of "peace." Space is empty, and so "all emptiness" refers to the fourth empty state. "Perfectly dwelling" refers to coming to abide in that empty state after having engaged successively in the three previous empty states. These two lines are also an explanation of *single-pointed mind.*

Therefore Len is incorrect when he ascribes single-pointed mind to mind isolation and states that the line beginning "the nature of every buddha" refers to illusory body and that the remaining text is a brief teaching on clear light.

The *Vajra Garland* on the elements body isolation in the section on the explanation of the hidden introduction says:

> Air, fire, water, and earth
> are the four—Locanā and so on.
> They should be known as possessing
> the nature of the three exalted wisdoms
> granting the buddha enlightenment.[365] [116]

This says that the meditations on the four elements as Locanā and so on should be understood as possessing the nature of the three exalted wisdoms of the three types of empty states. Therefore, during body isolation, the three empty states of the path are present. The fourth empty state mentioned above is illustrative clear light, and it is not contradictory for it to be generated from the practice of body isolation up to illusory body. Teachings on it being within the three empty states and occurring before illusory body, however, are on the basis of the illustrative clear light being included in the greatly empty state of the close-to-attainment appearance.[366] Therefore, dwelling in close-to-attainment clear light at those times should be taken as referring to

the latter part of this state, which is a state of unconsciousness and is posited as being the all-empty state like the sky free of clouds.

The general features of meditative absorption explained earlier are found in the branches of conceptualization and analysis, but they do not feature in joy, bliss, and single-pointed mind, and so shouldn't these three be considered separately from meditative absorption? In the explanation of meditative absorption upon the sense powers and the objects as deities, there is meditation on deities with faces and implements and meditation on the reality of those deities, so there is no fault here.

Bhavyakīrti's *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp* explains that when engaging in objects, the sense powers, objects, and consciousnesses conceptualized as being in the nature of the five buddha families is the branch of *conceptualization*. The same three conceptualized as having the nature of the three exalted wisdoms is *analysis*. Actualizing reality and thinking, "this is me," produces a special joy, and this is *joy*. By gaining this bliss of the mind, the body becomes very flexible, and that is *bliss*. He asserts that conceptualization and analysis are appearance, joy is increase, and bliss is close-to-attainment, and that these are the three wisdoms of mind isolation. This is a mistake of not truly ascertaining the objects focused on by the three exalted wisdoms, as described in Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* when it explains the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* in the section on mind isolation. It is also mistaken in what kind of mode of apprehension these objects are held.

Nāropa's description of these two branches is just a rewriting of Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*. There is a need for these six yogas of the Ārya tradition to have been explained in great detail, but earlier writers seem not to have done so. Therefore they have been explained in detail here, and more will be explained later.

15. The Practice of Body Isolation

The way to practice body isolation

1. Gathering the winds through meditation on the subtle drop
2. Based on the above, how the bliss of melting is created
3. When the bliss has been created, how to develop it in meditation and post-meditation

Gathering the winds through meditation on the subtle drop

[117] If you have previously reached the point of being able to induce the special bliss of melting by gaining stability in the yoga of focusing upon the subtle mandala, you will know how to produce the joys and should cultivate them as will be explained. If you have gained that stability, but the ability to induce the above has not been attained, from this point on dwell in the yoga of the main deity and consort and meditate. In cases where even that has not been attained, if you continue with your present practice, meditate to the completion of the prerequisite meditation on the yoga of the mandala residents.

In *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, it says:

> Body, time, objects, and breath—
> there are these four essential points.[367]

The essential points concerning the activities of the body will be explained in the section on speech isolation. The essential point concerning time is that generally you should meditate continually, but specifically, you should meditate when your faculty of cognition is clear, and in the latter part of the day at the time of the fire element.[368] As for the breath, your natural breathing is acceptable. In terms of the object on which to focus, *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter says that a man meditates on a deity implement the size of

a rice grain at the entrance of the vajra, and a woman meditates on the same, the size of a chick-pea, inside the vagina.[369] *Illuminating Lamp* on the third chapter says to meditate by placing the conventional bodhicitta, the size of a mustard seed and in the nature of the five buddhas, at the opening of the vajra.[370] Mention of the center of the jewel in Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*, as cited earlier, does not conflict with the teaching to meditate on the opening of the vajra.[371]

The instruction to meditate on the "mouth" of the vajra refers to it being the lower opening of the dhūtī. *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* describes how the mandalas invited by light rays from the syllable at the heart enter the heart, melt, and fall in drops to rest in the jewel. *Illuminating Lamp* states that your meditation should be like the existence creation process in which, during sexual union between a man and a woman in ordinary existence, the drops melted by the fire of passion fall to the lotus. Therefore it is clear that such drops in such a process fall to the lower gateway, where they are meditated upon.

As for the color of the drops, *Illuminating Lamp* states that they should be the color of your deity.[372] If the mind is held within a very small drop, then the conceptual minds are easier to sever, and consequently the winds that move them are easier to halt. If it becomes clear that, no matter what you do, the mind cannot be held there, make the drop a little bigger, hold the mind there, and then reduce it. This is a fault caused by passing through the meditation stages without developing a stable generation stage. If it had been stable, it would make no sense for the mind not be able to be held in such a way. Detailed core teachings on the special way to hold the mind, the way to cultivate it without agitation or dullness, what to do if there is no desire to halt the winds even though the focus is held, what to do if it is not possible to develop the required amount of bliss and so on, the way to eliminate the slight discomfort that arises in the desire to stop the winds, and so on will be taught separately. [118]

Therefore, by focusing and meditating on the vital point at the center of the jewel cakra, or the lower end of the dhūtī, wind and mind become concomitant, and because of that, if the mind is held there, the winds are stopped from flowing in the right and left channels and flow instead in the dhūtī. Then, when the winds are about to dissolve, the five signs will appear. *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* states:

> Then the great secret drop,
> subtly as before, is held gently with the mind

to become a place of non-phenomena.
Through development of this apprehending,
reversal occurs, and earth is reversed,
bringing the appearance of a mirage;
know this to be the first sign.
Likewise, water is reversed,
bringing the appearance of smoke;
know this as the second.
Fire being reversed brings an appearance
like lights in the sky; this is the third.
Air likewise reversing brings
the appearance of a flame;
know this to be the fourth.
Also, imperfect consciousness reversed brings
an appearance of profundity and clarity nondual,
resembling a cloudless sky;
this is the fifth of the clear signs.
By five appearances come the nonabiding nirvana;
the yogi therefore strives in this.
This is the branch of apprehending.[373]

The *Later Tantra's* description of these signs occurring during the branch of apprehending is made on the basis of the first four signs occurring before entering clear light, with the fifth occurring at the time of clear light, and that entering clear light is made possible by the power of the three kinds of prāṇāyāma. On that basis, *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* says that these five signs occur during the meditation on the subtle drop at the lower gateway and on the indestructible drop at the heart, and it can be understood that these signs will also appear when the same two places are engaged by vajra repetition. *Illuminating Lamp* speaks of entering clear light through the five signs. This can be explained as follows: It is true that clear light has to be described after mind isolation and illusory body, when the three types of prāṇāyāma have been completed. Even when entering the simulated clear light of the lower stages, however, there is no assertion that these signs do not occur. Therefore it is not contradictory to speak of the branch of apprehending in which you enter the clear-light "place of non-phenomena" by way of the signs arising during meditation on the subtle drop at the lower gateway.

Tathāgatavajra explains that attaining the clear-light branch of apprehending by meditation on the letter *hūṃ* at the heart drop and then meditating on the winds entering the drop situated there is only an illustration, and that the yoga of the consonants and vowels situated at the center of the navel, or meditation on the drop at the channel tip of the vajra, or the yogas of caṇḍālī, and so on will also produce the clear-light branch of apprehending. An Indian text on the six yogas from the Jñānapāda tradition says the same. [119] This too is a valid explanation.

Therefore, concentrating the mind at these crucial points on the body is unlike other practices of concentrating the mind. The practice of meditating on the subtle drop at the lower gateway is found up to the point of the later stages mentioned above. However, if it is not known what excellent qualities will arise from such a meditation, as described above, certainty in the instructions will not be found. Realizing this, Buddhaśrījñāna has produced this excellent teaching based upon the *Later Tantra* and the words of the venerable Mañjuśrī. Thus know this particular path to be one of unerring instructions for the practice of a special prāṇāyāma. As the citation above says, "The yogi therefore strives in this." So make strenuous effort in its cultivation.

Based on the above, how the bliss of melting is created

Generally, an experience of joy arising from melted bodhicitta descending to the secret place can occur in those who meditate on the path and those who do not. If the caṇḍālī blazes at the navel and secret place, melting will occur. Therefore, for the caṇḍālī to blaze and to melt the bodhicitta, it is not necessary for the winds to have dissolved and so on inside the dhūtī. Thus, for some types of people when they meditate as described above, the winds do not enter the dhūtī, but there is nevertheless an experience of bliss from the bodhicitta melting. This is true for the meditations of other instructions on penetrative focusing of the body.

Such bodhicitta drops, once they reach the vajra jewel, are very difficult to hold. Realizing this, many earlier masters relied on inner and outer methods for initially causing the bodhicitta to descend and then used methods for forcefully reversing the descended bodhicitta before it reached the jewel and for immediately reversing it as soon as it reached the vajra. Also, seeing that if such a forceful reversal were not dissloved within the body it would create sickness, they used methods for its diffusion. Nonetheless, if we separate out the process of bodhicitta melting because of the winds dissolving in the

dhūtī from the process of it melting not due to the winds dissolving, then discussions do not arise about the ease and difficulty of holding the bodhicitta, about when it is necessary and not necessary to use forceful methods for its reversal, or about illness arising and not arising from its nondiffusion.

The reason to ignite the fire of the caṇḍālī by the power of the path and to melt the bodhicitta is to generate innate exalted wisdom. Thus the bodhicitta is melted and descends. When it descends below the navel, and specifically when it arrives at the jewel, if it does not remain there for some time without emerging, true innate exalted wisdom will not be generated. In order for the innate exalted wisdom to be established as the great bliss of the completion stage, there needs be a holding of the bodhicitta through the power of the dissolution of the winds. If the melting of the bodhicitta occurs through the power of the winds dissolving in the dhūtī, even if the bodhicitta is held at the tip of the vajra, it will not emerge until the innate exalted wisdom is developed. This is because when the bodhicitta falls from the crown, the movement of the winds becomes gradually weaker, and when it reaches the jewel, all activity of the winds necessary for the emission of the bodhicitta has been stilled. [120]

As long as you have not arisen from the innate-wisdom samādhi, the bodhicitta will not be emitted. When you arise, the winds are greatly stirred, and so at that time you will need a method to prevent the bodhicitta from emerging. Whether you are not developed in this practice and have to rely on a method for turning back the bodhicitta, or you are developed in it and the bodhicitta turns back on its own without recourse to any method, when the bodhicitta starts to ascend, it will not cause any illness at all, even if it is not dispersed throughout the body.

If bodhicitta is melted through meditation upon the subtle drop and so forth without the force of the winds being dissolved, then that means that it cannot be held at the jewel for any length of time. Therefore it must be turned back immediately and you should know the superior and inferior places for reversing the bodhicitta. If only a small proportion of the bodhicitta has melted, reversing it will be sufficient. If most of the bodhicitta has melted, you will need to disperse it throughout the body also. If you have practiced this for a long time, even if you cannot reverse it immediately, such ability will be there after a short time. There is no mention of these instructions in the tantra and the great Indian works as there is in other instruction manuals, because the completion stage of dissolving the winds will be quickly developed for the primary disciples of this tantra, and for such disciples such instructions are not necessary.

The way that the four joys of descent are generated in dependence on the melted bodhicitta arriving at different places is found in the *Vajra Garland*:

> After that the forward process will be explained.
> At the crown cakra of great bliss,
> it is explained as the place of *joy*;
> at the cakra of enjoyments, the *supreme joy*;
> the *joy of absence* is located at the dharma cakra;
> at the emanation cakra *innate joy* is experienced.[374]

The joy experienced from the crown to the throat is designated *joy*. The other three can be understood accordingly. On the four joys of stable ascent the same work states:

> At the emanation cakra, *joy*,
> at the dharma cakra, *supreme joy*,
> at the cakra of enjoyments, *joy of absence*,
> *innate joy* at the great bliss,
> the reverse process is taught.[375]

The locations of these joys can be known from previous discussions. This description is very similar to that found in the *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra*. In that work it says that each of the ascending and descending joys is divided into four to make sixteen phases of the moon, and using the terminology of the sun, each is divided into three to make twelve:

> These divisions of the rabbit-holding moon
> are the sixteen drops of joy;
> know them to be the nature of the vowels.
> Progressing through the four cakras,
> they are explained in this way,
> and they are also explained
> as the twelve of the sun.[376]

When the bodhicitta descends and ascends, it is accompanied by blood. In that connection, at each of the four locations, there is a division into four, and at each of these sixteen places, there is an experience of bliss. At each of the four locations, there is a division into three, [121] and at these places,

because of the flow of the red bodhicitta, the experience of joy is divided into great, intermediate, or lesser. Know this from experience, as it is very subtle. Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* says that all four types of bliss of the stable ascent are innate and are divided into lesser, intermediate, great, and greater than great. This must mean that the four of stable ascent are of greater bliss than the four of descent. During stable ascent, the bliss is not stable until the reverse process is stabilized at the crown. Only when it is stable at the crown is it said to be "stable." *Sheaves of Instructions* says:

> Then, upon the wind is the mind;
> by opposing, it will flow
> to dwell in the very center of the lotus.
> After that it becomes stable,
> and at that time the guide does not move.
> Just like in a vessel without a hole,
> the water does not leak but remains,
> at that time the bliss becomes stable.
> Being stable, the innate joy is born.
> Therefore the yogi, without doubt,
> will become the unceasing buddha.[377]

Sheaves of Instructions says that "mind" refers to seminal fluid, "opposing" means "reverse process," and "stable" refers to stability at the crown. Lakṣmī says that when the bodhicitta falls from the crown, *appearance* is generated; when it spreads to all branches of the body, *increase* is generated; when one drop is emitted from the tip of the vajra, *close-to-attainment* is generated; and when it is stabilized at the tip, *clear light* is generated.[378] Also, this author has another explanation in which the first two are similar, but reaching the tip of the vajra is close-to-attainment, and remaining within the jewel is clear light. Many say likewise. Muniśrībhadra says that arriving at the base of vajra is appearance, arriving at the center of the jewel is close-to-attainment, and arriving at the tip is clear light.[379] On the strength of that, we would have to say that when the bodhicitta travels from the base of the vajra to the neck of the jewel, increase is generated. The *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra* explains the four joys as appearance, increase, close-to-attainment, and clear light.[380]

In the Guhyasamāja root and explanatory tantras and in the works of the five masters of the Ārya tradition, there is no mention of the four joys explained as being the four empty states. Also, the master and his four

disciples do not speak about the generation of these four joys or the four empty states when the melted bodhicitta arrives at these places; they speak only of the winds dissolving to produce appearance, the mind dissolving to produce increase, and so on. Most others who follow the five masters of the Ārya tradition only describe the four empty states arising from the gradual descent of the bodhicitta from the crown to the secret-place vajra but say nothing about the exalted wisdom of the four empty states incorporated into the path. Not accepting this is to not understand a crucial point of this great tradition and will be dealt with below.

Of these descriptions of how the four joys are generated from the gradual descent of the bodhicitta, which one should be accepted here? [122] The special four empty states, which are yet to be explained, arise from the penetrative focusing on the heart area. Therefore they are not generated here, but a corresponding four empty states are generated at this point. In that respect, following the assertion of Muniśrībhadra would clearly be most conducive.

Great bliss is the very life of this path. Its stability depends on the bliss of the stable ascent, and therefore generation of that is important. *Sheaves of Instructions* says:

> For its generation, as long as the bodhicitta remains in the center of the jewel and not emitted, it will increase and ascend.[381]

Taken literally, this seems to say that if the bodhicitta is not emitted from the jewel, it will reverse on its own. But that is not the case. Even if it is not emitted, if it does not return by the same path it descended, there is no telling where the bodhicitta will go. Even if it does return, there can be no certainty that it will return directly to the crown, and it may even disperse and disappear from some lower location. It is necessary to have an all-in-one ascent to the crown. The yogi has to make a deliberate effort in this. The *Vajra Garland* says:

> The reality of the wind
> moves upward from its previous place.
> This the yogi accomplishes,
> through which will be experienced
> joy at the emanation cakra.[382]

The text goes on to say that then the yogi accomplishes the upward movement to the dharma cakra and then to the enjoyment cakra.

These methods for dissolving the winds by meditating on the subtle drop, the way the signs appear, the way the bodhicitta descends having been melted by the blazing of the caṇḍālī, how it returns and ascends, and the way that the joys of descent and stable ascent—divided into sixteen parts by way of the moon phases and twelve parts by way of sun—are generated and so forth from these two processes are the same for those practices at both the navel and secret places, for caṇḍālī-generated blazing and falling, for the placing and meditating on letters and drops there, and for practicing pot-like meditation and so on there. Consequently, they are all very important practices. In particular, they are unerring methods for enacting the main principles of the path of yoginī tantra, and therefore you should regard them as excellent.

In this meditation on the subtle drop at the lower gateway, the evacuative winds can easily return upward, and so the power of the blazing caṇḍālī has to be very strong. Also, in order to fully reveal the innate bliss of the descent, the bodhicitta has to remain at the vajra for a long time. There are these and many other reasons why you should remain in this practice for a long time, but for fear of it becoming too wordy, I will not write of them here.

When the bliss has been created, how to develop it in meditation and post-meditation

When you have the ability to generate the innate joy upward and downward in this way, apply it to a decisive view of no-self, which is the purity of reality, and make these two minds one in terms of simultaneous duration,[383] and thus enter meditative equipoise on great bliss and emptiness as consciousness and its object. [123] When you arise from this equipoise by the force of the winds having moved, the way to meditate is taught in the *Vajra Garland Tantra*:

> When the senses engage with objects,
> wherever they abide, they are restrained
> and you engage exceptionally with the conventional,
> with emptiness, the nondual, the illusory, and so forth.
> This is the experience of bliss
> from the knowledge wisdom initiation and so on.
> By calling to mind the great bliss,
> the senses turn from the objects.[384]

This teaches the special engagement with the object during the occasions of emptiness clear light, the nondual union, conventional illusory body, and

as illustrated by the phrase "and so forth," at lower stages too. In addition, from speech isolation upward, whenever the four empty states are induced, understand this way of sealing all that appears with bliss and emptiness as it is explained here. In this way, "by calling to mind" the bliss of actually receiving the third initiation,[385] as well as the great bliss previously experienced, such as that explained above and illustrated by the phrase "and so on," you engage in objects and they are sealed by this bliss. All opposing mental activity is "restrained,"[386] and if the senses abide in that state, all objects appear as bliss. After that, the winds that engage with objects through the gateways of the senses turn inside by the force of the blazing bliss, and when this happens, the sense consciousnesses also withdraw. The winds dissolve, and as before, the types of bliss are generated.

During the first or generation stage, you have to train yourself to see all that appears, external and internal, as deities. Likewise, during the completion stage, it is necessary for all that appears to be the expression of great bliss. This occurs from the time you have found the innate great bliss of the completion stage. Therefore, here, the teaching that through body isolation all that appears is seen as the play of great bliss is said for the purpose of all that arises appearing as bliss. To accomplish this, first ascertain the natural purity of all things, and then know that all phenomena are an expression of emptiness. Then, through the joining of bliss and emptiness, mediate upon them as expressions of great bliss. To explain this, the *Compendium of Practice* says:

> "Self is naturally pure." Therefore self is made firm and specially imagined to be Vajradhara, the entity of the three vajras. This is the yoga of consecration.[387]

During the single-family body-isolation practice, the yogi makes firm the conviction that he is naturally pure and meditates upon himself as Vajradhara. This instruction is not only applied to himself but to his whole body as the basis for body isolation, and it is not only practiced during single-family meditation but similarly during the hundred families and so on. [124]

Once it is determined that all the phenomena that act as the bases of body isolation possess a nature of natural purity by having always been empty of existing by way of their own characteristics, then know that this very emptiness of nature appears as those phenomena, and this is the meaning of phenomena being the expression of emptiness. Although there are many different types of phenomena, in terms of being empty of true existence, which

is the object of refutation, there is no difference between any of them. Therefore these enumerations of emptiness are not of many different types but are of one taste. This emptiness is to be made into the object of the innate bliss. Although apprehended object and subject consciousness have not yet become like water poured into water, imagine this to be the case and practice it. At that time, by the strength of imagining bliss and emptiness to be of one taste, and just as phenomena have become expressions of emptiness, it becomes easy to establish them as expressions of bliss by the force of this imagination. This is the perfect reason for calling to mind the bliss and emptiness of meditation and sealing accordingly all that appears. Therefore, on the basis of viewing all phenomena as expressions of one-taste bliss and emptiness, even that which appears as resultant samsara and its causes, karma, and mental afflictions are the play of great exalted wisdom. Because of this, ordinary samsara and its causes have no place from which to arise. In a passage quoted by the *Compendium of Practice* in the section on the hundred-family body isolation it says:

> With aggregates, spheres, and sources
> divided into groups of five
> blessed by each tathāgata,
> the activities of samsara,
> from where will they come?
> Likewise, the five outer objects,
> each continually blessed
> by those gone to the realms of bliss,
> abide in the three and five exalted wisdoms.[388]

This translation by Chak Lotsāwa is the best. Having seen the import of this, Saraha says:

> Do not make it plural, make it one.
> Of types, do not divide into specifics.
> The entirety of these three realms
> transform into the color of the one great desire.
> In it, there is no beginning, middle, or end,
> no samsara, no going beyond suffering.
> In this supreme and great bliss,
> there is no self and others.

In front, behind, in all the ten directions,
whatever I see is that.
Today, O Master, all error has been cut.
Now I will not ask anything of anyone.[389]

"Great desire" refers to the innate exalted wisdom.

First of all, determine through study and contemplation the hundred families and so on, as has been explained. When the time comes to practice, first train in individual withdrawal that regards all that appears as the play of bliss and emptiness. When you are trained in that, train in the ultimate body isolation of all that appears arising solely as the great secret Vajradhara. Meditate on yourself also as bliss and emptiness in the form of Vajradhara, who is in union with consort. [125] It is not clear from the works of the master and his disciples if Vajradhara here is blue or white.

If you have the ability to create the bliss of melting, but are without the ability to generate the kind of great bliss explained previously, meditate with this ability. If even that is not possible, develop your practice by understanding well the ways to unite bliss and emptiness and the ways to cultivate meditation and post-meditation sessions.

For taking great bliss as the path, you need the indispensable assistance of all that appears manifesting as bliss through the force of a stable familiarity with the ways of cultivating great bliss in meditation and post-meditation. To that aim, many teachings found in various tantras and commentaries are clearly explained in the body-isolation section of this tradition. So having understood them well, and with the mind referring to them again and again, develop the special abilities of the families of this path.

Part 5

Speech Isolation

16. Identifying Speech Isolation

[126] *Training in the samādhi of the speech-vajra speech isolation*

1. The sequencing of body isolation and speech isolation
2. Refuting assertions that speech isolation is generation stage
3. Teachings on the nature of the winds, the phenomena to be understood in speech isolation
4. Teachings on the nature of the mantras
5. How speech isolation becomes prāṇāyāma
6. The way to practice speech isolation

The sequencing of body isolation and speech isolation

It is taught that you train in speech isolation after body isolation. Without body isolation preceding, speech isolation will not arise. Why is this? The *Compendium of Practice* says that when you have trained in the coarse and subtle generation stages, you dwell in the samādhi of beginners, and that when you have trained in body isolation, you dwell in the samādhi of the body vajra. It is true that there is also a body-vajra samādhi on the first, or generation, stage, but the body vajra referred to here is the special body vajra of the completion stage. The vajra body and exalted-wisdom body, explained as referring to the illusory body, are not found at this point. Having found the completion-stage innate bliss, however, this body vajra appears as the play of that bliss and therefore is a vajra in the sense of being inseparable from great bliss. The necessity of accomplishing this before speech isolation is that speech isolation is the exclusive mantra recitation of the completion stage, and if this body does not exist in the deity meditation of the reciting practitioner, the potential of the recitation will not be fully realized.

Furthermore, for the process of winds gathering and dissolving in the special location for wind dissolution, which is at the center of the heart area in the dhūtī, the gathering is generally made a lot easier if bliss has been

previously generated from the gathering and dissolving of winds into the dhūtī. Without this it becomes a lot more difficult. That is also a reason for body isolation preceding speech isolation, because the *Vajra Garland* says that loosening the cakra knots of the dhūtī of the heart area is harder than loosening the knots of other cakras, and so gathering winds in the dhūtī at other places first makes it easier to gather winds at the heart area. [127]

Refuting assertions that speech isolation is generation stage

In *Light of the Moon Commentary*, it says:

> Vajra repetition, too, is cultivated like that and initially is taught to be a branch of that. Therefore vajra repetition is established as generation stage. In the *Compendium of Practice* at the end of speech isolation it says that abiding in the samādhi of the speech vajra, and having passed beyond the generation stage, you seek the isolation of mind. Then in one instant you focus on the complete body of the deity, which is the completion stage. It is because of this that the *Compendium of Practice* says, "The isolation of speech is not a phenomenon within the scope of the generation-stage practitioner."[390]

He is asserting the following: When you abide in the speech-vajra samādhi, you seek the mind isolation that passes beyond the generation stage. Therefore, during speech isolation, you are not beyond generation stage. However, in an instant you are complete as the form of the deity, and this is a phenomenon labeled as completion stage. This is not a gradual generation of a deity, and this is why it is taught that it is not a phenomenon of the generation stage.

This statement from the *Compendium of Practice* is saying that abiding in speech-vajra samādhi is beyond the generation stage. It is not talking of mind isolation being beyond the generation stage. Therefore the translation reads, "then having passed beyond the generation stage." The Chak translation says "passing beyond," and so both translations are correct.

The *Compendium of Practice* also says that you attain the eighth level with the generation stage, and that abiding in the speech-vajra samādhi is the "mighty one of the eighth level." Do not think this means that it is a path of the generation stage, because although this samādhi can be found on the

eighth level, there are many levels of its development and so do not conclude that it is established only in one place. The description of these levels will be explained later. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Speech isolated is the exalted wisdom of the yogi and very subtle. It is not a phenomenon of the Great Vehicle. In the Vajra Vehicle also, it is not a phenomenon for those who engage in the generation stage, because it is very subtle.[391]

It is not correct to interpret this passage as meaning that speech isolation is not the phenomenon of a generation stage that generates a deity gradually but instead is the phenomenon of a generation stage that generates the deity in an instant. This is because it makes no difference whether it is or is not the phenomenon of these two stages.

Also, the *Compendium of Practice*, when commenting on the meaning of the instruction found in the third chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* to meditate on the five-colored jewel on the tip of the nose at the beginning of speech isolation, explains the subtle yogas of the two stages individually, teaching the definitive vajra repetition as the subtle yoga of the completion stage. [128] Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages* also talks of explaining the five stages of vajra repetition and so on to those who, having completed the generation stage, seek the completion stage.

Saying that it is not a phenomenon of the generation stage is not saying that it is not understood on the generation stage but that it is not a path of the generation stage. Therefore do not fault those authentic texts that explain vajra repetition in the generation-stage chapters, because there is no contradiction at all in explaining it at the time of the generation stage and yet it not being a path of the generation stage. This also refutes Gepawa's[392] assertion that the vajra repetition of the incoming and outgoing breath is a generation-stage instruction.

17. Divisions, Functions, and Movement of the Winds

Teachings on the nature of the winds, the phenomena to be understood in speech isolation

1. The meaning of training successively in the winds, mantras, and vajra repetition
2. Faults and advantages of not knowing and knowing the reality of the winds
3. Divisions of the winds
4. Explanation of each division
5. How the winds move
6. How the winds perform their functions
7. How to understand the essential points of practice in dependence on the above

The meaning of training successively in the winds, mantras, and vajra repetition

In *Five Stages*, it says:

> By stages of knowing the reality of the winds,
> engage well with the reality of the mantras.
> Having understood the generation of the mantras,
> train in vajra repetition.[393]

This is saying engage with the reality of the mantras through the stages of engaging with the reality of the winds, and having understood them, train in vajra repetition. Bhavyakīrti explains engaging with the reality of the winds as meaning the yogi of the three vajras possessed of the three poisons[394] meditates on the bodhicitta substance drop at the tip of the secret area, the mantra drop at the tip of the heart area, and, with the winds in the form of drops, the light drop at the tip of the nose. He explains engaging with the reality

of the mantras as a meditation focusing on the dissolution of the *oṃ* at the crown into the *āḥ* at the throat, the *āḥ* into the *hūṃ* at the heart, and this syllable's *anusvāra* drop symbol, the crescent moon below it, its head, the body of the letter *ha*, successively dissolving into the *u* vowel sign, which becomes a short-vowel *a*.[395] Lakṣmī and many others explain likewise. This, however, is not the understanding of the *Later Tantra* and the *Vajra Garland*, and I do not see it as being the position of *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice*. Therefore the instruction to engage in these three realities successively means, as asserted by the master Gö, initially to understand the reality of the winds, then to understand the reality of the mantras. This is done by study and contemplation on both of them and is followed by meditation upon vajra repetition. [129]

Faults and advantages of not knowing and knowing the reality of the winds

The *Vajra Garland* states:

> Now, the reality of the winds
> I will definitely explain, so listen.
> If the yogi meditates on the winds,
> he will quickly gain the siddhis.[396]

Also, the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*:

> Those not knowing the yoga of the winds,
> or knowing but not meditating on them,
> will be tormented by various sufferings
> and will become an insect in samsara.[397]

Having understood wind yoga, in order to meditate on it, it is very important to understand well the essential points of the winds. Therefore, not only for actual meditations upon the winds, such as vajra repetition, but also for meditations focused upon the drops situated at points in the body and for generating the path through outer prāṇāyāma, you should know these vital places. By understanding how all completion-stage meditations of penetrative focusing on the body's vital points involve the workings of the winds, realize that meditation directly and indirectly on the winds is indispensable for this path.

Divisions of the winds

How many different types of winds can be ascertained? The *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* and the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* talk of the ten winds using non-literal terms such as *koṭakhya.*[398] A tantra called *Vajra Gateway* talks of them in literal terms: life, evacuative, fire-accompanying, upward-flowing, pervading, moving, roving, perfectly flowing, intensely flowing, definitively flowing.[399] The *Vajra Garland* and *Explanation of the Intention* list the first five similarly and refer to the next five:

> Nāga, turtle, and lizard,
> *devadatta* and *dhanvanjaya.*[400]

The commentaries also refer to the tenth as *dhanaṃjaya.*[401] The convention of dividing these two sets of five into root and branch winds is followed by Ekādaśasvara, but this is not clearly followed in other works of the Ārya tradition.

The *Vajra Garland* talks of 108 winds, *mucilinda,*[402] and so on. Are these included in the ten winds? Some Tibetan scholars explain this by saying that each of the ten winds has ten synonyms and that there are eight common synonyms. The commentary on the *Vajra Garland* says:

> In the emanation, dharma, fire, enjoyment, wind, and great-bliss cakras, the pervading wind has no activity but pervades the entire body. The remaining nine flow through them. Of these, there are fifty-four of the daytime and fifty-four of the night. This makes 108. The life-sustaining wind flows from the centers of all six cakras. The eight winds from the evacuative wind to the definitely flowing wind move through the petals of four cakras, excluding the fire and wind cakras. [130] It is explained that the fire cakra below the enjoyment cakra has three petals and the wind or brow cakra has six petals. Of the first, there are three channel knots on the dhūtī, two channels of the left and right breasts, and three petals. This makes eight. The second cakra has six petals and two channels either side of the brow. This also makes eight, through which the remaining eight winds flow.[403]

Separate translations of the tantra speak of fifty-four from the middle of the night to the middle of the day, and fifty-four from the middle of the day to

the middle of the night. This description is not found in the translations of the commentary. This is clearly an explanation of there being 108 winds by way of nine winds flowing through the six cakras. Therefore the first explanation above contradicts the tantra. Also, when each of the nine winds—life-sustaining, evacuative, and so on—are flowing through each of the cakras, if they are flowing through the other cakras as well, then the count of 108 winds still has to be explained. If they were not thus flowing, then when winds are flowing from the navel to the nostrils, they must also be flowing from the cakras of the throat, heart, and so on, and so that position is incorrect.

Furthermore, the way that lines from the text have been reproduced in the commentary is not right:

> From the beginning of the session,
> the nature of the nine in the six cakras
> at the end of half the session . . . [404]

Nevertheless, it is clearly the position of this tantra that these 108 winds are included in the ten winds. Still, the explanation that posits the nine winds moving progressively through the six cakras is difficult to sustain. Therefore there is more investigation to be done on this point.

Explanation of each division

1. Explanation of the five root winds
2. Explanation of the five branch winds
3. Explanations common to both types of wind

Explanation of the five root winds

Where are the locations of these five winds, and who are the lords of these winds? The *Vajra Garland* says:

> Life wind is located in the heart,
> born from the family of Akṣobhya.
> In the genital area is the evacuative wind,
> born from the Ratnasambhava family.
> The upward wind is located in the throat
> and of the nature of Amitābha.

The accompanying is in the navel lotus,
of the nature of Amoghasiddhi.
The pervading is located in all parts,
in the entity of Vairocana.[405]

The *Compendium of Practice* says the same. The *Vajra Garland* also says:

These clear realities of winds
with the entities of the five wisdoms.[406]

The winds explained as the five exalted wisdoms should be understood on the basis of the five buddha families.

The life-sustaining wind that flows through the nostrils is coarse life-sustaining wind. The indestructible wind that abides in the heart is the subtle life-sustaining wind. The *Vajra Garland Tantra* says:

In the hollow of the heart's lotus,
the wisdom vajra constantly abides.[407]

Also:

That is the worldly realm
of Akṣobhya, the great and supreme. [131]
There, āḥ constantly abiding presence
under the name of "wind of wisdom."[408]

Therefore the wind that abides in the heart for the duration of life is also explained as being life-sustaining wind. Thus the life-sustaining wind has to be divided into coarse and subtle. Also, *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* says:

Of half a measure, the supreme and subtle,
the substance of mind in the form of a drop,
constantly located in the center of the heart,
ablaze with great rays of light.[409]

This states that it is also the indestructible wind shining with five lights. The *Vajra Mandala Ornament Tantra* says:

Indestructible in the heart center,
radiant, like a lamp,
unchanging and supremely subtle,
the vowel *a*, the highest lord.[410]

This also is talking of the indestructible wind. In general, the "indestructible" situated at the heart refers to the red and white bodhicitta, the clear light of basic state, the subtle life-sustaining wind, as well as many other phenomena. In the *Vajra Garland* commentary, it is referred to as the *clear-light wind.* Cito's *Establishment of Reality* speaks of reality being perceived after other winds have dissolved and the innate wind remains in its place. This too refers to the above. The *Vajra Garland* says that at the time of death, the winds dissolve in the reverse sequence of when they were first created, and when they were created, the life-sustaining wind was formed first. So finally the winds dissolve into the subtle life-sustaining wind. Therefore, when the *Compendium of Practice* says that the winds finally move into the "indestructible," it means that they dissolve into the indestructible wind at the heart. The indestructible wind and drop at the heart are situated within the dhūtī at the heart channel-knot; the life-sustaining wind that flows through the nostrils is also situated at the heart but not in that location.

The *Vajra Garland*, in the chapter on the essence of enlightened body, speech, and mind, says that the evacuative wind is situated in the center of the anal secret area. This refers to the actual location of the secret lotus and is described as such on the basis of excrement being evacuated through the anus. The *Compendium of Practice*'s description of the earth wind being located in the "lotus of the anus" is just an instance of the secret lotus being labeled in this way.

In the *Vajra Garland* it says:

Above and below, as if facing,
of sixty-four and eight petals.
Well positioned above and below,
the life and evacuative winds flow.[411] [132]

Does the third line mean above and below the eight-petal heart cakra or above and below the sixty-four-petal navel cakra? If it were the first, then this would contradict a previous passage on the location of these winds. If it were the second, this would contradict the lines that follow on from the two lines beginning "In space of the hollow of the heart's lotus," which state:

Well positioned above and below,
the great life and evacuative winds are located.[412]

"Above and below" mean above and below the heart channel-knots. And "located" means "flow" and so refers to the pathway of the flow and not to the sense of *abiding*. Therefore the first fault does not accrue. It is taught, however, that the earth or evacuative wind flows from both nostrils, so what does it mean to say that it flows from a position below the heart? This refers to the fact that the evacuative wind cannot move upward within the pathway of the dhūtī in the center of the heart channel-knot, since it is obstructed by that knot. The same applies to the life-sustaining wind. The life-sustaining wind flows back and forth from the "neck" of the heart to the upper nostrils. Similarly, the evacuative wind flows back and forth from the navel to the openings of the anus and genital organ. The *Red Yamāri Tantra* states:

Evacuative wind is sent on the lower path
to the far end of the secret area,
beginning from the navel.
Beginning from the neck of the heart,
the life-sustaining wind moves through the nostrils.[413]

The accompanying wind abides in accompaniment with the navel caṇḍālī.

The *Vajra Garland* states that the life-sustaining wind, obstructed by the channel knots in the center of the heart, cannot move downward from that point, and the evacuative wind cannot move upward from that point. For the same reasons, the three other winds located in the three other cakras do not at present move back and forth within the channel knots. When the *Vajra Garland* says, "Comes and goes at the throat, heart, navel, and secret lotuses,"[414] it is expressing that the four winds, not including the pervading wind, come and go from particular locations. Furthermore, a wind is found at these locations when it first arises and at the end of its flow. Between these times, however, when it is flowing out as far as it goes and returning, it is not found at these locations.

When the winds come and go, the particular nostril the winds flow through, which wind belongs to which element mandala, and their colors is found in the *Vajra Garland*:

Abiding as the five buddha families,
arising from the nostrils,

the five winds flow upward,
constantly active in the body,
flowing through the conventional nose,
emerging from that gateway,
left, right, both, and gently, these are the four ways.
From the right, the fire-mandala element
of the color red, the flow of the lotus protector.
From the left, the air-mandala element
appearing as green and yellow,
the wind of the activity protector.
From both, the mighty mandala,
the element of earth, the color of gold,
the wind of the jewel protector. [133]
Gentle and non-flowing, color of pure crystal,
the water mandala element, flow of the vajra protector.
Perfectly arising from all elements,
holder of supporter and supported,
with the nature of Vairocana, arising at death.
In meditative equipoise, recite them constantly.
The mantra practitioner, with the number of recitations,
recites them constantly day and night.[415]

The meaning of this passage is found in the *Compendium of Practice*, where it says that "from the vajra and lotus nostrils, the light rays emerge and travel upward. The lords of the mantras of the three syllables and so on enter each mandala that flows from the gateway of the conventional nose, from the left, right," and so on, and these are "to be recited constantly in sequence by the practitioner."[416] For the phrase "constantly active in the body" other translations have "constantly flowing in the body." The pervading wind also flows through the nostrils because above it says that the five winds flow upward through the gateway of the nose. Because flow from the right and left nostrils is explained separately, "flowing gently" can be understood as being from both nostrils. "Non-flowing" is explained in the *Compendium of Practice* as meaning "slowly." Arising from the "right" and so on is explained in the *Compendium of Practice* as meaning arising from the right and left nostrils and both nostrils. Descriptions in the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* are similar to this. Therefore the explanation in the commentary to the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* of the winds flowing on the left, right, and in the center of each nostril does not make sense.

The description found in Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*, which talks of the air element flowing from the right nostril, water from the left, earth and fire from both, does not contradict the *Vajra Garland*. The latter description here is based on the primary flow. As for the former, flow described as being equal in both nostrils is also described as flowing from individual nostrils, and winds described as flowing from individual nostrils are also described as flowing from both nostrils. There is no certainty on these two types of flow. Also, winds described as flowing from the left nostril are also described as flowing from the right nostril. Therefore there is no certainty on the winds flowing from the individual nostrils. The former position illustrates this uncertainty. The way that the other three winds also flow as accompaniments when a particular wind of a greater element flows will be explained later.

It is not clearly stated in this tantra and in the texts of the master and his disciples that the four winds that flow from the nasal gateways actually refer to the five root winds. This can be understood by comparing the winds described as being the winds of the four lords with the previous citation describing the life-sustaining wind and so on as referring to these lords. *Illuminating Lamp* says that earth, water, fire, and air winds flow from the secret-area, heart, throat, and navel lotuses, respectively. [134]

Concerning the colors of the winds, in the translations of the *Vajra Garland* and according to the *Vajra Garland* cited in old translations of the *Compendium of Practice*, the winds flowing from the left are green-yellow, and in the following explanation they are described as "green-yellow, with the characteristic of black rays." In the *Vajra Garland* citations found in the Patsap and Chak translations of the *Compendium of Practice*, they are green-blue, and in the following explanation they are also described as green-blue. In the *Compendium of Practice* the four winds are described as having the characteristics of black, red, yellow, and white rays, respectively. A similar description can be found in *Illuminating Lamp*'s commentary on the fourteenth chapter. *Illuminating Lamp* on the third chapter describes the colors of the four winds as red and so on, and the *Explanation of the Intention* does likewise. In *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter, except for describing the winds of the right as having red rays, the other three are described as above. Clearly, the descriptions vary, but the independent colors of the life-sustaining, evacuative, upward-flowing, and accompanying winds can be ascertained as white, yellow, red, and black respectively. Concerning the rays of five colors, they should be understood as described in the *Compendium of Practice*:

> Although that is the case, when each ray appears, five rays can be ascertained, because each elemental mandala pervades all four elemental mandalas.[417]

Karuṇāśrī talks of *śyāma*,[418] which is explained as referring to both green and black. Therefore this can be rendered as green-blue or green-black but not as green-yellow. Based on the statement that pervading wind is Vairocana and life-sustaining wind is Akṣobhya, Lakṣmī has them as white and black respectively. This assertion contradicts many other texts. The color of the pervading wind is not clearly described, but in accordance with the master Gö, it should be described as blue-green.

Stating that one elemental mandala of the winds pervades all four means that while one of the winds, such as life-sustaining wind, is flowing, it is also flowing together with the other three. *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter says:

> When engaged in the activities of each mandala, the other three accompany the mandala and enter it.[419]

This is also commentary on the line from the tantra, "Those accompanying specifically emanate."[420] The four mandalas referred to here are explained as being the four mandalas that flow through the right, left, and both nostrils. Therefore they should be understood as the life-sustaining wind and so on. In that case, when the upward-flowing wind is flowing through the right nostril, the life-sustaining wind, evacuative wind, and accompanying wind all flow together with it. The other three can be understood similarly. At that time, the way that these three winds flow when immersed into the upward-flowing wind is that by the strength of the upward wind being of the fire element, they will appear like a rainbow in which their colors, [135] although still white, yellow, and green, will have a reddish hue. From this you can understand, when the accompanying wind and so on flow from the right and so on, how the main wind flows and how the other three winds flow within it.

Therefore the statement that the upward wind flows from the right nostril, the accompanying wind from the left nostril, and the life-sustaining wind and evacuative wind flow equally from both nostrils is made on the basis of it being a main wind. When flowing as an accompanying wind, however, there is no such certainty.

When the winds of the four lords flow with the upward wind from the

right nostril as the main wind, the first 225 breaths of the four winds are the winds of Pāṇḍaravāsinī. The next three sets of 225 breaths are the winds of Tārā, Locanā, and Māmakī, respectively. The winds of each goddess include the winds of the four lords. Similarly, it can be understood that when the winds of the four lords flow with the accompanying wind flowing from the left nostril as the main wind, the breaths begin with the winds of Tārā. For the winds flowing equally from both nostrils: When the life-sustaining wind flows, the first winds are those of Māmakī, and when the evacuative wind flows, the first winds are those of Locanā. *Explanation of the Intention* says:

> Pāṇḍaravāsinī and so forth flow respectively,
> above, sideways, straight, and below,
> the mandalas of fire, air, earth, and water.[421]

Therefore Pāṇḍaravāsinī winds flow upward, Tārā winds flow sideways, Locanā winds flow straight ahead, and Māmakī winds flow downward. These four are the elemental mandalas from fire to earth.

In this way, there is a set of four winds with one wind, such as the upward wind, flowing as the main wind. In each set of four, the four winds divided among the four goddesses do not flow simultaneously. The four winds divided among the four lords that make up each of the goddess winds, however, do flow simultaneously. The winds of the goddesses only flow sequentially, and there are no winds flowing simultaneously other than the four winds of the four lords. Therefore Kṛṣṇasamayavajra is not correct when he asserts that one wind is in the middle of the nostril and the other four are in the four directions, and all five flow simultaneously. On these four simultaneously flowing winds, the assertion by Yoṣa that they do not flow individually but together, "like a rainbow," is correct.

Because this explanation is different from other traditions that teach the five lesser elements in the center and the simultaneous flow from the four directions, the flow "above, sideways, straight, and below" refers to a sequential flow and not a simultaneous one.

The Chak translation of the above has "Above, on the sides, equally, and below." In which case, when each set of nine hundred breaths is explained in terms of the four winds of the four goddesses, the fire wind of Pāṇḍaravāsinī flows from the upper part of the nostril, the air wind of Tārā flows from the sides of the nostrils, the earth wind of Locanā flows equidistant from the right and left sides of the nostrils—that is, in the center—and the water wind

of Māmakī flows from the lower part of the nostrils. [136] This agrees with Śrīdhara, who assigns the winds of the four elements to each wind shift and explains that the earth wind flows from the center and the air wind flows from the sides. "Flowing on the parts" as explained in the *Saṃputa Tantra* and "flowing sideways" as found in other works should be taken to mean "flowing on the sides." "Straight" and "equally" mean "flowing from the center." If it is taken to mean "flowing from both sides of the nostril" this should be understood as occurring sequentially.

In the tantra, at the point where it begins "The five winds flow upward . . . ," it explains that the pervading wind also arises through the nostrils. However, later it says that it arises at death. This has led Lakṣmī, as well as Alaṃkakalaśa and many earlier Tibetans, to assert that "it flows at death but not at the present time." Ekādaśasvara, on the other hand, says that it flows in the manner of whatever mandala is arising at the present time but that at death it flows as a main wind. Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* says that the winds that flow each day in the *māra*-tearing channel[422] are life-consuming winds and are therefore pervading winds. Thus there are three explanations. Concerning how and when the pervading wind, which pervades all the joints in the body, flows through the nostrils, the first assertion is the best. Therefore it is possible to gather in the engaging winds that flow through the nostrils, but there are many instances of pervading wind that cannot be gathered in. These also have to be gathered. The *Saṃputa Tantra* says that when pot yoga is practiced, winds from twenty-four places are gathered in, and *Sheaves of Instructions* explains this as being the gathering in of the pervading wind.

Explanation of the five branch winds

Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* states that the five branch winds abide in the five sense organs—the eyes and so on. The *Vajra Garland* states that these winds flow from the channels known as *lunar segment* and so on:

> Lunar segment, light, service, dewlap, and spleen[423]
> are the names of the five channels.
> Winds flowing from these five channels are
> nāga, turtle, lizard, *devadatta*, and *dhanvanjaya*.[424]

Also:

In the heart's center, a phenomenon of bliss,
a buddha-sun of clear light;
by the forms of apprehended and apprehending,
it becomes the twelve rays of light.
Increasing light, light rays, bright light,
illumination, blazing, blazing light,
in dependence upon the eyes, and so on
will apprehend external form.
Light rays, light, luminosity,
beautiful clarity, clear light, clear sun:
these are aspects of external form.
These six are asserted as being light.[425]

This passage describes the winds arising from the heart in dependence upon the six organs to form the six apprehending winds that move the six consciousnesses and the six apprehended winds that illuminate form and so on. [137] Therefore it is clear that these channels are channels of the heart. Whether these channels can be identified with the object-reaching channels of the heart, such as the threefold channel,[426] is something to be investigated. The five secondary winds are mostly branches of the life-sustaining wind, and so the main location of their arising and setting is the heart.

Illuminating Lamp says:

> The "five blazes" are the five kinds of light rays, with aspects such as rising upward.[427]

Also:

> "A glimmer of many sparks" means that they possess the characteristics of five rays of light.[428]

Also:

> Because it never ends, like a waterwheel revolving day and night, it is a "wheel." "Five vajras" are the five colors.[429]

Therefore the five branch winds possess the characteristics of the five light rays, and they come and go day and night by way of the five senses.

As for their colors, the moving wind is red, roving wind is blue, perfectly flowing wind is yellow, intensely flowing wind is white, and definitively flowing wind is green. This is according to the works of the master Gö. The way that the fifth wind abides in the bodily sense power is that it is to be found wherever that power is found.

Explanations common to both types of wind

The *Compendium of Practice* says that the ten winds become respiratory breath. It is explained that the ten winds are formed in the womb but do not rise and fall until birth. It is only at birth that they become breath. As for the five main winds, this coming and going has already been explained. For the five branch winds, some either flow together with the winds flowing through the nostrils or they are assigned elsewhere. The statement[430] that the winds become the four elemental mandalas of air and so on, the four goddesses, and the five elements can be understood from the previous explanations. "They become the five buddha families and the five exalted wisdoms" has also been explained in terms of the five root winds. As for the branch winds, this occurs in accordance with the way that the five sense powers and the five objects become members of the five buddha families.

The statement that the winds become the bases for the three syllables used in vajra-repetition practice applies to all ten winds. Also, the statement that the winds become the basis for the letter *a* and bring about all speech is not contradictory for all ten winds. These winds "attaining the indestructible and becoming non-phenomenal" means that at death they dissolve in the indestructible drop at the heart and engage in the clear light. Such a process is similarly engineered by practices of the path.

The above is found in the *Compendium of Practice* as a reply to the question, "What do the ten winds do in their locations?" Looking at the answer it could be construed as a description of the function of the winds, but their functions are taught by the words "The five root winds dwell in the body and perform the functions of the body. The five branch winds dwell in the eyes and so on and perform the functions of the sense organs."[431] This has already been extensively explained in the body-isolation section and is something that can be learned there. [138] Therefore "becoming respiratory breath . . ." and so on is to be regarded as a description from the standpoint of the nature of the winds.

Five Stages says, "This is the mount for consciousness,"[432] and so forth, thereby teaching that consciousness possesses the mount of the winds. This means that the winds animate the consciousness. Because of this reason, it is said that "all living beings constitute the animate world." The body being able to move objects and so on is not valid as a reason for living beings being "animate" because it does not apply to all living beings.

Form being moved by the winds within the body, for example, does not involve consciousness, so what does it mean to say that consciousness is moved by the winds? Lakṣmī and others say that the six consciousnesses being able to discern their objects depend upon their being driven by the winds. Otherwise, like a blind person, they would not be able to "see." Therefore, if these two work together, like a disabled person and a blind person, they will be able to accomplish the task in hand. *Explanation of the Intention* says that activities such as going and apprehending objects similarly depend upon the winds:

> Activity concerning going, objects, and so on,
> here, depends upon that.[433]

The *Compendium of Practice* says that the five winds dwell in the sense powers and perform the activities of the five objects and the sense powers. Therefore it has to be accepted that the activity of consciousness apprehending objects depends upon the winds. That alone is not reason enough to establish the winds as the mount for the consciousness because consciousness similarly depends upon the sense organs and their objects. Furthermore, the *Compendium of Practice* speaks of winds engaging in the subtle realm of the appearances, causing them to gradually move, thereby bringing about the continual experiences of the intrinsic natures. The great brahman Saraha says:

> Gathering the mind is influenced by the winds;
> moving and carried, it becomes uncontrolled.[434]

The mind under the influence of the winds can become uncontrolled. Therefore it is accepted that all instances of conceptual and nonconceptual minds being carried to objects is performed by the winds. I still do not think that this is enough to explain the statement that winds are the mount of consciousness. So what does? Consciousness has no form and so has no ability

to travel independently on the paths to and from objects; yet, when it is together with the winds, it does have the ability to travel to objects. In the *Compendium of Practice* the question arises:

> If it is taught that the three consciousnesses[435] do not come and go, how do they day and night emanate and withdraw from within the body? Why are they known as "watchmen"?

In reply, after explaining how these three are devoid of form:

> Although that is the case, they are together with appearance. Therefore, accompanying the realm of the winds, they are watchmen.[436] [139]

The meaning of this is: While it is true that the three consciousnesses have no form, because they are together with the appearances of the winds, they accompany the winds and come and go like a never-resting watchman. Therefore traveling to objects by way of the winds is what is meant by saying that the mind travels mounted on the winds. In this traveling there will be times when the mind is and is not carried to objects. When it happens that the winds as the mount of the consciousness move from the former position to the latter—from carrying the mind to an object to not carrying the mind to an object—there is no traveling to another object, but it is not that the mind has not traveled to an object.[437] The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> The appearances of the subtle realm and the consciousnesses are without form and so are mixed like melted butter poured into melted butter. In this way all activities of the world and beyond the world are completed.[438]

Wind and mind are mixed like butter poured into butter and accordingly are of one nature. This is a good description. The *Compendium of Practice* stating that this wind has no form is a reference to formlessness as defined by the coarse realm and is not saying that the five light rays of the subtle realm have no form. This is illustrated by the previous passage where the external winds lacking the form of hands and legs are referred to as "formlessness." Statements that the consciousness creates movement in the sense of moving the body and so on are made on the basis of being together with

the winds. Without the winds, it is not capable of creating movement. This can also be understood from the commentary to Āryadeva's *Four Hundred Verses.*

How the winds move

1. Movement from one nostril to another
2. Movement from one channel-petal mandala to another

Movement from one nostril to another

In the Kālacakra literature, six winds flow from the right nostril in the order of earth, water, fire, air, space, and exalted wisdom. From the left nostril six winds flow in the reverse order. Beginning with the wind shift from the earth wind on the right to the space wind on the left, there are in total twelve sequential wind shifts. In between each of these shifts, 56¼ breaths flow from the dhūtī. Therefore, in one day 675 winds flow from the dhūtī. The remaining winds flow from the right and left channels. The 21,600 winds that flow in a single day are divided into twelve to make divisions of 1,800. This is explained as the *shift of the winds.* If the winds from the dhūtī are counted separately, then that much has to be subtracted, with each breath consisting of one inhalation and one exhalation. The *Vajra Garland* and the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* make similar assertions. [140]

Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* states that the space wind does not flow separately from the other four element minds. This is established with citations from the *Vajra Garland*, *Explanation of the Intention*, and the *Triumph of Nonduality Tantra*. It goes on to say that Kālacakra assertions of the space mandala flowing separately from the four elements, the winds of the five minor elements flowing through each of the nostrils from the center and the four directions, reversing the count of the petals in the throat and crown cakras, and designating four of the sixty-four channel petals of the navel as empty channels were teachings deliberately interpreted for disciples such as Sūryaratha.[439] They are not definitive because "they are similar to the teachings on the arrangement of the three realms in the upper regions of Meru asserted by the followers of Varāha."[440]

On the teaching in *Explanation of the Intention* of twenty-four wind shifts, Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon*[441] commentary says, "Some say that two shifts flow uninterruptedly from one nostril" and then the wind

moves to the other nostril. Therefore, in one day twelve shifts flow, and this is "like the twelve shifts of the sun in the external year." On the *Hevajra Tantra* teaching of sixteen shifts, the commentary says this is "based on the sixteen-petal cakra at the throat." "Others say that" of the twenty-four shifts through one nostril, "after one and a half shifts, the flow moves to the other nostrils, where one and a half shifts flow," thereby making sixteen shifts in one day. Also they say, "of the third level of the navel lotus," in which there are sixteen petals, "four are put aside, leaving twelve shifts in accordance with the outside world." Alternatively, it is not necessary for inner and outer to match up consistently. In both possibilities one and a half shifts externally and internally make up half a period. The *Vajra Garland* and others say that each shift constitutes half a period, but this is not contradictory." This is the explanation from *Light of the Moon.*

The tradition of twenty-four shifts with each set of two consecutive shifts making up one shift in each nostril means that the explanation of sixteen shifts was taught with the petals of the throat in mind and is not a shift at the nostrils. The tradition of one and half shifts from the twenty-four shifts making up one shift in the nostrils means the explanation of twelve shifts is based upon the twelve shifts of the twelve petals at the navel harmonized with the outside world and is not based upon the shift at the nostrils. The *Vajra Garland* and others state that each shift constitutes half a period, and *Explanation of the Intention* says that one and a half shifts makes one period. Therefore two statements that disagree can be seen to be not contradictory. *Sheaves of Instructions* explains that twenty-four shifts means twenty-four half-period shifts. These explanations mean that there must be twenty-four shifts of the four goddess winds. [141]

Muniśrībhadra says that the *Explanation of the Intention* position of there being twenty-four sets of nine hundred in a single day is on the basis of the shifts at the nostrils, and that the teaching on the twenty-four shifts is a provisional teaching, whereas the sixteen-shift teaching in Hevajra is definitive and refers to the shift at the nostrils. Also, he says that this accords with the maxim, "As without, so within."[442]

The *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra* and other explanatory tantras do not clearly teach the duration of the flow of the four mandala winds from the nostrils. In contrast, the more recent translation of *Explanation of the Intention* says:

> For each of the white, yellow, red, and black winds, there are four sets of 225 winds of the goddesses. In total this comes to nine

> hundred. In one day twenty-four sets of nine hundred flow in sequence to make 21,600.[443]

If this is put together with the *Vajra Garland*, these four winds are the four root winds. Each of the four, however, is based on one main wind with the other three within it, and that makes up one set of nine hundred winds. The *Vajra Garland* says that when the four winds flow, they remain for half a period. Earlier Tibetans explain this as meaning the duration of the flow of one set of nine hundred winds. Muniśrībhadra also explains a half period of the Guhyasamāja tradition in that way. Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* on the fifteenth chapter says that in the duration of the flow of nine hundred winds, vajra repetition will accomplish the feats of pacification and so on. In the same work, on the fourteenth chapter, it says that "an explanatory tantra states" that the winds of the four elements remain for half a period. This is explained as follows: The winds of the four mandalas arise from their locations of the four sites—the secret area and so on—and in the time of a half a period the four feats, pacification and so on, will be accomplished. Therefore the duration of half a period is nine hundred winds. When the winds of the four mandalas flow through the nose, the duration of that flow at that time is measured by half a period. It is not the intention that the first half period of nine hundred is followed uninterruptedly by another nine hundred before moving to the other nostril. Also, there are two mandalas that flow equally through both nostrils, during which there is no shift at the nostrils. This does not mean, however, that in a single day of winds there are twelve shifts left and right.

The tantra in "an explanatory tantra says" is identified by Śraddhā and Bhavyakīrti as the *Explanation of the Intention.* The passage does not occur in the present translation, but as there are still parts to be translated into Tibetan, it is not necessarily wrong.

Drop of Freedom says:

> For each of the four consorts,
> two hundred and twenty-five; [142]
> repeated four times is nine hundred.
> That multiplied by twenty-four shifts
> is twenty-one thousand six hundred.[444]

How is this figure of twenty-four shifts arrived at? Both this text and Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* state that there are two mandalas flowing

through each nostril and two mandalas flowing equally through both nostrils. Therefore, for two mandalas there are twelve shifts between the right and left nostrils, and for the other two mandalas there are no shifts at the nostrils. This makes twelve instances of wind shifts and is the meaning of the text. Buddhaśrījñāna's *Drop of Freedom* commentary also says that twenty-four shifts in left and right nostrils is not the meaning of the text.

It might be thought:

> The position of *Explanation of the Intention* may well be as described, but it does not match the measure of half a period according to the *Vajra Garland*, which says:
>
> > With the divisions of the periods
> > comes the recitations;
> > at each period the winds are examined
> > and with effort are ascertained perfectly
> > as numbering two thousand seven hundred.
>
> Therefore the winds of each period number 2,700, making half a period 1,350 winds. Also, the same work states:
>
> > By the yoga of emanating,
> > the periods become eight in number.[445]
>
> Therefore, in a single day there must be sixteen half periods.

The meaning of the first citation is as follows: The *Vajra Garland* states that having completed the generation stage, you start to practice vajra repetition for six months. In the second month you perform the recitations, and when the winds are examined, they number as mentioned above. Then with great effort the yogi equalizes the number of winds of the eight equal parts that make up a single day. It is not a statement made on the basis of winds other than those. In the second citation, the emanating is from the right, left, and central channels and is therefore referring to the eight period-channels of the heart. It is not referring to a measure of the duration of the flow of winds. The statement that when the winds of the four mandalas flow through the nose they remain for half a period refers to the natural duration of the flow of these winds in the basic state and on the path. Therefore this half period and the half period of the 2,700 winds are described with the same term but are not the same in meaning. The half periods described in the two explanatory tantras and the *Triumph of Nonduality Tantra*, as cited in the *Five Stages*, have the same meaning.

Lakṣmī, Bhavyakīrti, and Alaṃkakalaśa talk of the duration of flow of the winds in terms of eight periods and sixteen half-periods. Each period has eight hours,[446] and in each period there is a clear-light half hour devoid of incoming and outgoing breaths. Therefore, in one day, four clear-light hours appear. Bhavyakīrti says, "At these times, if the mind is held in the drop, a single-pointed mind in the nature of clear light will be produced." [143] Other tantras from the Guhyasamāja tradition do not teach the number of hours in a day, but the *Vajra Garland* says there are sixty hours in a day. Therefore "sixty-four hours" has no relevance in this tradition. If you specifically want to eliminate the contradiction posed by "sixty" and "sixty-four," on the basis that this tantra says that "hours" and *daṇḍa*[447] are similar and that other tantras talk of sixty-four *daṇḍa*, then you would have to resolve the contradiction between the incompatible assertions of the thirty-two hours and sixty-four *daṇḍa* found in other works and the measurement found in this tantra, the *Vajraḍāka Tantra*, and the *Four Seats Tantra*, as described above. Moreover, the half an hour devoid of inhalation and exhalation at the beginning of each period of flow at the nostrils is refuted by the type of reasoning known as "that which should appear is not apprehended."[448] Therefore any attempt to resolve the contradiction is not a good idea. Furthermore, thinking that it can be resolved by the Kālacakra explanation of there being sixty-four channel petals with four empty channels is not relevant here. The *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* says:

> The winds from the sixteen shifts
> are completed in a single day,
> with half a period perfectly flowing
> from the nostrils constantly.[449]

This assigns sixteen half-periods to a single day, so the sixteen shifts explained as flowing through the nostrils at each period are not to be regarded as sixteen occasions of shifting from one nostril to another. This is because that tantra explains that the fire and air mandalas flow from each nostril and the earth and water mandala flow equally through both nostrils. Therefore there are eight occasions of shift from one nostril to the other, and at the other times of no shift, eight mandala shifts are designated. Śrīdhara's *Innate Light: Commentary on the Black Yamāri Tantra* explains that the winds remain for half a period at one nostril before moving to the other and that this occurs eight times in the day and eight times at night. Kṛṣṇācārya and Muniśrībhadra agree with this.

Movement from one channel-petal mandala to another

The *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* says:

> Channels said to be "thirty-two"
> means that the quarters of a period
> are spoken of as channels and hours.
> The number of *daṇḍa* day and night is sixty-four;
> half a channel, half an hour is a *daṇḍa*;
> remember it as an eighth of a period.[450]

By dividing it into eight, astronomers designate eight periods to a day. When half of a period is designated as one shift, there are sixteen shifts. When a quarter of a period is designated as an hour, there are thirty-two hours in a day. When half of an hour is designated to be a *daṇḍa*, there are sixty-four *daṇḍa* in a day. In the commentary to the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*, the Bhasati[451] calculations are used, and one day consists of eight *daṇḍa*. Therefore the length of a *daṇḍa* is determined by those who perform astronomical calculations. The same is true with hours and so on. It is similar to the tantras. [144] In some, one day has thirty-two hours, in others sixty-four hours, in yet others one hour is one *daṇḍa*.

Inwardly, 2,700 winds flowing through one channel petal at the heart are the number of winds for the duration of one period. Half that amount of wind, or 1,350 winds, is one shift of flow at one throat channel-petal. A quarter of the number of winds at one channel petal of the heart, or 675 winds, is one hour of flow at one crown channel-petal. One eighth of the number of winds at each of the heart channel-petals, or 337½ winds, is one *daṇḍa* of wind flow at one navel channel-petal. Winds flowing from a single channel-petal are doubled in those of the navel, the crown, the throat, and the heart respectively. This is the position of the *Hevajra Tantra* and the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*, as clarified by the commentary to the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*. That it is indeed the position of the *Hevajra Tantra* is made clear by Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions*.

Concerning which of the three main channels the winds of the four mandalas flow through, the *Vajra Garland* says:

> Well positioned, above and below,
> the life and evacuative winds flow.

It has been clearly taught that these two
are solely winds of conceptualization.
The channels *lalanā* and *rasanā*
are the essence of body and speech.
The *avadhūtī*, supreme channel,
lying in between these two,
supreme of the supreme, winds without conception,
is always flowing, pervading all.[452]

This teaches that the life-sustaining wind and evacuative wind are winds that create conceptualization, and that winds that enter the dhūtī are winds that negate conceptions. The same work says:

The two winds of conceptualization
are then severed to become
the great winds of nonconceptuality.
Severing body and speech vajras . . .[453]

Severing these two winds is said to be the severing of the body and speech vajras. Therefore "the essence of body and speech" refers to the life-sustaining wind and the evacuative wind. These two are stated as flowing in the two channels. Therefore, except through the power of yoga when they are brought into the dhūtī and at the time of death and so on, according to this tradition, they do not flow in the dhūtī. From the same work:

The two winds of conceptualization
arise from the nostrils
flowing from the perfect sun and moon
that are hidden inside.[454]

These winds flow from within the sun right channel and moon left channel. Therefore, in this tradition, flowing equally from both nostrils does not necessarily mean that the winds are flowing within the dhūtī.[455] Although it is not clear on the fire-accompanying wind and upward flowing wind, these two also flow through the right and left channels. Therefore the flow from the right and left channels can be alternate or simultaneous. When the accompanying wind and upward wind are the main winds, the flow is through the right or left channel. When life-sustaining wind and evacuative wind are the

main winds, the flow is from both right and left channels simultaneously. When they flow as winds accompanying the main winds, there is no such definitive flow. [145]

Concerning the shifts from one wind mandala to another, there are six shifts in a day for each major mandala, making twenty-four shifts. For the minor mandalas and for each shift of the six major mandalas, there are four shifts, making ninety-six altogether. This is the position of the Guhyasamāja explanatory tantras. In the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* tradition, there has to be sixty-four mandalas of the minor elements, and so mention of ninety-six in the commentary is not relevant.

Explanation of the Intention talks similarly of the number of winds for each of the four mandalas being nine hundred. Also, the *Vajra Garland*, the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*, and Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* speak of two mandala winds flowing through individual nostrils and two mandala winds flowing through both nostrils equally. Therefore it could be that the winds of the two flows that pass individually through the left and right nostril make up half the winds of one day and the winds that flow equally through both nostrils make up the other half. If that is the case, each dual flow of breath through both nostrils and each individual flow of breath through the left and right nostrils are of the same duration. Therefore the way of counting the nine hundred winds of the dual flow must be applied to the pairs of incoming and outgoing breaths of right and left nostrils combined. In that case, does there have to be a different way of counting compared to the way of counting the individual flows? This should be examined. If that is so, then the dual flow of winds of similar strength from left and right nostrils together will be shorter in duration, but the dual flow of winds of varying strengths from both nostrils will be longer in duration. Therefore both these types of flow are designated as being of dual flow.

The way that dual flow occurs in both nostrils at the occasion of the shift from right to left nostril is as follows: There is a point when the wind flowing in the right nostril begins to weaken imperceptibly, and from that point, a very weak flow begins in the left. Gradually that flow becomes stronger as the flow in the right becomes correspondingly weaker until finally not even a trace remains on the right. From that moment on, the flow in the left nostril alone begins. The change of flow from left to right is similar. Therefore, although this is a new flow of wind in a nostril where there was not one before, there is still wind that has not shifted from the nostril of the previous flow.

According to the Guhyasamāja explanatory tantras, half of the winds of

a single day involve twelve shifts at the nostrils, but according to the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*, there are eight. According to the Kālacakra, apart from 675 breaths, there are twelve shifts at the nostrils for the whole of one day. Are these contradictory or not? For the Guhyasamāja position, Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* and the Ārya and his disciples in their commentaries have left it as it is. The *Saṃvarodaya* commentaries have also followed that particular tantra. [146] Therefore it is not right to explain these citations as having the same meaning. Moreover, it is difficult to make distinctions by saying that this tradition's position on the flow at the nostrils can be experientially determined whereas the others' cannot. Therefore these positions have been taught on the basis of different disciples and should be regarded as not contradictory. Although there are other similar disagreements in the presentations on the root winds and so on, if you understand the need for their assertions, and practice penetrative focusing on the body, it becomes clear that in all these traditions, the essence of the path involves bringing the karmic winds into the dhūtī where they dissolve to produce great bliss, which is then joined to the perception of emptiness. Therefore these differences do not serve as conditions for discrepancies in the principal points of those paths.

Bhavyakīrti says that the fire wind flowing through the right nostril is the first wind of the day. Nevertheless, the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* says:

> Beginning from the first of the bright days,[456]
> for the following three days
> wind flows half a period in the moon.
> Then for three days it flows in the sun,
> continuing this way for the fifteen bright days.
> Beginning from the first of the black days,
> for three days it flows in the morning from the sun,
> for the duration of the fifteen days.[457]

This also is not contradictory. Flowing in the "moon" means from the left nostril, and flowing in the "sun" means from the right nostril. "Day" means from sunrise to sunset, and from sunset to sunrise then is night. Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* explains the initial flow as beginning from dawn.

Wind omens divined from the reversal in the order of flow at the beginning of the waxing or waning phases for a period of six days, for "one side," or half a month, "two sides," or two half-months, and "three sides," or three half-months, and the corresponding bad events are found in the same text:

If for one, two, three, four, five, and six days
the winds should flow in reverse,
at such time great troubles will arise.
From reversal for one whole side,
great sickness will everywhere spread.
From reversal for two whole sides,
your closest friends will disappear.
From reversal for three whole sides,
death occurs in six months.[458]

Although many other signs of death are explained, it is stressed that the signs of death divined from the wind reversal of someone whose elements are balanced are reliable, and that if they occur, you should perform the inner and outer death-cheating rituals.

On the good and the bad that will occur depending on which wind of the four mandalas is flowing, the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* says:

Earth means happiness[459] for the kingdom;
water means all will be well accomplished;
the fire wind flowing means thirst and hunger,
poisons, suffering, and illness will occur,
and all works and deeds will deteriorate.
This the great holder of the vajra has said.
Wind means trouble, decline, confusion,
poverty, and mental affliction.
Earth means wealth, grain, and so forth [147]
will be gained and accumulated.
When the water wind flows,
all desired siddhis will arise.
Therefore its yoga is the highest,
Vajrasattva has said.[460]

Concerning what activities to perform when the winds flow from the individual nostrils and from both:

For the elimination of poison and also
for the creation of all to be auspicious,
the nature of wisdom is well praised.

For the organizing of battles,
always be with the power of glorious compassion.
For playing, putting on shows,
cutting, digging, burning, and smelting,
the nature of compassion is well praised.
Furthermore, that which has the nature of both
should be known as an expression of doubt.
No certifying them as good or bad,
the holder of the vajra, knowing the winds,
has illustrated them here.[461]

"The nature of wisdom" refers to the time of the flow of wind solely from the left nostril. "The nature of compassion" refers to the time of the flow of wind solely from the right nostril. "The nature of both" refers to the time of the winds flowing from both nostrils. In the commentary,[462] the former citation is explained in terms of wind yoga accomplishing the feat of increase when the earth wind flows, pacification when the water wind flows, the wrathful feat when fire flows, and as an aspect of the wrathful feat, the feat of expelling and so on when the air flows.

Ācārya Śrīdhara says:

When doing good and bad deeds,
coming and going and so on:
With earth and water come good deeds,
with fire and air come black deeds.
Know that moon is the best,
bright light is average.
Bad deeds done in the sun
will certainly bring death.
That done in the moon
will not bring much suffering.[463]

This is an explanation in connection with various deeds. "Moon" refers to the time the left winds flow. "Bright light" refers to the time of the sun, or right, winds. Wrathful deeds attempted at that time bring death means that that feat will be accomplished. In short, it is good to perform placid deeds such as pacification at the time of the earth and water winds. Performed at the time of the fire and air winds, such deeds will bring no joy. It is good to

perform them during the times of the left winds, whereas at the times of the right-nostril winds, the results will be average. When performing wrathful deeds and the reverse situation is present, similar results will follow. Śrīdhara explains the four winds as being those of the minor elements.

Furthermore, if something is requested when winds are flowing in your *āli*, or left, but flowing in the questioner's *kāli*, or right, or vice versa, the purpose will not be realized. If both winds are in the same nostril, the purpose will be realized. If both winds are flowing in both nostrils of requester and requested, there is no certainty that its purpose will be accomplished. If the other asks something when your winds are entering, and you undertake that task, the result will be good. The same situation when the winds are leaving will produce bad results. When the winds are abiding inside, there is no telling whether it will be good or bad. The *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* continues:

> A request with the lord flowing in *āli*
> and for others dwelling in *kāli*
> or flowing in *kāli* while dwelling in *āli*,
> desired aims will not be fulfilled. [148]
> From wherever the lord is flowing,
> if others request while dwelling there,
> all their wishes will be realized fully.
> Dwelling in both, the result is in doubt.[464]

Also:

> For the questioner and even for oneself,
> all dharmakāya instances are good,
> sambhogakāya instances are in doubt,
> and emanated body instances are trouble.[465]

"Dharmakāya" refers to the winds entering. "Sambhogakāya" refers to the winds dwelling. "Emanated body" refers to the winds leaving.

How the winds perform their functions

The *Compendium of Practice* says that the subtle element of wind and the consciousness appearances join together and accomplish all worldly and transworldly activities. If you understand the first of these, you will understand

the process of entering samsara shared by other vehicles as well as the exclusive position. By knowing this you will comprehend the second function and understand well the stages of turning away from samsara according to the shared and exclusive traditions.

How do the winds accomplish the activities of worldly samsara? The *Vajra Garland* says:

> Just like the moon being eclipsed,
> the winds gradually weaken
> as their own characteristics successively dissolve,
> again to merge with *mucilinda*.[466]

At death, just as the moon being eclipsed becomes unseen, preceding winds dissolve into succeeding winds and again merge to join with *mucilinda*, or life-sustaining wind. This is the same as the *Compendium of Practice* when it says, "These attain the indestructible and become non-phenomenal,"[467] and "While abiding in the body, all is accomplished, and finally they enter the indestructible."[468] When earth, water, fire, and air dissolve sequentially, the movement of the winds becomes progressively less, until finally the winds that move the intrinsic conceptual minds enter the consciousness of the first appearance. These conceptual minds are stopped, and the first empty state arises. Then the second and third empty states arise, followed by the fourth empty state, or clear light. These also appear because the movement of the winds is becoming progressively less. When the movement of the clear-light wind increases in strength, close-to-attainment, increase, and appearance will arise sequentially due to an increase in the movement of wind in each. When the movement of the wind of appearance is at its strongest, the intrinsic conceptual minds are created. In this way the stages of birth and death are created by the winds, and the time between the dissolution of the winds that move the intrinsic conceptual minds [149] and their subsequent arising is the time of the appearance of the four types of empty states. In this way the increase in movement in the three appearances will induce the intrinsic conceptual minds. Therefore it is said that the root of the intrinsic conceptual minds in all living beings is the three appearances. The *Vajra Garland* states:

> Here are gained the three consciousnesses,
> with features of the three appearances,

the root of the intrinsic natures
of every realm of living being.[469]

Also:

This is the great realm of wind,
the mount of the three consciousnesses.
Through its force the intrinsic natures
constantly move where they will.[470]

Five Stages also:

Endowed with the appearances,
riding the mount of the wind,
at such a time every intrinsic nature
without exception will arise.
Wherever a wind abides,
there an intrinsic nature will be engaged.[471]

The intrinsic conceptual minds give rise to mental afflictions, which in turn accumulate karma and create samsara. The *Vajra Garland* says:

Just as fire burns to leave nothing,
they cease flowing and dissolve.
Again life-sustaining wind arises,
and various karmic winds appear;
once together, the consciousness
again dwells in the three worlds.
From this comes karma, likewise birth;
from that imprints of desire and so forth,
from that, again birth and death.
In this way, it is like the turning of a wheel.[472]

This is not teaching that wind is the root of samsara while ignoring the teaching that holding to a self is the root of samsara. The *Compendium of Practice* also states the above, but by relying upon three sutras, including the *Eight Thousand Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, he establishes the stages of entering

samsara by clinging to self and mine, committing good and bad deeds, and circling through the realms of happiness and suffering. These processes are clarified by citing Nāgārjuna:

> If all this is empty,
> and of the nature of no birth,
> then how is this happiness and suffering
> driven by karma?
> As soon as there is delusion of self,
> you come under the power of thoughts
> driven by the stains of desire and so forth,
> and the ignorant are tormented by suffering.
> These things are just mind
> arising as the forms of perfect illusions.
> Then by good and bad deeds,
> they are born in happy and suffering realms.[473]

This is common to both sutra and tantra. Therefore the statement that the winds create samsara should be understood as meaning that they exist as a cooperative cause for the creation of samsara by the afflicted emotions of holding to a self and so on.

This has been the functions of the winds in general. [150] Concerning functions of specific winds, on the life-sustaining wind the *Vajra Garland* says:

> From the continuum of the sense gateways,
> life (*prāṇa*) and endeavor (*āyāma*) flow.
> At all times it flows and is known as *life*.[474]

There are several other translations of this verse found in other editions of the *Vajra Garland* and also as citations in other works. Still, the meaning is that the constant entering and exiting of winds through the gateways of the senses is primarily carried out by this wind. Also, because this process gives life, it is known as *life*. The meaning of *endeavor* is "lengthen," and so it also has the function of making life long. Ekādaśasvara's *Secret Ambrosia Instructions* says that it has the function of traveling out and withdrawing in through the gateways of the senses.

On the function of the evacuative wind:

> Life, winds, and excrement,
> semen, and so forth carried below:
> this is the evacuative wind,
> the yogi should always know.[475]

Carrying semen and so on to the lower areas of the body is the function of the evacuative wind. Other translations have "urine" instead of "life," which is better. Carrying "winds" below means carrying them to the lower areas, particularly to the two openings in the secret area and then back up to the navel as explained previously.

The accompanying wind:

> Laughing, eating, and licking,
> all drinking and sucking,
> always in their accompaniment,
> known therefore as the *accompanying*.[476]

The Chak translation says, "Explained as accompanying eating and drinking." The verse as cited in *Sheaves of Instructions* says:

> Abiding at the navel region,
> and bringing together food and drink,
> it is known as *accompanying*.[477]

The meaning is explained by *Secret Ambrosia*: "Food, drink, and so forth are digested together."[478] Therefore it digests all partaken food into a single taste in the stomach.

The function of the upward flowing wind:

> Moving up and gathering,
> and by knowing eating and tasting,
> it adheres to them.
> Know this as the function of the upward wind.[479]

There are also translation versions that say, "It knows eating and tasting and joins with them," and, "It knows eating and tasting and adheres to them." On the meaning of this verse, earlier commentators explain it as meaning sending

food to the tongue consciousness, which is in keeping with *Secret Ambrosia Instructions*. In Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* it is explained as "moving the flow of the ten winds." Although *Secret Ambrosia Instructions* describes this wind as sending out the karmic winds through the sense gateways, and although "moving up" does teach that this wind travels upward, this is not the only function being taught here; hence the phrase "and gathering" means that it is also responsible for bringing the winds in. The other lines teach that by knowing the partaking of food, this wind comes together with the tongue and performs the functions of chewing and so on. [151]

The function of the pervading wind:

> Pervading and holding,
> going and reversing,
> pervading every joint,
> it is known, therefore, as *pervading*.[480]

In the first line the Chak translation has "nourishing."

The functions of the individual branch winds are to assist the five senses in apprehending their objects and have been explained previously.

Having explained the way the winds perform in common with ordinary beings and yogis, now the way they specifically perform in yogis is explained. By applying vajra repetition to the four winds, you are performing an activity for the accomplishment of deeds such as those of pacification and so on. In this way the ordinary siddhis are achieved. Also, by applying vajra repetition to the winds, the four empty states are induced and the subtle wind will bring about the creation of the illusory body. In this way the supreme siddhi is accomplished. By applying vajra repetition to the five branch winds, the five kinds of extrasensory perception, such as visual clairvoyance,[481] will be attained, and the appearance of objects will bring about the blazing of great bliss. Scholars of the past have said that applying vajra repetition to the pervading wind brings about the experience of clear light when accomplishing the supreme siddhi in the intermediate state.

How to understand the essential points of practice in dependence on the above

By depending on the description of the natures and functions of the winds, how can you come to know the vital points of the body for the practice of penetrative focusing? The *Vajra Garland* states that the wind as the chariot

of the consciousness is mixed with the imprints of consciousness, and when objects are engaged, this will create the intrinsic conceptual minds. Through the contamination of the imprints, you wander in samsara, and there is no samsara other than that. After this the text continues:

> Therefore, in order to leave samsara,
> attain the stage that divides the drop,
> make efforts in meditation,
> and by opening the central knot,
> which is the ignorance unseen by others,
> you will gain the siddhi.[482]

Therefore, to remove the imprints for wandering in samsara, you "divide the drop," meaning to meditate on vajra repetition, which is to open the knots that bind the dhūtī at the heart. Therefore you understand how the four empty states arise at times of movement or non-movement of the intrinsic conceptual minds, as explained previously, and then, in order to recreate those stages in the mindstream, you have to meditate on vajra-repetition prāṇāyāma and so on. To know that is the peerless knowledge of the essential points of practice arising from the explanation of the winds.

The great scholars are agreed that, having sought the wisdom of understanding no-self, which means to have repudiated the objects held as the two types of self [152] and perfectly ascertained the meaning of no-self, to then meditate upon that no-self, the two obscurations will be uprooted and destroyed. Having thoroughly determined the above through listening and thinking, to then meditate upon profound emptiness, however, you need the special subject consciousness of great bliss taught in this vehicle. This is something not found in other vehicles or in the lower classes of tantra and is therefore a feature of this ultimate vehicle. Whether it is the four joys or the four empty states that are induced by this special method, they are induced by way of the great bliss, and that bliss is not complete until the winds that move the intrinsic conceptual minds are stopped. This practice means to make effort in those methods that stop the winds. Therefore it is said that by meditating on the winds, their movement is pacified, and immediately the mind dwells in a state of stability. If, however, you know how to cultivate the mind in a state of nonconceptuality without dullness and agitation, through constant familiarization with that, you will also reach a stable samādhi, even without wind meditation, and so you may wonder what is the point of meditating on the

winds? Also, you might think that if the mind is stable within a state of nonconceptuality, then that itself brings the winds into the dhūtī, and so there is no need for any separate meditation. This will be explained.

Generally, merely holding the mind in the stability of a nonconceptuality is common to both Buddhists and non-Buddhists and to both the Great and Lower vehicles. In particular, a noncontaminated samādhi dwelling nonconceptually on the significance of emptiness is also common to the Perfection Vehicle. So, to develop these states, there is clearly no need to meditate on penetrative focusing on the body through wind meditation. Also, it makes no sense to say that such a samādhi will bring about great bliss through the force of the winds dissolving in the dhūtī. Therefore "stable mind" in the instruction to develop the stability of the mind by stopping the movement of the karmic winds refers to the mind of innate bliss. Saraha says:

> Gathering the mind is influenced by the winds;
> moving and carried, it becomes uncontrolled.
> If it knows the nature of the innate,
> that will make it of stable nature.[483]

Developing this depends upon the winds dissolving in the dhūtī and the caṇḍālī fire blazing. Thus the nonconceptual minds and bliss of the above may have similar names but are completely different in meaning. This has been fully explained previously.

Although the view of emptiness has been clearly ascertained, when you come to meditate on it, that meditation will have to be performed by the bliss of melting, and you will enter the completion stage. At first there will be teachings on the many gateways for penetrative focusing on the body as a method for developing great bliss. Do not think that these are teachings on a less profound completion stage that only deals with channels, winds, drops, wind yogas, and so on, and where there is no meditation on emptiness. [153]

If the karmic winds are halted through the wind-yoga meditations, then the ten winds that come through the sense gateways in dependence upon the two channels in general and the main flow of the life-sustaining wind and evacuative wind in the left and right channel in particular are also halted. Unless these winds are brought into the dhūtī, then by the force of coming and going in other channels, the eighty intrinsic conceptual minds are induced and therefore become a hindrance to the actualization of the four empty states. To complete the generation of great bliss, a powerful melting

of the bodhicitta is necessary, and for that, a powerful blazing of caṇḍālī is necessary. For a special blazing of this fire, the evacuative winds must have reversed into the dhūtī and dissolved, and so the evacuative wind must be prevented from coming and going through the lower gateway. Therefore, as explained previously, the coming and going of this wind has to be divided into the upper and lower gateways.

Also as explained previously, if you understand the process of engaging in samsara that is common to both vehicles, then you will understand the necessity of reversing the holding to true existence, and a search for the ascertainment of the view of no-self will begin. If you understand the uncommon view of the process of engaging in samsara through the force of the winds, you will see the need to halt the karmic winds that move the conceptual minds, and a search for instructions on penetrative focusing on the body as the method to halt these winds will begin. The great bliss induced by that method will ascertain the meaning of no-self, a cultivation of the resulting union of bliss and emptiness as the heart of the path will begin, and the essence of the instructions will be unmistaken. If this is not followed, you will not differentiate the subtle features of great bliss from other forms of bliss, nor will you find the ultimate view by differentiating coarse and subtle types of emptiness. Therefore you may praise the union of bliss and emptiness, but you are just rejoicing in the name.

This is the essence of the teachings of the two classes of tantra and the exclusive and prime cause for the accomplishment of the dharmakāya. Nevertheless, the exclusive accomplishment of the form body is also clearly taught in this tradition. That has been explained before and will be explained again.

18. Significance of the Mantras

Teachings on the nature of the mantras

1. Compiling the mantras
2. Mantra terminology
3. The significance of the mantras
4. Ultimate significance of the mantras
5. Explanation of the short vowel *a*, root of the mantras

Compiling the mantras

The mantras are compiled from the sixteen vowels and the thirty-four consonants. As the *Black Yamāri Tantra* says, "The city of *āli kāli* is the source of secret mantra."[484] [154] The *Compendium of Practice* leaves out *kṣa* and talks of thirty-three consonants, but this is because *kṣa* is not separate from *ka* and *ṣa*. The mantras compiled from this source are those essence mantras, near-essence mantras, rosary mantras, and so on found in the tantras. As to how they are compiled, many ways are described in those tantras. The reality of all these kinds of mantras is found in the three syllables *oṃ āḥ hūṃ*. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Mantras such as the "snake" arise from the *āli kāli*. Their reality is in the three syllables that arise from the indestructible, because all mantras in the very nature of being feminine, masculine, and neutral, according to scriptural tradition, engage with the three syllables. Therefore the three syllables are the masters of the mantras.[485]

The text from "because" up to the end of the sentence expresses why the three syllables are the masters of all mantras. The *Root Tantra* also says that the three syllables are the essence, or chief, of all mantras:

> This is the essence of mantra,
> the compilation of them all,
> the secret body, speech, and mind.[486]

Are the terms "feminine, masculine, and neutral" to be applied to the compilation sources *āli kāli*, the compiled mantras such as the "snake," and the three syllables? The Chak translation of the *Compendium of Practice* has "all mantras in the nature of being feminine, masculine, and neutral." *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter says:

> Mantras arising from *āli kāli* have the nature of the snake and so on. By being feminine, masculine, and neutral, they are the basis of the three syllables. Therefore mantras are the three syllables.[487]

This is found in the two earlier translations. The two later translations have "compiled into the three syllables." *Illuminating Lamp* on the tenth chapter talks of the three mantras of feminine, masculine, and neutral gender to be compiled into the three syllables. These explanations apply the three genders to the compiled mantras. The manner in which the mantras are male, female, and neutral, and how they are compiled within the three syllables "according to scriptural tradition," is the only clear reference found in the works of the master and the four disciples,[488] and there is nothing reliable to be found in other sources.

Our own position is that the three genders are determined by mantras being those of male, female, and both male and female deities. Nevertheless, regardless of how many deities with their corresponding mantras have been taught, they all are contained within the three vajras. Likewise, all mantras are contained within the three syllables. The three syllables are the essence of all mantras because the essence of all those of the body-vajra family is the syllable *oṃ*, and so the main syllable of all their mantras is *oṃ*. [155] The same is applied to the other two families.

In terms of the consonant and vowel bases of mantra compilation, our position is that of the *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra* when it says that twelve vowels are feminine, the consonant classes *ka*, *ca*, *ṭa*, *ta*, and *pa* are masculine, and the two vowels, *ṛ* and *ḷ*, in short and long form, are neutral.[489] As for the three syllables, it is clear that *oṃ* has to be masculine, *āḥ* feminine, and *hūṃ* neutral. Bhavyakīrti and others say that the eight classes of vowels and consonants are compiled within *a*, *ka*, *ca*, *ṭa*, *ta*, *pa*, *ya*, and *śa*, which

are the initial letters of those eight groups, and that these eight are compiled within *a*, *ka*, *ya*, and *śa*, these four within *a*, *ka*, and *ya*, and these three are combined in feminine *āḥ*, masculine *hūṃ*, and neutral *oṃ*.[490]

Although there are clearly countless ways of compiling mantras from the bases of compilation, here they are all included in *oṃ āḥ hūṃ*. Each of these three also is compiled by being formed from three individual letters together with the indestructible drop, thereby creating the three syllables into which all mantras are compiled. This is mantra compilation.

The necessity of teaching that all mantras are compiled in the three seed syllables is to make it known that the ability of all other mantras to achieve siddhi is found within the three syllables. *Illuminating Lamp* on the tenth chapter says that the generation-stage practitioner who comprehends the three tantric activities, even if he has not attained siddhi, will invoke the essence of every deity's mind with the recitation of the three seed syllables.[491] Moreover, as will be explained, the generation-stage practitioner can accomplish the four feats with this recitation. If that is the case, there is no need to ask if the vajra-repetition practice of the definitive three syllables joined inseparably to the winds contains the power of every verbal recitation of mantra to invoke the essence of the deities' mind and bless the practitioner.

Therefore you have to discover that within vajra repetition, not only are there the benefits of bringing the winds into the dhūtī and so on, from the perspective of wind yoga, but also that through the mantra recitation, there is the development of a special power. In this way, wind yoga is unlike any other practice.

Concerning the activities carried out by these three syllables, the *Compendium of Practice* speaks of two types.[492] Activities in common with both ordinary beings and yogis include the following: By the action of these three syllables "successively entering, abiding, and rising day and night, they hold the body, in the sense of maintaining it." These three seeds "together with the *āli kāli*," in the form of blood and semen, "face downward during the joining of the two organs, and in the form of the seed, emerge from the secret opening to create the bodies of living beings." [156] Also, these three syllables "travel upward together with the prāṇāyāma and awaken the gateways of the senses" such as the eyes. This is a description of the three syllables in terms of being mixed with blood, semen, and wind and traveling downward to create the coming and going of winds through the lower gateway and in terms of remaining in their own places. Also, when the life-sustaining wind travels upward, part of it remains in its own place, and after emerging to the

outside, it then returns inside, and so it is acceptable to be described in terms of the three syllables. Also, syllables in the form of the tone of winds are said to be "together with the winds." "Abiding in the body, all activities are carried out." These have been explained and will be explained again. Then at death, "finally they enter the indestructible, and again in dependence upon a body, they will initiate all activities as before." The meaning of this has already been explained.

Activities performed by the three syllables that are exclusive to yogis include the following: For the generation-stage practitioner, the combining of the three syllables generates the body of the deity. These are the three syllables in the aspect of shape and color. The three syllables with these aspects are placed at the heart and other places, and with whispered or clearly articulated verbal recitation, the feats of pacification and so on are accomplished by way of their respective outer colors and directions. In the generation stage, the three syllables have sound and form.

For the completion-stage practitioner, having arisen from the upper gateway, the spontaneous vajra repetition is performed and "past deeds are purified." With vajra-repetition practice, in each half-period flow of the winds of the four mandalas, both ordinary and main feats are accomplished. At that time, one particular feat from those of pacification, increase, power, and wrathfulness is accomplished as the principal feat, while the other three are accomplished as ordinary feats.

For both types of yogis, when taking food and drink, the three syllables remove faults and contamination from the food through the successive actions of purifying, increasing, and making resplendent. Here, too, the three syllables have sound and form.

The above is taught on the basis of both outer and inner practices. The main topic here, however, is the three syllables as the innate tones of the winds coming from the indestructible drop and entering, abiding, and rising. As the *Compendium of Practice* says, "Although there is no doubt that you should enter into the syllables of speech whose meaning is inner . . ."[493] It also states that each syllable arises from the indestructible drop.

Mantra terminology

This refers to the names of mantras, of which there are many. Those beginning with *oṃ* and ending with *svāhā* are of the snake class. Those with *oṃ* and no *svāhā* are the tailless class. The opposite is the headless class, and those

without either are the compiled class. [157] There are also essence mantras, near-essence mantras, and so on. Nevertheless, here in the *Compendium of Practice, Explanation of the Intention* is cited:

> Through terminology the three realities exist
> with characteristics of natural recitation.[494]

This is saying that through terminology the reality of the winds existing from the very beginning as entering, abiding, and rising are shown as possessing the characteristics of natural recitation. Therefore the terminology used for the three inner mantras is "the three realities existing." In that connection, the reality of entering is the terminology for *oṃ*, and the other two can be understood similarly. That tantra also uses the terms "swift," "gathered," and "slow." Therefore, when the mantras to be recited in vajra-repetition practice are compiled and the three syllables appear, and when their names, or terminology, are explained, you understand them as being the syllables of the innate tones of the winds, and wind and mantra are indivisibly joined.

Explanation of the Intention says:

> Also, by mantra alone without mudrā,
> you will not become a person of mantra.[495]

This means that without mantra and mudrā combined, you will not gain accomplishment. If that is so, and in Guhyasamāja hand mudrās are not taught, How will we gain accomplishment by mantras alone?" The answer:

> With the three, swift and so on,
> you will achieve the mudrā.[496]

With a mantra count that includes the rising and emerging wind as swift, the incoming wind as gathered, and the abiding wind as slow, you will "achieve," or construct the mudrā. Also:

> Swift, gathered, and slow,
> well joined as mantras,
> the master with great effort
> recites into the disciple's ear.[497]

These three joined to the three-syllable mantra is the combining of mantra and mudrā. Therefore it is explained that you will achieve the mahāmudrā, and so is saying that the qualities of every mudrā construction is included here. These answers have been reproduced as they appear in Nāgabodhi's *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana*. Also:

> Inviting and requesting to leave,
> how is this spoken here?[498]

The answer:

> The swift, the entering, the abiding,
> these successive yogas
> perfectly become the mudrās
> for inviting and requesting to leave.

Hand mudrā construction is performed in order to invite the deities, bring them to take their seat, and request them to leave to carry out their enlightened activity. These activities are fulfilled by vajra repetition because the three recitations of entering and so on fulfill the actions of inviting, requesting to remain, and invoking to act.

The significance of the mantras

Generally mantras have many meanings, [158] but here we must explain the significance of the three-syllable mantra of vajra repetition. The innate tone of the three syllables has already been described, and so that is not the significance here. So what is it? Here it refers to the three vajras of the completion stage—body vajra and so on. This is what is being described in *Explanation of the Intention* when it says:

> From that transformed comes form
> apprehended as the form of the deity.[499]

This is because the explanation from the *Compendium of Practice* of "mantra compilation, mantra terminology, mantra significance, and the reality of mantras taught in this explanatory tantra"[500] are the very four topics referred to in that tantra as mantras to be spoken, their focus, terminology,

and ultimate significance. Also those lines are an answer to a question on how to develop the form described in the lines in the second chapter of the *Root Tantra* that begin "Create a body like the mind . . ."[501] and is an instruction to develop the illusory body with the yoga of body, speech, and mind inseparable. Therefore those two lines teach the development of the illusory body, and in those lines the word "that" refers to the wind and mind arising from the "non-phenomenon entity," or clear-light indestructibility. From its transformation comes that "apprehended as the form of the deity," referring to arising in the form of a buddha created from wind and mind.

Ultimate significance of the mantras

> Not ceasing, fully at peace,
> leaving behind permanence and nonexistence,
> unmade by the knower of the three times,
> and thought—as illustrated by inseparable space—
> is alone the ultimate;
> these are the characteristics of each.[502]

The clear-light bodhicitta comprising the one-taste inseparability of "thought," meaning "consciousness," and the reality of phenomena, which like space is uncreated by the buddhas, is the reality of the mantras or the ultimate significance of the mantras.

Therefore the sections on mantra compilation—or mantras to be spoken—and mantra terminology teach the manner of vajra-repetition practice. By performing this, you develop the bodhicitta of the two levels of truth, which is taught by the sections on the significance—or focus—of the mantras and the ultimate significance of the mantras. Regard this as being the meaning of the explanatory tantra passage.

Explanation of the short vowel a, *root of the mantras*

In Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages*, it says that the reality of mantras is taught by the statement in the tenth chapter of the *Root Tantra* that says that the synthesis of all mantras is found in the three syllables.[503] It states that this point is explained in the second chapter of *Explanation of the Intention* in the passages on the mantras to be spoken and cites the relevant passages. The *Compendium of Practice* states that the way that the three syllables are formed by

letters is taught by this passage and also cites these verses. In this cited passage, just after the section on the compilation of the three syllables, it says:

> The short vowel becomes all speech,
> not one and not many.[504] [159]

The *Compendium of Practice* explains the meaning of "The short vowel becomes all speech" but does not directly comment on the rest of the passage. The reason for this is that in order to understand mantras, it is essential to know well the provisional and definitive characteristics of the statement that the short vowel *a* is the root of all speech, and if that is known, it is easier to understand the definitive meaning of other passages. Therefore in the *Compendium of Practice* it says, as an answer to the question, "How is the short *a* causally engaged in every word?":

> Explaining the scriptures follows only the grammatical meanings, having first applied the teachings of *vyākaraṇa*.[505] Also, expression by way of letters and syllables is not a knowledge of what, why, or how they engage. The reality of the letter is not known, because that is in the scope of the buddhas. This is understood through the stages of the teachings, so listen.[506]

This passage has to be well understood. "Explaining the scriptures" refers to all explanations of the teachings of our own path in which it is not understood by way of the explanatory tantra that the definitive meaning of the short *a* as the basis for engaging in all speech is the reality of mantra. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> As for the reality of mantra, the *Compendium of Reality Root Tantra*, the *Later Tantra*, and so on teach only the mantras and do not teach the compilation of mantras. Only in the explanatory tantras did the Bhagavan speak the truth concerning mantra compilation, mantra terminology, the significance of mantra, and the final reality of mantra. Therefore those who do not know the explanatory tantras and those who are attracted to the tantras of the outsiders will not understand.[507]

The meaning of the sentence "Explaining the scriptures follows only the grammatical meanings, having first applied the teachings of *vyākaraṇa*" is

that through the system of the grammarians, using the system of the grammarians, the meanings of the spoken words are explained through the power of grammar to a particular extent. By ascertaining the meaning of the text in this way, the meaning expressed by the grammatical structure is understood to the same extent. The sentence beginning "Also, expression by way of letters" refers to the definitive meaning beyond the limited meaning found by grammar in the line from the tantra "The short vowel becomes all speech." It is also being referred to in the following text on what engages, why it engages, and how it engages. Tibetan masters have explained this, saying that what the spoken words engage in is their content; why or by what cause they engage is by way of the causal factor of the short vowel *a*; how they engage is that letters come together to form words, those words combine to form sentences, sentences form speech, and speech forms treatises. This is not the meaning here. If it were, then the above statement that an explanation of scripture will not be understood by relying upon the works of grammar would be completely incorrect. [160]

So what is the meaning here? The engager here is the wind appearing in the form of vowels and consonants, and it is symbolized by speech possessing the nature of the *āli kāli*. What it engages is the indestructible drop at the heart. This has been explained by a previous citation from the *Compendium of Practice*. Why it engages the indestructible drop is "to attain the indestructible and become non-phenomenal," as stated by the *Compendium of Practice*, or in other words, to actualize the non-phenomenal clear light. The way it engages is by the process of dissolution of earth into water and so on. "The reality of the letter"—referring to the short vowel *a* that undergoes these three processes—"is not known, because that is in the scope of the buddhas," meaning that the scope of the buddhas is a secret to the lower disciples, and so they will not understand it. I do not see the explanation in the commentary to the *Compendium of Practice*[508] where it says that engaging by listening and so on to the meaning of words is like pointing to the moon with the finger and will not lead to understanding by the ordinary beings, as being the meaning here.

The way that "this is understood through the stages of the teachings" is as follows: "All speech," as cited in the tantra verse, refers to all forty-nine letters—sixteen vowels and thirty-three consonants. From their compilation come the sutras and tantras and all other worldly and transmundane treatises, and from them all siddhi will be accomplished. "Any comprehension of the specifics of letters found in the speech" of these works is because the short vowel *a* is the life letter. This is because "letters such as *ka* and so on do not exist without the short vowel *a*. It is a completion, without which words

will not be formed."[509] This explanation is the provisional and literal explanation of "The short vowel becomes all speech."

Then the *Compendium of Practice* continues:

> As *Speaking the Ultimate Names of Mañjuśrī* says:
>
> > *A* is the supreme of all letters,
> > of great purpose, the most sacred of letters,
> > arising from itself, it is without birth,
> > not being the spoken word,
> > it is the supreme cause of all speech,
> > the expresser of all words.[510]

This verse is not being cited as a scriptural reference to illustrate how the vowel *a* is necessarily part of every letter, as described above, because:

> This has been said. Therefore the Bhagavan said that "the letter *a*, seed of the gateway to all meditative absorptions, is without birth and is therefore the gateway of all dharmas." It is also the innate letter because it says in the *Vajra Mandala Ornament Tantra*:
>
> > To express clearly the letter *a*,
> > the indestructible in the heart center,
> > radiant, like a lamp . . .

This quote continues as cited previously.[511] At the end of it:

> Therefore all tathāgatas belong to the family of *a*. *A* is the cause; from *a* they will arise.[512]

Therefore, using passages from three works as reasons, [161] he establishes that buddhas arise from *a* and not that all speech has the short vowel *a*.

At the end of this section, the *Compendium of Practice* cites the *Entering Laṅka Sutra*, which in paraphrase says the following:

> Entrust yourself to the meaning, not to the words. Following words, you will fall from the meaning, and you will cause others to not understand. Someone shows something to someone else

> by pointing with his finger, and the other person follows him and looks at the tip of his finger. Like this, the childish are attached to the literal meaning and do not search for the ultimate meaning. Therefore, if you seek the meaning, do not rely upon this. Abandon your attachment to the literal and search for the meaning.[513]

This has been cited as a reference to say that if you hold only to the literal meaning of the teaching that *a* engages all words, you will not find the true meaning that is being taught. This is like looking only at the tip of the finger and not seeing what is being pointed out. Therefore you have to search for a meaning other than the literal.

So what is that meaning? Tibetan masters explain it purely in terms of the sound, saying that all sounds of speech are formed from vowels and consonants. These in turn arise from the short vowel *a*, and the short vowel *a* arises from the inner bodily hollow of clear light. Therefore, as sounds are as extensive as space and have emptiness as their root, it can be understood that the actual phenomena, such as the aggregates, voiced by those sounds are also like space and are devoid of nature.

Our own position is as follows: By quoting the *Vajra Mandala Ornament Tantra* it is saying that the indestructible in the heart center, blazing like a fire, is what is signified by the short vowel *a*. In this context, that *a* has to be identical with the *a* that is the supreme of all letters expressed in the *Speaking the Ultimate Names of Mañjuśrī* citation and the *a* that is taught in the other tantra as the gateway to all dharmas. That is also what the *Compendium of Practice* is referring to when it talks of the indestructible being the base for the dissolution of the winds at death. If the definitive meaning of the short vowel *a* is described in this way, then the definitive meaning of the vowels and consonants, of which the short vowel *a* is the causal basis, is to be understood as those winds arising in dependence on the subtle wind of the indestructible drop, moving to their places within the body, and arising in the form of vowels and consonant tones. It is not to be applied to the vowels and consonants produced from the motions of the tongue and palate.

When the *Samputa Tantra* talks of the letter *a*, the supreme seed abiding in the center of the eight-petal navel cakra, [162] and the short *a* from which all mantras of living beings are produced, it is referring to the *nāda* squiggle of the red bodhicitta caṇḍālī symbol.[514] On this point, the *Vajra Garland* talks of 108 winds, and as a reply to a question on where they arise from and on their development, says:

> The characteristics of the sites of the winds
> is that the winds pervade the six cakras.
> Abiding constantly in the dharma cakra,
> the life wind pervades living beings,
> without conception, in the middle of night,
> arising from the supreme space,
> separating the features of the winds.[515]

This states that, generally, the locations of the winds are the six cakras, and specifically, the life-sustaining wind arises from the space that is the inner hollow at the heart. That wind "separates," or moves, all winds, which then arise. Also, that wind pervades all winds of living beings. It also states that when the winds are first formed, the life-sustaining wind is formed from the heart, and at the end when they withdraw, they withdraw to this location. Therefore the previous indestructible short vowel *a*, from which all mantras are said to arise, refers to the short vowel *a* of the life-sustaining wind and the bodhicitta indestructible drop.

Commenting on the statement that the eight groups of letters abide at the navel, Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* explains that "abiding" means that they are "in an unclear state." Also, "at the time of being spoken, those letters are created unclearly together with the winds whose birth place was in the lotus of the bhaga," and "when interacting with the palate and so on are created clearly."

The short vowel *a* at the heart is the supreme foundation for the arising of the clear light. Therefore it is "the supreme of all letters."[516] In that sense, it is "of great purpose" and "the most sacred of letters." For the line "arising from itself, it is without birth," the Chak translation has "the great life, devoid of letters." "Life" is life-sustaining wind. "Great" means supreme. "Devoid of letters" means that the indestructible has no lettering. "Not being the spoken word" means that it does not have the nature of speech. "Cause of all speech" generally refers to all winds, but the indestructible is the prime cause. "The expresser of all words" likewise means that the winds that arise from it travel to the throat to create articulated words. "Gateway of all dharmas" means "gateway to all meditative absorptions," because the clear light of bliss and emptiness is at the heart of all samādhis. If you have the ability to gather the winds into the indestructible *a* by your samādhi, then the clear light of great bliss ascertaining emptiness, which by nature is without birth, will arise. Therefore it is "without birth" since time without

beginning. "Without birth" does not refer merely to emptiness, which by nature is without birth.

In keeping with the above, the significance of the short vowel *a* described previously in terms of where it engages and so on is that it represents the ultimate vital point of the path to enlightenment, and so it is said that all buddhas arise from *a*.

To summarize, understanding that the indestructible is the root of all the winds [163] in their form of inner vowels and consonants, and seeing how those winds gathered into that indestructible drop will actualize the clear light, is the exclusive way to understand the nature of the mantras in vajra repetition. This is finding the definitive by using the literal understanding of "The short vowel becomes all speech" in order to reveal another meaning. Therefore while it has been explained, "When the finger is pointing, look at what it is pointing at and do not be someone who looks at the pointer itself," still there are evidently many who have done just that. So, those with great resources of intellect, don't be easily satisfied. Think about these points for a long time.

19. Prāṇāyāma Meditations

How speech isolation becomes prāṇāyāma

This section will explain how speech isolation becomes the branch of prāṇāyāma from the six-branch yoga. The way this branch is described in the *Later Tantra* is:

> Breath, the nature of five wisdoms,
> entities of the five elements
> emerge as a spherical form
> focused on at the nose-tip;
> jewels of five different colors
> explained as being *prāṇa* and *āyāma*,
> the natural mantra, visualized at the heart,
> the *prāṇa* placed as the drop.[517]

The meaning of this passage, as given in Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*, is as follows: The first four lines teach meditation on the substance drop at the secret area "nose-tip." The first two lines and the text from "jewels" up to "the natural mantra" describe the vajra-repetition meditation on the light drop at the upper nose-tip. The one and a half lines from "visualized at the heart" onward are describing the meditation on the indestructible drop at the heart nose-tip. The need for these meditations is also explained. These then are the three prāṇāyāma meditations on the three drops at the three "tips." The breaths of the five wisdoms are those of the pervading wind as the mirror-like wisdom up to the life-sustaining wind as the dharmadhātu wisdom. The five elements are those from earth to space, with evacuative wind being earth and so on. This breath of the five wisdoms, which possesses the entities of the five elements, arises from the opening of your vajra, and the bodhicitta as a "spherical form"—meaning in the form of a drop—is meditated on at the "nose-tip" of the consort's lotus. The way that the winds become the entity

of a drop is explained in *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter as follows: While method and wisdom are in union, the prāṇāyāma wind dwelling in the upper part of the body is induced by the joy of union and melted by the fire of desire to become a drop.[518] [164]

In all translations of this *Later Tantra* passage as cited in *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter, in both later translations of the same passage cited in the commentary to the twelfth chapter, and in the Chak translations of *Five Stages* and *Compendium of Practice*, the phrase "at the nose-tip of the lotus" appears. In the revised old translation of the commentary to the twelfth chapter, in the *Later Tantra*, *Five Stages*, and the *Compendium of Practice* as translated by the great Rinchen Sangpo, however, there is no "lotus."[519] It is clear that both versions appear in the Indian scriptures. The *Compendium of Practice* says, however, that the vajra repetition of the three syllables applied to the winds of the four mandalas and practiced at the upper nose-tip is clearly taught by the six lines beginning "Breath, the nature of five wisdoms."[520] Therefore the no-lotus version is evidently more correct. Kṛṣṇācārya talks of the "lotus nose-tip of the face," but that does not fit.

If these lines are applied to the present discussion of vajra repetition practiced at the nose-tip of the face, then as the *Compendium of Practice* states, the winds are the four winds with the pervading wind omitted. The "nose-tip" is the upper opening of the nostrils, and "emerge as a spherical form" refers to the state of those winds when one wind is flowing as the main wind while the other three are included within it. Ekādaśasvara's *Secret Ambrosia* says that these winds become those entering, abiding, and rising and that this is the "sphere." Also, they arise in the form of the three syllables.[521]

Bhavyakīrti says that the instruction to meditate upon the nose-tip of the lotus is just an illustration and that meditation at the tip of the vajra is also being taught. This is the tradition of males and females individually meditating on their own individual tips. Here, meditation is on both your own and the consort's tips because meditation on individual tips has already been taught at the subtle generation stage and in the body-isolation practice. *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter states that these lines explain meditation practice on the subtle drop at the lower gateway for the generation-stage practitioner. This statement is being made on the basis of a similarity, but their actual significance is for the completion-stage practitioner.

The meditation on both tips is found in the *Vajra Garland*:

> Descending everywhere from channels,
> bodhicitta is made firm.

At the tips of vajra and lotus,
in the instant of the winds being held,
by application of syllables on the palate
and application of the *kṣmaṃ* mantra,
the supreme yoga will be achieved.[522]

The meaning of this is that the supreme yoga is achieved through the melted bodhicitta descending from the channels, the method for which will be explained later, and stabilizing it at the two tips. On the method to stabilize the bodhicitta, Alaṃkakalaśa's commentary describes "palate" as a "long channel in the middle of a dharma-source," and the "application of being struck[523] against it is to constrain it tightly." The *kṣmaṃ* is to be meditated on at the tip of the vajra. "In the instant of the winds being held" is explained as referring to the life-sustaining wind, and in that instant, the stability will be achieved by the supreme yoga meditating upon the reality of this wind." [165] In keeping with this explanation, we get the line "by application of striking against the palate." Other translations have "held by the winds," which is better. "By application of syllables on the palate and application of the *pukṣīṃ* mantra" is not a good translation. "Holding at the tip of the vajra" here means holding at the tip of the lotus also, because it occurs where the two channels meet.

The *Root Tantra* says:

Recitation by enjoying all desires
and not weakening the branches of mantra.[524]

Therefore, at this point too, it is not contradictory for some yogis with very special qualities to rely upon a karma consort. This is a meditation that also relies upon a wisdom consort.

If you know how to transfer these *Illuminating Lamp* teachings into instructions for practice on the five stages, it is clearly the supreme prāṇāyāma. *Illuminating Lamp* says, "They are breaths traveling upward, of five colors."[525] The Patsap translation has "those breaths" and is a better translation. Therefore those winds that were described above as the breaths of the wisdoms and elements travel upward to the gateways of the senses, are "of five colors," and possess the entities of the five tathāgatas. Therefore they are "jewels."

In the old translations *prāṇa* means "life" and *āyāma* occurs as "endeavor" and "lengthening." On this Patsap says, "Because it extends and expands, it is called *prāṇāyāma.*" This is a good translation. Its meaning is that the

wind that lengthens *prāṇa*, or life, is spoken of as *prāṇāyāma*. *Āyāma* can be rendered as "endeavor," "stop," or "lengthen," and here it refers to the last of these. Therefore "*prāṇa* and *āyāma*"[526] is a mistaken rendering, because if this phrase were joining two individual terms, it would be in the plural. This is the assertion of Tibetan scholars. The Kālacakra tradition uses the second interpretation and explained *prāṇāyāma* as "stopping *prāṇa*." The Tibetan word "endeavor" (*rtsol ba*) does not equate with either "stop" or "lengthen," but the Sanskrit equivalent (*āyāma*) carries both meanings. Similarly, there is no contradiction in that "withdrawal" (*sdud*) from the Tibetan rendering "individual withdrawal" (*so sor sdud*) can be equated with "taking," but "individual" (*so so*) does not equate with "repeated" as it does in the Sanskrit equivalent (*prati* in *pratyāhāra*).

Because those winds traveling through the upper gateways as the entities of entering, abiding, and rising are naturally recited day and night, this is "natural mantra." The commentary on this from the two old translations runs:

> ... because they are recited day and night. "Natural mantra visualized at the heart" means visualized in the lotus of the heart.

The two new translations, however, have "Because they are recited day and night, this is a natural mantra." This is a better translation. The word "because" indicates a reason, but it is not indicating a reason for the preceding statement of wind being prāṇāyāma or for any other statement. [166] Therefore it must be affixed to "natural mantra." Also, *Illuminating Lamp* on the eleventh chapter says:

> "Natural mantra" refers to the three syllables having the nature of entering, and so on.[527]

Nāropa's commentary on the *Later Tantra* has:

> "*Prāṇa* and *āyāma*" refers to visualizing the short vowel *a* on the lotus of the heart.[528]

But there is nothing in Nāropa's commentary on the explanation of prāṇāyāma, the day and night recitation of the winds entering, and so on, or on "natural mantra," as one finds in *Illuminating Lamp*. This must be a

corruption of the text or a translation error, because in other sections on the six-branch yoga, the text is very similar to that found in *Illuminating Lamp*. The passage describing visualizing the short vowel *a* at the heart must either be found in some Indian editions of *Illuminating Lamp* or is supplementing the position of the commentary, because *Illuminating Lamp* describes the drop as the indestructible, and this is in keeping with a citation in the *Compendium of Practice* that describes the short vowel *a* of the indestructible drop at the heart.

On the line "the *prāṇa* placed as the drop," *Illuminating Lamp* only says, "placed within the indestructible."[529] The meaning of this line is as follows: "Drop" refers to the indestructible to be visualized at the heart, "*prāṇa*" means "winds," and "placed as" means "placed within the indestructible." Therefore the winds are gathered in the indestructible drop. This describes the functions of the winds after having meditated on the three types of prāṇāyāma.

On this point Ekādaśasvara's *Secret Ambrosia* says that natural mantra is the three syllables. "Visualized at the heart"[530] means meditating that these three dissolve into the winds entering, abiding, and rising, and that these three then dissolve into the life-sustaining wind. The meditation on the life-sustaining wind dissolving into the indestructible drop is thus explained as being the meaning of "the *prāṇa* placed as the drop."

Muniśrībhadra says:

> The natural mantra is meditated on at the heart where the syllable *hūṃ* is visualized. From the *hūṃ* comes an "indestructible *ñāda*," which is a subtle vowel *a* in the form of a drop. The mind is placed as a drop, which means that the mind is applied to that and becomes the object of meditation.[531]

Light of the Moon says:

> At the heart the natural mantra, the samādhi *sattva*, is visualized. Above its drop, your natural mind is in the aspect of a *nāda* squiggle. Think on this as the entity of mind.[532]

Lakṣmī says that within the dhūtī at the center of the lotus of the heart, you visualize the drop on the syllable *hūṃ*, which is the thunder-like sound of the natural mantra. He also says that to place the *prāṇa* there is to place the consciousness, since it rides on the mount of the winds. This point is explained

differently in other traditions, and even in this tradition it is acceptable here to have *hūṃ* at the heart and to meditate on the short *a*, [167] but the meaning of "natural mantra," as taught here, is not as is described by these commentators. To ascribe "*prāṇa*" to mind and to place it within the drop above the syllable is not the meaning of "the *prāṇa* placed as the drop," because at this point the common purpose of all three kinds of prāṇāyāma meditation is to gather the other winds into the indestructible drop at the heart, where they will dissolve and invoke the four empty states. It could be thought that this is the case for two of the three types of prāṇāyāma, but in the meditation on the lower-gateway prāṇāyāma, it was explained previously that the bodhicitta is placed and held at the tip of the organ, and so the four empty states that arise from the dissolution process at the heart will not be created. This is true. This is a practice performed initially until the ability to hold the drop at the tip of the secret place is accomplished. After that, however, there are exclusive instructions on how union with the two types of consort becomes a method for gathering the winds into the heart, and so there is no fault here.

The *Root Tantra* talks of the jewels of five colors, the size of a mustard seed, meditated upon at the tip of the nose. To explain this, the *Vajra Garland* describes the three "nose-tips" and the three drops to be meditated upon at those places:

> Characteristics of the three nose-tips
> with the names of secret, heart, and face . . .[533]

Also:

> Drops of wind, mantra, and substance,
> the three peerless drops.[534]

Meditation on the substance drop in the secret-area tip was described by a previous *Vajra Garland* citation. Meditation on the mantra at the heart tip is described:

> In the center of the lotus at the heart,
> the syllable *hūṃ* is placed.[535]

This continues until "This is described as the mantra drop." Meditation on the wind drop at the tip of the nose is described:

The wind drop, the supreme yoga,
of five colors, greatly vivid,
applied to the tip of the nose,
is everywhere meditated upon.
The supreme of mantras
is recited by the yogi.[536]

Also:

The supreme mantra drop,
the light, and the substance drop.[537]

Therefore the indestructible mantra drop at the heart is superior to the other two, and the wind drop is also known as the light drop. Meditation on the light drop is spoken of as vajra repetition on the winds coming and going at the nose-tip and is to be applied to the prāṇāyāma of the previously explained *Later Tantra* citation, whereas the explanations by Bhavyakīrti and others are not correct.

It might be thought, "If the three types of prāṇāyāma, explained above, are meditations for a single person, is this not a contradiction with the *Vajra Garland*, which, in reply to a question on whether the meditations were for a single person or different individuals, says that those of greater desire should meditate on the substance drop, [168] those of greater anger on the mantra drop, and those of greater ignorance should meditate on the light drop?" Generally, the Guhyasamāja was taught for those with desire for the joining of the organs, as indicated by the line "for the sake of those beings possessed of desire." Therefore these three types of being are also of this inclination, but within it there are these three categories, and the above passage is talking of the three paths along which these types of person can be primarily led, but it is not saying that a single person should not meditate on all three practices. Moreover, these three paths were taught for those disciples to be liberated in this life or to be quickly liberated. Here, "those of ignorance" means to have desire and anger in equal measure.

When the natural mantra is being recited with the three syllables applied to the winds entering, abiding, and rising, you recite while concentrating on the indestructible drop at the heart, but even without that connection you will still need a meditation on the mantra drop at the heart.

In this tradition prāṇāyāma is the wind that preserves life, but that on its

own is not a branch of the six yogas. Therefore "the branch of prāṇāyāma yoga" is abbreviated to "*prāṇāyāma*." In the meditations on the drops at the secret place and the heart, there is no actual meditation on the prāṇāyāma winds. As they are special methods for gathering the winds into the dhūtī, however, it is not contradictory for them to be considered prāṇāyāma meditations. Speech isolation and vajra repetition are so called in consideration of their being particular features of prāṇāyāma. Therefore, to mistakenly label the particular as a generality and when practicing vajra repetition to ignore the two other prāṇāyāma meditations are very grave mistakes. So know well how necessary it is to meditate on all three prāṇāyāma practices.

The way to practice speech isolation

1. Sequence of the three prāṇāyāma meditations
2. Explanation of the exclusive function of vajra repetition
3. Stages of developing experiences in prāṇāyāma meditation

Sequence of the three prāṇāyāma meditations

1. Prāṇāyāma meditation upon the mantra drop at the heart tip
2. Prāṇāyāma meditation upon the light drop at the tip of the nose
3. Prāṇāyāma meditation upon the substance drop at the secret-area tip

Prāṇāyāma meditation upon the mantra drop at the heart tip

1. The mantra drop partial meditation
2. Meditation on the mantra circles

The mantra drop partial meditation

The place for meditation is described in the *Vajra Garland*:

> In a place of the gods with no human presence, [169]
> free from disturbing noise,
> no nearby communities of people,
> no interferences, beloved by the fortunate,
> pleasant groves, of great peace and delight,

enjoying the five objects of the senses,
the main points of mantra will be accomplished.[538]

A "place of the gods" means temples and so on. Concerning the particulars of physical position or demeanor required for the meditation and the essentials of breath:

With demeanor that is a state of great bliss,
the supreme siddhi will be accomplished.
The practitioner sitting on a comfortable seat,
eyes focused toward the tip of the nose,
at a distance of the nose to the navel,[539]
shoulders level, tongue touching the palate,
teeth and lips resting naturally,
breath allowed to come and go,
without the slightest effort,
breathing in and out in this way,
in the cross-legged hero position,
with such bodily demeanor,
the two syllables are constantly recited.[540]

The two-syllable vajra repetition mentioned here is similar to the three-syllable recitation. Some translations have "cross-legged vajra position." The particulars of the time for meditation are similar to those explained previously. The foundation for the practice should be the meditation of the main deity and consort from the one great secret-family body isolation.

Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* comment on the lines from the *Later Tantra*, "Visualized at the heart, the *prāṇa* placed as the drop,"[541] as cited in *Five Stages*, explains this as referring to meditation upon the indestructible drop at the heart. Commentaries on the *Five Stages* also explain it as referring to meditation on the mantra drop at the heart. The continuation of a passage cited in *Five Stages* from *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* says, "Of tiny size, the supreme, and subtle,"[542] and so on, as quoted previously, also has the same meaning as the citation from the *Later Tantra*. Also, when the *Compendium of Practice* quotes *Vajra Mandala Ornament Tantra* and speaks of the indestructible short vowel *a* in the heart and the indestructible drop as the place for the gathering of the winds, it is for the purpose of comprehending

the meditation on the indestructible drop at the heart. On this point the *Illuminating Lamp* on the third chapter says:

> The "five colors" possess the entities of the five tathāgatas. These "jewels" are renowned as indestructible because they create the jewels of the buddhas. "The size of a mustard seed" explains that they are in the form of the drop. "Tip of the nose" refers to the center of the lotus of the heart. "Concentrated" means focused upon that, you meditate "constantly," day and night, "with the yoga" of entering, abiding, rising, and withdrawing.[543]

Therefore you meditate day and night upon the indestructible drop at the heart with the yoga of entering and so on. [170] On the sequence of the indestructible-drop practice and vajra repetition, the text continues:

> "Stable" means "permanent." What does that refer to? It refers to the indestructible drop. From that emanate the "jewels," or the mass of light rays of five colors, which are made active through entering, abiding, and rising. "Not stable, no emanation" means perform this yoga by understanding the reality of the indestructible drop and not by any other means.[544]

This is a commentary on the lines:

> When stable, jewels emanate;
> not stable, no emanation.[545]

The meaning is as follows: By meditating on the indestructible drop, which was described in the previous citation as something to be meditated upon constantly with the yoga of entering and so on, that drop becomes stable. When that occurs, you engage in the yoga of the winds entering and so on from within that drop. This is practiced "by understanding the reality of the indestructible drop," which means by apprehending the stable indestructible drop as the object of meditation, "and not by any other means." Therefore meditation upon the stability of the indestructible drop as "permanent," or unchanging, is accomplished first. After that comes vajra repetition.

In *Illuminating Lamp* this explanation is described as the "ultimate" explanation. Some say that this refers to the way vajra repetition is performed with the ultimate state of union as its basis. Others explain it in terms of the

indestructible fourth-stage clear light. The *Illuminating Lamp* commentary on the third chapter, however, which is an extensive description of this point, says at the end of the description of the winds of the four mandalas arising from the indestructible drop:

> "Accomplishing body, speech, and mind"[546] means it creates the enlightened form. "Arises from the vajra" means formed from the clear light to produce the deity assembly whose nature is the two truths.[547]

This is the Chak translation. Therefore, through the practice of vajra repetition, the winds create the state of union, and it is "ultimate" in the sense of the function of vajra repetition. This is similar to the three types of emptiness described as being ultimate in the commentary to the seventeenth chapter.

Concerning the particulars of the object, or the site where you meditate on the indestructible, described as the "center of the lotus at the heart," this is identical to the *Vajra Garland*'s description of the center of the eight-petal lotus of the dharma cakra where the mantra drop is meditated on. Therefore Lakṣmī's description of meditation within the avadhūtī at the center of the heart is correct,[548] but the black and white juncture in the heart as described in Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* and the inner hollow of the heart as found in Serdingpa's *Four Points* are not correct.

The dhūtī is known as the "staff of life" and is supported by the life channel[549] according to the *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra* and *Wisdom Drop Tantra*. Therefore the point in question is located midway between the breasts, in the center of the heart cakra, facing the life channel. [171] That is where to focus. In these kinds of meditations on the drops and so forth as objects of penetrative focusing in the body, first know these points of the body well, and then place your mind there. In this way they will become focal points, but otherwise they will not.

Concerning the drop meditated on at that location, the *Vajra Garland* only talks about the syllables and does not mention an actual drop. *Illuminating Lamp*, however, talks about meditating on the indestructible in the form of a drop. As for the form of this drop, some from the Gö tradition assert it to be a sun-and-moon-conjoined drop, in the middle of which the short vowel *a* is meditated on. Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* describes meditation on the indestructible drop together with the short vowel *a*, and in connection to this, the two instruction texts by Serdingpa Shönu talk of a white drop and a black short vowel *a*. Another text describes a half-black

and half-white short vowel *a* within a white drop. Another talks of a short vowel *a* like a punctuation stroke[550] within a half-white and half-black drop. Yet another work talks of visualizing a white drop with a reddish hue. The tradition of the white-and-red conjoined drop is in keeping with Mahāsiddha Kukkuripa's description of the drop as the basis of vajra repetition:

> Visualized in its center,
> sun mandala drop, moon on top,
> shaped like a closed amulet,
> sun method and moon wisdom.[551]

Only here a syllable replaces the drop in the center. Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* describes it as white and slightly reddish. These two traditions describe the parents' blood and semen containing the consciousness of the intermediate state that had previously entered the womb as being at the heart, and say that this drop is the basis for the mind. Therefore the meditations practiced by these two traditions contain the essentials for purifying the basic state.

The size of the drop is described as that of a mustard seed, because when the mind is held on a tiny object, it is easier to sever the conceptions and to gather the winds. On the syllables, the *Vajra Garland* speaks of both the letter *a* and the syllable *hūṃ* in the center of the heart, but the *Compendium of Practice* speaks only of the letter *a*. These are meditated on as symbols of the indestructible, but there is nothing on the actual form of a letter or syllable, and so there is no certainty concerning the actual syllable. Nevertheless, here meditate on either *a* or *hūṃ*. As for the color of the letters, both can be dark blue, or as the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* states, the *hūṃ* can be white. The letters illustrate the indestructible wind, and the white and red drops illustrate the indestructible bodhicitta. The description of five colors refers to the radiance of the five rays of light and can be applied to the letters and the drop. Other traditions talk of a drop on top of a syllable within a hand implement, but here it is as described above.

Therefore, without the faults of squeezing the mind too tightly or having it too relaxed, hold the mind on the indestructible at the heart. This is highly praised in *Drop of Freedom*: [172]

> Vivid, indestructible, the form of a drop
> the size of a grain of mustard

shining with five different rays of light,
constantly present within the heart;
focusing upon it, great wisdom will blaze
in just an instant within the yoga.
Of this there is no doubt.[552]

It is also praised in other tantras. The *Later Exposition Tantra* says:

Constantly abiding in the heart,
the single drop, unchanging,
those who meditate upon it
will without doubt gain the wisdom.[553]

The meaning of this is described in *Cakrasaṃvara Five Stages*:

Mind, together with letter and drop,
is placed in the heart, and then
the lord and master Bhagavan
will arise to destroy the darkness
of its ignorance.[554]

This is saying that by meditating on the indestructible drop at the heart, the innate wisdom will appear and destroy ignorance from its root. The *Saṃvarodaya Tantra* says:

Wind arriving at the lotus of the heart,
visualize as a white syllable *hūṃ*,
and from that meditative equipoise,
you are no longer bound by objects and so forth.
The winds pass above samsara
and travel below nirvana,
the nonabiding nirvana dwelling within
the filaments of the lotus at the heart.[555]

Using the special methods explained previously and so forth, the winds are gathered into the center of the cakra of the heart, where they are stopped. When you have the ability to make that state stable, you will not be bound by the conceptual minds that engage with sound, sights, and the other objects.

This brings about the level of nirvana that does not dwell in either samsara or nirvana. This occurs when the twelve apprehending and apprehended winds arise from the heart as described earlier. Therefore, if you practice the penetrative focusing method of holding the mind at this location, the winds will gather there, and by their dissolving, it becomes easier to sever the conceptualization concerning the apprehending and apprehended.

Praises of the kind cited above are found in many tantras and works of the mahāsiddhas. To develop strong certainty about that praise, make strenuous efforts in the prāṇāyāma meditation on the indestructible mantra at the heart tip.

Meditation on the mantra circles

Clear Compilation of the Five Stages says:

> Various memories, conceptualizations,
> arise perfectly from the mind.
> Therefore meditate on mantra circles at the heart,
> the support for consciousness and *prāṇa*.[556]

The various conceptualizations arise from the mind, and the place where both winds and mind gather is the heart. Therefore meditate on the mantra circles with penetrative focus at the heart. On the circles of the mantra syllables, the text continues:

> First, engage in meditative absorption
> on an eight-petal lotus
> with layers in the form of
> outer, inner, and secret.[557]

Therefore you meditate on an eight-petal lotus of three layers at the heart. Then: [173]

> The outer layer, wisdom symbolized by vowels,
> the middle has the consonants of method,
> the nondual are found in the inner.
> Samādhi on the layers
> in the cardinal and intermediate directions

is of the nature of the three applications.
In the middle, the indestructible drop,
with the letter *a*, the *prāṇa*, essence of all,
emanating and withdrawing.[558]

This is saying that on the eight outer lotus petals is the entity of wisdom, symbolized by the twelve vowels; on the eight intermediate petals are the consonants whose nature is method; on the inner layer is the entity of nondual method and wisdom, symbolized by the four neutral letters; in the center is the indestructible drop; and one meditates accordingly. In connection with this passage, *Five Points of the Five Stages*, *Five Stages with Mantra Circle*, and *Five Stages Complete on One Seat*[559] say that you meditate on the mantra circle before vajra repetition; while in Serdingpa's *Four Points*, it is explained in the mind-isolation section. In the root text, however, meditation on mantra circles is explained first followed by vajra-repetition practice. Therefore follow the position of the former three.

Serdingpa describes the lotus petals as red, their shape as being like upright mirrors, and the letters as white. Other instruction texts from the Marpa tradition say that the channels are in the aspect of a lotus, white with a reddish tinge, and the letters are white. The lotus that contains the drop as the foundation of vajra repetition and placed at the heart is described by Kukkuripa both as a white four-petal lotus as well as a red four-petal lotus, and is seen as being of the nature of the four elements. These are to be visualized as the four channels in the vicinity of the heart. Other works in their sections on completion-stage practices describe as "channels" the lotuses at the navel and elsewhere drops and letters are placed. You can follow that practice, or you can regard the lotus petals themselves as being channels. There is no definitive color of the lotus at the heart, and many descriptions speak of it as a single eight-petal cakra. There are also descriptions of two cakras but not many describing three. Even if you meditate on it as resembling a lotus flower, it makes no sense to have the petals standing like an upright mirror.

Serdingpa has the consonants on the outer layer and the vowels on the middle layer. This contradicts the root text, and they should be placed as they occur in the root text, as others of the Marpa tradition have done. This order can also be known by the root text's description of the vowels as appearance, the consonants as increase of appearance, and the neutral letters as close-to-attainment.[560] Therefore it is good to have the outer letters white, the middle red, and the inner letters blue or black. The root text's expression "Twelve

letters with drop"[561] means that the eleventh vowel, not including the four neutral vowels, includes a drop,[562] and a drop is placed above the remaining eleven. [174] It does not mean that a drop is placed in front of them or that they are arranged without a drop. The way these letters are arranged is as follows: Starting from the east, two letters are placed in each of the four directions, and beginning from the southeast, one letter in each of the intermediate directions. Alternatively, they can be arranged sequentially from the east as Serdingpa has taught. The consonants are sequenced similarly.

On the placement of the consonants, the root text says:

> The letters from *ka* to *ha*,
> leaving out *kṣa*, together with four.[563]

The meaning of this has been said to be that the five consonant groups *ka*, *ca*, *ṭa*, *ta*, and *pa* are placed on the first five petals starting from the east. For the remaining three petals, two petals contain the *ya* and *śa* groups, and the last petal has the letters *kla*, *bla*, *sla*, and *śla*. These last four letters are said to be hidden and "uttered from the root of the tongue."[564] I cannot see this as making sense. The meaning of the above text is that each of the eight petals has four letters ranging from *ka* to *ha*, leaving out *kṣa*. In this way, the five consonant groups *ka*, *ca*, *ṭa*, *ta*, and *pa* have four letters, the *ṅa*, *ña*, *ṇa*, and *na* group is four letters, and the *ya* and *śa* groups each contain four letters. These make up the eight petals. The letter *ma* has become the drop on the vowels. The four cardinal directions of the inner petals have *ṛ* and *ḷ* in long and short form. The four intermediate directions are left empty.

If these letters are placed on the channel petals, the nonindividual groups of letters are within the channels and arranged standing up in sequence from the outer edge inward. If they are placed as the actual lotus petals themselves, they are arranged as a chain of letters. In the center is the indestructible drop with the letter *a*. Its placement has been described.

The root text says:

> In the middle of the realm of space,
> visualize the radiant mandala.[565]

This occurs in the section on mantra-circle meditation. As for its meaning, some say that you meditate on the mind arising in the form of a *nāda* squiggle

that transforms into a moon mandala at the heart. This is not what it means because the definitive meaning of such statements found in the *Root Tantra* is explained in *Illuminating Lamp*, which says that the realm of space is the clear light and the moon mandala in its middle is the indestructible drop.[566] This interpretation should also be adopted here because it teaches the indestructible drop.

This meditation on the mantra circles appears only in the instructions of Nāropa and not in the main works or instruction texts of the Ārya tradition. Some instruction texts transmitted from Jñānākara to Naktso conflict with the above, and some variations also appear in the Marpa-tradition instruction texts, but the above explanation is correct. Serdingpa quotes the *Explanation of the Intention*,[567] as cited in Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages*, which states, [175] "the fifth has five" and "four are applied as three" and "sixteen parts and so forth," and says that they teach the placement of the letters on the petals. This is not their meaning because these lines are referring to *oṃ āḥ hūṃ* being compiled from the vowels and consonants and not to placing letters on the lotus petals and meditating upon them.

Other tantras that talk of meditation upon many letters placed in the circles do so for the purpose of gathering the winds in those places, and it is no different here. Therefore, in order to bring the winds into the heart, letters are placed in layers in the cardinal and intermediate directions, where they are focused on and meditated upon. These instructions are solely for the purpose of gathering the winds gradually into the indestructible drop.

First you focus on the lotus petals, and then, beginning from the outer edges, if you focus and hold the mind in turn on the letters in the cardinal and intermediate directions, it becomes easier to bring the winds closer and closer to the indestructible drop. This is the point of these teachings. It is not because it is necessary to have extensive mantra circles. For example, in the Marpa tradition of *Five Stages*, in the instructions on the no-mantra-circle practice, the three-stacked *sattva*, and the all-at-once-arising practice, there are no mantra circles, and vajra repetition is explained with just the indestructible drop in the heart with the short vowel *a* and the placed syllable *hūṃ*. Nonetheless, the meditation described above on the indestructible drop with letters is certainly necessary. Thus placement of letters is just a matter of being extensive or abbreviated. For example, *Sheaves of Instructions* speaks of the four cakras with letters placed at the centers and on the petals, as well as four letters only on the centers.

Prāṇāyāma meditation upon the light drop at the tip of the nose

1. On which winds and in which location is vajra repetition practiced
2. Combining wind and mantra, and the divisions of vajra repetition

On which winds and in which location is vajra repetition practiced

By meditating upon the indestructible drop accompanied by mantra circles or on the indestructible drop accompanied by letters, you will attain an unmoving stability, and when this occurs, vajra repetition is practiced upon that foundation. If a completion-stage practitioner performs vajra repetition to gain the powers of pacification, increase, power, or wrath, it is performed on the four root winds. If that practitioner performs it in order to gain the five types of clairvoyance, such as visual clairvoyance, it is performed on the five branch winds. If vajra repetition is to be performed in order to develop the empty states of mind isolation, first body isolation is completed, and then vajra repetition is performed on the four root winds followed by the five branch winds once you have developed the potential of this practice. These are the three occasions of vajra-repetition practices that have been taught, but here we are concerned with the third.

If that is how vajra repetition is performed on those winds, is there a specific location for this practice so that we can say, "practice it from this vital point in the body"? [176] Most texts only specify the coming and going of breath from the upper region of the body to the nostrils and do not make any specific assertion that it should be performed at a particular cakra of the body. Others specify the sites of the four root winds, such as the throat, maintaining that it is performed from the four mandalas there.

On the first assertion, the entering, abiding, and rising of the winds can be applied to the three syllables, but as it lacks a core teaching to perform it at a particular cakra of the body, there will be no inducing of the four empty states to arise from bringing the winds into the dhūtī and dissolving them, no matter how much it is practiced. Otherwise, it could not be countered that the counting of breath as taught in Asaṅga's *Stages of the Śrāvakas* would accomplish the same task. As for the second assertion, it contains penetrative focusing on the cakras of the body, but with just this you will not discover the essential points of penetrative focusing of the vajra-repetition of this tradition.

Therefore our own position is that the entering, abiding, and rising are practiced from the indestructible drop in the center of the heart accompanied by the letters as explained previously. First of all, this is established by *Illuminating Lamp* in a previous citation [on page 276 above] containing text speaking of meditation with the yoga of entering, abiding, and rising. This is clarified by a succeeding citation, which says that this is performed with entering, abiding, and rising in the form of five-color light rays coming from that indestructible drop. Also, *Illuminating Lamp* on chapter 3 comments on the lines "in the middle of the realm of space, a moon mandala is drawn," as well as the lines that talk of meditation on dwelling in the middle of a radiant mandala, a circle mandala, a likeness of the lotus mandala, a likeness of the jewel mandala, and the drawing of the yoga mandala. The definitive meaning of these is described as follows: The text on the moon mandala is as described earlier. The radiant mandala is the indestructible drop; "dwelling in the middle" means arising from that; and the four mandalas that arise are those of water, fire, earth, and air, respectively.[568]

Also the sixth chapter of the *Root Tantra* talks of meditating on the realm of space, dwelling in the middle of which are the mandalas of the sun, the radiant, the jewel, and light.[569] The commentary on that states that the realm of space is the indestructible drop, "dwelling in the middle" means "arising from that," the four arising mandalas are explained as being the winds of the four elements, respectively, and upon these, the vajra repetition of the three syllables is performed. It also describes how the Vajrasattva who is dwelling in the heart is invoked by vajra repetition. The third chapter commentary on the four-winds vajra repetition is given by quoting and explaining the *Explanation of the Intention* explanatory tantra. [177] In particular, the teaching from *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* on how the winds come and go from the indestructible drop matches the explanation given by *Illuminating Lamp* above. This can be understood from the extensive settling of this point in the commentary to this tantra,[570] which first of all resolves any doubts on the verse from the *Vajra Garland* that talks of the four winds coming and going from these four places:

> Coming and going is expressed
> in the lotuses of the throat, heart,
> navel, and secret area.[571]

In the *Compendium of Practice* it says:

> Mantras such as the "snake" arise from the *āli* and *kāli*. Their reality is in the three syllables that arise from the indestructible.[572]

This too means that the recitation of the three mantras of vajra repetition is performed by way of an arising from the indestructible drop and is not performed with winds coming and going from their sites at the four cakras. The necessity of doing it this way is that gathering winds into the indestructible drop at the heart will bring about the four empty states, as explained earlier, and vajra repetition is the agent that will gather these winds in the indestructible drop at the heart. This is because for the three processes—namely, the place they enter and so on, which were explained previously—the main method to bring about this entering is vajra repetition. On this, Ekādaśasvara says:

> From the indestructible drop at the center of the lotus mandala of the heart, the rising *hūṃ*, the entering *oṃ*, and the abiding *āḥ*, with the characteristics of the water mandala and so on upon the colors white and so forth, rise in succession through the openings of the right nostril and so on of the conventional nose. By this vajra repetition, the acts of pacification will be spontaneously achieved, and all obscurations from previous karma will be cleansed.[573]

In his *Difficult Points Commentary on the Five Stages*, Bhavyakīrti's explanation that vajra repetition should be performed to initiate the entering, abiding, and rising of all four mandalas by way of the indestructible drop is a good explanation. The root text[574] talks of the indestructible drop, which is the essence of the entire body, initially emanating and finally withdrawing the winds and so on and then explains vajra repetition, and so this is a recitation involving the arising from the indestructible drop. In connection to that, in Serdingpa's *Four Points*, the description of the recitation of the three syllables assigned to the entering, abiding, and rising of the five root winds as the five-colored light rays emanating from the indestructible drop in the center of the heart carries the meaning of that root text and represents the ultimate significance of vajra repetition. In this tradition, however, there is no realization of the necessity to understand fully the vital point of the heart center, and because of that, they do not understand it as the excellent

explanation it is. [178] Others from the Marpa tradition divide the petals of the lotus into three layers of syllables, focus on them in turn, and perform the vajra repetition of entering, abiding, and rising on these three layers. This, they assert, is the meaning of the line "of the nature of the three applications."[575] This is not correct because the meaning of the lines:

> Samādhi on the layers
> in the cardinal and intermediate directions
> is of the nature of the three applications.[576]

is that the three samādhis on the cardinal and intermediate directions of the three layers is in the nature of the three applications, or yogas. Kukkuripa also talks of performing vajra repetition that involves rising and entering from within the conjoined drop placed at the heart.

Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* speaks of meditating on the three vajras and the wisdom beings at the crown, throat, heart, and midway between the breasts. At their hearts, within hand implements, are the mandalas of air, water, fire, and earth respectively, in the center of which are moon discs supporting the three seed syllables and the deity seed syllable. Then, it is explained, you perform vajra repetition. This is not performed from the hearts of individual deities, however, but from the indestructible drop, because the text continues:

> By this process perform the activity
> of vajra repetition of the indestructible.[577]

Buddhaśrījñāna's *Drop of Freedom* states that the right wind is the air-element body vajra, the left is the water-element speech vajra, the wind from both nostrils is the fire-element mind vajra, and wind from both nostrils[578] is the earth element and possesses the nature of all deities. Therefore, when it describes a vajra repetition to be performed on the four winds rising through the upper nasal openings as light rays of the four syllables, it is done so on the basis of these four winds beings the winds of these four phenomena. It is not a vajra repetition of entering, abiding, and rising. For example, in both this work and in Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*, there are meditations where the four syllables are placed in the hearts of deities; with the entering, abiding, and rising of the winds; and without either of these two.

The above are descriptions that accord with this tradition, but there are other traditions that describe vajra repetition as being performed from the navel.

Combining wind and mantra, and the divisions of vajra repetition

In terms of combining wind and mantra, when *Illuminating Lamp* speaks of the white *oṃ* and other syllables with color and shape that are placed at locations in the body as being the winds entering, abiding, and rising, it says this because these syllables symbolize the three winds. But the syllables are not meditated on as the three winds, and this is not the section on vajra repetition. In the sections on vajra repetition in the tantra and the Ārya corpus, there is no clear description of the sounds and forms of the three syllables, and in the section on the reality of the winds to which the syllables are joined, there is no clear description of the winds and their respective tones. The master Gö speaks of a tone, but not of syllables with particular shapes. Most of those scholars who follow him comply with this. [179] Many from the Marpa tradition describe the wind as being like a rosary string on which are drawn in order the beads of the three syllables.

In the seventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* is the line "Do not recite, eating alms."[579] *Illuminating Lamp* gives the definitive meaning of this by quoting from *Explanation of the Intention*:

> Separate syllables are the alms,
> and reciting them is to eat them;
> that is the meaning of eating alms.[580]

This is describing the enemy of vajra repetition, which is recitation with wind and mantra as separate. Therefore you have to understand the meaning of inseparability from this verse. "Alms" in Sanskrit is *bhikṣa*, whose etymology is *bhinna*, meaning "separate," and *akṣara*, meaning "syllable." Recitation with wind and syllables separate is "eating alms." In this way, when wind and mantra are described as separate, "mantra" refers to the tone recitation and not to the visualization of something written.

Similarly, making wind and mantra inseparable refers to an inseparability with the tone of the mantra and not to an inseparability with something written. As for "tone," verbal articulation is external speech, whereas the

Compendium of Practice describes this as inner speech, and so verbal articulation is not what is being referred to here. Neither is it referring to the tone of mentally engaging in verbal articulation. Rather, here it is the natural or innate tone of the winds entering, abiding, and rising and applied to the three syllables. That natural tone of the winds inseparably joined with the tone of the mantras is the meaning of "wind and mantra united." You recognize that the winds sound like the tones of the three syllables and place the mind in that without distraction. This is the recitation. *Illuminating Lamp* calls this mental recitation, but this is completely different from the mental recitation that engages mentally in a mantra as if it were being expressed by the actions of tongue and palate. Clearly differentiate between these two. The significance of the teaching that wind and mantra are inseparably joined is that to the mind's eye, they must appear as one. If you do not proceed as described above, they will not appear as one to the mind.

The instructions say, "When the winds are abiding inside, hold it a little longer." On this point some scholars say that the position of the tantra and commentaries is that breath should be left as it is and uncontrived. This is not correct. It is taught that in a single day, the number of breaths, with incoming and outgoing breath counted as one, is not more than 21,600. Therefore, if the breath is left uncontrived, there would be no state of abiding separate from the incoming and outgoing breath, and the vajra-repetition practice of winds entering, abiding, and rising could not exist. If you are practicing the two-syllable vajra repetition, as has been taught, it is acceptable to leave the breath uncontrived. For the three-syllable practice, however, deliberately making a state of abiding in the middle, as found in the instructions of both Marpa and Gö traditions, is necessary, because in Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*, four times it says that during the abiding, which has the nature of *āḥ*, it should be held gently.[581] [180] Many say that the inner abiding period should be longer than the entering and arising, but the assertion of Master Gö that all three should be of equal duration is better.

Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī says that when the winds arise and emerge, all phenomena are purified and are transformed into nectar. They return as *oṃ*, whereupon they remove the imprints of your mental continuum. In the nature of *āḥ*, they purify your mental continuum.[582] *Drop of Freedom* says:

> When *hūṃ* emanates the buddhas and so on, all inanimate phenomena are brought into existence. When *oṃ* gathers the buddhas and so on, all animate phenomena are brought into existence.

> When *āḥ* holds the buddhas and so on, all animate and inanimate phenomena are engaged in the nondual exalted wisdom.[583]

The commentary explains that "brought into existence" means "made pure." The Ārya tradition does not describe it this way. Some say that the lines beginning "The syllable *hūṃ* emanates sentient beings," from *Five Stages*, teach the same, but this is not their meaning.

According to Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages*, you practice with about twenty-one vajra repetitions of the three syllables. Further recitation makes the bodily elements comfortable and the winds easier to hold, and actual vajra repetition consists of meditation in which the upper wind is brought down by *oṃ*, the lower wind is brought up by *hūṃ*, and the winds are combined at the heart. According to Serdingpa's *Four Points*, the practice of vajra repetition of the three syllables causes the winds to cease flowing, and they are brought into the dhūtī, from which an experience of bliss and emptiness is generated that completes the vajra-repetition practice. Serdingpa's *Five Stages with Mantra Circle* also describes how the constant practice of 108 vajra repetitions and so on will bring about the appearance of the five signs. Concerning the first of these differing positions, to say you should not practice more than about twenty-one vajra repetitions of the three syllables is a big error that contradicts the root and explanatory tantras and all the works in the master and disciples tradition. To say that holding the conjoined winds is vajra repetition is simply an invention and even contradicts many from his own tradition who assert it to be the union of the winds of mind isolation. Therefore you should accept the position of Serdingpa's *Four Points*. *Five Stages with Mantra Circle* should also be seen as being in agreement with that work.

Nāgārjuna's *Condensed Sādhana* quotes text from *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* and says to perform "conjoining" (*kha sbyor*) while eating and drinking. Apart from a few commentaries describing this as a conjoining of the winds, this practice is not found at all in the Indian texts of the Ārya tradition. If it is to be performed according to the core teachings, then if it is practiced during mind isolation as found in the other core teachings of our own tradition, it is in keeping with our tradition.

If vajra repetition is divided up according to the focus of the recitation, which is the winds, then it is divided as root and branch winds. These two divisions have four and five subdivisions, respectively. If it is divided according to the mantras to be recited, the *Vajra Garland* describes a two-syllable vajra repetition with *hūṃ* and *hoḥ* as well as the three-syllable recitation.

[181] In the *Explanation of the Intention* and the *Later Tantra*, the actual three-syllable recitation is described. Lakṣmī, Bhavyakīrti, and others talk of eleven types of vajra repetition, which are those of the six families, wrathful recitation, the three poisons, and the neuter. They claim that this is the position of the thirteenth chapter and its commentary. In *Illuminating Lamp*, the reality of the three seed syllables is investigated, and the understanding of their significance is explained as being enlightened body, speech, and mind vajra repetitions. Then, however, it goes on to describe jewel recitation and unobstructed recitation as the main vajra-repetition practices. Thus the first three on their own do not fulfill all the criteria of being vajra repetition. Vajra repetition is described as mind recitation, while wrathful recitation is described as verbal recitation. It is very clear that wrathful recitation is not vajra repetition. Three-poisons recitation is explained as imagining sentient beings who have the three poisons to be clear light. It does not consist of wind recitation. Neuter recitation is explained as referring to clear light meditation, and so that too does not contain wind recitation. Moreover, these three are not taught as being vajra repetition.

On that which has been described as being the main vajra repetition, the tantra says:

> Recitation following the actuality
> without entity, the excellence
> investigates the buddhas of the three times.
> That is said to be jewel recitation.
> The buddha realms, everywhere
> the clouds of the enlightened form
> travel and return, the actuality of the vajra:
> that is unobstructed recitation.[584]

For the second line, the Chak translation reads, "arising from the entity, the auspicious one." This is better. The meaning of these lines is as follows: Recitation following the actuality of the three seed syllables—the entering, abiding, and rising—is "recitation following the actuality." The excellence arising from the entity of the indestructible drop refers to the unbroken stream of emanation through which the buddhas of the three times of entering, abiding, and rising are "investigated" or completely known. This is to know that the winds, as the entities of all the tathāgatas, are the entity of the indestructible drop. This is jewel recitation. This description is in accord with the reliable translations of the commentary to these lines. This explanation refers

to vajra repetition bringing the winds into the indestructible drop. Once gathered there, they dissolve, and when they arise again, they do so from the "buddha realm" of the indestructible drop at the lotus of the heart, and the clouds of enlightened form travel out "everywhere," meaning through the gateways of the sensory sources, such as the eyes. Then they return inside, where they abide as the "actuality of the vajra." Such emanating with these characteristics is unobstructed recitation. [182]

Calling the former "jewel recitation" is based on the fact that the root-winds vajra repetition gathers the winds into the jewel of the indestructible drop and is not describing a recitation of Ratnasambhava from the five families. Similarly, vajra repetition on the five branch winds, after gaining the ability to gather in the winds, is a recitation that passes unhindered through each of the sense gateways and is therefore called "unobstructed recitation." It is not a recitation of Amoghasiddhi. In the same verses quoted in *Five Stages*, the former is presented as "vajra repetition."

Apart from *Illuminating Lamp*, works of the master and his disciples, Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, and other works do not describe a vajra repetition of the branch winds. Even when performing recitation of the branch winds from the juncture described earlier, it has to be a recitation that involves the process of rising from the indestructible drop at the heart. And the master Gö has said that performing it this way aids all objects and appearances to blaze with bliss. This is the true thinking of the *Vajra Garland.*

On the etymology of the term *vajra repetition*, Tibetans and Indians have clearly come up with a variety of explanations. *Illuminating Lamp* says:

> Their significance is the three syllables. Their recitation is that of entering and so forth. Their existence is symbolized by the three inseparable vajras. Vajra repetition of such a nature is taught.[585]

Therefore recitation possessing the nature of the three syllables of the three vajras inseparably combined with the tones of the three winds is called *vajra repetition.*

During meditative equipoise, endowed with the four essentials of body and so forth, as explained previously, with all faults that lead to dullness and agitation eliminated, with the strength of joy from seeing well the benefits of wind yoga and recitation yoga, train yourself properly in the practice of the tones of the three winds arising as mantra. It can be practiced in post-meditation sessions too, as the *Explanation of the Intention* says:

In all activities also, laying down and so forth
with the knowledge of the yoga,
without words, without speech,
beyond the three times, constantly recite.[586]

The meaning of the last two lines is: recite the three syllables at all times without the vocalizing of names and words.

Prāṇāyāma meditation upon the substance drop at the secret-area tip

There are two divisions of this practice. The *Vajra Garland* describes a drop meditation in which the bodhicitta is held without emission at the point where the tip of the lotus of the karma consort meets the tip of your vajra. This, however, is not a meditation in which the focus is on the form of a drop. *Illuminating Lamp*, in its explanation on the *Later Tantra*, [183] describes how the wind that emerges from your vajra "emerges in the form" of a drop and is meditated upon in the form of a drop at the tip of the consort's lotus.[587] It is clear here that a wisdom consort is being used, and because the meditation is on the juncture of the two tips, it is different from any meditation on individual tips.

Generally, meditation by reliance upon a wisdom consort is for the generation of bliss through meditative union, for the meditation on the mandala contained within the drops of the bodhicitta that have passed into the lotus of the consort during meditative union, and for the meditation that focuses on the drop at the juncture of the two tips at the secret place of practitioner and consort. Of these three types of meditation found in the Ārya literary tradition, the one described in this section is the third type.

The purpose of this meditation is to bring the winds into the dhūtī, but it is not the case that here you develop the ability to gather the winds in the dhūtī where previously you did not, because you will already have this ability if you have properly trained yourself in body isolation. The two previous prāṇāyāma meditations of this section gather winds into the heart, which is something not previously possible, and this prāṇāyāma meditation at this juncture acts as an enhancement to the gathering of those winds at the heart. This way of thinking can be applied in other contexts also.

20. Vajra Repetition

Explanation of the exclusive function of vajra repetition

1. Vajra repetition loosens the knots at the heart
[• Compilation of the three-syllable mantra][588]
2. How loosening the knots at the heart is the main loosening of the channel knots

Vajra repetition loosens the knots at the heart

The reason why it is necessary to perform vajra repetition from the indestructible drop in the center of the heart cakra is clearly taught in the *Vajra Garland*:

> Dwelling in the hair treasury,
> the drop is explained as wind.
> By the reality of mantra, it is opened,
> and the knots are loosened with the yoga.
> With no understanding of the practice[589]
> of the yoga of the special opening
> through the reality of the winds and its reasoning,
> any wind-holding yoga
> beyond words and content,
> for the unclear, seeing wrongly,
> lacking the meditative absorption,
> even the Buddha would find it difficult to attain.
> By the kindness of the yoginīs,
> it remains transmitted mouth to mouth.[590]

On the meaning of the first two lines, the *Vajra Garland* elsewhere says:

> Letter *a* dwelling in the dharma-cakra lotus,
> pervading the wind cakra,
> that alone is the great wind
> expressed by all as *prāṇa*.[591]

It also says that in the site of the hair treasury, or the point midway between the eyebrows, is the six-petal wind cakra. Therefore these lines are referring to the dhūtī, the site of the life-sustaining wind, which ranges from the heart up to that point. The opening up of that with the realities of mantra and wind is indicated by the line beginning "and the knots are loosened . . ." [184] Opening the channel knots of the dhūtī is indicated by the line beginning "Having loosened." Any wind-holding yoga that does not comprehend this special opening practice of the realities of mantra and wind, together with the reasoning, will find it difficult to gain that result. This is a paraphrase of "With no understanding of the practice" to "any wind-holding yoga . . . would find it difficult to attain." The Shiwa Ö translation has:

> By the practice of the supreme opening,
> and not understanding that practice . . .

This is a better translation. He also has "knowing the reality of the wind."[592] Because this topic will not be understood without the transmitted instructions of the guru, it is "beyond words and content." "Unclear" means "not understanding clearly." "Seeing wrongly" means holding to wrong interpretations of the texts. Having understood the realities of wind and mantra but without their meditative absorption, then even the Buddha would find it difficult to attain the loosening of the knots of the heart through the power of yoga. The Shiwa Ö translation has "the buddhas would find it difficult to attain." In this tantra it states that the reality of mantra is due to the kindness of the yoginīs and "will be understood through the words of the guru." Therefore "yoginīs" does not refer to the guru. So what does it refer to? In a chapter on channels, this tantra describes 72,000 channels, which are compiled into channels matching the number of the twenty-four sites, such as Pulliramalaya.[593] These condense into the eight period channels of the heart, which also condense into the three channels at the center of the heart. These three, through joining, condense into the dhūtī alone. The tantra says that this process can be understood from the yoginī tantras. This is because the reason for having to open the channel knots at the heart by the

vajra repetition of the realities of mantra and wind is that the channels were originally created from this place, and that in the end, it is the final place of withdrawal. This was taught to the yoginīs who requested it in tantras such as the *Hundred-Thousand Exposition Tantra.*[594] This is the thinking behind "the kindness of the yoginīs."

Having spoken of these things, Vajreśvara Vajrapāṇi makes a request for a teaching:

> I request a teaching from the guide of beings.
> Those who know dividing of the drop, and the reasoning,
> by practice of the supreme yoga
> will speedily open the knots,
> and beings of these three realms
> will quickly travel to the supreme siddhi.[595]

This means, "Those who know the realities of mantra and wind, which is the 'dividing,' or divider, of the drop, by the practice of the supreme yoga meditation will open the knots of the heart and be led quickly to the supreme siddhi, this I request the guide of beings to teach." [185] The reply to this request is:

> With this request, the vajra holder
> spoke again to Vajreśvara.
> That of the nature of the supreme secret,
> where it has not been clearly taught,
> the division of the drop I will explain, so listen.
> In the space of the hollow of the heart's lotus,
> the wisdom vajra constantly abides.
> Well positioned above and below,
> the great life and evacuative winds are located.
> Its center tied by three knots difficult to open.
> These destroy the evacuative wind,
> which cannot flow upward;
> destroyed by that, again flowing as five.
> Life, evacuative, upward-flowing,
> the pervading, and the accompanying
> flow from the five tips
> in dependence upon the five channels.

Expansive, very expansive, intoxicated, downfall, and friend:[596]
these are known as the five channels,
clearly pervasive below the vajra.
For the upper *prāṇa*, in the middle too,
the realm of space at the center of the vajra,
prāṇa, the great life wind arises,
destroyed, reliant upon knots,
but flowing as five,
the five channels at the tips:
lunar segment, light, service, dewlap, and spleen.[597]

The continuation of the passage was quoted previously. To explain this passage: This is a highly secret topic, not clearly taught in any other tantra, a yoga of vajra repetition that opens the knots at the heart, in which the knots to be opened are described as follows. The center of the heart cakra, in line with the location of the exalted-wisdom-vajra indestructible drop is in the empty space within the hollow of the dhūtī channel; it is bound by three knots, very difficult to open. Although the right and left channels entwine the dhūtī with three knots each from the right and the left to make six knots in total, together they have three knots.

Those knots block the evacuative wind and prevent it from flowing upward, meaning that it is not free to flow upward in the dhūtī from the point of the knots. The fact that, generally, the evacuative wind flows upward has been explained previously. "Destroyed by that, flowing as five" does not mean that the evacuative wind flows as five winds but that, below the blockage of the knots, the five winds flow downward because they flow "pervasively" below the previously mentioned wisdom vajra. This is similar to statements from this tantra that the evacuative winds pull in a downward direction. The word "again" indicates that the five winds also flow upward. The five winds—the life-sustaining wind and so on—flow respectively from the five channels, called expansive and so on. Above the center of the vajra, too, and in the middle, the life-sustaining wind arises from the realm of space of the hollow channel and "flows as five." This phrase can be placed here. "Destroyed, reliant upon knots" means that the upper life-sustaining wind is blocked by the knots also, and therefore within the dhūtī it is not granted downward access. The tantra says:

The upper winds also travel downward,
but well destroyed by the *prāṇa*,

they dwell inside the life channel, [186]
facing downward, and do not travel downward,
bound by the knots of ignorance.[598]

To express the fact that the flow of *prāṇa* is destroyed, "destroyed by the *prāṇa*" is not a good translation. The upper winds can flow downward also, but within the dhūtī they do not move below the juncture of the knots "and do not travel downward." The reason for this is taught by the line beginning "bound by . . ." Therefore the Shiwa Ö translation, "the magic wheel of ignorance," is incorrect. The text also says that the life-sustaining wind flows from the upper hollow channels as the five winds—*nāga* and so on—and that the upper winds emanate through the gateways of the senses by the power of the life-sustaining wind. At this point the *Vajra Garland Tantra* states that the wind as the chariot of the consciousness is mixed with the imprints of consciousness, and when objects are engaged, it creates the intrinsic conceptual minds. Through the contamination of the imprints, you wander in samsara, and there is no samsara other than that. After this the text continues:

Therefore, in order to leave samsara,
gain the stage that divides the drop,
make efforts in meditation,
and by opening the central knot,
which is the ignorance unseen by others,
you will gain the siddhi.[599]

Therefore, to cleanse the imprints for wandering in samsara, you crack open the egg of ignorance that binds the dhūtī at the heart and "divides the drop" by meditating on the realities of mantra and wind. This is saying that until the life-sustaining and evacuative winds that create the conceptual minds are dissolved into the indestructible drop at the heart, the clear light will not fully arise. For this to occur you have to open the knots at the heart, and that means being opened by the reality of mantra. Therefore the *Vajra Garland* in the sixth chapter speaks of the necessity of opening the channel knot at the heart, and if it is opened by the reality of mantra, you will gain siddhis of the sword, the pill, clairvoyance, and so on, and the siddhi of mahāmudrā. It also explains the reality of mantra as being recitation applied to *hūṃ* and *hoḥ*, the two winds of entering and rising, and if this meditation is performed for six months, these results will definitely be achieved.[600]

Is this the opening of the channel knots by two-syllable vajra repetition, or

is it also accomplished by three syllables? The mantra reality that opens the knots, as taught here, is of two types. One is described here in the sixth chapter, and the second is found in the fifteenth chapter:

> The vajras of body, speech, and mind
> are to be recited by three mantras.
> By this, siddhi is soon attained
> and is the transcendence of the winds.[601]

Also:

> Now the teaching on the reality of mantra:
> It is the nonapprehending level, clearly apparent,
> the very cause of Vajrasattva,
> the mantra, endowed with every quality,
> the compilation of body, speech, and mind, [187]
> the reality producing the supreme wisdom,
> a reality that is the synthesis of all;
> supremely apparent in the lotus of the heart,
> the peerless reality of the mantra,
> accomplished by recitation for six months:
> thus will it be produced but otherwise not.[602]

These passages very clearly speak of the three-syllable mantra and how its accomplishment is reached by a six-month recitation of the reality of the winds from the lotus of the heart. Therefore it is clearly the position of the tantra that both the two-syllable and the three-syllable vajra repetition will loosen the channel knots.

On the way these knots are loosened, the tantra says that sound is given the name *hūṃ* and drop is given the name *hoḥ*, and then:

> Opened by the two winds,
> the knots of ignorance are loosened.[603]

For example, when a tube is blocked, you work a long instrument back and forth inside to free the blockage. Similarly, the winds entering and rising achieve the same effect. The tantra says:

A person without *ahaṃ*
is like a tree without a root.[604]

Lacking the knowledge of the definitive meaning of *ahaṃ* is to be like a severed root. The tantra continues:

A is said to be the life-sustaining wind;
the evacuative wind likewise is spoken of as *haṃ*.
These two as one are said to be *ahaṃ*.[605]

In this tradition the life-sustaining and evacuative winds are mixed within the indestructible drop at the heart.

Compilation of the three-syllable mantra

This has two divisions. On the provisional compilation, chapter 15 of the *Vajra Garland* says that *a*, which is the first of the vowels, *u*, which is the fifth vowel, and *m*, which is the affix to the *p* consonant group—the last of the *k*, *c*, *ṭ*, *t*, and *p* consonant groups—are put together.[606] From *a* and *u* comes *o*, and the form of the letter *u* is elided. The *m* is added as an *anusvāra* to make *oṃ*. Therefore, in all three translations of this tantra's chapter on the essence of the enlightened body, speech, and mind, the rendering *o* instead of *u* is incorrect. The *u* as it appears in the commentary is correct.

For *āḥ*, take the first vowel *a* twice and add *h*, which is the affix to the "*ūṣman* section," or sibilant group. When two identical short vowels are placed together, the first becomes long and the second is elided, and so here *ā* is formed from the first two letters of this group of three. The commentary explains that the letter *h* without its life-giving vowel becomes a *visarga*.[607] This is because letter *ha* is mentioned twice.

Last, to the letter *h* from the *ūṣman* section, *ū*, the sixth vowel, is added to form *hū*. To this, the letter *m*, which is the affix of the *p* consonant group, is added in the form of an *anusvāra*, to make *hūṃ*. On the line "last of the *ūṣman* section, with segment," the commentary says that "segment" expresses a crescent moon. Therefore the statement from Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* that each of the three syllables is comprised of three letters should be understood likewise. [188]

The definitive mantra compilation also has three parts. On the compilation of the definitive *oṃ*, the above tantra says:

Letter *a* dwelling in the dharma-cakra lotus,
pervading the wind cakra:
that alone is the great wind
expressed by all as *prāṇa*.[608]

Therefore the letter *a* from the three letters that make up *oṃ* refers to the life-sustaining wind. For the last line, the commentary translation has "*prāṇa*, comprising all." It explains the meaning of this line as the life-sustaining wind comprising all other winds. The tantra continues:

Oṃ abides in the enjoyment cakra,
like fire and like the sun,
dwelling in the region of the throat,
pervading the crown, an entity of radiance.[609]

The definitive meaning of the letter *u* pervades from the enjoyment cakra to the great-bliss cakra. Its color is like that of fire and sunlight. Brilliantly radiant, its entity is that of the upward flowing wind. The Shiwa Ö and Ra Lotsāwa translations, as well as the commentary translation, have *u* instead of *oṃ*. This is better. Then:

Dwelling in the great-bliss cakra,
the letter *m* as just the drop,
its height, twelve finger widths,
abiding in the region of the conqueror's crown.[610]

The definitive meaning of the letter *m* is the bodhicitta drop dwelling in the crown region measuring twelve finger widths above the midway point between the eyebrows. The Shiwa Ö translation has:

A span of twelve finger widths,
abiding in the transcended crown.

The provisional *oṃ* is placed at the crown of the head. Similarly, the definitive *oṃ* is a composite of the life-sustaining wind, the upward flowing wind, and the *haṃ* syllable drop, all contained within the dhūtī in the great-bliss cakra channel knot.

For the compilation of the definitive *āḥ*:

> The letter *a* was explained before
> as the supreme life-sustaining wind.[611]

Also:

> From the wheel of Dharma lotus
> to the throat, the letter *a* twice;
> *prāṇa* and the evacuative wind
> bound by the letter *h*
> in the center of the throat.[612]

The life-sustaining wind at the heart and the upward wind at the throat is the significance of the letter *a* doubled to make *ā*, and the evacuative wind illustrated by the letter *h*, provisionally forming *āḥ* and placed at the throat, are all contained within the dhūtī in the enjoyment-cakra channel knot.

On the compilation of the definitive *hūṃ*:

> Letter *h* is the evacuative wind
> abiding in the secret area of the anus.
> The letter *u* is the wind moving above,
> abiding in the center of the lotus of the throat.
> The letter *m* abides in the wind cakra at the forehead.
> These taken as one are spoken of
> as the seed of the enlightened mind in the heart.[613]

The letter *h* is the evacuative wind. The life-sustaining wind pervading from the heart to the wind cakra at the midway point between the eyebrows is signified by the letter *m*. The letter *u* is the wind moving above, or the upward flowing wind. Just as the syllable *hūṃ* is placed at the heart, these three are contained within the dhūtī in the wheel of the dharma-cakra channel knot. [189] "These taken as one" can also mean the definitive *oṃ* and definitive *āḥ* made into one.

This explanation of the definitive three syllables is saying that the life-sustaining wind, evacuative wind, and upward flowing wind are mixed within the dhūtī with the channel knots of the three cakras already loosened. In that

connection, placing the three syllables *oṃ āḥ hūṃ* in the three places to bless body, speech, and mind is expressed in many authentic texts on mantra, but placing the definitive three syllables in the three places to achieve blessings is as described above.

On the above passages, Vajrapāṇi asks:

> The meaning of the three vajras
> and the separation of the places
> have been understood,
> but tell us, in their midst, who is the lord?
> How is it described?[614]

The three letters united to form the three seed syllables, their definitive meanings as winds combined together, and the cakras of the body where they are combined is understood. But "in their midst"—meaning "among"—these three describe the one that is the lord. The reply:

> You ask of that which is hidden,
> which is secret, the supreme of secrets,
> not taught in other tantras,
> I will explain, so listen.
> The seed syllable of the mind is lord.
> Of all, it is without conception.
> It is therefore a master,
> weakening and stealing others.[615]

This is of great significance, something even more secret than secret, and hidden in other tantras. Therefore, "I will explain, so listen." Of the three, the definitive seed syllable *hūṃ*, which is the winds combined in the dhūtī at the loosened channel knot of the heart, is the lord. Why? The loosening of the knots at the heart is "without conception," meaning it is the best cutter of the conceptions. This is because it "weakens" the moving winds of conceptualization "other" than those winds that remain unmoving, and "it is therefore a master." If the line is read as "other masters,"[616] then the body vajra and speech vajra are "other" than the mind vajra. The channel knots of the crown and throat at the locations of these two vajras being destroyed by the loosened knot of the mind vajra is the meaning of "weakening and stealing." This assertion is on the strength of the explanation that says, beginning from below, loosening the knots of the heart will bring about the loosening of the

other knots. The commentary says that the syllable *hūṃ* is master of the three syllables because "all phenomena depend upon the mind" and so on, [190] but this is an explanation that has not truly discovered the definitive meaning of the syllables.

How loosening the knots at the heart is the main loosening of the channel knots

> The third is understood by the yogi
> free of conceptualization, of great marvel.
> Because all winds have been halted,
> this is born, an understanding of this reality.[617]

"The third" is the definitive significance of the mind-vajra syllable—the winds brought into the place where the channel knots of the heart have been loosened. "Understood" means that this has been realized by the yogi. At that time, an innate wisdom, free of conceptualization, "of great marvel," or of great wonder, is born. "An understanding of this reality" refers to the "great marvel." The reason for this is that all winds and conceptualization have been halted, meaning that you have the ability to gather the winds into the indestructible drop. This clarifies the reason given above for the mind seed-syllable being the master. It teaches the vital significance of gathering the winds at the heart in halting conceptualization and the moving winds. Therefore it is saying that practices that gather the winds at the other cakras do not have that capability, because it is a passage teaching why gathering winds at the heart is of prime significance.

Then:

> The centers of the emanation and dharma cakras
> are two lotuses, it has been said,
> above and below, as if facing,
> of sixty-four and eight petals.
> Well positioned above and below,
> the life and evacuative winds flow.
> It has been clearly taught that these two
> are solely winds of conceptualization.
> The channels *lalanā* and *rasanā*
> are the essence of body and speech.[618]

The sixty-four-petal lotus is the emanation cakra, and the eight-petal lotus is the dharma cakra. These are the two lotuses. The commentary on the third line says, "They are positioned like a lidded box."[619] This is a good description. It means that the heart lotus faces down and the navel lotus faces up, as described in the *Saṃputa Tantra*, and therefore they are like a box with its top and bottom joined. These lines describe the positions of the heart and navel-channel cakras and teach that the life-sustaining and evacuative winds, positioned above and below and flowing through the two channels, are winds that create conceptualizations.

Then:

> The *avadhūtī*, supreme channel,
> lying in between these two,
> supreme of the supreme, without conception,
> always flowing, pervading all.
> Such a yoga, once achieved,
> is always able to work for living beings,
> victorious over the 108 specific winds,
> at all times in a state of victory.
> Unknown by the fledgling yogi,
> it grants full enlightenment instantaneously,
> this tantra has said.[620]

If the winds enter the dhūtī, which lies between the other two channels, conceptualizations are severed. [191] Therefore it is greater than the other two channels. With the attainment of such a yoga comes the ability to work for others and a victory over the winds that produce the 108 conceptual minds. This is not known by the generation-stage practitioner, and it has been said that the gathering of the two winds into the dhūtī will "instantaneously," or quickly, brings about the full enlightenment of clear-light attainment.

In order to bring the winds into the dhūtī, the generation stage must be completed, and then you have to proceed through the stages leading to the practice of vajra repetition:

> How is that to be achieved?
> I will speak of this practice.
> First, the great yogi, with an excellent mind,
> meditates upon mental quiescence.
> With the yogas of the generation stage,

he practices the wrathful mudrās,
and at the nine openings of the senses,
all is everywhere constrained.
The *hūṃ* recitation is unparalleled,
the unbroken continuum is supreme
and is maintained for six months.[621]
Then, instantaneously it is achieved.[622]

The "mudrā" is the mahāmudrā of the deity form of the generation stage. The commentary describes "wrathful mudrās" as "blazing mudrās," referring to the generation stage that burns away ordinary perceptions. "*Hūṃ* recitation" is said to be just one part of vajra repetition. This practice draws in the winds from the nine openings, such as the eyes, as taught by the two lines beginning "and at the nine openings."

Then:

By what is this achieved?
By recitation the heart lotus also is broken to face upward.
Then the conjoining of the secret lotus is separated,
and the two winds of conceptualizations are severed.
The nonconceptualization brings bliss,
achieved by the reality of mantra,
and remains within the flow of the *avadhūtī*.
Having opened the eyebrow center with the winds,
it is achieved, and the joy in that achievement
arises constantly and does not end.[623]

The first two lines describe how the channel knots at the heart are destroyed after vajra repetition has been performed for six months. The Shiwa Ö translation, the Ra translation, and the translation within the commentary all have "the heart lotus turns to face upward," but Darma Tsöndrü translates this line as above. The commentary says that the two channel cakras are conjoined, and opening them up is the meaning of "turns to face upward." It also asserts that "secret lotus" refers to the emanation cakra and that its opening is "the unlocking of the lidded box." This description is no different from the former. The channel cakras of the heart and the navel exist with the former facing down and the latter facing up, and are not conjoined. Therefore these two do not open up individually.[624] In the descriptions of the six cakras in this tantra, the secret cakra does not appear. In the section that states, "Comes

and goes in the throat, heart, navel, and secret lotuses,"[625] the secret lotus is, however, mentioned separately from the navel. Therefore "secret lotus" above does not refer to the emanation cakra. Generally, this tantra talks of vajra repetition "opening the knots," [192] "breaking the knots," or "destroying the knots." Here, too, it teaches how the knots are broken by vajra repetition, and so "heart lotus also is broken" refers to loosening the knots of that cakra. "Broken to face upward" refers to the channel knots of the navel.

When loosening the knots of the heart cakra, it must occur as it does in the death process. Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* says that when training in the transference process, the heart lotus is turned to face upward again and again. The *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra* states:

> If just for an instant the life-sustaining wind
> at the navel root is not used,
> the upturned lotus instantaneously faces upward.[626]

Therefore it seems as if the lotus of the heart has to turn upward. The term "navel" is not clear, and because this tantra praises the site of the heart, it could refer either to the "navel of the heart"[627] or alternatively to its more common usage. Some texts have "if just for an instant it is not lost," meaning that the life-sustaining wind is held there, and so this line means "if it is stable there." "The conjoining of the secret lotus" refers to the left and right channels forming knots around the dhūtī there.

It is being taught here that loosening the knots of the heart lotus will loosen the channel knots of the navel and secret place. "Having opened the brow center with the winds" refers to the opening of the channel knots at the wind cakra. Therefore all other channel knots are opened by this process also. If the channel knots are loosened, the life-sustaining wind and evacuative wind are halted from flowing in other channels and remain only "within the flow of the dhūtī." By this the great bliss of nonconceptualization arises constantly, and the text states that this is brought about by the "reality of mantra" vajra repetition.

In the *Vajra Garland*, again and again it says, "Achieved only by the reality of mantra."[628] Moreover, the Ārya and his disciples teach this vajra repetition and no other yoga for meditating on the actual winds. These explanations are indispensable for bringing great certainty to this process, and so this has been an extensive explanation.

21. Experiences in Prāṇāyāma Meditation

Stages of developing experiences in prāṇāyāma meditation

1. Experiences developed by meditating on the indestructible drop at the heart
2. Experiences developed by meditating on the remaining prāṇāyāma practices

Experiences developed by meditating on the indestructible drop at the heart

From withdrawing the winds into the heart, as described previously, it is taught that the clear light will arise. Before entering into the clear light, the five signs, such as the mirage, will arise from the process of earth dissolving into water and so on. This is stated in Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*. These experiences not only occur at the occasions of entering the actual clear light but at all occasions of the winds withdrawing into the dhūtī and there dissolving, thus producing the four empty states. Therefore it is taught that the five signs occur from the meditation upon the indestructible drop at the heart. [193] *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* says:

> The mind is to be placed into the drop.
> If your power is concentrated there,
> the earth mandala enters water,
> water then enters fire,
> fire also enters wind,
> wind then enters mind,
> and mind enters nondual wisdom a little.
> By this process the signs will be present:
> signs resembling a mirage, smoke, flame,

lights in the sky, and a cloudless sky.
This is because you have entered Vajrasattva.[629]

Kukkuripa also says:

With intense effort of mind,
focus on the form of the drop.
Having engaged in that,
the five or eight signs will arise;
then you will abide in clear light,
abiding there for days, months, or years,
for as long as you desire;
all activities, such as working for others,
will be accomplished without effort.[630]

The five signs are the mirage and so forth. The eight signs are these five and the three appearances that resemble the sun, moon, and darkness. Vitapāda[631] speaks of the three signs indicating that imperfect earth and so on are capable of being reversed, somewhat reversed, and completely reversed, and it should be understood that these signs have many stages. Some say that these signs are spoken of as mirages and so on, in the sense of a progressive development of clarity, but that they are not appearances resembling actual phenomena. Others say that they are the measure of stability of the consciousness that possesses the signs. Others say that they are indeed appearances resembling smoke and so forth. Of these three assertions, the last is good. The appearances resembling the sun, moon, and darkness occur at the occasions of appearance, increase, and close-to-attainment, but the appearance resembling a cloudless sky occurs at the occasion of the all-empty state, whereas the mirage-like sign and so on are preliminary signs indicating the development of the exalted wisdom of the four empty states in the stream of consciousness.

The tantras heap limitless praise upon the innately produced joy and the clear light of the all-empty state. Such praise refers to bliss and emptiness united by being skilled in inseparably uniting these two, as was explained previously. In order to initially induce such a special bliss, you will without doubt need to gather the left and right winds into the dhūtī, where they will subsequently dissolve. Without the outer and inner prāṇāyāma paths, the meditations upon the actual winds, drop yoga, and so on as methods for

penetrative focusing upon the body, you can still have a decisive view on emptiness and know the unmistaken way to cultivate that view. Yet no matter how long you cultivate it, you will not be able to bring about the above accomplishment. Therefore there can be no doubt that you have to meditate on the methods for penetrating the points of the body as described in the authoritative literature. [194]

When you meditate on such a method, if your meditation is one that will take you unerringly to the very point you wish to go, then those signs heralding the development of the innately produced joy or exalted wisdom of the all-empty state will definitely arise. Therefore the praise heaped upon these signs is predicated on this point.

Nonetheless, through cultivating the mere placement of the mind in a nonconceptual state, phenomena resembling these signs will arise, and it is very difficult to clearly differentiate them from the signs that arise from the meditations on the methods for penetrating the points of the body. Therefore you should be very learned in this.

Also, included in the signs that arise from penetrating the points of the body are those of the very mobile and external winds at the gateways of the senses beginning to turn inside, turning inside somewhat, having entered the dhūtī a little, and so on, up to the signs of reversal occurring on the advanced paths and the special signs of reversal. There are many levels of signs. Therefore, when apparent signs appear, do not feel satisfied and think that you now have gained all the benefits described for the genuine signs. Even though the signs may be genuine, do not feel satisfied with just finding partial accomplishment, but having learned the upper and lower levels of the signs, seek out the features of the higher signs.

In many works of the great siddhas, such as Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* and those of Nāgārjuna, Kukkuripa, Ghaṇṭapāda, and so on, their accounts of the completion stage contain methods for penetrating the vital points of the body through concentration on the winds, drops, letters, and so on, as well as statements that meditation on the drop at the heart will definitely generate the exalted wisdom and "without doubt exalted wisdom will blaze forth" and so on. If you have understood the previous points well, you will gain an extraordinary conviction in the words of these siddhas and a heartfelt certainty that they represent the essence of practice. For those whose inferior intelligence does not understand this and who have not comprehended the essential points of the tantras through the teachings of the great siddhas, however, they hold the completion stage to be a meditation on

a mere partial emptiness, with stages that teach many different samādhis with features, and therefore it cannot be the supreme practice. They then hold a false path as the essence of practice.

It is clearly very difficult to comprehend genuine emptiness and, because the tantras and the works of the great siddhas are so profound, it is also very difficult to comprehend in a subtle sense the very special bliss. Given that, it is extraordinarily difficult to combine bliss and emptiness. Nevertheless, having developed a rough understanding of the essentials of these works, meditative familiarization with these exclusive methods without any wrong understandings will induce great bliss, and just meditating on that alone is an extraordinarily wonderful samādhi, quite unlike anything else asserted as being profound. [195]

The fifth sign, the cloudless sky-like appearance, can appear by meditating on the methods of penetrating the points of the body and also through mere single-pointed samādhi lacking the above. Those not learned in the essentials of the tantras will find it very difficult to distinguish between the two. Although some tantras say that this sign occurs when the winds have turned inward a little, here it occurs at the time of the all-empty state, which is the last of the four empty states. Therefore appearance, increase, and close-to-attainment appearing as moon, sun, and darkness precede this sign. Furthermore, this sign arises from the dissolution into the dhūtī, and so it is not the same as the above appearance.

Some from the Marpa tradition say that there is no certainty that the eight signs and eight consciousnesses associated with the signs will appear in a fixed order. The thinking of the texts, however, is that the signs do appear in a definite order, because those works that concentrate on the way the winds withdraw describe them as appearing in that order.

Having understood the essentials of the meditation upon the indestructible drop at the heart, then meditating upon it for a long time will produce the initial exalted wisdom of the four empty states. This is a facsimile of mind isolation, and for that reason it is acceptable to call it as such, but it is not the actual mind isolation. In this meditation, there is a forward process and a reverse process of the four empty states. Of these two, the second is a little harder to develop. You remain in the latter for as long is necessary, and when rising from it, you visualize the basis of practice as before and focus on the drop. Kukkuripa says:

When arising from the samādhi,
focus constantly and solely on the drop,
and do not think of anything else.[632]

If you have been able to withdraw the winds once into the dhūtī through this method, and from their dissolution you have the ability to induce the four empty states, then when you next focus on the drop, withdrawing the winds becomes very easy. You will be able to withdraw the winds and induce the four empty states without having to spend a great deal of time on it.

The creation of the innate exalted wisdom through the concentrated mind being focused upon the drop and other phenomena at the important points of the body and withdrawing the winds into the dhūtī is extraordinarily wonderful and something that will captivate the mind of the learned. This is very different in terms of power and stability from the forceful withdrawing of the winds without knowing well the points of wind yoga. Learn these and other benefits, and know that other concentrations of mind cannot compare with this.

Experiences developed by meditating on the remaining prāṇāyāma practices

1. The way to develop experiences each month from vajra-repetition practice
2. Dissolving the winds into the dhūtī through vajra repetition
3. The way to ignite the caṇḍālī [196]

The way to develop experiences each month from vajra-repetition practice

For someone who has completed the coarse and subtle generation stages and trained in body isolation, the way to practice vajra repetition in the first month is spoken of in the *Vajra Garland*:

At first, with incoming and outgoing breaths
numbering twenty-one thousand and six hundred,
ascertained during the day and at night,
for as long as that is obtained,

for days numbering twenty-seven,
with yoga, that count is well applied.[633]

For the last line Shiwa Ö reads, "that count is applied again and again." The 21,600 flows of wind of a single day, with the incoming and outgoing breath counted as one, are ascertained as the number of winds that flow in a day. "For as long as that is obtained," for as long as twenty-seven days, that count is applied again and again. This does not include the abiding breath. This is teaching that the number of breaths of each day and each night should be equalized without excess or omission. If the winds of each period are equalized, the greater elements of the body are also balanced. The necessity of such a state of balance is that when it occurs, all good qualities that depend upon the body for their development become easier to develop.

On the way to practice vajra repetition in the second month, the *Vajra Garland* says:

By divisions of the periods
comes the subsequent recitations;
at each period, engaging in prāṇāyāma,
numbering two thousand seven hundred,
they are ascertained perfectly.
Through clear separation, for twenty-seven days,
by the divisions of the four mandalas,
this is ascertained day and night.[634]

In the second month, equalization is maintained by 2,700 winds flowing in each of the eight periods. The former is easy to practice; this is harder. The commentary says that the nine hundred winds of each period are multiplied by the three processes of entering, abiding, and rising to make the 2,700. This is not a good explanation because if that were the case, it would be describing twenty-four periods of nine hundred winds, and this is not correct because there are not more than eight periods in a day. This practice is "ascertained" for twenty-seven days, and ascertained also by the vajra repetition on the four winds arising from the four mandalas.

On the way to practice in the third month:

Then, making effort at the locations,
you should engage individually.

With the flow at the channel cakras,
ascertain the incoming and outgoing breaths.
With the yoga of ascertainment,
examine the channel cakras.
With this division of the channel cakras,
for twenty-seven days . . .[635]

Having equalized the winds of the eight periods, examine the channel cakras, which are the "locations" of wind flow, individually for twenty-seven days with the method of ascertaining the flow of incoming and outgoing winds. This is speaking about clearly seeing the channels of the cakras. [197]

For practice during the fourth month:

Then, by way of the divisions of locations,
the genuine characteristics are to be engaged.
Engaging in each of the locations,
one hundred and eight will flow;
the supreme yoga devoid of conceptualization,
of the nature of having abandoned conceptualization,
of the nature of all phenomena,
one hundred and eight will flow;
this is the genuine and supreme yoga.
For twenty-seven days the yogi,
meditating upon the characteristics
exactly as they exist, meditates well.[636]

This is saying that, in the fourth month, having ascertained the channels, which are the locations of the winds, the yogi meditates upon the characteristics of the winds exactly as they exist and sees and ascertains the 108 winds flowing in the channels. That this is the method for entering the clear light, the nature of all phenomena, where all conceptualization is abandoned, the supreme yoga of vajra repetition that cuts all conceptualization, is taught by the three lines beginning "the supreme yoga" and the single line "this is the genuine and supreme yoga."

For practice in the fifth month:

The yogi with conceptualization
turns away from it with yoga,

and the great winds of nonconceptualization
flow in the channel cakras.
From the ascertainment of the ultimate state,
from the bondage of affliction,
for twenty-seven days
with the yoga of a beginner,
the intelligent one thinks to turn away.[637]

The Shiwa Ö translation reads, "the intelligent one, from turning away." With the wind yogas of the fifth month, which, when compared to the completion of vajra repetition, is the "yoga of a beginner," the intelligent yogi turns away from conceptualizations and their associated winds and brings about the flow of the great winds in the channel cakras, which will induce nonconceptualization. This occurs when the winds begin to reverse into the location of the indestructible drop. From the ascertainment of the ultimate state, or the reality, of the winds, the yogi turns away from the movements of the bondage to the afflictions. This is an arrangement of the above lines.

In the sixth month:

By the force of the pure yoga
with these completely pure winds,
the conceptualizations of prāṇāyāma
are completely abandoned,
and the supreme yogi meditates
with the reality of the winds as a cause.
The supreme and nondual yoga,
for a period of twenty-seven days,
depends upon the reality of the winds,
and so the wandering mind is purified.[638]

In the sixth month, by the force of vajra-repetition meditation, which depends upon the reality of the winds as the cause, the prāṇāyāma winds and the conceptualizations are abandoned, and the mind is purified from wandering to objects of the conceptualizations. [198]

The above has been taught with details of the count, sequence, conceptualizations according to location, conceptualizations according to time, the reversal of winds, and the complete purification. The statement that at the end of six months the channel knots of the heart are completely loosened is

made on the basis that the disciple is of very sharp faculties. In many places this tantra only speaks of the winds entering and emerging and does not mention the state of abiding. On this point commentators have said that the phrase "coming and going is expressed," cited earlier, implies going and not going.[639] The lines "The completion-stage yoga of entering, abiding, and rising . . . ," however, clearly teach abiding.

Venerable Gö says that the measure of having fully trained in the coarse winds is that the flow is clear, meaning that the different colors appear clearly to the senses. Furthermore, the count is clear without error or confusion. There is clarity in the nature of the sounds of the different aspects of the three syllables, clarity in the locations, in the natures of coarse and subtle winds, and in their different speeds and heaviness. The sign of completion is that no sudden illnesses occur. The measure of having become fully trained in the subtle winds is that the outer winds of the great billionfold world enter through the pores and can be contained within the body. All the inner winds emerge and fill the outside billionfold world, where they are capable of mixing with the outer winds. The merest touch of outer wind brings bliss and all touch is light. The measure of having become fully trained in the branch winds is that you will be able to move the sense consciousnesses to the individual sense organs. Having the ability to restrain without harm means that if the winds of air, fire, earth, and water are prevented from emerging outside and are held within while they are flowing, then you will be able to fly through the air without harm, you will be unharmed by the cold, you will not be moved by the force of strong men, and so on, and you cannot be harmed by fires and so on. These are included in the genre of clairvoyance. This has been taught by Venerable Gö.

Dissolving the winds into the dhūtī through vajra repetition

As explained previously, if you practice the recitation with wind and mantra inseparable, you will generate powerful experiences that are not mere imaginings in your mind regarding the tones of the winds resonating as the three syllables. For example, in the beginning, generation-stage practitioners imagine themselves as deities. When that meditation is fully developed, the divine pride of being a deity arises naturally without any deliberate contrivance on the part of the mind. Therefore, when the above occurs, you will be able to cut any appearance of or holding to wind and mantra as separate.

Here, you are performing the recitation of entering, abiding, and rising, and from the direct center of the dhūtī—because wind and mind follow

the same path—it is possible to make the winds flow from the dhūtī. In the beginning, this entering and leaving will also be contrived, [199] but with practice the winds will in reality enter the dhūtī through the force of vajra repetition. The sign of that is, although the winds flow through the individual nostrils when not practicing vajra repetition, during the actual practice, winds are very definitely flowing through both nostrils equally after a short time. When this happens, it means that the winds have entered the dhūtī through the practice of vajra repetition. This also applies to the meditation at the lower entrance and to the subtle drop at the heart.

This, however, only refers to the ability to bring the winds into the dhūtī, and if after a short time the winds revert to flowing individually through the nostrils, this is a fault of insufficient development. If you bring the winds to the dhūtī and develop the entering and leaving from within it as described previously, the heart channel-knots start to loosen a little at a time, until finally you are able to loosen the knots fully.

It is possible to bring the winds into the dhūtī through the power of vajra repetition practiced within the dhūtī at the vital point of the heart, and consequently the channel knots will loosen. However, vajra repetition cannot restrain the winds inside the dhūtī, because vajra repetition leaves the winds as they are, not preventing them from entering or leaving. Therefore, if the winds are not brought together and conjoined and held so that entering and leaving are halted, vajra repetition will not dissolve the wind into the dhūtī. Such a doubt, it is true, will occur to those who, content with just a partial completion stage, do not understand generally how to gather the winds through the practices of drop yoga and so forth, as described in the authentic texts, and in particular do not know the Guhyasamāja literature that explains all these points with an emphasis on vajra repetition.

No such fault is present. As previously explained, when you have developed the vajra-repetition practice of entering, abiding, and rising in equal measures, even if you do not consciously create an abiding state between the other two, the winds will naturally begin to abide. That state becomes longer and longer, and even if you do not deliberately halt the in and out breaths, they will become shorter and shorter. Therefore it is not necessary, at the beginning of this practice, to create an abiding state that is longer than the natural duration of the entering and leaving breaths. If you continue with your efforts in vajra-repetition practice, the winds no longer flow in and out but remain within. On this point *Explanation of the Intention* says:

As for terminology, the three states exist,
with characteristics of natural recitation.
Without names, and unspoken,
this is the supreme bodhicitta.
Those three become one,
with no going and no coming.[640]

Recitation that has the nature of not being expressed in names and words is applied to the bodhicitta wind that is the realities of wind and mantra inseparably joined. At the end of which, all entering, abiding, and rising are no longer individual but have become as one. At that time there is no wind leaving or entering. [200] In this tantra it says, "Bodhicitta becomes the winds."[641] Therefore here "bodhicitta" refers to the winds. Also this tantra speaks of the three states of entering, abiding, and rising becoming one, and other tantras make a similar point. The *Vajra Garland* also says that vajra repetition cuts the flow of the winds:

By the application of vajra repetition,
the characteristics of the winds are known,
and the winds of conceptualizations are cut.[642]

Also:

At the nine openings of the senses,
all is everywhere constrained.
The *hūṃ* recitation is unparalleled.[643]

At all the openings, such as the upper and lower openings, the winds are constrained within via this practice of vajra repetition and will not emerge. This point is very clearly expressed in *Oral Transmission* also:

Hūṃ is applied to the leaving,
oṃ to the gathering, *āḥ* to the abiding;
their realities are held well,
and from the entering, abiding, and rising,
the exalted wisdom of liberation is gained.
Of this have no doubt.[644]

Through the practice of vajra repetition, do not be of two minds or in any doubt that you will gain the exalted wisdom from the dissolution of the winds divorced from entering, abiding, and rising.

You might wonder how the two-syllable vajra repetition is able to dissolve the winds. Development of this practice will bring the winds into the dhūtī and loosen the knots just like the three-syllable practice. At that time the wind will find the path that leads to its root location and will enter that location, just as it does in the death process. The tantra speaks of two vajra-repetition practices, but the Ārya father and disciple presentation of the three-syllable system is just an illustration of the practice. *Oral Transmission* speaks of gaining liberation not only from the entering and leaving, but also from the abiding. Therefore, first the entering and leaving is reversed and the winds abide within. Then the abiding has to dissolve. This non-flowing achieved by vajra repetition can also occur when under the influence of mental dullness. Therefore it is important to differentiate.

Reversing the winds from the nostrils causes them to abide within, but if they do not dissolve, the body feels correspondingly full. When they dissolve, that is alleviated. As mentioned previously, when the definitive signs of the winds entering the dhūtī arise, and when the winds abide naturally for a long time within, if at that time they dissolve, the empty states will appear as described. At other times the winds may dissolve within, but because they are not dissolving into the dhūtī, the empty states will not appear as they are described.

To dissolve the winds into the actual indestructible drop at the heart, the channel knots of the heart must have been loosened. Therefore any previous gathering of the winds into the heart and dissolving of them into the dhūtī is a dissolution into the dhūtī *close to* the indestructible drop but not an actual dissolution into it. Similarly, the winds may have entered the dhūtī, but they cannot come and go from the dhūtī at the location of the channel knots. [201]

The *Vajra Garland* says, "Little by little, without effort,"[645] meaning that you do not need to put a lot of effort into the winds entering and leaving. Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* also says that when the winds are abiding within, they should be held gently. Therefore practicing vajra repetition gently upon the entering, abiding, and rising means that the halting of the winds and so on will be somewhat delayed, but it is crucial that the elements of the body are not disturbed and are kept in balance. In this way, developing the qualities that come from penetrating the vital points of the

body is unlike other developments of qualities. This gentle development is essential in order to have great strength to induce the empty states, to be able to easily enhance your practice by having induced the empty states even once, and to be able to have very firm experiences of bliss, heat, and so forth.

Therefore, if you produce a little experience of the radiance of bliss and heat and so forth and consequently develop some inspiration, and you then see the importance of it being able to cultivate virtuous deeds and so on, even if you employ forceful methods of cultivation, it is good to continue until those deeds are accomplished—or whatever the texts recommend. Moreover, although it might be a little better for vajra-repetition wind yoga and for focusing on and cultivating the drop and so forth, it is said that forceful application to meditations such as the conjoining of winds is a cause for untimely death. Therefore, although there is clearly the benefit of being a little faster, you should be adept at not transgressing the limits.

The signs arising from the meditation of focusing on the drop, described by Kukkuripa and cited previously, are also asserted as being the signs of vajra repetition. So here, too, the mirage and other signs will arise. The empty states of actual mind isolation are not achieved until the channel knots of the heart are truly loosened, but the empty states that are a facsimile of mind isolation will clearly appear from the lower levels onward, and so these must be differentiated. If not, you will hold the three empty states of those empty states induced on a lower level through vajra-repetition practice as being actual mind isolation. You will hold the fourth empty state as being fourth-stage clear light and the two occasions of arising as the form deity at the conclusion of those two times as being third-stage illusory body and fifth-stage union. While you will have none of the qualities of these high attainments, you will have the evident pride that thinks you have attained them. You will fall away from pursuing the features of those high qualities you have not yet attained, and the qualities you have already achieved will not develop further. Some will think, "I have achieved this path, but having achieved it, I see no brilliant qualities. Therefore, those who describe them are uttering mere words." In this way, they will develop wrong views. [202] Others who hold literally to presentations from the works of the master and his disciples see that, before mind isolation, there is not much explanation on path-related empty states and therefore believe that, until that time, these empty states do not appear. They then put no effort into the practices to develop them and consequently fall away from achievements of great significance.

The development of the four joys and the four empty states from the

dissolution of the winds into the dhūtī through completion-stage meditation is not a practice set aside for higher paths; by putting effort into the methods that develop them, the three empty states and the illustrative clear light will appear. When that occurs, you recall the view of emptiness and stay in that state for as long as it remains. When the winds stir and you arise from that state, again with vajra repetition and other practices, meditate on the methods for gathering the winds, thereby alternating the practices.

The way to ignite the caṇḍālī

You might think, "It is possible to bring the winds into the dhūtī, and once there, to dissolve them through vajra repetition, but if this practice is unable to melt the bodhicitta by stimulating the caṇḍālī, there will be no subsequent union of bliss and emptiness. On the other hand, if it is able to do that, then please say how." The great bliss induced by vajra repetition, as described previously in the *Vajra Garland*, is the bliss of the bodhicitta melting at the brow, and for this to melt, it is certainly true that vajra repetition has to ignite the caṇḍālī at the navel. How this is done is described in the *Vajra Garland*:

> Because the ḍākinīs are gathered,
> it is said to be the ḍākinī assembly
> dwelling always at the center of the navel,
> with the light of a thousand suns.
> The fire of great exalted wisdom
> destroys all conceptualization.
> Arising, conceptualization of the aggregates
> is burned up, a body without interruption.
> Then conceptualization of the elements
> is gathered, and again the natural
> conceptualization of apprehender and apprehended
> is subsequently gathered.
> From this, like a moth,
> all binding is burned away.
> By the actual yoga of the reality of the winds,
> by the knowledge of the reality of mantra,
> as much as there is of conceptualization,
> that much, without a doubt, is burned away.[646]

The first four lines teach the nature of the caṇḍālī at the navel. Stating that its nature is that of all the ḍākinīs gathered is similar to it being described in the *Saṃputa Tantra* as possessing the nature of Nairātmyā and in Kṛṣṇācārya's *Drop of Spring* as having the nature of Vārāhī. This is because Nairātmyā and Vārāhī possess the nature of all yoginīs—Gaurī and so on. Pracaṇḍā and the others are merely illustrative of this point. The meaning of the teaching that the caṇḍālī red particle possesses the nature of all ḍākinīs is that the activity of the consort is the inducing of great bliss in the yogi, [203] which is accomplished by the blazing of the caṇḍālī.

The next two lines teach, in general terms, that the blazing caṇḍālī burns away conceptualization. Then the next two lines, the next one and a half lines, and the next two and a half lines say that the conceptualization of the aggregates, elements, and apprehending consciousness cum apprehended object, respectively, are gathered. Here "gathered" means "burned up" or "destroyed." "Without interruption" means "repeatedly" or "constantly." "Body" means "burned away within the body." The next two lines give an analogy of burning away the conceptualizations. The next two lines state that the burning away of conceptualization through the blazing of the caṇḍālī is itself accomplished by knowledge of the yoga of the reality of the winds—with its process of entering and leaving, or entering, abiding, and rising—and of the reality of mantra with two syllables or three syllables. This means that it is the work of vajra repetition. The next two lines state that there is no reason to doubt that even the subtlest conceptualization will be burned away.

In the same work:

> Relying upon the reality of the winds,
> invoked by the syllable *hūṃ*,
> the mandala of fire is awakened.[647]

This says that the reality of mantra in dependence upon the reality of the winds will awaken the caṇḍālī, because here *hūṃ* is mentioned as a part of the two and three-syllable vajra repetition.

Other translations have "by the yoga of the mantra body"[648] and the commentary on this line explains this to be referring to generation-stage meditation. Therefore, even in the Indian editions, there is clearly a discrepancy. Darma Tsöndrü, however, follows the former translation, and this is better.

How the winds are stirred to ignite the caṇḍālī is expressed in *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*:

> The restrained[649] bow-shape stirs,
> the fire of exalted wisdom blazes within a triangle,
> and the element melts.[650]

The "bow-shaped," or wind, dwelling within a triangle stirs and ignites the caṇḍālī. That wind is the evacuative wind. The *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra* says:

> At the navel is a path;
> at the end of the path, the secret lotus.
> There the self-blazing wind
> circles and then comes to rest.
> Through the two organs and their union,
> the wind will cause the fire to blaze.[651]

This says that the wind dwelling in the lotus of the secret place will ignite the caṇḍālī. If this special feature of the stirring of the evacuative wind ignites the caṇḍālī, what is it that stirs the wind? The *Saṃputa Tantra* says:

> In the mandala that is the hearth of the navel,
> the fire of Brahmā blazes within the triangle
> through the movement of the winds of activity.[652]

On this, Abhayākaragupta's *Sheaves of Instructions* explains that the caṇḍālī is ignited by the winds being moved by the activity of placing the mind in meditative equipoise and by the activity of uniting the two organs. The first refers to meditation on the winds, drops, and so on in penetrative focusing on the body. The second is expressed by "the two organs and their union." The blood whose nature is the red particle, and is the fire to be ignited, is found in many places within the body, [204] but it primarily refers to the blood at the navel, illustrated by the short *a*, and the "fire of Brahmā," illustrated by the syllable *kṣa* and located below the navel in the secret place. They also reside within the dhūtī. The evacuative wind, which ignites the caṇḍālī, has two types—that which has entered within the dhūtī and that which has not. The former is the main one. The *Vajra Garland* states that the winds flowing from the dhūtī will awaken the caṇḍālī fire:

Know that the left descends with bodhicitta and moon
and the right descends with blood and sun.
Know that wind flowing in the center
will awaken the fire.[653]

Therefore, from the point when vajra repetition brings the winds into the dhūtī, a little of the special caṇḍālī heat is generated, but in order to increase it, the bodhicitta at the crown is melted. The *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra* says:

By this perfectly blazing fire,
melting occurs at the crown,
by which the supreme ambrosia
falls through every channel.[654]

Concerning this meditation on blazing and falling, there are many occasions when the winds are not brought into the dhūtī and yet caṇḍālī blazes and the bodhicitta melts. There are also times when, not meditating in that way but meditating on the winds, drops, and so on, the winds are brought into the dhūtī, and before they are dissolved, the caṇḍālī blazes and the bodhicitta melts. Even through the ordinary union of the organs this will occur. On these occasions, it is the strength of the bodhicitta melting that makes it difficult to hold and thereby prevent emission. If the melting occurs from the winds dissolving within the dhūtī, however, it becomes very easy to hold.

As for the development of heat, it occurs both with and without the ability to melt the bodhicitta. Heat occurring with the ability to melt the bodhicitta also occurs when the winds have or have not been brought into the dhūtī. Heat when winds have been brought into the dhūtī occurs when the winds have or have not been dissolved. As for bliss it can be just the bliss of the winds becoming manageable without being the bliss of melting. For the bliss arising from melting, there are many levels. You should become skilled in differentiating all of these.

When the evacuative wind ignites the main caṇḍālī, the fires of the secret place and the navel are ignited. Because this wind enters and leaves at the lower openings, it will be brought into the dhūtī just like wind from the upper openings of the nostrils. Just like the upper life-sustaining wind dissolving and no longer flowing through the nostrils, if this wind no longer enters and leaves and dissolves, the caṇḍālī blazes with greater power, and the corresponding melting of bodhicitta is also more powerful.

This process will happen one time, but it will then alternate many times

with the winds rising up and beginning the process of entering and leaving again. Therefore, when these winds dissolve, it is not that they will never arise again, like seeds eradicated by the supramundane path. The *Vajra Garland* explains that through vajra repetition the winds that abide at the nine sense-organ openings are constrained within. [205] Thus entering and leaving is not only halted at the nostrils but also at the lower openings. On this point, drawing up the winds with forceful bodily activity may halt those winds a little quicker, but such activity will miss the essential point of the practice. Therefore, if you can halt the flow with a gentle yoga such as vajra repetition, it is preferable. You should know this even if you practice holding the conjoined winds.

You might ask, "If the evacuative wind enters and leaves at the lower openings, isn't it right to practice recitation on its entering and leaving as is done at the upper openings?" The oral tradition of Tibetan masters says that bliss can be generated through the yoga of opening and closing the lower openings. This is not called a recitation on entering and leaving, but if you examine it, the reality is that it is very similar to that practiced at the upper openings. On this the venerable Atiśa in his *Song of Dharma* speaks of a special method for bringing the winds into the dhūtī:

> The movement of the sun and moon is destroyed;
> otherwise the *veraṃpa*[655] does not enter
> the gateway to the great space.
> Through the yoga of opening and closing,
> invoke the wrathful woman.
> The five buddhas burn
> again and again the four goddesses.
> The ḍākas and ḍākinīs gather from the ten directions,
> and absorb into *jalandhara*.[656]
> The four drops in the four lotuses
> create the sixteen levels of bliss.
> The self-appearing wisdom dwells
> at the center of the lotus with form.
> When dwelling at the tip of the jewel,
> the butter lamp–like nirvana is attained.
> Once nirvana is gained at the tip of the jewel,
> the host of conceptualizations of self, others, and so on
> I do not see anywhere.

When sun and moon are in eclipse,
mind and *veraṃpa* do not move.
All conceptualization is pacified, and when dissolved,
the mind is in the state of the ultimate sphere.[657]

The same point is also found in *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra*:

Through closing and opening,
the wind internalizes the fire,
and with the wood of the senses,
the caṇḍālī will blaze.
The massed heap of conceptualization
is burned away completely.
By this perfectly blazing fire . . .[658]

The passage continues with the previous citation from this tantra. From this it can be understood that recitation is also performed on entering and leaving through the urinary canal. Although both purposes can be achieved through upper vajra repetition, if you wish to master the practice of specifically focusing on the evacuative wind at the lower part of the body, you should do so on the basis of receiving existing core teachings on this topic. If you restrict the evacuative wind through forceful methods, you incur the unwanted and severe consequence of the complete retention of urine, excrement, and so on. If you practice a gentle yoga and are skilled in the essence of the core teachings, then when the flow of the winds is reversed, less urine and excrement is passed less frequently, and there will not be the slightest discomfort. The power of the blazing caṇḍālī is very strong, and so the bliss is very special, [206] and no matter how great the melting is, you need have no fear of emission. These and other signs will appear.

When the caṇḍālī blazes and the bodhicitta is melted through vajra-repetition meditation on the indestructible drop at the heart and so on, is it then brought down to the jewel thereby producing the four joys, as explained in the yoginī tantras, or is it gathered into the heart from above and below to consequently produce the four empty states? This will be dealt with in the section on mind isolation.

Many see that forceful yogas for halting the winds and so on are somewhat faster methods, and they do not clearly differentiate the types of short- and long-term qualities that can arise from the gentle and wrathful yogas.

Therefore, once they take on the methods of penetrating the vital points of the body, they believe they are to be performed forcefully, and they meditate accordingly. Some see enormous hindrances in this practice and turn away from these meditations. Others see the hindrances but insist that having become skilled in methods for their removal, one should continue to meditate. As for these methods, some develop a pain that cannot be alleviated after gathering the winds, and so they meditate on the *yoga of many holes* and send the pain outside and away. Many use other methods to relieve the pain resulting from gathering the winds. Some say that if you strive to gather the winds and, once they are gathered, you then relieve the pain without using a method to bring the winds into the dhūtī, the effort has been wasted and you are therefore left without instruction. For their own position, they recommend the yoga of squeezing the two *sambhoga* veins[659] by which the winds enter the dhūtī and the pain is relieved. All are in agreement that the initial yoga to be meditated upon is forceful.

It is not for certain that, once you enter into the collective meditations upon channels, winds, and so on, great hindrances will arise to cause your death or bring you close to death, because such possibilities arise from the fault of not having examined well and coming to a definitive conclusion on the initial way to cultivate this practice. These problems will not occur to those who know these ways. Therefore understanding well how to cultivate the initial practices and meditating accordingly, knowing that no great hindrances will occur, is wise. On the other hand, forcefully creating hindrances, even if you know the methods to remove them, is not wise.

Using a gentle yoga to gather the winds generally means fewer hindrances. The way to eliminate the small pain that occurs in the beginning of practice when the winds are gathered but are not controlled will be explained elsewhere. Do not think of such methods solely from the point of view of removing pain. It is wise to understand them as dispersal methods to prevent difficulties in any future gathering of winds and to foster bringing into the dhūtī winds already gathered.

In the first two practices above, there is relief of the pain caused by gathering the winds, but these methods are of no help in bringing the previously gathered winds into the dhūtī. [207] The method of pain removal in the third practice may well be efficient once you have begun with the forceful yoga, but our own position is that the method of removal should also be carried out with gentle yoga and not with forceful methods.

This has been an extensive explanation of vajra repetition. There are many

practices of vajra repetition in the instruction texts, but a complete explanation of vajra repetition like that found in the Guhyasamāja literature is not present in other tantras or treatises. Moreover, a good explanation from the Guhyasamāja tradition is rare. Therefore this explanation has been for the purpose of conclusively ascertaining this wind yoga as taught by the Ārya master and his disciples, who did not teach other wind yogas.

Part 6

Mind Isolation

22. The Nature of Mind Isolation

[208] *Training in the samādhi of the mind-vajra mind isolation*

1. The necessity of comprehending the entity of mind
2. How the mode of existence of that mind is expressed in the teachings
3. How highest yoga tantra is the special method for comprehending the nature of mind
4. The three appearances and the intrinsic natures taught in the tantra
5. The faults of not understanding these precisely and the benefits of understanding them

The necessity of comprehending the entity of mind

Dwelling within the Great Vehicle generally, and having trained and become familiar with vajra repetition specifically, you desire to become a buddha. Therefore it is essential to strive to comprehend the nature of mind. The *Compendium of Reality* says:

> Son of the family, dwell in meditative equipoise and understand your mind.[660]

In the *Vairocana Enlightenment Tantra*:

> Enlightenment is knowing completely and exactly how your mind exists.[661]

Also, from *Principles of the Three Baskets*:

> Tame this hard-to-tame mind
> that travels alone, long wandering
> without a body, living in the cave of the senses,
> and you will be free from the chains of Māra.[662]

Therefore, with the wish to actualize the illusory body, having abandoned all five obstructions, such as mental wandering and sleep, and having pleased the guru who has truly gained the instructions of every tathāgata, follow the explanatory tantras such as the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* and understand the intrinsic natures of the three consciousnesses. The above is taken from *Compendium of Practice*.[663] All three citations are quoted in this work as reasons for those wishing to train in mind isolation to seek out the entity of mind, and they express the necessity for understanding the reality of the mind. Therefore this refutes those Tibetans and Indians who say that the exalted wisdom of mind isolation knows the mind as an entity possessing the reality of the mind but does not perceive that reality of the mind, for if it did, it could not be distinguished from clear light. The exalted wisdom of fourth-stage clear light directly realizes the reality of the mind, whereas mind isolation realizes its reality but does not do so directly. It is not that they are undifferentiated. [209] The sutra citation and the two lower-tantra citations used as scriptural authority here do not teach the exalted wisdom of mind isolation but merely give reasons for the need to understand the actuality of mind.

How the mode of existence of that mind is expressed in the teachings

If the reality of mind is to be investigated, then how is that to be carried out? The *Compendium of Practice* describes this from the standpoint of the Perfection Vehicle and from the Mantra Vehicle. For the Perfection Vehicle, the *Entering Laṅka Sutra* is cited, which says that this is done by desiring to know the scope of the Buddha with the conceptualization of apprehender and apprehended, which are just appearances to one's own mind;[664] that excitement, sleep, and so on are to be eliminated; and that mind, mentality, and consciousness are the roots of all animate and inanimate phenomena. Older translations of the *Compendium of Practice* have "scope of conceptualization," but the Chak translation's "scope of the Buddha" is better. *Sutra Requested by the Merchant Bhadrapāla* is also cited, teaching that consciousness takes a body, enters into lowly states of birth, and yet is not contaminated by the faults of those births, that wherever the consciousness travels to, the experiences of pain and pleasure, which are the fruits of karma, also travel there, and that not seeing the truth, consciousness is not known. In summary the sutra states:

> In this way, it is said in the Great Vehicle sutras that consciousness possesses a nature of having no color, no features, and no shape and of being merely a self-knowing wisdom.[665]

"Scope of the Buddha" refers to the reality of mind. It being the "root of all" demonstrates that mind is the entity that possesses this reality. It enters various states of birth, but that reality of mind is not subject to change. Because this is not the mind of an ārya being, it does not realize that reality directly. Therefore the mind ultimately is empty of all features and yet it conventionally exists without color and shape and without relying upon other forms of knowing; it exists simply as consciousness knowing its own object.

Concerning the way that the nature of that mind is expressed in the Vajra Vehicle, the *Compendium of Practice* says:

> The nature of that mind that asks about the scope of the buddhas is rootless, without location, without basis, without features, without shape and color, beyond the senses, and not within the scope of those who intellectualize. [210] This the Bhagavān has taught in all the tantras.[666]

The reality of the mind that asks how to train in mind isolation is one that is shared with the Perfection Vehicle, but this is not mind isolation. *Sixty Reasons* also says:

> No location, no place of focus,
> without root, and without place,
> arising from the cause that is ignorance,
> having abandoned any beginning, middle, or end,
> devoid of essence like the plantain tree,
> like the city of the gandharvas,[667]
> an unbearable city of ignorance,
> in appearance like an illusory being.[668]

The commentary on this passage states that "location" refers the six sources, such as the eyes; "place of focus" refers to all phenomena; and "root" means through the circumstance of cause, in the manner of a seed. Being dependently arisen, these phenomena have no nature, like an illusion. "Without basis" means "without place of focus."[669]

How highest yoga tantra is the special method for comprehending the nature of mind

The *Compendium of Practice* states:

> Without engaging in the great yoga tantras such as the Guhyasamāja, you will not come to understand the true reality of your mind even in as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges Valley, and you will not perceive the conventional truth.[670]

This is not saying, as has been explained previously, that until you enter highest yoga tantra you cannot even determine the basic view. It is also not saying that by meditating on the view you have determined, you will not realize it, because no authentic scholar would say that the ārya levels cannot be reached by the Perfection Vehicle. Moreover, that would contradict the fact that once the levels have been reached, reality is experienced directly. Nor is this referring to the dharmakāya as the ultimate reality of the mind, because in the practice of mind isolation, the understanding of the true meaning of mind is an analytical process. This can also be understood by the phrase "and you will not perceive the conventional truth." The main consciousness that realizes the reality of mind is the innate bliss, and to achieve that exalted wisdom that perceives that object, if you do not enter the gateway of highest yoga tantra, you will not achieve it by entering the gateways of the Perfection Vehicle or the lower tantras.

The special feature of highest yoga tantra is that it is a fast path, in which the level that can only be reached over many countless eons by other paths is accomplished in one life. This refers to the innate great bliss ascertaining and meditating on the meaning of reality. [211] The *Saṃputa Tantra* says:

> Therefore, how is that attained?
> In brief, the enlightenment gained
> over countless eons
> you will gain in this life through supreme bliss.[671]

Just the cessation of the obscurations of afflictions can be reached by some śrāvakas in three lifetimes, and the direct realization of the truth of reality is common to both vehicles. Therefore merely being liberated from samsara through a speedier way of perceiving emptiness directly is not what this

characteristic of being quick refers to. Therefore this path must have a very fast way to eliminate the obscurations to omniscience. In the Perfection Vehicle, if the method part of practice is missing, in which you train in the practices of the limitless types of limitless accumulation, then once you have ascertained a genuine view of emptiness, no matter how much you meditate on it, while you will be released from samsara, you will not be able to eliminate the obscurations to omniscience. Therefore, for practitioners of the Great Vehicle, the purpose of training for a long time in the practices of the limitless types of limitless accumulation is so that the same perception of emptiness will result in the elimination of the obscurations to omniscience. On the path of highest yoga tantra, although you do not train in the practices of the limitless types of limitless accumulation as you do on the Perfection Vehicle, the statement that the innate bliss meditating on genuinely ascertained emptiness is very quick means that by the presence of this special consciousness of great bliss, the perception of emptiness is able to eliminate very swiftly the imprints of dualistic appearance that comprise the obscurations to omniscience. Therefore the great praise of being far superior to other paths, which is heaped upon the initiations, generation stage, and supplementary practices of this path, is made on the basis of their ability to produce fit vessels for the path of bliss and emptiness united—and as being ripening agents for the completion of that union—and not on the basis of their own abilities.

To take this swiftness characteristic of bliss and emptiness to its supreme accomplishment depends upon knowing how to cultivate upon this basis the special cause for the accomplishment of the form body of an identified buddha as a replacement for accumulating the limitless types of limitless merit. That can be none other than the illusory body. Therefore, as long as you are not adept in the great-bliss emptiness side of the completion stage and in the illusory-body appearance side of the completion stage, you have not completely discovered the essential points of the two kinds of tantra.

The Guhyasamāja states that in the past, as many eons ago as there are atoms in an indescribable-beyond-indescribable number of buddha realms, from the time of Buddha Dīpaṅkara to the time of Buddha Kāśyapa, this great secret was not taught, and the reason for this was that at that time, [212] sentient beings did not possess the merit to receive teachings on the great secret.[672] However, it also says that the enlightenment bodhisattvas strive after and seek for as many eons as there are grains of sand in the Ganges but do not achieve is gained in one life by those bodhisattvas who take joy

in the Guhyasamāja. The reason for this statement is taught in *Illuminating Lamp*:

> For that duration of time, sentient beings were especially attracted to the inferior paths. They were tamed by the Dharma of nonattachment, such as giving, ethics, and so on. They were frightened by teachings on the profound. Therefore they did not possess the merit, and so at that time teachings on the great secrets were not given. In these times, sentient beings engage in desire, and knowing this, the Tathāgata came and taught it only to them.[673]

Therefore the difference is on the basis of whether or not sentient beings had an attraction for the external methods of inducing great bliss. A thoroughly ascertained emptiness and bliss are united through practice, and in one life, enlightenment is granted. It is this that they were frightened of, not of emptiness alone.

It is true that the reason they were frightened of the skillful activities of desire is that they had little desire, but the main cause was as follows: The qualities of the resultant enlightenment are limitless, and they saw that to gain that result, limitless time and limitless types of accumulation were appropriate; anything less is not fitting. Moreover, they thought that if even those on the high levels, who are great treasures of excellent qualities, were still obstructed by great stretches of time, then the assertion that enlightenment can be achieved in the very short space of time of an individual life must have been made to lure some disciples but could not be taken literally.

There are areas of great benefit and of falling into error both in this particular path and in the path of great faith in emptiness, and it is important to discern these. The presentations of both paths should be well formed, and you should see the special validity of each. Then with a strong conviction it is very important to plant firmly the very special seeds of this particular path.

The teaching that the exalted wisdom of mind isolation perceiving the reality of the mind and actualizing the illusory body is something extremely rare in other paths is on the basis of the assertion that meditation on the three kinds of prāṇāyāma, as previously explained, induces the mind isolation of great bliss, which is the special path to produce the illusory body through the meditation on the reality of mind. It is said that without entering the great yoga tantras such as Guhyasamāja, you will not see the conventional truth even over many eons. This refutes both those who maintain that

the conventional illusory body refers to samādhi apprehending appearance but perceiving it as having no nature and those who assert it to be merely the appearance of the form of the deity with no nature.

Whether other paths are eventually incorporated into this path and the accompanying reasons will be explained later.

23. The Three Appearances and the Intrinsic Natures

[213] *The three appearances and the intrinsic natures taught in the tantra*

1. The appearances
2. Understanding the intrinsic natures
3. Developing the wisdom of the appearances

The appearances

1. Synonyms of the three appearances
2. Definitions of each of the appearances

Synonyms of the three appearances

Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* teaches synonyms for the three consciousnesses in common with the Great Vehicle, or Perfection Vehicle, as well as exclusively in terms of the Vajra Vehicle. On the first it says that the Teacher explicitly taught method and wisdom, and from this the unclear neutral can be inferred. This makes three. Other threefold enumerations taught in this text that are synonyms include: mind, mentality, and consciousness; the total conceptualization, other-powered, and thorough existence; desire, ignorance, and anger; and the three natures. Of these, *method* refers to increase of appearance, *wisdom* to appearance, and *neutral* to close-to-attainment—the fusion of the previous two. This is because from bliss and emptiness, *appearance* is a mind in which emptiness is predominant, *increase of appearance* is the opposite of that, and *close-to-attainment* is those two in equal measure. It is not teaching that every instance of method, wisdom, and those two gathered together refer to these three. This description is given on the basis of the three appearances of the path, but they could equally apply to the three appearances of the basic state.

Also, mind as appearance, mentality as increase of appearance, and consciousness as close-to-attainment is not teaching that every instance of mind, mentality, and consciousness refers to these three. Whereas the three appearances are mutually exclusive, mind, mentality, and consciousness are not asserted as being mutually exclusive. Other texts explain *mind* as referring to foundation consciousness, *mentality* as referring to afflicted mentality, and *consciousness* as referring to the six engaging consciousnesses, and on that basis there are explanations that assign appearance to the engaging consciousness, increase of appearance to afflicted mentality, and close-to-attainment to foundation consciousness. I, however, cannot see that as being correct. If you assert that close-to-attainment and increase of appearance are, respectively, foundation consciousness and afflicted mentality, then just as ordinary beings are unable to ascertain a manifest foundation consciousness and afflicted mentality, which are separate entities from the six consciousnesses, it follows that these two must also be likewise. Moreover, the description of the focus and aspect of the appearances is completely at odds with those of the foundation consciousness and afflicted mentality. Also this contradicts the explanation found in many works that the appearances can be newly generated by the outer and inner prāṇāyāma practices. [214] If you make the assertion on the basis that the terms *foundation consciousness* and so on can be used for these three, that is not correct, because nowhere is that described.

So what is the reason for these three synonyms? In the scriptures mind, mentality, and consciousness are described as being the root of all phenomena in the two categories of affliction and purification, and here it is this particular feature of mind, mentality, and consciousness as the root of all phenomena in the two categories of affliction and purification that is being asserted, and so these three names are assigned to the three appearances. To this effect the *Compendium of Practice* cites the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium*:

> Consciousness arises from clear light. This is *mind* and *mentality*.
> All phenomena belonging to the two categories of affliction and purification have this as their root.[674]

The *Vajra Garland* also says:

> Whatever has the characteristics of the three appearances
> is here said to be three consciousnesses.

> Of every intrinsic nature in the world of living beings,
> this is the root.[675]

Here, the name *consciousness* is applied to all three appearances, but this could equally apply to *mind* and *mentality*, and so each of the three appearances could be labeled with all three names. Giving the three names to the three appearances individually is on the basis of three sequential appearances from the one category of mental consciousness.

The etymologies are as follows: "Because it gathers, it is *mind*. Because it supports, it is *mentality*. Because it is supported, it is *consciousness*." All three etymologies are complete in the minds of each of the three appearances, and to no larger or smaller degree in each. Therefore they cannot be individually designated by way of these etymologies.

Five Stages states that appearance is *other-powered*, increase is *totally conceptualized*, and close-to-attainment is *thoroughly existent*.[676] Apprehender and apprehended appear far from each other, and the basis of that appearance is other-powered phenomena. Because of this appearance, there arises a superimposition of apprehender and apprehended as being substantially separate. This is total conceptualization. In the face of the actualization of the unchanging thorough existence, there is no conceptualization or dualistic appearance. Similarly, first there is appearance, which is the basis of the first of the empty states. Dependent upon that, increase of appearance arises. During close-to-attainment these two are turned away, and method and wisdom function equally. Maybe it can be explained this way, but it needs more investigation.

Calling appearance "anger," increase of appearance "desire," and close-to-attainment "ignorance" is on the basis of little, great, and medium degrees of bliss. The occurrence of these on the path and in the basic state is as described above.

"Three natures" does not refer to the three characteristics of other-powered, total conceptualization, and thorough existence because they have just been explained. [215] Therefore these intrinsic natures are those of the sphere of emptiness, the sphere of appearance, and of both equally. They can be applied as was done above.

In the Perfection Vehicle literature, the three appearances are not labeled with these names. Therefore the names to be applied to the appearances are shared between the two vehicles, but those names applied in this way to the three appearances are exclusive.

Concerning synonyms of the three consciousnesses as they are exclusively known in the Vajra Vehicle, the *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Appearance, increase of appearance, close-to-attainment of appearance; empty state, very empty state, greatly empty state; mind, state arising from mind, ignorance; freedom from nondesire, desire, and intermediate desire.[677]

Also:

> It is *oṃ*, which is the seed that depends upon the gateway of speech. It is the cause of stabilization. Sentient beings of little faith do not understand what the Tathāgata intended when he spoke, and so it is visualized in the form of a moon disk. It is a clear conventional form of mind as a lotus, the female form, the left side, nighttime, and gentleness.[678]

Also:

> It is *āḥ*, which is the seed that depends upon the gateway of speech. It is the cause of stabilization. Sentient beings of little faith do not understand what the Tathāgata intended when he spoke, and so it is visualized in the form of a sun disk. These are the conventional forms of states of mind as a five-pointed vajra, a jewel, daytime, the male form, the right side, and the coarse aspect.[679]

Also:

> The complete accomplishment of the gateway of speech that depends upon the seed of speech: this is the close-to-attainment appearance.[680]

For the above citation, the Chak translation has "depends upon *a*, the seed of speech."

The fact that from the perspective of their dissolution sequence, the three appearances are the three empty states, and having posited the three empty states as the reality of the three appearances, it is incorrect not to assert them as being the three appearances. This is because the *Compendium of Practice*

states that the three appearances themselves are the three empty states. This point is also made clear in the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium.*

Therefore, of the three appearances, *appearance* is so called because of the moonlight-like appearance that arises from the dissolution of the moving winds of the conceptual minds. Because that state is empty of the eighty conceptual minds and the accompanying winds, it is an *empty state. Increase of appearance* is so called because it is very bright like the sun. Because it is empty of appearance and the accompanying winds, it is the *very empty state. Close-to-attainment of appearance* is so called because it is an appearance that is unclear like the period of night and because it is an appearance that is approaching clear light. Because it is empty of increase and the accompanying winds, it is the *great empty state.* Also, because it is unclear it is known as *ignorance*, which illustrates just one aspect of close-to-attainment.

The "gateway of speech" refers to the pathway by which speech arises. The seeds that arise in dependence upon that are the three syllables. [216] The "cause of stabilization" refers to these three in their conventional forms ascertaining the three exalted wisdoms. *Five Stages* says:

> "Left" too is its name,
> a moon disk with lotus,
> the cause of stabilization,
> the first syllable with a drop.[681]

Also:

> Also it is known as *vajra*,
> a part adorned with two drops.[682]

Here the appearances are illustrated by the names of the syllables.

The statement that those of lesser faith visualize by way of moon and sun disks refers to the generation-stage practitioner who, unlike the completion-stage practitioner who has achieved mind isolation, is unable to produce the illusory body from the three wisdoms and uses moon and vajra, as well as the other implements, as substitutes for appearance and increase, and the amalgamation of mind and the states of mind, which illustrate appearance and increase, as a substitute for close-to-attainment. They will then produce the form of the deity from the amalgamation of moon, vajra, and so on. *Five Stages* says:

> This entity of wisdom,
> conceptualized as a moon disk,
> seen by the mind itself,
> itself as the form of the moon.
> Then focusing on the moon,
> visualize the vajra implements.
> The vajra and so forth
> illustrate the methods of the yogi.
> Moon, vajra, and so forth, amalgamated,
> mind and states of mind brought together,
> wisdom brought to method,
> will produce the form of the deity.[683]

For the fifth line, the Chak translation has "having completed the focusing on the moon," which is better.

The first two appearances are expressed by the analogies of sun and moon, and day and night, because they are like sunlight and moonlight pervading the sky. Lotus and vajra, female and male, and left and right illustrate their affiliation to method or wisdom. "Gentle" and "coarse" refers to the quality of bliss or to the extent of the appearance. "Conventional form" means that the moon and so on symbolizing the two exalted wisdoms are deliberate contrivances.

Close-to-attainment of appearance is symbolized by analogies such as neuter, the time between day and night, the center between left and right, the medium between gentle and coarse, the fusion of method and wisdom, the coming together of moon, day, and night, and so on.

Definitions of each of the appearances

The *Compendium of Practice* says that the definitions of the three appearances are taught in brief in *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* and that they are to be explained by the teachings of the gurus.[684] The text continues:

> What is the definition of *appearance*? It has a nature of being without aspect, without body or speech. [217] Just as the pure skies of autumn are pervaded by the appearance of light from the moon, likewise it focuses on all phenomena without exception in an aspect of natural clarity. Therefore it is the appearance of wisdom, the ultimate bodhicitta, and the first empty state.[685]

Also:

> What is the definition of the *increase of appearance*? It has the form of being without apprehender and apprehended, without body or speech. Just as the autumn skies are pervaded by the rays of the sun, likewise in its entity of being very clear and free from taint, it focuses upon all phenomena without exception. It is the second Samantabhadra bodhicitta and the second level—the very empty state.[686]

Also:

> What is the *close-to-attainment of appearance*? It similarly has the characteristics of the sky; it has the form of a non-phenomenon, without body or speech. Just like the descent into the darkness of the juncture, it is pervasive. It is subtle, without self; with no prāṇāyāma flowing, it is without flow; it is without mind and without movement.[687]

In this tradition, determining and ascertaining the four empty states is crucial. In the *Root Tantra* and four other explanatory tantras, their names occur many times, but their identification is not made clear. The *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* only speaks of ignorance appearing like darkness, states of mind like sunlight, and mind like moonlight but makes no further identification. Identification in the works of the master and the other three disciples is very limited. We can only understand them by relying upon the *Compendium of Practice.*

The *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* explains the three empty states as they arise in reverse order from the clear light of death. The *Compendium of Practice* explains them in keeping with the empty states arising on the path. In this work, the four empty states are explained using the analogy of a clear sky. There are many times in the autumn when the dust in the air has been settled by the summer rains and the skies are free of clouds. The autumn skies are used as an analogy for this reason. In these pure and clear skies, there are four situations: daytime, when the sky is pervaded by sunlight; the period from the onset of night until its darkness is dispelled, when the sky is pervaded by thick darkness; the period from the time that darkness is cleared as the moon rises until dawn, when the sky is pervaded by moonlight; and the period of dawn when the three conditions are lacking. These three are:

moonlight has disappeared, sunlight has not yet arrived, and the sky's own color has not emerged. The last of these is the analogy for the fourth or all-empty state, and so it is only included here temporarily. The first of the three analogies is that of increase, [218] the second of close-to-attainment, and the third that of appearance. When the three exalted wisdoms arise, experiences resembling the three skies will arise.

In the third citation above, "form of a non-phenomenon" is rendered in the Chak translation as "nature of being without aspect," as in the first citation, and is a better translation. This is identical in meaning to "without apprehender and apprehended" in the middle citation. This means that apart from the appearances arising in the three ways described above, all other coarse dualism has vanished in those appearances. The phrase "without body or speech" appearing in all three citations means that, at these times, all physical movement and verbal articulation has ceased. The sentences from "just as . . ." to "likewise . . ." have been explained. The phrase "the characteristics of the sky" should be taken to refer to the sky being pervaded by darkness. The phrase "[focusing] in an aspect of natural clarity" refers to the clarity of the object appearing. "Very clear" means that it is even clearer than the previous appearance. The phrase "focuses on all phenomena" means that the appearance pervades every direction and the focus is as extensive as is appropriate. The actual "ultimate bodhicitta" is the exalted wisdom of bliss and emptiness united on the path, but this name is given to paths other than that and is even used during the state of ordinary existence. When close-to-attainment turns into a loss of awareness,[688] there is no union of bliss and emptiness, but that is not to say that generally it is not present in close-to-attainment. "Subtle" means difficult to perceive, "without self" means "with the aspect of no nature," and the "prāṇāyāma not flowing" means that winds are not inhaled or exhaled. These are features of all three appearances, but in the close-to-attainment appearance they are more prevalent. In the Chak translation, "without mind . . ." becomes "being without awareness, it is a nonmoving samādhi." This is a better rendering.

Therefore, when winds that move the conceptual minds dissolve, the flame sign appears, and following that is an appearance resembling a clear autumn sky filled with the light of the nighttime moon, in which the single aspect of the whiteness of light appears within total clarity and emptiness. Apart from that, there are no other coarse dualistic appearances. For example, the skies may be filled with moonlight, but that does not cause any obstruction, and you can still see. Likewise, here the appearance of this white light arises without obstructing the clarity of the emptiness that is like the clear sky.

After that appearance has withdrawn, increase of appearance dawns. At that time, just as the light of the sun fills the clear autumn skies, an aspect of red or orange light arises within an emptiness that is even clearer than the previous appearance. [219] The rest of the description is the same as the previous appearance.

When that appearance has withdrawn, close-to-attainment arises. Because the cessation of winds has become that much stronger, the appearance within the emptiness has an aspect of blackness like the darkness of nighttime. Awareness, as an aspect of consciousness, recedes, and you enter a state of no awareness, but this is not the faulty lack of awareness.

These appearances arise fully at the time of death. When sleeping, the flow from the nostrils does not cease, and only something resembling these appearances will arise. On the path, when the winds are brought into the dhūtī at the heart and dissolved, these characteristics will appear completely. When they are dissolved elsewhere, they will not appear to that degree. Depending on the strength of development, the quality of the gathering of the winds, and the strength of the dissolution, these three appearances will vary greatly in their extensiveness, depth, duration, and so on. When meditating on the winds and so on, if a state of no awareness characterized by a blackness should arise before the first two appearances, this is not close-to-attainment.

Three empty states like those above can arise from the time you attain the illusory body until you actualize the true clear light, when you arise from meditation through the reverse process of the true clear light, and from the attainment of the practice union until the attainment of the no-further-practice union. But they are not mind isolation. Similarly, before you attain mind isolation, the exalted wisdoms of the three empty states can arise. Therefore, in terms of which encompasses which, you should differentiate between the wisdoms of the three empty states on the one hand and the wisdoms of the empty states of mind isolation on the other.

Some earlier Tibetans said that every nonconceptual consciousness, such as the sense consciousnesses, is one of the three appearances. They assert that such a consciousness initially apprehending its object is appearance, the cognition of the features of that object becoming clearer is increase, and finally the object becoming unclear as it starts to fade is close-to-attainment. This explanation is not found anywhere in the root or explanatory tantras or in the works of the master and his disciples. It also contradicts the definitions of the appearances from the *Compendium of Practice* given above. Previously, when mind, mentality, and consciousness, the three characteristics, and so on were given as synonyms of the three appearances, it was

done so because these terms could be used for the three appearances and not because they *always* referred to the three appearances. If they did, many contradictions would surface, such as even the eighty intrinsic natures being the appearances.

However, in *Five Stages* it says:

> Nighttime, daytime, and in between,
> appearance, increase of appearance,
> and likewise close-to-attainment of appearance:
> having explained these three aspects of mind,
> I will speak of their accomplishments. [220]
> The winds as subtle forms
> are well mixed with the consciousnesses
> and emerge through the paths of the senses
> to focus upon their objects.[689]

Here, the consciousness mixed with the subtle winds, emerging through the sense organs, such as the eyes, and focusing upon objects are described as the three appearances. What does this mean? "Having explained these three aspects of mind," the text states, "I will speak of their accomplishments." But in the Lochen and the Chak *Compendium of Practice* translations it says, "I will speak of their bases," thereby referring to an explanation of winds that are the bases of the three minds. Moreover, in the description of the winds "well mixed" with the consciousness, "mixing" means being moved by the winds, from which the intrinsic natures and consciousnesses focusing on their objects by way of the senses are created. This is the meaning, because immediately after the above verses, the text continues:

> When that endowed with appearance
> is mounted upon the winds,
> at that time all the intrinsic natures
> without exception will arise.
> Wherever and whenever the winds occur,
> there the intrinsic natures are engaged.[690]

This passage together with the previous citation are quoted in the *Compendium of Practice*, and their meaning is then summarized:

> Therefore, from entering the subtle element, in an instant, a *lava*, a *mūhurta*, the blink of an eye,[691] or the clap of a hand, the appearances are moved. Then in an instant, a *lava*, a *mūhurta*, the blink of an eye, or the clap of a hand, the intrinsic natures are engaged.[692]

Therefore, at the time of taking a new birth, consciousness and the intrinsic natures are created gradually and sequentially from the three empty states arising in reverse order, and then they are mixed again and again from within the empty states of sleep. It does not mean that each time the engaged consciousness and the intrinsic-nature conceptual minds are created they are actually created from the three empty states. Consciousness can be categorized as being either conceptual or nonconceptual, but it is not necessarily categorized as being any one of the appearances or being an intrinsic-nature conceptual mind. A sense consciousness is not one of the appearances, but it is also not an intrinsic-nature conceptual mind.

Understanding the intrinsic natures

If the appearances are as described above, how are the eighty intrinsic-nature conceptual minds the entities of the appearances, and how are these intrinsic natures created from the appearances? There are thirty-three intrinsic natures of the first appearance. *Five Stages* states:

> Their intrinsic natures elaborated, I will explain:
> nondesire, moderate and great,
> going and coming to the mind,
> the three of lesser grief and so forth,
> similarly, peace, thought,
> fear, moderate and great,
> craving, moderate and great,
> grasping, nonvirtue, hunger, and thirst,
> instances of feelings, moderate and great,
> perceiver, perceiving, and basis perceived,
> discrimination, a sense of shame, [221]
> compassion, and loving as three,
> doubt, accumulating, and jealousy:
> these are the thirty-three intrinsic natures,
> the self-knowing minds of sentient beings.[693]

"Nondesire" is a state of not wanting an object. It has three levels—lesser, moderate, and great. The phrase "to the mind" means "of the mind," and the "going of mind" refers to the mind going to an external object. "Coming" refers to the mind returning to an internal object. The Gö tradition says that this stanza line can be generally applied to all. "Grief" is the mental torment of being separated from that which we love. It can be small, moderate, and great. "Peace," according to *Clarifying the Meaning*[694] means the mind resting in peace. Those of the past explain it as meaning "at leisure," with the mind in its natural state. "Thought" here, according to the above commentary, means a state of agitation or excitement. Those of the past described it as the mind thinking coarsely. "Fear" is a mind frightened from coming in contact with unpleasant circumstances. "Craving" is an attachment to objects. These last two are each in sets of three. "Grasping" is holding on fully to sensual objects of pleasure. The above commentary explains "nonvirtue" as being in two minds over virtuous activity. Earlier masters described it as the mind becoming discouraged. This particular intrinsic nature is also translated as "inauspicious."[695] Earlier masters described "hunger" and "thirst" as the desire for food and drink. The Chak translation counts these as one, but the previous understanding is better. "Feelings" are those of happiness, unhappiness, and of being neither happy nor unhappy. These too are small, moderate, or great according to the object of the feelings. There are three types of conceptual minds concerning the perceiver, the perceiving, and what is perceived. "Discrimination" is the analysis of what is correct and not correct. "A sense of shame" is the avoidance of wrong activities with oneself or the Dharma as the reason. "Compassion" is the wish for others to be free of suffering. "Loving" is of three kinds: wanting to protect the object of your focus, holding it as beautiful, and wanting to be with it. "Doubt" is an oscillating mind that cannot find certainty. "Accumulating" is a mind desirous of gathering possessions. "Jealousy" is a mind disturbed by the wealth of others. Vīryabhadra's *Clarifying the Meaning* and the Chak translation both have "miserliness" here. In *Five Stages* and old translations of the *Compendium of Practice*, however, this term is translated as "jealousy," which is good.

On the forty intrinsic natures, *Five Stages* states:

> Desire, attachment, likewise delight,
> moderate delight, and great delight,
> rejoicing, enrapture, amazement,
> excitement, and satisfaction,

embracing, kissing, and sucking,
stability, endeavor, pride,
doing, thieving, power,
enthusiasm, innate, moderately innate, [222]
very innate, forceful, flirting,
spite, virtuous, clear words, truthful,
untruthful, certainty, nongrasping,
the giver, exhorting, bravery, shame,
pretension, malice, cruelty, and guile:
These are the forty characteristics,
instances of the very empty state.[696]

"Desire" is the mind wanting things not yet attained. "Attachment" is the mind's desire for things already attained. "Delight" is small, moderate, and great and arises from the mind coming across the attractive. "Rejoicing" is a mind of happiness that comes from getting what you want. "Enrapture" is the mind in the aspect of the previous intrinsic nature and experiencing it again and again. Vīryabhadra's *Clarifying the Meaning* explains "amazement" as the sense of wonder that comes from hearing various stories, but it is more like the description given by previous masters of the mind coming across phenomena not previously encountered. "Excitement" is the mind becoming distracted after coming into contact with an attractive object. "Satisfaction" is described by the above commentary as mental experience in an aspect of happiness, but it is actually being made content by a particular object. "Embracing, kissing, and sucking" refers to a mind wishing to engage in these activities. "Stability" is an unchanging mental continuum. "Endeavor" is to be immersed into virtue. "Pride" is a puffed-up mind. "Doing," or "activity," means completing the deeds you constantly perform. "Thieving" is the desire to steal wealth and possessions. "Power" is the desire to destroy the forces of others. "Enthusiasm" is a mind well acquainted with the paths of virtue.

Concerning "innate," previous scholars say that this term in Sanskrit is *sahaja*, but that this is not what is found in the Indian text. *Sāhasa* is found instead, and translated means "with hesitancy" or "applying oneself to difficulties." In *Clarifying the Meaning* this is rendered as "without hesitancy" and is described as arrogantly engaging in nonvirtuous activity. The old translation of the *Compendium of Practice* has "applying oneself to difficulties." Chak Lotsāwa renders it "capable" in his *Five Stages* translation and as "applying oneself to difficulties" in the *Compendium of Practice*. Earlier

masters say that the application is small, moderate, or great according to the effort put into it.

"Forceful" is described as wanting to argue with the wise, even without reason. "Flirting" means wanting to play or pose when seeing someone attractive. "Spite" is a mind that holds a grudge. "Virtuous" is wanting to make efforts in virtuous actions. "Clear words" and "truthful" mean wishing to speak in a way that others will understand and without perverting the meaning. "Untruthful" means wishing to speak in a way that perverts the meaning. "Certainty" means firm in your resolve. "Nongrasping" means not wanting to take hold of. "The giver" is one who wants to give away their property. "Exhorting" means wanting to motivate those who are lazy. [223] "Brave" means wanting to be victorious over the enemies that are the afflictions and so forth. "Shameless" means engaging in nonvirtue, with no thought to avoid it in consideration of oneself or the Dharma. "Pretension" means to deliberately deceive others. For translations that have "skillful," here, it means having a sharp mind. "Malicious" means being well trained in bad views. "Cruel" means having evil designs on others. "Guile" means being dishonest. For the last two lines of this passage, the Chak translation has:

> Instances of these forty intrinsic natures
> arise from the very empty state.

For the seven intrinsic natures, *Five Stages* states:

> Instances of moderate desire,
> forgetfulness, mistaken, not speaking,
> discouraged, laziness, and doubt.[697]

"Forgetfulness" is a poor memory, "Mistaken" refers to things like holding mirages to be water. "Not speaking" means having no desire to talk. "Discouraged" means a weary mind. "Laziness" is to have no delight in virtue. The other two need no explanation.

Although it would seem that there is a way of categorizing these three sets of conceptual minds into three main types—namely, by way of a strong desire, strong aversion, and a moderate state between these two, in regard to their respective objects—I have nevertheless explained them here by relying upon Vīryabhadra's *Clarifying the Meaning* and the explanations of masters of the past. *Garland of Jewels* [attr. Nāgabodhi] explains how these

conceptual minds fit into the fifty-one states of mind, but it is not convincing, and so I have not included it here.[698]

The *Compendium of Practice* describes these three sets of conceptual minds as the intrinsic natures of the three appearances. *Intrinsic nature* in Sanskrit is *svabhāva*,[699] which can be rendered as "arising," "nature," and "phenomenona," and it is possible to argue that "arising" should be used here, but the *Compendium of Practice* speaks of "nature" in the introductory section, and in the summary speaks of the "thirty-three and forty characteristics" and "these seven characteristics of their intrinsic natures." Therefore he also refers to them as the *characteristics* (*lakṣana*) of the three appearances. Lakṣmī says that the intrinsic nature of the appearances means *entity* of the appearances, while *Clarifying the Meaning* says they are "included" within the three appearances. These are not correct because Āryadeva in his *Stage of Self-Consecration* says:

> Earth dissolves into the element of water,
> water dissolves into fire,
> fire into the subtle element,
> wind dissolves into mind,
> mind dissolves into states of mind,
> states of mind into ignorance,
> and that too into clear light.[700]

This says that the winds dissolve before the creation of "mind," which is the first appearance. Those winds are the winds that move the conceptual minds, so at that time the conceptualizations must have also dissolved. Moreover, the appearances and the intrinsic natures are completely dissimilar. Even in the creation process the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* states that the intrinsic-nature conceptual minds develop after the creation of the three appearances.[701] [224] *Analysis of Karma* also states that the 160 intrinsic natures develop after the three empty states.[702] Also, to state that the first set of intrinsic natures are "possessed of the cause of," or fruits of, the exalted wisdom of the first appearance means that this fact applies to the other sets of intrinsic natures also. Therefore the statements in some texts that the set of seven intrinsic natures exist at the same time as "ignorance" is a printing error.

It is said above that the winds dissolve into the first appearance, but before the creation of the first appearance, there is no first appearance, and so you might think it cannot be right to say that the winds dissolve into it. If this

were the case, as the same statement applies to appearance, increase, close-to-attainment, and for clear light also, this would therefore mean that the former would necessarily dissolve only after the latter has been created, meaning that these components would not be causes and effects and there could be no presentation of a sequential process. This cannot be what is being asserted here because *Five Stages* says:

> The empty state, very empty state,
> the third, the great empty state,
> and the fourth, the all empty state,
> are instances of cause and effect.[703]

Thus descriptions of the former dissolving into the latter are merely ascribed to the process of the power of the former being withdrawn to become no longer apparent and seemingly transferring to the latter. Therefore, to assert that during the dissolution process, first the thirty-three intrinsic natures cease, followed by the creation of the first appearance, then the forty intrinsic natures cease and are followed by the creation of increase, and so on, and while maintaining that position, to also claim that the intrinsic natures and the appearances coexist, and also that during the creation process first close-to-attainment is created, and from that the seven intrinsic natures are created, is both wrong and contradictory. On this point, the *Compendium of Practice* position that the intrinsic natures arise from the appearances is as cited previously. In the Chak translation of *Five Stages* also, at the end of the description of the thirty-three and forty intrinsic natures, it says, "arising from the exalted wisdom of appearance," and "arising from the activity of increase of appearance."

Therefore describing the conceptual minds as the intrinsic natures of the three appearances means that they are *characteristics* of the appearances. It is not that they are not separate, as was described previously in the characteristics of the three appearances, but that they are characteristics in the sense of being separately existing indicators, in the same way as the presence of a crow indicates a good house. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> It is the same with the appearances of the consciousnesses: They are without form but can be inferred from the intrinsic natures of desire, nondesire, moderate desire, and so on.[704]

Because the appearances can be inferred from the intrinsic natures, they indicate the existence of the appearances. [225] The way they are inferred is that the intrinsic-nature conceptual minds clearly have small, moderate, and great degrees of strength, and thus it can be inferred that the appearances that create them, together with their wind-mounts, will also have degrees of movements that are small, moderate, and great. So any of the seven small-movement conceptual minds is an aftereffect of a small degree of movement of an appearance together with its wind-mount. Therefore it can be established as the result of the close-to-attainment appearance. The same reasoning can be applied to the other two sets.

The yogi who is able to induce the three exalted wisdoms through the power of meditation on the path does not infer their existence through signs, because he is able to ascertain them experientially. The need to infer the existence of the appearances through the intrinsic natures is for other people. In that case, the assertion that all sense consciousnesses are one or another of the three appearances is not correct because sense consciousnesses can be experientially ascertained without the need for inference from the presence of signs. Ordinary beings experience the three appearances and the clear light at birth, death, and so on but are not able to induce them through the power of direct experience.

The enumeration of 160 intrinsic natures is arrived at by the set of eighty being active both in the night and in the day. The *Vajra Garland* speaks of 108 conceptual minds being moved by the 108 winds.

In ordinary existence there are occasions when the winds that move the intrinsic natures have dissolved and occasions when they have not dissolved. The time when they have not dissolved is the time when the intrinsic natures are present. Of the time when they have dissolved, there are occasions when the winds of the three appearances have and have not dissolved. The time when these winds have not dissolved is the time of the three empty states. The time when they have dissolved is the time of the arising of clear light. During the path also, this sequence is followed, and that is the reason for having to determine the four empty states, the dissolution sequence of the conceptual minds, and the creation process.

These topics from the literature of the Guhyasamāja root and explanatory tantras are not explained as clearly elsewhere as they are here by the master and his disciples. Moreover, the high praise expressed in the *Compendium of Practice* that the instructions of all the buddhas is being taught because of the kindness of his guru Nāgārjuna is predicated on the point that the

special practice to attain the clear light and illusory body depends on knowing the above.

Developing the wisdom of the appearances

1. Presentation of different traditions
2. Determining which is correct

Presentation of different traditions

Lakṣmī, Bhavyakīrti, and others describe an eight-spoke wheel at the navel, at whose center is placed the syllable *aṃ*. This syllable emanates the syllables *oṃ*, *āḥ*, and *hūṃ*, which are placed at the crown, throat, and heart. White light radiates from the *aṃ* and hooks the syllable *oṃ*, which is dissolved into the syllable at the navel. There the mind is held single-pointedly, and the exalted wisdom of the first appearance is generated. Similarly, again at the center of the navel cakra, you focus on a red *āḥ* and a drop. [226] The red and black rays emanated from these two hook *āḥ* and *hūṃ* respectively, and they are dissolved into the navel, where they are focused on single-pointedly to generate the exalted wisdoms of increase of appearance and close-to-attainment. Then the drop and the wheel dissolve into the space of the navel. Through this meditation the clear light preceded by the five signs will arise. In this description *oṃ* and *āḥ* are used as representations of the first two wisdoms. For close-to-attainment, core teachings taken from *Five Stages* are applied:

> Drop not possessed of seed syllable,
> not arising by way of the winds,
> with this culmination of appearance
> the characteristics are complete.[705]

This is the generation of mind isolation through the mantra process. Generation through the consort process is performed as taught in *Five Stages*, and from that, the way to develop the empty states has been explained.

The master Gö describes the methods of creating mind isolation from the two traditions of Kṛṣṇasamayavajra and Yoṣa. In the first tradition a karma consort is relied upon when using the pathway of the lower openings. For the upper openings you meditate on *haṃ* at the crown, *aṃ* at the throat, and *a* at the heart. From these light emanates and withdraws, and the inner bodhicitta

melts of its own accord. This produces bliss of weak, moderate, and strong levels, by which you develop the bliss and emptiness that halts the three levels of coarse and subtle intrinsic natures. He says that "this is reported to be the experience of the practice of masters of the past." He cites a passage from Āryadeva and explains it to illustrate the above. The passage cited and the explanation given of it do not match at all. Also, he says "is reported to be," as if he is not happy with it. This appears to be something coming from the oral teachings of his guru Kṛṣṇasamayavajra and is not found anywhere in any present work of Āryadeva.

The tradition of Yoṣa relies on a karma consort only and does not mention meditation upon the syllables. Disciples of Gö, such as Ngok Yeshé Sengé, also follow the explanation of this tradition. Others who follow the teachings of Gö say that the Yoṣa tradition asserts that a karma consort is relied upon when using the pathway of the lower opening, as mentioned above, while for the upper openings the winds are first made supple by vajra repetition. This enables you to visualize at the heart an *aṃ* upon a lotus and on top of a moon, from which very fine rays of light, white and as cool as the moon, invoke *haṃ* at the crown from within the dhūtī. From *haṃ* white bodhicitta falls onto the *aṃ* with the sound "*ca ra ra*."[706] The *aṃ* becomes brighter and brighter, until finally the bliss of the mind becomes as clear as the moon, and the exalted wisdom of the first appearance is generated. Likewise, at the heart, a vajra is visualized upon a sun disk, at the center of which is *āḥ*, and then a single *a* is visualized without any seat. From these, in turn, fine rays as hot as the sun [227] and fine black rays radiate from within the dhūtī and so on, as described above, to generate the other two exalted wisdoms. Gö's guru Saraha asserts that the three wisdoms are generated from focusing on the three syllables without the emanation and withdrawing. The above assert that these are core teachings that explain the moon, sun, syllables, and so on as representations of the exalted wisdoms. Guru Abhijña states, however, that these are merely verbal representations of the wisdoms and that it is not being taught they should be meditated on as being the actual wisdoms. This, when compared with Gö's *Great Overview*, is not the position of Yoṣa.

According to the oral tradition of Nāropa, passed on through the noble Marpa and written down by Serdingpa, there are two traditions—one with and one without mantra circles. The one with mantra circles is similar to the arrangement described earlier. During vajra repetition the mantra circles are not withdrawn, but during this practice of focusing on the mind, they are withdrawn. The conjoining of the upper and lower winds while training in

focusing on the mind is taught in the four great core teachings and the three lesser core teachings, and Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* asserts that this is done at the heart. It is explained that with the winds held, you focus and meditate on the letters of the outer petals to generate the first empty state. Then the outer petals withdraw into the middle petals, which are focused on and meditated upon to generate the very empty state. These withdraw into the four inner petals, which are focused on and meditated upon to generate the great empty state. Other explanations in this tradition speak of the first petals dissolving right from the beginning; or, while focusing on the first petals, the mind holds a sign of a white appearance like moonlight, after which the first petal dissolves into the second, causing the cessation of the thirty-three intrinsic natures; and when focusing on the letters of the outer petals, "it is good if the form of the deity dissolves into it." Others say that after generating the three empty states, the form of the deity dissolves into the central drop, or that light emanates from the letters of the first petals, purifies the animate and inanimate world, and dissolves into the consonants. Others say they dissolve into the vowels. There are many discordant positions in this tradition, but the fundamental assertion is clearly the first described above.

Serdingpa's *Five Stages with Mantra Circle* and his *Four Points* say that the three empty states arise with the bliss experience of the bodhicitta simply arriving at the base of the vajra, the "neck" of the vajra, and at the "vase" of the vajra, respectively. Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* speaks of the first empty state arising from the bliss of the mere movement of bodhicitta from its location, but this text should be in agreement with the other two works.

The mantra-circle tradition speaks of an alternating practice with vajra repetition followed by holding the winds conjoined. There are many other discordant descriptions of the way the signs and the mind possessed of these sign arise, and I will not describe them here.

The tradition of no mantra circles is of three kinds. The first is explained as follows: With yourself clearly visualized as a deity, you meditate at your heart on a light the size of a mirror [228] in whose center is a drop marked by a short vowel *a*. Then you perform the vajra repetition as described previously. For the focus on mind practice, the upper and lower winds are conjoined, and you meditate on the deity, light drop, and short vowel *a*, successively dissolving one into the other to produce the three empty states. Calling this process a "no mantra circle" practice is a case of a general name applied to a specific.

The second tradition is that of the three-stacked *sattva* of the five stages. You meditate upon yourself as the pledge (*samaya*) *sattva*, at whose heart is the exalted wisdom (*jñāna*) *sattva*, the size of a thumb. At its heart is a vajra the size of a mustard seed, and at its center a blue-black syllable *hūṃ*. This is the samādhi *sattva*, as small as if drawn by a single strand of hair. This is then meditated upon and vajra repetition is performed as described previously. For the focus on mind, the winds are held conjoined, and you meditate on the two *sattvas*, the vajra, and the *hūṃ* all dissolving successively into the other, thereby generating the three empty states.

The third division is that of the all-at-once arising tradition of the five stages. You meditate upon yourself as the deity, at whose heart is a red four-petal lotus, and at its center is a white drop and a black short vowel *a*. Vajra repetition is performed as described previously. For focus on mind, it is explained that the three empty states are produced from concentrating the mind on the form of the deity, the lotus petals, and the drop. It is also explained that the form of the deity, the lotus petals, the drop, and the short vowel *a* merge successively into each other, but this process is not presented as being the generation of the three empty states. This mistake can be understood from the essence of the two previous traditions. Therefore it should be that the three empty states are produced by the three levels of dissolution as with the other two traditions.

In these traditions, the intention is to perform vajra repetition until the five signs of the mirage and so on appear, and that is excellent. In order to develop mind isolation, these condensed and extensive traditions combine the practices of the conjoined winds and the focused dissolution sequence.

Developing mind isolation through a karma consort practice, as is taught in *Five Stages*, is not clearly taught in Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* or in the transmissions of Serdingpa, but the general teachings on developing bliss through relying on a mahāmudrā karma consort are there.

Some from the Marpa tradition focus on the three sets of syllables without the conjoined winds and, by performing vajra repetition successively, remove the three sets of conceptual minds and develop the three exalted wisdoms.

In the Nāropa transmissions that pass through Naktso Lotsāwa, you develop insights by associating the nature of the mind with bliss. This consists of two kinds of practices. In the desire-led practice, you use the lower openings and rely upon a karma consort. In the desire-free practice, you use the upper openings, and bliss is generated using the three methods of letter mantra circles, letters on their own, and no letters. On the basis of the first of

these, you meditate that light rays emanate from the three sets of letters, melt the *haṃ* at the crown, and this fills the heart. [229] When bliss is generated you hold a small amount of wind. This is all that is said. There is no conjoining of the winds followed by a focused dissolution sequence.

Determining which is correct

1. Analyzing these traditions
2. Determining the established traditions

Analyzing these traditions

Initially, to gather the winds into the dhūtī and to dissolve them, it is necessary to make use of ascertained points of the body. However, for those who have meditated on the methods of penetrating the vital points of the body through the practices of vajra repetition and so on and have become trained in generating the four empty states and the four joys from gathering and dissolving the winds in the dhūtī, wherever the mind is focused and concentrated, there the winds will gather, and those experiences will arise accordingly. This happens because of the power of previous practice, and it cannot be said with any certainty that it happens because of the effect of the object focused upon. So if you have trained well in vajra repetition, and if you then focus on those objects described above with that training and gain experiences by doing so, this cannot be used as a reason to prove that a particular instruction tradition represents the true meaning of the corresponding classical scriptures.

The teachings in *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice* that the three syllables; the moon, sun, and vajra; and so on are representations of the three appearances mean that these three appearances of the completion stage are merely given those names, and that during the generation stage, which does not have the ability to develop the exalted wisdoms of the three appearances, these phenomena are to be meditated on as if they were the appearances. Therefore Guru Abhijña is correct to assert that it is not the position of these texts that the completion-stage practitioner develops these wisdoms through meditations involving the placement of letters on a sun, moon, and so on. Even if they could be developed this way, they would have to be developed at the heart, because developing them at the navel is not found in this tradition. Also, "arising from the exalted wisdom of appearance and from

increase" teaches that from these arise the intrinsic natures. It does not say that the wisdoms arise from meditation upon the letters and so on. The force of meditating on the white, red, and black colors of the letters and radiating light may well produce objects appearing in those three colors, but this is not the way those colors appear according to the classical texts. Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* explains the three sets of letters as symbolizing appearance, increase, and close-to-attainment, respectively, but it does not necessarily teach that by holding the mind directly upon the placed letters the wisdoms will be generated. This also would contradict that same text when it states:

> Mind restrained in sameness,
> in meditative equipoise.
> In the center of the circle,
> the wisdom seen as one,
> close-to-attainment, the great empty state.[707]

The mind focused on the letters that are placed on the circle is "restrained" from wandering to other objects. [230] It is placed in a "sameness," as if it had entered the letters. Familiarity is developed through meditative equipoise, and from placing the mind in the indestructible drop together with the short vowel *a* at the center of the circle, they become of one taste, and the great empty state is generated. Therefore, in the process of withdrawing the circles, the letters are clearly visualized and stabilized, and then the outer layer is focused upon and developed first. That is withdrawn into the middle layer and then focused upon and developed. That withdraws into the inner layer, which is focused upon and developed. Finally that is withdrawn into the indestructible drop and likewise focused upon and developed. This can be alternated with the previous arrangement of letters and their associated practice, and in this way, the winds are brought more quickly into the dhūtī. If they are not brought inside the dhūtī, however, you may well practice outside the dhūtī, but the authentic paths of the empty states will not appear. This is because these states arise from the winds being brought inside the dhūtī and dissolving within it. Moreover, Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* does not speak about the conjoining of winds, instead speaking only of the meditation on the letters and vajra repetition.

Moreover, many times the *Vajra Garland* says, "Through the reality of mantra alone, you will accomplish."[708] This means that if you fully understand this

point and meditate accordingly, then even without the assistance of any other wind yoga, you will accomplish the goal. Those who do not fully understand the vital points of vajra repetition think that with no conjoined wind-practice vajra repetition, you will not be able to dissolve the winds in the dhūtī. If these people practice conjoined wind meditation, it is because they have not understood the point of this practice. It is in this context that the above statement is made, but it is not saying that in general vajra-repetition practitioners who practice wind conjoining are making a mistake. In this tradition, if you conjoin the winds it should be done as pot yoga[709] at the heart. This is taught in the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*. Statements that say pot yoga at the heart can create great obstacles when first practicing wind yoga are made by those not skilled in this yoga. If it is well understood, it can be seen that there are no such obstacles.

The dissolution sequences of the no-mantra-circle traditions above can be understood from the explanation of the mantra-circle traditions.

Although there can be no certainty that the exalted wisdoms will be produced directly from the placed letters, without positing that the empty states are generated from the progress of the bodhicitta descending from the crown to the vajra, the instructions of the Marpa tradition state that the generation of the empty states from the dissolution process at the heart is the essential point made by the root-text lines:

> On the basis of consciousness and prāṇa withdrawn,
> meditate on mantra circles at the heart.[710]

This is a peerless teaching for the master and disciples tradition also.

Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* teaches that from the sequential dissolution of earth, water, fire, winds, and consciousness, the four signs from mirage-like to flame will appear. It has already been explained that when the winds have dissolved, the first appearance arises. Therefore the descriptions of many signs, including the above, arising at the time of the three appearances make no sense. [231] Rather, follow *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*, which, like the *Compendium of Practice*, asserts:

> First, with five rays of light,
> a mirage-like experience appears;
> second, a moonlike appearance;
> third, a permeation of sunlight;
> and from the appearance of night, close-to-attainment.[711]

The mention of mirage without the other three is just an abbreviation. Extensive descriptions can be found in the *Later Tantra* and in *Illuminating Lamp* wherever this topic appears.

In summary, the individual traditions described above have not added any new objects of focus, such as syllables, in this section on mind isolation.[712] However, having first practiced body isolation, and without analyzing, in general, how many of the four empty states speech-isolation vajra repetition can or cannot induce, it is not good to add new objects of focus as methods for inducing mind isolation because this would be to cast aside the practice of penetrating the vital points of the inner body as the principal method of inducing mind isolation and to teach some minor methods instead.

The objects of focus found in the core teachings passed on from Naktso as methods for developing bliss and the teachings on their five divisions are given because of the recognized need to develop bliss quickly, but I do not see them as representing the texts.

Determining the established traditions

1. How the wisdoms are produced from outer and inner causes
2. How to combine the bliss and emptiness produced from these causes

How the wisdoms are produced from outer and inner causes

Five Stages says:

> The yogi abiding in vajra repetition
> will achieve focus on mind.[713]

This is saying that vajra repetition will induce the empty states of mind isolation, but it is not explicit on how it will induce them. The *Compendium of Practice* also says that by abiding in speech isolation you will achieve mind isolation, and that without speech isolation, mind isolation cannot be produced.[714] But that section is not clear on how it will be produced, either. In the extensive explanation on speech isolation, however, the *Compendium of Practice* discusses the three activities—the site where the winds enter and so on—and how finally the winds enter the indestructible drop, where the clear light arises. If this is contemplated, it can be understood that vajra repetition brings and dissolves the winds in the indestructible drop, from which will

arise the four empty states. This has already been explained. The *Vajra Garland* also says:

> By the application of vajra repetition,
> the characteristics of the winds are known,
> the winds of conceptualization are cut,
> and focus on mind is achieved.[715]

Many times this work states clearly that the empty states of mind isolation are produced by vajra repetition stopping the flow of the winds. [232] How vajra repetition induces the empty states has already been explained in general terms. Then in particular terms, the point when the empty states of mind isolation are induced is when the channel knots at the heart have been well loosened and you have the ability to withdraw the winds into the indestructible drop at the heart. It does not occur before this point. So from that point onward, is it necessary to concentrate on another withdrawal process in order to induce mind isolation? In the previously cited *Illuminating Lamp* passage on the third chapter, it says:

> You meditate "constantly," day and night, "with the yoga" of entering, abiding, rising, and withdrawing.[716]

The yoga of entering, abiding, and rising is vajra repetition. Furthermore it is clear that the "yoga of withdrawal" has to be practiced from the point where you have the ability to induce the four empty states through the practices of vajra repetition and the indestructible drop. In the Nāropa tradition also, the inducing of the empty states is through the yoga of withdrawal. As for the way to practice this withdrawal, it is "by the practice of the two meditative absorptions," as described in Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages*; namely, a held-as-a-whole dissolution and subsequent dissolution. This is because, as stated in Lawapa's commentary to Lūipa's sādhana, withdrawal through subsequent dissolution is explained in the earlier completion stages. Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* also talks of withdrawal through subsequent dissolution in the section on meditation on the indestructible drop at the heart. That position has no unacceptable features for this tradition either. The Nāropa tradition that passed through Naktso teaches a way to produce mind isolation without using letters, and in the three smaller transmissions of the Marpa tradition there are

no mantra-circle letters. Therefore, even in that tradition, mantra-circle letters are not indispensable.

Since meditation on the three kinds of prāṇāyāma and the yoga of withdrawal are posited as methods for inducing mind isolation, is that sufficient? The *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* says:

> The coming together of vajra and lotus is a method for producing mind and states of mind. The equal joining of mind and states of mind is the method for producing the samādhi of great bliss. That is illustrated by the example of an illusion.[717]

Also:

> Until milk and sesame are well activated, butter and sesame butter will not arise. Likewise, without vajra and lotus coming together, well activated by mantra and mudrā, the three consciousnesses cannot be shown. Without the capability for *bhaga* and *liṅgam* to be well united, the samādhi of great bliss will not be achieved.[718]

This is speaking of the three appearances as a necessary consequence of union with a consort, and if that union is not there, those three will consequently not be produced. Moreover, this exalted wisdom is spoken of as being the method for producing great bliss, and that great bliss is described in the *Compendium of Practice* as "illusory body." [233] Therefore, to fully generate the three exalted wisdoms of mind isolation as a basis for the production of an illusory body, you have to rely upon an external consort. This point is made in *Five Stages*:

> From all illusions,
> the illusory girl is the best.
> The divisions of the three wisdoms
> are clearly revealed by her.
> Desire, nondesire, and that in between
> arise from the two organs joined,
> the coming together of vajra and lotus.[719]

Therefore, to use the divisions of desire and nondesire to refer to the lower and upper openings, respectively, is wrong. On the basis of it being taught

in *Five Stages*, the *Compendium of Practice* does not mention this external method of creating mind isolation. On this point that the three wisdoms will be revealed through the consort, Lakṣmī explains that this refers to the time of the third initiation. In general, this can occur at the time of the third initiation, but here it is referring to the time of training in the path of mind isolation. If a suitably qualified individual is conferred the actual third initiation and has already gone through the meditations of the paths of the two stages, does that person at this point need to rely upon a karma consort in order to reveal the three wisdoms? It is possible during that initiation to be shown the four joys through the winds dissolving in the dhūtī from outer prāṇāyāma meditation. Here, however, it refers to the time of having developed an excellent potential through meditation on the three types of prāṇāyāma, and so the three wisdoms of mind isolation that are generated are far superior to earlier ones. Therefore it is not the case that here they do not have to be revealed again.

Concerning the three wisdoms produced through a karma consort, are they produced from the bodhicitta descending from the crown to the tip of the organ in the secret place, or is the bodhicitta gathered into the heart from all parts of the body? *Illuminating Lamp* speaks of the sovereign mandala being generated from the bodhicitta melting and descending to the path of the vajra, but unlike other works, there is nothing clear in the works of the master and the four disciples on these joys and empty states being produced when the bodhicitta melts and descends to this particular part of the body. They do, however, speak of the winds dissolving to produce the "mind" as the first appearance; the mind dissolving to produce the "states of mind" as the increase of appearance, states of mind dissolving to produce close-to-attainment, and close-to-attainment dissolving to produce the arising of clear light. Also, the *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Vajra and lotus unite, and beginning from the crown, bodhicitta melts from the 72,000 channels. Desire, nondesire, and intermediate desire descend in order.[720]

Therefore this work also says that the three wisdoms are produced from the melting of the bodhicitta. [234] In that case, the four empty states arise from the dissolution process of the winds as well as from the descent of the melted bodhicitta. It has been explained previously that the special place for the wind-dissolution process in this tradition is within the dhūtī at the heart, and

it will be explained again. Therefore the caṇḍālī is ignited by vajra repetition and so on, the bodhicitta is melted, and the place to where it is withdrawn, from which the empty states will arise, is the heart. It is not the case that the forward and reverse processes of the bodhicitta being melted, descending as far as the tip of the secret place and then returning upward as far as the crown, cannot produce the four joys, but the training in that particular practice was explained in the body-isolation section. Here it is critical that the four empty states are induced in accordance with the death process. Therefore this is the creation of the four empty states from the forward and reverse processes of the winds being withdrawn into the heart and then emanating out from the heart. Just as you do with the practice of the inner prāṇāyāma, similarly, when relying on the union with an external consort, both the wind and the bodhicitta are withdrawn from all parts of the body into the heart. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Together with a consort you enter the ultimate truth through the held-as-a-whole dissolution or the subsequent dissolution.[721]

This is saying that, having united with an external consort, you then, in order to enter the ultimate through the process of the four empty states, perform the yoga of withdrawal with either of the two meditative absorptions, and that process occurs at the heart. If you have gained stability in the development of the withdrawal process at the heart, when you enter into union with a consort, if you then practice the yogas of the two meditative absorptions, union with an external consort becomes a cause for winds and mind withdrawing at the heart.

From the point of development, when vajra repetition has developed the ability to produce the empty states from the dissolution of the winds at the heart, it can be understood, even though vajra repetition is not perfected, that having ignited the caṇḍālī through vajra repetition, melting the bodhicitta, and withdrawing it from above and below into the heart, the empty states will arise. In that case, it can also be well understood that the melting of the bodhicitta through the circumstance of an external consort becomes a cause for it to be withdrawn into the heart and, from that, for the empty states to be produced. From this, know that the winds and the bodhicitta are withdrawn into the heart through union with a wisdom consort also. When you have the ability to produce the empty states from the dissolution process of withdrawing the winds and bodhicitta into the heart, you will be able

to induce the joys of descent and stable ascent as well as the special empty states produced from the process of withdrawal into the heart and emanating out again.

Some who follow the master and his disciples describe the empty states, such as those arising from the descent of the melted bodhicitta generally, [235] and specifically those arising from union with an external consort, as being the four joys of either the descent from the crown to the tip of the secret place or the return to the top of the head. If this assertion is accepted, it would miss the essential point of the development of the special empty states found in this tradition. Such assertions are also the fault of not clearly determining that, if the illusory body is produced in correspondence with the intermediate state, then it is necessary for the empty states to be produced exactly in accordance with the death process.

On this topic *Five Stages* says:

> Those who are without, even conventionally,
> the union of lotus and vajra will,
> through just a single experience,
> gain accomplishment
> through the power of yoga.
> By engaging in the exalted wisdoms,
> they will know the divisions exactly.
> Again, that very entity
> will be revealed continually by the yogi.[722]

Clarifying the Meaning explains the meaning of this passage as:

> For those holding precepts and for hermaphrodites, if they do not join the organs, even conventionally, they can still develop the three wisdoms through clear meditative equipoise.[723]

This is not the meaning. Samayavajra's explanation is that if it is experienced once at the time of initiation, you will gain accomplishment through the power of inner yoga. This is similar to Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon* and to Lakṣmī's position. Venerable Gö's explanation is that of Yoṣa and says that even for those who do not possess the opportunity to make use of an external consort continually, if the experience is actually revealed just once, later they can train in practices other than that. This is the meaning of the

passage. Some assert that "conventionally" here does not mean "as commonly known." However, in the same way as "conventional tip of the nose," refers to the tip of the nose on the face, it refers to the conventional lotus and vajra. You may not have had continual experience of joining the conventional lotus and vajra, but if you have experienced it once, and then on that basis, you develop the practice through a wisdom consort and so forth, you will be able to produce mind isolation.

If the practice of reliance upon an external consort begins from the point of completing the vajra repetition, then consider the following passage from *Guhyasiddhi*:

> Together with a karma consort,
> with vajra and lotus in union,
> the speaker of truth has taught
> directly such a meditation.
> For beginner sentient beings
> who abandon the karma consort,
> I do not see the bodhicitta
> being revealed by another teacher.
> This the beginners should know."[724]

You might think, "This stands in contradiction to *Five Stages* because this passage states that if a beginner abandons the external consort, this experience will not be revealed by other means. Therefore it has to be revealed by this method. Also, a beginner is someone who is unable to bring the winds into the dhūtī by the meditative power of inner prāṇāyāma." There is no contradiction here because the *Five Stages* passage is on the basis of producing the three exalted wisdoms of mind isolation, [236] whereas the thinking behind the *Guhyasiddhi* passage is the creation of the innate experience of the four joys. Someone possessing the complete qualities of the beginner described above is a very rare person. The consort too is similarly qualified, and so do not be misled by this term "beginner."

For such a person clearly there are other methods to induce the foundation of bliss as far as the secret area, but the statement that if the above method is abandoned it cannot be revealed by another is based on it being a method to bring the winds into the dhūtī. The reason for that can be determined somewhat by reference to the *Vajra Garland*, the *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra*, and Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*, but to be conclusive on this is

very difficult. Until the innate bliss is revealed by such a consort, the methods for holding the bodhicitta without emission include turning back the winds, meditation on *phaṭ*, and so on.

Tantras such as the *Vajraḍāka Tantra*, the eighteenth chapter of *Red Yamāri Tantra*, and *Acala Highest Tantra* speak of many methods of stiffening the seed through substances. Therefore you might wonder if there is no need to have practiced turning back the winds in order to use an external consort. Such statements are made for the purpose of preventing the emission of the bodhicitta in general. In the context of an external consort, statements that say if the bodhicitta should fall after the innate bliss has been revealed it is to be "taken with the tongue" are also made in order to prevent emission. These statements are not made for those who have brought the winds into the dhūtī but are unable to dissolve them, and neither are they made for those who, by the power of vajra repetition and so on, are able to dissolve the winds inside the dhūtī.

Many say that there is no fault in possessing the ability to prevent emission and that it will produce great qualities. However, if it is not applied to the view of emptiness that conclusively ascertains reality, the purpose of generating bliss is lost, and it has been said very many times that this becomes a cause for unending birth in the lower realms. However, for fear that this will become too wordy, I will not write of it here. Merely having such a view of emptiness is not sufficient, and you should study in great detail all the other qualities that are needed.

As for the consort, generally, three kinds of yoginīs are spoken of—the innately born, the land born, and the mantra born. The most important of these is the third, which is of four types: Padminī, Śaṅkhinī, Hastinī, and Hariṇī, to whose families Locanā and so on belong. Their individual forms and attitudes, their general and specific physical attributes, and so forth can be understood from Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī*, the *Saṃvarodaya Tantra*, and others. In the practices of inner prāṇāyāma, the ways to penetrate the vital points at the cakras will yield many ways for the different qualities to appear. The same is true of the outer prāṇāyāma practices. The reason why the special beginner should use this method to reveal the bliss [237] is that by remembering and cultivating bliss and emptiness in the generation stage, it acts as an agent to ripen the insights of the completion stage. Also, when meditating on the methods of penetrating the vital points of the completion-stage body, the withdrawal of the winds will become very easy. There are these and many other reasons.

How to combine the bliss and emptiness produced from these causes

In the practice of relying upon an external consort, the bliss that is generated from that particular method should be joined with a conclusively determined emptiness. If you have developed a good view of emptiness, then the bliss induced through the meditations on vajra repetition and so forth should also be joined with it and meditated upon accordingly. In other tantras, when the four joys are generated, not much is said about joining emptiness to the first three joys, but a lot is said about joining emptiness to the fourth, or innate, joy. Here, as explained previously, mind isolation is developed in order to perceive the reality of the mind. Therefore bliss and emptiness are joined for all four empty states.

If the bliss of the three exalted wisdoms is not joined with emptiness, there is no focus upon no-self, and no nonfabrication[725] aspect will appear, which means that just the white, red, and black appearances themselves will arise. If the bliss and emptiness of those three wisdoms are united, then from the ascertaining consciousness focused on the view, the appearance of distance between the three objects and object-holding consciousnesses will necessarily be removed. Therefore the three appearances do appear to the mind, but they do not appear to its ascertaining side. For example, if the nonfabrication aspect of the ārya meditative equipoise appears to a conceptual mind, it will appear in a nondualistic aspect to the ascertaining part of that mind, but in general this is not a disappearance of dualism to that conceptual mind.

As soon as the non-aware state[726] of close-to-attainment with its aspect of darkness clears, an empty appearance resembling the clean and pure sky of dawn will arise, even from the lower stages onward. If that is so, why is the creation of the three wisdoms taught in mind isolation but not the creation of the all-empty state? This is true, but the teaching of just the three wisdoms is based on the fact that the exalted wisdom of *actual* clear light is not produced below the stage of illusory body. Nonetheless, it is not the case that *illustrative* clear light is not produced. So when speaking of the three wisdoms, where is illustrative clear light? It is included in close-to-attainment. In the beginning of close-to-attainment, there is a darkness-like aspect in which awareness has not subsided; in the middle, a phase where it has become a state of non-awareness; and at the end, a phase where the non-awareness has cleared, resembling a clear and pure sky free of the three contaminating conditions. If illustrative clear light is equated with the all-empty state and

four empty states are posited, the first two phases are included in the greatly empty state.

In general, the halting of the winds in the first three empty states to a greater degree will produce a long and intense clear light that is pure and nonconceptual. [238] In particular, the awareness subsiding during the non-awareness state of close-to-attainment to a greater degree will disable the mind from becoming distracted by other objects and induce the entrance into clear light. The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Ignorance, like a hook, will ensure that consciousness is not mixed with anything. Clear light is activated and is of an entity that is without contamination.[727]

During the time when clear light appears, you should remember the view of emptiness and place the mind single-pointedly on reality alone, without engaging the mind in any other objects for as long as the winds do not stir the consciousness. The *Compendium of Practice* states:

> For as long as the consciousness does not stir, sleep and gaze on the clear light.[728]

The reference to the clear light of sleep is merely illustrative. When your mental consciousness becomes the entity of great bliss, you remember the meaning of no-self, and this will accomplish the union of bliss and emptiness as object and object-holding consciousness. Therefore there is no need for any separate method of joining these two.

The bliss-and-emptiness union of the three wisdoms is the mind that is the basis of this isolation. That mind turned away from holding to characteristics and from not becoming the entity of great bliss is the meaning of isolation.

The presentation of the empty states given in this section on mind isolation should be understood as reference for previous and later sections.

The faults of not understanding these precisely and the benefits of understanding them[729]

Not understanding exactly how your mind exists in terms of the eighty intrinsic natures and the three appearances by relying upon those tantras that teach these topics, then you are cocooned by the karma and afflictions of holding

to I and mine like a silkworm and experience the fruits of the two types of karma accumulated in the past. At the end of this life, you abandon the old aggregates through the process of entering into the ultimate clear light of death, and the similar-to-the-cause result of this dharmadhātu, or clear light of death, will be to take an intermediate-state body composed purely of wind and mind. Then, driven by either of the two types of karma, like the workings of a waterwheel, you take birth again and again in the five realms of living beings and experience the sufferings of samsara.

For those who possess the exalted wisdom that understands mind isolation through the process of the intrinsic natures and the three appearances, the winds that stir the virtuous and nonvirtuous intrinsic-nature conceptual minds will dissolve during the forward process, [239] the empty states will gradually arise, and those practitioners will enter the clear light. During the reverse process, when the winds of the appearances are stirred, it is perceived as the movement of the intrinsic natures and is turned toward the gateway of self-consecration.[730] From this you will gain liberation. This has been a paraphrase of the *Compendium of Practice.*

To sum up: You understand that holding to true existence turns the wheels of samsara and plants the imprints of obscurations to omniscience. You then see that the conclusive view of no-self will uproot that object and that, if this view is not generated into the entity of great bliss, the exclusive cause for the exalted-wisdom dharmakāya will not be complete. You see that bliss arises from the dissolving of the winds that move the conceptual minds, and if that bliss, too, is not generated into the entity of the four empty states that arise from winds dissolving in correspondence to the death process, then the exclusive cause of the sambhogakāya, which is the illusory body created in correspondence to the intermediate state, is not complete. Through this process you then develop mind isolation. This explains the earlier statement that if you do not enter this path beforehand, you will not find the exclusive cognition that realizes the reality of mind, even in countless eons, and you will not be able to actualize the conventional illusory body.

Part 7

The Conventional-Truth Illusory Body

24. Gaining Instructions on the Illusory Body

[240] *Completion stage of the two truths*

1. The completion stage of each truth
2. The completion stage of the two truths inseparably combined

The completion stage of each truth

1. Completion stage of the conventional illusory body
2. Completion stage of the ultimate clear light

Completion stage of the conventional illusory body

1. Actual instruction on the illusory body
2. Associated instruction on the illusory body

Actual instruction on the illusory body

1. What kind of listener should perform what kind of activity
2. Stages of explanation by the teacher

What kind of listener should perform what kind of activity

Five Stages says that the disciple endowed with four attributes, in order to receive the instructions on illusory body, should first praise the guru and then make requests.[731] The first of these four attributes is "to have followed the generation stage and to have received the initiations," meaning to have first received the initiations and to have followed, or trained in, the generation stage. The second is "to be possessed of the wisdom that has understood the thinking of the four kinds of tantra," meaning to have the wisdom of having trained in the four classes of tantra. The third is "to possess the learning

of the three isolations," meaning to have trained well in the path of the three vajras. The fourth is to have "great faith in the two truths," meaning to have a very firm faith in the completion stage of the two truths individually and of the two truths inseparably joined. Such a disciple should please the guru for a long time. After pleasing the guru, he should make a host of offerings and offer to the guru a sixteen-year-old girl. He then offers praise, beginning "In your body there are no cavities." This is followed by the requests, beginning "An accumulation of omniscient wisdom . . ." An older translation of *Five Stages* says that the nine initiations of the garland and so on, together with the secret initiation, are given after the core teachings on illusory body have been imparted, and this is followed by the praises. The Chak translation says, however, that after having received the nine initiations and the secret initiation, praises and requests are made in order to receive the illusory-body core teachings. This is the better translation. Lakṣmī also explains it this way.

Those of the past say that this passage from *Five Stages* teaches that with the learning of the three isolations you then receive the secret initiation. [241] Holding to this they say that if you have received the vase initiation completely, then even if you have not received the higher initiations, it is acceptable to meditate on the three isolations. This is very wrong because to those who have not received the higher initiations—which make them a fit vessel for the completion stage—the secrets of the completion stage should not be revealed. Also, the meaning of the text is that those possessing the learning of the three isolations receive the secret initiation as a prerequisite for the praise and requests that are to be made in order to receive the illusory body instructions. If this were not the meaning, then, because it says that having received the nine initiations together with the secret initiation those who possess the learning of the three isolations make the requests, it would erroneously follow that it would be perfectly acceptable to meditate on the three isolations even before receiving the initiations of the garland and so forth. Nāropa's explanation that if you have received the secret initiation you are a suitable vessel for the illusory body is the meaning of this text.

Even if you request the instructions after having received the full initiations, you still perform the three activities of pleasing the guru and so forth and make the praises and requests, because this is common procedure both for receiving initiations and for instructions.

Having made the requests, the disciple asks the guru for the instructions on the illusory body. The way this is done is described in the *Compendium of Practice* and should be understood from that work:

> From the generation stage until the completion of isolation of the body, the features of the three vajras and so on are only imagined. Therefore in body isolation there is no deity form, because the body is just a collection of particles. Also, in the process of practicing to the completion of speech isolation, there will only be the mere cognizing of vajra repetition. There, too, there is no aspect of the deity because the sounds are like echoes. The completion of mind isolation also is limited by only perceiving the intrinsic-nature appearances. So there, too, there is not an entity that is the form of the deity of supreme aspects, because mind is mere appearance. By this thinking, no abiding can be found that depends upon the conventional. Therefore, Master, with your words, enable me to understand generation into a deity from exalted wisdom alone.[732]

The nature of this request is as follows: Beginning from the generation stage, it is explained that all holding to ordinary appearance is purified into clear light, from which your mind is generated into the form of a deity. When those of discernment analyze this, they state that from some level on the path there is a need for the creation of the form of the deity from exalted wisdom alone, one that is not just imagined. From the beginning of the generation stage until the completion of mind isolation, however, that does not occur. [242] Because of this "thinking," or situation, at such times, no abiding within the respective samādhis that depend upon a conventional illusory body can be found. Because of these reasons, I need to understand from the words of the guru the generation of an actual illusory body from exalted wisdom alone that is not deity creation from mere belief.

The explanation of these reasons is as follows: From the beginning of the generation stage until the one greatly secret family, the forms of the deities of "the three vajras and so on"—"the three vajras" refers to the body, speech, and mind vajras, while "and so on" refers to those of the five families, the hundred families, and so on—are created by mere belief, which just visualizes these deities. Therefore there is no illusory-body deity during body isolation because the body is merely a collection of particles. This means that although the mind imagines a deity form, the reality is that the basis for this belief that prides itself to be the form of a deity is none other than the old body of basic elements and elemental development in the form of a collection of particles. These lines are teaching that we need something that is not a creation

formed by mere belief focused on the illusory-body deity and that the deity form, which is the basis of the yogi's pride, is not a form of the coarse body.

Moreover, as far as the completion of speech isolation also, there is no illusory body deity "aspect," or form. The word "also" indicates that like the previous lines, here too there is no form other than that generated by imagination. So what happens in vajra repetition? Through the process of entering, abiding, and rising, the winds as the basis of vajra repetition are made very serviceable, and through this process there is just the mere "cognizing" of the sounds as being "like echoes." Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*, when going through the sequence of the stages, describes vajra repetition as "cognizing" prāṇāyāma. The *Vajra Garland* also says, "the characteristics of the winds are cognized."[733] The word "mere" refutes the creation of a deity form that is not mere imagination.

As far as the completion of mind isolation, also, an illusory-body deity endowed with the supreme aspects of the marks and features of an enlightened being is not found. The word "also" indicates, as in the above, that the previous reasons apply here. So what happens in mind isolation? "Intrinsic-nature appearance" should be understood as a term referring to the appearances. "Intrinsic natures of the appearances" refers to the conceptual minds. Therefore mind isolation is limited by only perceiving the three empty-state intrinsic-nature appearances. This is because at that time, the yogis perceive their own minds as mere appearances empty of the conceptual minds.

Those followers of Guhyasamāja in the past who explain the nonexistence of the deity form as referring to the nonexistence of the deity form of the stage of union have not understood the context here. I also cannot see as representing the meaning of this passage the explanation that the last three reasons establish there is no deity form in body, speech, and mind and that, [243] by meditating within the three isolations with a conceptual mind conventionally contrived, the deity body of the stage of union will not be found.

The Chak translation has "not depending upon the conventional," but the above translation is better. If these questions of the *Compendium of Practice* are not conclusively understood, then the answers, which teach the essential points of the illusory body in this wonderful tradition, will also not be understood, so know them well.

Stages of explanation by the teacher

1. Explanation prior to the actual illusory body
2. Explanations of the stages of the illusory body

Explanation prior to the actual illusory body

The guru hears the requests for teachings on the illusory body, generates compassion for the disciple, and teaches. Such teaching is instruction from the words of the guru and is not found elsewhere. *Five Stages* says:

> Knowing the stage of self-consecration
> is taught to be the conventional truth;
> it is gained by the kindness of the guru
> and not elsewhere.[734]

In the *Compendium of Practice* also:

> I will bring you to comprehend the unimaginable reality of the deity taught by all the buddhas, which comes from the lineage of the gurus and is not even the province of the mighty ones of the tenth level.[735]

Also in *Stage of Self-Consecration*:

> Phenomena are like dreams and illusions;
> all Buddhists do declare this true,
> but they have not understood.
> Facing away from self-consecration,
> that having consciousness and wind,
> like a rainbow, of the nature of mind,
> it is not seen by their wisdom.
> Ignorant of the analogy of illusion,
> they travel to the perfection of listening
> for eons beyond measure,
> but without the words of the guru
> they cannot actualize the illusory.
> Therefore, with the wish for the fruit of enlightenment,
> completely abandon all pride,
> ride the Vajra Vehicle, and make effort
> to please the guru.[736]

If the reference to "the mighty ones of the tenth level" is applied to the statements in the *Compendium of Practice* and *Five Stages* that when you attain

mind isolation you dwell on the tenth level, then it means that on that level and at that time, the illusory body cannot be actualized. If it is applied to the tenth level of the Perfection Vehicle, it means that it cannot be actualized by Perfection Vehicle paths. *Illuminating Lamp* also says:

> The completely pure deity yoga is beyond all conceptualization. It is your own individual knowledge, the province of all the buddhas, dwelling inside the container of the precious aggregates, free from the extremes of existence and nonexistence, not the province of those who follow the words and those who are intellectuals but only known from the core teachings of the guru.[737] [244]

This is saying that the pure illusory body has to be understood solely from the core teachings of the guru. It is not the province of those who follow the literal meaning of words, those for whom the meanings of the tantras have not been well explained by the six sides. This phenomenon has been taught from the words of the master Nāgārjuna. The pure illusory body has to be understood from the teachings of the guru, and the same can be applied to third-stage illusory body.

The illusory body has to be known solely from the core teachings of the guru, and its ultimate teachings are those of the *Compendium of Practice* and *Five Stages*. However, a few core teachings do appear in the works of the other disciples of the master. Whatever teachings are not clear in *Five Stages* are clarified in the *Compendium of Practice*, and so they should be understood there. Although many details are not found in these texts, the main points are those found there. Therefore, if you can understand well what is being definitively taught in these texts, you will not err on the important points of the core teachings. If you do not spend a lot of time and effort on them and instead put your efforts into the lesser instructions, then you may gain a partial view of the main points of the teachings on the illusory body that has to be known solely from the core teachings of the guru, but you will not have the thought that these teachings are actually there. If, however, you put the greater and lesser instructions together and examine them, it makes a great difference, and therefore the lesser teachings, too, are necessary. It is said that, for most difficult points of mantra, you rely upon the core teachings of the guru. Among these, reliance upon the guru for instructions on the illusory body is critical and completely unlike any other.

It is said that the illusory body has to be known solely from the teachings of the guru, and if you wonder what the advantages are of knowing it in this way and the disadvantages of not so knowing, *Five Stages* says:

> For those who do not find
> the stage of self-consecration,
> efforts in sutra, tantra, and conceptualization
> will come to nothing.
> For those who gain the stage of self-consecration,
> the nature of the lord[738] and every buddha,
> in this life, they will
> without a doubt gain enlightenment.[739]

If you do not receive from the guru the methods to achieve this body, whatever effort you put in it will not result in enlightenment. If the methods are known, practiced, and the result achieved, then in that life you will certainly become enlightened. This supreme feature of speed, characterized by attaining enlightenment in one life, is due to the presence of inseparable bliss and emptiness and of the illusory body. Of these two the latter is the harder to comprehend, and when it has been investigated and discovered in this great tradition, you should know that its meaning can be carried over to other traditions.

25. Methods of Attaining the Illusory Body

[245] *Explanations of the stages of the illusory body*

1. How the basis found in the core teachings on the illusory body is set out
2. How the illusory body is attained in dependence on the above

How the basis found in the core teachings on the illusory body is set out

To attain the illusory body, you have to know how the basis on which it is attained exists in the basic state. In *Five Stages* it says:

> All beings are without independence;
> not arising independently,
> the cause is clear light,
> and clear light is the all-empty.
>
> By the mind are ordinary beings
> bound in the chains of samsara,
> and by that very mind, the yogi
> travels to the abode of the Sugata.
>
> Here, nothing whatsoever is born;
> there is no death whatsoever.
> The abiding nature of mind:
> know this as samsara.[740]

The first verse teaches that sentient beings do not arise independently without relying upon a preceding death clear light and that they are therefore born from the clear-light all-empty state. The second verse teaches that sentient beings take birth through the power of the mind and winds of the death

clear light and that this very mind and wind that circles in samsara arises as the illusory body for the skillful yogis to become enlightened. The meaning of this verse is explained differently in the commentaries to *Five Stages*, but that this explanation is the intended meaning can be known from Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* when it says that the intermediate state—the cause of samsara for ordinary beings—becomes the illusory body for those endowed with the core teachings. The third verse teaches that there is no creator of birth and death other than the nature of mind and wind alone and that it is this that circles in samsara.

Stage of Self-Consecration also teaches the foundation of the illusory body:

> The elements of earth and so forth
> and likewise the four empty states,
> as causes for birth and death,
> these are the eight phenomena.
>
> From clear light comes the greatly empty,
> from that arises method,
> and from method arises wisdom.
>
> From that comes wind,
> from wind comes fire,
> from fire is water born,
> and from fire comes earth;
> in this way are living beings born.[741]

The text continues, "Earth element dissolves into water," up to "In this way the three realms cease." This was cited previously. Then:

> In this way, since time without beginning,
> they engage in the cycle of existence
> for as long as its nature is not seen
> by the illusion-like samādhi.
> Therefore the self-cognized illusion,
> although it dwells within the body,
> is of little merit and not discovered.[742] [246]

For as long as the nature of this foundation of the illusory body is not seen by the illusion-like samādhi, you engage in the cycle of existence. Engaging in samsara refers to both wandering in samsara and continually engaging with imprints of samsara. To stop the first, the illusion-like samādhi is needed. This is the illusion-like samādhi common to both sutra and perfection vehicles. The illusion-like samādhi needed to put an end to the second has a shared as well as an exclusive type. Although the exclusive comprises both bliss and emptiness united and the illusory body, here it refers to the latter.

When explaining the foundation of the illusory body, to say that other than just wind and mind there is no separate person who circles in samsara is not to say that the actual phenomenon being conventionally labeled as a person is wind and mind; rather it is said in order to identify the primordial body of a sentient being as being the basis for the designation of "person." The *Vajra Garland* also says:

> Apart from the essence, the individual *prāṇa*,
> there is no other in the three realms;
> the illusory, created by wind in the three worlds,
> is seen as if dreaming a dream.[743]

There are no bodies in the three realms other than the essence of sentient beings, which is their individual *prāṇa*, or winds. Therefore the illusory bodies of the three realms produced by the winds are like the bodies in a dream. Taken literally, this verse mainly reads as if it were speaking of the actual foundation for the creation of the illusory deity-body. However, it could be read as applying to that body itself, and so in Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* it is cited as a reference for the creation of the illusory body of the deity from wind and mind alone. The *Vajra Garland* says:

> Birth, duration, and destruction,
> dwelling in intermediate existence
> for as long as the world conceptualizes,
> they are manifestations of the winds of the mind.[744]

This is saying that the birth, death, duration, and the intermediate states of living beings are manifestations of just mind and wind. *Explanation of the Intention* also says:

All that is labeled as sentient beings,
with recognition or without,
arises from the winds and is ended by the winds.
That unknowing mind dwells in the ocean of samsara,
where, by going wayward, it migrates
into dogs, jackals, and cows.[745]

This and subsequent passages speak of wind and mind becoming various types of beings. Teaching that all beings are merely bodies formed from wind and mind means that because the primordial body that acts as a basis of designation for "sentient beings" is just a body of wind and mind, there is therefore no primordial body beyond that. It is not saying that there is no external body or that the coarse body of ripened karma is not the body of sentient beings. [247] Thus the bodies of sentient beings are two in number: a temporary body and a primordial body. The first of these is not the body of wind and mind but a coarse body of ripened karma composed of elements and so on. The second is the body formed of wind and mind alone. At the time of transmigration into the womb and so forth, the coarse body is not born, but it is not that there is no body of a sentient being. Likewise, at the time of death, the coarse body composed of elements is discarded, but the body of a sentient being is not lost. Therefore this present body is not the primordial body. It is like the heat of water. The primordial body, because it is not lost on all those occasions, is like the wetness of water. Right now, at this time of possessing a coarse body, the primordial body is merely wind and mind, and so the coarse body is like a house for that body.

Although there are other reasons for the above descriptions, the main reason is the identification of the primordial body as the basis for which the deity illusory body is created. The mind of this primordial body is not sensory consciousness but purely mental consciousness. The wind too is none of the other four main winds or any of the five branch winds but is the life-sustaining wind alone, and of the coarse and subtle forms of that wind, it is the subtle form. Bodies formed from this wind and mind of sentient beings at the time of ordinary existence—with arms, legs, and so on—are those that arise and appear separately in the intermediate state and in dreams. The kind of body made of wind and mind that does not appear with arms, legs, and so on is that described above. The above citation says, "Although it dwells within the body" on the basis that this foundation exists.

The support for the present state of consciousness is the very coarse body

composed of elements as well as the subtle mind-body, but this does not mean there are two separate continua. You should know that it is not necessary for the subtle body to abandon the status of the coarse body in order to exist, and although the main basis for the designation of "person" is the wind and mind, this does not contradict the fact that the coarse body is still the support of that person.

How the illusory body is attained in dependence on the above

1. The methods for achieving the illusory body found in the works of the master and his disciples
2. A very clear method for achieving the illusory body
3. Benefits of achieving the illusory body
4. Methods from the core teachings of the gurus

The methods for achieving the illusory body found in the works of the master and his disciples

If the above is a description of the basis for the achievement of the illusory body found in ordinary existence, [248] how is that foundation developed for the achievement of the illusory body on the path? *Five Stages* says:

> That, well possessed of the winds,
> the three consciousnesses again
> become the body of the yogi.
> This is called the "illusory body."
> In this way, therefore, here
> all beings are said to be like an illusion.
> Dwelling in the illusion-like samādhi,
> everything is seen in this way.[746]

The Chak translation has "those three consciousnesses well possessed of wind, again . . . ," which is better. The first four lines say that through meditation on the inner and outer prāṇāyāma methods, the mental consciousness part of the illusory-body basis is developed into appearance, increase, and close-to-attainment states of mind isolation. That mind and its wind-mount becomes the body of the yogi, and this is the "illusory body." The word "again" means that this does not only apply to the taking of a body of

wind and mind when that yogi took birth. The next two lines say that this is the way to achieve the illusory body, and "therefore, here" in this highest of vehicles, where "all beings are said to be like an illusion," there is a meaning of "illusory" not shared with the Perfection Vehicle, the lower tantras, or the generation stage. On the term "like an illusion," the *Vajraḍāka Tantra* says:

> Like an image in a mirror,
> a dream, illusion, a bubble,
> and an optical illusion,
> whoever sees in this way,
> such seeing is taught to be supreme.[747]

These analogies are those similarly listed in *Five Stages*, which means that the exclusive meaning of similar passages found in other highest yoga tantras should be understood in the way it is explained here.

The next two lines say that the yogi who has achieved the illusory body sees all sentient beings similarly. This means seeing their primordial bodies in the manner described above. The yogi also sees all environments, too, as being like his own illusory body, because they are all seen as manifestations of wind and mind.

The way this process is described in the *Compendium of Practice* is:

> A perfect knowledge of your mind exactly as it is; not found within the aggregates, elements, and sources; a mere appearance in the form of mere exalted wisdom alone in the form of the deity possessed of all features and illustrated by the twelve analogies, such as an illusion or a dream: This is the body of the buddhas, its nature being that of mind.[748]

"Mind exactly as it is" refers to mind isolation. "Not found within the aggregates, elements, and sources" means that the illusory body is formed only from the wind and mind of mind isolation and not from other parts of the body. [249] The first "mere" excludes the illusory body being formed from the aggregates and so forth; the second excludes it being formed from the conceptualizations. The illusory body, illustrated by twelve analogies and possessed of the marks and features, is formed from the mere exalted wisdom of mind isolation.

Then a question is asked:

> It is said in the teachings that without the support of a body, there is no entity of mind, and that without mind, a body is not apprehended. If that is so, how by mind alone can a body of a deity be formed complete with all features, such as arms and legs? Those with views that apprehend will not believe this without scripture and insight. Therefore, Bhagavan Vajra Master, I request that you teach a method for easily actualizing the reality of this nonapprehended deity.[749]

The word "mere" in the previous statement that the body of a deity possessed of every feature will be formed from mere exalted wisdom excludes any actual cause that is not mind. Taking this into consideration, it cannot be that a complete body of a deity, with arms and legs and so forth, is formed from mind alone because the teachings say, with regard to the support of the body and the supported mind, that if one is not present, the other is not present also. "Those with views that apprehend," meaning those with thoughts of doubt, will not attain any conviction that cuts those doubts without scripture and "insight," meaning reasoning. Therefore I request you to teach and cut the doubts regarding the method for actualizing the "reality," or illusory body, of this "nonapprehended," or characteristic-free, deity.

The reply:

> Those who dwell in the ways of the sutras and so forth and those meditators who abide in the generation stage may repeat and have great faith in analogies such as, "All dharmas are like illusions, dreams, and reflections," but by these analogies they will not understand the teachings on self-consecration and how the body of a deity, whose nature is that of mind, is fully formed from exalted wisdom alone. Therefore I, following the yoga tantras, will bring you to understand these causes and conditions for becoming the complete Vajrasattva.[750] [250]

By dwelling in the sutras and so forth, you can say that all dharmas are like illusions, and by focusing on that develop great faith, but you will not understand the meaning of illusory body self-consecration. This refutes any idea that those who comprehend decisively the illusion-like falseness described in Madhyamaka, and who meditate upon it to become free of holding to true existence, have gained an introduction to the illusory body. This may be a

samādhi on the general meaning of illusion, but it lacks the understanding of the hidden meaning of the third-stage illusory body and the ultimate illusory body of the fifth stage. Generation-stage meditators may have great faith in the fact that all dharmas are like illusions, but they, too, do not understand the core teachings on illusory-body self-consecration. This refutes any suggestion that the state of nonattachment that abides in the understanding that the deity form appears but lacks any inherent nature is an introduction to illusory-body self-consecration. In the generation stages of highest yoga tantra, there are many instances of very stable samādhis on appearances that are pure, very clear, and as unobstructed as a rainbow, and at that time there is a separation from clinging to true existence by joining with the view of emptiness. It is taught, however, that by this alone they do not understand the teachings on illusory-body self-consecration and how the body of a deity is fully formed from only exalted wisdom. In that case, there is no need to mention that those in the three lower tantras also do not discover these teachings. There are those who focus and hold their minds on the image of a deity in a mirror[751] and finally meditate on dissolving that deity into their own body. When they sit in meditative equipoise on that appearance of purity and clarity, there arises a state of nonclinging. This they incorrectly hold to be the illusory-body self-consecration. A good understanding of the above points is a complete refutation of these mistaken views.

Therefore it is being taught that the understanding of an illusion-like falseness unconnected with any meditation upon the form of a deity, the deity form of the generation stage within a meditation on this falseness in conjunction with the form of a deity, and even the deity form of the three isolations in which the completion-stage practitioner has achieved the great bliss—none of these is the illusory body of self-consecration. The "yoga tantras," on whose reliance will bring knowledge of the core teachings on the above, refers to the root and explanatory tantras of the glorious Guhyasamāja and so on.

Concerning the way in which you are brought to understand the illusory body as being the cause and condition for becoming the complete Vajradhara, the text continues:

> In truth, the mind lacks shape and color, is mere appearance, is of an entity equal to space, and—like the ultimate truth—is difficult to reach. That may be so, but the three appearances that are mere appearance rely upon the winds. In common they are light in weight. Therefore the winds bind the consciousness. Then the

> wisdom and method appearances will arise, together with rays of light as well as the illusion-like form with all the various qualities. On what does this ride? It is the wind. That mind vajra, like riding a horse, will travel wherever it wishes.[752]

The commentary[753] glosses "in truth" as "in reality" and asks if the illusion-like causes and conditions exist ultimately. The reply is that the mind does not exist ultimately, but since conventionally the three appearances are together with the winds, then "the winds bind the consciousness," in which "bind" is glossed as "causes to wander." This is an answer from the point of view of both levels of truth and therefore does nothing to resolve the original doubt. [251] Also, "causes to wander" is an irrelevant remark and so this answer has no meaning. Therefore the mind without color and shape, and "equal to," or similar to, space, has no form. Like the ultimate truth it is difficult to "reach," or understand. "In truth" means "it is true." This is the meaning, as can be understood from similar descriptions found in the section on mind isolation. Mind has no form, "that may be so, but the three appearances" of mind isolation "rely upon the winds." Therefore the winds "bind," or hold, the consciousness. Concerning the next phrase, the older translations mostly follow the translation cited here. Some have "Having become common, they are light and mixed." The Chak translation has "The three appearances become the element of wind. That is the support and it is light." On the former version some say it means that the winds and consciousness are mixed, and because wind is light, consciousness is also light. However, taking the meaning of "light" here to refer to the fact that wind is far subtler than the other elements, it is something suitable to be mixed with consciousness. This is a quality they have "in common." Such an explanation is in keeping with the chapter on mind isolation from the *Compendium of Practice*.

With wind and consciousness mixed, then from wisdom first appearance and method increase of appearance, together with the five rays of light, the illusory deity form arises endowed with all qualities of arms and legs and so forth. In short, if mind is alone without wind, the form of the deity complete with face, arms, and so forth will not arise from it. Because wind, with its five rays, and mind are of one entity, however, there is no hindrance to the creation of the deity form. This teaches that consciousness alone, appearing as the form of the deity, has the appearance of form, but it will not produce the actual illusory body.

Although the text speaks of wisdom and method, just before that all three

appearances are mentioned, and so the basis for the production of the illusory body here is the same as it is in *Five Stages*. On the "causes and conditions," the substantial cause of the mind of the formed illusory body is the preceding mind, and the cooperative condition is the wind. The substantial cause for the body of the illusory body is the wind, and the preceding mind is its cooperative cause. The mind vajra of the three appearances riding on its wind-mount, which is like a horse, will travel to wherever it wishes. This means that when the illusory body has been created from the primordial body of the mind and wind of mind isolation, it can separate itself from the coarse body and travel outside or inside the body as it wishes.

On this point the *Compendium of Practice* continues, "This is clearly taught in the *Sutra of the Transmigrating Consciousness*."[754] This cited sutra speaks of the arms, feet, and so on of the intermediate state formed immediately after death as being like the shadow[755] of a person appearing in water, which experiences no cold or heat, happiness or pain, which has no flesh and so on, and cannot be destroyed by the elements. [252] The Chak translation has "This consciousness, when it starts to transmigrate, leaves the vessel of the body and takes on another form." After this it continues, "In this way, the intermediate existence of an ordinary being becomes the cause for samsara." The passage then continues as above. This sutra does not clearly describe the illusory body, but by its description of the formation of a body from wind and mind complete with limbs and so forth and the separation of that body from the old aggregates, it is very clear as an illustration that determines the existence of the illusory body. Also, in terms of the wind and mind that normally arises as the intermediate state for those not possessed of the method becoming the wind and mind arising as the deity illusory body for those trained in the method, the *Compendium of Practice* states that it "very clearly teaches" it.

The *Vairocana Enlightenment Tantra* says:

> The pure rainbow-like body
> achieved by meditation on reality.[756]

This is cited in the *Compendium of Practice* in the section on illusory body. It does not actually illustrate the method for achieving the illusory body. Nonetheless, if it is established, generally, that by meditating on the meaning of reality you will achieve the rainbow-like body, then it must be established, specifically, that if you meditate on reality within the three isolations also,

you must achieve the rainbow-like illusory body. In that sense it is an appropriate citation.

A very clear method for achieving the illusory body

To achieve the illusory body you will need the ability to separate the coarse and subtle bodies through the power of meditation. These two can be separated by the yogas of upward consciousness-transference and by the process of *entering the household.* In these methods you first train in the pot-yoga meditation as described in Abhayākaragupta's commentary on the *Saṃpuṭa Tantra, Sheaves of Instructions*, and then repeatedly develop the focus of the consciousness on its wind-mount being ejected from its residence of the heart. Here, however, you do not engage in these practices, but follow instead another special method. When the stages of death occur from earth dissolving into water up to death clear light, these stages naturally result in the separation of the coarse and primordial bodies. In the manner of this illustration, you perfect the inner and outer prāṇāyāma practices, such as vajra repetition, that necessarily precede mind isolation. You then complete mind isolation through a process that mirrors the stages of death—earth dissolving into water and so on—and by this practice, the two bodies will separate. Finally you develop the illusory-body self-consecration from just the mind and wind of the empty states. "Self" in self-consecration refers to the wind and mind as the basis for the conventional designation "I." That "self" generated into the form of Vajradhara is "consecration."

This is very different from the creation in which you have separated the body of wind and mind through the power of entering the household [253] and imagine yourself as the form of Vajradhara, because the form developed here is not one created merely through the power of imagination but is the wind and mind themselves developed into the body of a deity. Therefore, if it is developed, it is different from the body of a deity that is merely the appearance of an aspect of that mind.

Once the illusory body of the stage of union on the path has been achieved, its continuation is assured. It exists as a reality and therefore fulfills all the criteria for being a "vajra body." When third-stage illusory body is actualized into the actual clear light, it disappears through purification. Therefore, although it is called "vajra body," it does not fulfill all the criteria. Therefore, on the basis that it no longer exists as before, it is not contradictory to call it a "wisdom body" existing in the mind of the yogi. However, except when

using the term *third-stage illusory body* without differentiating the actual illusory body from its simulation, a deity body that appears to the mind alone as separate from the coarse body is not to be held as the actual illusory-body self-consecration.

Apart from saying that the illusory body is achieved from the wind and mind of the three appearances of mind isolation, the works of the master and four disciples are not clear where in the forward and reverse processes of the empty states the illusory body is achieved. Lakṣmī and others posit an all-at-once achievement in which you arise immediately from the clear light in the form of Vajradhara like a fish leaping out of the water, as well as a method involving the stages of close-to-attainment and so on in which you arise as Vajradhara at the junctures of clear light and close-to-attainment, close-to-attainment and increase, and increase and first appearance.[757] Our own position will be made clear in the section on the stage of union.

Separating from the old body does not mean abandoning the status of the old body, as explained previously. This can also be understood from *Illuminating Lamp* stating that the pure illusory body remains in the container of the aggregates and so on.[758] If the yogi who had achieved mind isolation produced the illusory body by a transformation of both coarse and subtle aggregates, then the explanation from the works of the master and his disciple that the illusory body is produced from just wind and mind would be incorrect. For example, if a blanket is to be produced from the entire weave, it would be wrong to take out two strands of wool and say that it could be produced from these two alone. When the illusory body is first created, it has to be created from the wind and mind of the empty states, but once it has been created and is in existence, there are many occasions when the illusory body is present and the wisdoms of appearance, increase, and close-to-attainment are not actually manifest. Therefore it is not the case that when these three disappear the illusory body will disappear, and when the latter is present the former has to be present also.

The kind of propelling intention[759] initiated to create the illusory body is not clearly taught in other works of the master and his disciples. [254] However, you should apply the thinking found in the *Compendium of Practice*, which says that if you are to attain enlightenment in the intermediate state, you propel the intention with the thought, "Dwelling in the clear light, having cast off the ordinary aggregates, I will arise through the process of self-consecration."[760] This should also be applied to the simulated illusory bodies.

This type of body is illustrated by twelve similes of illusion in the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium*: illusion, the moon reflected in water, an apparition,

a mirage, a dream, an echo, a city of the gandharvas, an optical illusion, a rainbow, lightning, a bubble, and a reflection in a mirror.[761] Illusion is only used once as a simile, and yet these are called "twelve similes of illusion." The thinking behind this is that the first of the twelve illustrates the others or that these are "similes of the illusory body."

On these twelve similes, when the form of Vajradhara is generated from just the wind and mind, all parts of the body are complete, and yet it is nothing more than wind and mind, and so it is like an illusion. Since it is able to appear anywhere, it is like the moon reflected in water. Being without flesh and bones, it is an apparition, like the shadow of a person. In an instant it can appear and disappear, like a mirage. Being a body formed from just wind and mind means that it is like a dream body, which is separated from the coarse body. Being included in the continuum of the body formed by the ripening of karma and yet appearing elsewhere, it is like an echo. The supporting and supported mandalas of that body are like the city of the gandharvas. Like an optical illusion, although it is one it can appear as many. It is like a rainbow in that its five colors are unobstructed and appear individually. Dwelling within the aggregates of the body produced by ripened karma, it is like lightning within the clouds. Arising suddenly from the sphere of emptiness, it is like a bubble rising through the clear water. With all its features of limbs, body, and so on complete, it is like the reflection of Vajradhara appearing in a mirror. These are a way of illustrating the illusory body of the path of practice, but when using them to illustrate the illusory body of no further practice, the sixth and tenth simile should be made to fit that context. In *Stage of Self-Consecration* "shadow" refers to apparition, and instead of optical illusion, the text has "cloud." As for synonyms:

> It is known as "self-consecration."
> With characteristics revealed as an illusion,
> it is definitively illustrated.
> The conventional truth, the illusion,
> the complete sambhogakāya,
> it is a being of the gandharvas,[762]
> the vajra body, Vajrasattva, the great being.[763] [255]

Benefits of achieving the illusory body

As for the benefits of achieving the illusory body, it is taught that you will definitely attain enlightenment in that very life. *Five Stages* also says:

The supreme, the nature of every bliss,
the great being comes and goes,
in an instant gaining from space
a place to stay, clothes, and food.
He will sever samsara and become the teacher
of the highest of sentient beings,
to be worshiped by all the gods,
prostrated to again and again.[764]

The *Compendium of Practice* says that you will receive the initiation of the buddhas. The *Root Tantra* also says:

Vajra body, speech, and mind
meditated on as Mañjuvajra
emanating to body, speech, and mind
to become like Mañjuvajra,
this very nature of joy,[765]
adorned with every adornment,
whose light of blazing vajras
illuminates a distance of a hundred leagues,
never to be seen by Brahmā, Rudra, or others.[766]

Illuminating Lamp explains this passage as follows: Mañjuvajra is the illusory body that has the nature of mind. That is meditated on as being your body, speech, and mind and also as emanating to the bodies, speech, and minds of the three realms, which thereby become like Mañjuvajra. "Blazing vajras" refers to this body's natural light, which illuminates the vast areas of immeasurable and countless worlds for "a distance of a hundred leagues." It is adorned with the thirty-two marks and so on. If the achievement of such a body of wisdom is never seen by gods such as Brahmā, there is no need to mention that it will not be seen by others, because it is the province of the nonreturning stage. That great mahāmudrā of Mañjuśrī is not seen or touched by ordinary beings. Therefore this samādhi is known as "non-apparent."

Right after this explanation the text continues, "Because this body, with its nature of illusion, will be achieved through purification by clear light . . ." It also states that it enters the clear light through the two meditative absorptions, but it does not say that the stage-of-union illusory body enters the clear light through the two meditative absorptions. Thus it is describing third-stage illusory body. To dwell on this stage does not exclude those who have

not attained the ārya levels, and so "not seen by ordinary beings" refers to those other than the achiever of this stage. Like the previous statement that it is not seen by Brahmā and others, it means it is not seen by ordinary beings who have not achieved the illusory body.

To take comfort in those samādhis that do not possess a fraction of the above qualities, having been introduced to the actual attainment of this illusory and exalted-wisdom body, is to make the mistake of not knowing at which level this illusory body is achieved, [256] the methods to achieve it, or what excellent qualities arise upon achieving it.

The ways to generate the mantra body of the generation-stage practitioner and the exalted-wisdom body of the completion-stage practitioner are not clear in other works. Therefore there are many from other traditions who have asserted all descriptions of the ways to generate the deity for the completion-stage practitioner to be those of the generation stage also. Although those of this tradition have differentiated the two types of deity generation, a good differentiation of the different points of each type is rare to find. Therefore, not wishing this most secret of points to disappear, I have clarified this matter.

Methods from the core teachings of the gurus

1. The methods that have come about from the core teachings
2. Applying their teachings to literary sources

The methods that have come about from the core teachings

These instructions within the Marpa tradition were set down by Serdingpa. For the way to identify the actual illusory body, he says in *Four Points* that the Ārya and his disciples assert that an illusion is something that appears but has no intrinsic nature and that that "body" is the body of a deity. Thus the deity body is something that appears but has no intrinsic nature. The causes that bring about such a body are as follows: You meditate on the deity body of the generation stage. Any apprehension of that generation-stage deity body is purified by the three empty states from which the deity body of method and wisdom is "emitted," or appears, without interruption, like a bubble bursting through the water or a fish leaping out of a clear stream. The process is that the four neuter letters dissolve into the indestructible drop, and it is that drop that appears as the deity body, with the consort illustrating emptiness, the male deity illustrating appearance, and the two in embrace illustrating

the taste of emptiness and appearance arising as bliss. The short vowel *a* like a punctuation stroke exists with five light rays, and because it is the body of wind and mind, you meditate on dissolving into it. Moreover, the deity form of the illusory body is meditated on within a triangular source that is white outside and red inside.

Serdingpa's *Five Stages with Mantra Circle* also speaks about the meditation of withdrawing into the indestructible drop at the center of the inner petals of the lotus and then that drop arising as the deity and consort like a reflection in a mirror. Serdingpa's *Five Stages Complete on One Seat* speaks of placing the mind upon the drop and meditating on that as the clear light of the path, and then with further concentration the drop arises from the empty state as the deity body, which then performs the various activities. This contradicts two of the greater oral core instructions and the lesser core instructions of this tradition.

Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* says that the short vowel *a*, which is like a punctuation stroke, exists with five light rays. In reality it is the body of mind and wind, and therefore the mind is withdrawn into it. That is devoid of any holding to reality and so is not existent. Having no intrinsic nature yet still appearing, it is not nonexistent. That is the identification of "illusion." Āryadeva says that the "body" is the form of the deity. [257] Therefore the clear and empty deity form that appears but is without any intrinsic nature, and is devoid of recognition, is posited as being the illusory body. Because it is illustrated by the twelve similes of illusion, when it is recognized as being like a reflection in a mirror and so on, that is the recognition of the illusory body. Although in this work the actual illusory body is posited as being the indestructible drop, it can be understood from the text that this refers to the drop rising in the deity form. From this it should be known that the two lesser core instructions explain that the short vowel *a* and syllable *hūṃ* as being the illusory body.

According to *Five Points of the Five Stages*, illusory-body practice consists of meditative equipoise on illusion and illusion liberation. For the first practice, place windows east and west in the house and make a skylight. Fill a copper vessel with resin and on top place a raised sword. In front place a mirror showing the reflection of a cloth-drawn Vajrasattva. Focus the mind on this and meditate. Because no apprehension of true existence occurs, that is the recognition of illusion. He says that this has been taught as an instruction for training on the generation stage and asserts this to be the meaning of the lines from *Five Stages* beginning "Vajrasattva, well drawn . . ."[767]

As for the way to eradicate this apprehension of true existence, Serdingpa in his *Three Illusions: Teachings of the Tantra* describes three illusions: those of meditative equipoise, dreams, and the intermediate state. The first has three sections: holding the illusion, single training, and the condensed meditation. For the illusion, praise and criticism is heaped upon the form of the deity reflected in a mirror. You look to see if it invokes pleasure or displeasure, desire or anger. When it does not, you bring the image before you. Again you praise and criticize it and see if it responds with desire and anger. Seeing that it does not, you absorb the deity into yourself and meditate on yourself as the illusion-like deity. You praise yourself and from the right side offer yourself a massage of sandalwood paste, jewels, and so on, to which you show no delight or desire. You then criticize yourself, and from the left visualize being attacked by an axe, your wealth being stolen, and so on, to which you show no anger or displeasure.

Some who follow the teachings of this tradition keep the name "meditative-equipoise illusion" and posit the meditation as follows: With a strict body posture and eye position, the mind is held in an unmoving state. This is the holding of the mind, and because of that the winds are held. From this state several experiences arise. Earth, water, fire, air, mind, states of mind, ignorance, and the all-empty state dissolve successively, with the former dissolving into the latter. The signs from mirage-like to darkness occur. This is followed by the all-empty cloudless-sky-like sign. Then in the reverse process, from the three minds and winds of the three appearances, immeasurable clear appearances of the deity illusory body and so on are produced. If after meditation the results are not fully developed, you initiate the enhancement process. [258] An extensive practice of this is found in Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages*.

If you can't achieve this, meditate with single-pointed focus upon the heart of the deity appearing in the mirror. The clarity of the reflection is the first appearance. Then the reflection appearing as if it were cut off and separate is increase. The reflection becoming unclear and dark is close-to-attainment. Then everything becomes clear like the sky, and from this state the various experiences occur as described above. These instructions are clearly based on the belief that the explanations from Puṇḍarīka's *Stainless Light* and Vajrapāṇi's *Cakrasaṃvara Commentary* cited earlier, which describe various experiences seen in space through the yoga of withdrawal as self-consecration and the self-consecration described here to be one and the same.

The enhancement practice is based upon the practice of some earlier

Tibetans. When they focused on any object, they called its initial clarity the first appearance, its subtler appearance was increase, and finally, its fading into obscurity was close-to-attainment.

For the training in the illusion liberation, Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* speaks of the waking practice during the day and the dream practice during the night. For the first, you visualize yourself clearly as the deity, and with the experience of bliss and emptiness in the throat area, bring the wind and mind together and meditate. This produces the experience of prāṇāyāma penetration from which arises the illusion liberation. In the night, dreams occur, but because they do not occur in this practice, they are different. The transworldly liberation means traveling to the realm of Akaniṣṭha to receive blessings from the gurus, to meet many emanations and receive teachings, and so on. By training in worldly liberation it is said that you will see and travel to the realms of Trāyastriṃśa, Tuṣita, and Akaniṣṭha, receive offerings from the young gods and goddesses, be able to restrain the drop as a result of these experiences, and show various miraculous powers. You set the aspiration to accomplish these liberations, practice the pot yoga at the throat, and from that it is said that they occur like the events in dreams.

In the instructions on meditative-equipoise illusion, it says to focus on the drop with the short vowel *a* punctuation stroke and to meditate on the winds conjoined. When you develop the experiences of traveling though space and so on, you have developed the illusory-body liberation. Without taking pleasure in or becoming conceited about this accomplishment, you practice traveling without obstruction through cliff faces, ravines, and so on. According to Serdingpa's *Four Points*, you visualize yourself clearly as the deity. Light radiates from the coil of hair between the eyebrows and so forth, making offerings to the buddhas, manifesting in suitable forms for sentient beings ready to be trained, and having purified them of the two kinds of obscuration, the light rays withdraw back into you. All those who have been transformed into deities dissolve into light, and by way of the two meditative absorptions, they withdraw into you. [259] In this way, the liberations, as described above, are accomplished.

Applying their teachings to literary sources

The statements from Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* and *Four Points* that the short vowel *a* with light rays is in reality the body of wind and mind cannot be applied to just the actual form of the letter *a* that appears to the meditating mind. Therefore it is the subtle life-sustaining wind symbolized

by that letter. The mental consciousness apprehending that letter is the wind and mind of the primordial body. Furthermore, it is explained that the illusory body is produced from the bliss-and-emptiness experience of the arising empty states without intervention. This means that the illusory body is produced without intervention from anything other than the wind and mind of the three empty states. Thus the fundamental assertions that the drop in the form of the deity is the illusory body and that the drop and the letter are the illusory body should be understood to mean that the illusory body is produced from the primordial body symbolized by these phenomena; whereas the mere transformation into a deity of the drop and the letter appearing to the mind should not be held to be the achievement of the illusory body. With this understanding, *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* says that vajra repetition should be performed with the placing of the mantra circles, and continues:

> Imprints of ordinary conceptual minds,
> with mantras are focused on as the mind.
> By purifying the body, conceptual minds are purified.
> Purifying the winds, they are without contamination.
> Purifying the winds, the conventional-truth illusion
> of exalted wisdom is actualized.[768]

This shows how the prerequisite vajra-repetition meditation upon the mantra circles purifies the winds, thus producing the illusory body. The forms of the mantra letters arranged on the petals of the circles symbolize the mind of the eighty conceptual minds of ordinary existence as well as the winds that move them. The "body," or form, of each letter is withdrawn and purified in sequence, from which the conceptual minds, together with the winds, are purified. From the purification of the winds that move the conceptual minds, the exalted-wisdom body, which is the conventional-truth illusory body, is actualized.

Moreover, the same work says:

> From just the wind and mind,
> the appearance of the illusory body . . .[769]

This too supports the explanation that the illusory body is produced from just the wind and mind whose eighty conceptual minds and associated winds have been purified. Even if this way of understanding is compared with the

root and explanatory tantras and the works of the master and his disciples, the meaning is the same.

On the topic of the illusory body being illustrated by the twelve similes of illusion, they explain how some of the twelve illustrate the illusory body and say that if these are recognized, the illusory body is recognized. This is saying that to ascertain how the similes illustrate the illusory body is to determine the illusory body. This is good. However, they take core teachings that have been explained as being enhancement practices to bring out generation-stage meditations that are not developing clearly enough and posit them as referring to the meaning of the *Five Stages* lines beginning [260] "Vajrasattva, well drawn . . ." They then proceed with a meditation involving concentrating upon a reflection in a mirror, mentally removing that image from the mirror, and then placing it in between oneself and the mirror, finally dissolving it into oneself and positing that this generation of oneself as a deity is the illusory body. This contradicts their own assertion made previously that the illusory body is produced, without intervention from elsewhere, from the experience of the bliss and emptiness of the exalted wisdom of the empty states. It is also at variance with all authentic classical works and even contradicts their own root text.

Even within the instructions on each of the tantras possessed by Lama Marpa, there are many different core teachings from several gurus, and it is not possible to say that they are all transmissions from Nāropa. If you ask, then, what is the meaning of the following lines from *Five Stages*?

> Free from reality and no reality,
> Vajrasattva, well drawn,
> its reflection, like a vivid appearance,
> in a mirror without taint,
> supreme in every characteristic,
> gazing at its form is never sated;
> this is shown to the good disciple
> and explained as self-consecration.[770]

The form of Vajrasattva, divorced from the two extremes, is drawn perfectly, and the drawing is reflected in a dust-free mirror, where it appears as a vivid image. It is endowed with the best of every physical feature, and gazing at it never becomes tiresome. These lines are matching up the simile of the image in a mirror with the illusory body that it illustrates, whereby the significance

of the simile is shown to the disciple and explained as self-consecration. This is the meaning of these lines. It is not teaching that you should focus and meditate on the image appearing in the mirror, remove it, withdraw it into yourself, and then that the resulting deity form is the illusory body. If that were not the case, you would have to perform similar actions with the other similes.

Five Stages speaks of three of the twelve similes. The reflection is a reflection of a painting of Vajradhara and does not refer to ordinary reflections, illustrating that all features of the body are complete at any one time. The rainbow illustrates that it is unobstructed and yet its colors are clear and unmixed. The moon reflected in the water indicates that the single illusory body has the ability to divide up into many manifestations to accord with the disciples' dispositions. *Self-Consecration* says, "With these, meditate on the form,"[771] thereby stating that you should meditate on the illusory body by way of the three similes, but this means that you should ascertain what these three are illustrating and then meditate. If the two methods of achieving the illusory body through meditative focusing on an image in the mirror were correct, perfecting the generation stage and the three isolations would have no purpose.

If you say that the experience of various appearances in the yoga of withdrawal is described as self-consecration in Puṇḍarīka's *Stainless Light* and other works, and therefore these are referring to illusory body, [261] then all eight signs from mirage to the black Rāhu-like sign must be illusory bodies. At the end of this sequence, however, the reverse sequence occurs, and so to describe the deity form that arises at its end as being solely the illusory body is not correct. The mirage and other signs described in the the yoga of withdrawal of Kālacakra are signs of the winds of the sense organs, which normally engage with ordinary objects, starting to turn away and eventually turning inside. The four signs of mirage and so on that arise during mind isolation and so on are signs that the four empty states are about to arise, and for that to happen it has already been explained many times that the wind has to enter and dissolve inside the dhūtī. Therefore there is no way that the forms of the moon, sun, and Rāhu seen in the yoga of withdrawal can be the same as the moonlight and so on experienced during the three empty states.

In short, if you have learned well that the conceptual minds and the winds that move them dissolve while developing the empty states of mind isolation, and that the sense consciousnesses have dissolved even before that, then when you come to the development of the illusory body, the doubt

that wonders whether to meditate by looking with the physical eyes will not arise.

Generally, whatever arises during the post-meditation session appears as false and illusory. When great bliss is induced during the practices on the three isolations and the illusory body, emphasis is given to applying a decisive view of emptiness to it and meditating accordingly. During the post-meditation session, though, eradicating the holding to true existence by examining if a reflection is pleased or not pleased and so on is insignificant. Furthermore, developing certainty through a perception that has destroyed all apprehension of inner and outer phenomena as truly existing so that subsequently objects naturally appear as illusions depends upon a good understanding of Madhyamaka reasoning.

Five Stages asserts that once the illusory body is attained, then in whatever activity is undertaken, all is seen as being like an illusion. This could be taken to be in common with seeing everything as an illusion as expressed in the Perfection Vehicle, but the special illusion talked of here, which is the primordial body of all living beings and is seen directly as wind and mind and so on, is as described previously.

Having become very well trained by meditating on the winds, and wishing to experience the appearance of various objects such as world realms, first propel the intention. Then, if you practice holding the winds in closed union, those objects will appear like illusions. In the Ārya literature, however, there are no teachings of such a practice and its subsequent meditation. Also, the practice of withdrawing the appearances produced by the two meditative absorptions during the meditation on the illusions is also not taught there, nor can it be inferred from the literature. [262]

Associated instruction on the illusory body

1. Sources of the instruction and the time to teach it
2. Actual instructions on sleep, dreams, and so on

Sources of the instruction and the time to teach it

This tradition teaches instructions for sleep and dreams, as well as instructions for death and the intermediate state. On what tantras and works of the master and his disciples are these based? Venerable Gö explains both death mixing and intermediate-state mixing for attaining enlightenment in the

intermediate state and sleep mixing for attaining enlightenment in future lives. Dream mixing does not occur in these core teachings. These mixing practices applied for the attainment of enlightenment in this life are also not explained. These practices are explained by citation of passages in the *Compendium of Practice.*

In the teachings of Nāropa passed through Naktso, these mixings are not found. In the teachings transmitted from Marpa, many instructions on all four can be found. For attaining enlightenment in this life, sleep and dream mixings are taught, and for enlightenment in the intermediate state these two as well as death mixing and intermediate-state mixing are explained. For attaining enlightenment in future lives, all four are explained. The relevant texts here are only concerned with the teaching aspect and are not clearly applied to sources. *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* says:

> In order to train in the dream body,
> from the time of being revealed as an illusion,
> see all appearances as the conventional truth;
> this is the stage of the conventional illusion.[772]

Also, "Train in dream and illusion becoming one." These are instructions on dreams. Other instructions include "The three mixings of the intermediate state" and, as cited previously, the instructions to meditate on the five stages by applying them to "a single day" and to birth and death existence. These teach in brief the sleep mixing and the death and intermediate-state mixings.

As for the works of the great guide Nāgārjuna, in his *Five Stages*, the intermediate state is explained in the context of the illusory body, and these two may be described as being mixable, but with that exception, the literal rendering of the text is not clear on the mixings. Nāgabodhi in the completion stage speaks of practice corresponding to the death process, but there is no mention of any application to the intermediate state or to sleep and dreams. In the generation stage, however, he teaches practice corresponding to birth, death, and the intermediate state. Candrakīrti explains death and intermediate-state mixing for attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state, and in the fifteenth chapter, when describing all phenomena as being like dreams, he cites a passage from Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* as a source for asserting that the phenomena of the waking state and the phenomena of dreams are the same in terms of being unreal. Apart from that there

is no actual explanation of the mixings. Therefore to assert in this tradition that the explanations of phenomena being like dreams, as found in chapter 15, teach the instructions on dream retention and so on has no basis in fact. [263]

Therefore the teachings on mixing sleep and the four empty states are found only in the *Compendium of Practice* and not in any other works of the master and his disciples. In this work it says:

> Then, through developing this from life to life, you train in phenomena without self and fully comprehend the yoga of mixing. Then mix with the intrinsic-nature appearances, and by this process focus upon the ultimate truth. The process is as follows: The aggregates and so on enter the subtle elements. The subtle elements enter mind. Mind enters intention,[773] and intention enters ignorance. With this yoga, you will fall into sleep. At the time when mind and intention have entered ignorance, you immediately lose all awareness. After that comes the clear light, an entity of inexpressible exalted wisdom. If that disappears, the winds will find an intrinsic nature, and at that time other dreams will arise. For as long as the consciousness remains unstirred in the state of sleep, you look at the clear light. This is the inner stage of mastery—the ultimate truth, divorced of body, speech, and mind, and of your individual self-perception. With this process you put an end to the host of tathāgatas that dwell within the body mandala and dwell within the state of reality,[774] and thus you will gain the siddhi of good fortune. Without relying upon activities with or without elaboration, you will very quickly completely transform your body in this very life.[775]

The Chak translation reads, "the winds move an intrinsic nature, and if other dreams do not arise," which is a better translation. Immediately after this passage the text continues:

> This meaning is expressed in the great yoga tantra, *Explanation of the Intention*:
>
> > Seeing these inner phenomena, form, and so on
> > is said to be special insight.
> > Visualizing Akṣobhya, and so on

in accordance with number
is known as quiescence.
These in their state of reality
of being non-phenomena
is explained as being at peace.
In the mandala of the state of reality,
the yogi will enter enlightenment.[776]

The transformer of sleep into the samādhi of the four empty states is described as a yogi who is engaged in completely unelaborated activities. For such a person the methods to develop the four empty states are those of sleep and of the waking state. Although the first of these methods is not described, the text does say that when that person develops the four empty states, it is done in that manner. The *Compendium of Practice* continues, "Through this practice you are engaged in the activities of a *bhusuku*."[777] [264] The text explains that you engage only in the activities surrounding eating, drinking, defecating, and urinating, and apart from that, when sleeping you meditate on the clear light. If you understand the essence of this clear-light meditation explained only from the process of falling asleep, you will be able to understand fully the essentials of the other mixings.

The above passage from *Explanation of the Intention* clearly teaches that the yogi enters "enlightenment," in which the aggregates and so forth enter the mandala of the state of reality, or clear light. But how does this passage become a reference for the aggregates entering the clear light through the process of the four empty states of sleep? That the yogi develops sleep into the entity of the four empty states is not clearly expressed by the words of the tantra, but this can be understood from Āryadeva making it clear through the core teachings of Nāgārjuna. In that case, the significance of the aggregates and so forth entering the clear light as expressed in the *Explanation of the Intention* passage is complete in this particular way of entering clear light, and it can therefore serve as a reference. For example, the word *bulbous*, which is a term used to describe the characteristics of a pot, does not actually say "a lapis lazuli bulbous entity is a pot" when a base of lapis is joined with *bulbous*, but that bulbous characteristic expressed by the word is nevertheless complete within that base.

The instruction to "put an end to the host of tathāgatas" and you will "gain the siddhi of good fortune" is no different to the lines from the *Root Tantra*:

> Put an end to the host of tathāgatas
> and you will gain the supreme siddhi.[778]

So, by possessing similar characteristics, this citation can also be applied to the clear light of sleep. By mentioning the tantra text on which the teachings of clear light of sleep relies as reference, through reliance on the teachings of Āryadeva, the others can also be known.

This kind of sleep clear-light branch of apprehending is clearly the activity of those who will gain enlightenment in this very life. Therefore the highest instructions on sleep and clear light mixing are intended for the best of practitioners to gain enlightenment in this very life. This instruction is also needed for those who will gain enlightenment in the intermediate state as well as after a succession of lives, however, and that instruction also "arises from the core teachings of the gurus." If such explanations and methods to develop the four empty states of sleep were not to be found in the core teachings, present practitioners might see the passage from the *Compendium of Practice* that states that these are practices of someone engaged in activities completely without elaboration and, realizing that this is a special practice for those types of practitioners, give up meditating on this subject, thereby falling away from something very special. Lesser beings cannot practice the way of mixing of sleep and the four empty states exactly as taught in the *Compendium of Practice*, but this is not to say that they cannot develop an ordinary samādhi upon the mixing of sleep and the four empty states. It is necessary, therefore, to distinguish between the various levels of the path. [265] In this sense, this scriptural reference from the *Compendium of Practice* is applicable for present practitioners to engage in the empty states of sleep.

What is the scriptural reference for the instructions on dreams? Again, the tantra and other works of the master and his disciples are not that clear. Therefore, this is to be understood from the *Compendium of Practice*:

> Why do we sleep for a long time? Then why do we leave the container of the body and in dreams travel to the realm of Trāyastriṃśa or other places, enjoy the delights of the five senses, and return to this body? Why do we experience the fruits of good and bad inauspicious dreams? Similarly, the states of sleep and nonsleep, are they separate or not separate?[779]

These are the questions on dreams. "Why do we sleep for a long time?" is a question asking for the cause of a long sleep without dreams. The meaning

of the question beginning "Why do we leave the container of the body . . ." is as follows: Having been asleep, as described in the previous question, "then," when dreams arise, why is it that the dream body separates from the existing aggregates container, travels to other places, and then comes back to this previous body? The Chak translation "in dreams all the senses travel to the realm of Trāyastriṃśa . . ." would mean that the separated dream body appears to have the complete support of the senses. "Why do we experience the fruits of good and bad inauspicious dreams?" asks what it is that brings about in the waking state the results of good and bad omens seen in dreams. The question on whether sleep and the waking state are separate or not asks whether objects from the waking state appearing in dreams are different in terms of being real. The answer:

> In order to banish the doubts that regard and apprehend as a reality the body whose nature is one without beginning and to clarify the explanation on self-consecration, it is wonderful to ask questions on the characteristics of dreams. The forms of all deities of your individual self-perception, explained by way of dreams as being reflections, is to be understood by following the tantras and sutras. Listen well with a single-pointed mind:
>
> Aggregates, elements, sources, sense organs, and so on
> and the two consciousnesses are well withdrawn here.
> The great empty state dawns and sleep occurs.
> By the power of wind, dreams are seen.
> No differences are seen between dreams and being awake, [266]
> and through conceptualization you wish for the fruits of dreams.
> Beings sleep in the day and the night,
> and because of the dense earth they sleep a long time.
> By actions done, their fruit has not yet ripened;
> the wind again engages with this birth.
> When the fruit ripens, that very wind
> will swiftly travel to another worldly death.
> Like the mighty victor dwelling in the ten directions
> who has no flesh and bone to his form
> yet benefits living beings by engaging with the elements
> and with emanated bodies performing his deeds,
> by that process is the mind awoken from sleep.

> Desiring results in the trap of conceptualization,
> all phenomena are therefore like dreams;
> they are neither true nor false.[780]

The lines beginning "To banish the doubts that regard and apprehend as a reality the body . . ." mean the following: Not distinguishing the subtle and coarse forms of this present body, you hold just the coarse body to be the reality of the body and wonder how you can achieve the rainbow-like illusory body through such a basis. The Chak translation has "*like* reflections." Understanding this by following the tantras and using the example of dreams is taught by the lines from "Aggregates . . ." up to the line beginning "is the mind awoken from sleep." Understanding by following sutra is taught with the following citation taken from *Purification of Karmic Obscurations Sutra*,[781] which explains that in terms of being true or false, there is no difference between dreams and the waking state. Gaining an understanding by relying on tantras is explained by citations from the *Root Tantra* and the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium Tantra.*

The meaning of the first line is as follows: As described in the *Vajra Garland*, the first four aggregates, the four elements such as earth and so forth, four object sources, four sense organs such as the eyes, and the remainder of these phenomena, as indicated by the phrase "and so on," are "withdrawn here," into this body, meaning that consciousness engaging with its objects is ineluctably and gradually withdrawn. From this withdrawal, the first appearance and the increase of appearance are produced. These are "the two consciousnesses." The first appearance withdraws into increase, increase withdraws into close-to-attainment, "the great empty state dawns," and you fall into a deep sleep. As for "dense earth," *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* says that when placing the four mandalas in the body, the heart is earth. Other tantras also explain the heart as "earth." Therefore the wind gathered at the heart is "dense," and because of that dreams do not arise and sleep lasts for a long time. These lines teach generally the cause of falling sleep and specifically the cause of a long sleep.

"By the power of wind, dreams are seen" means that immediately on waking from the non-awareness of close-to-attainment the clear light of sleep arises, and when that disappears dreams will arise, because at this point the clear light has withdrawn into close-to-attainment. [267] According to the old translations "beings" should be affixed to "sleep."[782] The Chak translation reads "For living beings dreams occur day and night."

"The wind again" refers to the dream body formed from only wind and mind, traveling to other places, as can be inferred from the original question. The lines on ripening and non-ripening refer to whether the power of the karma that links the wind-mind body and this coarse body is finished or not. Because it is not finished, it "again engages with this birth," thereby teaching the cause for re-engaging.

The answer to the third question can be understood from the fact of there being a single continuum, as expressed by the teaching that the separate dream body will engage with the old body. The two lines beginning "No differences are seen . . ." and the three lines beginning "Desiring results . . ." explain that in terms of being true or false there is no difference between the dream state and the waking state. The Chak translation has "All those phenomena are like dreams."

The five lines beginning "Like the mighty victor . . ." explain that the complete sambhogakāya has no flesh or bones, but so that it will be seen by sentient beings, it enters a body of coarse elements and with a nirmāṇakāya performs deeds to benefit living beings. By such a process, you can understand the dream body traveling to other places during sleep and entering the old body when approaching the waking state. Because the dream body is like the sambhogakāya, you understand the illusory body. Because the dream body entering the coarse body is like the nirmāṇakāya, you understand how the coarse nirmāṇakāya is held by the illusory-body sambhogakāya. On these lines the Chak translation has "by such a process is the mind awoken from sleep."

Therefore the three empty states preceding the illusory body are illustrated by the three empty states of sleep that precede a dream, the actual illusory body is illustrated by the dream body, and the immediate aftermath of a dream illustrates the illusory body possessing the nirmāṇakāya.[783] Therefore you should understand from the teachings of Āryadeva that, of the twelve similes, the dream is without parallel. By understanding the similes they contain, the other examples will bring about an understanding of the illusory body, but the illustrative illusory body cannot be developed into the nature of the path from the simile itself, whereas such potential does exist within a dream. This too exemplifies the superiority of the dream simile. Furthermore, the teaching that the yogi transforms the four empty states of sleep that arise before a dream into a samādhi is the instruction on mixing sleep with clear light. If that is so, then through logical consequence, you can understand the instructions for mixing the subsequent dream body with the illusory body.

This can also be confirmed by the fact that three bodies of the path and three bodies of the bases to be purified are taught for both generation-stage and completion-stage practitioners. [268]

Therefore this is the way that the instructions on dream occur in this supreme tradition, and this process is necessary for all three types of practitioners.

The false *Triumph of Nonduality Tantra* says:

> The place of migration, together with wind,
> developed in the throats of all beings
> with the syllable *oṃ*, this very place,
> where *a nu ta ra* is spoken,
> then held, transformed, and increased,
> remembered as an illusion, and sealed,
> and the second, the meditative absorption, becomes the path.[784]

This work talks about holding dreams and so on, but it is difficult to have any confidence in it.

Concerning death and intermediate-state mixings, the *Compendium of Practice* and other works explains them in terms of attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state, and based on that, these instructions can also be applied to attaining enlightenment over a succession of lives, as was done with sleep mixing. The way to apply death and intermediate-state mixings and dream mixing to their references in the tantras and other works can be inferred from the methods described previously.

Therefore, if you bring these instructions on mixing, which are a feature of the Marpa tradition, to the classical teachings of the Ārya and his disciples, and you know how to explain them well, that is a peerless feature of this path.

In the section on the illustrative illusory body developed in reliance on dreams, instructions on dreams are linked with the illusory body according to the *Compendium of Practice*. Thus instructions on apprehending the empty states of sleep are also linked with the same practice. According to the practice, you enter the empty states of sleep from the time when you have at least the ability to induce the four empty states during the waking state. After that you meditate on the instructions for dreams. Therefore this practice can occur during body isolation, speech isolation, and mind isolation as

well. Mixing with actual death and actual intermediate state occurs at those times. Practices using facsimiles of those two are also termed *mixing with death and intermediate state*, and so they can be performed during the waking or sleeping states.

26. The Mixings

Actual instructions on sleep, dreams, and so on

1. Explanation of sleep and dream mixing
2. Explanation of death and intermediate-state mixing

Explanation of sleep and dream mixing

1. Sleep mixing
2. Dream mixing

Sleep mixing

In the basic state yet to be purified, first the empty states of dreamless sleep occur followed by dreams. Is the same fixed sequence followed on the path of practice—meditation of mixing sleep with the clear light followed by mixing the dream state with illusory body? [269] On the basis of *Five Stages* stating that illusory body is the third stage and clear light is the fourth stage, some later followers of the Marpa tradition split up these two mixings and posited meditation of the illusory body of the dream state as being the third stage and meditation on sleep clear light as fourth stage. Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* is correct, however, when it says that you apprehend the four empty states during the initial period of sleep and after that you arise in the sambhogakāya of the dream state, because the essence of the teachings on dreams is that the dream body arises as the sambhogakāya and that has to be preceded by the development of the empty states. Also, this corresponds exactly to the order of sleep and dream state in the basic state yet to be purified. Moreover, the illusory body of the third stage has to be preceded by the empty states of mind isolation, and the illusory body of the stage of union has to be preceded by the empty states of clear light. The intermediate state arises from the empty states of death, and the generation-stage first lord arises

from the withdrawal of the imagined deities into the clear light. These and others all follow the same pattern. Therefore sleep clear light has the name "clear light," but it is not true that below the stage of illusory body there is no illustrative clear light, as explained previously.

If the apprehending of sleep clear light precedes the meditation on dream illusory body, how is it apprehended? Generally, there are two ways of turning sleep into an entity of samādhi. It is a fact that if you have attained the stable samādhi of quiescence as shared by the Great and Lower philosophical vehicles and by the Mantra and Perfection Vehicles, you will not need any special effort to make sleep a samādhi. If, however, you actualize that samādhi in the waking state at the point of going to sleep and the continuation of that state is carried over into sleep, then it becomes entirely a samādhi that does not turn into ordinary sleep.

In the second method, when going to sleep, the four signs, such as the mirage, appear by bringing the winds into the dhūtī. When that is completed, the three empty states of the first moonlight-like appearance and so on will appear. After that, sleep is generated into the entity of clear light like a pure and cloudless sky. In the first method the four signs of the mirage and so on and the three appearances of moonlight and so on do not appear. Instead there arises the brightness and clarity of a pure vacuity. This, however, has no connection with the clear light of sleep, and in order to develop such a state, none of the methods described in the Mantra Vehicle for apprehending sleep clear light are necessary. It is thus not necessary to enter this vehicle in order to develop such a state. Developing the clear light of sleep here, therefore, is accomplished by the power of the winds being brought into the dhūtī and dissolved, as described by the second method.

In the waking state you practice the instructions on penetrating the vital points of the body [270] until you have at least developed the ability to produce the four empty states. Then these empty states are mixed with the empty states of sleep. If that were not the procedure, you would want to practice sleep mixing but would have nothing to mix. During sleep, for the most part, the subtle coming and going of the breath at the nostrils is not stopped. The complete halting of the subtle breath, as found in the empty states of dissolution into the dhūtī, is not to be found in the ordinary empty states of sleep, but that does not mean that the four empty states are not present. Also, on that point, there is a great difference in the intensity of the winds gathered at the heart and the level of dissolution of the coarse winds between the time of sleep before dreams arise and the time of sleep when they do. For the

yogi who has the ability to mix the empty states of the waking state with the empty states of sleep, even the subtle flow at the nostrils must cease and dissolve into the dhūtī when the empty states of sleep are generated. In this process, when going to sleep, the four signs of the mirage and so on may not at first appear in the correct order, but with training they will definitely occur in that sequence. Therefore generating sleep into a samādhi without the preceding three empty states occurring in their correct order will not be the clear light of sleep, because for the all-empty state to arise, it has to be preceded by the empty state, the very empty state, and the greatly empty state, since these are in a causal chain.

Consequently, the clear-light forceful-method teachings from the Marpa tradition say that by setting a boundary of one month, you focus on the black and white drop placed at the center of the four-petal lotus at your heart and apprehend the empty states of sleep. Continual meditation day and night within the space of that month on that object of focus will make it easier to withdraw the winds for some practitioners This is prāṇāyāma meditation teachings on the indestructible drop at the heart. It is also a mixing with sleep practice that must be preceded by the ability to induce the four empty states during the waking state, and it will not succeed by meditating only on the moment of falling asleep without meditating at other times of day and night. Moreover, concentrating on the object at the moment of sleep and repeatedly meditating on it may well bring about a recognition of the empty states of sleep of ordinary existence, but it cannot cause the genuine empty states of the dissolved winds to arise.

Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages* says that to apprehend the empty states of sleep before the dream-mixing practice, *a nu ta ra* should be placed at the throat. Metsön also asserts that the meditation is at the throat. Tsurtön's assertion that this meditation is performed at the heart is because the clear-light meditation is performed at the heart while meditation on the illusory body of the dream state is performed at the throat. He also explains that by focusing on the four letters of the petals, you join each letter to the apprehending of an empty state. On the above assertions, it is correct that you should apprehend the empty states of sleep before the dream mixing, [271] but when they are apprehended and linked in this fashion, the lotus together with the drop should be meditated on at the heart, as asserted by Tsurtön. Therefore meditation at the throat is not correct. When meditating on clear light, it has to be done at the heart because of its connection with the heart. The meditation to apprehend dreams through the power of aspiration

without the ability to practice dream mixing through the force of the winds dissolving is performed at the throat, and it is important to separate this out.

The *a nu ta ra* meditation as taught by the so-called *Triumph of Nonduality Tantra* may well be asserted by some Indians also, but the instructions of Nāropa advocate meditation on mantra circles at the heart and that whatever is not accomplished by these instructions is not going to be accomplished by these four syllables.

For these reasons, when apprehending the clear light of sleep, it is correct to follow the instructions of Marpa, which advocate meditation focused on the black and white drop at the heart. This meditation involves placing the focus on the indestructible drop at the center of mantra circles at the heart. Nonetheless, should you wish to elaborate on that meditation, you can arrange the mantra circles and perform the withdrawal processes as described previously.

Serdingpa's *Five Stages Complete on One Seat* speaks of focusing on the four letters at the heart together with the drop in the center, performing vajra repetition and apprehending sleep clear light. Whether the placement of these four letters is necessary or not has been discussed previously. Focusing on the drop at the heart, performing vajra repetition, and then apprehending sleep clear light is a truly wonderful instruction and expresses the meaning of a teaching from *Explanation of the Intention* at the end of its explanation of the recitation for the winds of the four mandalas:

> Well explained as being of eighteen kinds,
> it is dwelling within them.
> Just as within the pervading milk
> the fresh butter dwells,
> so does this peace dwell within
> Pāṇḍaravāsinī and the others.[785]

The tantra continues, "Seeing these inner phenomena, form, and so on," up to "the yogi enters enlightenment." Then:

> The incoming and outgoing breath of the yogi,
> the reality of the yoga as one,
> with wisdom dwelling in method,
> recite the mantras without decline.
> In all activities also—lying down and so forth—

with the knowledge of the yoga,
without words, without speech,
and beyond the three times, constantly recite.[786]

The first six lines say that clear light in the nature of the eighteen kinds of emptiness dwells within the vajra repetition of Pāṇḍaravāsinī and the others, in the same way as fresh butter arises from milk; thereby explaining that vajra repetition induces the four empty states. The lines from "Seeing these inner phenomena, form, and so on," up to "the yogi enters enlightenment," speak of the aggregates and so on entering the clear light, and it has been explained previously how the significance of these lines is also to be found in the clear light of sleep. The four lines beginning "The incoming and outgoing breath of the yogi" [272] explain how the recitation should be performed with winds and mantra joined. The remaining four lines beginning "In all activities also" teach that this recitation should also be performed even when lying down. So at night, when lying down, you use vajra repetition to induce the four empty states. This means that sleep clear light is induced by vajra repetition.

In short, whatever method is used in the waking state to induce the four empty states, then that same method will have to induce the four empty states while asleep and will thus perform the mixing. The best waking-state methods are the meditation upon the indestructible drop at the heart and vajra repetition, as explained many times already. You should know that these two methods for apprehending sleep clear light, which come from the teachings of venerable Marpa, represent the highest thinking of the root and explanatory tantras and of the Ārya and his disciples. It is also important to separate those core instructions that have become scattered and intermixed. If you understand this, you will able to resolve the doubt, "If *Compendium of Practice* speaks of sleep arising as the entity of the four empty states, where are the methods for apprehending the clear light of sleep?"

Generally, for whatever path, if you know how to skillfully bring that which exists in ordinary existence up into that path, it will be a swift path. During sleep, a natural withdrawing of the winds that create the four empty states does exist in ordinary existence, and if you know how to elevate that process into the path by the instructions on mixing, it will be a very swift path. Although the four empty states exist during our basic state, they are not obvious, and moreover, sleep severely reduces our awareness of them. Therefore, until they are elevated into the path, you cannot induce an ascertainment that can identify them. If the power of awareness is not reduced at all,

sleep will not come. If awareness is severely reduced, it will not be possible to ascertain the four empty states. Thus the instructions must bring about a state in which you are asleep but awareness is not so reduced so that you have no ability to induce an ascertainment of the four empty states.

Hindrances to this virtuous practice arising from sleep not occurring are minimal. Nevertheless, the core instructions contain many methods to remove them as well as hindrances occurring from excessively deep sleep. There are also other methods that are not found in the core instructions. At the completion of the four empty states of a sleep not too light and not too deep, at the time of the clear light, recall the view and cultivate this state for a long time. Otherwise, if you wake too soon or you dream too quickly, this can become an obstacle to that practice. A basic method to remove them will be explained later.

If a yogi has the ability to create the four joys and the four empty states from bringing the winds into the dhūtī and dissolving them but does not know these instructions on mixing, he may well mix the experiences he has developed with sleep and meditate accordingly, but the insights of the path will not reach any special levels in this life. [273] Without attaining the supreme state in this life, if he then applies his practice at death, by taking the four empty states of death into the path, not only will he just be free of the fears of death, he will not know how to transform the insights of the path into something special. Therefore you should become very skilled in the instructions on mixing. If you know them well, then even if you cannot accomplish the above, by taking them to your mind repeatedly, you will plant firm and wonderful imprints.

Of those who lack the ability to generate sleep into an entity of samādhi, there are those with and without the ability to ascertain the four facsimile empty states of ordinary sleep. Of those who have the ability to generate sleep into an entity of samādhi, there are those who generate it into the entity of the empty states of sleep and those who do not. Regarding the methods to generate sleep into the empty states of sleep, there are genuine and false methods.

This has been a thorough explanation of the above and is a way to gain a rough but unmistaken understanding of the essentials of the instructions for apprehending the clear light of sleep. Anything else will be explained elsewhere in greater detail.

Dream mixing

Those who have apprehended dreams using the power of the winds and have the ability to practice mixing the empty states of sleep will be able to know, "This is the first appearance, this the second," and so on when the empty states of sleep arise in sequence. They will know how dreams arise after the clear light of sleep, and through this they will be able to discern the boundary between the empty states of sleep and the appearance of a dream. In this sense, there is no need of any other method for recognizing a dream as being a dream. Therefore Āryadeva only spoke of a method to apprehend the clear light of sleep and did not expound another method for apprehending dreams.

For those unable to apprehend dreams through the power of the winds, other methods of apprehension are explained in the core teachings, because such people will not be able to apprehend dreams through any previously mentioned ascertaining of the four empty states of sleep. Moreover, without recourse to meditation on the paths, many people recognize dreams as dreams in ordinary existence. Strong aspirations in the daytime for certain activities can appear directly in dreams. Through this, it is not difficult to develop within a dream a consciousness that knows it is a dream. This cultivation of strong aspirations in the daytime is recommended as a method to apprehend dreams. Although it is possible that nights may pass without sleeping and thus no dreams, that will not create any significant obstacle to this virtuous practice of dream mixing. When sleep occurs, it is possible that the sleep is too deep and dreams do not arise, or that for some who spend the day solely in mental placement, dreams do not occur, or that even if dreams arise, they cannot be explained on waking. These occurrences are not significant, but when they do occur, if you know how to apply the remedies that can be found in the core teachings and the reasoning behind them, eradication is simple. [274]

Therefore, when it is not the case that sleep does not occur, and that when sleep does occur, it is not the case that dreams do not arise, then the way to accomplish the apprehension of dreams is by planting imprints in the daytime that will awaken at the time of dreams. This is done by propelling many times the thought that all present appearance is a dream, and particularly that in a dream you will similarly recognize them as dreams. Many dreams may arise and even last for some time, but if they are not clear, those imprints cannot awaken, and so it is important to have clear dreams. If you have clear

dreams from the beginning, it is easier to apprehend them. If not, you will need a method to make them clear. That involves focusing on a drop at the throat, between the eyebrows, and other places while going to sleep and so on. If you wake up as soon as you begin to apprehend the dream or very soon after, thereby creating an obstacle to the virtuous activity of dream mixing, then you need to know a method for prolonging the dream. Many such methods have been taught, but the main ones can be found from other tantras' teachings that the drops located in the heart and the jewel create deep sleep, the drops located in the throat and the secret place below the navel create the dream state, and the drops at the brow and the navel create the waking state. Using these teachings you can understand that a strong withdrawal of the winds into the heart and the jewel when going to sleep will bring about a dreamless sleep, and as long as the winds remain in these locations, this dreamless state will continue. When the winds begin to separate out from those two places to arrive and withdraw at the throat and the secret place, dreams will occur. If they remain there a long time, a long dream will occur. If not, the dream will be short. When the winds gather there, separate out a little, and move to the two other places, you will enter the waking state. In addition, if you know how to halt the rise to the waking state, then that is significant because from the above you should also comprehend the method for prolonging a state of sleep clear light that does not remain long when first apprehended.

Guru Marpa's instructions describe the importance of the heart as the vital point for apprehending the clear light of sleep, the throat as the vital point for apprehending dreams, and the navel when meditating on the caṇḍālī in the waking state. This should be understood by relying upon the above explanations. The importance of the vital point at the throat in the apprehending of dreams is based on the apprehension of dreams that cannot be apprehended through the power of the winds. The teaching on focusing on the drop at the crown during meditative union means that there are two vital points for the waking state.

The apprehending of dreams through the power of aspiration does not have the ability to ascertain the preceding empty states of sleep, but if the apprehension and so on is firm and well practiced, special instructions for apprehending the four empty states of sleep during that dream state can be found in the Marpa tradition. [275] If that is possible, then prolonged meditation in the sleep state so that it becomes firm and stable will mean that the winds will be easier to withdraw in the waking state and will be of great

assistance in inducing the four empty states of the waking state. This is an exception to what was explained previously.

Therefore it is best to first generate the four empty states of sleep through the power of the winds and then to arise in the dream sambhogakāya. Alternatively, you should at least generate the empty states of sleep by the method just explained and then arise in the dream sambhogakāya. If you do not know these dream-mixing instructions, then the very essence of the instructions on dreams will not be there.

The way to arise as the sambhogakāya of dreams from the dharmakāya of sleep and the assertion that if this is accomplished then without doubt you will have the ability to practice intermediate-state mixing are the instructions of Marpa as found in Serdingpa's *Five Points of the Five Stages*, and they are of great importance. Later followers, however, enter into these instructions without a great deal of thought, and when they have entered, they find it very difficult to comprehend the two exclusive methods of arising as the dream body and, in particular, the way that these instructions on dream mixing grant an exclusive ascertainment of intermediate-state mixing.

The best instructions on dream mixing are these. Ordinary instructions worthy of note are those found in the core teachings on emanations[787] and on viewing pure and impure appearances. This latter practice is carried out by the apprehension of dreams other than those created by the power of the winds dissolving in the dhūtī. As for the wonderful visual experiences that arise in the waking state, many images of gods, realms, and so on appear, but they are not real and are just appearances resembling the real thing. Likewise the appearances of pure realms and so on are not real but only resemble the reality.[788] The scriptural sources for this practice can be found in *Samādhi of Present Buddhas* and other works, but for fear of being too wordy, I will not write of them here.

The appearances viewed in dreams apprehended through the power of winds are very different from the above, but until you have reached an advanced level where the ability to practice the mixing has become powerful, they are merely images of the pure worlds and their residents, no different from those described above. Therefore, concerning the ability to prophesize and so on that is associated with this practice, there may well be some prophecies that are authentic, but there will be many that are not, and so it is difficult to have complete belief in them. With a good familiarity of dream apprehension accomplished through the power of the winds, there clearly exists a point from which this practice becomes a special method for the

reliable declaration of past and future events. [276] These special features, which are not the main features of dream mixing, are not explicitly taught in any of the great authentic works, but they are seen to be of benefit to people these days.

Apprehending dreams through the power of the winds is the foremost practice here, and so you should make efforts in these methods. You might make effort, but because it is clearly difficult to accomplish, you then apprehend dreams through an alternative method. Do not be satisfied with that but build on it and endeavor to accomplish the apprehending through the power of winds. If you do not know the exclusive instructions on dream mixing, then in the waking state you will not know how to accomplish the insights concerning the illustrative illusory body, and even if you do know, those insights will not be that significant. Moreover, without attaining the supreme state in this life, you will not know how to apply the special intermediate-state mixing at death. Therefore, as described previously in the section on sleep mixing, you should master this practice and so on.

Apprehending dreams occurs in ordinary existence and on the path. For the latter there is dream apprehending shared by other vehicles as well as exclusive dream apprehending. For the latter, there is the main practice and there are ordinary practices and so on. If you gain an understanding of these practices, you will separate the actual mixing of illusory body with dreams from its more incidental practices and so on, and you will not mistake the coarser points of the core teachings.

Explanation of death and intermediate-state mixing

1. Mixing for attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state
2. Mixing practices for the attaining of enlightenment over a succession of lives
3. Summary of the kinds of mixing

Mixing for attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state

Generally, the creation of a path that follows the process of ordinary death, the process of reaching the intermediate state, and the process of taking on another existence through birth is known *as bringing birth, intermediate state, and death to the three bodies* and *mixing with birth, intermediate state, and death*. Thus three separate paths of mixing can be established for

attaining enlightenment in this life, in the intermediate state, and after a succession of lives. Moreover, these paths are found on the generation stage and completion stage. Mixing clear light with actual death is explained in the *Compendium of Practice* and *Illuminating Lamp* in the section on attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state.

But what kind of insights of the path does that person attain in this life? The *Compendium of Practice* says, "Seeing the truth, realizing the completion stage, understanding reality."[789] [277] *Illuminating Lamp* says, "Realizing the stages of the completion stage." According to followers of Venerable Gö, this refers to having attained the stage of union but without any real familiarity and that it is "the abandonment of birth, but not the abandonment of death." The third stage of *Five Stages* says that once the illusory body is gained, enlightenment will definitely occur in that very lifetime. The second stage also says:

> Having well attained actual mastery,[790]
> you will go to a pure realm;
> never falling back from a buddha realm,
> by this very life, the omniscient state.[791]

This is saying that once the fourth stage is attained, this very life will bring about enlightenment. Therefore attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state means that the illusory body and clear light have not been previously attained. It also states that once the fourth stage has been reached, the three appearances are purified and therefore perceive reality directly. On this point the *Uttaratantra* states:

> The ārya has eradicated completely
> sufferings of death, aging, and sickness.
> These are not to be found because in such a one,
> there is no birth through the force of karma and affliction.[792]

Therefore, if the Great Vehicle ārya of the Perfection Vehicle has abandoned the death that comes through the force of karma, what need to mention the Great Vehicle ārya of the Mantra Vehicle? Here, attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state means that that person has *not* eradicated death brought on by the power of karma. Also, the *Compendium of Practice* states that the practitioner who attains enlightenment in the intermediate state is

of two types and that one type has no possessions with which to engage in the tantric activities, and so the above position is damaged by the further statement that those who have attained the illusory body get food and clothing from the sky in an instant. *Stages of the Bodhisattva* also says that once the Joyous level has been reached, they are never bereft of possessions.[793] So, as it is not possible for a Great Vehicle ārya to be bereft of possessions, this too damages the above position. Therefore "Seeing the truth" means the wisdom of mind isolation realizing reality and having completed vajra repetition, because seeing reality does not necessarily mean seeing it directly.

Furthermore, the *Compendium of Practice* says that those who are distracted by farming, business, service, and so on do not complete the necessary tantric activities and that others do not have all necessary provisions. They are thereby unable to complete the ritual practices as they are described in the tantra, and because their tantric activities remain incomplete, they will attain their enlightenment in the intermediate state. From this it can be inferred that if the activities were completed, they would have attained enlightenment in this very life. Therefore those activities are clearly those appropriate for the completion stage and, at the very least, must begin from the completion of mind isolation. From this we can understand that while such tantric activities are appropriate, the illusory body is not yet attained. These activities, then, must be for the attainment of the illusory body. If that is so, the following *Vajra Garland* verse is also an appropriate citation:

> Knowing the divisions of the appearances,
> enter into the activities.
> Having left behind the body of karma,
> you will attain the vajra body.[794] [278]

Such citations teach that if the activities are not completed, you will not attain enlightenment in this life. So to become enlightened in this life, the activities must definitely be completed. They also teach that instead of using the activities as methods to attain the illusory body, the four empty states of this life combined as one with the four empty states of death can be used. Thus there is no need to engage in activities that separate the coarse and primordial bodies through the force of meditation in general, as is done in the practices of consciousness transference and entering the household. Nonetheless, to separate the two bodies by developing the samādhi that creates the four empty states from the dissolution of the winds and the mind at the heart

and generating the separated primordial body into the illusory-body Vajradhara adorned with all the supreme features is a very difficult feat to accomplish. Therefore it is toward this purpose the activities should be directed.

On the subject of mixing such practices with death, the *Compendium of Practice* only speaks of the propelled intention to mix death with the ultimate truth. The Gö tradition followers assert the practice of vajra repetition at death to be the mixing practice. This is excellent because it involves focusing on the indestructible drop at the heart and is the method for the withdrawal process by way of the two meditative absorptions. In such a practice, the very dissolution process of earth into water and so on induced by the samādhis becomes the dissolution process of the death withdrawal process, and there will be no death process other than that. During the death clear light brought on by this practice, there is no direct cognition of reality, because up to this point the illusory body has not been attained, and for there to be a basis for the actualization of actual clear light, the illusory body must have been achieved. *Five Stages* says:

> The samādhi of self-consecration
> and the level of the clear light,
> through aspects of being cause and effect,
> are taught as being the two truths.
> The clear light is attained
> through the stage of self-consecration.[795]

The *Compendium of Practice* also:

> Without the realization of the conventional truth, the ultimate truth cannot be directly realized.[796]

The same work says, "Created by this will be the conventional truth." In this propelled intention the conventional truth is third-stage illusory body. On this *Illuminating Lamp* also says:

> At that moment, when the time arrives at the continuum, you rise and actualize the illusion-like samādhi.[797]

Moreover, this is not the illusory body preceded by the actual clear light.

The way to actualize the illusory body is not that first you arise as the

actual intermediate-state being and then actualize it after. [279] Rather, the wind and mind of the death clear light itself is generated into the illusory body. That which would become the intermediate-state being for others here becomes the illusory-body Vajradhara. On this point there are those who say that first you arise as an actual intermediate-state being and then through meditation the intermediate-state body is transformed to become the body of the stage of union. Others say that when you arise in the intermediate state, you meditate on yourself as possessing the body of Vajradhara. These assertions come from the mistake of not knowing the ways to achieve the illusory body.

The *Compendium of Practice* states that having understood how "death becomes the ultimate truth and birth the conventional truth," you develop the strong state of mind that thinks, "When I have entered clear light and left behind the ordinary aggregates, then I will arise by way of the stage of self-consecration." Taking this to mind and keeping it in mind, you will not lose that resolution for another birth and will therefore achieve the omniscient state. Thus it is said,

> Whatever thoughts people apply to their mind,
> of that nature they will come to pass, like Viśvāvasu.[798]

In this passage, it is established by scripture that an intention propelled toward the two truths at the time of death will come to pass. Here, there is no birth into another birth existence, and so "birth" here means that you propel the intention for the wind and mind—which for another person would become the intermediate state—to arise as the conventional-truth illusory body, and it will indeed come to pass as intended. Therefore, without question, you must desire the wind and mind of the clear light itself not to be born into the intermediate state and instead to arise as the Vajradhara conventional-truth illusory body.

But there is no intermediate state here, so how can this be called attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state? Well, in that case, in the withdrawal of the imagined deities into clear light there is no clear light, and when developing the first lord through the practices of the five enlightenments there is no actual Vajradhara. So these terms would also not be applicable. There are many other similar instances. Therefore, in the same way as the intermediate state follows on from the clear light of death, it is not contradictory to use the phrase *attaining enlightenment in the intermediate state*

for a development just from wind and mind that then becomes the enlightened state. To assert that after the clear light of death, a proper intermediate state is formed, and then through meditation on the path, you become enlightened in that intermediate state, is in disagreement with this tradition and with Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī.*

Because the third stage illusory body is accomplished at the end of the death clear light this means that during death clear light, this person does not perceive reality directly. Therefore, after attaining the illusory body, that person will achieve the remaining two stages in that form and become enlightened. [280] This method of achieving the illusory body also brings great certainty concerning the way to achieve the illusory body that will attain enlightenment in this life. Attaining the illusory body in the intermediate state involves separating from the previously held coarse body, but there is no certainty that this will happen when attaining enlightenment in this life. Such an attainment in the intermediate state takes no account of the intermediate state not being able to last for more than forty-nine days. Moreover, with this attainment you have the ability to travel to be in the presence of buddhas and to listen to instructions.

Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī says, "I will explain the stage of self-consecration, by which the yogi can perform activities for some eons."[799] The text then goes on to describe pleasing the guru, properly receiving the initiations, pledges, and vows. Then:

> By gaining the suchness discovered from the words of the guru,
> if you are unable to meditate in accordance with what was taught
> with secret and supremely secret knowledge, then meditate with
> this stage of reality.[800]

If you then meditate on the teachings on transference, then:

> Through the circumstance of these thoughts,
> my mind dwells in the realm,
> experiencing space-like clarity and great joy.
> Then, endowed with the miraculous powers,
> when I accomplish the form of a five-year-old child,
> I will experience an unparalleled perfection of bliss.
> Then, when I propel myself to another birth,
> I will realize perfectly the emanated form.

> Therefore, whatever thoughts exist in sentient beings,
> when applied to the minds of people,
> as taught in the sutras, become reality, like Viśvāvasu.
> The dharmakāya, of a joy equal to space,
> experienced for a moment at death, when fainting,
> when asleep, yawning, and in sex,
> if meditated upon, the minds of living beings
> will be purified.[801]

"My mind dwells in the realm" refers to dwelling in the clear light of death, and at that time reality is realized. "When I accomplish the form of a five-year-old child" refers to the time that others would attain the intermediate state. At that time, "an unparalleled perfection of bliss" refers to the attainment of the sambhogakāya, as explained previously. When others would be taking another birth existence, here you attain the nirmāṇakāya. These are the two bodies of the path. Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* does not mention the latter, but it can be added, because with the attainment of the illusory body you have the ability to take on a nirmāṇakāya, which can be seen as an object of your fleshly eye. The lines beginning "Therefore" are similar to those cited in the *Compendium of Practice*. The five lines beginning "The dharmakāya" describe previous situations when the clear light of basic state appears and teaches that they are to be taken into the path. This taking of the sambhogakāya here at the time when others take on the intermediate state is the creation of the illusory body without the formation of an actual intermediate-state existence.

The same work says:

> If you do not gain the three bodies,
> you will become chief of the holders of knowledge
> and gradually gain the mahāmudrā.[802] [281]

This is saying that if you do not accomplish the three bodies of the path, you will still become chief of the holders of knowledge with a special basis of practice for the activities of mantra. This is not teaching, however, a way to meditate on the path in the intermediate state for the practitioner who has not accomplished the three bodies of the path. Also, it seems that such a person is someone who would be born in a buddha realm without having to take birth in another existence.

Mixing practices for the attaining of enlightenment over a succession of lives

The root and explanatory tantras and the works of the master and his disciples are not clear on the way to practice mixing with death and the intermediate state for the attaining of enlightenment over a succession of lives. The explanations in the *Compendium of Practice* and *Illuminating Lamp* nonetheless do illustrate that these two mixing practices are acceptable practices. Therefore such teachings found in the works of gurus from this tradition are excellent in the same way that sleep and dream mixing practices are.

For this practice what present level of insight is needed for mixing with actual death? Properly receiving the initiations and guarding the pledges and vows and, with that as a basis, meditating on the generation stage is a crucial foundation for attaining enlightenment in this life, the intermediate state, and over a succession of lives. If such a person can then meditate on the methods for penetrating the vital points of the body and, by doing so, withdraw and dissolve the winds into the dhūtī to bring about a firm creation of the four empty states, and if they can apply that to a view that perceives well the significance of no-self, then that person will be able to mix with the empty states of death, and if they remember the view during the clear light of death, that will be a realization of reality. If there is no such view, even if the former factors are present, then that person may well be able to practice the mixing with the empty states of death, but there will be no realization of reality. There are only these two possibilities. If you can practice mixing with the former, then at that time, there will be a great severing of elaboration in the form of coarse dualism, thereby producing a truly special cognition of the meaning of reality; with the latter, however, the experience is very different.

If even these two have not been achieved, if you can still repeatedly bring to mind the stages in the manner they arise at death from the present time onward so that they become integrated in the mind, then through the force of such familiarity, you will be able to remember them at the point of death, and a recognition of the empty states of death will surely arise. This is because whatever the mind has become very familiar with in this life it will engage with again at the point of death. This is also taught in *Stages of Yogācāra*.[803] Depending on whether it is conjoined with the view or not, this recognition of basic death clear light can also be with or without a realization of reality.

The core teachings for the time of death in these situations are to bring to mind the signs from mirage to flame that arise from earth dissolving into

water and so on. Then, remember the teachings on the three empty states [282] and meditate on the teachings of the two prāṇāyāma practices and the two meditative absorptions, which are the methods for inducing the empty states through the path.

Lūipa's sādhana states:

> With mind at ease,
> the yogis do not show nirvana.
> At the time of transference, the yogis
> are led to the land of the ḍākinīs
> by the *śrī heruka* yoginīs,
> holding various flowers in their hands,
> accompanied by victory standards, banners,
> the sounds of music, offerings of song,
> and thus so-called "death" is a concept.[804]

This says that at the time of the yogis' "transference," or death, the heroes and heroines arrive, carrying various offering substances in their hands, and lead them to "the land of the ḍākinīs," which according to the three commentaries, such as that by Lawapa, means being brought to the clear light. Therefore this is saying that with these circumstances in place, there is even an external method to bring one to the clear light. The explanation given for the first and second line is that "nirvana," or death, is not a finality, but the mind is at ease, as if it were merely traveling from one house to another.

This teaching from the Cakrasaṃvara literature is only an illustration. For those who keep their pledges and vows pure and show great respect to the guru, and who show great respect for the generation stage of the main deity with its meditation on the personal deity, the above are the tangible benefits in the form of being cared for by the main deity at the time of death.

If at the end of the clear light of death, the illusory body has not been achieved, and you fall into the actual intermediate state where you will not attain enlightenment, what is the meaning of the following citation from *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages*?

> Having achieved the level of clear light,
> actual enlightenment for those of effort
> will be in this very life;
> for the lazy, at death;

for the lowest, in the intermediate state.
In this form of the supreme attainment
they will work for others.[805]

Thus by having realized the clear light, then the clear light from which you will become a buddha will be realized in this life by those of highest faculties, at the time of death by those of intermediate faculties, and in the intermediate state by those of lower faculties. From this clear light they will go on to attain the supreme state. It is not saying that you attain enlightenment at the actual time of the clear light of death or in the actual intermediate state, because this latter person must be posited as someone who attains enlightenment over a succession of lives. Intermediate-state mixing means that if you have the ability to practice death mixing, then the ability to practice intermediate-state mixing will arise from the propelled intention, as explained previously. For those who have created an actual intermediate-state existence, however, generating oneself into a deity is performed by the power of imagination.

The special method for apprehending the intermediate state is the instruction on developing through meditation the ability to properly produce the four empty states of the waking existence and sleep followed by the creation of the illustrative illusory body. [283] If you do not have such an ability, the apprehension of dreams through the power of aspiration is also a good method. If neither of these methods is developed, then when contemplating the core teachings on death, you should familiarize yourself with contemplating the ways the intermediate state arises after death and the meditations on the aspects of the illusory body.

Summary of the kinds of mixing

Clear Compilation of the Five Stages says, "Mix the three intermediate states."[806] From this we can infer that three types of death and three types of birth are also to be mixed. These mixing practices are not clearly mentioned by name in the works of the master and his disciples, but they are there in meaning.

Concerning the three intermediate states, although there is agreement on the intermediate state of existence and the intermediate state of dreams, many followers of the Marpa tradition take the term "in between birth and death" to refer to the present aggregates that were formerly created and will remain until death. However, to take the two intermediate states found in basic state and the intermediate state on the path as being the three intermediate states

is more in keeping with the works of the master and his disciples. This is similar to *Five Stages* talking of the illusory body as being the intermediate state, which has an actual state and a facsimile state.

For the three types of death, first, there is death as we all know it. Second, the fact that the dream body is explained as being the intermediate state means that the empty states of death that precede it can be posited as the death of the sleep state. On the completion stage, death within the path is generated in accordance with the ordinary stages of death. Therefore there are two death states within basic state and one death state on the path.

For the three types of birth: there is the birth in the womb taken by the being of the intermediate state of existence; the birth that corresponds to the waking state when the being of the intermediate state of dreams again enters the coarse aggregates; and the birth corresponding to the intermediate-state illusory body taking hold of the coarse aggregates. In this way there are two births in basic state and one birth on the path.

The first set of three are called practices that mix the intermediate state with the sambhogakāya and are illusory-body mixing practices. The second set is known as practices mixing death with the dharmakāya and are clear-light mixing practices. The third set comprises practices that mix birth with the nirmāṇakāya. In short they are known as the three sets of mixing, and in more expanded form, as the nine types of mixing.

On this topic *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* says:

> From the wind of caṇḍālī yoga
> comes the focused mind and great bliss.
> Train in dream and illusion as one.
> Mix the three intermediate states.
> Afflictions become the path of wisdom.
> Cutting the path short is transference,
> and entering the household is the branch.[807]

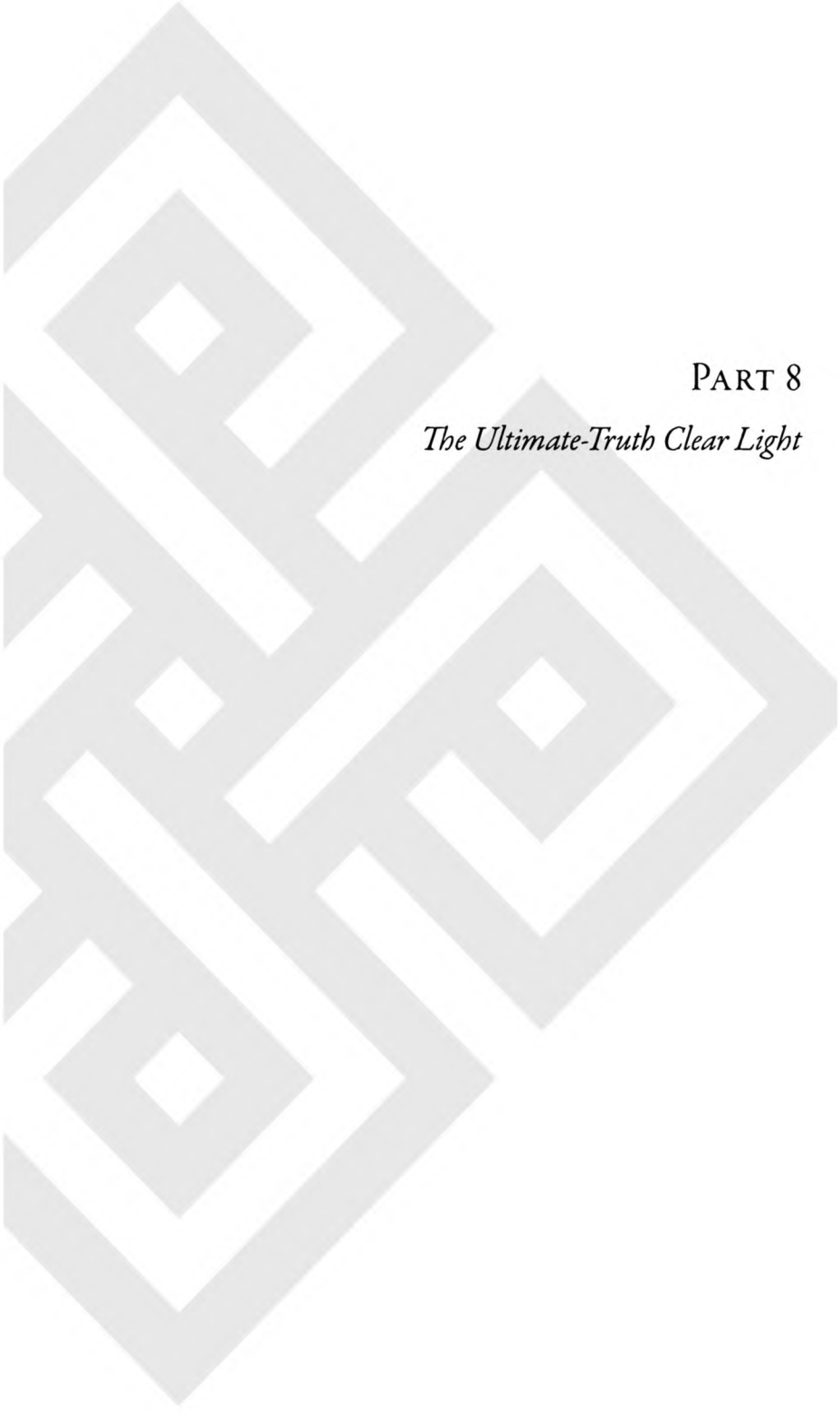
Using this passage as authority, Serdingpa has applied the caṇḍālī meditation in the Guhyasamāja core instructions to the five stages and produced core instructions on transference and the practice of entering the household. He asserts that these are taught in Nāropa's *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* to show how alternatives to the five stages of father tantra can be found in the caṇḍālī meditation taught in the yoginī tantras. [284] He does this in order to incorporate all paths from both types of tantra into the actual five

stages or their alternatives. In that case, in his system the alternative for the wind of vajra repetition inducing mind isolation is caṇḍālī yoga. The alternative for mind isolation is the wind entering and dissolving in the dhūtī to produce the "great bliss," or four joys. These two practices are found in the yoginī tantras. To these are added the illusory body, clear light, and union from the father tantras to make five stages. This is the meaning of the passage. To explain it any other way is not correct.

"Train in dream and illusion as one" means that the instructions on dreams are included in the instructions on the illusory body. The line "Mix the three intermediate states" teaches the three illusory-body mixing practices. Mixing the two intermediate states of basic state with the intermediate state of the path is to transform the impure into the pure. This explains the next line, beginning "Afflictions . . ." If the supreme state is not attained in this life or in the intermediate state, transference is practiced in order to gain a special form for tantric activities in a future life, thereby not making the path overly long. "Entering the household" is a name given to a special "branch" of transference. These two practices are clearly taught in the yoginī tantras. Alternatively, exchanging the poor body of this life for the good body of another is the "branch" practice of "cutting the path short" known as "entering the household."

Teaching these two practices at this point is saying that they should be added to father tantra. Alternatively, they are taught to make it understood that if you meditate on the practice of entering the household from the juncture of having developed the ability to create the illustrative illusory body found in the father tantras, the potential you develop is very special.

I have explained many mixing methods within the nine mixing practices. There are a few very difficult points on this topic, and they should be understood separately.



Part 8

The Ultimate-Truth Clear Light

27. Stages of Attainment

[285] *Completion stage of the ultimate clear light*

1. Explanation of the teachings in *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice*
2. Explanation of the teachings on the yoga of apprehending found in the *Later Tantra*

Explanation of the teachings in Five Stages *and the* Compendium of Practice

1. Ascertaining the order and becoming a suitable vessel
2. Teaching clear-light instructions to a suitable vessel
3. How this stage occurs at the end of other paths

Ascertaining the order and becoming a suitable vessel

Previously, in the section on ascertaining the order of the stages, it was stated that if the conventional-truth illusory body is not generated first, it will not be possible to actualize the clear light of this stage. Why is this? Generally, according to the Ārya master and disciples tradition, the direct realization of the reality that is the no-self of phenomena is common to both śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha ārya beings. If that is so, there is no need to mention that such an ultimate truth will be directly realized on the Perfection Vehicle level known as Joyous. The accomplishment of the illusory body is an exclusive feature of highest mantra practice, and therefore it is not being asserted that it is necessary to have first generated the illusory body only in order to have a direct realization of ultimate-truth clear light. What is being asserted here is that for the actual clear light that is the direct realization by innate bliss of the very subtle reality, it is necessary to have generated the illusory body previously. This will be explained in detail.

In other vehicles the understanding of emptiness, which is the main cause of the wisdom dharmakāya, is posited as the cooperative cause of the form body, while the limitless accumulation of merit, which is the main cause of the form body, is posited as the cooperative cause of the dharmakāya. These vehicles, however, do not travel the path by holding these two main causes as method and wisdom inseparably joined and combining them into one in meditative equipoise. In contrast, in this highest vehicle, emptiness and bliss are perfectly joined and are combined with the illusory body to become a single entity, as explained previously. The general path of developing bodhicitta and training in the activities of the six perfections is similar to that of the other vehicles, [286] but the way of training in the limitless divisions that make up the accumulation of merit is different in each. Moreover, such training is for the purpose of gradually enhancing the ability of the understanding of emptiness to remove the obscurations to omniscience, as has also been explained previously. Because of this, the quickest of Lower Vehicle practitioners will eradicate mental afflictions and their seeds with three lifetimes of practice. In the Perfection Vehicle it is said that a practitioner is delayed many times before reaching the Joyous level of direct understanding of reality and that the obscurations of afflictions are eradiated on the eighth level. With these and other examples, it can be seen that there is a great difference in the length of practice between the vehicles. It is also taught many times that there is a difference concerning deliberately seeking to abandon the afflictions. Therefore, on this path, the illusory body is not developed to generate the wisdom that only realizes reality directly. Rather, it is generated for the wisdom of actual clear light to enhance its ability to eradicate the obscurations to omniscience. This is because the illusory body is the main and exclusive cause of the form body. Within the innate bliss taking emptiness as its object, from the point of view of it being an object-holding consciousness, there is a gateway to developing the special ability to eradicate the obscurations to omniscience. However, here in the completion stage, the substitute for the limitless accumulation found in other vehicles is the illusory body. Knowing how those two are combined is the ultimate point.

In that case, the two vehicles may be similar in that the cause for the form body is developed so that the main cause for the wisdom dharmakāya is enhanced in its ability to eradicate the obscurations to omniscience. There is a huge difference, however, in what the main causes for the two bodies actually are. From this we can understand the following difference: In other vehicles, a form endowed with the marks and features is attained on the levels,

and after that form enters meditative equipoise and meditates solely on emptiness, the buddhas will arouse the practitioner from that state, and in the post-meditation session the practitioner engages in a great accumulation of merit. Here, however, once the illusory body has been achieved, there is no need to do such a practice.

Without being easily satisfied, you should familiarize yourself thoroughly with these reasons that ascertain the above sequence, especially with regard to the general presentation and to the more subtle points of the paths traveled by other vehicles, other classes of tantra, and the two types of tantra. Because these reasons are very difficult to understand, it has led to many false assertions such as, "In order to cleanse the stain of clinging to the illusion of the illusory body, you have to enter the clear light."

The fourth stage from *Five Stages* says:

> Because he gives the instructions,
> the vajra master is greater than
> the self-arising, the Bhagavan,
> the unique, celestial being of great nature.
> Please the guru well for years or months,
> please him, make offerings to him
> in whatever way you are able. [287]
> Offer him well-trained consorts,
> and in the midst of the offering circle,
> make offerings according to the rites.[808]

Because he gives teachings on this topic, regard the guru as greater than the Buddha. Please him for a long time. Then with secret offerings and other offerings, make offerings to the guru who teaches this topic.

Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* also says that without the instructions from the guru, the clear light will not be understood. It also states that from the guru you receive the transmission, the nature of which is that the teaching as a cause and that which is being taught as the effect are in reality nondual. Then you make offerings as described earlier. Although this is taught here as being the procedure for an initiation, it is the same for receiving instructions. Even if these offerings are created within the mind, you should know that they have been praised as causes for all auspiciousness on a special path. After this, the guru bestows the secret initiation and the third initiation preceded by the nine initiations, as described in *Five Stages* and the

Compendium of Practice. If the disciple has already received once before the initiation to make him into a suitable vessel for this teaching, he does not need to receive it a second time for the same purpose. The fourth stage from the *Five Stages* says that after initiation is conferred in the middle part of the night, at dawn the disciple makes offerings and praises in order to please the guru. The offerings here are similar to those described previously. The praises begin with the line "Freed from the three worlds"[809] and continue for four and a half verses. After these come three verses, beginning "Freed from karma and birth." These verses urge the guru once more.

The thinking behind the praises and requests to the guru in the sections on illusory body and clear light, which are made in accordance with the instructions to be received at those sections, should be applied to the other stages also.

Then perform guru-yoga meditation and make requests in the way described above. This is excellent. Therefore, not only when receiving instructions but at other times also, you should make requests by these means. In all vehicles generally, and especially in this vehicle, do not weaken the bond with the guru. Making offerings while regarding him as a buddha, pleasing him with every pleasing act, and endeavoring to abandon all acts of displeasure are all crucial.

28. The Outer and Inner Mastery

Teaching clear-light instructions to a suitable vessel

1. Explanation of the outer and inner stages of mastery [288]
2. Explanation of the two meditative absorptions, which are methods to actualize the stages of mastery
3. Synonyms and verses of praise

Explanation of the outer and inner stages of mastery

1. Actual explanation
2. Resolving disputes

Actual explanation

Having heard the requests, the guru has great compassion for the disciple and begins to teach. The fourth stage from *Five Stages* says:

> Nighttime with clarity is appearance, and the sun's rays radiating is increase of appearance.
> The juncture is attainment of appearance, and by your intrinsic natures, not just once do they arise.
> That which is not night, not sun, not the juncture, divorced of the intrinsic natures,
> the supreme guru declares as an instant of mastery, an object perceived by the yogi.
> The end of the juncture, not yet destroyed, beyond the mass of darkness, until the sun rises,
> that moment he explains as the stainless limit of perfection.
> The supreme master freed from all lack of clarity
> shows the disciple the outer stage of mastery,

> and in an instant the disciple attains the buddha mastery,
> the inner bliss, free of all disturbance.[810]

This teaches the outer and inner stages of mastery. The Chak translation has "These are your intrinsic natures and occur not just once." He also has:

> The limit of darkness all ended, beyond the splendor of the juncture,
> until the sun rises, a stainless moment, he shows the limit of perfection to the disciple.

The *Compendium of Practice* states:

> The stage of mastery is of two types: Outer mastery occurs at the time of the break of dawn, when the ignorance appearance has passed and for as long as the sun has not risen. Here is the all-empty clear light.[811]

On this *Five Stages* says:

> Beyond the two times, illustrated by attainment and appearance, until the sun rises is explained as dawn. The sun rising is increase of attainment, the sun setting is ignorance, and the moon rising is appearance.[812]

When explaining the inner stage of mastery:

> First, a mirage-like appearance with five rays of light is seen. Second is appearance, like the light of the moon. Third is increase of appearance, like the rays of the sun. Fourth is the attainment of appearance, like the darkness. Then, in a moment free of the darkness, arises the clear light, with the feature of great clarity and constancy. It has the characteristics of the ultimate truth and is seen with the eye of wisdom.[813]

Here the guru reveals to the disciple the outer and inner stages of mastery. If the outer refers to an external day divided into four parts with the explanation of the four empty states left as it normally is, then it would not be correct

to say that the fourth empty state is an instant of mastery [289] and that it is an object seen by a yogi. If it is taken to mean a teaching on the four empty states using four aspects of the sky during a single day as similes, the four inner empty states are also presented in this way, and so this cannot represent a division between inner and outer stages of mastery because internally also the moon, sun, and darkness are used as similes. If it is taken as describing the development of the wisdom of the four empty states at those four times, this would mean that the four empty states could not be developed all at once at any one of those four times. So where is the distinction between the outer and inner stages of mastery? The venerable Gö presents two positions: the assertion of Nāropa and the assertions of Yoṣa and Kṛṣṇasamayavajra. The first of these says that the explanation of the four parts of a single day as being the four empty states is an interpretative description because they refer to similes of reality, times, signs, and illustrations. This is the outer mastery. The definitive description is the inner mastery. This is because dwelling in meditative union with the karma consort, the bodhicitta arrives at the base, middle, and vase of the vajra. The three experiences of bliss are sealed with emptiness, and meditation produces the three empty states of the path. When two drops have been lost and two drops remain, the blissful wisdom of the reversal of the intrinsic-nature conceptual minds is the all-empty state, or clear light.

The second position posits the four outer similes as illustrations from the point of view of the four absences of the conceptualizations, which are the immediate phenomena to be negated. This is the outer mastery. Revealing the experience of the illusory body entering the clear light through the two meditative absorptions is the inner mastery.

Lakṣmī asserts that explaining the parts of a day as the four empty states is because the four inner states have these names. The fourth empty state developed by reliance upon a karma consort, a wisdom consort, or through the process of the five signs of mirage and so on is explained as being the inner stages of mastery.[814]

Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon* commentary, Vīryabhadra's *Clarifying the Meaning*, the commentary by Samayavajra,[815] and Muniśrībhadra all say that the four empty states explained in the section on the outer mastery are actually the four inner empty states and do not make any clear distinction between the outer and the inner.

If the question is analyzed according to the above assertions, it has not been answered by those who make a distinction between the two, and the explanations by those who do not distinguish between the two also do not

provide an answer. This is a very difficult point, and because it is a very important point too, it should be examined. Moreover, it should also be understood through the words of Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* on the fifteenth chapter. The *Root Tantra* says:

> Through a girl of brahman, ruling,
> merchant, or ordinary classes,
> practice that with the nature of the vajra dharma.
> This will gain the secret.
>
> After the vajra sun has set, [290]
> the practices are wholly engaged.
> When the break of dawn appears,
> with the supreme meditation, you will achieve it.[816]

The commentary glosses the meaning of this passage as follows: The completion-stage practitioner takes a consort from one of the four classes. The "dharma" that is unbreakable like a "vajra" is the completion-stage yoga. Its "nature" refers to the realizations of this yoga. The practitioner will practice the gaining of the vajra "secret," meaning Vajradhara. This accomplishment has to be completed by the process of the masteries, and the method for that is taught by the four lines beginning "After the vajra . . ." Of the outer and inner mastery, if the method is explained according to the outer, "vajra sun" refers to the actual sun. "After . . . set" refers to the time beyond the reddish period of sunset. At that time you please the guru with whatever possessions you have. Then in the middle of the night you receive the initiations through the kindness of the guru. When the break of dawn appears, after the period of night—which illustrates the appearances—until the sun rises, you will achieve the stage of mastery by receiving the transmission. You become pure and this is the stage of outer mastery.

If the method is explained according to the inner mastery, "vajra sun" refers to the arising of the characteristics of the exalted wisdom of the method, which comes from meditative union. "Set" refers to the entity of wisdom arising and then ceasing. This means that appearance and increase of appearance have subsided and "close-to-attainment, the accomplisher of clear light, is 'wholly engaged,' meaning that it appears. 'Break of dawn appears' means that after the passing of ignorance, the practitioner, through the causes and conditions of the three empty states, actualizes the 'supreme meditation,' or clear light, and through this he will gain the mahāmudrā."[817]

This is the explanation of *Illuminating Lamp*. "Mahāmudrā" refers to the stage of union. Because this is talking about the direct realization of clear light, the outer and inner stages of mastery are referring to the actual clear light. Engaging in the close causes that will actualize this clear light through reliance upon an external consort is the meaning of the first verse. The way this is performed is by the guru conferring initiation through reliance upon a karma consort, thereby illustrating the clear light. Then at the break of dawn the practitioner receives instructions on how to meditate on the clear light and subsequently on the ways to achieve the stage of union. Through this the yogi will achieve the clear light and later the stage of union.

Therefore realizing the actual clear light in dependence on the very special time of the break of dawn is the outer stage of mastery. From the perspective of actualizing the process of the four inner empty states, it is the inner stage of mastery. Positing the other three parts of an external day as the other three empty states are illustrations determined by the aspects of the sky at those times, as was described in the chapter on mind isolation. [291] However, here there is not the fault of not being able to differentiate between outer and inner stages of mastery. Both the *Compendium of Practice* and *Five Stages* state that the no-further-practice stage of union[818] is gained at the break of dawn.

Resolving disputes

Five Stages and the *Compendium of Practice* both say that the practitioner who has attained the illusory body and is striving to gain the clear light is initiated in the middle of the night and then taught the core teachings on the two meditative absorptions and the two stages of mastery at dawn. At that time does this practitioner possess the potential to generate the clear light or not? If they do not, this would contradict the passage from *Illuminating Lamp* above. If they do, this would mean that before the development of such a potential it would not be proper to give them teachings on the clear light. Therefore this would mean that before the attainment of the illusory body, the four initiations would have been bestowed completely, but it would not be proper for the disciple to listen to a complete teaching on the completion stage of the tantra by way of the six sides and four modes. If it were proper, then explain the intention of the above statements that speak of the practitioner who has perfected the illusory body having to listen to the instructions on the clear light.

I will explain. There are two occasions for these teachings found in *Five*

Stages and the *Compendium of Practice*. One occasion is for making practitioners into suitable vessels. The second is for practitioners who have achieved the illusory body to develop the above potential. The explanation from *Illuminating Lamp* is on the basis of the latter. It does not apply everywhere. Perfectly qualified disciples will have received completely the initiations to transform them into suitable vessels; they are taught the whole tantra and will have developed an understanding of it. However, because they possess perfectly qualified gurus to generate the insights of the path necessary at the time in their mindstreams, they still depend heavily upon the explanation of instructions that will develop the path stage by stage in their minds. Although they have been taught the clear light previously, how can it be that at this point they do not need further instructions? There may be countless disciples who achieve the illusory body, but those who are suitable to become their gurus are far more in number. So do not be satisfied with the present count of gurus and their disciples.

Moreover, as soon as the illusory body is achieved, the actual clear light cannot be developed the same day. *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* says:

> Bhagavan, how do the three empty states become the finality of clear light? The Bhagavan replied, "Just as fire burns wood to ashes, for the clear light, the exalted wisdom of wisdom appearance purifies for a long time. As the palm leaf burns to ash, in that manner the exalted wisdom of method appearance purifies. As a cotton leaf burns, so the exalted wisdom of the attainment of appearance quickly purifies."[819] [292]

This is taught in the section on final clear light. *Five Stages* also says, "Please the guru well, for years or months."[820] Therefore, even after achieving the illusory body, the disciple listens to instructions on clear light and, through the two meditative absorptions, meditates on the many methods for entering clear light. After this point the teachings from *Illuminating Lamp* apply, and in this connection it is important to understand and distinguish between the characteristics of the clear light that has become the actual clear light of the innate bliss directly cognizing reality and the illustrative clear light that has not yet been transformed as such.

29. The Two Meditative Absorptions

Explanation of the two meditative absorptions, which are methods to actualize the stage of mastery

As explained previously, the practitioner who has perfectly achieved the illusory body has to strive to develop the actual clear light within his mindstream. At the time for realizing the actual clear light, the disciple must be taught how the two stages of mastery come about and before that how to meditate on the two meditative absorptions, namely, *held-as-a-whole* and *subsequent dissolution*. The two stages of mastery have been explained and now the two meditative absorptions will be explained. The fourth stage from *Five Stages* says:

> The disciple who has received the teachings
> then practices the two yogas:
> the held-as-a-whole and the subsequent dissolution.
> From the head to the feet,
> traveling as far as the heart,
> the yogi entering the limit of perfection
> is known as held-as-a-whole.
> The animate and the inanimate
> at first become the clear light,
> after which, in similar fashion,
> is the subsequent dissolution.
> Just as breath dissolves on a mirror,
> likewise the yogi enters again and again
> the limit of perfection.[821]

The *Compendium of Practice* also says:

> Having actualized the all-empty state, on this stage you focus on the two meditative absorptions. Its process is as follows: The yogi

> constantly meditates upon its gradual dissolution like a mass in a clean river or pond. The yogi should also look upon it like breath gradually disappearing on a mirror, thereby performing the meditation on the held-as-a-whole process.[822]

The first sentence on actualizing the fourth empty state and then focusing on the two meditative absorptions is saying that at the end of the explanations, you understand the two masteries and the two meditative absorptions. Also, the two lines beginning "The disciple who has received the teachings" speak of receiving the teachings and then practicing them. In the held-as-a-whole process, the withdrawal begins downward from your head and upward from your feet. The limit of these two withdrawals is the heart, therefore "traveling as far as the heart." [293] Samayavajra says that the withdrawal from the head to the feet proceeds to the seed syllable of the heart, which withdraws into the drop, which withdraws into emptiness. Having withdrawn into the heart, the yogi enters the limit-of-perfection clear light. An illustration of that process is expressed by the lines beginning "Just as breath . . ." The vapor that collects from breathing on a mirror withdraws from all sides into the center. Similarly, the withdrawal process within the body begins from above and below, front and back, left and right, and withdraws to the heart at the center.

In the subsequent dissolution, first the inanimate and animate environment withdraws into the clear light, and subsequently your body withdraws into the clear light. The phrase "in similar fashion" Samayavajra glosses as "similar to the held-as-a-whole." This is good. The phrase "again and again" means that both processes should be practiced many times. An illustration of the subsequent-dissolution process is that of a ball of snow, for example, floating in a pond and gradually melting. On this line, the Chak translation has "a drop" [instead of "mass"], but the older translation is better. The gradual disappearance of your aggregates is common to both processes; the difference between them being only the separate and preceding withdrawal of the animate and inanimate. The etymology of *subsequent dissolution* is as has been explained. On the term *held-as-a-whole*, Abhayākaragupta says that the body is the "whole," which is "held" by emptiness. Therefore the body enters into clear light and is held.

Making the heart the final place for the withdrawal process of the two meditative absorptions is a wonderful assertion of the Ārya master and his disciples. The reasons for this have been explained many times before and should be known accordingly. As a focus of this withdrawal process, the fact

that it is a withdrawal of the winds is not clearly stated, but if they are made the focus, know that it will become a peerless withdrawal of winds. This is the meaning of the citation from *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* that says:

> . . . constantly located in the center of the heart,
> ablaze with great rays of light.
> As far as the nine openings,
> winds dwelling in the brow,
> as far as the soles of the feet,
> withdraw solely into that drop
> to dwell within its center.[823]

The winds in the brow, or head, to as far down as the soles of the feet withdraw into that drop and are brought to dwell in the center of the lotus of the heart. Therefore you should know that during speech-isolation practice, all three prāṇāyāma meditations are methods for withdrawing the winds and the bodhicitta into the heart and inducing the four empty states. Through the power of developing that practice, in this section too the focused withdrawal process withdraws the winds and bodhicitta into the heart and brings about an entrance into clear light. This is the reason why the achiever of the illusory body is taught to meditate on the two meditative absorptions as methods for entering clear light. [294] Moreover, the need for meditative union with an external consort is taught in the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium*, and the function expressed there is similar to the function here.

Saying that the illusory body enters clear light through the two meditative absorptions means that the wind and mind withdraw into the heart, the four empty states are generated again and again, from which the actual clear light is realized, and at that time the illusory body is purified and disappears.

For the achiever of the illusory body to meditate on the two meditative absorptions, followers of the Marpa tradition do not mention stacking the three *sattvas* of the three vajras. In the core teachings of the Gö tradition, however, it is asserted that meditation on these three is the intention of the eleventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* and commentaries. Because this is tantra and commentary passages emerging as core teachings, this is an excellent assertion. The *Root Tantra* states:

> Dwelling amid the buddha mandala,
> your body is placed as Vairocana.

Visualizing the syllable *oṃ* at your heart,
meditate on consciousness in the mantra.

When the cessation vajra has become your mind,
the supreme state of every buddha is apprehended,
as if endowed with glory and every wish.

Dwelling amid the buddha mandala,
the vajra is meditated on as Akṣobhya.
Meditate on the syllable *hūṃ* at the heart,
and the mind is set as the drop.

Dwelling amid the buddha mandala,
meditate well upon Amitābha.
Visualize the syllable *āḥ* at the heart,
and the vajra is placed as the drop.

This greater than the great samaya—
meditation on the three vajras inseparable—
is the exalted wisdom of the cessation samaya,
and you will gain the siddhi of the buddhas.[824]

On the term "buddha," [it is stated in the *Dhātusutra*], "*buddha* means 'comprehend.'" So, in keeping with that rule, the "mandala" is the mandala of knowledge to be comprehended, which refers to the bodies, speech, and minds of the three realms. "Amid" means as the nature of those three. "Dwelling" there means that you imagine that these three become the nature of your own body, speech, and mind. "Placed as Vairocana," and the references to the meditations on Akṣobhya and Amitābha, means to meditate on the two types of body described above as inseparable and so become Vairocana, the two types of mind as inseparable and so become Akṣobhya, and the two types of speech as inseparable and so become Amitābha. At the heart of these three visualized pledge *sattvas* you meditate on the syllables *oṃ*, *āḥ*, and *hūṃ*. These are the wisdom *sattvas*. "Mantra" refers to syllable *oṃ*, and "consciousness" refers to the drop of the samādhi *sattva*. Within the syllable *hūṃ*, the samādhi *sattva* of your consciousness becomes the drop. Within the syllable *āḥ*, the samādhi *sattva* of the "vajra," or consciousness, is placed as the drop. The yogi who meditates in this way places his mind in the midst of the cessation-vajra clear light, thereby abandoning the meditation of it as the

drop, and at that time generates the finality of clear light. When this occurs, [295] "the supreme state of every buddha is apprehended," or "held," and it is as if you have become a wish-granting jewel fulfilling every wish or are endowed with the glory of the two accumulations. This meditation on the inseparability of the three vajras of the body, speech, and mind of every sentient being with your own body, speech, and mind is "greater than the great samaya" of the generation stage. Thus it will generate the exalted wisdom of those who know the teachings of apprehending the cessation-vajra samaya of clear light. They "will gain the siddhi of the buddhas," meaning "of the aggregates," because they are divorced from the ordinary aggregates and thus will gain an exalted-wisdom body of the vast and profound. This whole explanation is taken from Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*.

In order to bring your body, speech, and mind into clear light, having achieved the illusory body, you meditate on the three-stacked *sattvas*; beginning with the body vajra, followed by the speech vajra, and then the mind vajra. Having meditated perfectly, not only on the first two but also on the drop that is the samādhi *sattva*, you enter clear light. All three samādhi *sattvas* are represented by the short vowel *a*. The place where they are put is inside three-sided drops. This is stated by the Gö tradition.

After this the tantra continues, "Dwelling within the realm of vajra space . . ." and so on. Some ascribe these verses to the subsequent-dissolution process within the meditation on the three vajras, while assigning the previous verses to the held-as-a-whole process. The *Illuminating Lamp* commentary, however, says that the meaning of the previous verses "is clarified in another way" by these subsequent verses. So the former verses are to be divided into both held-as-a-whole and subsequent-dissolution processes. Their meditations are as follows: From whatever seed syllable there is in the heart, light rays emanate, and by the upper process beginning at the head of the pledge *sattva* and the lower process beginning at the soles of the feet, withdrawal is taken into the wisdom *sattva* at the heart. The wisdom *sattvas* also withdraw into the short vowel *a*, which is the samādhi *sattva* indestructible drop. That in turn withdraws into clear light, in which the mind is held without moving. This process is common to both types of meditative absorptions. The way that the subsequent-dissolution process withdraws sentient beings, not including oneself, and their environment into clear light is found in *Illuminating Lamp*:

> On the animate and inanimate, "the syllable *khaṃ*" transforms them into space. This is the subsequent-dissolution process

> making all into non-phenomena. It also enters oneself, by which the "vajra wisdom becomes as expansive as space," and those with the entity of the three *sattvas* become one. "*Khaṃ*" refers to clear light.[825]

The Patsap and Chak translations have "This is the subsequent dissolution process making all invisible." [296] This passage says that the dissolution eventually enters oneself, and so the light rays that emanate from the seed syllable in your heart dissolve sentient beings and their environment into light, and then this mass of light enters oneself and they become invisible.

Usually the syllable *oṃ* is meditated on at the crown and the syllable *āḥ* at the throat. The reason why it is taught that all three syllables are meditated upon at the heart has been explained previously. Therefore the assertion of Lakṣmī and others that emanation and withdrawal is performed within the navel from syllables that are placed at the center of a cakra at the navel is not correct.

Regarding the teaching here that the benefit is the attainment of an exalted-wisdom body divorced from the ordinary body, while it is true that you have already gained the exalted-wisdom body that is the illusory body separated from the ordinary body, here you gain a vajra body of union that has not been achieved before, and so there is no contradiction. *Five Stages* says:

> The illusion-like samādhi
> is purified by the limit of perfection.[826]

Compendium of Practice also says that the conventional truth is purified by the ultimate truth,[827] and *Illuminating Lamp* says that the illusory body is brought into clear light by the two masteries.[828] Do not think, "It is contradictory for the meditation on the bodies of the three vajras to enter into clear light because the illusory body is the body of Vajradhara." It is true that the form of the illusory body is that of sambhogakāya Vajradhara, but having meditated with that form upon the emanations of the three vajras, you practice withdrawing again and again into the clear light from which will arise the actual clear light, and at that time the illusory body disappears like a rainbow in the sky. A body created from the winds and purified by the actual clear light will not vanish when actual clear light is being realized. This is very different from a body created by winds and purified by the illustrative clear light.

If you do not follow the practice of the two meditative absorptions and reliance upon a consort to arrive at the fourth empty state and then meditate again and again on the union of bliss and emptiness as object-holding consciousness and conclusive-reality object, and instead you meditate on the four empty states arising merely from the withdrawal process of the winds and mind, then no matter how much you develop them, it will not be possible to make manifest the actual clear light. Therefore a skillful way to unite bliss and emptiness is definitely needed. In that connection, there are many instances where the purification of the coarse dualism arises like the pristine sky at the break of dawn but where the very subtle dualism has not been reversed. Also, up to the point of a direct realization of emptiness with the object-holding consciousness of bliss and the conclusive-reality object having become of one taste, there are instances where the illusory body has not been purified in clear light. It is important therefore to properly separate these out. [297] If this is not done, then at lower levels that have not even reached mind isolation, the arising of the three empty states will be held as being actual mind isolation. At the end of that process, the form that arises to the mind as a deity, very bright and vivid like the colors of a rainbow, will be held as the actual illusory body. Then, through the meditation on the two meditative absorptions, that form is purified and vanishes to leave a state resembling the pristine sky, in which there is a firm absence of any manifest apprehending by a mental engagement that thinks, "this is it." This is then held to be the actual clear light. At the end of this process, the deity form that arises is held to be the actual stage of union. If the above experiences are classified as being facsimiles of the actual four stages of mind isolation and so on, then without making a distinction between actual names and merely designated names, it is acceptable to use this terminology to describe them, but if they are regarded as being the actual four stages found in *Five Stages*, you will never unlock the main points of the root and explanatory tantras with the key of the ultimate core teachings that is *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice*.

Therefore the root and explanatory tantras and the works of the master and his disciples are mostly centered on the main jewel-like disciple, and they teach the way for that disciple to complete the preceding path before entering the next. In that sense, it is very important to know exactly how these paths are developed in the mind of that disciple. The four other kinds of disciples,[829] who lack these capabilities, and especially disciples these days, should distinguish the way that earlier paths and facsimile paths are produced in

meditation and not hold any of the insights produced by facsimiles of the five stages as being the same as the genuine paths of the five stages.

When you truly experience the signs of being very close to the realization of the actual clear light through continual development by way of the two meditative absorptions, you will receive the initiations at midnight, the core teachings at dawn, and realize actual clear light.

Synonyms and verses of praise

Synonyms for the actual clear light in which innate bliss directly realizes the meaning of reality are found in Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* and include "clear light," "the all-empty state," and many others. Also, in the *Root Tantra* second chapter, the six tathāgatas talk of it in terms of bodhicitta.[830] Another highest yoga tantra says:

> Beyond meditation on all the branches,
> all conceptualization abandoned,
> beyond the vowels and drops,
> this is the supreme mandala.[831]

And so on. In summary:

> The difficult meanings of the terms found in the 84,000 categories of Dharma and these words that lack any certainty of characteristics depend, it is said, upon the ultimate truth.[832] [298]

These passages are found in the *Compendium of Practice* and are taught in order to eliminate the manifest apprehension that apprehends each term as possessing a separate meaning. The second stage from *Five Stages* also says:

> In various sutras and tantras,
> the reality that is taught there
> is not spoken of as being other than
> this that abides as the all-empty state.[833]

This is saying that everything taught on the meaning of reality in the sutras and tantras is not being spoken of as something other than the all-empty state clear light. The meaning of this statement is that although the exalted

wisdom of great bliss is not being taught in those places, there is much that is taught on the meaning of reality. Thus the clear light that is the innate bliss realizing reality is not being taught everywhere. Nevertheless, teachings on the ultimate clear light as the object of that exalted wisdom and the clear light that is other than the great bliss that is the object-holding wisdom consciousnesses cognizing reality are found in the sutras that teach the reality of the perfection of wisdom and in the lower classes of tantra. The above statement is based on this. This kind of clear light is clear light in general, whereas great bliss realizing reality can be categorized as hidden clear light or ultimate clear light. Therefore, within the exalted wisdom that has become one taste with the meaning of reality, there are two kinds—that which is and that which is not the exalted wisdom of the completion stage.

With the instructions on the two stages of mastery and the two meditative absorptions, which are the methods to achieve them, and with doubts concerning the synonyms of clear light all dispelled, the disciple offers up praise to the guru who has taught these and to the Dharma itself. With a bright face and hands placed together, the disciple recites:

> Emaho Buddha! Emaho Dharma!
> This wondrous teaching of the Dharma,
> the perfect reality, the purified reality:
> I prostrate to the bodhicitta.[834]

This verse is found in the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra* second chapter. Uttering "emaho" twice is to offer praise by way of the conventional truth and the ultimate truth in that order. The second line is an offering of praise through expressing the two truths in union. "Perfect reality" refers to the clear light, and "purified reality" refers to the reality of the completely pure deity form purified by the perfect reality. Prostrations are made to the great Vajradhara who possesses such qualities. This verse also illustrates what is to be done at the conclusion of the teachings on the other stages.

30. How the Path of Tantra Must Occur on the Sutra Path

How this stage occurs at the end of other paths

At the end of its teachings on clear light, [299] the *Compendium of Practice* states:

> Following these stages, the Bhagavan, the glorious Śākyamuni, was aroused by the sound of all the tathāgatas snapping their fingers. He arose from his unmoving samādhi, and sitting under a bodhi tree, he realized the clear light in the middle of the night. He then rose from the illusion-like samādhi and taught living beings. From that time, and for as long as the sacred Dharma lasts, it will be transmitted from master to master by word of mouth.[835]

The Chak translation has "Rising by the illusion-like samādhi, he turned the wheel of Dharma for those who were disciples." The phrase "these stages" encompasses the conferring of initiations in the middle of the night followed by the instructions at dawn as taught in the *Compendium of Practice*. Even if this phrase is confusedly applied to "He will grant the conferment of the wisdom and exalted wisdom initiations," which is the line immediately preceding, the meaning is the same. The second stage from *Five Stages* also states:

> Thus from the pure clear light
> come the three exalted wisdoms,
> and possessing the thirty-two marks
> endowed with the eighty beautiful features
> with the supreme of every characteristic,
> the omniscient one arose.[836]

This teaches the way to become a buddha through the path of highest mantra itself. The verses continue:

As it is said in the *Great Play Sutra*,
Śākyamuni, the Tathāgata,
having vowed to attain enlightenment,
thought that by the great emptiness
he would become a buddha,
and so by the banks of the Nairañjanā River,
he sat in unmoving samādhi.

At that time the conquerors in the vajra of space
gathered like sesame in a sesame pod,[837]
snapped their fingers at the son of the conquerors,
and called to him with a single voice:

"This meditative absorption is not pure;
through it you will not attain the ultimate.
Concentrate on the clear light,
which is supreme and like space.

"Having reached the level of clear light,
you will gain the form of joy.
At that time, with a form that is a vajra of joy,
you will become the most powerful of all."

Then, on hearing these sounds
he left the unmoving samādhi,
and in the middle of the night,
the bodhisattva focused on the reality.[838]

Also, further on:

The wonderful all-empty state,
a great wisdom bright and clear,
by the kindness of the gurus,
he clearly sees.[839]

Also:

By the vajra-like samādhi
at the time that the dawn broke,

like the moon in water, a mirage, and so on,
he was adorned with illusion-like qualities.

Abiding in the essence of enlightenment,
he destroyed the hindering māras.
The Śākya master, having gained
the peerless and perfect wisdom,
then taught it here [300]
to protect and benefit living beings.[840]

This teaches how enlightenment is attained by the path of highest mantra at the end of the Great Vehicle path of perfection. The Chak translation has "From that pure clear light" and "Similarly, the Great Vehicle sutras too . . ." The second of these is particularly good because it teaches that just as enlightenment is attained by your own path following the processes of clear light and stage of union, similarly, at the end of other paths too, you become a buddha by this same method. This is the meaning of the following verses. It is not just a scriptural reference for the previous lines. The six lines beginning "Śākyamuni, the Tathāgata" explain how Śākyamuni vowed to become a buddha by the "great emptiness," and how by the banks of the Nairañjanā River, he sat in the unmoving samādhi. It is the events up to this point that are described in the *Great Play Sutra*. The remaining lines beginning "At that time the conquerors . . ." are not being taught as coming from this sutra. "Great emptiness" is described in some of the commentaries to *Five Stages* as meaning the close-to-attainment appearance, but that sutra speaks of him dwelling in the samādhi of the fourth absorption as pervasive as space, and so it is better to ascribe it to this state. This absorption is also called the unmoving samādhi.

The *Compendium of Practice* speaks of entreating Śākyamuni, but here the four lines beginning "At that time" explain that the arousing occurred while he was by the side of a river. The *Compendium of Reality Tantra* only speaks of the tathāgatas calling to the bodhisattva Siddhārtha, who was sitting in front of a bodhi tree and is not clear on whether that was in the realm of Akaniṣṭha ("None Higher") or the desire realm. The *Vajra Peak Tantra* explains it as being in the realm of Akaniṣṭha Richly Adorned.[841] The way he was aroused is taught by the four lines beginning "This meditative absorption is not pure," which say that this particular meditative absorption cannot completely purify all obscurations and therefore will not result in highest state. You should therefore actualize the clear light.

The next four lines beginning "Having reached the level of clear light" are urging him to actualize the state of Vajradhara, the stage of union with its eight mighty qualities.[842] The manner in which this is done is much clearer in the Chak translation. On the words used to entreat him, the *Compendium of Reality Tantra* only says, "Without knowing the reality of all the tathāgatas, do you think you will become a buddha through austere practices?"[843] The way he is entreated and the way he realized his goal after the arousing as described here is not found in the *Compendium of Reality Tantra* or the *Vajra Peak Tantra*, and so it must have been taken from another highest yoga tantra.

The four lines beginning "Then, on hearing these sounds" and, from the *Compendium of Practice*, the part beginning "He rose from his unmoving samādhi" up to "... in the middle of the night" have to be identical in meaning. Therefore he was aroused while sitting by a river. He rose from his meditation and went to sit in front of a bodhi tree. [301] In the middle of the night he relied upon a consort, was initiated, and actualized the clear light. The four lines beginning "The wonderful all-empty state" clarify the phrase "focused on the reality." The four lines beginning "By the vajra-like samādhi" teach that at dawn he gained the form of the no-further-practice stage of union. The two lines beginning "Abiding in the essence ..." teach his destroying of the māras. The four lines beginning "The Śākya master ..." teach how, having attained his goal, he taught the same to others.

Analysis of Karma also says:

> For eons beyond measure,
> giving away his head, his wealth, and so on
> did not bring him the fruit of enlightenment
> because the appearances were not purified.
>
> Likewise, for eons beyond measure,
> the practice of morality, patience, and so on ...[844]

The verse continues in the manner of the first verse. Then:

> For eons beyond measure,
> the samādhi of the mantra body ...[845]

This also continues as before. Then:

With the three appearances purified,
without doubt, omniscience is gained.[846]

The first two verses are speaking of the Perfection Vehicle. The next verse is speaking of the generation stage alone and the path of the three lower tantras. The teaching is that these cannot purify the three appearances, and so the highest enlightenment is not attained. The thinking behind this teaching is that during the times of the three appearances, mistaken dualistic appearances exist, and they cannot be totally eradicated until the imprints of dualistic appearances are completely purified. In order to achieve purification by eradicating them totally, meditation is necessary with the realization of the meaning of reality by innate bliss, and this is not found anywhere except in the highest vehicle.

Drop of Freedom also states:

For countless eons did he accumulate merit
but did not realize this.
At Nairañjanā, while in samādhi on nothingness,
all the sugatas turned him from that unimpeded mind
and taught him the stainless profundity and clarity,
pure like the core of the sky.
In the middle of the night,
he meditated on that, as if in a faint,[847]
and at dawn, in an instant,
he had perfect realization.[848]

And so on. This is similar to the previous two citations. "Nothingness" refers to an "unimpeded" emptiness. The commentary to this work speaks of being blessed by the accompanying master and attaining the true reality as if fainting. The "master" is explained as being the consort.

Sheaves of Instructions says:

"For the ultimate also, you definitely rely on this method." I will explain. For example, having received the wisdom initiation given by the perfect buddhas abiding in the skies above, the Śākya master relied upon it in order to attain enlightenment while sitting in front of a bodhi tree. Also, the Bhagavan, by this alone, [302] was initiated into the vajra essence by Tilottamā.[849]

It is good to explain this extensively because, "Those who understand the teachings will clearly understand this point."

The *Hevajra Tantra* says:

> Having manifested a mandala
> of a violent circle of flames,
> Tilottamā was summoned
> to grant the initiation of the vajra essence.[850]

This is the reference for asserting that the tenth-level bodhisattva is initiated by relying upon an actual consort.

It might be wondered: In the Perfection Vehicle it is stated that unless buddhahood is attained in the Akaniṣṭha form realm previously, the deeds of a buddha will be not shown subsequently in the desire realm. It also states that the Śākya master attained enlightenment many eons previously. *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana* also says the bodhisattva who is one life away from enlightenment is shown entering the womb of his future mother in order to take a nirmāṇakāya because the sambhogakāya cannot act out the deeds of working for human beings.[851] So, before he displayed deeds of the austerities and so on by the river as described in the *Great Play Sutra*, Śākyamuni was already a buddha. In that case, what does it mean here to say that he became a buddha by the path of mantra at the conclusion of the path of the Perfection Vehicle after the deed of performing austerities by the river?

This should be explained. At the end of the Perfection Vehicle path, there are final-life bodhisattvas who first attain buddhahood in the realm of Akaniṣṭha in the form of a sambhogakāya, and final-life bodhisattvas who attain buddhahood in the desire realm in the form of a nirmāṇakāya. For both of these occasions there can be an actual buddhahood in which the bodhisattva is aroused, as described earlier, as well as a display of the act of becoming a buddha. Therefore, in the second of these, while there is no new attaining of buddhahood, such a display shows that, in general, the final-life bodhisattva on the tenth level of the Perfection Vehicle has to develop the path of mantra in his mind and then become a buddha.

In the commentary to the *Vajra Garland* it says that the buddhas manifested a mandala for bodhisattva Siddhārtha, performed the preparation ceremonies, and conferred the fourth initiation.[852] Then, through the three samādhis, the hundred-family body-isolation practices, and the teachings on

the five stages, he became a buddha in the middle of the night and destroyed the māras. The latter part of this assertion contradicts both *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice*. The first parts also contradict the teachings, which only speak of the stages of clear light and union.

The Gö tradition maintains that traveling as far as the tenth level by way of the Perfection Vehicle path replaces the path from the generation stage up to mind isolation, because *Five Stages* says:

> By the initial yogic practices, [303]
> the eighth level is gained.
> Achieving the three appearances,
> you abide in the tenth level.[853]

Therefore it is acceptable for the final-life bodhisattva of the Perfection Vehicle to begin meditation from the illusory-body practices. At dusk he receives the secret initiation and actualizes the illusory body. In the middle of the night he receives the third initiation and realizes the clear light, and at dawn he receives the fourth initiation and actualizes the no-further-practice stage of union. In doing so he has become a buddha in just a single night. This is the Gö tradition. Here the point of entrance at the end of the Perfection Vehicle into the path of mantra is on the tenth level. More specifically, it is the final-life practitioner on the tenth level rather that the tenth-level practitioner separated by one more life. This can be understood by the fact that he attains buddhahood in a single night.

The way in which such a practitioner enters the path of mantra is not by first abandoning his own path but by adding the path of mantra to his own path. As to what is to be added, the beginning of the generation stage up to mind isolation does not need to be developed, as asserted by followers of the Gö tradition. The third-stage illusory body also does not need to be added; this can be understood from the reasons why a practitioner who has entered mantra from the beginning has to develop illusory body before actualizing clear light.[854] The conferring of the third initiation implies the conferring of the fourth, and so these two initiations are to be added. When the third initiation is conferred, you first enter the three appearances followed by the clear light of the close-to-attainment appearance, where even the subtlest of dualistic appearance is purified and the actual innate bliss is realized. It is true that this bodhisattva has directly realized reality from the first bodhisattva level, but the innate great bliss directly realizing emptiness has not been previously

experienced. Thus, it is developed at this point. Then, by meditating on this, at dawn he attains a form described as an illusion-like samādhi, which is illustrated by the similes of an illusion, such as the moon in water and so on. This refers to the actual clear light of innate exalted wisdom and the completely pure illusory body of the no-further-practice stage of union created from the winds that act as the mount of that wisdom.

On the Perfection Vehicle you gain a form adorned by the marks from the very first bodhisattva level, and on the succeeding levels this is developed to greater degrees of perfection, until finally, through the Perfection tradition, you achieve the final marks on the path of practice. However, highest yoga tantra says that a form body of no further practice will not be achieved from this alone. Because of that, if you understand the prior development of the exclusive wisdom of clear light together with the winds, which is the foundation of such a body, then you will understand well whether or not the illusory body can be generated from the coarse body of ripened karma at the third stage and at the practice stage of union. All this teaches that until you meditate upon the innate great bliss directly realizing reality, [304] you will not attain the dharmakāya of the complete abandonment of obscurations to omniscience, and until you develop the illusory body that is created from just wind and mind and purified by the actual clear light, you will not attain the form body of no further practice. This is teaching that combining bliss and emptiness and attaining the illusory body are the ultimate essence of the highest tantra vehicle and that these two are the two exclusive causes of the two bodies.

Here, the reliance on a consort during the third initiation is an alternative for engaging in the tantric activities. The reasons why it is not necessary to engage in the three activities[855] can be known from the reasons given previously. At this level, not being previously conferred with the vase initiation and the secret initiation and only being conferred with the last two, and not previously developing the attainments of the third-stage illusory body and below but only developing the last two stages are to be regarded as exceptions here.

Therefore teachings on the sequence and fixed number of the generation and completion stages, and explanations of the necessity of having a basis of desire within the path of mantra, desire for the union of the two organs, and so on, are given for those who are definitively the type who enter the path of highest yoga from its beginning. Moreover, teachings such as those that state that gods of the desire realm and so on do not produce the *kunda*-like

bodhicitta, refer only to ordinary gods of the desire and form realms and not to the special form possessed by someone like a final-life bodhisattva. Although we do not assert definitive types of practitioners belonging to three ultimate vehicles, we can assert three definitive types temporarily. In this way, even though a tenth-level practitioner within the Perfection Vehicle will finally enter highest yoga tantra, it is not contradictory to say that at levels below the tenth, such a person is a definitive type of practitioner within his or her own path. An arhat and a nonreturner are without attachment to food and clothing, but they do have the desire that seeks out food and clothing. Likewise, a tenth-level practitioner, for example, has extinguished all mental afflictions and therefore has extinguished all craving for the bliss of the union of the two organs. Still, that does not conflict with generating the desire that seeks out that bliss. If that were not the case, it would be impossible to refute the inference of attachment in those who speak, as is maintained by non-Buddhist outsiders who hold to the belief that if you have desire, you have attachment.[856] *Divisions of Vinaya*[857] speaks of the separate causes for making suitable the organs of those with and without attachment to objects of desire. Saying that those who have extinguished all craving for objects of desire are not suitable to take a consort are the words of someone who is not greatly learned in the Mantra and Perfection Vehicles.

The Light Everywhere eleventh level of the Perfection Vehicle practitioner who attains buddhahood through mantra after traveling the path for three countless eons and the Light Everywhere level of a practitioner who entered the Mantra Vehicle from the beginning and attains buddhahood in one life have no differences at all in terms of superiority. [305] It is not that the two respective paths do not have their differences, though, because there is a great difference in terms of the distance to the goal. Also, the Perfection Vehicle must have other paths added to it. Although the Perfection Vehicle practitioner relies finally upon the path of mantra, it is still not contradictory to say that such a person attains buddhahood by practicing on the path for three countless eons, because in order to actually attain the complete enlightenment, that path must be added on at the end of three countless eons. The *Vajra Peak Tantra* says:

> In the past, long ago,
> when he took hold of the bodhi mind
> and became a courageous bodhisattva
> endowed with method and wisdom,

there was great joy and wonder.
He endured countless hardships
and, in keeping with the stages,
made great attainments up to the initiations,
and with great wisdom, he completed the levels.
Having received the clothing initiation,
with great joy did this great mind
dwell in Akaniṣṭha.[858]

This is saying that he completed the path of practice, sat in front of a bodhi tree, where he was roused by the buddhas, and after meditating on the five enlightenments, became a buddha. The same work says:

Through three countless eons he practiced giving,
gaining the good fruits of giving,
amassing wealth as vast as space,
and was conferred the initiation of wealth.
Through three countless eons,
he practiced the austerities of other traditions,
gaining the fruits of perseverance,
and was conferred the initiation of vajra activity.[859]

Also:

With the four secret initiations,
he attained the complete enlightenment of a buddha.
Then he received the name initiation,
and the sage became Vairocana.[860]

This is saying that by receiving the vajra mind, vajra dharma, vajra jewel, and vajra activity initiations, he gained the nature body, sambhogakāya, the marks and features, and the nirmāṇakāya, respectively, and became a buddha. This is the same person as the earlier bodhisattva, and these paths are explained as being accomplished over three countless eons. This is because the yoga tradition,[861] having delineated its own path and those of others, does not affix the above practices to the Perfection Vehicle path, and it is not clear that there is any separate way of attaining buddhahood at the end of its own path. This is unlike the highest tantra tradition, which speaks of the two ways

of attaining buddhahood—namely, that of the jewel-like disciple entering his own path from the beginning and attaining buddhahood in a single life and that of adding on paths at the end of the Perfection Vehicle path. I think that the explanations of being roused by the buddhas and becoming a buddha and so on, which occur at the completion of the levels described above, are traditions within their own paths. This should be well examined. [306]

According to the highest yoga tantras, if the two additions to the path described above are not developed within the mind, buddhahood cannot be attained, and because those two are not found in the three lower classes of tantra, they have to be added to the paths of those who have entered the three other classes of tantra.

It seems that the thinking behind the teaching found in both types of tantra that after the completion of the levels you become a buddha by way of the five enlightenments involving moon, vajra, and so on refers to the *Vajra Garland* statement that as a replacement for the generation-stage practitioner's creation of a deity of mantra through visualization processes involving a vajra, moon, and so on, the completion-stage practitioner creates a completely pure deity form from the four empty states. By doing this, it is true that the actual phenomenon referred to, which is behind the literal aspect of the teachings above, is an exclusive feature of the path of highest yoga tantra, but it is not contradictory to use literal language that is other than that referred to and for that to appear in the paths of the lower tantras. This is because in many of these instances, such arrangements are very necessary for explaining the teachings.

This analysis of the way that the principal points of the completion stage of this tradition occur at the end of other paths will bring about an exclusive conviction in the main features of this path. Based on this you will ascertain the power this kind of path has, and so such an analysis also becomes a wonderful method for not falling back to other paths. Furthermore, it is a topic very difficult to understand, and so I have explained it here.

31. How Clear Light Is Incorporated into the Six Yogas

Explanation of the teachings on the yoga of apprehending found in the Later Tantra

The stage of mastery or fourth-stage clear light, as taught in Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages*, is spoken of in *Later Tantra* as being the branch of apprehending from the six branches:

> Self, powers, and the jewel cease.
> Apprehended, it is explained as apprehending.
> Mind has become vajra cessation;
> signs, closely apprehended, will arise.
> The elements of the signs are five in number.
> This, Bodhivajra has explained.
> The mirage-like is the first,
> the smoke-like, the second,
> that like lights in the sky is third,
> fourth is that like a burning lamp,
> and fifth is a constant clarity,
> like a cloudless sky.
> By the vajra path made stable,
> emanate into the realms of space.[862]

In Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* as translated by Lochen Rinchen Sangpo, it says, "'Apprehending' refers to the fourth branch" immediately after explaining the first two lines. The Patsap translation is similar. In the Gö translation, it says, "'These are the branch of apprehending' refers to the fourth branch," immediately after explaining all the lines above, [307] thereby making all the above lines refer to the branch of apprehending. The Chak translation is similar. There are clearly two versions of the Indian text,

but the Gö translation is better, as can be seen from the explanation in the commentary.

"Self" refers to the objects of form and so on. "Powers" refers to the eyes and so on. These two "cease" or dissolve, and then the "jewel," which refers to the mind together with the life-sustaining wind, also ceases and sets. When this is "apprehended," it is the "apprehending," or the clear-light limit of perfection. The dissolution of mind with the winds refers to the dissolution process of the three minds. The dissolution of the sense powers and their objects refers to a dissolution like that of the death process.

In Ekādaśasvara's *Secret Ambrosia Instructions* it says that "Self, powers" refers to the fault of not knowing mind isolation, which means that you cling to the apprehending and the apprehended, thereby causing you to wander in samsara. To know the mind isolated from apprehending and the apprehended is to generate the jewel wisdom of the buddha. Therefore "jewel" refers to isolation from the ordinary. He continues by saying that "cease" and the next line, "Apprehended, it is explained as apprehending," refer to the vajra and lotus being in meditative union while the bodhicitta travels through the vajra from the base, the middle, and up to the tip, from which arise the three appearances to create the mind isolation isolated from the yogi. I do not see this explanation as representing the meaning of the root text.

"Vajra cessation" is clear light. For the mind to "become" that means that the mind has reached that stage. In order for the mind to enter the clear light, a "close apprehension" of the "signs"—meaning an appearance of the signs—of the mirage and so on "will arise," or be created. These sign appearances are "five in number," and the first three, from mirage-like to the one resembling lights in the sky, arise from earth, water, fire, and wind dissolving successively one into the other. The "lights in the sky" look like fireflies, as Patsap has translated. The assertion that it refers to seeing tiny parts of space is not correct.[863] *Illuminating Lamp* says that the subtle element moves into the three all-encompassing appearances, from which arises the flame-like appearance.[864] Here, "subtle element" refers to the winds that greatly stir the intrinsic-nature conceptual minds. When that is dissolved, an appearance like a lamp flame unmoved by the wind will arise.

The *Compendium of Practice* says:

> The aggregates and so on enter the subtle element. The subtle element enters mind.[865]

The first sentence refers to the earth, water, fire, and air dissolving successively one in the other. The second sentence, which speaks of the subtle element entering mind, does not contradict with the *Illuminating Lamp* citation above, which speaks of the subtle element entering the three appearances, because the former is a rough explanation while the latter is very detailed. For example, Nāgabodhi's *Analysis of Karma* and the *Vajra Garland* both speak of the appearances entering clear light without differentiating them, whereas the *Compendium of Practice* does differentiate them and speaks of the close-to-attainment appearance withdrawing into clear light. [308]

Most older translations of *Compendium of Practice* have:

> From the dissolving of the intrinsic-nature appearances comes that resembling the cloudless sky and becomes just the constant clarity of clear light. This is the fifth.[866]

Some editions and some translations have "dissolving *into* the intrinsic nature all-encompassing appearances," but the former is correct, because for the clear light to appear, the three appearances must dissolve. The way this point is taught in the above *Illuminating Lamp* citation is in an abridged manner. If it is expressed more extensively, it should speak of mind dissolving into states of mind, states of mind dissolving into close-to-attainment, and close-to-attainment dissolving into clear light, as is done in Āryadeva's *Stage of Self-Consecration* and *Compendium of Practice*. Also, on the manner in which these appearances arise, it should say something like, "Second is appearance, like the light of the moon," and so on, which was cited earlier. The *Compendium of Practice* when it says "First, the mirage-like with five rays of light" without mentioning smoke and so on is abbreviated, because if it were more extensive it would mention all four signs, as is done in the *Later Tantra* and in *Illuminating Lamp*.

Illuminating Lamp says that by these five signs the nirvana of the actual clear light is gained and quotes *Analysis of Karma* as a source for earth dissolving into water and so on. The actual words of this text are:

> Just as these arose previously,
> by this process they will dissolve.
> First, earth enters water,
> water dissolves into fire,
> fire dissolves into wind,

wind enters consciousness,
consciousness moves from apprehending,
and then it dwells in clear light.
From that it becomes the gandharva[867] being,
and aroused by karma it takes birth.
Like this, in thousands of lives,
taking birth after birth again and again,
the intrinsic natures will circle and confuse.
Not an object of the intellectually inclined,
knowledge of the appearances
is not to be found by ordinary beings.[868]

This is the text composed by Nāgabodhi and not the *Analysis of Karma Sutra*,[869] as asserted by Bhavyakīrti. Consciousness entering into clear light means the all-encompassing appearances entering clear light and not the intrinsic natures entering clear light. Although the above citation teaches the death process of the basic state, that process and the entering of the clear light by way of the path are similar in terms of the mirage sign and others arising. Therefore, to assert that these signs arise in the form of a mirage and so on when enlightenment is attained in the intermediate state, and yet in the process of entering clear light in this life they represent the measure of the sign-possessing consciousness being stable or not; to assert that mention of the signs in the *Compendium of Practice* refers to the measure of stability but that those mentioned in *Illuminating Lamp* arise in the form of a mirage and so on; [309] and to assert that the description refers to each of the four signs becoming clearer than the preceding sign as explained in the commentary to Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* but that they do not actually resemble these phenomena are all incorrect.

These signs arise when the reversing earth element and so on and the winds of the sense powers are made suitable for turning inward, when they are actually turning, and when they have fully turned. These signs are taught as occurring at all levels. There are those of basic state, those of the path, and for those of the path there are those of body isolation and so on. These all have to be separated out. When the winds of the conceptualizations dissolve, the first appearance occurs as the flame-like sign. When the exalted wisdom of that appearance arises, the first appearance occurs as a moonlight-like appearance. These two processes are in sequence. In the forward process from the exalted wisdom of the first appearance until clear light, and in the reverse process

from clear light up to the first appearance, the four signs of the mirage and so on will appear. Therefore they occur before the first appearance in the first process, and they appear after the first appearance during the second process. In the practices of this section, the signs appear when withdrawal is practiced repeatedly by the two meditative absorptions and the mind is held. However, it is not right to assign the appearance of the individual signs to each of the three held-as-a-whole processes, nor is it correct to assign them to each of the three *sattvas* of the three individual held-as-a-whole processes.

In the sphere of illustrative clear light, the objective aspect of that clear light that appears at that time resembles a pure sky. However, during actual clear light, even the subtle dualistic appearance has subsided, and while the absence of the contamination of all fabrications is illustrated by the example of the sky, such a form does not appear.

When the genuine exalted wisdoms of the three empty states of the path have been produced, they appear like the moonlight and so on, illuminating on all sides and without partiality whatever object appears in the land. The kind of illumination that comes from moonlight and so on that illuminates only individual areas of the land is not the moonlight-like appearance and so on that occurs at the time of the arising of the exalted wisdom of the three empty states. It is not always the case that as soon as the moonlight-like appearance is withdrawn, the sunlight-like increase of appearance immediately arises. There is a state between these two. That state can also arise with the resemblance of a pure sky, and so there is a great difference between this and the way that the fourth empty state arises.

"By the vajra path" you enter the clear light by the process of the five signs, which are "not to be transgressed." "Stable" means "pure." The "realms of space" refers to the world realms, in which you "emanate" by "pervading by way of the dharmakāya" as the Chak translation reads. To emanate into the world realms means that the reality of all animate and inanimate phenomena is pervaded by the mind. The commentary passage talks of not transgressing the order of the five signs. [310] So, for a few times in the beginning, there is a small possibility of uncertainty of order, but when you are fully knowledgeable in the meditations on the empty states of the forward and reverse processes, they will definitely arise in the proper order.

Here this explanation is primarily applied to the actual clear light, but until you reach this level, you will have to familiarize yourself with the illustrative clear light again and again; this explanation applies to the time spent on the lower paths also.

Part 9

The Stage of Union

32. The Two Truths Inseparably Combined

[311] *The completion stage of the two truths inseparably combined*

1. The explanation from *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice*
2. The explanation of the last two branches from the *Later Tantra*

The explanation from Five Stages *and the* Compendium of Practice

1. Questions
2. Answers

Questions

In the *Compendium of Practice* it says:

> Bhagavan, having entered the ultimate truth and become a non-phenomenon, how does it arise from that? Here, what are the experiences of engagement? What does it mean to be irreversible? What is the meaning of liberation? Why will we be freed? Who is the one that is freed?[870]

These six questions are asked in order to determine the stage of union. The first question asks, "The illusory body of the third stage enters the ultimate truth and becomes purified. What is the process of arising from that clear light again?" The second question asks, "Here, in this highest of vehicles, what are the stages of developing the 'experiences of engagement' by way of the first level and so on, which refer to the development of experiences on the path that engages the fruit of practice?" The Chak translation has "Here, what is the experience of the highest bliss," but the above translation is better. The third question asks, "What is the boundary between returning and

not returning to samsara?" The fourth asks, "In terms of being liberated from what, what is the meaning of liberation?" The fifth asks, "What is the reason for becoming free or liberated?" "Why" is asking for the reason. The sixth question asks, "Who is the one that is freed?" thereby asking about the person who is freed. The Chak translation does not have the last two questions but has "What is one freed from?" The older translation is correct.

Answers

The vajra master replies, "Great being, excellent, excellent! The process of arising from the clear light is not the province of those who turn away from the teachings of the Tathāgata. Having followed the glorious Guhyasamāja, I will bring you to understand. Listen with a concentrated mind."[871]

Having instructed the disciple to listen, the questions are explained. This is in four parts:

1. Answer to question two [312]
2. Answers to questions three and five
3. Answer to question one
4. Answers to questions four and six

Answer to question two

In this Vajra Vehicle, the eighth level is gained by training in the generation stage. As long as the completion stage is not reached, for that long do you still need to please the spiritual friend. Having realized the enlightened body, speech, and mind, the ten levels are attained. The illusion-like samādhi is gained. Having perfectly realized the illusion-like samādhi, the clear light of the perfectly pure three appearances is gained. Arising from the non-appearance light, then, by the process of abiding in union and having actualized the deeds of a buddha, you exist adorned with all the qualities of the illusion-like samādhi. This is how it is explained in the *Compendium of Practice*.[872] The Chak translation has "Having realized the body, speech, and mind isolations, the ten levels are attained, and the illusion-like samādhi is gained." It also has "Having actualized the body of a buddha." These help to make the former translation clearer.

The text only says "ten levels," and in the works of the master and his disciples, the names of the levels and the meanings of their names do not occur anywhere. The *Vajra Garland* speaks of the eleven vase initiations and the

three higher initiations to make fourteen initiations and only says "one level for each initiation,"[873] thereby making fourteen levels. But it does not give the names or the meanings of these levels. *Explanation of the Intention* only says, "Relied upon by the buddhas, the thirteen levels,"[874] and says nothing on their names and descriptions. The *Root Tantra* itself and the other explanatory tantras also say nothing on this matter. Because of this, disagreement has arisen. The commentary to the *Compendium of Practice* [attributed to Śākyamitra] says:

> There are twelve from Heat, the lowest,
> up to Patience and the Supreme
> as highest, intermediate, and preparatory.
> The Joyous is the thirteenth.[875]

Also:

> Those who have attained
> from Joyous up to Cloud of Dharma
> will practice by way of union.[876]

According to this explanation, each of the Heat, Peak, Patience, and Supreme levels of the path of preparation is divided up into high, intermediate, and low to make twelve levels. The level known as Joyous is the thirteenth. With the practice of vajra repetition you attain the eighth level, which is the intermediate level of Patience. Through mind isolation you attain the low or intermediate level of Supreme Dharma. Through illusory body you attain the high level of Supreme Dharma. Through clear light you attain Joyous, the first of the ten ārya levels, which, when counted alongside the twelve levels of the path of preparation, is the thirteenth level. He says that union is practiced by those who have attained the levels. [313] Therefore, from the above it is clear that you travel as far as the seventh level by way of the generation stage.

Lakṣmī asserts the ten levels to be Joyous and so on and that the eighth level is reached by the generation stage together with body isolation.[877] It can then be inferred that vajra repetition gains the ninth level. The tenth is reached by seeing the three appearances because this grants control over exalted wisdom. The illusory body is the post-meditation state of the previous level and so is given no separate level but is also the tenth level. Through the clear-light practice, the eleventh Light Everywhere level is reached. The stage of union is

the post-meditation of this and so remains on the eleventh level. The level of the beginner is reached through meditation upon the *brahmāvihāras*[878] and so on. In that connection, the stage of a buddha reached in that very lifetime is the thirteenth level.

Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon* commentary speaks about the ten levels, such as Joyous, but does not explain them or how they are allocated.[879] Some earlier Guhyasamāja scholars attribute the ten levels to Joyous and so on and then speak of attaining Immovable and Cloud of Dharma through the completion of the generation stage and so on. The thinking behind this assertion is not that these two levels are attained through the perfection of all the qualities of those levels but that alternatives for those levels are attained. Some Tibetan scholars cite the *Later Exposition Tantra*, which states:

> The Incomparable and Possessed of Wisdom,
> and the vajra level makes thirteen.[880]

The meaning of these lines, they say, can be found in Abhayākaragupta's explanation of the ten levels according to the Perfection Vehicle, which speaks of the tenth level having three parts to it: the tenth level itself, the special path, and the uninterrupted path. The tenth level is just the tenth level itself. The special path is the Incomparable, and the uninterrupted path is the Possessed of Wisdom level. The Light Everywhere level is the vajra level. This thirteenth level, they maintain, is the level described in *Explanation of the Intention Tantra*, which speaks of a thirteenth level as the all-empty clear light. They also assert that the thinking of the *Compendium of Practice* is that illusory body is the eleventh level, and clear light is the twelfth. Counting from the initial stage of belief, however, it is the thirteenth. They say that the thinking of the *Vajra Garland* also is that its thirteenth level is the clear light, and that by practicing these paths, the levels attained are the actual levels. If this is the case, they must maintain the stage of union as the fourteenth level.

The Perfection Vehicle speaks many times of Joyous and so on as the levels of practice for an ārya being and of Light Everywhere as the level of no-further practice. For ordinary beings it talks of the stage of belief and the level of the beginner. Mantra speaks of twelve, thirteen, and fourteen levels. As for their names, the *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra* lists twelve, called Light Everywhere, Ambrosia Light, and so on. The *Hevajra Tantra* and *Saṃputa Tantra* speak of twelve levels called Place[881] and so on, which

conflict with those of the Perfection Vehicle, [314] and there is also mention of ten levels called Joyous and so on, which nominally do not conflict. It can be inferred that within these are found the stage of belief and the Light Everywhere level, as described in *Sheaves of Instructions*.[882] I think that the previous twelve levels are the same as the latter twelve.

The three extra names that make up thirteen levels can be explained as Abhayākaragupta has done. These levels are those of ārya beings, and if the stage of belief is added, the vajra level becomes the fourteenth. Therefore, although the number of levels is greater than that of the Perfection Vehicle, no level higher than the eleventh level of Light Everywhere is being asserted.

The *Root Tantra* says:

> Dwelling in the ten levels,
> the bodhisattva becomes that.[883]

This is spoken in the section on union, and in the commentary, *Illuminating Lamp* says:

> "The ten levels" are the rays of light, and within them he dwells.[884]

The ten levels mentioned previously should be assigned to those of Joyous and so on.

It is said that the eighth level is reached by the generation stage, and that the eighth level is also reached by vajra repetition. It should be understood that the first statement is referring to the very moment of attaining the eighth level and that the second refers to the eighth level of the Perfection Vehicle and, as illustrated by that, the ninth level also. The thinking behind this is that completion-stage body isolation is included in vajra repetition.

Five Stages says that by seeing the three appearances you dwell in the tenth level,[885] and the *Compendium of Practice* states that having come to realize enlightened body, speech, and mind, the ten levels are attained.[886] Concerning these two assertions, Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* on the sixth chapter explains enlightened body, speech, and mind as first appearance, increase of appearance, and close-to-attainment of appearance. Therefore, if these two assertions are taken as referring to the same thing, mind isolation is assigned to the tenth level. Kṛṣṇācārya, in his commentary on the seeing of the three appearances being applied to the tenth level, explains

it as referring to the attainment of self-consecration. This is because illusory body is attained in dependence upon mind isolation, and designating that to the tenth level is the meaning of the *Compendium of Practice* assertion. This is the earlier portion of the Perfection Vehicle tenth level. Placing clear light and the stage of union as the later parts of the tenth level can be understood from the earlier section on adding highest yoga practices to those of a tenth-level Perfection Vehicle practitioner. Therefore it can also be understood that the union of no further practice is assigned to the eleventh Light Everywhere level. The two tantras that describe clear light as the thirteenth level do so on the basis of the initial stage of belief. That position also illustrates the practice stage of union.

If that is the way the levels are assigned, then when the various paths at the times of the generation stage and so on are completed, are the qualities of the levels of Joyous and so on completely attained? Or is it a case of a correspondence of similarities, in the same way that one level is assigned to each of the fourteen initiations, or the five paths are assigned to a single practice of the sādhana, or when the imagined deities being withdrawn into the clear light and so on are assigned to the three bodies? [315] If you have attained third-stage illusory body but have not actualized clear light, it is taught that you can be returned to samsara by the force of the mental afflictions. Therefore, merely by completing the path at this point, not only have you not attained the tenth level you have not even attained the ārya levels, and so this way of assigning levels is not done on the basis of gaining all the qualities associated with the levels of Joyous and so on. Moreover, this also harms the position—as well as many other positions—of assigning the completion of the generation stage to the actual attainment of the Immovable level.

Just as traveling by the Perfection Vehicle up to the tenth level is explained as a substitute for traveling by this path from its generation stage up to illusory body, so too can the paths of this vehicle leading to buddhahood be a substitute for other vehicles traveling up to that level. Thus the attainments of this path are spoken of as being attainments reaching as far as the tenth level, but the attainment of qualities is not necessarily reciprocated across the paths. Moreover, the generation stage is the ripening agent for the complete generation of the insights of the completion stage. Therefore the ripening of the last of these insights is designated to the moment the eighth level is attained, and any previous ripening before that moment is designated to the seven previous levels. However, do not apply such and such feature of the generation stage to such and such feature of the seven levels.

When the generation stage has been perfected, you are able to engage just as you wish in a very stable samādhi of no conceptuality of ordinary appearances. You also gain a pure appearance of the world and its inhabitants as being a celestial palace inhabited by deities. This is similar to the eighth level. With the generation stage as a prerequisite, and having trained in speech isolation built on the completion of body isolation, you attain, as the *Compendium of Practice* describes, one of the states of *tolerance of unborn dharmas*; and having purified the wind, which is the root of speech, you gain control over the winds. This is similar to gaining control over the exalted wisdom of the perfectly pure speech of teaching Dharma gained on the ninth level. In dependence upon the completion of speech isolation, mind isolation is accomplished, and from the wind and mind of mind isolation comes the accomplishment of the illusory body, and you gain initiation from the buddhas. This is similar to the attainments of the tenth level, because with the attainment of the illusory body, the wind and mind—the causes for the ordinary body—are transformed into the causes for the sambhogakāya. Similarly, on the tenth level by gaining control over karma, the bad imprints of karma, which are the cause for the ordinary body, are transformed into causes for the perfect body, and you will receive the initiation of the great rays of light. On the tenth level the accumulations gathered on the paths, which are the causes for the understanding of emptiness to become a force capable of destroying the obscurations, are complete, and there is nothing new to train in on your path. In the same way, on the basis of the illusory body, you engage in the clear light, and after that you will attain the no-further-practice stage of union. Because of the similarity these are assigned to the tenth level. [316]

Whether you have reached the ārya levels or not is determined by whether you directly perceive reality or not, and on this basis the paths are divided into those of ordinary beings and those of ārya beings. The paths of ordinary beings are the paths of accumulation and preparation. If the practices are to be applied to these paths, then beginning from the shared paths, and for as long as you are not able to actually induce the empty states by bringing and dissolving the winds into the dhūtī through the power of meditation, that is designated as the path of accumulation. From the point of developing that ability, but without the bliss directly cognizing reality, up to and including the illusory body is designated as the path of preparation. From the actual clear light onward, but before the attainment of the stage of union, is the path of seeing. From the practice stage of union, but before the attainment

of the no-further-practice stage of union, is designated as the nine levels of the path of meditation.

Answers to questions three and five

As long as those who have attained the illusory body have not actually perceived the ultimate truth, they can still fall back. The reason for this is that as long as the illusory body is not purified by the three appearances, there will be the conceptualizations of the consciousnesses. For as long as they are present, the continuum of imprints of afflictions remains, and that will bring about existence again. This is how it is explained in the *Compendium of Practice.*[887] "Not actually perceived" means "not directly perceived." Without such a perception, none of the seeds of the afflictions can be permanently eliminated, which means that birth through the force of afflictions has not been eliminated. This is the meaning of the above statement that the continuum of imprints of afflictions will bring about existence again, because "imprints" (*bag chags, vāsanā*) here refers to the seeds of the afflictions and not to imprints as the obscurations to omniscience. With the attainment of the illusory body, buddhahood in this life is certain, and so you will not be born again in samsara through the force of karma. Saying "if direct perception of reality is not attained" is merely a hypothesis. For example, it is like saying, "If Siddhartha, the son of Śuddhodana, does not follow the monastic path, he will become a universal sovereign."

The above teaches that until the attainment of the fourth stage you do not directly perceive the meaning of reality. Therefore the three pure appearances at that time are purified of even the subtlest dualistic appearance, and the corresponding exalted wisdom is of one taste with the reality, like water poured into water.

Continuing from the above explanation, the *Compendium of Practice* states, "that which is separate from other mental activity[888] is the state of purity." As a source for this the *Supreme Original Tantra* is cited, which says that the state of the three poisons purified is the state of bodhisattva.[889] Also cited is the master Kampala, who says in *Sādhana of the Inner Nature*[890] that the nature of sound is coarse, the nature of mental activity, or thought, is subtle, and that the absence of mental activity, or thought, is the supreme state of the yogi. [317] The Chak translation of this citation has "that which is the absence of all thought." This refers to the clear light of the three pure appearances. This is a state that is purified of some of the seeds of the afflictions.

With such an attainment "existence" will not be brought about by the force of karma and affliction, and so there is no return to samsara.

The Lower Vehicle practitioners directly perceive emptiness, but until they become arhats, they have not overcome birth caused by the force of karma and affliction. Great Vehicle practitioners, having directly perceived reality, will negate birth and death brought on through the force of karma and affliction; this is the same for both types of Great Vehicle practitioners.

In the second stage of *Five Stages*, after saying that by the generation stage you attain the eighth level and by the three appearances you attain the tenth level, it states:

> Having well attained complete actual enlightenment,
> the purified state is closely perceived,
> and in this birth of no returning,
> you become omniscient in the buddha realm.[891]

This teaches nonreturning from clear light onward. Before that state, though, returning can be inferred. The "purified state" is the one explained previously. Therefore this passage is best as translated by Chak Lotsāwa. The older translation was cited earlier. What is the reason for stating that in this vehicle, once you directly perceive reality, you are freed from birth caused by karma and affliction? Right after the Kampala citation the *Compendium of Practice* states:

> In this way, through this process of enlightenment, you gain the perfected clear light, and body, speech, and mind, untainted in their nature, become the all-empty state. Thus the three consciousnesses, the nature of the pure perfection of wisdom, are beyond mental activity, beyond speech. This is the realm of nirvana, without form, difficult to find, freed from karma and birth, resplendent like the sun, the moon, fire, and a jewel.[892]

This teaches the reason. "In this way" refers to the method by which the three appearances enter the clear light. This is a method by which the achiever of the illusory body enters clear light by relying upon an external consort and the two meditative absorptions. The above refers to an illusory body that replaces the limitless accumulation of merit and to a very special object-holding consciousness of great bliss directly perceiving reality. It teaches here

that this path has the ability to block the force of mental afflictions causing birth into an existence. This means that in terms of the reality to be cognized, it may be no different from the direct perception of emptiness by the Lower Vehicle, but the power of the consciousness is vastly greater.

In that case, the Perfection Vehicle practitioner on the path of seeing and the Lower Vehicle practitioner on the path of seeing are no different in terms of their direct experience of reality. [318] When that experience occurs in the Great Vehicle practitioner, however, the ability to negate any returning to samsara through karma and affliction is developed, as are the twelve sets of a hundred excellent qualities and so on. These do not occur in Lower Vehicle path-of-seeing practitioners because whether such an insight will produce this ability is dependent on whether they have trained in the limitless collection of merit on the path of accumulation and the stage of belief. Also, although there is a great difference in the speed with which a direct perception of emptiness is attained, the respective qualities that arise from the Great Vehicle perception are like the sky compared to the palm of the hand, and so you should know that this is also a reason that the Great Vehicle practitioner, unlike the Lower Vehicle practitioner, does not quickly gain a direct perception of reality.[893]

Here [in tantra], the direct perception of reality is very quick indeed. But not only is it fast, you also attain a collection of excellent qualities superior to those of other Great Vehicle paths. So this path is truly wondrous. The difference between this path and the other two paths in eliminating the obscurations to omniscience is one life in these degenerate times as compared to three countless eons. Similarly, there is a great difference in the speed of elimination of the obscurations of afflictions. With the supreme feature not found in other paths of having great power to eliminate the obscurations, it is not necessary for this path to follow the kind of presentation found elsewhere, which says that the elimination of the intellectually contrived afflictions occurs on the path of seeing and the elimination of the innate afflictions has to begin from the path of meditation. Similarly, according to the position of the Perfection Vehicle, the Lower Vehicle is fast in its elimination of afflictions, whereas the Great Vehicle is not. In this vehicle, however, from the point where you are able to mostly meditate with innate bliss and emptiness joined, you do so by being absorbed into that state. Therefore, as explained previously, this is a process that differs from other paths and will eliminate the afflictions very quickly. In this regard also, it is different from other Great Vehicle paths.

Because of this, it is taught that the exalted wisdom of fourth-stage clear light eliminates the seeds of the afflictions and that the term "imprints," used when describing the excellent quality of being freed from all imprints of afflictions upon attainment of the stage of union because it is an uncontaminated stage, refers to the seeds of the afflictions. It refers not only to those of the intellectually contrived afflictions but to those of the innate afflictions as well.

It is the thinking of the master and his disciples that not only holding to a self of phenomena—which other schools explain as being an obscuration to omniscience—but even the innate holding to a self of phenomena, which is more subtle, is in fact a mental affliction. These points have been extensively dealt with in my *Differentiating the Interpretive and the Definitive* and elsewhere. [319]

Answer to question one

When you enter the fourth-stage actual light, the previous illusory body is purified and disappears, and so how does the practitioner again arise in a form that is the stage of union? The *Compendium of Practice* speaks of close-to-attainment arising from the actual clear light, of increase of appearance from close-to-attainment like the warm rays of the sun, and of the initial appearance arising from that like the cool light of the moon. After this it says:

> Therefore this amassed appearance, of the four empty states becoming one,[894] illuminates the three worlds like the sun; inseparably together with the subtle element like a shadow, the entity of the indestructible vajra body. Not transmigrating and without contamination, you are freed from all imprints of afflictions. You gain control merely by wishing. Like a fish leaping out of water or like waking from sleep quickly, you become form that is the entity of a body of supreme joy, the nature of form whose name is Great Vajradhara. Because this is definite liberation from the chains of samsara, it is freedom.[895]

The ninth chapter of the root tantra says that fire comes from the movement of the fire stick but that the fire is not to be found in the user's hands and so on. With this as an example the text continues, "All the tathāgatas'

vajra samaya should be likewise subsequently known, coming and going, and so on."[896] On this *Illuminating Lamp* says that this teaches the method for creating the vajra body from the clear light and is not found in other vehicles. It explains that "all the tathāgatas" refers to the all-empty state; "vajra" refers to the greatly empty state, "samaya" to the very empty state, and subsequent knowledge of all three refers to the first empty state. Going to the ultimate truth through the process of the three empty states is "going." The coming of the three empty states in the reverse process is "coming." "And so on" teaches the completion when there is no coming and going of the arising and entering processes. This means that when attaining the stage of union, the three empty states arise in reverse order, and at the time of no further practice, the four empty states do not come and go in reverse or forward order.[897]

The second stage from *Five Stages* also says that when the stage of union is accomplished, the three exalted wisdoms arise from the clear light. This citation was quoted previously.[898]

Do you attain the body of the stage of union immediately after arising from the fourth-stage actual clear light or not? If you do, this would contradict the teaching cited above that when attaining the stage of union, the three empty states arise from the clear light in reverse order, because if the stage-of-union body were not produced from the wind and mind of the three empty states arising in reverse order, [320] then there would be no sense in teaching it. The teaching of the third stage from the *Five Stages*, which says that the illusory body is produced from the three appearances together with the wind, would also be incorrect, because it cannot be right to make the distinction that it is necessary at that stage but not necessary here.

On the other hand, if you do not attain the stage-of-union body immediately after rising from the fourth-stage actual clear light but attain it after the arising of the three empty states in reverse order, then it must be produced simply from the wind and mind of the first empty state. Then what does it mean to say that it is produced from the three appearances? It would also mean that the *Compendium of Practice*, speaking of the "four empty states becoming one," would make no sense. For the duration of the first appearance and as soon as it arises, there is no actual clear light, and so there could be no attainment of the stage of union. This position also contradicts the basis of purification process in which the intermediate state rises from the death clear light without anything intervening. Moreover, if you assert that the stage of union is attained when you again enter clear light from the last appearance, this would contradict *Five Stages* when it says, "Arising from the

limit of perfection, you attain the nondualistic wisdom," as well as the *Compendium of Practice* and *Illuminating Lamp*, which state many times that the stage of union is attained once you have risen from clear light. However, if it is attained in this way, then the above contradictions occur. So where exactly is this point at which the stage of union is produced from the clear light?

In order to understand well the stage of union, which is the principal topic of the glorious *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, you first have to know properly the way to attain the practice stage of union. To do that, you set out these kinds of questions and then arrive at certainty by resolving those doubts conclusively, leaving no room for other possibilities elsewhere. This is excellent. Those who follow the master and his disciples in their commentaries on *Five Stages* and so on do not seem to have engaged in this kind of conclusive analysis. Using the teaching above on the empty states appearing in reverse order, the venerable Gö explains that the body of the stage of union is gained from the three appearances together with the wind, which arise in reverse order from the clear light. Lakṣmī also speaks of a way in which the illusory body is produced arising from the empty states appearing in reverse order. In keeping with that, I have described the same process in other compositions. Still, we should look at this difficult point in more detail. *Five Stages* says:

> Light together with this entity[899]
> endowed with consciousness and wind,
> the stage of self-consecration
> will sometimes arise for the sake of beings.
> Just as fish quickly rise
> from the clear waters of streams,
> likewise from the clear all-empty state,
> it is said that this network of illusion will arise.[900]

This explains that this body too arises from just wind and mind through the process of self-consecration, [321] and from the clear light, which is likened to a clear stream, the pure illusory body appears like a fish suddenly leaping out of the water. This matches the position of arising from the clear light with nothing intervening. In Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice* example of waking quickly from sleep, the sleep is an example for clear light, and waking represents the arising from that of the body of the stage of union. This too matches the position of nothing intervening. The description of the four

empty states as one also matches well with the forward process in which the preceding dissolves into the following, finally to become as one in the clear light, but it does not fit well with the reverse process. This description also fits very well with the basis-of-purification process in which the intermediate state is formed simultaneously with the formation of the close-to-attainment of appearance immediately following death clear light. Therefore the body of the stage of union is formed immediately from fourth-stage actual clear light. However, it is not contradictory for there to be the creation of close-to-attainment and so on from clear light as described previously. There are statements that speak of the three empty states arising in reverse order when describing the attainment of the stage of union, but these statements are not being said to establish that this body of the stage of union is accomplished from that reverse process.

If the stage of union is not a simultaneous coming together of the mind of actual clear light and the form of the pure illusory body, there may well be the attainment of an illusory body formed immediately after rising from fourth-stage clear light, but at that time there will be no actual wisdom of clear light, so how can there be a state of union? That is true, and to understand this, it is necessary to know the many methods of achieving union taught in *Five Stages*. Twenty-one are taught, beginning:

> Abandoning conceptions
> concerning samsara and nirvana
> so that they become a single phenomenon:
> this is taught to be union.

And ending:

> Abandoning conceptions
> concerning form and no form,
> the powerful yogi who has perceived peace
> has gained the stage of union.[901]

The verse beginning "Held-as-a-whole and subsequent dissolution . . ." teaches two unions, and the verse beginning "Dwelling and not dwelling in meditative equipoise . . ." also teaches two unions, so it could be said that there are twenty-three unions. Of the unions explained in this way, the principal ones, as expressed in the Chak translation, are:

Knowing reality, you eventually know
self-consecrated and clear light.
These two alone combined
is the stage of union.

Self-consecration and clear light are a "pair" (*zung*). Combined they are "engaged (*'jug*) as a pair"[902] [i.e., a union]. Also:

Having known individually the divisions
of the conventional and the ultimate,
then these two well mixed
are explained as being union.

The conventional and the ultimate are the "pair." [322] Mixed together they are "engaged as a pair." Before the attainment of actual clear light and during the time of the attainment of the illusory body produced from the five-light wind, there is no clear light in which the mind has become of one taste with the ultimate. Before the attainment of the stage of union and during the time of clear light in which the mind of bliss has become of one taste with the ultimate, there is no conventional truth in which the body has become the illusory body. These two alternate, and therefore there is no union. When the "self," or body, has become "consecrated," or gone to the limit of the conventional illusory body, and when the mind has gone to the limit of "clear light," or the ultimate, and these two are gathered together at the same time in one continuum and are combined equally without alternating, union has been attained. When this principal union is first accomplished, these two must be together at one time. Even so, there are other ways of determining union, and every attainment of union is not necessarily a union that has been determined this way.

The Sanskrit for union is *yuganadva*. *Yuga* means "pair" and *adva* means "not two." This means that the individual parts of the pair are not two in the manner of alternating but are together simultaneously, and this, as explained above, is "union." This is attained when you once again enter clear light, having arisen from the last of the reverse-process appearances.

Nāgārjuna's *Five Stages* speaks of many types of union where conceptualization of samsara and nirvana and other pairs of dual phenomena are eliminated and become a union of nonduality not separated by those conceptualizations. These descriptions determine union using different criteria

from that described above. If this kind of union refers to the pacification of those conceptualizations in the face of the direct cognition of reality, then that has already been attained from the time of fourth-stage clear light, and so it cannot be correct to say that this is a union attained by relying upon itself having been attained previously. If this kind of union refers to the permanent elimination of every conceptualization, that is a state not accomplished until the attainment of the no-further-practice stage of union, and so it would not fit with the practice stage of union. Therefore the nondual exalted wisdom of having eliminated all holding-as-real conceptualizations, together with their seeds, focused on persons and phenomena is this type of union.

The stage of union will be attained immediately upon arising from the first time you actualize fourth-stage clear light, but then how does one session of actual clear light develop the ability to destroy all the innate afflictions? The wisdom of the actual clear light being able to develop the power to eliminate the obscurations in this way is due to the power of the illusory body together with the activities undertaken at that time, as well as a lot of meditation on illustrative clear light. Moreover, these obscurations are not eliminated during the fourth stage. It is the moment of attaining the path-of-practice union that is established as the elimination of the innate afflictions. [323] If such a clear light is actualized, you have the ability to remain in meditative equipoise for a long time and not just for a brief period, because if you can remain a long time in the illustrative clear light that occurs before this, it goes without saying that the same can be done in the actual clear light. *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* also states:

> Not apprehending nondesire, desire, and intermediate desire, the exalted-wisdom deity becomes clear in that instant, to be experienced for eight hours, or a day, a month, a year, an eon, or a thousand eons.[903]

This is saying that the duration of the innate exalted wisdom accords with the varying levels of ability of practitioners. *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* also says:

> Attaining the state of clear light,
> you cross over samsara.
> For one session or one day,
> a month, or half a month,

a year, an eon, or a thousand eons,
dwelling in every instant,
the yoga of the wisdom constantly arises.[904]

This also explains the point well.

The "four empty states becoming one" described in the *Compendium of Practice* has been explained. The lines from "this amassed appearance" up to "like the sun" mean that the light rays from the body created from the wind and mind of the clear light fills the realms of the world as the sun lights up the skies. *Illuminating Lamp* on the fifteenth chapter, when explaining that after the actual clear light of dawn is actualized, the union will be attained, as was described earlier, refers to the tantra speaking of light that "illuminates a distance of a hundred leagues" and states that this is just an illustration, that the light illuminates a great trichiliocosmic realm, and so on.[905] The mention in that same commentary of attaining the ten powers can either refer to comparable qualities gained at the practice stage of union or to the actual ten powers in the no-further-practice stage of union. The union described in *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice* should also be taken as referring to both these levels individually and together.

"Not transmigrating" teaches that once this form has been attained, there is no break in its continuation because the authentic vajra body has been attained. "Without contamination" and so on means that all afflictions have been eliminated.

Illuminating Lamp states that in the union of no further practice there is no "coming" from the clear light by way of the reverse process of the three empty states. Here the arising from the reverse process is being described, and so the earlier description is to be applied to the path-of-practice union.[906]

Answers to questions four and six

The [*Compendium of Practice*] phrase "the nature of form whose name is . . ."[907] is rendered in the Chak translation as "whose name and physical form is Great Vajradhara." [324] Abhayākaragupta's *Light of the Moon* commentary also says that "name" refers to the other four aggregates and "form" refers to the form aggregate. This also teaches that the union-stage Vajradhara is in the nature of wind and mind. Therefore this is the answer to the question, "Who is the one that is freed?" The sentence beginning "Because this is definite liberation" teaches that the elimination of all the binding afflictions

is liberation, and this answers the question, "What is the meaning of liberation?" These lines teach that the state of complete elimination, which is the elimination of the afflictions, begins from the very first moment of attaining the union of no-further practice.

When this stage-of-union body is first attained, it will be achieved with a status that is separate from the old body. *Illuminating Lamp* on the eleventh chapter says that this stage-of-union body takes a nirmāṇakāya visible to the eyes of ordinary beings.[908] This refers to the following: Although there are other ways of taking the nirmāṇakāya, the nirmāṇakāya that resides within the old body like an intermediate-state being entering the womb to emerge later at birth for all to see is more difficult to perceive. Therefore it is on that basis that this statement should be understood. *Illuminating Lamp* on the first chapter expresses the same point when it says that, with the attainment of union, you take a nirmāṇakāya by entering the aggregates and so on,[909] and the same work also says that the form of the completely pure deity dwells within the casket of the aggregates.[910] Also, Nāgabodhi says:

> The perfect guide deliberately hides the reality
> within the casket of the aggregates.[911]

Therefore the stage-of-union body of someone like the guide Nāgārjuna, which is the province of the irreversible bodhisattva, is not seen by ordinary beings, but the old body can be seen.

The illusory body will also arise from the illustrative clear light at the end of the reversal process, and the teaching that it will be produced from the three minds means that it is produced indirectly from the two appearances and the first and middle part of close-to-attainment and directly from the last part of close-to-attainment. The sambhogakāya is first produced with a status separate from the old body, and then it takes a nirmāṇakāya by entering the aggregates, as described above. If you can understand this well, you will develop great certainty about the definitive meaning of the three-stacked *sattva* meditation, and you will resolve many doubts concerning, for example, how the illusory body and those who possess the body of the stage of union can perform tantric activities through the old body and how vajra repetition can accomplish the different feats.

The teachings on the meditations of the sovereign mandala of the nirmāṇakāya with the stage of union existing within the sambhogakāya are not meditations in which the appearance of the sambhogakāya undergoes a disappearing purification. Thus when that mandala is actualized into clear light,

this body does not disappear through purification. Except for the times of the illusory body entering the actual clear light, this way of thinking should be followed. [325]

Although *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice* say that once union is attained there is nothing new on your path to train in, this does not mean that you do not develop further what you have already trained in. *Five Stages* says:

> The great yogi continues to train,
> dwelling within the stage of union,
> and through meditation upon union,
> even the activities become nondual.[912]

This speaks of meditation in the stage of union and the practice of tantric activities in that stage. Nāgabodhi also says:

> The profound nonconceptualization,
> the body of the extensive buddhas:
> These are said to be the two truths
> divided and understood individually
> as the conventional and the ultimate.
> Then meditate on the endless state
> of these two joined together as one.[913]

Also, immediately after the Nāgabodhi citation prior to the above:

> Therefore, by the kindness of the guru,
> make effort to gain insight;
> by this the mind becomes clear.
> Then practice the activities.[914]

Synonyms for the stage of union with and without further practice are taught extensively in *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice* and conclude:

> Actually awakened to the net of illusion,
> having traveled to the far shore of samsara,
> the great yogi whose work is done
> dwells on the path of the two truths.[915]

33. How the Stage of Union Fits into the Six Yogas

The explanation of the last two branches from the Later Tantra

The explanation from *Five Stages* and the *Compendium of Practice* on the way to attain the stage of union is explained in the *Later Tantra* by way of the branches of recollection and samādhi:

> Having meditated on that which is recollected,
> they are to be emanated similar to that.
> This is known as *recollection*,
> produced from appearing individually.
> With method and wisdom in meditative union,
> all phenomena condensed exist as a mass,
> and in its center, form is meditated on.
> In time the wisdom is perfected.
> This is called *samādhi*.[916]

"Having meditated," or actualized becoming clear light, then the forms of "that which is recollected," such as the mirage-like, are to be "emanated" or developed, "similar to," or by the process of, that attainment of the perfection limit of clear light. Those explained above are to be known as the fifth branch, "known as recollection."[917] The Chak translation is more in keeping with the process in the commentary explanation. It reads:

> Having meditated, that which is recollected
> is to be emanated similar to that.
> This is to be known as *recollection*. [326]

When you have entered clear light through the forward process, you have done so through the forms of mirage and so on. Likewise, in the reverse process too, you arise through the same process. Therefore it begins from the

close-to-attainment appearance, and then, after the first appearance, lamp, fireflies, smoke, and mirage are produced.

> "Appearing individually" means apprehending them perfectly. From this the branch of recollection will be produced and not in any other way.

This is from both older translations, and the Chak translation is similar. On the line "produced from appearing individually," the Patsap translation of the commentary reads:

> "From" means from the branch of recollection, the "perfect knowledge" or perfect experience will be produced.

The three previous translations are better because this is a section explaining how recollection is produced from clear light.

The line "This is known as recollection" finishes the branch of recollection, so doesn't this teach that the stage of union is produced from recollection? This is the order in the explanation. If it were the actual order, the third line would come after the fourth. Therefore recollection is produced from the perfect knowledge of clear light "and not in any other way." This forceful statement means the following: Clear light involves forward and reverse processes, and if you are wondering which of these two processes recollection is applied to, it must be explained in connection with the process of arising from clear light in reverse order and not by the forward process, which is the "other way." Therefore this explanation from Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* should be explained in agreement with the *Compendium of Practice.*

"Method" is the conventional-truth pure illusory body. "Wisdom," although it is taught as being the ultimate truth, refers to the exalted wisdom of clear light in one taste with that truth. "Meditative union" means that these two are fused inseparably. "All phenomena" refers to the animate and inanimate. They are condensed and "exist as a mass," which means gathered into one as the form of the mahāmudrā deity. In the center of this container-like world and its inhabitants, this union, in the form of Vajradhara, is meditated on. By this process, "in time," meaning in just an instant, the wisdom is perfected, and so this is the branch of samādhi. This is the thinking of *Illuminating Lamp.*

The two truths are a pair and the union of these two inseparably combined

is the main union. This union can also illustrate other types of union. The way that the entire world and all its inhabitants can be condensed to become the stage-of-union body is that the foundation of all animate and inanimate phenomena is none other than wind and mind, [327] which is then developed into the single body of this stage of union. "By this process" means it is produced from clear light in the way that a fish emerges from water. The word "just" from the phrase "in just an instant" eliminates anything else intervening in its arising from clear light. The way that this is the stage of union has been explained previously.

Understanding the commentary explanation in this way, it can be seen how other explanations from Ekādaśasvara's *Secret Ambrosia Instructions* and so on are incorrect. Therefore I have not presented their explanations.

At this point *Illuminating Lamp* cites as reference the *Illusory Net Tantra*, which speaks of the three deity-yoga practices of self-consecration, complete ritual, and the perfection of the form.[918] The first refers to instantaneously generating yourself as the form of the deity, the second to the gradual generation through seed syllables and so on, and the third to the exalted-wisdom body generated as the stage-of-union body. Although Ānandagarbha explains this tantra to be yoga tantra, this is not accepted here, as was done with the Guhyasamāja. The first two, as was explained previously, refer to deities generated through imagination and are not deities generated in the manner of the two illusory bodies. Although the third refers to the main and pure illusory body, it can also refer to third-stage illusory body. Therefore it is not correct, as explained in the two tantras mentioned earlier and similarly from other tantras, to assert that all instantaneous generations of deity forms by the completion-stage practitioner who is able to meditate on the innate great bliss are for the sake of the exalted-wisdom body "perfected instantaneously."

Illuminating Lamp, citing as a reference the *Vairocana Enlightenment Tantra*'s statements on pure and impure deity forms,[919] is either from the perspective of the mantra body and exalted-wisdom body taught in highest yoga tantras as impure and pure deity forms, respectively, or from the perspective that this kind of statement is being made in a performance tantra with the deity forms of highest yoga tantra in mind. You should know, however, that in this tantra the methods of deity generation do not go beyond the literal, as was explained previously.



Part 10

Tantric Activities

34. General Presentation of Activities

[328] *Tantric activities: Methods for enhancing the two stages*

1. General presentation of activities
2. Specific presentation of highest yoga tantra activities

General presentation of activities

1. Divisions of activities in general
2. Eliminating the notion that certain activities contradict scripture

Divisions of activities in general

Our Teacher descended from Tuṣita to the human realm, displayed the four procedures[920] of lineage, renunciation, and so on, and took the form of a renunciate free from attachment. For those of the Lower Vehicle, who had an attraction to the lower, he brought about the understanding of the four truths and taught the attachment-free activities. For those of the Perfection Vehicle, who had an attraction to the vast, he brought about the understanding of the no-self of phenomena by teaching the eight consciousnesses and so on and taught the activities of the levels and perfections. He emanated in the form of a universal emperor, and through the activities of desire, taught to those with great attraction to the profound the activities of the Dharma of desire up to the understanding of the two truths described previously.[921]

All paths to liberation and omniscience that do not make attachment toward the sensual into a path are paths of activities of nonattachment. The mention in the *Compendium of Practice* of activities of nonattachment as those of the Lower Vehicle is for purposes of illustration only. Also there is no mention of uniting meditatively with consorts and meditation goddesses in the three lower tantras. Generally, however, there is an attachment focused on the five kinds of sensual objects of the goddess visualized in front, and that

is made into a path. Therefore the paths of these tantras can be included in the category of attachment for the sensual made into a path.

To those disciples who practice thoroughly the complete significance of the exclusive meaning of the two truths, and who take joy in the fruit of supreme joy, the activities of nonattachment belonging to the Śrāvaka Vehicle and the practices of Perfection Vehicle sutras were not taught. This is because disciples who are to be tamed by those disciplines do not understand the completion-stage great bliss that takes attachment to the sensual as a path. Although they may search a long time for enlightenment through the twelve excellent qualities gained from training,[922] their activities are not capable of producing final enlightenment without relying upon other paths. The *Vajraḍāka Tantra* says:

> To those who are actual monks,
> those who delight in concepts,
> and those who are old,
> this reality is not taught.[923] [329]

This is saying that the monastic that is tamed by the path of nonattachment is not able to have a liking for the path with attachment. The elderly, whose seed has weakened, lack the ability to unite bliss and emptiness, and those who are enthusiastic about outsider sophistry will not enter this Dharma. They are, therefore, unsuitable vessels for the supreme path. Because a special effect arises from a special cause, it should be known that the great bliss present at the time of the result is produced from a special bliss that engages with the qualities of the five types of sensual objects at the time of the cause. Ascetic practices other than that will not gain the single-pointed mind of great bliss because the bliss of melting arises in a wholesome body whereas these ascetic practices will destroy the five senses and their physical basis, the body. The *Vajraḍāka Tantra* says:

> These illusion-like phenomena
> produce a special enjoyment.
> As that bliss becomes fully developed,
> so the special result will be gained.
> Why would you not desire it?
> Animate and inanimate phenomena do not exist
> but are characterized by just appearance,
> and with such a special meditation[924]

comes the attractive result of bliss,
the highest illuminating power of the mind,
striving for the result, practicing the causes;
Goddess, who would deny that?
Therefore, with every effort,
make offerings to he who travels everywhere.[925]
With austerity, restraints, and the unbearable,
the body is emaciated and suffers.
The mind is distracted by suffering,
and with distraction, siddhis will go elsewhere.
With body and mind firm,
all bliss becomes firm.[926]

The *Root Tantra* also says:

With austerity, restraints, and the unbearable,
there will be no accomplishment.
By the enjoyment of all desires,
accomplishment is swift.[927]

"Austerity" refers to yogas that exhaust the body, such as building temples. "Restraints" refers to the twelve qualities gained from training, such as dwelling in front of trees. "The unbearable" refers to jumping off mountains and walking into fire. Enlightenment will not be accomplished while being tormented by following these practices. They emaciate and weaken the body, thereby creating suffering. This weakens the *kunda*-like bodhicitta, and you become distracted from the samādhi of great bliss, and so the great siddhi will not be gained in this life.

The citation from the *Supreme Original Tantra*, which like the previous *Root Tantra* citation is quoted in the *Compendium of Practice*,[928] is to either be understood as a general explanation or as being taught on the basis of the above explanation. In its literal meaning, it does not follow these explanations. The *Root Tantra* also says:

With body, speech, and mind dwelling in bliss,
enlightenment will be gained.
Otherwise, there will be untimely death
and definite burning in hell.[929] [330]

The first two lines, which are indirectly taught by the last two, teach the benefits of engaging in bliss. The last two lines directly teach the disadvantages of engaging in austere practices. Some say that this verse teaches the disadvantages of engaging in non-Buddhist austerities. Others say that it teaches the disadvantages of accruing the eighth root downfall[930] by taking initiations and pledges, understanding the realities of this path, and then abandoning them to engage in austerities. Being granted enlightenment in one lifetime through the path of highest yoga tantra depends on combining bliss and emptiness. The bliss of this union comes from the expansion of bodhicitta in the body, and that means that the senses and their physical foundation, the body, must be nourished. For this purpose, the activities, through which the senses are able to rely upon the five objects as much as they wish, are taught. *Illuminating Lamp* on the seventeenth chapter says:

> "All samayas, as many as there are," refers to women, such as those of the lotus class. "By the samaya of the three vajras"—meaning by the actions of your body, speech, and mind—they will bring delight and joy. "Do not denigrate the mind vajra" means do not make your mind free of attachment. This is based on the fact that the foundation of the body is the mind and the foundation of bodhicitta is the body.[931]

By relying upon the bodies of those of the lotus class and so on, the bodhicitta will increase. Since the foundation of that person's body is his mind, if his mind is denigrated, the root cause of great bliss is being harmed, and this becomes an obstacle to increasing the samādhi of great bliss. On this basis it is taught that the mind is to be protected. The prescription of the fourteenth root downfall[932] is also based on this. This line of reasoning should be similarly understood to apply to nourishing the body and not tormenting it.

The two newer translations of *Illuminating Lamp*, which say that mind is the foundation of body and that the foundation of bodhicitta is the body, are correct, whereas the reverse would be an incorrect translation.

Activities are taught for whatever path is practiced, just as activities are taught for the six perfections, for example. However, here "activity" means activity within the five objects as causes of great bliss by way of understanding their intrinsic nature. If body, speech, and mind do not dwell in bliss through the sense pleasures, you will not gain the single-pointed mind, and your mental state will not be in meditative equipoise. Therefore teaching that

you must engage in activities of bliss is not just for the accomplishment of the stable meditative equipoise of a single-pointed mind but also for developing the samādhi of innate great bliss. [331]

Eliminating the notion that certain activities contradict scripture

1. Presentation and explanation of this topic in the *Compendium of Practice*
2. Dispelling the arguments of others

Presentation and explanation of this topic in the Compendium of Practice

If it is taught that you will attain enlightenment by engaging the five types of sensual objects[933] in whatever way you desire, then how does that not contradict the teaching that attachment to the five types of sensual objects is a poison to be abandoned? As it says in the lines:

> Desire, anger, and ignorance
> are the three poisons of the world.[934]

Moreover, how does it not contradict the teachings that speak of the disadvantages of desire, namely that engaging the five types of sensual objects results in the arising of afflictions and is therefore asserted as a cause for rebirth in the lower realms? In reply the *Compendium of Practice* explains:[935]

> The afflictions become the conditions for the afflictions of those with apprehending views, such as śrāvakas, because they do not understand the nature of afflictions. If their nature is understood, they become a cause for enlightenment.[936] In the *Supreme Original Tantra*:
>
> > Holding desire, anger, and ignorance,
> > they will become poisons.
> > Pacifying those poisons,
> > poison eliminates poison.
> > Relying upon the ambrosia process,
> > they will become ambrosia.[937]

The *Kāśyapa Chapter* in the Ratnakuṭa sutra collection says that just as the manure of a city benefits the sugarcane fields and so on, the manure of the bodhisattva's afflictions is beneficial for becoming a buddha. Also, the same work says that just as poison held by medicine and mantra cannot cause death, the afflictions held by method and wisdom cannot cause downfall.[938] The *Vinaya Amoghasiddhi Tantra* says:

> That which binds the stupid
> will liberate the wise.
> Meditating on the aspect of enlightenment,
> all this will be reversed.
> Precisely that which binds the ignorant
> and finally leads to the wailing hell
> through transformation will lead to liberation
> and, by the power of wisdom, bring bliss.[939]

By this way of thinking, there is no other practice for obtaining the result of the great bliss of the highest yoga, which itself contains the cause of generating the extraordinary and beautiful result, on account of its being an extraordinary arousal, and an extraordinary transformation. Therefore the omniscient state endowed with the eight mighty qualities will be actualized through the pleasure of food, dwelling, and so on by means of just this. The *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* also says:

> Therefore bliss is gained by bliss
> and will bring about every buddha.[940] [332]

Concerning the phrase "become the conditions for the afflictions," the two later translations of the *Compendium of Practice* have "become the cause of the lower realms," which is a better translation.

The argument is that relying upon the five types of sensual objects produces afflictions that become causes for the lower realms. The reply differentiates between the afflictions that arise from relying upon the five objects that become a cause for the lower realms in those śrāvakas and so on who have not understood reality and the afflictions that become a cause for buddhahood in those who have. It does not say that afflictions are not produced from relying upon the sensual objects. Generally, as explained earlier, having

no attachment to objects of desire does not contradict seeking out objects of desire such as food and clothing. Merely making use of sense objects that may be attractive, unattractive, or neutral and seeking out sense objects that arise in the mental consciousness do not become afflictions. Here the teaching is primarily on the basis of not being divorced from attachment to sensual objects. Moreover, from among those objects of desire, this is an examination on whether it is right to take attachment to the joining of the two organs and make it into the path.

If someone who does not lack attachment to objects of desire and does not possess an understanding of reality makes use of objects of desire just as they wish, the affliction of attachment to those objects will be produced, and those afflictions will become a cause for the lower realms. Because such a person has no ability to transform any affliction into even the cause for liberation, such activities are not permitted. Even those of the Lower Vehicle who have understood reality have no ability to transform any affliction into a cause for their enlightenment. This is because that vehicle doesn't have even a fraction of the methods for such a transformation as we find in teachings of the Mahayana Perfection and Mantra Vehicles and because a transformation of that kind relies on special methods and special wisdom. Therefore the statement that by understanding the nature, or reality, of the afflictions they become a cause for enlightenment is saying that in those circumstances, there is a cause that will transform afflictions into enlightenment. It is not saying that all understandings of reality become a cause for transforming the sense-object afflictions into enlightenment. If it were, statements about the need to pursue the many practices from the category of method that are not views on emptiness would be meaningless.

The *Supreme Original Tantra* citation says that the three afflictions can become poison or can become ambrosia. Therefore saying that the three afflictions are wholly poisonous and are to be eliminated is for certain beings and not for all. By teaching that some of the afflictions of a bodhisattva can create the qualities of a buddha, the first half of the Ratnakuṭa sutra citation illustrates that not every affliction obstructs the attainment of buddhahood. [333] By saying that afflictions held by a special method and wisdom cannot lead to the "downfall" of the lower realms, the second half of the citation illustrates that the afflictions that shut out the higher realms for those not possessed of skillful means do not do the same for those who are possessed of skillful means.

The Ratnakuṭa sutra is saying that the Perfection Vehicle bodhisattva has

the ability to eliminate the afflictions of strong desire that cause birth in samsara but deliberately does not do so, and that taking birth by such an affliction enables the completion of the great wave of bodhisattva activities, and so is a cause of buddhahood. The sutra also describes special beings such as the brahman youth Tārakā and the woman who would die if he refused to indulge his desires—an outcome he had to prevent—and if he did indulge his desires, he would be able to bring her to virtue. For this reason he was permitted to commit adultery. The above kinds of afflictions transformed into causes of enlightenment and the way of using desire as the path described here are completely different. Nevertheless these citations are used as a reference for the fact that some afflictions held by skillful means become a cause for enlightenment and are therefore capable of dismissing the argument that afflictions produced from relying upon objects of desire will necessarily lead to the lower realms, that they are an obstruction to enlightenment, and that the citations above contradict each other.

The *Sutra Requested by the Householder Ugra* teaches the conduct of bodhisattva householders for those who are unable to abandon the desires of householders but have no attraction to traveling the path by the vehicle of desire. So they are taught to engage in the practices while perceiving reliance upon objects of desire as a fault.[941] This is different from taming those with attachment by the path of highest tantra. The citation from the yoga tantra *Supreme Original Tantra* does not teach the importance of increasing bodhicitta in your own body, or that there is no fault in making into the path the attachment held by skillful means that uses objects of desire as a way to increase your bodhicitta by relying upon the body of another. It does teach, however, that it is possible to turn the three afflictions into the path, and so it is an appropriate citation here.

In that case, though there is an allowance for desire here, how can there be allowance for anger and ignorance? It is said that when carrying out wrathful actions such as killing and expelling, there is no anger in the causal motivation, but during the contemporaneous-motivation[942] period, a fierceness of mind is generated. It is also explained that when performing the initial meditations of the protection wheel and so on, compassion is generated during the causal-motivation period, but in the contemporaneous-motivation period, hostility toward the hindering beings is generated. This is an allowance for anger and other states of mind included within that category. Every state of anger and desire arises as a concomitant associate[943] of afflicted ignorance. [334] Thus ignorance is allowed as an incidental affliction to other allowed afflictions, but there is no special allowance for ignorance.

The words "That which" from *Vinaya Amoghasiddhi Tantra* refer generally to attachment to objects of desire and specifically to attachment to the joining of the two organs. "Precisely that" attachment that "binds" in samsara "the stupid"—meaning those who are ignorant of the nature of reality—and leads the ignorant to the wailing hell will liberate into great bliss the skillful who, with the power of wisdom, have understood reality. Therefore meditation on the bodhicitta of bliss and emptiness will become bondage for the unskillful and liberation for the skillful.

The *Hevajra Tantra* also says:

> Attachment binds the world;
> by desire you will be free.[944]

The affliction of attachment to objects of desire contains the causes of both freedom and bondage. The *Vajra Garland* says:

> Abandoning what should and should not be done,
> even doing what is prohibited,
> like a lotus growing in the mud,
> you understand the nature and are not tainted.[945]

This is saying that although there may be attachment to objects of desire, you are not adversely affected by the faults of such attachment, and in this way you are "not tainted." It does not say that attachment does not arise.

In that case, if the way that afflictions become a cause for enlightenment in other vehicles is as described above, and taking attachment as the path in other classes of tantra means only to have attachment focused on the five sensory objects of the visualized goddess with whom one has not entered into meditative union, what does it mean to take attachment to sensual objects as the path in highest yoga tantra? Led by a mind of fervent admiration that has truly seen the exceptional qualities of the path of the innate wisdom of the bliss of melting meditating upon the definitive meaning of reality, you desire to generate great bliss in order to meditate upon reality. As a means to do that, you take as the path the attachment to an object of desire—namely, meditative union with an external consort or wisdom consort. Such a process is followed not only for this aim, but also for the accomplishment of the illusory body. These processes have been explained several times. Taking attachment to objects of desire as the path in order to produce a special consciousness that meditates on emptiness is found only in highest yoga tantra and not elsewhere.

The lines "This way of thinking is the exhortation to something special" in the Patsap translation read "This process is a special superimposition and . . . ," which is in agreement with *Establishment of Reality*, but it refers to the consort and the generation into a deity and so on. "Food, dwelling . . ." should be changed to "in food, dwelling . . ."[946] The phrase "and so on" includes conduct.

Through the method of penetrating vital points inside and outside the body, the bodhicitta melts, which inwardly produces a special bodily sensation. That sensation is taken as an objective condition to produce a special feeling of bliss within the bodily consciousness. [335] This consciousness is taken as the immediate condition to produce a mental consciousness generated into the nature of extraordinary bliss. At this very time, the meaning of reality, which was previously ascertained, is recalled, and in doing so emptiness and bliss become united. Therefore, when it is taught that emptiness is to be meditated on through the method of mind generated in the nature of bliss, the discerning will come to realize an essential point of this path through this very special consciousness, even though the emptiness that is its object is no different from other paths.

These stages of developing a sensory consciousness and a mental consciousness of bliss can be understood from the words of the master of reasoning:

> Sometimes attachment and so on
> may be increased by physical vigor and the like,
> but they are produced from pleasure and pain,
> which in turn are produced inwardly
> by the balance of the elements and so on.[947]

Also:

> These are changes brought on by a mind arisen from inner conditions.[948]

Therefore you should know that from the immediate condition of a mind in the nature of bliss come sensory consciousnesses in the nature of bliss also.

Dispelling the arguments of others

The *Compendium of Practice* speaks of "those with apprehending views, such as the śrāvakas," and "for those who had a liking for the vast, he brought about

the understanding of the no-self of phenomena."[949] Does this not contradict the teaching that the understanding of the no-self of phenomena is also found in the Lower Vehicle? Among śrāvakas there are those who have and who have not understood reality. Śrāvakas with "apprehending views" are being separated out here. In *Commentary on Entering the Middle Way*, a citation is quoted:

> The Ārya said:
>
> > Without understanding no-characteristics,
> > there is no liberation, you have said.
> > Therefore, in the Great Vehicle,
> > this you have taught completely.[950]

As this verse explains, no-self of phenomena is taught in both scriptural collections but far more extensively in the Great Vehicle collection. It is on this basis that bringing about the understanding of the no-self of phenomena is applied to the Great Vehicle. Similarly, *Commentary on Bodhicitta* states:

> To the śrāvakas, those who have pledged to help
> have spoken of the five aggregates
> of form, feelings, recognition,
> mental formations, and consciousness.
> To the bodhisattvas, that greatest of humans
> has always explained form as like froth on the water,
> feelings as like bubbles, recognition as like a mirage,
> mental formations as like the plantain tree,
> and consciousness as like an illusion.[951]

This passage is saying that whereas these examples have been used many times to teach the bodhisattvas the no-nature entities of the five aggregates, they have not been taught that many times in the Lower Vehicle scriptures. It is not saying that the aggregates compared in this way have not been taught at all in the Lower Vehicle, because in the commentary to Candrakīrti's *Entering the Middle Way*, [336] a sutra taught to the śrāvakas is cited that compares the aggregates to these five phenomena.

If it were the position of *Commentary on Bodhicitta* that the understanding of no-nature emptiness was not found in the Lower Vehicle, then consider the following from the same work:

> Those who do not understand emptiness
> possess no basis for liberation,
> and in the prison of existence in the six realms,
> these confused ones will wander.[952]

This assertion would then be incorrect because there are those in the Lower Vehicle who are freed from the prison of existence.

Likewise, when the *Compendium of Practice* says that while teaching to those who had a liking for the vast, our Teacher brought about the understanding of the eight consciousnesses and so forth,[953] it is merely repeating what is taught in the sutras, because its own position is that there is no foundation consciousness existing as a separate entity apart from the six consciousnesses. This is because according to the Guhyasamāja Ārya tradition, the mind of the death clear-light all-empty state is the death consciousness, and the mind of close-to-attainment arising from the reverse process is birth consciousness, and neither of these two is suitable to be the foundation consciousness. The *Commentary on Bodhicitta*, when speaking of a "foundation consciousness," is speaking of the mental consciousness as the foundation and the root of all dharmas from the categories of affliction and purification. This has been explained at length in my commentary to the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium*.[954]

The bliss of relying upon a consort, for which the cause is attachment to an object of desire, meditates upon the reality of phenomena. Does that meditation put an end to all afflictions or not? If it does not, then there is the contradiction of the understanding of reality "leading to the ultimate" and the problem that some afflictions would not be eradicated. Understanding reality puts an end to all apprehension of inherent existence, and so if the cause—which is the ignorance of apprehending existence—is ended, there is no way that the results of attachment and so forth are not negated. Also, all afflictions not being eradicated is in contradiction to the attainment of freedom.

If the other position is correct, and attachment is necessary as the cause of the path that puts an end to attachment, then this is as absurd as light being the cause of darkness. It is also a contradiction for a path that completely eliminates the ignorance apprehending inherent existence to have attachment as a cause of that accomplishment, because it is contradictory for the cause of the complete elimination of a cause to be the result of that cause. Moreover, all the other afflictions are produced by the ignorance that

apprehends inherent existence. This has been extensively explained elsewhere. Furthermore, at the time of desiring to take attachment as the path, if that attachment were merely a name given to another virtuous practice, that would contradict the *Compendium of Practice*, [337] which establishes, together with scriptural reference, that as far as afflictions are concerned, there is that which is and that which is not a cause for enlightenment. Also, the teaching that for another person the same attachment is a cause leading to the lower realms would not be correct. Also, how can a virtuous practice that is already not a cause for the lower realms and is transformed into a cause for enlightenment be a skillful means surpassing all other vehicles?[955]

On the other hand, if the attachment is actual attachment, you have to respond to the question of how that is made into the path. For if you assert that this attachment is the antidote for this affliction, you cannot establish by way of conflicting modes of apprehension something that destroys and something that is destroyed. Therefore isn't the skillful means of highest yoga tantra just something to take on faith?

I will explain. The second position is not accepted but the first is. The way that this position is not at fault is as follows: To say that meditating on reality with the bliss of relying upon a consort puts an end to all afflictions means that it puts an end to ignorance as the cause of all other afflictions, and if that ignorance is negated, then all afflictions are reversed. They are not eliminated by meditating on a path that directly conflicts with the mode of apprehension of the attachment that desires the object of desire. Therefore there is no fault. Also, this causal apprehending of inherent existence is not eradicated until the practice stage of union. It is not contradictory for meditation on a path with a mode of apprehension that directly conflicts with apprehending inherent existence to operate temporarily in a single continuum alongside the practice of turning attachment into the path. When someone who is not divorced from attachment to objects of desire deliberately makes use of a special object of desire, the attachment and subsequent bliss arising from relying upon the consort are cause and effect, but they are cause and effect only at that particular time. If that bliss is not preceded by the cause that is attachment, that bliss is negated, but this does not negate the mere bliss that depends upon a consort. For example the sweet taste of the *amla*[956] fruit soaked in milk would not be there if the milk were absent, but that does not negate the mere existence of the *amla*.

It has been established previously that the ending of afflictions in this supreme vehicle makes use of the joining of the two organs as the object of

desire. In reply to the question on whether attachment is to be negated by meditation on the ugly that holds a conflicting mode of apprehension, the *Later Saṃputa Tantra* says:

> When it is made into the nature of attachment, it is without attachment. Similarly, the Bhagavan said, "Son of the family! Emaho! The attachment of the Buddha is untroubled. When attachment is destroyed by attachment, all happiness is granted.[957]

The text also explains that even if a stream-enterer uses desire, it is not a natural fault. Also, just as the droppings of the aromatic elephant[958] that has eaten *ketaka*[959] flowers become musk whereas the droppings of an ordinary elephant that has eaten the same flowers are simply excrement, [338] similarly afflictions such as attachment characterized by a pure mind will produce an exalted result. Ācārya Śāntarakṣita's *Explanation of the Establishment of Reality* clearly explains this point.[960] Therefore the "attachment" is not a nonactual attachment that has been merely labeled as such.

Moreover, even when you engage in making attachment to objects of desire the path, at the time of the causal motivation, the mind will be captivated by bodhicitta and innate exalted wisdom, and you will engage in the practice focused on attaining these. There will be no consorting with affliction, and it is the causal motivation and no other that turns body and speech into virtue or nonvirtue. It is on this basis that works such as Buddhaśrījñāna's *Entering into Self Sādhana* say that when entering this practice, there is no mind of affliction; it is not based on the contemporaneous motivation.

Having made this attachment the path, it will not be a path that does damage by possessing a mode of apprehension conflicting with the other afflictions. So what is it? That very special person will eclipse the disadvantageous aspect of attachment that leads to the lower realms and so on. Also, that attachment is transformed into something that quickly creates the qualities of the higher paths. Concerning the first of these, the two types of bodhicitta common to both vehicles is firm, you have become a suitable vessel by way of the pure initiations and have guarded properly the vows and pledges, and you have become familiar with the definitive view of no-self, and so your illusion-like imagination[961] is strong. Self and consort are not being apprehended in terms of agent, object, and action.[962] You transform into the mahāmudrā body of the deity, and the power of imagination in the blessings of mantra and mudrā is strong and so on. It is through the power of the above that

the practice is carried out. For the consort too there are many requirements: a constraint of the ten nonvirtuous activities, a mind purified by initiation while guarding properly the vows and pledges, being trained in the samādhis of the generation stage, and being skilled in the works on the arts of desire.

Concerning the second feature—attachment being transformed into something that quickly creates the qualities of the higher paths—it is not enough just to take the mind of bliss induced by that attachment, place it in nonconceptuality, and label it as meditation on emptiness. The mind of great bliss is meditatively placed on the view of the well-ascertained meaning of no-self, and through the meditations of innate exalted wisdom, enlightenment will quickly be granted. It is also not sufficient to take the bodhicitta melted by relying on a consort and prevent its emission by some other method. Through that consort union, it is necessary to first bring the winds of the left and right channels into the dhūtī and from their dissolution to produce the innate mind. Therefore, as a method to develop the innate bliss, the melted *kunda*-like bodhicitta has to be held by the dissolved winds. [339]

Making this kind of attachment the path does not involve meditation on the ugly with a path whose mode of apprehension directly conflicts with attachment, but it will finally put an end to attachment, because it is a path that subscribes to the valid cognition that directly conflicts with the root cause of attachment. Not uniting with the emptiness that is the emptiness as the nature of everything in samsara and beyond but merely engaging with the bliss of the nonemission of bodhicitta from the union of the two organs does no damage at all to the root of samsara, which is the ignorance apprehending inherent existence. Therefore, as much as you indulge in that bliss, the craving induced by that apprehension of an inherent existence will continue to increase, and you will be like someone with the craving of thirst who sees a mirage as water and runs toward it. Such a practice is therefore despised, whereas the ability to unite bliss and emptiness as explained above has been praised as being a quick path. This is because without such a method you will not quickly attain buddhahood to fulfill the hopes of the three worlds. Saraha says:

> Those not knowing the nature of all things
> who at all times are engaged in great bliss
> are like the thirsty chasing a mirage.
> Even if they are dying of thirst,

will they find water from the sky?
If those who sport in the bliss
that dwells between the vajra and the lotus
are unable to make use of it,
how will they fulfill the hopes of the three worlds?[963]

A tantra cited in *Explanation of the Establishment of Reality* says:

With examination thorough and proper,
should the wise proceed;
whereas entering into fires,
will not approach a sixteenth of that.
Knowing things in such a way,
those who rely upon the goddess,
will find attainment.
Other than that,
they fall to the great hell.[964]

The *Guhyasiddhi* also says:

The precious *tattva*, of a nature pure,
with all dualism[965] abandoned:
If this good method is abandoned,
those who practice otherwise,
with contradictory samaya and so on,
will be boiled in the wailing hell and so on.
Just as in a raging fire
grass and wood becomes ash
and shoots and so on do not appear,
likewise, when *tattva* is not there,
they will be greatly surprised
when after death they fall to hell,
to stay for as long as the sky remains.[966]

These verses are saying that the wise should proceed having conducted a thorough examination, and that if you have not been wise in properly determining the meaning of reality, which is the abandonment of all elaboration, there will be grave consequences for taking, generally or specifically, attachment to

objects of desire as the path. Nevertheless, ascertainment of the meaning of the profound definitive scripture that comes from training thoroughly in the subtle paths of reasoning of Nāgārjuna and so on is very rare. [340] Consequently, those claiming to be tantric practitioners in this area who possess a complete presentation on this topic are very few. The discerning should follow the words of *Ascertaining Method and Wisdom*:

> With mind placed into the nature of enlightenment,
> and with delight in the object of bliss,
> accomplishment will be found in this life.
> By nature, all of this is pure;
> ordinary objects have no self and are like illusions,
> like optical illusions and apparitions,
> freed from the designations of improper conceptualization.
> When those great beings with vast thoughts
> and nonapprehending minds understand this completely,
> at that time the innate wisdom shines
> and these objects have no power to bind.[967]

These verses are saying that the innate exalted wisdom comes about from the union of bliss and emptiness by way of the melted bliss arising from engaging in objects of desire, and from the faultless ascertainment of the two truths: There is not even a particle of inherent existence found in any phenomenon anywhere, and yet all activity is valid in a manner resembling dreams and illusions. This union will outshine those very objects that bring great fear to those who do not possess skillful means. Similarly, with a subtle, sharp, but broad intellect, you should analyze constantly the methods to develop the innate exalted wisdom of bliss and emptiness united.

35. Highest Yoga Tantra Activities

Specific presentation of highest yoga tantra activities

1. How the divisions are described in the texts
2. Definitions of the three types of activity
3. Rituals for training in the activities

How the divisions are described in the texts

The fifth chapter of the root text and the seventh chapter in the section on the title speak of "supreme universal activities" and "supreme mantra activities," respectively.[968] *Illuminating Lamp* explains these as excellent activities that accomplish all the needs of self and others and as the three activities of those who recite mantras.[969] The first of these is also a generic name for the three types of activities. The ninth chapter speaks of bodhisattva activities and tathāgata activities.[970] *Illuminating Lamp* describes the first as various activities that "fulfill the needs of sentient beings, regardless of whether the activities defy worldly convention, and are performed by tantric practitioners according to their abilities." The second is described as the activities of the jewel-like practitioner of tantra who, "having perceived the completion stage, engages in yogas outside of meditation that will change his whole being in this life."[971] The first of these describes bodhisattva activities in general. [341] For the second, the description of them as completion-stage activities is only for purposes of illustration, and the thinking behind mentioning the jewel-like practitioner is that such a person is the main practitioner of these activities. Therefore it refers to all special activities that engage in the objects of desire found in highest yoga tantra.

The sixteenth chapter speaks of "the activities of taking on wisdom behavior."[972] *Illuminating Lamp* describes this as practitioner and consort carrying out activities having changed costume and wearing masks of deities.[973] Commentary to the sixteenth chapter describes the supreme of the three activities in the two older translations as being the activities of enjoyments and

freedom, and Patsap's translation has the same. The Chak translation has "The best of those activities is the activities of the *bhusuku.*"[974] This is a better translation, and so those other activities have not been taught.

The *Later Tantra* speaks of universal activities and mantra activities.[975] The first of these is a general name for all three types of activities. The second refers to the guarding of mundane and supramundane pledges and vows as described in the seventeenth chapter. Bodhisattva activities arising from attachment and divided into those with elaboration, those without elaboration, and those completely without elaboration are found in the *Compendium of Practice.* The second-stage chapter from *Five Stages*[976] and *Illuminating Lamp* also describes these three.

The prime object of desire of the activities is that of the wisdom woman. She is of two types: an actual wisdom lady and an imagined exalted wisdom consort. The first two types of activities are assigned for engaging with the first of these consorts, and the third type is assigned for activities with the second type. The description in the *Compendium of Practice* and the second stage from the *Five Stages* of these three activities as those of the completion-stage practitioner is only for the purposes of illustration. Therefore each of the three activities can be found in both stages. As *Illuminating Lamp* on the tenth chapter says:

> Dwelling in the supreme practice or in the ordinary, if the yogi who has developed insight into the three activities, such as those with elaboration, does not gain siddhi, then at that time he should invoke the essence with regard to the deity.[977]

This is saying that the activities of each stage are for accomplishing the appropriate siddhis of each stage, and if they are unsuccessful, invoke the essence of each stage. *Illuminating Lamp* on chapter 7 of the tantra speaks of general activities as those with elaboration, hidden activities as those without elaboration, and ultimate activities as those completely without elaboration.[978] This is based on the meditative mind that is engaged in these activities. It is not asserting that the other activities are not included in "general activities," because in the commentary to chapter 15 it speaks of the unelaborated activities of the five tathāgatas of the generation stage.[979] [342] In terms of the meditative mind, completely unelaborated activities cannot be found in the generation stage, but deeds and so on completely without elaboration can be.

Generally, there are two types of activities performed when taking attach-

ment to objects of desire as the path: those during the initiations that turn practitioners into suitable vessels for meditating on the two stages and, having become a suitable vessel, those performed while meditating on the path. The latter is of two types: activities designed to develop paths as yet undeveloped and activities designed to enhance paths already developed. The first of these are practiced from the initial meditations on the path until the stage of no further practice. The *Condensed Sādhana* says that having entered the generation stage, you should practice in this way:

> Having abandoned completely the five sensual objects
> and yet not tormented by austerities,
> follow the yoga tantras, and through bliss,
> accomplish enlightenment.[980]

On the second type, Samayavajra speaks of only two occasions for enhancement practices: when attaining the ordinary siddhis, having already perfected the coarse and subtle generation stages, and when accomplishing the supreme siddhi, having accomplished the three isolations and the completion-stage two truths.[981] Therefore he speaks of carrying out activities at these two times. Yoṣa, relying on the passage beginning "Although knowing the divisions of the intrinsic natures,"[982] posits two occasions on the completion stage for the practice of activities—from the attainment of the illusory body and from the attainment of the practice stage of union—and asserts generally that there are three types of activities.

Our own position is that over the two stages, there are four occasions for practicing the enhancing activities. Those for the generation stage are as described earlier. On the completion stage the necessity of practicing activities in order to advance from the attainment of mind isolation to that of illusory body has already been established. Having attained the illusory body, the necessity of practicing activities as a way to achieve and to eliminate, in terms of achieving the practice stage of union and eliminating afflictions, is found in the commentary to the sixteenth chapter in the section describing the benefits of practicing the unelaborated activities:

> "Exalted wisdom of the three vajras arises." This means that by the body vajra and so on, the vajra body and so on will be created. "Buddha enlightenment" refers to the ultimate truth. "Engaging" in that means attaining it. This achieves the attainment of the exalted-wisdom body made pure by clear light.[983]

This refers to the benefits of attaining the exalted-wisdom body purified by the clear light. Once the stage of union has been attained, the illusory body is no longer purified by the clear light.

The need for activities practiced from the attainment of the practice stage of union can be understood from *Five Stages* and the citation from Nāgabodhi quoted earlier. It can also be understood from the *Compendium of Practice*'s statement that the practitioner of activities has perceived the conventional truth, [343] because this statement can be applied to the practitioner as the basis of the conventional-truth illusory body of both the third and fifth stages. Furthermore, the *Compendium of Practice* continues:

> Without the activities of special behavior,[984] the imprints of afflictions from time without beginning will not be eliminated.[985]

The actual imprints of afflictions are the obscurations to omniscience, and these cannot be eliminated without the activities of special behavior. For eliminating them in this life also, activities are indispensable. The speedy elimination of the *seeds* of the afflictions, which are labeled as "imprints," also depends upon the activities. Therefore it can be understood that to attain the practice and no-further-practice stages of union, the activities are necessary.

If the practice of bringing attachment for objects of desire into the path begins from the time of receiving initiation, the main features of the three activities are all covered by that practice. So what is the point of separately engaging in activities? Enhancement activities on the completion stage are for attaining enlightenment in that very life. The second stage from *Five Stages* says:

> Although knowing the divisions of the intrinsic natures
> and relying upon the fourth reality,
> those who do not train in the three aspects
> will not swiftly attain the results.
> Just as fire dwells in the wood
> but until the rubbing does not appear,
> likewise, without training in enlightenment,
> it will not appear in this life.[986]

The *Compendium of Practice* and *Illuminating Lamp* also say that by practicing activities, the supreme siddhi will be gained in this life.[987] The way

this is accomplished is that when you have the ability to generate the three exalted wisdoms though the force of having perfected wind yoga, if you do not have the assistance of an external consort, the complete and definitive exalted wisdom of mind isolation cannot be generated. Relying on a consort for this reason has been explained previously.

In this way, having gathered the winds and ignited the caṇḍālī by penetrating the vital points of the inner body, the ability to melt the bodhicitta is perfected. Within such an achievement it is clear that there is still room for moving to a greater understanding of reality by attaining special levels in the above practices through the use of a consort. Therefore, when the ability to penetrate the vital points of the inner body has been perfected, combining that with making use of the objects of desire of a consort, together with all the branch practices, and then meditating on reality is what it means to practice the activities as a completion-stage enhancement. Just as many kinds of bliss arise from penetrating the vital points of the cakras within, similarly, various features of bliss are created within the yogi from the nature, number, movement, and differing abilities of the consorts. And at that time you should know that there are many ways in which the insights of this bliss meditating on emptiness can become special.

If the ordinary siddhis will not be attained without practicing these activities, [344] this is in conflict with the three lower tantras, which state that there are countless siddhis to be attained from practicing the paths of these lower tantras. Also, although they are practiced for the attainment of ordinary siddhis, how do these activities assist the attainment of these siddhis? Although it is not necessary to meditate on emptiness in order to achieve many of the minor siddhis, meditation on emptiness is taught for the achievement of many special siddhis found in the lower tantras. Some say that such a meditation is indispensable, while others say that with such an understanding, the achievement of siddhis will be easier.

Concerning the achievement of the ordinary siddhis by the highest yoga generation-stage practitioner, there are many not achieved by the lower tantras. For the ultimate attainment of ordinary siddhis, and for many other siddhis, the activities are a method to achieve them easily and quickly. For example, it is taught that those of the three faculty levels will attain them within seven days, half a month, and one or one and a half months, respectively. This is because when the generation stage has been perfected, you will have gained the signs of touching and seeing, and by the meditation of the syllable *phaṭ* at the secret-area opening, the ability to halt the emission of

bodhicitta will have been developed. Bliss will be generated from union with a consort, and with that bliss meditating on emptiness a special power is created and siddhis will be easily achieved. The existence of such a bliss-and-emptiness meditation on the generation stage has been explained previously.

It is possible for some practitioners to bring the winds into the dhūtī when they have completed the subtle generation stage, and if they understand the points of turning union with an external consort into prāṇāyāma, they will develop the ability to generate the four joys of dissolving the winds in the dhūtī through such a practice. When this happens, these two developments occur during the generation stage, but in terms of the path they must belong to the completion stage. This is like Buddhaśrījñāna's *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* explaining that the innate wisdom that arises in a similar way during initiations, before meditating on the path has begun, is the completion stage.

This practicing of activities during the generation stage in order to develop the ordinary siddhis is not the practice of the jewel-like practitioner but is for those of inferior faculties, such as the white lotus-like practitioners, whose minds have been seduced by the ordinary siddhis.

Definitions of the three types of activity

It is taught that there are three types of enlightenment activities arising from attachment. So in which tantras are these activities taught, and what are the essential characteristics of each? The *Compendium of Practice* states that "the extensive *ārali*[988] of all the tathāgatas actually taught in the section on the encouragement[989] of the tathāgatas and Vajradhara is activity with elaboration. Out of necessity sporting with a few consorts rather than with an all-pervasive host of consorts is activity without elaboration. Abandoning all social association, living off the food of meditative absorption alone, and practicing via union with a wisdom consort is activity completely without elaboration." [345] It also says that in the same way that wood, the palm leaf, and cotton are no different insofar as all three turn to ash when burned, so all three activities produce the state of Vajradhara. The text speaks of the divisions in terms of great, intermediate, and lesser and of training in the three activities in keeping with your age.[990] The *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* speaks of the encouragement from the five buddha families that tame living beings.[991] This is the first encouragement. It also speaks of the encouragement from Vajrasattva that tames living beings. This is the second encouragement. On

this basis, earlier masters have asserted that in the rituals of the above activities the main participant makes no more than six changes.

In the section on six encouragements as they are "actually taught," there is no "extensive *ārali*," but concerning its general meaning as expressed in *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra*, *ārali* is translated as "play" or "sport." This also refers to the gestures and their responses as taught in the *Compendium of Practice*. This work also says that some practitioners train in the activities taught in the *Compendium of Reality* and other tantras that teach the yogas of hand gestures, singing, posing, performance, dance, and so on. Others follow the activities taught in the *Supreme Original Tantra* and other tantras that teach sitting positions, the nine expressions of dance,[992] and so on. These are described in the *Compendium of Practice* as being elaborated activities.[993]

Therefore, generally, the above activities should always be performed. However, unelaborated activities are performed when, out of necessity, such activities are put aside for the time being. Even the special dwelling places with seats, assistants for the rituals, ritual masks, costumes, food and drink, and so on that are used in the unelaborated activities are put aside for the practitioner of the completely unelaborated activities, for whom there is very little elaboration of activities.

The three examples of burning substances teach that each of the three activities will produce the desired results and so there is no need to practice all three. Earlier masters say that just as there are degrees of difficulty in burning these three substances, so there are degrees of difficulty in gaining the results of the three activities.

As for the division into great, intermediate, and lesser, some say this refers to the amount of material things to be used and to the degree of wisdom. Others say it refers to the amount of attachment. This division into great, intermediate, and lesser is actually made on the basis of the amount of material things to be used, your age, and to the level of joy taken in elaboration. As for having no material provisions, that cannot happen once the illusory body has been attained. Therefore such a presentation is made on the basis of activities performed before that attainment.

The *Compendium of Practice* explains that the first of the activities is taught in the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra*, while the Guhyasamāja only teaches the second two.[994] The gestures and so on taught in the yoga-class tantras are used in the activities of highest yoga tantra. [346] Therefore, if examined, it can be seen that they are spoken of here as being those of the first activity and not on the basis of belonging to those tantras. The activities described

previously and performed to a great degree of elaboration are not found in the Guhyasamāja, and with this in mind the *Compendium of Practice* says that only the last two activities are taught in the Guhyasamāja. The statement from Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp* that the text of Guhyasamāja teaches the first activity is from the point of view that with elaboration you engage in desires exactly as you wish and is speaking only of the meditative state of mind of the generation-stage practitioner engaged in elaborated activities. Therefore these two are not contradictory.

The *Compendium of Practice* says that when material requirements are not complete and it is not possible to perform the elaborated activities described in the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* and not possible to perform activities constantly, you perform the last two activities. As that tantra says:

> Every day or every month,
> or even every year,
> in the way you have been blessed,
> perform the Buddha Saṃvara dance.[995]

The last two periods indicate the last two activities. The Chak translation has "However they are to be accomplished." This means, whatever way they can be accomplished with material possessions, that is the way they should be performed. This too is based on the last two activities. The last two activities as taught here and the two activities taught in the Guhyasamāja are not to be taken as the same.

Masters of the past established the three activities in terms of the mind of the practitioner. This is of two types: the type of mind engaging in the objects of desire and the type of mind determined by the basis of training. In the first you enter the practice with the thought of engaging with objects of attachment according to your desires. This is done in three ways: applied to the senses only, because of possessing a great deal of attachment; applied to both senses and samādhi; applied solely to samādhi. These three are explained as being the types of mind for engaging in activities with elaboration, without elaboration, and completely without elaboration, respectively. The seventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* says:

> Relying upon every acquisition of desire
> in exactly the way you wish
> is a yoga that will quickly bring buddhahood.

Every acquisition of desire,
rely upon it as you desire;
through the yoga of your deity,
make offerings to self and others.[996]

Also:

Do not recite eating alms.
Take no pleasure in begging.
Making use of every object of desire,
recite without decline the branches of mantra.[997]

Illuminating Lamp explains the meaning of the first verse by saying that the yogi, in keeping with his abilities, engages in elaborated activities by relying on objects of desire. The second verse is on the basis of unelaborated activities and says that in keeping with your desires, you experience bliss through the five objects of desire, and with these desires you offer to and satisfy self and others with the samādhi on your deity.[998] [347] Concerning the meaning of the third verse, "eating alms" is just an illustration, and so you do not recite when searching and so forth, which are activities like seeking alms.[999] You should not be attached to seeking alms, but also you should not be attached to food and be "content with the state of the body as it is and perform completely unelaborated activities." This is the gloss of *Illuminating Lamp*. The above gloss "in keeping with his abilities" applies to the three types of mind engaged in objects of desire.

Here, engaging in objects of desire with the focus primarily on the nondual union with the exalted wisdom of great bliss is the same for all three activities. This can be understood from the *Root Tantra*:

With desire for the attachment-led exalted wisdom,
rely constantly upon the qualities of desire.[1000]

Therefore these are not activities solely of the senses.

Engaging in these objects of desire means creating bodhicitta where it did not exist before and stabilizing and increasing bodhicitta already existing. If that is so, then engaging in such practices exactly as you desire and without constraint, in accordance with faculties and desires, must be the same for all three activities. Thus, the first two lines of the first two verses speaking of

"desire" and the third-verse line "Making use of every object of desire" are similar. However, the commentary explains that they teach the three activities in order to point out that this is not repetition.

The line "take no pleasure in begging" is said in order to remove the hindrance to meditating on the path that comes from excessive craving for food and being distracted by the activities of seeking it out. It is not said to stop the continuous reliance upon objects of desire by having understood their nature. Therefore "the state of the body as it is" refers to a physical state that does not hinder the expansion of the element. It is not just referring to sustaining life. It can be understood from chapter 16 in the section dealing with the food of the elaborated activities that the above is not a feature of the third activity. That it is not referring only to sustaining life can also be understood generally from analyzing the reason for the injunction to rely continually on the objects of desire.

The second division is the type of mind determined by the basis of the training. Early masters have said that the five senses engage the five objects of desire, and during the first activity, the meditative state of mind is focused on training in the deity. In the second, they focus on the mind alone, and in the third, they focus on emptiness. *Illuminating Lamp* on the seventh chapter explains that engaging in objects of desire is divided into general, hidden, and ultimate activities, and this is linked to the three activities.[1001] Also, in terms of the paths, the three activities are practiced, in order, from the single-thought stage up to beginner's accomplishment, from body isolation up to illusory body, [348] and during clear light and the stage of union.

Illuminating Lamp explains that in the practice of elaborated activities, the meditative mind that engages in the objects of desire is focused on these objects as being deities. The five objects from visible form to tactile objects are meditated on as being Vairocana up to Akṣobhya, and offerings are made to your own buddha family. Every superior, middling, and inferior division of each of the five objects is to be meditated on equally as being deities, but the offerings are made using the five superior types. Alternatively, the five objects are meditated on as Locanā and so on or as the five Vajrās. All are regarded as being the enjoyments of Vajradhara and are enjoyed accordingly.[1002]

Therefore there are these three ways. Desiring the exalted wisdom of attachment in this way in all activities, you rely upon the sensual qualities of desire. What does this achieve? In response the tantra says:

Please the bodhisattvas;
delight the bodhi sun.[1003]

Illuminating Lamp explains that "bodhisattvas" means the sense organs of the eyes and so forth and that these are "pleased." Such activities satisfy the "*bodhi*," or elements, and the "sun," or five aggregates.[1004] Therefore this is done in order to enhance your sense organs, elements, and aggregates.

Offering to the deity of your own buddha family is primarily illustrated by Vairocana and so forth, but the practice is not exclusive to these deities. The instruction to only use the superior types for offerings is given on the basis that during meditation you meditate on every object as being a deity, whereas during actual engagement, relying upon an attractive object will enhance the senses and their supporting bases[1005] in a way that other objects will not. If you meditate on the five objects as the four goddesses, Locanā and so forth, you hold Māmakī as belonging to both vajra and jewel family. Like this, three ways are explained, but as the most important quality of desire is that of wisdom, the latter two ways are the main meditations.

The way to practice this meditation is found in the seventh chapter:

Apply the mind constantly
to form, sound, taste, and so forth.
This comprises the very essence
of the secrets of every buddha.[1006]

Illuminating Lamp also says that you "generate constantly, day and night, the creative faculty of the mind in the meditation on the objects as deities," and that "because this is the hidden method that achieves the stage of the buddha it comprises the very essence."[1007] So you meditate upon the five objects as deities, and then for the practices of gazing at the forms of the deities and so forth, you meditate continuously and specifically and develop a prerequisite stable experience.

In this way, all inner and outer sources of form are transformed to become form Rūpavajrā. She holds a mirror in her lotus-soft hands, gazes with gentle eyes, and is draped with clusters of pearls. Her breasts are large, prominent, and close together. [349] Her clothing is somewhat loose, revealing the beautiful lower part of her body. Think this way, and by gazing upon her body continually think that you have generated great bliss. Likewise, all sounds

become sound Śabdavajrā singing beautiful songs and playing lutes. Aromas are generated into aroma Gandhavajrā, who dances and with a jeweled vase filled with saffron, aloe, snake-essence sandalwood, camphor, and so on, permeating the ten directions with their beautiful aromas. Tastes are generated into taste Rasavajrā, holding a vase made of gold, silver, and other gems, which is filled with various tastes and the ambrosia of the gods. Tactile sensations are generated into Sparśavajrā, adorned with all the special signs, beautified with the three wrathful wrinkles, with a slender waist, a broad navel that coils from left to right, the lower part of her body and private area thick and heavy, of a slow and leisurely gait and a coquettish pose. All are created with smiling faces and eyes of desire. Having done this, enjoy the sounds, aromas, and tastes, enter into embrace, engage in the tactile sensations, and think that you are increasing the great bliss.

These meditation practices can also be applied to Locanā and the other goddesses. However, it should be analyzed whether it is necessary to meditate on Vairocana possessing a beautiful form, on the next three holding the objects described above, and on the fifth deity wearing clothing of supreme tactile sensation. Also, I wonder if it is suitable to meditate on the many other deities of the same family as the individual deities.

When you have become familiar with these practices, at first bliss is created in the mind. Gradually this is spread, and the senses and their supporting bases will also be enhanced. The master of logic has said:

> If this changes, it can be seen
> that they too will change.[1008]

Therefore, if the mind is very blissful, the body will appear radiant, and samādhi is said to be the cause for the expansion of the elements of the body. If the body is developed by such a cause, the *kunda*-like bodhicitta is increased, and the samādhi upon the bliss of melting will also increase. That is used to meditate upon emptiness, thereby becoming a matured virtue to fully create the supreme insights of the completion stage. If this samādhi is made stable, then when the five senses actually engage the five objects, a samādhi similar to one of the previous meditations is actualized. This will constrain ordinary mental activity, which is a hindrance to great bliss. In the tradition of this particular path, this is said to be the supreme type of ethics that constrains the gateways of the senses.

The above is a meditative state of mind that engages in the qualities of

desire at the beginning of the path and for as long as you are unable to induce the empty states by dissolving the winds in the dhūtī through the power of meditation on penetrating the vital points of the body. Unlike bliss and emptiness united through the winds being dissolved in the dhūtī by the power of meditation, this meditative state of mind does not have the ability to eclipse the elaborations of holding on to signs[1009] and is therefore called *a mind with elaboration*. [350] In the generation-stage practitioner, in terms of meditative states of mind, the last two activities are not found, but in terms of objects and deeds and so forth with varying degrees of elaboration, all three activities are present. This advice should be followed from the very start of generation-stage meditation and is very important for beginners.

From the time of being able to induce the empty states through the dissolving of the winds by the power of meditation up until the attainment of fourth-stage clear light, the empty states of a previous meditative equipoise are recalled, and in the post-meditation sessions the generation of oneself as Vajradhara and the engaging in the qualities of desire are both sealed with the three empty states. The state of enjoyment engendered by making offerings to Vajradhara is of lesser elaboration in its apprehension of signs than the above but still does not involve the direct perception of emptiness. Therefore it is a meditative state of mind that trains in unelaborated activities. On this level of practice, in terms of the particular meditative states of mind, there are no elaborated activities or completely unelaborated activities, but in terms of deeds and so forth, there are, and so all three activities are present. From the attainment of the practice stage of union up until the no-further-practice stage of union, when engaging in the qualities of desire in post-meditation sessions, you recall the direct perception of emptiness, and so the practice is sealed with this attainment. At that time the activity is freed from the seeds of elaboration of the holding on to signs, which is holding to true existence, and is therefore a meditative state of mind completely without elaboration. In this practice and the two described above, there are the meditative states of mind in which the qualities of desire appear as deities. In this practice the other two activities in terms of their meditative states of mind are not to be found, but they can be established as being present in terms of deeds and so forth, as similarly described above.

36. Rituals for the Three Activities

Rituals for training in the activities

1. The ways to accomplish elaborated and unelaborated activities
2. The way to accomplish completely unelaborated activities

The ways to accomplish elaborated and unelaborated activities

1. Shared rituals
2. Specific rituals of each

Shared rituals

Describing the actual place for the accomplishment of the two activities, the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* is cited in the *Compendium of Practice*. In the older translation it says:

> Accomplishment is within the three existences
> or in pleasurable groves and the like.[1010]

The Patsap translation has "The three realms, your own pleasure grove." The Chak translation has:

> Accomplishment is within a place of residence
> or your own pleasure grove and so forth.

A separate translation of the tantra itself says:

> Accomplishment is within your own abode
> or in pleasurable groves and the like.[1011]

Therefore the practice takes place in your own abode or within pleasurable groves and so forth, [*ngi*, 96a5] somewhere pleasing to the mind and away from those of bad fortune. On how the building should be assembled: It should be a three-story celestial house built from bricks, with four walls, four entrances, and four portals, [351] decorated with precious gems and so forth, and "endowed with various adornments." Alternatively, it is an earthen house encircled by a strong boundary wall and "endowed with various adornments." The first dwelling place is superior to the second, but both are similar in being three-story buildings. Therefore the second is not a three-level building dug into the earth.[1012]

Concerning the types of offerings that decorate the building, the ground floor is adorned with cardamom and the middle floor contains lutes and other materials for songs and music. The upper floor is adorned with the ornaments of precious gems mentioned above and with bells, fans, canopies, and so on and is the gathering place for those yogis and yoginīs "possessed of the great fortune of various glories." Up to this point the layout is common for both types of activity. If you are performing elaborated activities, twenty-one seats covered with cloth of colorful lotuses are prepared—twenty for the goddesses and one main seat. For unelaborated activities prepare as many seats as necessary.

On the costumes of the yogis and yoginīs, mirroring *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra*, the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* speaks of this in the sixteenth chapter:

> The vajras of enlightened body, speech, and mind
> meditate upon body, speech, and mind.
> This is performed with your own form,
> and in this way siddhis are gained.[1013]

On this the commentary says:

> "Your own form"[1014] means that this is performed with changes of costume and not with meditation alone.[1015]

Therefore, when the yogi of the three vajras[1016] practices the activities of wisdom behavior, this explanation concerns both yogi and consort.

On the material of the masks, the Lochen and Patsap translations of the *Compendium of Practice* and a separate translation of the *Illusory Saṃvara*

Tantra speak of that with "the nature of the elements" and that "from life and root."[1017] For the latter, Chak has "from life forms and roots," which is a better translation. Therefore the masks are made from "elements" of gems such as gold and silver, from "life forms" such as human bones, and from the roots of trees and so forth. *Illuminating Lamp* also says that they are made of the roots of trees and so forth. As for their construction, they can be cast, carved, beaten, or drawn. The faces and hands and so forth, the body colors, and the hand implements should be created in accord with the forms of the particular deities. In the old translation of the *Compendium of Practice* as well as in the Chak translation, it says:

> Surrounded by accomplished[1018] consorts
> who face their deity.[1019]

According to this translation, these wisdom women are necessarily consorts with accomplishments. The Patsap translation says:

> With their deity masks,
> the siddhi consorts appear.

According to this translation, you are surrounded by siddhi-bringing consorts who have been transformed by their deity masks. The meaning of this is as it is cited in a separate *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* translation: [352]

> . . . performed by accomplishing consorts
> in the costume of your deity.[1020]

In the old translation of the *Compendium of Practice* it says:

> Cast or carved, formed or well drawn,
> these images of various forms
> are symbol mudrās; examine well.[1021]

"Symbol mudrās" is not to be explained as referring to the masks because this term in the tantra is clearly explained as referring to hand implements. Therefore Patsap cuts off the line with "these are images of various forms."

In the old translation of the *Compendium of Practice* it says:

> Endowed with your deity,
> women well trained,
> marked by mudrās of good fortune:
> Arrange well the mandala assembly.[1022]

For the first line, a separate translation of the tantra has "resembling your deity." The way they resemble the deity can be understood from the Patsap translation:

> With the masks of your deity,
> women well accomplished . . .

"Well trained" is a better translation. The yogis and yoginīs in costumes, as many as there are deities in the mandala, arranged in this place is what is meant by "the mandala assembly." The *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* at this point also speaks of initiating the disciple.

In the center of the mandala stands the yogi who performs the activities. In the first inside row in the east, south, west, and north are four women: Paramasukhamāyā, Emahosukhā, Prādīpa, and Śaśī, respectively. Chak has translated the fourth as "possessing a rabbit."[1023] These women "accompany in activities." Four women in the form of goddesses stand in the intermediate directions beginning clockwise from the southeast. They are Buddhabodhī, Dharmacakrā, Trailokavijayā, and Kāmāṅkuśā,[1024] respectively. Outside this circle of women, in the intermediate directions, beginning from the southeast are four women in the form of goddesses. They are Dhvaninālā, Bahutantrī, Ekatantrī, and Ghanatantrī. From the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* in the section on consorts, the last three are also known as Player of the Lute, Player of the Round Drum, and Player of the Clay Drum.

In the third outer circle, in the intermediate directions beginning from the southeast, stand four women in the form of Vajrapuṣpā, Vajradhūpā, Vajrālokā, and Vajralepanā holding, respectively, flowers, an incense holder, the best of lamps, and a conch filled with perfumes. In this third circle, clockwise from the southeast at each of the four entrances, stand four women. They are in the form of Aśvamukhā, Vajra Varāhamukhā, [353] Vajrālokā, and the Vetālā reduced[1025] to dust. The last of these is she who still lives even though she died and became dust. The latter sixteen women can be understood from the context as being those who subsequently take part in the activities.

Illuminating Lamp on the fifteenth chapter says that for unelaborated activities in the generation stage, the mandala is to be constructed using the mandala ceremonial ritual.[1026] This is followed by Master Gö. Therefore to draw the mandala properly with watercolors is excellent. For Guhyasamāja unelaborated activities, the mandala is drawn in watercolor; masks, according to the numbers of the assembly, are used for the costume performances; and the deities are put in their own places.

Specific rituals of each

1. The ritual for elaborated activities
2. The ritual for unelaborated activities

The ritual for elaborated activities

The Ārya master and his disciples do not clearly teach the Guhyasamāja practitioner rituals for the elaborated and unelaborated activities in any particular way, but they do assert that the elaborated rituals are performed by way of Guhyasamāja. In that case, how is this to be done? Some say that it should be performed by adding yogis and yoginīs in costumes of the thirty-two deities to the twenty goddesses described in the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra*. However, the *Compendium of Practice* states, "Accompanied by disciples of the same family."[1027] In that case, there is not a common ritual for the individual mandalas of Saṃvara and Guhyasamāja. Thus, if you are performing elaborated rituals in the Guhyasamāja tradition, the mandala assembly should consist of the number of deities in the Guhyasamāja mandala to which is added the elaborations of the gestures, gesture responses, and so on as taught in other tantras. If you are to perform elaborated rituals according to the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra*,[1028] meditate on the emptiness "focused on ultimate truth" together with the yogis of the two stages. Then move through the element-stacking process up to Mount Meru, on top of which is created a base consisting of a lotus and a crossed vajra. Upon this, generate a celestial palace with a vajra at its pinnacle, and with all features complete up to the individual seats. Then by generating yourself into a main deity, such as Vajrasattva, perform the process of self-consecration. "Sitting in the manner of the principal figure of the mandala" when you create the assembly, you generate the twenty women into the nature of the particular deities. They too perform a similar generation. If the text of the *Compendium of Practice* were followed literally,

there would be no practice beyond this. It is clear, however, that it should be preceded by the supplementary meditation on the protection wheel and the absorption of the wisdom beings.

For enjoying the qualities of desire, first recall the samādhi "possessing the nature of the perfect process." [354] Then, thinking that you "satisfy all the tathāgatas dwelling inside your body mandala," first engage in the objects of form, sound, and smell. When you engage in tastes, first purify, transform, and increase the food substances. Then "recall the innately existing open hearth," and while eating think that you are offering the substances for burning "to the mouth of the samādhi *sattva*," where they melt and transform into elixir. In this way you satisfy the aggregates, elements, and so forth of the body vajra with food and drink.

Finally, engage in the enjoyment of tactile sensations by taking, according to your wish, one of the consorts skilled in the arts of desire from among the twenty accompanying and subsequently accompanying goddesses and place her on your lap. Develop the strong thought that through this consort you will complete the mahāmudrā siddhi. Enter into union and perform the actions up to "stimulating the channel."[1029] Then, in the posture of your buddha family, remain in meditative equipoise. The *Compendium of Practice* at this point speaks of the postures of the tathāgata, vajra, jewel, lotus, and activity families.[1030] This indicates the way to change into each of the main deities.

From the movement between vajra and lotus, and with every tathāgata in the nature of the aggregates and so forth,[1031] the bodhicitta of the vowels and consonants melts and descends from the crown of the head through the seventy-two thousand channels, like water falling from a steep mountainside, to create successively the "nondesire" first appearance, the "desire" increase appearance, and the "intermediate desire" close-to-attainment. Finally, the all-empty state of clear light in the nature of the perfection of wisdom is perceived by the individual yogi.

This is mostly an explanation according to the Saṃvara tradition [up to *ngi* 98b7]. Therefore it is based on the four joys experienced in the descent of the bodhicitta from the crown of the head to the tip of the vajra. However, it is not the case that the creation of the four empty states during the withdrawal process at the heart, as described below, is not found in this tradition.

Here [from *ngi* 98b7], the statement that the yogi who has attained the supreme state performs, by way of the six families, the deeds of "severing and preserving within that mandala assembly" mostly refers to deeds performed

from the attainment of the practice stage of union onward, and these deeds are taught in the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra.*

In this way, the innate is created and cultivated through reliance upon a consort. Then when the main yogi, with the nature of great bliss, arises from that practice, he performs the dance of the play of the buddhas in order to express[1032] well the nature of the play of great *ārali*, which swiftly "brings the dharmas"[1033] for the needs of self and others. The procedure is as follows: Together with the yoginīs, the main yogi performs the gestures, and the consort performs the response to those gestures. Likewise, they perform paying homage and the responses to paying homage, [355] offerings and the responses to offerings, dances and the responses to the dances, songs and the responses to the songs, and communication though physical and verbal signals. In the *Compendium of Practice* the last two are explained, but except for a little explanation on paying homage and the responses to paying homage and on offerings and the responses to offerings, the others are not explained. These should be learned from other tantras. The need for these activities is taught in the *Compendium of Practice* with the words "so that the mind does not change and to bring mutual joy." Therefore they are performed so that the mind does not wander away from great bliss and to increase mutual bliss. [up to *ngi* 99a6]

In the meditation sessions you engage with the qualities of desire to develop the innate. In the post-meditation sessions, using the meditative states of mind described previously, you are involved day and night in the enjoyment of the qualities of desire by way of the many elaborations of gestures and so on.

If you practice elaborated activities in the Guhyasamāja system, thirty-two yogis and yoginīs transformed by costume, in keeping with the thirty-two deities of the mandala, are arranged in their deity places on thirty-one seats. You meditate in keeping with the sādhanas of the two stages, at the end of which you should engage with the five objects of desire as described earlier. After that, you add the elaborations of gestures, their responses, and so on. The way to perform the ritual will be explained below.

The ritual for unelaborated activities

Concerning unelaborated activities, the *Compendium of Practice* says that if you are unable to complete the abridged mandala because of a lack of resources, "you should practice unelaborated activities by way of the five

aspects of reality," accompanied by five consorts. If even that is not possible, you should practice the unelaborated activities accompanied by just one consort. In this way, including the practice of unelaborated activities with the complete abridged mandala and the necessary resources, the text speaks of three procedures.[1034]

Therefore being unable to complete the abridged mandala refers to not having the necessary requisites of costumes and so on for yogis and yoginīs equal to the number of deities in the mandala. It does not refer to not being able to perform the ritual of meditating on the complete mandala. *Illuminating Lamp* on the fifteenth chapter, in the section on the Akṣobhya yogi performing unelaborated activities with his consort, says that you adorn the mandala with the deities of the meditated mandala of Akṣobhya.[1035] Such a meditation on the complete deities of the mandala applies to all three types of unelaborated activities.

In this way, the extensive form of unelaborated activities is to have thirty-one seats covered with colorful lotus cloth upon a mandala drawn in watercolor arranged into the appropriate deity places [356] with twenty-three yogis and nine yoginīs, all in masks, placed upon them. The intermediate type of unelaborated activities is the activity of the reality of the five secrets.[1036] On this practice, *Illuminating Lamp*, commenting on the root text of the fifteenth chapter, says that on the central seat is the practitioner meditated upon as Vajradhara, and that day and night in the places of Locanā and so forth are women well trained in mantra and the tantras and visualized as Locanā and so forth.[1037] The *Compendium of Practice* speaks of four women in the form of Rūpavajrā and so on placed in the four intermediate directions, and of one woman in the form of Sparśavajrā seated on the practitioner's lap.[1038] If there are no more than five women, then clearly you can choose between these two practices. In the *Compendium of Practice*, the assertion from the sixteenth chapter that the yogis of the three families perform activities with Locanā, Māmakī, and Pāṇḍaravāsinī is cited as a source for unelaborated activities performed with one consort. Therefore in that text it is not definite that the consort for the main deity is always generated into Sparśavajrā. This should be applied to the other two types of unelaborated activities.

When practicing the intermediate unelaborated activities, there are five seats, consisting of one in the center of the mandala and four in the inner circle or in the second circle, all covered with colorful lotus cloths. There are six costume transformations. When practicing the abridged unelaborated activities, there are two seats and two costume transformations.

On the actual ritual, the *Compendium of Practice* says:

> Create a celestial palace with a vajra-jewel pinnacle, and with a well-trained external mudrā and accompanied by disciples of the same family, accomplish the mahāmudrā. The procedure is as follows: First of all, having focused on the ultimate truth, you are self-consecrated. Arising from that as Akṣobhya, you enter and take your place as master of the mandala.[1039]

The generation of the entourage in the Patsap translation is clearly described:

> Then, for the mandala deities of Vairocana and so forth, ordinary conception is cleared away, and the indivisible entourage is visualized as being the sections of the mandala of your own body. The entire entourage of the mandala is to be pleased.

The text [*ngi* 101b3] goes on to say that, accompanied by your consort, you enter the ultimate truth by the practice of held-as-a-whole dissolution and by subsequent dissolution. The goddesses Locanā and the others exhort you with the verses beginning "Vajrasattva, you . . . ," and you arise by the process of self-consecration. Then, in order to experience the taste of supreme joy, with the nine expressions in dance, you first enjoy form, sound, odor, and taste, and then, by taking a consort from a choice of a meat seller[1040] and so on, [357] you enter into union and engage in the enjoyment of tactile sensations.

Just how many preparatory rituals are required for the above is not made clear. According to Master Gö, you meditate on the complete preparatory practices beginning from the protection wheel. According to Yoṣa and Bālāka the generation-stage practitioner performs the three rituals of generation and so on according to the sādhana, while the completion-stage practitioner performs an instant generation. In other texts there are explanations that speak of mastering the generation stage and then instantaneously generating the whole cycle of self-generation.

Judging from what is taught in the *Compendium of Practice*, the practitioner as Vajradhara or Akṣobhya is acceptable. However, in general, generation of the main figure using any of the six buddha families is also found, and that is the same for both stages. Generating the celestial palace on the peak of Mount Meru was taught previously during the description from the mother tantras, but here it is not necessary. The generation-stage

practitioner at this point will have the ability to generate a special innate state by the process of the four joys on three separate occasions: during the initial yoga, while entering the clear light at the completion of the sovereign mandala, and having risen from that clear light, while relying upon an actual consort. In this way they are unlike any other generation-stage occasions. For the sovereign mandala practice, the supporting and supported mandala is generated inside the lotus of the mother from meditative union with an actual consort. Akṣobhya emerges and, at the end of the emanations and so on, merges with you to become Dveṣavajra. This procedure is based on two buddha families, and the same process should be applied to each of the other main deities. Having performed the emergence and so forth of the figures from Vairocana up to Sumbha, think that they absorb into and become indivisible from the thirty-one yogis and yoginīs. By meditating on deity yoga, your entourage dispels all ordinary pride and remains inseparable from such thoughts.

The meaning of "being the sections of the mandala of your own body" is that you visualize that entourage as being the "sections," or components such as the aggregates, of your own body, and this meditation is to be performed equally by yourself and your entourage. With the five-consort and one-consort practice, absorption is performed into those actually there, and for those not actually there, after emerging, they are placed in their respective places like the others.

Concerning the sentence "the entire entourage of the mandala is to be pleased," the Chak translation says "is to be desired." The actual meaning is that completing the sovereign mandala and entering union with an actual consort will please the deities by way of them being incorporated into the parts of the body. The practice is not complete by meditative union and entering the clear light alone; rather by adding the yoga meditation of the two meditative absorptions, [358] the winds and mind withdraw into the heart to generate the four empty states, as has been explained earlier. Applying this to the completion-stage practitioner, know that this refers to other occasions of meditative union also.

The arousing from the state of clear light by singing [*ngi* 10123] is performed in the extensive unelaborated practice. If there are four women meditated upon as being the inner circle of Locanā and so forth, the rousing is performed with actual singing. If they are meditated upon as the five Vajrās or if there is one consort, the singing is imagined. Alternatively, for the former it is clearly acceptable for the four women on this occasion to hold the

pride of being the four goddesses—Locanā and so on—and to perform the arousing by song. Having arisen from that state, the instruction to enjoy the good, bad, and indifferent from the first four sense objects evidently refers to the fact that from around this point in your practice, even inferior objects are aids to the creation of inner bliss.

From the three occasions that these activities are performed on the completion stage, if activities are being performed in order to gain the illusory body, having already achieved the beginning of the path of mind isolation, then generation is not actuated by way of syllables and hand implements but is done in an instant. Before the creation of the celestial mansion, the ground of exalted wisdom is generated, and at the time of the imagined deities withdrawing into the clear light, withdrawal is carried out by the power of the winds being absorbed. Those who have achieved the illusory body and those on the practice stage of union are also able to do this, and so the difference in ability between the two stages is great. If the generation-stage practice of arising in the form of the primordial lord from the sphere of emptiness is performed by practitioners who have attained mind isolation, they will have the ability to arise from the wind and mind as a simulated third-stage illusory body. If it is performed by those who have attained the illusory body but have not realized actual clear light, entering emptiness is not carried out by the illusory body disappearing through purification. When arising in the form of the primordial lord, the mind arises from the illustrative clear light but not in a new body. Once the stage of union has been achieved, the continuum of the illusory body is never lost, and so entering into and arising from clear light are both performed from the mind and not from the illusory body. Therefore, in these two situations of arising from the clear light, bring to mind the form you already possess by the process of visualization. For taking the nirmāṇakāya, you reenter the coarse body you have separated from and generate the coarse body as the nirmāṇakāya. Even those who have attained only the simulated illusory body will have the ability to create in their minds something similar to the real thing. Through these explanations, you also understand the procedures at the times of the generation-stage initial yoga, the creation of the innate from entering union with a consort at the end of the sovereign mandala, the arising from that state, and so on.

The commentary on the seventeenth chapter speaks of arising through the arousal by song, holding the pride of Vairocana and so on, [359] and entering into union with Locanā and so on.[1041] It is evident that this procedure should be applied here and is similar for both stages. This is also in keeping

with the four goddesses being assigned to the four women who act as the inner companions of the main figure. The women who make up the subsequent companions are also consorts of the main figure, and so it is clear that he also engages with Rūpavajrā and so on. Because of this, the intermediate and abridged unelaborated practices are determined by the number of consorts in the entourage and not by the number of males. In the *Compendium of Practice* when it says that you should rely upon one of the five types of women—the meat seller and so on—it is saying this on the basis that there are no specific types of women set out for the completion-stage practitioner whereas it is taught that the generation-stage practitioner relies upon a consort of his own buddha family. Whichever of the two types of consort is taken, the actual activity involves a meditation on developing innate joy through relying upon your particular consort and applying that to the union of bliss and emptiness. This is not a meditation where the generation-stage practitioner meditates primarily on the mantra body while the completion-stage practitioner meditates mainly on the illusory body.

It is not clear how many times a day you should perform this activity ritual, but the root text and the commentary on chapter 16 in the section on activities states that the secret offering of union with a consort should be performed four times.[1042] Thus there should be four sessions a day. The *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra* states that the great gathering ritual using the mandala assembly is performed once a year or once a month, and the *Compendium of Practice* says that this statement refers to the last two activities. These are not activities described in the context of being divided into four sessions, and so based on the latter citation, it makes no sense to enter into an explanation of whether activities performed while training in the high paths of the two stages have elaborations of time.

When elaborated activities are performed after the enjoyment of tactile sensations, they are performed with the gestures and their responses using the appropriate meditative states of mind. This is not done with the unelaborated activities. Therefore at this point the phrase "the *ārali* is completed" as found in the old translation of the *Compendium of Practice* is better rendered "the *ārali* is practiced," as in the Patsap translation.

The instructions [*ngi* 101b2] to purify the five meats and the five nectars and so on and to consume them in an isolated place apply to all activities of the two stages. The *Compendium of Practice* also says that you do not form the gestures; that there is no drawing or offering of mandalas; that you do not perform fire offerings in an external hearth, perform reliquary rituals such as

making small clay offerings (*tsha tsha*), or read scriptures; that you put aside all physical hardship, do not prostrate before cloth, stone, or wood images, and do not go for refuge to the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas or pay heed to dates and so forth; and that "these are all to be only perfected internally." These apply to the completion-stage practitioner, [360] but in the actual activities, not forming gestures and not drawing mandalas are not included. Guhyasamāja and many other tantras, Mahāsukha's *Guhyasiddhi*, Saraha's *Treasury of Songs*, and other works also say to not perform these activities, and there are many who misunderstand these instructions saying that those of sharp faculties practice the all-at-once method and so, even from the very beginning of practice, do not follow the above practices but that those of lesser faculties who do follow them practice the gradual method.

The way to accomplish completely unelaborated activities

According to Yoṣa the type of person who practices completely unelaborated activities is solely the completion-stage practitioner, but Kṛṣṇācārya states that they are found in both stages. The latter assertion, as the master Gö has affirmed, is the better.

[*ngi* 10325] Concerning the place for these activities, a tantra speaks of locations on isolated mountains, on riverbanks, by running water, in cemeteries, and so on.[1043] To perform these activities there is no need to construct a three-story building and so on. For help in providing food, "a *yakṣinī*, female servant, and so on will provide." Alternatively, food is obtained from "the best provider or the community." For the latter, the Patsap translation has "having obtained just cooked rice from an official." This refers to being sponsored by those with wealth, such as high officials. If you are able to use a *yakṣinī* as a helper, then you have the necessary resources to perform elaborated activities or unelaborated activities, and so this activity is not restricted to those lacking the necessary prerequisites.

There are four states of mind necessary for this practice. The first is that, to begin with, the practitioner recalls the sufferings of samsara without beginning, and with the desire for the happiness of nirvana, leaves behind the busy life, meditating on the fact that even great rulers of kingdoms have suffering. For the second state of mind, the two newer translations have "cast out the mind that holds on to phenomena, even down to a sesame seed." This is a better translation, and so you should take it to mean not holding on to collected provisions, even down to a single sesame seed. Do not take it to mean

not holding on to phenomena in the sense of apprehending true existence. The third state of mind is, with faith in the meditation on ultimate-truth clear light, to pay no heed even to body or life. The fourth is not to strive for the subtle worldly siddhis or even the eight great siddhis, as they will become distractions and cause regression.

The generation-stage practitioner who practices the activities will have developed the complete bodhicitta and so will possess the general desire to become a buddha. However, after perfecting the generation stage but before having created the paths of the completion stage, they will be practicing the activities with a mind drawn to the common siddhis. [361] Thus, three states of mind, with the exception of the second, are here to be applied to the completion-stage practitioner.

Concerning the type of consort in completely unelaborated activities, the *Compendium of Practice* says that it is the wisdom consort:

> Having abandoned external women, enter into meditative union with the wisdom consort in the heart, focus on the thought that you will quickly reach the level of Vajradhara, and solely practice the activities.[1044]

On the wisdom consort, Yoṣa says:

> For the generation-stage practitioner, a goddess with form emerges from the heart. For the completion-stage practitioner, it is said that the meditation on emptiness is meditative union with the wisdom consort.[1045]

The completion-stage practitioner can also enter meditative union with a consort having the form of a goddess. This is established by *Illuminating Lamp* on the fifth chapter when it says, together with scriptural reference, that if an actual consort is not found, Prajñāpāramitā, the mother of the buddhas who dwells in your heart, emerges, and you enter meditative union with her.[1046] In the sixteenth chapter it says:

> For the meditative absorption of
> the three syllables possessed of the vajras,
> your consort is conceived by the mind.
> In this way, the omniscient buddhas
> will without doubt be pleased.[1047]

The commentary says that this verse teaches activities with a wisdom consort, and that those in the "meditative absorption of the three syllables possessed of the vajras" refers to the yogis endowed with the three vajras of Vairocana and so forth. Yogis who do not rely upon external women are given the consort Vajreśvarī dwelling in their heart.[1048] The teaching that if an outer woman is not found you rely upon a wisdom consort is based on the fact that the level of samādhi on great bliss that comes from an external consort cannot be reproduced with a wisdom consort. However, the instruction here to abandon the outer woman even if you have found one and to rely upon a wisdom consort is based on the opposite of that. This is similar to the statement in the two newer translations of *Illuminating Lamp* commenting on the seventeenth chapter, which says that those whose minds are not stable when entering meditative union with a wisdom consort should rely upon an external consort.[1049] The older translation of *Illuminating Lamp* says, "If the mind is stable, rely upon an external consort." The previous translation is better. Such variation seems to be due to the particular type of practitioner and to the way of practice of someone who has meditated from the very beginning of the path with a wisdom consort.

In these completely unelaborated activities, the generation-stage practitioner leaves aside the other elaborations, but the ritual itself is clearly the same. Having completed the sovereign mandala and entered meditative union with a wisdom consort, you generate the innate joy through the process of the four joys and meditate on bliss and emptiness. You arise from this state when aroused by the songs of the four goddesses generated in that meditation and engage in the enjoyments of food and the consort using meditative states of mind.

On the three occasions of completion-stage practice for these activities, you rely on whatever ritual process is necessary from the sādhana, [362] and when entering meditative union with the wisdom consort, you are assisted by the completion of wind yoga, through whose power many elaborations of dual appearance are severed and a special experience of the four empty states is actualized. It is also possible here to generate the four empty states through the withdrawal process of bringing the winds and mind into the heart or by the process of bringing the bodhicitta to the tip of the vajra, but primarily the former method is followed here.

At this point the *Compendium of Practice* explains [*ngi* 104a5] that the aggregates and so forth enter the subtle element of wind, which in turn enters "mind." This enters "states of mind," which in turn enter "ignorance," and this is followed by meditation on clear light. This is performed through reliance

upon a wisdom consort. In the other two activities the same practice is performed by relying upon an external consort. Here in the text, there is an explanation on the cultivation of sleep clear light. This refers to activities for the completion-stage practitioner, and the meaning is that whenever you meditate on clear light, it is done in order to mix it with sleep clear light and meditate accordingly. It does not refer, as in other instances, to the individual meditations on the clear light unmixed with sleep during the waking state and on the clear light mixed with sleep during the sleeping state. This can be understood if all the points on the mixing practices are thoroughly comprehended.

The activities are performed on both stages. Therefore, when practicing them, except for the difference in the superiority of the four joys and four empty states, the innate and the clear light is cultivated on both stages by uniting with a wisdom consort in meditative equipoise. When you are no longer able to remain there, you rise from that state and again rely upon that wisdom consort and meditate as before. You therefore alternate the practice in this way.

This involves great perseverance, and because you take no joy in various elaborations, you continue to engage in the activities with tremendous faith in meditation on the innate. Because of this, such practice is "the activities of a *bhusuku*," because such a person is involved only in the activities of eating, sleeping, and walking. If syllables are added to the first syllable to make *bhuñjana*, the etymology is "eating food." If the second syllable is extended to make *suptana*,[1050] its explanation is "sleeping." If the third syllable is extended to become *kuṭisara*, its explanation is "walking in order to urinate and defecate." Except for these three intentions, the busy life is abandoned, and with no thoughts at all toward the body, feelings, sensory objects, or sense organs, such a practitioner cultivates sleep and clear light mixing. Some say the first syllable is extended to make *bhuktvā*, which means "to eat."

The activities of such a completion-stage practitioner will quickly achieve—without recourse to the other two activities—the illusory body in which "your whole being" is changed into the vajra body of the practice stage of union, and the vajra body of the no-further-practice stage of union. Therefore the commentary on the sixth chapter describes the activities of the *bhusuku* as the best of activities.[1051] [363] Here, the *Compendium of Practice* says, "I will also explain completely unelaborated activities by the process described in the text on the behavior of the insane."[1052] This long citation can be found in the sixteenth chapter of *Ornament of Vajra Essence Tantra*.[1053]

In the two newer translations of the *Compendium of Practice* it says, "By the process and methods in the explanatory tantra, engage in the completely unelaborated with the behavior of the insane." The Lochen translation has "the text explaining the behavior of the insane." This is a better translation, because that chapter teaches the activities and describes them as "the behavior of the insane." Therefore "explanatory" means "explaining the behavior of the insane" and does not mean that this practice is taught in the explanatory tantras of Guhyasamāja.

That tantra and the Guhyasamāja both teach that through the practice of these activities you will gain accomplishment in six months. "Accomplishment" refers to the achievement of buddhahood. Therefore this is not a practice of the generation-stage practitioner.

The *Compendium of Practice* states that by practicing the three activities for half a month, one month, or six months, the eight signs of the mahāmudrā siddhi, such as a subtle form, light touch, and so on, as well as signs seen in dreams, such as those cited in the fifteenth chapter of the root tantra, will arise.[1054] Within the six months these eight signs arise and accomplishment follows. As for the identification of these eight, the *eight mighty qualities*, such as the might of the enlightened form and so on, refer to the supreme siddhi, and so these eight are not being taught here. It is the *eight qualities of Īśvara* that are referred to here. The Chak translation of the *Compendium of Practice* at this point says:

> Subtle form, light to the touch,
> pervading, perfection attained,
> shining appearance, stable, mighty,
> with all that is desired.

It is clear that earlier scholars did not come across any explanations of these eight qualities of Īśvara. Therefore they should be applied to the explanation of the eight qualities of Īśvara taught by Avalokitavrata.[1055] These are described as follows: "Subtle" refers to Īśvara creating and destroying the animate world of sentient beings. "Light" refers to Īśvara creating and destroying the inanimate world. By creating and destroying both the animate and inanimate world, he is their lord and master. Here, these mean that the yogi has the ability to manifest and withdraw these two worlds. The latter quality is expressed by the future "perfection attained." The mind being able to travel to whatever place it thinks of is expressed by "pervading." Being worshiped

by all elemental spirits is expressed by "shining appearance" or brightness, referring to eclipsing others with his light and radiance. Having the power to destroy and look after sentient beings, he is "mighty." Having control over all that is desired for various qualities, he holds "all that is desired." Having the ability to gain whatever he wishes, he dwells in joy. This is expressed by "stable." [364]

Attaining the supreme accomplishment within six months refers to those of the practice stage of union. In the four occasions of engaging in activities described above, the practice is continued until the goal is reached. Considerations of time are not relevant.

If those on the two stages engage in the activities in this way but individual goals are not swiftly attained, there are ways to invoke the essence of the two stages described in the commentary on the tenth chapter of the tantra[1056] and in Nāropa's commentary on the *Later Tantra*.[1057]

37. The Attainment of Complete Enlightenment

[365] *The way to actualize the results at the end of meditation on the path*

Illuminating Lamp says:

> The purpose will now be explained:
> the rituals of the feats of pacification and so on,
> likewise, the eight siddhis,
> and best of all, buddhahood.[1058]

The supreme purpose is the attainment of buddhahood, the eight great siddhis are the middling purpose, and the enlightened activities of pacification, increase, control, and wrath are the lowest.

On the eight siddhis, the *Vajra Wisdom Compendium* lists six and does not actually mention the other two:

> Mantra, medicine, fire offering, powders, eye medicine, swift feet, and so on. These are the eight great siddhis.[1059]

The *Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* says:

> I will explain the eight substances and secondary accomplishment.
> The siddhi of pills and of eye medicine,
> of traveling through the earth and of the sword,
> flying through the sky and invisibility,
> immortality and destruction of illness.[1060]

The *Vajra Canopy Tantra* states:

> Eye medicine, swift feet, the sword,
> traveling through the earth,

> pills, performing deeds in the sky,
> invisibility, and elixirs.[1061]

The last two attainments are common siddhis. Therefore siddhis can be categorized as common and supreme. The *Later Tantra* says:

> The siddhis of invisibility and so on
> are explained as ordinary.
> Attaining buddhahood is said by the Buddha
> to be the supreme siddhi.[1062]

The ways to gain the common siddhis at the completion of training in the generation stage and its activities can be known from listening to the tantra and commentary.

The way to accomplish the no-further-practice stage of union at the completion of training in the paths of the completion stage and its activities is as follows: You actualize the dawn clear light by way of the outer and inner masteries, as described previously. Then, when the ultimate dharmakāya is realized, the illusory body of the practice stage of union becomes the illusory body of the no-further-practice stage of union, and for the duration of samsara you will remain irremovable from these two enlightened forms. The object clear light, endowed with the two purities,[1063] is the noncomposite dharmakāya. The consciousness clear light is the exalted-wisdom dharmakāya, also known as the "body of great bliss." The support for this clear light, the form body composed of just wind and mind, is the sambhogakāya.

These two bodies are one entity but with different isolates, and so the form body is often referred to as "the nondual body of exalted wisdom." Thus to maintain that the Ārya master and his disciples assert that the form body is not exclusively incorporated in the state of buddhahood but is incorporated in the mental continuum of disciples, that it is composed of matter separate from consciousness, [366] and that in the resultant state it is divorced from exalted wisdom, and so on are not worthy statements.

A form endowed with such a union will produce many emanations—supreme emanation bodies and so on. To posit a nirmāṇakāya state of union also, and then to explain the system of the two bodies within the body of union, is to understand this point well. Other works on mantra speak of the form-body support of the exalted wisdom as the nirmāṇakāya, the enlightened mind as the dharmakāya, and the enlightened speech as the

sambhogakāya. The above, however, is the assertion of the Ārya master and his disciples.

It is true that the special path of mantra added to the completion of other paths, as described earlier, and becoming a buddha in the realm of Akaniṣṭha is what it means to be a buddha according to highest yoga tantra. However, this does not conflict with the explanation that the buddhahood reached in one life by those who have entered highest yoga tantra from the very beginning is gained by using the desire realm as a basis. This is because buddhahood as posited by highest yoga tantra is not the same as the buddhahood attained by entering the path of highest yoga tantra from the beginning. The subtle difference between the way of attaining the form body and dharmakāya in these two determinations of buddhahood can be understood from the explanation above.

It is not difficult to understand that the illusory-body person, who has attained the illusory body with a basis of human form and becomes a buddha on that basis, will attain buddhahood on the basis of being a human being. If a yogi with the basis of human form departs this life and, instead of becoming an intermediate-state being, attains an illusory body and becomes a buddha with that form as a basis, such a basis is not included in the six realms of sentient beings; this is not a contradiction. For example, it is explained that the intermediate state is not included in the six realms of sentient beings, but a nonreturner passes into the intermediate state and will become an arhat on that basis.

The sambhogakāya of the buddhahood that arises from meditating on this path is endowed with the seven features, but there can be no such certainty with the nirmāṇakāya. Because of this, it is taught that the sambhogakāya that has the seven features of union joins with several members of the entourage, such as the accompanying consorts, and engages in the great bliss of play. Therefore, on the path also, and in correspondence with that resultant state, the yogi comprehensively expands the great bliss by means of play within desire.

In this section on the resultant state, it is necessary to arrive at conclusions through the process of argument. There are many other points to be raised also. Here I have explained the most difficult points. Other difficult points concerning presentations of the shared assertions of both Mahayana vehicles can be learned from other works. I have also not discussed them here for fear this work would become too long.

Colophon and Dedication

The glorious Guhyasamāja, king of tantras, as renowned as the sun and moon, the ultimate of all of Buddha's teachings, and the sole jewel of the three worlds explained by the prophesized master Nāgārjuna, [367] teacher of the ultimate definitive meaning of the Buddha's words, and by his disciples, who had realized the meanings of the tantra and commented accordingly on its glorious five stages: This work has been a clear and complete explanation of all their points.

I realized that if you do not understand just what the superior paths are superior to, and if you do not properly understand the lower tenets, you will not understand the subtle and exclusive features of those superior paths and of the higher tenets. Especially if you do not truly discover the ultimate definitive meaning that is the profound emptiness and the definitive teachings of the Buddha using an analytical intelligence that has trained well in the subtle paths of reasoning presented by the master Nāgārjuna, then you will not discover the general points of the paths to liberation and omniscience. In particular, you will not properly recognize the innate exalted wisdom that arises from a practice that has bliss and emptiness united, which is the essential subject matter of the two kinds of nondual tantra. Though you may have great liking for it, it will never go beyond mere faith. Realizing this, I trained myself well in ours and others' traditions of the Great and Lower vehicles of our own tradition, the Mantra and Perfection Vehicles, and of the four tantra classes of the Vajra Vehicle.

Also, I familiarized myself for a long time with an enthusiastic application to the ways that disciples are guided by the stages of the complete corpus of each of these paths, ornamented by relevant core teachings; to the ascertainment of emptiness and, having ascertained it, to the way to meditate upon it; to the ways that each Guhyasamāja tradition has been explained; and to all the genuine Indian works of the Ārya tradition that have been translated into Tibetan, together with their core teachings. With this, I compared the

Root Tantra and the explanatory tantras, and with much prayer and request I received special signs of permission to compose this work. Then, with a pure motivation for the severely weakened Guhyasamāja Ārya tradition to be restored and remain strong for a long time, I composed this work.

The greatest beacon to dispel the darkness of the minds of living beings,
sole source of every jewel of excellent explanation,
peerless teacher, crown jewel of orators,
the glorious sovereign Vajradhara,
who taught highest yoga tantras numbering
two hundred and twenty million.

Among those tantras, like a universal sovereign in the midst of other rulers,
surrounded by an entourage of a myriad tantras,
ruling over the continent of the precious teachings,
completely fulfilling the hopes of thousands of bodhisattvas,
sitting at the pinnacle of the teachings,
the glorious Guhyasamāja, the king of tantras.

To dispel the darkness of unknowing and misunderstanding
surrounding the five stages, which are the very essence
excellently commented on by venerable Nāgārjuna, greatest of siddhas,
who by relying on its path, completed the levels,
and perfectly explained by Āryadeva, Nāgabodhi, Śākyamitra,
and Candrakīrti who supplemented his thinking,
I have created this great feast of a new and excellent explanation,
a great **lamp illuminating** all points of **the five stages**. [368]

When the teachings in general, and specifically the Ārya tradition,
have for a long time been severely weakened,
it becomes very difficult to play within the bliss
of meditative absorption that reveals precisely
the hard-to-fathom meaning of the tantra.

Nevertheless, with a share of discernment
granted by the agent of virtuous karma,
it is not impossible even in these dark times
that an explanation never before seen

can still appear for those great beings
enriched with the discernment
that grants rest free from anxiety,
in a single place of discernment within the vast area
that is the wisdom of many a scholar.

In this manner, I immersed myself,
with great effort, for a long period of time
and applied myself with thorough examination.
Yet my mind is poor and the tantra is difficult to fathom.
Therefore, in whatever I have been mistaken,
I beg the deity host of Akṣobhyavajra and those who evaluate
to be like loving parents who hold with wonder
the mistakes made by their young child.

Unlearned in the tenets of ours and others' traditions and satisfied
with just partial learning,
with no devotion to the hardships of the subtle path of reasoning,
for whom the scriptural tradition does not arise as instruction:
for such beings to bring out the points of a path long since in decline
is like children climbing up onto a stone platform
and trying to take hold of the sun—
their efforts are nothing more than good intentions.
Therefore it is only fitting that those with intelligence should make
effort in this.

May I be cared for by that venerable treasure of wisdom,
a fragment of whose enlightened activity
when it enters the heart will render brilliantly clear
those points difficult to find and deeply hidden.

By the virtuous karma I have collected from striving in this work,
which, like a beautiful face to the hearts of those with desire,
will captivate the minds of scholars
who see it and contemplate its meanings,
may all beings understand correctly
the points of tantra, so very difficult to uncover,
and by practicing them, travel to the stage of the vajra holder.

For as long as Meru remains within the stamens
of the eight-petal lotus of the continents,
for that long may this excellent explanation
illuminate the ultimate path for fortunate sentient beings.

May I too, in all my future lives,
never be apart from this ultimate of paths,
and may I always delight the holy spiritual friend,
the unparalleled source of all goodness.

At the repeated requests—of many spiritual friends who hold the practice of this path as the essence of their practice—for the points of the paths of the five stages to be written down in a clear and extensive form, this **lamp illuminating** all the points of **the** profound **five stages**, essence of the glorious Guhyasamāja, king of tantras, was composed in Ganden Nampar Gyalwai Ling on Drok Mountain by Losang Drakpa of the eastern regions, a monk of much learning and a yogi of glorious Guhyasamāja who took with the crown of his head the dust from the feet of the venerable and holy Khyungpo Lhepa,[1064] the venerable and holy Kumāramati,[1065] and many other holy gurus. The scribe was the Guhyasamāja practitioner [Kashipa] Rinchen Pal, master of the four difficult treatises.[1066]

Maṅgalam

Table of Tibetan Transliteration

Amé Shap Ngawang Künga Sönam	A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams
Butön Rinpoché	Bu ston Rin po che
Chak	Chag
Chak Lotsāwa Chöjé Pal	Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal
Darma Tsöndrü	Dar ma brtson 'grus
Dechen Nyingpo	Bde chen Snying po
Degé	Sde dge
Dok Yeshé Sengé	Rdog Ye shes seng ge
Drok	'Brog
Ganden	Dga' ldan
Ganden Nampar Gyalwai Ling	Dga' ldan rnam par rgyal ba'i gling
Gepawa	Gad pa ba
Gö Khukpa Lhetsé	'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas
Jakhangpa Sönam Rinchen	Bya khang pa Bsod nams rin chen
Jamgön Amé	'Jam mgon A mes
Khampa Ronyam Dorjé	Khams pa Ro mnyam rdo rje
Khön(gön)tön Gepa Kīrti	'Khon (mgon) ston Gad pa kīr ti
Khyungpo Lhepa Shönu Sönam	Khyung po Lhas pa Gzhon nu bsod nams
Len Tsang Tsa	Glan rtshang tsha
Lha Lama Shiwa Ö	Lha bla ma Zhi ba 'od
Lhodrak Marpa	Lho brag Mar pa
Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen	Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan
Losang Drakpa	Blo bzang grags pa
Marpa	Mar pa
Metsön	Me mtshon
Naktso Lotsāwa	Nag tsho Lo tsā ba
Ngari	Mnga' ris

Nyima Cham	Nyi ma lcam
Nyima Drak	Nyi ma grags
Patsap Lotsāwa Nyima Drak	Pa tshab lo tsā ba Nyi ma grags
Phabongkha	Pha bong kha
Rendawa Shönu Lodrö	Red mda' ba Gzhon nu blo gros
Rinchen Pal, [Kashipa]	Rin chen dpal, [Bka' bzhi pa]
Rinchen Sangpo	Rin chen bzang po
Serdingpa Shönu Ö	Gser sding pa Gzhon nu 'od
Shiwa Ö	Zhi ba 'od
Shönu Sönam	Gzhon nu bsod nams
Shüpu Lotsāwa Drakpa Gyaltsen	Shud pu Lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan
Tanak Gö Lotsāwa	Rta nag 'Gos Lo tsā ba
Tashi Lhünpo	Bkra shis lhun po
Trarak	Phra rags
Tsurtön	Mtshur ston
Tsurtön Wangi Dorjé	Mtshur ston Dbang gi rdo rje
Yongzin Yangchen Gawai Lodrö	Yongs 'dzin Dbyangs can Dga' ba'i blo gros

Notes

1 For more on the six yogas of the Kālacakra systems, see volume 14 of this series, Khedrup Norsang Gyatso's *Ornament of Stainless Light: An Exposition of the Kālacakra Tantra* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2004).

2 Wedemeyer discusses this possibility. Moreover, the *Blue Annals* says, "The teachers belonging to the Nyingma school declared the Guhyasamāja to be the most important text among the eighteen classes of their tantras" (p. 359).

3 Jamgön Amé Shap Ngawang Künga Sönam (1597–1659).

4 Gö Lotsāwa Shönu Pal, *Blue Annals*, *Deb ther sngon po* (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1974), vol. 1, p. 444.

5 The four commentaries are the *Illuminating Lamp* commentary by Candrakīrti and three works of Tsongkhapa: a work annotating difficult points of Candrakīrti's commentary (Toh 5282), a more general analysis of *Illuminating Lamp* called *Precious Sprout* (Toh 5284), and an outline summary of Candrakīrti's text (Toh 5283). See the bibliography for details.

6 Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Āryadeva, Dignāga, Vasubandhu, and Dharmakīrti are known as the six adornments of the world.

7 *Saṃvarodayatantra*, chap. 22, Toh 373 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 291a3.

8 *Vajrahṛdayālaṃkāratantra*, chap. 11, Toh 451 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*, 51b4.

9 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 150a1.

10 *Hevajratantra*, chap. 1, Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 2a3.

11 *Gsang ba mchog gis dgyes pa*. In some texts the grammatical particle is possessive (*gi*), rendering, "The joy of the supreme secret."

12 This refers to the *Condensed Saṃvara Tantra*.

13 Puṇḍarīka, *Vimalaprabhā*, chap. 1, Toh 845 Kangyur, dus 'khor 'grel bshad, *śrī*, 15a6.

14 *Hevajratantra*, chap. 1, Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 2a3.

15 *Later Guhyasamāja Tantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 150a1.

16 *Primordial Buddha: Kālacakra Adibuddha Root Tantra*. Found in *Vimalaprabhā*, chap. 1, Toh 845 Tengyur, rgyud, *tha*, 120b2.

17 I have consulted scholars on this sentence, and it appears to mean that the fire of blazing straw is essentially the same nature as the straw.

18 *Illumination of the Secret Reality* (*Guhyatattvaprakāśa*), Toh 1450 Tengyur, rgyud, *wa*, 354b5.

19 *De nyid*. The term in Tibetan means "the thing itself," but the Sanskrit *tattva* can refer to a philosophical principle.

20 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 1, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 3a3.
21 Ibid., 3b4.
22 Degé has "great compassion" (*thugs rje che*) instead of "Mind Vajra" (*thugs rdo rje*). There are other minor differences too.
23 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 2, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 4b6.
24 Puṇḍarīka, *Vimalaprabhā*, chap. 1, Toh 1347 Tengyur, rgyud, *tha*, 120b3.
25 Ibid., chap. 4, Toh 1347 Tengyur, rgyud, *da*, 120b3.
26 In the Kālacakra system, breath or wind regularly flows through the central channel during ordinary existence. Breaths are a measurement of time, and 21,600 breaths make up one day. Of these 675 breaths are central-channel winds.
27 Here the verb "said" is in honorific form, meaning that the following assertion was made by someone the author had great respect for.
28 *Vajrapañjaratantra*, chap. 4, Toh 419 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 36b6.
29 Ibid., 37a4.
30 Ibid., chap. 13, 54b5.
31 Kṛṣṇācārya, *Guhyatattvaprakāśa*, chap. 1, Toh 1450 Tengyur, rgyud, *wa*, 349b5.
32 *Vajra Canopy Tantra* (*Vajrapañjaratantra*), chap. 1, Toh 419 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 30b2.
33 Ibid., chap. 4, 37a4.
34 Ibid., chap. 4, 35b3.
35 Ibid., chap. 4, 35b4.
36 Kṛṣṇācārya, *Guhyatattvaprakāśa*, chap. 1, Toh 1450 Tengyur, rgyud, *wa*, 349b5.
37 Ibid., 349b4.
38 *Vajra Canopy Tantra* (*Vajrapañjaratantra*), chap. 13, Toh 419 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 54b2.
39 Sanskrit term for the jasmine flower, its whiteness often used as a simile for the white bodhicitta.
40 *Ḍākārṇavatantra*, chap. 50, Toh 372 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 262b6.
41 This is the Degé reading. Citation in the Tashi Lhunpo edition has *Uradatantra*.
42 *Candraguhyatilakatantra*, Toh 477 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ja*.
43 *Vajrapātāla*, Toh 499 rgyud 'bum, *da*.
44 *Brgya dgu brgyad*. All versions have *brgya dgu brgya*, which might mean 90,000, but it seems unlikely.
45 *Stong phrag gsum*, according to Degé. Translation text has *stong phrag 'bum*.
46 *Vajrahṛdayālaṃkāratantra*, chap. 11, Toh 451 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*, 51a4.
47 Ibid., 51b2.
48 See page 25.
49 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*. Although categorized separately, this is the eighteenth or last chapter of the *Root Tantra*.
50 Alaṃkakalaśa, *Extensive Commentary on the Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantraṭīkā*), Toh 1795 Tengyur, rgyud, *gi*.
51 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 1, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 1a5.
52 *Lamp for All Secrets* (*Sarvaguhyapradīpaṭīkā*), Toh 1787 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 205b5.
53 *Phyi ma*, *uttara*; as in the title *Uttaratantra*.
54 *Tattvasaṃgraha* is a yoga tantra of the four classes of tantra.

55 *Perfection of Wisdom Commentary on One Hundred and Fifty Principles* (*Prajñāpāramitānayaśatapañcāśatikāṭīkā*), Toh 2647 Tengyur, rgyud, *ju*, 191a2.

56 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 161a4.

57 The Ārya master is Nāgārjuna, and his four main disciples are Āryadeva, Nāgabodhi, Śākyamitra, and Candrakīrti. Much more concerning these five is discussed in chapter 5.

58 *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 45a5.

59 *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 4, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 76b6.

60 *Devendrapariprcchātantra* (*Lha'i dbang pos zhus pa*). As Tsongkhapa notes below, this was not translated into Tibetan.

61 Smṛtijñānakīrti, *Extensive Core Teachings on the Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses* (*Caturdevatāparipṛcchāvyākhyānopadeśapauṣṭika*), Toh 1915 Tengyur, rgyud, *phi*, 217b4.

62 *Thams cad gsang ba'i mchog*, Skt. *Paramamahāguhya*. Tsongkhapa wrote a commentary on a chapter of this explanatory tantra called *Lha mo bzhis zhus kyi rgya cher bshad pa srog rtsol gyi de kho na nyid gsal ba*. In the colophon he gives the full title of the source tantra as *Dpal thams cad gsang ba'i mchog gsang chen zhes bya ba'i rgyud*.

63 Alaṃkakalaśa, *Extensive Commentary on the Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantraṭīkā*), Toh 1795 Tengyur, rgyud, *gi*, 3b6.

64 The term for "connection" is *'brel ba*, but both versions of the text have *'grel ba* (commentary). The question posed in the *Later Tantra* (148b6), however, clearly asks about the "connections of the commentary" (*rgyud kyi 'brel ba ji ltar bu*).

65 *Lamp for All Secrets* (*Sarvaguhyapradīpaṭīkā*), Toh 1787, rgyud, *ha*, 203b7.

66 *Man ngag*. For a discussion on the choice of translation for this term, see the glossary.

67 A "metaphorical expression" (*dgongs bshad/can*), as used here, is one of the six sides (*mtha' drug*) employed to explain the meanings of tantra. "Exclusive" means distinct from the lower tantras and sutras.

68 Alaṃkakalaśa, *Extensive Commentary on the Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantraṭīkā*), Toh 1795 Tengyur, rgyud, *gi*, 139a7.

69 The "diverse" (*sna tshogs*, *viśva*) are various activities performed with the consort, and the "occasions" (*skad cig*, *kṣaṇa*) are the periods of those activities.

70 Eleventh-century translator and ordained Ngari ruler, elder brother of Jangchup Ö. The colophon to this translation in the Lhasa edition of the Kangyur says it was cotranslated by Sujana Śrījñāna, which may be a name for Atiśa. See David R. Kittay, *The Vajra Rosary Tantra (Vajramālatantra): With Introduction and Summary Based on the Commentary of Alaṃkakalaśa* (New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2013), pp. 166–68.

71 Also known as Alaṃkakalaśa, author of the *Extensive Commentary on Vajra Garland*.

72 This is the Degé edition, although it does not follow exactly any of the three variations above. It is revised by Shiwa Ö.

73 In the tantra the Bhagavan enters a samādhi called *vajra garland enlightenment* and performs various miracles that directly affect the gathered disciples. One of these involves hook-like lights that revive disciples who had previously fainted. These lights stretch like a vajra garland from the secret-place cakra of the disciples to their crown cakra, endowing them with the four types of bliss.

74 Not translated into Tibetan.

75 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 10a7.

76 *Vajra Garland* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 274b6. See glossary for synonyms of the five stages used in these stanzas.

77 *Piṇḍīkṛtasādhana*, Toh 1796 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 3b1.

78 These are seven categories that form the basis for the explanantion of a tantra. They are explained at the beginning of *Illuminating Lamp*. The first ornament is introductory and concerns the name, author, audience, length, and purpose of the tantra. The second discusses the tantra, the introduction, etymology, and causes. The third is the six sides. The fourth concerns divisions and refers to the four modes. The fifth concerns those who are suitable for the tantra. The sixth lists the five types of disciples. The seventh discusses the completion stage.

79 These are by Tsongkhapa himself.

80 *Rgyud kyi mchog gi mchog gyur ba*. This is the Degé reading, where "supreme" is *mchog*. The Tashi Lhünpo translation edition has *phyi ma* ("later"). This probably reflects the dual meaning of the Sanskrit *uttara*.

81 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 148b3.

82 Ibid., 157b1.

83 Ibid., 157b3.

84 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 15b6.

85 Ibid., 15b3.

86 *Raktayamāritantra*, chap. 18, Toh 475 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ja*, 213b3.

87 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 5a4.

88 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 2a2.

89 *Vajrajñānasamuccaya*, chap. 2, Toh 450 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 284b7.

90 *Difficult Points Commentary on the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramapañjikā*), Toh 1838 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 29b2.

91 *Essential Mirror: Short Explanation of Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpadīpaṭippaṇī-hṛdayādarśa*), Toh 1791 Tengyur, rgyud, *a*, 171b5.

92 *Lamp for All Secrets* (*Sarvaguhyapradīpaṭikā*), Toh 1787 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 207b3.

93 *Guhyasamāja* (*gsang ba 'dus pa*) means literally "a gathering or bringing together of secrets." In the context of Nāropa's commentary on *Later Tantra*, "gathering" does not mean a secret assembly but refers to the secrets that have been gathered. In the context of the citation from *Illuminating Lamp*, "gathering" refers to a locus where the meanings of all other tantras are gathered.

94 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 7b3.

95 *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 12a5.

96 *Essential Collections of the Siddhas* (*Grub snying*). Together with the *Guhyasiddhi* this collection would seem to comprise the Seven Works on Siddhi (*grub pa sde bdun*). A list is at http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/grub_pa_sde_bdun. *Essential Collections* (*snying po'i skor*) has been identified with the three Dohas of Saraha.

97 Also known as Lilavajra.

98 *Samantabhadrasādhana*, Toh 1855 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 28b6–36a5.

99 According to Wayman, this is *Guhyasamājamaṇḍalavidhi*, Toh 1865 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, by Dīpaṅkarabhadra.

100 Only one work on *Guhyasamājatantra* by Ānandagarbha is found in Degé: *Guhyasamājapañjikā*, Toh 1917 Tengyur, rgyud, *bi*, translated by Rinchen Sangpo. The Vimalagupta commentary is the *Guhyasamājālaṃkāra*, Toh 1848 Tengyur, rgyud, *ti*.

101 Ratnākaraśānti, *Handfuls of Flowers* (*Kusumāñjali*), Toh 1851 Tengyur, rgyud, *thi*, 207b6.

102 Three of these four chapters are named after three of the four *yugas*, or great ages: the age of four (*caturyuga*), the age of three (*tretāyuga*), and the age of two (*dvāparayuga*).

103 Bhavyakīrti, *Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikāvyākhyāṭīkā*, Toh 1793 Tengyur, rgyud, *ki*, 172b2.

104 Untraced.

105 *Clarification of the Meaning of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramaṭīkākramārthaprakāśikā*), Toh 1842 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*.

106 Ascribed to Nāgabodhi. See bibliography.

107 Untraced.

108 Tsongkhapa gives both renderings of his name in Tibetan—*Klu'i blo* and *Klu'i byang chub*.

109 *Rang bzhin gyi rtog pa*, *prakṛti vikalpa*. Much discussion on these follows in later chapters.

110 Because Nāgabodhi was an actual disciple of Nāgārjuna, as was Śākyamitra (see below), he undoubtedly would know who wrote the second stage.

111 Refers to the *Extensive Commentary to the Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāsamuccayapradīpaṭīkā*), Toh 1834 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*.

112 *Guhyasamāja Ornament of Insight Commentary* (*Samājābhisamayālaṃkāravṛtti*), Toh 1817 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*.

113 Patsap Lotsāwa Nyima Drak (b. 1055).

114 *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 1a3.

115 *Śrīcakrasaṃvarapañjikā-śūramanojñā*, Toh 1405 Tengyur, rgyud, *ma*, 40b7.

116 *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikāvyākhyāṭīkā*), Toh 1793 Tengyur, rgyud, *ki*, 2a4.

117 Kumāra, *Essential Mirror: Short Explanation of Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpadīpaṭippaṇīhṛdayādarśa*), Toh 1791 Tengyur, rgyud, *a*, 171a5.

118 *Lamp for All Secrets* (*Sarvaguhyapradīpaṭīkā*), Toh 1787 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*.

119 *Rtsa bshad* (*shad*). I am unable to reconstruct the Sanskrit for this name, but it is often mentioned as being one of the names of Nāropa.

120 Tsurtön Wangi Dorjé (b. eleventh century); disciple of Marpa.

121 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*. This colophon is not found in Dége.

122 *Lamp for All Secrets, Sarvaguhyapradīpaṭīkā*, Toh 1787 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 234a5.

123 Ibid., 234a6.

124 Alaṃkakalaśa, *Vajramālātantraṭīkā*, Toh 1795 Tengyur, rgyud, *gi*.

125 *Precious Garland Commentary to the Short Sādhana* (*Piṇḍīkṛtasādhanavṛttiratnāvalī*), Toh 1826 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*.

126 Untraced.

127 Possibly *Illuminated Union Initiation Ritual* (*Yugalanaddhaprakāśa*), Toh 1818 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*.
128 Gö Khukpa Lhetsé, b. eleventh century.
129 *Khri brtan*; although Roerich has *grib stan*, which he renders as Srinagar. He and other sources have Candrarāhula for this person, and Navakuṭipa for Nāgakoṭi.
130 Naktso Lotsāwa (1011–64).
131 Shüpu Drakpa Gyaltsen; b. thirteenth century.
132 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 1, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 211b1.
133 Ibid., chap. 65, 271b5.
134 Ibid., chap. 55, 272a3.
135 *Vajrapāṇyabhiṣekatantra*, Toh 496 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *da*, 149a4.
136 Aśvaghoṣa, *Gurupañcāśikā*, Toh 3721 Tengyur, rgyud, *tshu*, 10a5.
137 *Dran pa gcig*, *ekasmṛti*. Tsongkhapa discusses this term below on pages 89–90.
138 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 59b4.
139 *Illuminated Union Initiation Ritual* (*Yuganaddhaprakāśa*), Toh 1818 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 232b5.
140 *Vajraśekharatantra*, chap. 3, Toh 480 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nya*, 199b4.
141 *Don bzhi ma*; by Serdingpa Shönu Ö (b. twelfth century).
142 This section does not appear until chapter 37 of the book.
143 This section does not appear until chapter 34.
144 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 45a6.
145 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 1, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 58b2.
146 Ibid., 60b5.
147 *Vajraḍākatantra*, chap. 50, Toh 370 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 124b6.
148 *Drop of Freedom* (*Muktitilaka*), Toh 1859, rgyud, *di*, 52a2.
149 *Vajramālātantra*, chap 35, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 245a4.
150 The four yogas of the generation stage are: yoga (*rnal 'byor*, *yoga*), subsequent yoga (*rjes su rnal 'byor*, *anuyoga*), higher yoga (*shin tu rnal 'byor*, *atiyoga*), and great yoga (*rnal 'byor chen po*, *mahāyoga*).
151 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 1, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 5a6.
152 Religious songs, made popular by siddhas such as Saraha.
153 Tsongkhapa, *Great Exposition of Secret Mantra*.
154 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 12, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 111b2.
155 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*,
156 *Guhyasamājatantra*, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154a4.
157 Subtle yoga (*phra ba'i rnal 'byor*, *sūkṣmayoga*) is the last practice of the generation stage, involving tiny but detailed meditations at the tip of the nose.
158 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 79b5.
159 *Sems dpa'*. See *three-stacked sattva* in glossary. Also explained below.
160 *Las tshogs*. The powerful feats of pacification, increase, power, and wrathfulness.
161 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277a6.
162 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, 109a2.
163 The actual quote is on page 78.
164 *Rtog pa'i rnal 'byor*, *kalpitayoga*. This is a general term for tantric practices, such as in the generation stage, where visualization is a central component.
165 Sākyamitra (attr.), *Caryāsamuccayapradīpaṭikā*, Toh 1834 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*.

166 The five enlightenments involve the visualization of the buddhas of the five families from their respective seed syllables.
167 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 11, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 79a5.
168 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 15a2.
169 This appears in chapter 10.
170 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 1, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 211a6.
171 These forty verses on the Guhyasamāja introduction and their commentary form a major part of Alex Wayman's *The Yoga of the Guhyasamājatantra* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977).
172 This Sanskrit term is transliterated in Tibetan. It refers to the female genitalia.
173 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 58, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 263b5.
174 Ibid., 263b6.
175 The *anusvāra* rendered by the letter *ṃ* resembles a drop.
176 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 58, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 263b3.
177 Ibid., 263b7.
178 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 2, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 7a3.
179 Degé has variants in these two lines, but it appears to be corrupted.
180 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 4, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 13b4.
181 Ibid., chap. 2, 8a3.
182 *Vajra Garland* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 58, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 263b4.
183 *Saṃputatantra*, chap. 3, Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 118b4.
184 In the Sanskrit alphabet these two letters are roughly triangular and circular.
185 *Chos 'byung*, a triangular representation of the source of all phenomena.
186 These three gateways are enumerated in the next sentence.
187 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 5, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 82b5.
188 Found in Āryadeva, *Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*), chap. 5, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 83a7.
189 *Ascertaining Method and Wisdom* (*Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi*), Toh 2218 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 29a1.
190 Nāgārjuna, *Ratnāvalī* 1:35, Toh 4158 Tengyur, spring yig, *ge*, 108a5.
191 Nāgārjuna, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, Toh 1800 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 41a3.
192 *Ascertaining Method and Wisdom* (*Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi*), chap. 1, Toh 2218 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 29a2.
193 *Mtshan nyid kyi theg pa.* Synonymous with the Perfection Vehicle.
194 *Vajrahṛdayālaṃkāra*, chap 8, Toh 451 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*, 49b2.
195 Dharmakīrti, *Treatise on Valid Cognition* (*Pramāṇavārttika*) 2: 223, Toh 4210 Tengyur, tshad ma, *ce*, 116a3.
196 *Four Hundred Verses* (*Catuḥśatakaśāstra*) 14:25, Toh 3846 Tengyur, dbu ma, *tsha*, 16a5.
197 Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6:120, Toh 3861 Tengyur, dbu ma, *ah*, 210a4.
198 Nāgārjuna, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, Toh 1800 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 38b1.
199 Mañjughoṣa Narendrakīrti, *Pradarśanānumatoddeśaparīkṣā*, P 4610 Tengyur, rgyud 'grel, *pu*, 23a8.
200 It is likely that Tsongkhapa is mocking his opponent by playing with the double

meaning of "no essence": that the meditation has no meaning and that it is a meditation on the no essence of phenomena.

201 Puṇḍarīka, *Vimalaprabhā*, chap. 5, Toh 1347 Tengyur, rgyud, *da*, 223a6.
202 Ibid., chap. 2, 26b5.
203 Ibid., 25a4.
204 Ibid., chap. 5, 226a4.
205 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 2, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 98b2.
206 Chapter 2 of the *Root Tantra* is on bodhicitta, and the "bodhicitta" of *Commentary on Bodhicitta* refers to the topic of this chapter.
207 In the previous section, Tsongkhapa referred to this school by its alternative name, Yogācāra, and below he also uses Vijñānavādin.
208 *Rnam rtog*; generally meaning "thought."
209 *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, Toh 1800 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 40a3.
210 Ibid., 38b3.
211 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, chap. 9, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 185b5.
212 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 16, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 227a1.
213 *Vajrahṛdayālaṃkāratantra*, chap. 6, Toh 451 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*, 45b4.
214 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 3, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 9b6.
215 Ibid., chap. 4, 15b4.
216 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, chap. 2, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 34a3.
217 Ibid., 34a5.
218 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 1, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 3b5.
219 *Avadhūtī* or *dhūtī* is a Sanskrit for "central channel" and is often transliterated in the text.
220 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, chap. 1, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 9b1.
221 *Saṃputatantra*, chap. 2, Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 5b7.
222 Anaṅgavajra, *Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi*, chap. 1, Toh 2218 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 29a2.
223 Ibid., 29a7.
224 *Mos pa yid byed.*
225 *Ngo bo tha mi dad kyi grub bde gcig*; meaning that these two phenomena are created, abide, and cease to exist simultaneously with each other.
226 *Treasury of Songs* (*Dohakoṣagīti*), Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 71b1.
227 *Saṃputatantra*, chap. 1, Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 85b5.
228 "You" is in the plural (*khyed cag*) here, indicating that Tsongkhapa is refuting a particular tradition of those times.
229 *Saṃputatantra*, chap. 2, Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 85b5.
230 Ibid., 86b4.
231 Anaṅgavajra, *Prajñopāyaviniścayasiddhi*, chap. 2, Toh 2218 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 29a2.
232 Nāgārjuna, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, Toh 1800 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 40a5.
233 Nāgārjuna, *Lokātītastava*, Toh 1120 Tengyur, bstod tshogs, *ka*, 69b1.
234 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 150a4.
235 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 50b7.
236 *Treasury of Songs* (*Dohakoṣagīti*), Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 73a1.

237 *Dngos dang dngos med mi zad gtso*. Degé has *zad pa'i gtso* for the last three syllables. The actual clear light and pure illusory body of the stage of union will never disappear and they represent the prime goal of completion-stage practice. They are therefore "unending and prime."

238 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 442 Tengyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 150a4.

239 Ibid., 150a1.

240 *Tshul bzhi*; See glossary entry.

241 *Devendrapariṗcchā*. Found in Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*, chap. 1, 10a2.

242 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 5, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 55b6.

243 One of the four modes of explanation.

244 Maitreya, *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 1:19, Toh 3786 Tengyur, shes phyin, *ka*, 2b5.

245 That is, Tsongkhapa's *Great Exposition of Secret Mantra*.

246 The commentary was composed by Tsongkhapa himself: *Explanation of* [*Nāgabodhi's*] *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana*.

247 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, chap. 6, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 20a5.

248 *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, Toh 44 Kangyur, phal chen, *ka–a*. *Forbearance* is the ability to stay single-pointedly with the Middle Way understanding of emptiness without falling to the extremes of existence and nonexistence.

249 *Yul dang rten*: yogi and consort.

250 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, chap. 1, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 9b1.

251 Although the sentence makes sense as it stands, it reads as if it should say, "In highest yoga tantras there are **many** that do not teach this path of prāṇāyāma." This would mean that "none" (*med*) is a corruption of "many" (*mang*).

252 Possibly found in his *Padminī* commentary to the *Hevajra Tantra* (*Hevajratantrapañjikāpaminī*), Toh 1181 Tengyur, rgyud, *ka*.

253 *Treasury of Songs* (*Dohakoṣagīti*), Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 71b7.

254 The two truths are illusory body and clear light, for which the following is a precursor.

255 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 176b7.

256 Ibid., chap. 59, 264b1.

257 "Smell-eater" (*dri za*). The *gandharva* is an incorporeal celestial musician. Because it shares its characteristic of living off aromas with the intermediate-state being, the term is used as a synonym for the intermediate-state being.

258 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 53b1.

259 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 85b2.

260 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 278a6.

261 *Rang bzhin gyi rtog pa* (*prakṛti vikalpa*).

262 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 33, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 244a5.

263 Ibid., chap. 32, 243a7.

264 Ibid., chap. 68, 276b1.

265 *Saṃputatantra*, Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 74b6.

266 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 145b3.

267 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 217b6.

268 Ibid., 217b2.

269 *Bla ma'i gsung gi 'od zer bstan pa*.

270 *Advayasamatāvijayākhyāvikalpatantra*, Toh 452 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*. See

Gö Lotsāwa, *Blue Annals* (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1974), p. 417.

271 Khön(gön)tön Gepa Kīrti (b. twelfth century), a disciple of Tsurtön Wangi Dorjé.

272 Serdingpa Shönu Ö (b. twelfth century).

273 *Grong 'jug*. Described by Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (*Sun Illuminating the Profound*, 62a4) as "the consciousness entering the household of the sensory organs of another."

274 All four works are by Serdingpa Shönu Ö.

275 Serdingpa Shönu Ö, *Five Stages Complete on One Seat*.

276 All four works are attributed to Serdingpa in the TBRC database.

277 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 278a5.

278 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 6, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 98b6.

279 *Rab mchog, pravara*.

280 Patsap Lotsāwa (b. 1055) was a major figure in the new translations.

281 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 67a1.

282 *Lhag mos*. This makes it a generation-stage practice.

283 This line and the subsequent line cited by Bhavyakīrti come from the introductory remarks of *Illuminating Lamp*, which state that the five stages are the essence of all tantras.

284 This is the third chapter of *Five Stages*. Here and elsewhere the author only refers to these chapter titles without mentioning the book title.

285 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 45a6.

286 Initial yoga, sovereign mandala, and supreme activities mandala.

287 *Bsnyen, sevā*. Here this term is being used as a general description for the six yogas of the completion stage. See glossary *six-branch yoga* for other meanings.

288 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154a5.

289 Abhayākaragupta, *Pañcakramamatiṭīkācandraprabhā*, Toh 1831 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*, 202a6.

290 The verses quoted in Ekādaśasvara's *Secret Ambrosia* (*Amṛtaguhya*) are taken from the *Later Tantra* (154a6–7), where the six yogas are taught and on which he is commenting. The last cited line beginning "in order for wisdom to break . . ." is his own comment. Tsongkhapa is referring to two lines missing from this work that nevertheless appear in the *Later Tantra*.

291 *Ril 'dzin*.

292 *Rjes gzhig*.

293 Len Tsang Tsa, also known as Nyima Cham; dates unknown. See Gö Lotsāwa, *Blue Annals*, p. 365.

294 Line from *Later Tantra*. See explanation of this line in part 4, page 196.

295 Primarily refers to Butön Rinpoché; see Wayman, *Yoga of the Guhyasamājatantra*, p. 168.

296 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 149b6.

297 Puṇḍarīka, *Vimalaprabhā*, chap. 1, Toh 1347 Tengyur, rgyud, *da*, 111a5.

298 Vajrapāṇi, *Lakṣā-bhidhānāduddhṛta*, Toh 1402 Tengyur, rgyud, *ba*, 132a2.

299 The six yogas as posited by the Kālacakra and the six yogas as found in the Guhyasamāja.

300 *Mos spyod kyi sa*; pre-ārya levels. See glossary.

301 *Nāsāgra*/*nāsikāgra*; these are explained in the section on prāṇāyāma on page 160 below.

302 *Yang dag pa'i mtha'*, *bhūtakoṭi*. Often used as a synonym for emptiness in sutra, it refers in tantra to the ultimate-truth clear light.

303 *Clarification of the Meaning of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramavṛttārthavirocana*), Toh 1842 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 188b3.

304 Untraced.

305 Once the elephant is out of the water, it rolls in the dust and has to be put in the water again (Phabongkha, *Compilation*, 50b1).

306 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 60a7.

307 Ibid., 60a1.

308 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 45b1.

309 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 60a1.

310 *Sna rtse*. This term occurs a few times in the text. The word *sna* means "tip" as well as "nose," and it may be tempting to translate the whole term as "tip" because clearly it does not always refer to the nose on the face. However, when it does refer to the actual nose it is described as the "conventional nose-tip" indicating that the actual nose on the face is indicated to some degree within this term. Therefore, however clumsy it may feel, it might be best to leave it as "nose-tip." The lower nose-tip refers to the tips of the male and female genital organs, and the heart nose-tip is the indestructible drop within the heart cakra.

311 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 1a5.

312 Ibid., 1a5.

313 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 278a5.

314 All three works are by Serdingpa Shönu Ö.

315 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277b6.

316 These are: hidden phenomena of desire, which refers to union with consorts; the hidden minds of the appearances, which refers to the four empty states that arise in basic state and on the paths of the three isolations and illusory body; and the hidden illusory conventional truths, which refers to the subtle wind body, the intermediate-state body, and the dream body of the basic sate, as well as to the two types of illusory body on the path.

317 "Family" here refers to the groupings of deities described later in the body isolation chapter.

318 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 84a5.

319 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51a2.

320 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 8, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 90a1.

321 Ibid., chap. 2, 61a6.

322 *Lhag mos*.

323 Lakṣmī and Bhavyakīrti.

324 *Shin tu rnal 'byor*.

325 *Gzung rnam*.

326 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 2, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 66a5.

327 Ibid., 66a3.

328 *Hevajratantra*, chap. 9, Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 10b6.

329 Ibid., 10b7.

330 Ibid., 11b1.

331 According to much ancient Indic literature, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are the three root qualities (*guṇa*) or constituents of all existence.

332 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 9a4.

333 *Commentary on Lūipa's Bhagavan Realization* (*Lūyipābhisamayavṛttikaviśeṣadyota*), Toh 1510 Tengyur, rgyud, *zha*, 301.

334 *Vajra Garland Mandala Procedures* (*Vajrāvalimaṇḍalalopāyikā*), Toh 3140 Tengyur, rgyud, *phu*, 59a1.

335 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 2, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 60b7.

336 Ibid., 61a3.

337 Ibid., 61a4.

338 Ibid., 61a6.

339 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 17, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 142b5.

340 Ibid., 142b7.

341 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 62b5.

342 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 16, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 263a2.

343 Ibid., chap. 28, 241a7.

344 *Rgyun bzhag gi me.*

345 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 17, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 142b6.

346 *Gro ga gcus te bcad pa.* Although the Degé *Compendium of Practice*, from which these lists are taken, has *grog* instead of *gro ga*, the latter is the more likely. Wayman and Wedemeyer follow the former and translate it as "ravine."

347 *Dogs pa med*, "without doubts." The Degé *Compendium of Practice* source for this description of the five wisdoms has *rtog pa med* ("not conceptualizing"), which may be preferable.

348 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 64b3.

349 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100b1.

350 "Here" means in the corresponding section of the *Compendium of Practice*, the source for these twenty divisions.

351 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 150a3.

352 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 18, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 277a6.

353 *'Byung 'gyur.* This refers to physical phenomena created from the four elements, which are regarded as the fundamental building blocks.

354 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154a6.

355 The "commentary" here is Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*, from which Tsongkhapa has quoted, often verbatim, in the above and later paragraphs.

356 Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā* 1:13, Toh 3860 Tengyur, dbu ma, *a*, 11a7.

357 Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośa* 4:13, 4089 Tengyur, mngon pa, *ku*, 11a7.

358 Bhavyakīrti, *Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikāvyākhyāṭīkā*, Toh 1793 Tengyur, rgyud, *ki.*

359 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 15, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 38b1.

360 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154a7.

361 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 12, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 96b1.

362 Ibid., chap. 12, 96b3.

363 *Sems byung.*

364 I have inserted quotation remarks here and elsewhere because although there is no grammatical indication of it in the text, Jé Tsongkhapa is quoting verbatim from *Illuminating Lamp* and glossing accordingly. Therefore "training" is cited text

and "developing" is a gloss. Without the quotation marks, the text is sometimes unwieldy.

365 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 59, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 264b3.

366 Clear light is usually identified with the fourth empty state, known as the "all-empty state." The third empty state is the close-to-attainment appearance (*nyer thob*) and is known as the "greatly empty state." See glossary for a list of these states.

367 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 176b2.

368 I have not determined what "the time of the fire element" (*me'i dus*) refers to. Probably the day is divided according to the four elements.

369 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 6, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 44b2.

370 Ibid., chap. 3, 29a1.

371 Phabongkha says that this is because "center" refers to the center of the cakra at opening of the vajra.

372 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 6, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 43a2.

373 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 9a7.

374 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 20, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 231b4. The cakra of enjoyments is at the throat, the dharma cakra is at the heart, and the emanation cakra is at the navel.

375 Ibid., 231b3.

376 *Mahāmudrātilakatantra*, chap. 19, Toh 420 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 82a7.

377 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 208a5.

378 *Clarification of the Meaning of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramaṭīkākramārthaprakāśikā*), Toh 1842 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 191a1.

379 *Captivating the Mind of the Yogi: Brief Explanation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramārthaṭippaṇīyogimanohara*), Toh 1813 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 188a4.

380 *Mahāmudrātilakatantra*, chap. 6, Toh 420 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 70a6.

381 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, chap. 22, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 206a1.

382 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 20, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 231b5.

383 *Grub sde gcig*. The two minds are the mind of great bliss and the mind focused on emptiness.

384 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 9, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 219b4.

385 This is the wisdom initiation received during an initiation into a highest yoga tantra.

386 Phabongkha explains: "At the time of generating the bliss of descent, all suffering and mental unhappiness, which would oppose it, has to be restrained" (*Compilation of Notes*, 55b7).

387 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 64b1.

388 Ibid., 61a7.

389 *Treasury of Songs* (*Dohakoṣagīti*), Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 72a2.

390 Abhayākaragupta, *Pañcakramamatiṭīkācandraprabhā*, Toh 1831 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*. 186a2.

391 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 67a6.

392 See note 271.

393 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 8a7.

394 As Tsongkhapa says later, "Bhavyakīrti and others talk of eleven types of vajra repetition—that of the six families, wrathful recitation, the three poisons, and the neuter."

395 *Commentary Explaining the Meaning of Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpoddyotanābhisaṃdhiprakāśikāvyākhyāṭīkā*), Toh 1793 Tengyur, rgyud, *ki*, 31a4.
396 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 19, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 221b3.
397 *Saṃvarodayatantra*, chap, 5, Toh 373 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 271b6. Degé has minor variations.
398 *Vajrajñānasamuccaya*, Toh 450, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 10a7.
399 The citation from this tantra is found in Ekādaśasvara, *Secret Ambrosia* (*Mṛtaguhya*), Toh 1823 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 268b6.
400 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 216b4. *Devadatta* (*lhas byin*) means "given by the gods," and *dhanvaṃjaya* (*gzhu las rgyal*) literally means "victory over the bow." David Reigle says this may well be a mistaken reading of the Sanskrit *dhanañjaya* or *dhanaṃjaya*, which is suggested by Tsongkhapa as an alternative below.
401 *Nor las rgyal*, "victory over wealth."
402 *Btang bzung*, also a type of flower.
403 Alaṃkakalaśa, *Extensive Commentary on the Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantraṭīkā*), Toh 1795 Tengyur, rgyud, *gi*, 53b6.
404 Ibid., 50a2. The verses are not actually reproduced in the Degé commentary, just the first words from each line.
405 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 276b1.
406 Ibid., chap. 12, 223a2.
407 Ibid., chap. 6, 216b1.
408 Ibid., chap. 6, 216b1.
409 *Caturdevīparipṛcchātantra*, chap. 1, Toh 446 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 278a6.
410 *Vajramaṇḍalālaṃkāratantra*, Toh 490 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *tha*, not found.
411 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 22, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 234a5.
412 Ibid., 234a5.
413 *Raktayamāritantra*, chap. 19, Toh 475 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ja*, 214b4.
414 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 12, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 122b6.
415 Ibid., chap. 24, 237b4.
416 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 69b2.
417 Ibid., 69b6.
418 As transliterated in Tibetan.
419 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 44a7. Primarily translated according to the Degé version.
420 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 6, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 99a6.
421 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, chap. 3, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 171a3.
422 *Bdud dral ma*, *māradārika*. One of the eight channels developed at the heart.
423 *Zla ba'i cha*, *candrakalā*; *snang ba*, *āloka*; *bsnyen bkur*, *upāsana*; *lkog shal*, *sāsnā*; *mchin pa*, *plīhan*.
424 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 216b4.
425 Ibid., chap. 28, 241b7.
426 *Sum skor*, *trivṛtā*.
427 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 11, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 85a4.
428 Ibid., 85a5.
429 Ibid., 85a6.

430 This and the following references to "statements" refer to the *Compendium of Practice*.
431 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 68b5.
432 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 45a7.
433 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 168b6.
434 *Treasury of Songs* (*Dohakoṣagīti*), Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 73a7.
435 Although the text says "three appearances," the actual quote from the Degé edition has "three consciousnesses." While these terms are sometimes interchangeable, Tsongkhapa refers to them as "consciousnesses" in his explanation.
436 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 79a1.
437 Here Tsongkhapa distinguishes between the winds *carrying* (*'phyar ba byed pa*) the consciousness to an object and the consciousness *traveling* (*bgrod pa*) by way of the winds. All carrying is traveling, but not all traveling is necessarily a carrying of the mind to an object, even though there is no instance of a mind without an object.
438 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 79a7.
439 The brahman leader to whom the call for a mass conversion by way of the Kālacakra initiation was made by the Shambhala emperor Mañjuśrī Yaśas. See part 1 of Khedrup Norsang Gyatso, *Ornament of Stainless Light* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2004).
440 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, chap. 21, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 198b6. Varāhamihira was a renowned sixth-century Indian astronomer.
441 Tsongkhapa is paraphrasing and glossing the text of this commentary. However, the Degé edition seems to be somewhat corrupt.
442 Muniśrībhadra, *Captivating the Mind of the Yogi: Brief Explanation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramārthatippaṇīyogimanohara*), Toh 1813 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 176b3.
443 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 71a2.
444 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Muktitilaka*, Toh 1859 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 49b5.
445 Ibid., chap. 30, 242a6.
446 This is an "hour" equivalent to 22.5 minutes.
447 *Dbyu gu*. "Stick" or "staff" but often seen as a synonym for "hours" (*chu tshod*, *nāḍi*/*ghaṭikā*).
448 *Snang ba ma dmigs pa*.
449 *Saṃvarodayatantra*, Toh 373 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 269b4.
450 Ibid., 269b2.
451 As transliterated in Tibetan. No further information available.
452 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 22, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 234a6.
453 Ibid., 233b2.
454 Ibid., 234a4.
455 Unlike in the Kālacakra tradition, where winds flow regularly in the central channel, even during the basic state of existence.
456 The "bright days" are the waxing fortnight of the lunar cycle, while the waning fortnight is here called the "black days."
457 *Saṃvarodayatantra*, Toh 373 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 264a7.
458 Ibid., 264b5.
459 The text and the Degé edition both have *de*, and I have taken this to be a corruption of *bde*.

460 *Saṃvarodayatantra*, Toh 373 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 270b3.
461 Ibid., 270b6.
462 Ratnarakṣita, *Lotus Commentary to the Saṃvarodaya Tantra* (*Saṃvarodayatantrapadminīpañjikā*), Toh 1420 Tengyur, rgyud, *wa*.
463 *Innate Light: Commentary on the Black Yamāri Tantra* (*Yamāritantrapañjikāsahajāloka*), Toh 1918 Tengyur, rgyud, *bi*, 109b4.
464 *Saṃvarodayatantra*, Toh 373 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 271a1.
465 Ibid., 271a2.
466 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 276b6.
467 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 69a3.
468 Ibid., 70b3.
469 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 60, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 264a5.
470 Ibid., 264a6.
471 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 49a5.
472 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 276b7.
473 *Twenty Verses on the Mahayana* (*Mahāyānaviṃśaka*), Toh 3833 Tengyur, dbu ma, *tsa*, 138a4.
474 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 226b2.
475 Ibid., chap. 68, 276b3.
476 Ibid., 276b3.
477 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, chap. 21, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 196b3.
478 Ekādaśasvara, *Amṛtaguhya*, Toh 1823 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 269a6.
479 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 276b4.
480 Ibid., 276b4.
481 *Mig gi mngon shes*. On this term Phabongkha says, "The great Seventh Dalai Lama has said that in the upper tenets of the sutra tradition, clairvoyance is strictly mental consciousness, but in tantra it can also be sensory consciousness" (*Compilation of Notes*, 58a6).
482 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 217a4. Degé differs: "Ignorance other than this is not seen."
483 *Treasury of Songs* (*Dohakoṣagīti*), Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 73a7.
484 *Kṛṣṇayamāritantra*, Toh 469 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ja*, 166a5. *Āli* is the vowel range, and *kāli* is the consonant range.
485 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 70a3.
486 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 10, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 108b4.
487 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*. Not found in newer translations.
488 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 15, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 76b6.
489 *Vajrahṛdayālaṃkāratantra*, chap. 2, Toh 451 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*, 37a6.
490 *Śrīcakrasaṃvarapañjikā-śūramanojñā*, Toh 1405 rgyud, *ma*, 28b4.
491 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 70b1.
492 The following descriptions of the activities of the three syllables, up to the end of the section, are primarily taken from Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*, as indicated by Tsongkhapa, and text from that work is woven into Tsongkhapa's commentary. Where necessary, quotation marks have been used to mark off verbatim citations.
493 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 71a6.

494 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, chap. 2, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 167b1.
495 Ibid., chap. 11, 193a6.
496 Nāgabodhi, *Presentation of the Guhyasamāja Sādhana* (*Samājasādhanavyavasthāli*), Toh 1809 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*. 131a3.
497 Ibid., 131a3.
498 Ibid., 131a2, but the Degé citation varies considerably both for the question and the following answer.
499 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, chap. 2, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 167b1.
500 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 70a2.
501 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 2, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 38a5.
502 Although not mentioned these verses are from *Explanation of the Intention* and cited in the *Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*), Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 70a3.
503 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 10, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 104b4.
504 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 70b6.
505 The study of grammar, or more specifically Sanskrit grammar. The term is transliterated in the text and so is left untranslated here.
506 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 71b1.
507 Ibid., 70a1.
508 Sākyamitra (authorship refuted by Tsongkhapa), *Caryāsamuccayapradīpaṭīkā*, Toh 1834 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*.
509 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 71b7.
510 *Mañjuśrīparamārthanāmasaṃgīti*, Toh 360 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, 3a3.
511 On page 222.
512 These citations are found in Āryadeva, *Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*), Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, beginning at 72a2.
513 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 72b1. This is not a verbatim citation of the sutra passage as found in the *Compendium of Practice*. The sutra reference is *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Toh 107 Kangyur, mdo sde, *ca*, 133a3–4 and 133b4–6.
514 *Nāda*, the squiggle-like tip extending from the *anusvāra*, the drop symbol used to represent the Sanskrit nasalization.
515 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 3, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 214a2.
516 This and the following quotes are from the earlier *Speaking the Ultimate Names of Mañjuśrī* citation on page 262.
517 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154b2. This quote is referred back to over the course of the entire section.
518 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 43a1.
519 This refers to lines three and four of the *Later Tantra* quote above. The no-lotus version, originally quoted here, runs *gong bu gzugs kyis phyung nas ni/ sna yi rtse mor rab tu brtag*. The other version mentioned by Tsongkhapa runs *padma'i sna rtser phyung nas ni/ thig le gzugs su brtag par bya*.
520 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 67b5.
521 *Amṛtaguhya*, Toh 1823 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 269a1.
522 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 21, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 293a6. As Tsongkhapa points out there are variations in translation. For "made firm" (*brtan byas*) Degé has "melted" (*zhu byas*). Also, "vajra and lotus" is "vajra or lotus." "Application

of syllables on the palate" (*rkan la yi ge'i sbyor ba*) is "bending the palate" (*rkan dgug*). The mantra in Degé *Vajra Garland* and its commentary by Alaṃkakalaśa is *kṣim*. Also, Tsongkhapa does not agree with the commentary interpretation of the last line.

523 *Rdebs*; although the commentary itself has *sdebs*: "placed alongside."
524 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 2, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a2.
525 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 12, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 97a1.
526 This is a line from the *Later Tantra*, cited earlier.
527 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 76b7.
528 *Lamp for All Secrets* (*Sarvaguhyapradipaṭikā*), Toh 1787 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 226a5.
529 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 12, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 97a2.
530 *Amṛtaguhya*, Toh 1823 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 270b3.
531 *Captivating the Mind of the Yogi: Brief Explanation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramārthaṭippaṇīyogimanohara*), Toh 1813 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 171b2.
532 Abhayākaragupta, *Pañcakramamatiṭīkācandraprabhā*, Toh 1831 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*, 187a7.
533 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 24, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 237a3.
534 Ibid., 238a4.
535 Ibid., 232a7.
536 Ibid., 232b2. Differs somewhat from Degé.
537 Ibid., 232b3.
538 Ibid., chap. 6, 218a3.
539 *Sna ni lte ba'i tshad du bzhag*. It is customary for the eyes to be focused on a point sixteen finger widths in front of the nose, which is the distance from the nose to the navel. Degé has "tongue" (*lce*) for "navel" (*lte ba*).
540 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 218a5.
541 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 45b7.
542 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), chap. 12, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 97a2.
543 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 29b1.
544 Ibid., 29b2.
545 Ibid., 29a6.
546 Other editions of these *Root Tantra* lines have "Meditating on body, speech, and mind."
547 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*. The Chak Lotsāwa translation is not available.
548 *Clarification of the Meaning of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramavṛttārthavirocana*), Toh 1842 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 209a3.
549 Staff of life (*srog gi dbyig pa*); the term "life channel" (*srog gi rtsa*) is usually identified with the spinal cord.
550 *Shad*, the perpendicular punctuation mark of Tibetan writing, often used to mark the end of a phrase or line of verse.
551 *Heruka Sādhana in the Tradition of the Great Illusion Tantra* (*Mahāmāyātantrānusāriṇīherukasādhanopāyikā*), Toh 1627 Tengyur, rgyud, *ya*, 270b5.
552 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Muktitilaka*, Toh 1859 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 49a3.
553 *Abhidhana Uttaratantra*, Toh 369 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, not found.

554 Vajraghaṇṭa, *Śrīcakrasaṃvarapañcakrama*, Toh 1433 Tengyur, rgyud, *wa*, 225a2.
555 *Saṃvarodayatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 373 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 273a1.
556 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 276b2.
557 Ibid., 276b3.
558 Ibid.
559 All three are by Serdingpa Shönu Ö.
560 Nāropa, *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*), Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277a4.
561 Ibid., 277a6.
562 The eleventh vowel is *aṃ*, which in Sanskrit and Tibetan script carries the *anusvāra* drop above it.
563 Nāropa, *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*), Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277a4.
564 *Lce rtsa can*, *jihvāmūlīya*, the guttural class.
565 Nāropa, *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*), Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277a3.
566 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 3, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 43b7.
567 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*.
568 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 29b5.
569 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 6, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 136b3.
570 By Tsongkhapa himself: *Extensive Explanation of Tantra Requested by the Four Goddesses*. Kubum Collection, vol. 5, *ca*.
571 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 12, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 222b6.
572 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 70a2.
573 *Secret Ambrosia Instructions: The Graded Path of Vajradhara* (*Mahāvajradharapa thakramopadeśāmṛtaguhya*), Toh 1823 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 269b4.
574 *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* by Nāropa.
575 Cited previously on page 281.
576 Cited previously. Nāropa, *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*), Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 276b3.
577 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 10a6.
578 *Muktitilaka*, Toh 1859, rgyud, *di*, 49a7. In *Drop of Freedom*, the first is forceful wind from both nostrils, the second is gentle wind.
579 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a2.
580 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 7, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 48b1.
581 *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 10b2.
582 Ibid., 10a7.
583 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Muktitilaka*, Toh 1859 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 49b2.
584 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 13, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 112b4.
585 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 78b.
586 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 171a6.
587 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 6, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 43a7.
588 This heading is not listed in previous outlines.
589 The syntax of lines 5–8 is odd, and Tsongkhapa alludes to this below by citing an alternative translation and by giving a paraphrased version of the meaning. I have arranged the lines to reflect this. There are also variations in Degé, which is the Shiwa Ö alternative translation given below.

590 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 216a4.
591 Ibid., 233a3.
592 The Tibetan for "knowing" (*rig pa*) differs from the Tibetan for "reasoning" (*rigs pa*) by one letter.
593 These are the twenty sacred abodes of Heruka. They are located internally within the body and externally within the Indian subcontinent.
594 *Mngon brjod 'bum pa*. Not extant in any of the Kangyurs.
595 *Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 216a6.
596 The parenthetical variations occur in Degé: *rgyas* (*rgyags*, "*pride*"), *rnam par rgyas pa*, *myos*, *ltung* (*btang*, "*sent*"), and *mdza' bo*.
597 *Vajra Garland* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 216a7.
598 Ibid., 216b7.
599 Ibid., 217a4. This citation has been used previously. See the accompanying note 482 there.
600 Ibid., 217a2.
601 Ibid., 225a5.
602 Ibid., 225a6. The Degé edition has a few variations, as does the *Vajra Garland* commentary. I have gone with the citation as quoted by Tsongkhapa (Tashi Lhünpo edition) wherever the rendering seems plausible. The line in brackets is in Degé and commentary and not in this text, but it clearly should be, as Tsongkhapa comments on it a few lines later.
603 Ibid., chap. 6, 218a1.
604 Ibid., chap. 48, 251b2.
605 Ibid., chap. 22, 233b6.
606 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 15, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 226a5.
607 *Visarga* (*rnam bcad*). In Sanskrit grammar, aspiraton of the preceding vowel.
608 *Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 22, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 233a3. Degé has "without obstruction" instead of "that alone."
609 Ibid., chap. 22, 233a6.
610 Ibid., 233a7.
611 Ibid., chap. 22, 233b4.
612 Ibid., 233b5.
613 Ibid., 233b7.
614 Ibid., 234a2.
615 Ibid.
616 *Gtso bo gzhan rnams* can be read either way in Tibetan, but in English both meanings cannot be put in a single rendering. Therefore the rendering in the verse is the first of Tsongkhapa's interpretations.
617 *Vajra Garland* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 22, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 234a4.
618 Ibid., 234a5.
619 Degé has an extra line after the fourth line that echoes this commentary gloss: "Again, existing as conjoined." *Za ma tog* (*karaṇḍa*) is a lidded container whose lid is of equal proportions to the container.
620 *Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 22, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 234a6.

621 The Degé edition has "one month," but the commentary does not mention the duration here. Elsewhere these stanzas have been clarified with the help of the commentary.
622 *Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 22, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 234b1.
623 Ibid., 234b3.
624 This might mean that the two cakras are not individually conjoined.
625 *Vajra Garland* (*Vajramālātantra*), chap. 12, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 222b6.
626 *Mahāmudrātilakatantra*, chap. 8, Toh 420 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 18b4.
627 *Lte ba* has the dual meaning of "navel" and "center."
628 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 217a5.
629 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 12a2.
630 *Heruka Sādhana in the Tradition of the Great Illusion Tantra* (*Mahāmāyātantrānusāriṇiherukasādhanopāyika*), Toh 1627 Tengyur, rgyud, *ya*, 270b6.
631 Disciple of Buddhajñāna, and author of a commentary (Toh 1866) to the above cited *Oral Transmission* composed by Buddhajñāna.
632 *Heruka Sādhana in the Tradition of the Great Illusion Tantra* (*Mahāmāyātantrān usāriṇiherukasādhanopāyika*), Toh 1627 Tengyur, rgyud, *ya*, 271a1.
633 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 12, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 222a1.
634 Ibid., 222a2. The first line, "By divisions of the periods," has been added from the Degé to give continuation.
635 Ibid., 222a3.
636 Ibid., 222a4.
637 Ibid., 222a6. As Tsongkhapa implies, the lines seem confused here. Degé has variations, but they appear equally confused.
638 Ibid., 222a7.
639 The *Vajra Garland* commentary states that the phrase "coming and going" is shorthand and implies the middle term, "abiding."
640 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 167b1.
641 Ibid., 169a2.
642 *Vajramālātantra*, chap 67, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 274b6.
643 Ibid., chap. 22, 234b2.
644 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 10a3.
645 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 218a5.
646 Ibid., chap. 34, 245a2.
647 Ibid., chap. 7, 218b7.
648 Instead of "by the knowledge of the reality of mantra" in the above citation from the *Vajra Garland Tantra*.
649 *Sdom mrtson, yati*. Often used for a monk, in the sense of one who is restrained by vows. Maybe here it refers to the restrained wind.
650 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, chap. 11, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 6b4.
651 *Mahāmudrātilakatantra*, chap. 11, Toh 420 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 74b1.
652 *Saṃputatantra*, Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 136b6.
653 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 30, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 242a5.
654 *Mahāmudrātilakatantra*, chap. 16, Toh 420 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 79b3.

655 Possibly a corruption of *vairambhaka*, one of the winds. I cannot say if it is a root or branch wind. Thanks to Paul Hackett for this suggestion.

656 Jalandhara is one of the twenty-four places sacred to Heruka and also refers to the crown cakra.

657 *Dharmagītikā*, Toh 2374 Tengyur, rgyud, *zi*. Citation untraced.

658 *Mahāmudrātilakatantra*, chap. 16, Toh 420 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 79b3.

659 *Longs spyod kyi rlabs*; I am not familiar with this term.

660 *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, Toh 479 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nya*, 3a7.

661 *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhitantra*, Toh 494 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *tha*, 173a5.

662 *Sde snod gsum gyi tshul*. Not translated into Tibetan, and author unknown. In this passage cited in the *Compendium of Practice* (75a5) there is an extra line between lines three and four: "this I have taught to be the brahman." This verse, together with the extra line is also found in the *Collection of Aphorisms* (*Udānavarga*), Toh 326 Kangyur, mdo sde, *sa*, 252a4.

663 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 76b6.

664 *Rang gi sems kyis snang ba gzung 'dzin gyi rnam rtog*. Tsongkhapa is paraphrasing the citation as it appears in the *Compendium of Practice*. There the sentence begins *rang gi sems kyi snang ba'i gzung 'dzin* and then continues with the variation he mentions below.

665 *Sutra Requested by the Merchant Bhadrapāla* (*Bhadrapālaśreṣṭhiparipṛcchā*), Toh 83 Kangyur, dkon brtsegs, *cha*, 74a3. Cited in *Compendium of Practice*.

666 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 75a2.

667 In other words, an illusory or magically created city.

668 Nāgārjuna, *Yuktiṣaṣṭhikā*, verses 27–28, Toh 3825 Tengyur, dbu ma, *tsa*, 21a7.

669 Candrakīrti, *Commentary on Sixty Reasons* (*Yuktiṣaṣṭhikāvṛtti*), Toh 3864 Tengyur, dbu ma, *ya*, 18b4.

670 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 76b5.

671 *Saṃputatantra*, chap. 4, Toh 381 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 80a4.

672 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 15, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 141a2.

673 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 17, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 193b7.

674 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 77a1.

675 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 59, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 264a5.

676 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 49a1. *Gzhan dbang, kun brtags, yongs grub*. Often called the three characteristics.

677 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 77a6.

678 Ibid., 77b4.

679 Ibid., 77b5.

680 Ibid., 77b3.

681 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 48b3.

682 Ibid., 48b7.

683 Ibid., 49b6.

684 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 77a4.

685 Ibid., 77b3.

686 Ibid., 77b6. I am not sure what "Samantabhadra bodhicitta" (*byang chub kyi sems kun tu bzang po*) refers to.

687 Ibid., 78a1.

688 *Dran med*.

689 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 49a4.
690 Āryadeva, *Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*), Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 79b3.
691 In *The Golden Chariot Commentary on "The Illuminating Sun: Core Teachings on Astrology"* by Minling Lochen Dharma Śrī (chap. 1, p. 13), it says, "One hundred and twenty instants make one long instant. Six long instants make one *lava*. Thirty of these make one *mūhurta*. Alternatively, the blink of an eye is one *lava*."
692 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 79b6.
693 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 48a7.
694 Vīryabhadra, *Pañcakramapañjikāprabhāsārtha*, Toh 1830 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*, 166a4.
695 *Niḥśubha*; rendered as *mi dge ba* and *mi shis pa*.
696 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 48b4.
697 Ibid., 49a1.
698 Nāgabodhi (attr.), *Garland of Jewels* (*Maṇimāla*), Toh 1840 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 86a3.
699 Although the more usual Sanskrit term would seem to be *prakṛti*. The three possible renderings of this term given here are *'byung ba*, *rang bzhin*, and *dngos po*.
700 *Svādhiṣṭhānakramaprabheda*, Toh 1805 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 112b6.
701 *Vajrajñānasamuccaya*, Toh 447 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 282b4.
702 Nāgabodhi, *Karmāntavibhaṅga*, Toh 1811 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 146a1.
703 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 48a5.
704 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 79a4.
705 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 49a2.
706 Said to be the sound of rain falling on the ground.
707 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277a5.
708 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 6, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 217a5.
709 *Bum pa can*, *kumbhin*. Also called "vase yoga."
710 Nāropa, *Clear Compilation of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*), Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 76b2.
711 Ibid., 277a1.
712 This sentence might connect better with the following if it were in the positive, i.e., "have added."
713 Nāgārjuna, chap. 1, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 15b1.
714 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 84b4.
715 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 68, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 274b6.
716 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 3, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 29b2.
717 *Vajrajñānasamuccaya*, Toh 450 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 283a5.
718 Ibid., 283b1.
719 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 49a7.
720 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 89b6.
721 Ibid., chap. 10, 101a3.
722 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 49b2.
723 Vīryabhadra, *Pañcakramapañjikāprabhāsārtha*, Toh 1830 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*, 169b7.
724 Mahāsukha/Padmavajra, *Guhyasiddhi*, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 10a1.
725 *Spros bral*.

726 *Dran med.*
727 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 10, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 104b6.
728 Ibid., 104a7.
729 This heading was introduced at the outset of chapter 22 above.
730 *Bdag la byin brlabs*, *svādhiṣṭhāna*; synonym for illusory body.
731 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51b7.
732 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 84a5.
733 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 12, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 221b3.
734 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 52a7.
735 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 84b2.
736 Āryadeva, *Svādhiṣṭhānakramaprabheda*, Toh 1805 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 112b2. The Degé edition varies in syntax. It reads:

Phenomena are like dreams and illusions,
all Buddhists do declare,
but facing away from self-consecration,
they have not seen the truth.
Ignorant of that possessed of consciousness and wind,
the nature of mind in the aspect of a rainbow
and likened to an illusion,
it is not seen by their wisdom.
They may travel to the perfection of listening
for millions of eons without limit,
but lacking the transmission of the guru,
they will not find self-consecration.
Therefore completely abandon all pride,
and by riding the Vajra Vehicle
with the wish for the fruit of enlightenment,
concentrate on pleasing the guru.

737 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 17, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 200a1.
738 *Gtso bo*; Lakṣmī explains this as referring to Vajradhara.
739 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 52a7.
740 Ibid., 52b2.
741 Āryadeva, *Svādhiṣṭhānakramaprabheda*, Toh 1805 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 112b4.
742 Ibid., 112b7. As with other citations from this work, the syntax of the Degé is different here but not significantly so.
743 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 65, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 271a5.
744 Ibid., chap. 59, 265b1.
745 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, chap. 2, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 168a6. Degé has an extra verse after the third line.
746 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 52b4.
747 *Vajraḍākatantra*, Toh 370 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 4b2.
748 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 84b6.
749 Ibid., 84b4.
750 Ibid., 84b2.
751 A statue is conveniently placed to reflect in a mirror.
752 Ibid., 85a1.

753 *Extensive Commentary to the Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāsamuccayapradīpaṭīkā*), Toh 1834 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*, 272a5. Attributed to Śākyamitra, although this authorship is refuted by Tsongkhapa.

754 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 85a3. There is not sutra by this name in Degé.

755 *Grib ma*, shadow, although a few lines later in the sutra passage cited in the *Compendium of Practice*, "reflection" (*gzugs bsnyan*) is used.

756 Cited in Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 85b4.

757 *Clarification of the Meaning of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramaṭikākramārthaprakāśikā*), Toh 1842 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 191a5.

758 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 17, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 200a1.

759 *'Phen pa*; A method of initiating a mental event in the future by creating in the present the strong intention for it to happen and then "propelling" it into some later time.

760 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 106a5.

761 *Vajrajñānasamuccaya*, Toh 447 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 283a5.

762 Described by Lakṣmī as a synonym for a being of the intermediate state.

763 Nāgabodhi, *Core Teachings Compiled into Stages* (*Kramāntarbhāvanopadeśaprakaraṇa*), Toh 1812 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi* 148a2.

764 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 53a7.

765 Degé has different word order here and has "purity" (*dag pa*) for "joy" (*dga' ba*).

766 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 12, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 108b7.

767 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 527.

768 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 276b5.

769 Ibid., 277a2.

770 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 52b7.

771 Āryadeva, *Svādhiṣṭhānakramaprabheda*, Toh 1805 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 113a4.

772 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277b3.

773 *Sems pa*. Elsewhere *sems byung* (state of mind) was preferred.

774 *De bzhin nyid*, *tathatā*.

775 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 104a4.

776 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 171a4.

777 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi* 104b4. *Bhu su ku*: untranslated Sanskrit term meaning one who only eats (*bhu*), sleeps (*su*), and defecates (*ku*).

778 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 101a7.

779 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 6, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 85b7.

780 Ibid., 86a2.

781 *Karmāvaraṇaviśuddhasūtra*, Toh 218 Kangyur, mdo sde, *tsha*.

782 The confusion arising possibly because *'gro ba* means "beings" and is also the verb "to go."

783 The syntax of this sentence gives the impression that something is omitted, but the meaning is clear from the preceding sentences.

784 *Advayasamatāvijayākhyāvikalpa*, Toh 452 or 453 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*. Untraced.

785 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 171a4.
786 Ibid., 171a5.
787 *Sprul bsgyur*. To transform into various manifestions.
788 In the practice of viewing pure and impure appearances, the daytime is used to "see" various realms and so on, which then appear as pure realms in dreams.
789 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 106a6.
790 *Mngon par byang chub*, *abhisambodhi*; refers to the clear light fourth stage. See glossary entry.
791 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51a2.
792 Maitreya, *Uttaratantra* 1:66, Toh 4024 Tengyur, sems tsam, *phi*, 57b3.
793 Maitreya, *Stages of the Bodhisattva* (*Bodhisattvabhūmi*), Toh 4037 Tengyur, sems tsam, *wi*, 35a4.
794 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 59, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 265a2.
795 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 3, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 52b1.
796 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 1, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 60a7.
797 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 7, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 55a5.
798 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 106a7. This citation, with some variance in one line, is from *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* and is cited again below. Viśvāvasu (*sna tshogs nor bu*) may well just mean "jewel of many colors," but there was a person of this name in Indic literature who had mastered the art of illusion.
799 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 14a6.
800 Ibid., 14a7. Degé (14a6–b1) has this and the previous citation as verse and consequently with a little variation. Vitapāda's commentary on *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* (130a4) has "reasoning" (*rigs pa*) for "knowledge" (*rig pa*), for example.
801 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Oral Teachings of Mañjuśrī* (*Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*), Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 15a5.
802 Ibid., 15b1.
803 Asaṅga, *Yogācārabhūmi*, Toh 4035, sems tsam, *tshi*, 28b2.
804 *Bhagavan Realization* (*Bhagavadabhisamaya*), Toh 1427 Tengyur, rgyud, *wa*, 192b4.
805 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 278a1.
806 Ibid., 277b7.
807 Ibid.
808 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 4, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 53b7.
809 Ibid., 54a3.
810 Ibid., 54b1.
811 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 7, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 88a7.
812 Cited in Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 7, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 88b1.
813 Ibid., 88b2.
814 *Clarification of the Meaning of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramavṛttārthavirocana*), Toh 1842 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 191a7.
815 *Commentary on the Difficult Points of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramapañjikā*).
816 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 15, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 125b4.
817 Although Tsongkhapa follows *Illuminating Lamp* (137b4) very closely in the

explanation of this *Root Tantra* verse, it is not exactly verbatim, which is why I have not indented these two paragraphs apart as a citation.

818 *Mi slob pa'i zung 'jug*. This union is equivalent to stage of Vajradhara, where no further practice is required. Preceding this is the practice stage of union.

819 *Vajrajñānasamuccaya*, Toh 450 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 284a3.

820 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 4, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 54a1.

821 Ibid., 55a1.

822 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 7, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 88b4.

823 *Caturdevīparipṛcchātantra*, Toh 446 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 178a6.

824 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 11, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 108a7.

825 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 11, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 80b4.

826 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 5, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 56b1.

827 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 15, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 84a3.

828 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 10, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 68b6.

829 The five kinds of disciples are the utpala flower-like, white lotus-like, lotus-like, sandalwood-like, and jewel-like. These are described in *Illuminating Lamp* (3a7). The utpala-like are skilled at remembering what they have learned but will quickly forget it. The white lotus-like are learned but cannot teach. The lotus-like have faith and compassion but nothing stays in their minds. The sandalwood-like are of little learning, proud, talkative, have no foundation and cannot retain anything. The jewel-like have pure ethics, are learned, intelligent, and skilled at teaching.

830 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 1, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 94b2. Each of the six buddhas enters a different meditative concentration and recites a verse of "bodhicitta" describing the meditation. The verses detail characteristics of the clear light as the object of the bliss consciousness.

831 This tantra verse is cited in the *Compendium of Practice*, 89b3, where it is not identified.

832 Āryadeva, *Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*), chap. 7, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 89b6.

833 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 50b6.

834 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 2, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 95a4.

835 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 7, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 90a2.

836 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 50a3.

837 Nāgabodhi in his (disputed) commentary to *Five Stages* states that "vajra of space" refers to the "palace of dharmadhātu" (227b2). Lakṣmī says that "like sesame in a sesame pod" means placed in such a way that they do not hinder or obstruct each other (236b2).

838 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 50a4. Sutra reference: *Lalitavistarasūtra*, Toh 95, mdo sde, *kha*, 125a4.

839 Ibid., 50b1.

840 Ibid., 50b2.

841 *'Og min stug po bkod pa*. *Akaniṣṭha* is the highest heaven in the form realm.

842 *Dbang phyug brgyad*. These are the eight qualities: enlightened body, speech, and mind, miraculous powers, being everywhere, place, being granted all desires, and enlightened activities (see Dungkar, *Dictionary*, p. 1527). Later Tsongkhapa distinguishes these from the eight Īśvara qualities (*dbang phyug gi yon tan brgyad*).

843 *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, Toh 479 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nya*, 3b4.

844 Nāgabodhi, *Karmāntavibhaṅga*, Toh 1811 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 146b3.
845 Ibid., 146b4.
846 Ibid., 146b5.
847 *Brgyal ba ltar*. But Degé has *rgyal ba ltar*, meaning "like the conqueror." Degé also has "pure like the *realm* (*dhātu*, *dbyings*) of the sky" as opposed to "core" (*dkyil*).
848 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Muktitilaka*, Toh 1859 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 50b7.
849 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 34b1. Tilottamā (*thig le mchog ma*) is a goddess well known in Hindu mythology. She is also listed among the thirteen courtesans and as a consort of the gandharvas.
850 *Hevajratantra*, chap. 5, Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 25a1.
851 Nāgabodhi, *Samājasādhanavyavasthāli*, Toh 1809 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 123b2.
852 Alaṃkakalaśa, *Extensive Commentary on the Vajra Garland Tantra* (*Vajramālātantraṭīkā*), Toh 1795 Tengyur, rgyud, *gi*, 2a4.
853 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51a2.
854 The reasons for the development of the illusory body not being necessary, as described previously, are that the illusory body is the tantra equivalent of the limitless accumulation of merit on the Perfection Vehicle and here the tenth-level practitioner would have already accumulated this.
855 Elaborated activities, unelaborated activities, and completely unelaborated activities. These are discussed in a later chapter. The "reasons given previously" are that the accumulation of merit these activities allow for has already been accomplished by the tenth-level bodhisattva.
856 Some non-Buddhist practitioners who seek to eliminate attachment refuse to speak because without desire you would not speak, and desire is attachment.
857 *Vinayavibhaṅga*, Toh 3 Kangyur, 'dul ba, *ca–nya*.
858 *Vajraśekharatantra*, Toh 480 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nya*, 146b2.
859 Ibid., 148a2.
860 Ibid., 148a6.
861 The *Vajraśekhara Tantra* belongs to the class of yoga tantra and therefore is not highest yoga tantra.
862 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443, Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154b3.
863 In the phrase *mkha' snang*, *mkha'* means "space" and *snang* means "light," or "appearance." The dual meaning of *snang ba* may have given rise to the uncertainty concerning this term.
864 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 12, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 95a6.
865 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 104a5.
866 Ibid., chap. 7, 88b3.
867 *Dri za* here refers to the intermediate-state being.
868 Nāgabodhi, *Karmāntavibhaṅga*, Toh 1811 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 146a6.
869 Not extant in any of the Kangyurs.
870 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 8, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 90a5.
871 Ibid., 90a6.
872 The preceding paragraph, except for one or two words of explanation, is verbatim from Āryadeva's *Compendium of Practice*.
873 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 2, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 212a3.
874 *Sandhivyākaraṇa*, Toh 444 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 160a1.

875 Śākyamitra (attr.), *Extensive Commentary to the Compendium of Practice* (*Caryāsamuccayapradīpaṭikā*), Toh 1834 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*, 178a3.

876 Ibid., 178a4. Mentions here and below of "Joyous up to Cloud of Dharma" and "Joyous and so on" refer to the ten bodhisattva levels, or *bhūmis*, to which an eleventh or twelfth is sometimes added for the resultant state of buddhahood. These begin with entry in the ārya state at the third of five paths, the path of seeing. Tsongkhapa is here trying to discern how the thirteen levels mentioned in *Explanation of the Intention* correlate to the well-known five paths and ten levels. The stage of belief refers to the first two pre-ārya paths of accumulation and preparation, where the perception of the ultimate reality is still at a conceptual level.

877 *Clarification of the Meaning of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramaṭīkākramārthaprakāśikā*), Toh 1842 Tengyur, rgyud, *chi*, 241b1.

878 *Tshangs pa'i gnas*; refers to meditation on the states of love, compassion, joy, and equanimity, also known as the four immeasurable meditations.

879 Abhayākaragupta, *Pañcakramamatiṭīkācandraprabhā*, Toh 1831 Tengyur, rgyud, *ci*, 198a5.

880 *Abhidhana Uttaratantra*, Toh 369 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, 326b6. (With variations.)

881 *Gnas*, *pīṭha*.

882 Abhayākaragupta, *Mañjarī*, Toh 1198 Tengyur, rgyud, *cha*, 33b1.

883 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 15, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 125b4.

884 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 11, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 81b1.

885 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51a2.

886 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 8, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 90b1.

887 Ibid., 91a2.

888 *Sems pa*; which Tsongkhapa glosses as "thought" (*bsam pa*) in the following citation. Degé has *sems dpa'* (*sattva*).

889 *Paramādyatantra*, Toh 487 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ta*, 151a5.

890 Not translated into Tibetan.

891 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51a2.

892 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 8, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 91a6.

893 In other words, Great Vehicle practitioners take much longer than a Lower Vehicle practitioner to achieve the path of seeing because of spending so much time accumulating merit in the earlier paths, but once they get there, their qualities are far vaster and they have also cut the causes for rebirth through the force of karma and affliction.

894 *Stong pa nyid gzhi gcig tu gyur pa*, both here and in Degé. However, later Tsongkhapa glosses this more than once with the phrase "the four empty states becoming one" (*stong pa bzhi gcig tu gyur pa*). *Gzhi* means "foundation," and *bzhi*, with one letter changed, means "four." Nonetheless, the essential meaning is not changed.

895 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 8, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 91b1.

896 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 9, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 104a7. The word order of this citation has been adjusted to fit with Degé, as this corresponds to the *Illuminating Lamp* commentary.

897 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 9, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 104a7.

898 See page 463.

899 *Rang bzhin*, but both Degé and the commentary by Lakṣmī have "form" (*gzugs*), which reads better.
900 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 4, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 55a3.
901 Ibid., 55b3.
902 *Zung du 'jug pa* or *zung 'jug* for short. This is the Tibetan translation for *yuganaddhā*, the Sanskrit term used for the fifth stage of union.
903 Buddhaśrījñāna, *Dvikramatattvabhāvanā*, Toh 1853 Tengyur, rgyud, *di*, 6b7.
904 Nāropa, *Pañcakramasaṃgrahaprakāśa*, Toh 2333 Tengyur, rgyud, *zhi*, 277a6.
905 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 138a6.
906 Ibid., chap. 9, 70a1.
907 From a previous citation from the *Compendium of Practice* on page 493.
908 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 81a4.
909 Ibid., 14b5.
910 Ibid., chap. 17, 200a1.
911 *Twenty-Verse Ritual on the Guhyasamāja Mandala* (*Guhyasamājamaṇḍalopāyikāviṃśatividhi*), Toh 1810 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 136a6.
912 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 5, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 56b3.
913 *Twenty-Verse Ritual on the Guhyasamāja Mandala* (*Guhyasamājamaṇḍalopāyikāviṃśatividhi*), Toh 1810 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*. 136a4.
914 Ibid., 136a6.
915 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 8, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi* 92b6.
916 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154b5.
917 This paragraph up to here is verbatim from Candrakīrti's *Illuminating Lamp*.
918 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 12, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 97b7.
919 Ibid., 95b5.
920 *Tshul rnam pa bzhi*; these four are lineage, renunciation, definitive words, and cause. See Wedemeyer, *Vajrayāna and Its Doubles*, p. 325n13.
921 This paragraph is both gloss and paraphrase of the *Compendium of Practice*, hence its slightly stilted style.
922 These are the fruits of living an ascetic lifestyle with regard to food, clothing, and so on. These are dealt with in detail in Dungkar, *Dictionary*, p. 1578.
923 *Vajraḍākatantra*, chap. 32, Toh 370 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 70a2.
924 Degé has an extra line here: *Goms pa'i stobs ni rdzogs pa na*, "When the power of meditation is complete."
925 *Kun tu 'gro ba*; explained in Bhāvabhadra's commentary (22a7) to this tantra as referring to Vajradhara.
926 *Vajraḍākatantra*, chap. 1, Toh 370 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *kha*, 4a3.
927 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a1.
928 This citation, which begins "Holding desire, anger, and ignorance," is cited later.
929 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a3.
930 To despise the five aggregates.
931 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 17, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 185a6.
932 Disparaging women.
933 *'Dod yon lnga*; literally, "five qualities of desire." Each of the five types of objects engaged by the sense consciousnesses possesses qualities that can lead to desire.
934 *Mahāmāyūrī, Queen of Mantra Knowledge* (*Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī*), Toh 559

Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *pha*, 116a6. Cited in *Compendium of Practice*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 95b2.

935 The following, including some of the citations, is at times verbatim from the *Compendium of Practice* and sometimes paraphrase.

936 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 95b4.

937 *Paramādyatantra*, Toh 487 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ta*, 162a4.

938 Here Tsongkhapa paraphrases the Ratnakuṭa sutra rather than reproducing the long quote Āryadeva provides. *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 95b5.

939 Cited in Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 96a2.

940 *Saṃvaratantra*, Toh 366 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, 152b3.

941 *Sutra Requested by the Householder Ugra* (*Gṛhapati-ugraparipṛcchā*), Toh 63, dkon brtsegs, *nga*, 264b5.

942 Causal motivation and contemporaneous motivation are *rgyu'i kun slong* and *dus kyi kun slong*. The first is the motivating state of mind that precipitates the action, and the second is the motivating state of mind during the action.

943 *Mtshungs ldan*. Every primary mind will have secondary states of mind concomitant with it.

944 *Hevajratantra*, chap. 2, Toh 417 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 16a4.

945 *Vajramālātantra*, chap. 59, Toh 445 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 265a6.

946 As noted above, this was already added to the translation of this citation.

947 Dharmakīrti, *Treatise of Valid Cognition* (*Pramāṇavārttika*) 2:76, Toh 4210 Tengyur, tshad ma, *ce*, 110a7. This is the section where Dharmakīrti is establishing past and future lives. Here he is dismissing the arguments that mental states such as attachment arise directly from various bodily conditions, such as physical vigor.

948 Ibid. 2:77, 110b1.

949 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 95b4.

950 Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3862, dbu ma, *'a*, 228a2.

951 Nāgārjuna, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, Toh 1800 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 38b7.

952 Ibid., 41a3.

953 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 94b6.

954 Tsongkhapa, *Extensive Explanation of Vajra Wisdom Compendium* (*Ye shes rdo rje kun las gtus pa'i rgya cher bshad pa*), Shol par khang Collection, vol. *ca*, 12a4.

955 In other words, such a position—virtue being the cause of enlightenment—already exists in the lower vehicles, so what is so special about it?

956 Emblic myrobalan (*skyu ru ra*; *amla/amlaki*): *Emblica officinalis*, normally a bitter fruit.

957 *Later Samputa Tantra* (*Samputamahātantratilaka*), Toh 382 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ga*, 183b6.

958 *Spos kyi glang po*, aromatic elephant. Musk is produced from the insides of a musk deer, but *glang po* means elephant or bull. The phrase also means "a powerful elephant."

959 As transliterated in Tibetan. *Ketaka/ketaki/kewra/kevda*; *Pandanus odoratissimus*, tree whose flowers produce an essential oil.

960 *Tattvasiddhiprakaraṇa*, Toh 3708 Tengyur, rgyud, *tsu*, 27a1.

961 *Sgyu ma lta bu'i mos pa.*

962 *Yul dang rten gnyis 'khor gsum mi dmigs pa.* The basis (*rten*) is the yogi under these circumstances, and the object (*yul*) is the mudrā consort, real or imagined. Agent, action, and object are the "three spheres" (*'khor gsum*).

963 *Treasury of Songs* (*Dohakoṣagīti*), Toh 2224 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 76a2.

964 Śāntarakṣita, *Tattvasiddhiprakaraṇa*, Toh 3708 Tengyur, rgyud, *tsu*, 27b5.

965 Degé has "argument" (*rtsod pa*).

966 Mahāsukha, *Guhyasiddhi*, Toh 2217 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 3b7.

967 Anaṅgavajra, *Prājñopāyaviniścayasiddhi*, chap. 5, Toh 2218 Tengyur, rgyud, *wi*, 36a3. For line seven Degé has "no place" (*gnas med*) instead of "improper" (*gnas min*); also line ten reads "the innate conceptualization is eclipsed."

968 *Guhyasamājatantra*, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 97a6 and 100a3.

969 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 7, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 75a3.

970 *Guhyasamājatantra*, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 104a2.

971 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 9, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 68b4.

972 *Guhyasamājatantra*, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 132b5.

973 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 173b2.

974 On the term *bhusuku*, see note 777.

975 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 151b1.

976 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51a3.

977 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 70b1.

978 Ibid., 51a2.

979 Ibid., 144a2.

980 Nāgārjuna, *Piṇḍīkṛtasādhana*, Toh 1796 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 1a4.

981 *Commentary on the Difficult Points of the Five Stages* (*Pañcakramapañjikā*), Toh 1841, rgyud, *chi*, 186b1. With variations.

982 The full text from *Five Stages* is cited below.

983 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 174b3.

984 *Brtul zhugs kyi spyod pa*, *vrata*. Observance of special modes of behavior as part of religious training.

985 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 94a7.

986 Nāgārjuna, *Pañcakrama*, chap. 2, Toh 1802 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 51a5.

987 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 95b2, and Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 11, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 58b6.

988 As discussed later, this Sanskrit term means "play" or "sport." It is transliterated in the Tibetan, both here and in the *Compendium of Practice*, though Tsongkhapa uses the letter *a* rather than *ā* at the beginning.

989 *Dbugs dbyung*, *āśvāsa*; this term means encouragement, succor, comfort, consolation, relief, assurance, reviving, and so on.

990 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 96a7.

991 *Saṃvaratantra*, Toh 366 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, 192b1.

992 The nine expressions of dance are described in Dungkar's *Dictionary* and elsewhere as being a subset of the sixty-four arts; they are divided into three physical, three verbal, and three mental expressions.

993 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 96b1.

994 Ibid., 96b5.

995 Cited in Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 100a7.

996 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a1.

997 Ibid., 100a2.

998 *Rang gi lha*. The Institute of Tibetan Classics text has *rang gi rang bzhin* (nature of oneself), but the former follows the Degé *Illuminating Lamp*, from which this gloss comes, and is in keeping with the root-text verse.

999 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 7, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 48a4. The definitive meaning of "eating alms" was described previously in the vajra-repetition chapter on page 288. It is also glossed as "not reciting in the manner of eating alms."

1000 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a4.

1001 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 48a6.

1002 Ibid., 48a7.

1003 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 7, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a4.

1004 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 7, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 49a1.

1005 *Dbang po rten bcas*. The supporting bases here are probably the aggregates and elements mentioned previously. The visual sense power, for example, is said to possess form but is not the actual eye. The eye, however, can be said to be a support or base (*rten*) for the visual sense power. Here too, because the eye comprises the elements and the form aggregate, it can be said to be the supporting base. Moreover "enhance" (*rgyas pa*) means to nourish in the way that food nourishes the body.

1006 *Guhyasamājatantra*, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 100a7.

1007 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 12, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 91b3.

1008 Dharmakīrti, *Treatise of Valid Cognition* (*Pramāṇavārttika*) 2:40, Toh 4210 Tengyur, tshad ma, *ce*, 109a3.

1009 *Mtshan 'dzin gyi spros pa*. "Signs" usually refers to appearances of true existence. These result in the proliferation of elaboration.

1010 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 95a1.

1011 *Saṃvaratantra*, chap. 6, Toh 366 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, 159b6.

1012 The three stories of the earthen house are upward from the earth not downward into the ground, as could be read from the Tibetan.

1013 *Guhyasamājatantra*, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 137b5.

1014 The translation text has *rang tshul*; the Degé root text has *rang gzugs*, and the Degé commentary has *ngang tshul*, but they all suggest a transformation using the visual apparatus of masks and costume.

1015 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 173b2.

1016 This phrase is from the root tantra and probably refers to the three vajras of the enlightened body, speech, and mind applied to the yogi.

1017 *Srog dang rtsa las byung*. This could mean "arising from *prāṇa* (*srog*) and from the channels (*rtsa*)." However, in keeping with the Chak translation cited immediately afterward, I have taken *srog* to mean "life" and *rtsa* to be an abbreviation of *rtsa ba* meaning "root." The Degé *Compendium of Practice*, also attributed to Lochen Rinchen Sangpo as translator, has *srog dang rtsol las byung*, which could be translated as "arising from *prāṇāyāma*."

1018 *Grub pa*, as compared with *ngos grub* (*siddhi*) in the version below.

1019 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 97a3.
1020 *Saṃvaratantra*, chap. 5, Toh 366 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, 155b6.
1021 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 97a3.
1022 Ibid., 97a4.
1023 Wherever possible, Tibetan translators translated Sanskrit proper names into Tibetan. "Śaśī," however, was not translated and is left as a transliteration in most translations with the exception of Chak's, where it is rendered as *ri bong can ma*.
1024 The Degé *Compendium of Practice* has Kāmalatā (*'dod pa'i lcug ma*). Otherwise I am indebted to Wedemeyer for many of these Sanskrit renderings.
1025 *'Jig pa*. Degé has *'jigs pa* (frightens).
1026 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 136b3.
1027 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 97b4.
1028 Here Tsongkhapa closely follows the text of this tantra, which is quoted in the *Compendium of Practice*. Wholly verbatim passages are marked with quotes.
1029 *Rtsa bskul ba*. The Degé *Compendium of Practice* has "*nāli*" as the transliteration. Wayman's reproduction of the Sanskrit of this passage (pp. 349–50) reads *nāḍi*. Both concur with Tsongkhapa's rendering of "*rtsa*," as *nāli* seems to be a corruption of *nāla*, which has a similar meaning to *nāḍi*.
1030 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 98b4.
1031 The Degé *Compendium of Practice* has "crown of the head *of* every Tathāgata," but both editions of the translation text omit the genitive particle. Wayman, translating from the Sanskrit, makes this phrase the reason for the process beginning at the crown of the head.
1032 *Bstan pa*. Degé has *brtan pa*, "to make firm."
1033 *Chos 'byung*. Often translated as "source," but Tsongkhapa splits this term, as it is found in the *Compendium of Practice*, with "swiftly" (*myur du*) to render it as a phrase.
1034 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 96a6.
1035 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 136b3.
1036 *Gsang ba lnga'i de kho na nyid*. These are the same as the "activities by way of the five aspects of reality" mentioned above.
1037 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 136b7.
1038 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 9, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 97b4.
1039 Ibid., chap. 10, 100b7. This is presented as a verbatim citation. It differs a little from Degé.
1040 *Sme sha can, khaṭṭikī*. This is taken from Wedemeyer (*Vajrayāna and Its Doubles*, p. 341, note), who has taken the meaning from the Sanskrit, although the Tibetan means "a low-caste woman," "one whose skin is blemished," and the like.
1041 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 197a5.
1042 Ibid., 174a2.
1043 *Later Exposition Tantra* (*Abhidhana Uttaratantra*), chap. 4, Toh 369 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ka*, 253b4.
1044 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 103b7.
1045 Untraced.
1046 Candrakīrti, *Pradipodyotana*, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 36a6.

1047 *Guhyasamājatantra*, chap. 16, Toh 442 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 138a3.

1048 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 154a6.

1049 Ibid., 184a5.

1050 The Tibetan text has *sutana*, but this has been changed at the suggestion of David Reigle, who says, "We cannot make the neuter noun ending in *-ana* from the past passive participle *supta*. Nor can we make it from *sut*."

1051 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 45a3.

1052 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 104a7.

1053 *Vajrahṛdayālaṃkāratantra*, Toh 451 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *cha*, 56a1–6b6.

1054 Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, chap. 11, Toh 1803 Tengyur, rgyud, *ngi*, 105a7.

1055 Avalokitavrata, *Light of Wisdom Commentary* (*Prajñāpradīpaṭīkā*), Toh 3859 Tengyur, dbu ma *wa*, 122b6.

1056 Candrakīrti, *Illuminating Lamp* (*Pradīpodyotana*), Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 72b2.

1057 *Lamp for All Secrets* (*Sarvaguhyapradīpaṭīkā*), Toh 1787 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 229a5.

1058 Candrakīrti, *Pradīpodyotana*, chap. 1, Toh 1785 Tengyur, rgyud, *ha*, 2b2.

1059 *Vajrajñānasamuccaya*, chap. 2, Toh 450 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 285b1.

1060 *Caturdevīparipṛcchātantra*, chap. 4, Toh 446 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 280a7.

1061 *Vajrapañjaratantra*, chap. 14, Toh 419 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *nga*, 65a7.

1062 *Guhyasamāja Uttaratantra*, Toh 443 Kangyur, rgyud 'bum, *ca*, 154a4.

1063 *Dag pa gnyis ldan*. The purity of being free from the obscurations of affliction and the obscurations to omniscience.

1064 Or, Shönu Sönam, a principal student of Butön Rinpoché and tantra teacher to Tsongkhapa.

1065 Rendawa Shönu Lodrö (1349–1412), a principal teacher of Tsongkhapa.

1066 The five major treatises or areas of study in the monastic curriculum were epistemology based on *Treatise on Valid Cognition*, the perfection of wisdom based on *Ornament of Realization*, Madhyamaka studies, *Treasury of Abhidharma*, and Vinaya studies. A master of the four difficult treatises would be learned in the first three and one of the latter two.

Glossary

actual clear light (*don gyi 'od gsal*). The fourth of the fifth stages. When third-stage illusory body withdraws into illustrative clear light, the illusory body itself disappears, but the remaining clear light becomes the *actual* clear light. Its nature is the very subtle mind focused on the ultimate truth of phenomena, and its function is to serve as the substantial cause for the exalted-wisdom dharmakāya.

all-at-once method, gradual method (*cig car gyis*, *rim gyis*). *All-at-once* refers to advanced tantric practices that seem to negate or omit any preceding preparatory practices, such as the generation stage. The *gradual method* is a sequential process to advanced tantric states. As Tsongkhapa points out, there are divergent views on what these two terms actually refer to.

appearance (*snang ba*). *See* three appearances/consciousnesses.

apprehending (*'dzin pa*, *dhāraṇā*). Generally, this term refers to the prime function of any consciousness apprehending its own object. The branch of *apprehending* is the fourth yoga of six yogas that comprise an alternative categorization of the completion stage. In terms of the five stages, it is a synonym for clear light. *See also* six-branch yoga.

approach (*bsnyen pa*, *sevā*). Elsewhere this term is an "approach," or "approximation" in the sense of getting close to the deity. The Sanskrit also has the meaning of homage, worship, devotion, and so on, or "service" in the sense of devoted attendance to a master or deity. Wayman translates it this way. In indigenous Tibetan (usually without the nominative *pa*), it can refer to a qualifying meditation retreat on the generation stage. In this work it is mostly used as one of the four branches of approach and accomplishment. *See also* four branches.

ārya (*'phags pa*). Generally, *ārya* refers to the levels (*bhūmi*) of attainment, or to those who have attained these levels, characterized by a direct and non-conceptual understanding of the ultimate truth in meditation. Becoming an ārya, attaining the first of the ten levels, and reaching the path of seeing all happen simultaneously. Specifically, in this work the "Ārya tradition" is the Guhyasamāja tradition that primarily follows Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples.

basic state (*gzhi dus*). The ordinary state of existence, whose natural processes of birth, death, and intermediate state are mirrored and used in tantric practice to advance on the path.

bearers of mantra knowledge (*rig 'dzin, vidyādhara*). Tantric adepts who have achieved high levels of attainment.

bhaga. Sanskrit term, transliterated in Tibetan, referring to the female sexual organ.

bliss and emptiness (*bde stong*). Bliss is generated through a number of completion-stage practices, all of which should involve bringing the winds into the central channel. This bliss consciousness is then brought to focus upon emptiness, the ultimate mode of existence of all phenomena. These two become as one, like "water poured into water." This is the union of bliss and emptiness and is one of the key features distinguishing tantra from sutra.

bodhicitta (*byang chub kyi sems*). Normally, this is the mind that wishes to attain the highest state of enlightenment for the sake of all beings and is essential to both sutra and tantra Mahayana practices. The same term is used in tantric language to refer to the white seminal fluid that primarily resides at the crown of the head during life but can be manipulated to descend through the channels to produce bliss.

body isolation (*lus dben*). A completion-stage practice included in the first of the five stages in which the ordinary view of bodily constituents is replaced with a divine view in which these constituents appear as the play of bliss and emptiness in the form of deities. This is distinguished from generation-stage practice because this practice arises from the practice of dissolving the winds in the central channel. *See also* five stages.

cakra (*rtsa 'khor*). Channels that carry the winds are grouped together at certain "vital points" within the body, such as the heart, navel, and throat, often in a form resembling the spokes of a wheel or petals of a lotus. The Tibetan term means "channel wheels."

caṇḍālī (*gtum mo*). The inner heat or fire generated by the force of the winds entering the central channel from the practice of penetrating the vital points of the cakras.

channel (*rtsa, nāḍī*). Subtle material avenues for wind and for subtle drops of blood and semen within the body. Each cakra has channels branching off from it. The three main channels are the central channel ([*ava*]*dhūtī*) and the left (*lalanā*) and right (*rasanā*) channels on either side of it. Completion-stage practice manipulates the flow of winds in these channels.

channel knot (*rtsa mdud*). The central channel is blocked or knotted above and below the cakras stationed upon it. The practice of bringing the winds into the central channel loosens these knots.

channel wheel. *See* cakra.

clear light (*'od gsal, prabasvara*). Fourth of the five stages; also the very sub-

tle nature of the mind that dawns at the moment of death and that can be actualized during life through yogic practices. *See also* actual clear light; five stages; illustrative clear light; three appearances/consciousnesses.

close-to-attainment (*nyer thob*). This is the third appearance that is experienced naturally during the withdrawal process at death. It is characterized by darkness and is close to the experience of the death clear light, hence its name. *See also* three appearances/consciousnesses.

conceptual yoga (*rtog pa'i rnal 'byor*). Generally refers to the generation stage where conceptualization is used to "create" divine forms, as opposed to the more nonconceptual completion stage. Within the generation stage, it refers to the more advanced practices of subtle yoga and drop yoga.

conjoined winds (*kha sbyor*). Usually a process of bringing the upper life-sustaining wind and lower evacuative winds together at the navel.

consciousness transference (*'pho ba, saṃkrānti*). The process of forcibly separating the consciousness, or primordial body, from the coarse body in order to take another life without going through the death and intermediate-state process. Also refers to the more commonly known practice of ensuring, with a lama's help, migration into a pure land at the time of death.

consort (*rig ma / phyag rgya ma*). *See* karma consort; wisdom consort.

core teachings (*man ngag*). Phabongkha (*Compilation of Notes*, 64b3) says that, generally, to think of "the core teachings of the lama" as merely oral teachings passed on from one to another is not correct; rather you should think that explaining the entire doctrine according to the thought of the Buddha is a core teaching. In that sense, the works of Nāgārjuna and his disciples are core teachings. Often overlaps with "instructions" (*gdams ngag*).

dhūtī. Central channel. *See also* channel.

disappearing through purification (*dag nas 'gro*). Often refers to the practice of a visualized deity form disappearing into emptiness or to the impure illusory body disappearing into the clear light.

drops (*thig le, bindu/tilaka*). Tiny matter-based phenomena that occur naturally within the body, or are "created" through completion-stage meditation, and that are located at particular points in the body. The *indestructible drop* is always present, located in the heart cakra, and consists of the subtle wind and subtle mind. Other drops are visualized at various "tips" within the body.

entering the household (*grong 'jug, purapraveśa*). The advance tantric practice of forcing the consciousness to enter the corpse or living body of another being.

exalted-wisdom body (*ye shes kyi sku, jñānakāya*). Refers to the body of the deity created on the completion stage from the creation of the illusory body onward as opposed to the mantra body visualized on the generation stage. Not to be confused with the exalted-wisdom dharmakāya (*jñānadharmakāya*), which is the consciousness of the enlightened state.

five stages (*rim pa lnga, pañcakrama*). A way of dividing the completion stage of tantra into substages.

1. *body and speech isolation*: When using the set of five, body isolation and speech isolation are grouped together. Speech isolation includes vajra repetition (*rdo rje zlas pa, vajrajāpa*) and prāṇāyāma (*srog rtsol*).
2. *mind isolation*: Also known as *focus on the mind* (*sems la dmigs pa*)
3. *illusory body*: Also known as *self-consecration* (*bdag la byin brlabs, svādhiṣṭhāna*), where "self" refers to the subtle wind imputed as self and "consecrate" means to transform (Phabongkha, *Compilation of Notes*, 126)
4. *actual clear light*: Also known as *mastery* (*mngon par byang chub, abhisambodhi*)
5. *union*: Includes the practice and no-further-practice stages of union

four branches (*yan lag bzhi*). A categorization of the developments on the paths of the generation and completion stages: Approach (*bsnyen*), close accomplishment (*nyer grub*), accomplishment (*sgrub pa*), great accomplishment (*sgrub chen*). Each set of four occurs on both stages.

four empty states (*stong bzhi*). These are names given to the arising of the three appearances and the clear light. The empty state (*stong pa*), the very empty state (*shin tu stong pa*), the greatly empty state (*stong pa chen po*), and the all-empty state, or clear light (*thams cad stong pa*). In some traditions they equate to the four joys.

four feats (*las bzhi*). Pacification, increase, power, and wrathfulness. These are powers gained through tantric practice and are used to remove obstacles and hindrances for self and others.

four joys (*dga' ba bzhi*). These are experienced when the melted bodhicitta passes through the four main cakras. When descending they are experienced as described below. When ascending, the order of the cakras is reversed.

1. *joy*: Experienced at the cakra of great bliss at the crown
2. *supreme joy*: Experienced at the cakra of enjoyment at the throat
3. *joy of absence*: Experienced at the dharma cakra at the heart
4. *innate joy*: Experienced at the emanation cakra at the navel

four modes (*tshul bzhi*). Often coupled with the six sides, these are four particular modes, or types, of tantric text. The work is said to be sealed by these four modes and cannot be fully understood without their recognition. The four are open mode, general or shared mode, hidden or exclusive mode, and ultimate mode.

gradual method. *See* all-at-once method, gradual method.

great bliss. Although bliss can occur on the sutra path, and even in the basic state before entering the path, this is not *great bliss*, which has to be caused by bringing the winds in the central channel. Great bliss is brought to focus on emptiness to form the "union of bliss and emptiness." It is also known as *innate bliss*.

held-as-a-whole and subsequent dissolutions (*ril por 'dzin pa, rjes gzhig*). Two dissolution processes beginning from the extremities and proceeding toward the heart; likened to vapor evaporating on a mirror. "Whole" is glossed as being the body; "held" means being held by the emptiness, or clear light, into which the body dissolves. Subsequent dissolution is dissolution in which the outer environment dissolves first, followed by the subsequent dissolution of the body.

holding to true existence (*bden 'dzin*). The fundamental ignorance that acts as a cause for the continuation of the cycle of suffering and whose characteristic is the mistaken perception that the phenomenon held by the consciousness exists in its own right, from its own side, without depending on other factors.

illusory body (*sgyu lus, māyākāya*). Third of the five stages; a form created during completion-stage practices that is composed of the subtle winds and able to separate itself out from the ordinary body. In the aspect of the deity, it is the substantial cause for the resultant form body at the enlightened stage.

illustrative clear light (*dpe'i 'od gsal*). The actualization of clear light before the illusory body has been developed; can be generated from the practice of body isolation onward. *See also* actual clear light.

imagination / strong belief (*lhag par mos pa*). The deliberate belief that the visualized deity is real. This is a practice of the generation stage and contrasts with the illusory-body deity of the completion stage, which is actually created from the subtle wind and mind and not conceived through the power of imagination.

increase (of appearance) (*mched pa*). The second of the three appearances as they occur during the death process; it is characterized by a reddish sunset appearance. *See also* three appearances/consciousnesses.

individual withdrawal (*so sor sdud pa, pratyāhāra*). The first of the six yogas and identified with body isolation from the five stages. Elsewhere in this work it refers to the process of the elements and the mind withdrawing into the drop at the heart during the death process.

innate (*lhan skyes*). On this term Phabongkha (*Compilation of Notes*, 57b7) says, "Subtle mind is innate mind, and the bliss experienced by that mind is innate bliss. Generally, never being separated from the mindstream throughout samsara, whether good or bad, is the meaning of *innate*. To create the completion stage, you must create innate bliss."

innate exalted wisdom (of bliss and emptiness in union) (*lhan skyes kyi ye shes*). The wisdom arising from the subtle consciousness characterized by great bliss focused upon the ultimate truth of phenomena.

intermediate state (*bar do, antarābhava*). The state of existence between death and the start of the next rebirth. The being of the intermediate state has a body composed of subtle wind. In advanced completion-stage practice, this state is replaced by the illusory body in the form of a deity.

intrinsic conceptual minds (*rang bzhin gyi rtog pa, prakṛti vikalpa*). Conceptual states of mind that arise and dissolve by the circumstance of the winds stirring and sinking at birth and death respectively. These are also just referred to as *intrinsic natures* (*rang bzhin, prakṛti*), which indicates that these states of mind are innate and are made manifest by the movement of the winds at birth. In this sense there seems to be some resonance with the non-Buddhist Sāṃkhya philosophy for whom the *prakṛti* is a primal source, but that may be a case of a single term with distinct applications.

intrinsic natures (*rang bzhin, prakṛti*). *See* intrinsic conceptual minds.

karma consort (*las kyi phyag rgya, karmamudrā*). Flesh and blood consort. There are two explanations for the sense of *karma* as used in this term: that the consort is a woman whose form is produced by karma, and that *karma* here refers to the activity or function of the consort in creating great bliss. The term *mudrā* (seal) refers to the consort's ability to seal the yogi with great bliss.

knowable phenomena / knowing consciousness (*shes bya/shes pa*). If something exists, it can be known. Therefore, *knowable phenomena* is a synonym of *existence*. At every instance consciousness knows its own object; there is no consciousness without an object. Thus, *consciousness* is a synonym of *knowing consciousness*.

limit of perfection (*yang dag mtha'*). In this work this term refers to the fourth-stage actual clear light.

māra (*bdud*). An obstruction to spiritual progress, sometimes personified as the tempter Māra. There are four types: the aggregates, mental afflictions, death, and *devaputra*. The last, literally "son of the gods," is the personification of intoxication with desire-realm pleasures.

mastery (*mngon par byang chub, abhisambodhi*). The term *byang chub* often refers to enlightenment or buddhahood and is usually short for *rdzogs pa'i byang chub* ("complete enlightenment"). The fundamental meaning of *byang chub* alone, however, is to perfect, or to master, and it is used to describe the mastery of a particular science such as medicine. In this work *mngon par byang chub* is primarily a synonym of fourth-stage clear light and is rendered as "mastery." The same term is found in generation-stage practices when referring to the visualized transformation of the practitioner into the five buddhas by way of seed syllables, and in such instances, I have used "enlightenment" to distinguish it from the completion-stage practice and to indicate that such a transformation, although imagined, is a transformation into the forms of enlightened deities.

meditative absorption (*bsam gtan, dhyāna*). This term is mostly used in this work to describe the second of the six yogas, which equates with body isolation from the five stages. Generally, it refers to an advanced state of meditative concentration, often associated with the form and formless realms of

existence. Birth in these realms is determined by an absorption into form as an antidote to desire, and into formlessness as an antidote to attachement to form. *See also* six-branch yoga.

meditative equipoise (*mnyam gzhag, samāhita*). Often used to describe an advanced meditative session, often involving absorption in emptiness, and is contrasted with "post-meditation."

meditative union (*snyoms 'jugs*). Refers to the union between deity and consort.

mental quiescence (*gzhi gnas, śamatha*). The advanced meditative state of single-pointed focus of the mind.

mind isolation (*sems dben, cittaviveka*). The second of the five stages but third of the three isolations. This completion-stage practice correlates to the death-withdrawal practice of the generation stage, only here the withdrawal of the winds into the central channel and into the drop at the heart actually occurs.

mixing (*bsre ba*). The completion-stage practice of taking basic-state experiences and "mixing" them with the three enlightened bodies in order to bring one closer to the resultant state. There are three categories of experience—sleep, death, and meditative experience—each divided into three, thereby making nine mixings.

mucilinda. One of the 108 winds.

mudrā (*phyag rgya*). (1) Hand gestures made to illustrate particular states of mind such as wrathfulness and inner activities such as making offerings; (2) a consort, in the sense of she who seals the bliss of the yogi by way of meditative union. *See also* karma consort; wisdom consort.

nonabiding nirvana (*mi gnas pa'i myang 'das*). The resultant state of a fully enlightened buddha that dwells in neither samsara nor nirvana.

nonapprehending compassion (*dmigs med snying rje*). Great compassion focused on all living beings but grasped by the wisdom that characterizes these beings as not existing inherently.

pacification. *See* four feats.

penetrative focusing (*gnad du bsnun pa*). The concentrated mental activity in tantra of focusing on specific points within the body, usually the centers of cakras, with the purpose of manipulating the winds.

prāṇāyāma (*srog rtsol*). Three main types are discussed in this work: Meditation upon a mantra drop at the heart, meditation upon the light drop at the tip of the nose, and meditation upon the substance drop at the secret-area. Along with vajra repetition, prāṇāyāma makes up the stage of speech isolation in the completion stage. It is also the name of one of the six yogas of the alternate categorization of the completion stage.

pratyekabuddha (*rang rgyal*). Non-Mahayana disciples of the Buddha who, unlike śrāvaka disciples, prefer to meditate on their own, leading some tenets to classify them as more intelligent than the śrāvakas.

protection wheel (*srung 'khor*). Performed at the beginning of generation-stage sādhana, this practice involves the mental creation of a wheel or circle around the meditator and his or her environment consisting of protective elements such as fire, indestructible vajras, or various wrathful figures.

recollection (*rjes su dran pa, anusmṛti*). The fifth of the six yogas that make up an alternative categorization of the completion stage. Recollection is included in the stage of union from the five stages. *See also* six-branch yoga.

samādhi (*ting nge 'dzin*). Like *meditative absorption* this term refers to a concentrated state of mind, and these two are sometimes synonymous. *Samādhi*, however, has a wider range of application, to the point of there being specific samādhis named according to their particular power. In this work the term often refers to the sixth of the six yogas, which equates with the stage of union from the five stages. *See also* six-branch yoga.

sambhogakāya (*longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku*). One of the three or four bodies of an enlightened being; literally, the "enjoyment body," it is "enjoyed" by those who have attained the first bodhisattva ārya level.

self-consecration (*bdag la byin brlabs, svādhiṣṭhāna*). Synonymous with illusory body. *See also* five stages.

seven features (of union) (*kha sbyor yan lag bdun*). This is a synonym for Vajradhara, the Buddha as the teacher of tantras, and refers to seven constantly present characteristics:

1. *body of complete enjoyment*: Being endowed with the thirty-two marks and eighty features of complete enlightenment
2. *union*: Being in meditative union with consort
3. *great bliss*: Experiencing great bliss through the winds entering, abiding, and dissolving in the dhūtī
4. *no inherent nature*: Understanding the non-inherent nature of the mind dwelling in pure bliss
5. *unbroken continuum*: Never entering nirvana but remaining until the end of samsara
6. *filled with compassion*: Never straying from working for others by way of nonapprehending compassion
7. *unending*: An endless and continuous stream of enlightened activity

siddha (*grub thob*). An adept who has gained mastery over certain practices.

siddhi (*dngos grub*). Supernatural abilities gained from tantric practice. Usually eight types of ordinary siddhi are mentioned, and the *supreme siddhi* refers to the attainment of enlightenment.

single-thought (practice) (*dran pa gcig pa*). Tsongkhapa discusses the meaning of this term in the section "The way to meditate on the generation stage" beginning on page 87. Phabongkha (*Compilation of Notes*, 47a4) also says that single-thought yoga occurs in the coarse generation stage and refers to

focusing solely on the deity to the exclusion of all else, or to recollecting that you and the deity are of one nature.

six-branch yoga (*sbyor ba yan lag drug*, *ṣaḍaṅgayoga*). In the Kālacakra the completion stage is taught by way of these six yogas and not by way of the five stages. The same six names appear in the *Guhyasamāja Later Tantra* but not in the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra* itself. Much discussion, therefore, is given over to the identification of these six and how they are incorporated into the five stages. The six are: individual withdrawal, meditative absorption, prāṇāyāma, apprehending, recollection, and samādhi.

six sides (*mtha' drug*). Along with the four modes these are six "gateways" for the complete understanding of a tantric text that is sealed by these six. The first two are text understood literally and text understood nonliterally. An example of the first is "holding the vajra" understood as the literal holding of the five-pronged deity implement. An example of the second would be the same phrase understood as fifth-stage union. Here one text has two "sides" of meaning. The third and fourth refers to text using unrelated language that has to be understood as something else and text that does not do this. The first is for intelligent students, and an example is the phrase from the *Guhyasamāja Root Tantra* "young, with wide eyes" referring to the stage of union. The second is for lesser students of tantra and does not use unrelated language. An example would be "engaged in the meditative equipoise of the samādhi of the vajra of no-self," which refers to clear light. In these two, one meaning is expressed with two "sides" of text. The fifth is factual or instructional text, such as instructions on how to draw mandalas. The sixth is text exclusive to the tathāgatas that has no literal meaning and is not found in grammar treatises or conventionally known. Examples would be the name Koṭākhya as an epithet of Vajrapāṇi or the special names given to the ten winds in the *Illusory Saṃvara Tantra*. These last two are differentiated by the type of language they use and so depend upon "sides" of both text and meaning. Here the term *six sides* refers to six different "gateways" to the understanding of the intended meaning. The above explanation of these six has been translated from Phüntsok's *Lord of the Stars Excellent Explanation*.

sources (*skye mched*). The six sensory and mental consciousnesses are produced from the inner sources of their corresponding six sensory and mental organs connecting with the outer sources of the six sensory and mental objects.

sovereign mandala (*dkyil 'khor rgyal mchog*). The main resident and residence mandala of the generation stage.

speech isolation (*ngag dben*, *vāgviveka*). Including body isolation this practice makes up the first of the five stages and the second of the three isolations. *See also* five stages.

śrāvaka (*nyan thos*). Literally, "listeners." Non-Mahayana disciples of the Buddha who, as opposed to the pratyekabuddha disciples, relied heavily upon the Buddha's words.

stage of belief (*mos spyod kyi sa*). The first two of the five paths common to both vehicles. On the path of accumulation and the path of preparation, the understanding of emptiness, or the nature of reality, is based upon solid reasoning, but it is not a direct cognition free of conceptuality. Therefore there remains an element of belief, but not in the sense of blind faith.

tantric activities (*spyod pa*). The topic of part 10 of this volume. See page 15 of the introduction.

tattva (*de nyid*). This term can refer to the ultimate truth, when it is often translated as "suchness." At other times it means "principle" or "reality." In this work the term is used in the section describing the "reality" of mantra and the winds, and I have translated it as such. However, elsewhere in this work, it is found in citations from Indic tantric works and on its own refers to bliss and emptiness combined. In such cases, I have left it as *tattva*.

three appearances/consciousnesses (*snang ba gsum / rnam shes gsum*). Appearance (*snang ba*), increase (*mched pa*) of appearance, and close-to-attainment (*nyer thob*), or culmination of appearance. During the normal death process, the four elements withdraw, followed by the gradual withdrawal of the mind itself, during which these appearances occur. In tantra this natural process is brought into the path and even initiated through meditative techniques before death occurs. This is done in order to make use of the subtle mind of clear light that dawns after the third appearance. In their aspects of appearing like the sky at various times, they are known as "appearances." As entities, however, they are mental consciousnesses. They are indicative of their respective sets of intrinsic conceptual minds and accompanying winds. These three appearances recur in reverse order when the mind leaves the clear light and enters the intermediate state.

three pot-like faults (*snod kyi skyon gsum*). Not listening, like an upturned pot; perverting the message, like a dirty pot; not retaining, like a leaky pot.

three samādhis (*ting nge 'dzin gsum*). The three main meditative concentrations of the generation stage: initial yoga, sovereign mandala, and sovereign activities mandala.

three-stacked sattva (*sems pa gsum brtsegs pa*). Meditative process involving three main visualizations. The *samādhi* sattva is usually a deity syllable or a drop and is usually at the heart. The pledge (*samaya*) sattva is normally oneself as a deity. The wisdom (*jñāna*) sattva is the actual deity absorbed from without or resident in the heart.

union (*zung 'jug, yuganaddha*). The stage of union is the last of the five stages and refers to the union of the illusory body and the clear light. This is known as the union of the two truths. *See also* five stages.

vajra jewel (*nor bu*). Euphemism for male sex organ, often just referred to as *jewel*.

vajra repetition (*rdo rje bzlas pa*). Included in the stage of speech isolation, this is the exclusive form of mantra repetition on the completion stage. It is not vocalized chanting but an identification of the tones of the movement of the inner breath with the three fundamental syllables.

vidyādhara (*rig 'dzin*). *See* bearers of mantra knowledge.

vital points (*gnad*). Specific points within the body, usually at the very center of the cakras. In completion-stage practice these points are concentrated upon in order to bring the winds there for the purposes of withdrawing the mind, loosening the channel knots, and so on.

wind (*rlung*, *vāyu*). Externally as one of the four elements, wind is mobility and described as "that which is light and moving." Internally it refers to the five root and five secondary winds that move through the channels. There is a case for translating this term as "energy," but "wind" is prevalent. Beginning with the five root winds, the ten winds are:

1. *life-sustaining* (*srog 'dzin*, *prāṇa*): Seated at the heart, ruled by Akṣobhya, of the water element, flows through both nostrils, colored white, of the vajra family, associated with goddess Māmakī
2. *evacuative* (*thur sel*, *apāna*): Seated in genital area, ruled by Ratnasambhava, of the earth element, flows though both nostrils, colored yellow, of the jewel family, associated with goddess Locanā
3. *fire-accompanying/accompanying* (*me mnyam/myam gnas*, *samāna*): Seated at the navel, ruled by Amoghasiddhi, of the air element, flows through left nostril, colored green-yellow, of the activity family, associated with goddess Tārā
4. *upward flowing* (*gyen rgyu*, *udāna*): Seated at the throat, ruled by Amitābha, of the fire element, flows through right nostril, colored red, of the lotus family, associated with goddess Pāṇḍaravāsinī
5. *pervading* (*khyab byed*, *vyāna*): Seated throughout the body, ruled by Vairocana, flows through the nostrils at death, no specific color although asserted as blue-green by some, not associated with a family or goddess
6. *moving* (*rgyu ba*, *udvāha*): Also known as snake (*nāga*) wind
7. *roving* (*rnam par rgyu ba*, *vivāha*): Also known as turtle (*kūrma*) wind
8. *perfectly flowing* (*yang dag par rgyu ba*, *saṃvāha*): Also known as lizard (*kṛkalāsa*) wind
9. *intensely flowing* (*rab tu rgyu*, *pravāha*): Also known as *devadatta* wind
10. *definitively flowing* (*nges par rgyu ba*, *nirvāha*): Also known as *dhanaṃjaya* or *dhanvanjaya* wind

wisdom consort (*ye shes kyi phyag rgya*, *jñānamudrā*). Visualized consort. The term *mudrā* (seal) refers to the consort's ability to seal the yogi with great bliss. *See also* karma consort.

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About the Contributors

GAVIN KILTY has been a full-time translator for the Institute of Tibetan Classics since 2001. Before that he lived in Dharamsala, India, for fourteen years, where he spent eight years training in the traditional Geluk monastic curriculum through the medium of class and debate at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics. He also teaches Tibetan language courses in India, Nepal, and elsewhere, and is a translation reviewer for the organization 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha.

THUPTEN JINPA was trained as a monk at the Shartse college of Ganden Monastic University and holds a Ph.D. in religious studies from Cambridge University. He has been the principal English-language translator for His Holiness the Dalai Lama for more than two decades and has translated and edited numerous bestselling books by the Dalai Lama. Jinpa's own works include *Self, Reality and Reason in Tibetan Philosophy* and several volumes in *The Library of Tibetan Classics*. An adjuct professor at McGill University and a scholar at the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE) at Stanford University, Jinpa is currently the president of the Institute of Tibetan Classics in Montreal, where he lives with his wife and two daughters.



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