

Classics of the Early Sakya, Volume I

THE YOGINI'S EYE

Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra

Volume 1: Systemization and Interpretation



by Sonam Tsemo

as supplemented with the writings of the later Sakya lineage

translated by Ngor Thartse Khenpo Sonam Gyatso (Hiroshi Sonami)
and Wayne Verrill

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To the memory of Nai-yuine Ding

Translator's Introduction

Classics of the Early Sakya Series

The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra, Volume 1: Systemization and Interpretation by Sonam Tsemo (1142-1182) introduces a new series of translations called *Classics of the Early Sakya*. This series will include the major writings on the *Hevajra Tantra* cycle by the first three of the Five Founders of the Sakya lineage: Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158), Sonam Tsemo, and Drakpa Gyaltsen (1147-1216).¹ These writings will comprehensively explain the layperson's understanding and practice of Buddhist Tantra prior to the introduction of monasticism into the Sakya lineage by Sakya Pandita (1182-1251/52), the fourth of the Five Founders, and his Indian teacher Shakyashribhadra.² The three early Sakyapas were responsible for the introduction into Tibet of many major cycles of tantric practice that are still major practices today including Chakrasamvara, Vajrayogini, and Twenty-One Taras. Yet most important of all to the early Sakyapas was the *Hevajra Tantra* cycle of practice, which is reflected in the first five volumes of this new series.

This first volume in the series, *The Yogini's Eye*, has been since its composition and still is the introductory text for the study of the Sakya tantra system. In this capacity, *The Yogini's Eye* is included in volume 1 of the *Lamdre Tshokshe (Path and Result Teachings for the Assembly) Tradition of the Sakya Lamdre* (volume 21 of the *Lamdre Literature Series*)³ as the most basic introduction to the Lamdre system and in volume 1 of the Tantra Explanation section, which is volume 27 of the thirty-two-volume *Gyude Kuntu (Compendium of All Tantra Cycles)*,⁴ as the most comprehensive and systematic introduction to all Buddhist Tantra, as practiced by the Sakya as well as other lineages.

The second volume in the series will be *The Precious Tree: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra, Volume 2: Direct Knowledge through Practice*,⁵ written by Sonam Tsemo's younger brother, Drakpa Gyaltsen, completing the task that Sonam Tsemo initiated but was unable to complete during his lifetime. This second book and its most extensive commentary, written by Konchok Lhundrup (1497-1547), comprise the entire volume 2 of the *Lamdre Tshokshe* (volume 22 of the *Lamdre Literature Series*), and the entire volume 28 of the *Gyude Kuntu*.

The third volume in the series will initiate the complete word-by-word explanations of the source *Tantras*, beginning with Drakpa Gyaltsen's commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra* itself,⁶ together with annotations by Jamyang Loter Wangpo, comprising most of volume 3 of the *Lamdre Tshokshe* (volume 23 of the *Lamdre Literature Series*), and volume 29 of the *Gyude Kuntu*, as well as references to other Sakya commentaries, including that of Sonam Tsemo.

The fourth volume in the series will be Drakpa Gyaltsen's commentary on the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*.⁷

The fifth volume in the series will be Sonam Tsemo's commentary on the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*.⁸

Substantial work has already been done on most of the forthcoming volumes, which will be completed in as timely a fashion as possible if health, personal funds, and life span of the present translator allow. Please note that all volumes in this series will be available to all sincere readers without restriction, in order to fulfill the bodhisattva vow to be of most benefit to all sentient beings without presumption or prejudice, and thereby access will not be limited to a privileged few.

Sonam Tsemo, Author of Volume 1

Only a small amount of information is known about the life of Sonam Tsemo, the author of *The Yogini's Eye*. The best compilation of biographical material has been prepared by Ronald Davidson.⁹ Sonam Tsemo's life may best be summarized in three time periods. The first period from his birth in 1142 to age sixteen and the passing away of his father in 1158 was devoted to the study of the *Tantras* special to his father and the nascent Sakya lineage, particularly the *Hevajra Tantra* and *Chakrasamvara Tantra* cycles. After the death of his father (and also older brother who had been studying in India), Sonam Tsemo went to study at the Kadampa Center of Sangpu Neutok with Chapa Chokyi Senge from 1158 until Chapa's death in 1169¹⁰, when Sonam Tsemo was age twenty-seven. In the third period of his life from 1169 until his own death in 1182 at age forty, Sonam Tsemo returned to Sakya and composed most of his books and other writings, as he worked to expand on his father's legacy.

Other major writings by Sonam Tsemo include the first complete Sakya manuals for the *Hevajra* empowerment and practice, the *Treatise on Gateway to the Dharma*,¹¹ and a commentary on Shantideva's *Entrance into the Bodhisattva Practice*.¹²

The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction

to Buddhist Tantra

As far as is presently known, *The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra* was the first truly comprehensive book ever written on this subject. No book as comprehensive was ever known to have been written in Sanskrit in India. Four examples of relatively short books written in Tibetan covering some of the same topics are known to predate *The Yogini's Eye*. In the Sakya lineage, Ngari Salway Nyingpo wrote a book entitled *The Lamp that Illuminates the Vehicles Common to Tantra*,¹³ although the actual contents of this book are not known. In the introduction to his *Word Commentary on the Hevajra Tantra*,¹⁴ some of the topics in chapters 8 and 9 of *The Yogini's Eye* are discussed. Sonam Tsemo's father, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo, wrote relatively short texts called *Entry into and Departure along the Path*¹⁵ and *Brief General Introduction to Tantra*.¹⁶ There was said to appear be little difference between these and Ngari Salway Nyingpo's compositions.¹⁷ The content of Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's *Brief General Introduction* formed the basis for part 1, chapters 1-4 and 6 of *The Yogini's Eye* where the subject matter is greatly expanded. No material pertinent to part 1, chapters 5 and 7, nor parts 2 and 3, appear in Sachen Kunga Nyingpo's short book.

A book with the same title as on Sonam Tsemo's initial title page, *General Introduction to Tantra*, is attributed to the early translator and *Guhyasamaja Tantra* lineage teacher Khukpa Lhetse,¹⁸ an eleventh-century predecessor of Sonam Tsemo, but is unfortunately not presently known to still exist, if it ever did.¹⁹

Some doubt may be engendered as to the actual title of this present book by Sonam Tsemo, as *The Yogini's Eye* does not appear on the title page of the Tibetan edition, nor for that matter does the subtitle *Comprehensive Introduction*. The actual title appears at the end of the book in the first line of the epilogue,²⁰ a not unusual occurrence for a Tibetan book.

The Yogini's Eye was not finished by the time of Sonam Tsemo's death in 1182. The major part 4 on the content of the three continuities with detailed explanations of direct knowledge of the practice of tantra may not have been started, and part 3 may not have been finished. The colophon states that Sakya Pandita was responsible for the final editing, adding clarification, and restructuring the chapters.²¹ When the final edition was presented to his uncle and teacher, Drakpa Gyaltsen, the latter is said to have been very pleased at the result and, in recognition, composed the four lines of verse included at the end of the book.²² This must have occurred prior to Drakpa Gyaltsen's death in 1216; and

likely this occurred by 1200, as after studying under his uncle during his youth, he left Sakya in that year to begin study with scholars of the Sangpu tradition (as had his other uncle, the book's author). This was followed by meeting Shakyashribhadra in 1204, beginning studies with him in 1205, and taking full monastic ordination in 1208.²³

In the over eight hundred years since it was written, *The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra* has served as the standard Sakya introductory textbook for the study and practice of Tantra. This is apparent by the large number of study guides to the book written over the intervening centuries by the foremost Sakya scholars of their time. *The Yogini's Eye* is the first of four basic texts that were required for study and memorization at Ngor monastery.²⁴ The same was true at other Sakya institutions in Khams, for in the twentieth century, Dezhung Anjam Jamyang Kunga Tenpay Gyaltsen (1885-1952) studied the *The Yogini's Eye* with Khenpo Shenga, along with the other three of the four basic texts, then in 1934 taught the same, at the request of his teacher Gaton Ngawang Legpa, to Dezhung Rinpoche (the one who later become famous in the United States) along with others at Tharlam monastery in Kham. A commentary was written by Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal (1880s to mid-1950s), another learned monk of Dezhung monastery (near Litang in Kham) who was also a close disciple of both Gaton Ngawang Lekpa and Khenpo Shenga. His commentary was carved onto wood blocks at Dezhung and then transported to the printing house in Derge. It was also said to have been printed at Dzongsar.²⁵ Auspiciously, this commentary has just recently appeared in the vast holdings of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC), where it was also initially misidentified.

The first specific reference in English to Sonam Tsemo's *The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra* that the present translator is aware of is in a translation by Jeffrey Hopkins published in 1977, where it is cited and referenced as a foil for Tsongkhapa's interpretations.²⁶ In the years since, a number of articles in obscure academic journals have made reference to *The Yogini's Eye*, especially part 3 on the methods of interpretation of the Tantras. In just the last few years, a number of new books have made extensive reference to Sonam Tsemo's *The Yogini's Eye* and his other major writings.²⁷ The downside is that none of them present Sonam Tsemo's contributions in a complete and comprehensive manner; that absence has now been corrected, at least for *The Yogini's Eye*.

Early Sakya Transmission of the Tantras

In chapter 9 at the end of the book, Sonam Tsemo defends against claims of imitating others (specifically the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* lineage of Nagarjuna) by extolling the two sources for his *Hevajra Tantra* tradition, Virwapa (Virupa) and Dombi Heruka, continuing through subsequent lineage members until being combined into a single lineage by the Drokmi Translator Shakya Yeshe (997-1077), then continuing through to his father, Sachen Kunga Nyingpo. Regarding this lineage, Sonam Tsemo says that “now today, when giving explanations of all the *Hevajra* Cycle Tantras translated by the Great Translator, one becomes as if the compiler of (all) Tantras,” and that his instruction method based on these two combined lineages gives an “explanation of Tantra” that “is an instruction method for all Guhyamantra.” Sonam Tsemo implies that this cannot be accomplished by the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* lineage of Nagarjuna, which is “understood through just sadhana instructions and analyzing writings of panditas,” without the benefit of special lineage instructions.

The above combined *Hevajra Tantra* Cycle lineages include the *Vajra Panjara* and *Samputa Tantras* as the uncommon and common commentary Tantras, respectively. However, as explained in chapter 6, an additional eight Tantras transmitted through the Drokmi Translator are also to be included within the *Hevajra* Cycle as continuation Tantras: five *Tilaka Tantras* and three *Arali Tantras*. The five *Tilaka Tantras* came into the Sakya lineage from Prajnagupta (eleventh century), also known as the infamous Red Acharya.²⁸ The three *Arali Tantras* are said to have originated with an unidentified Singala yogini in Virupa’s lineage.²⁹

Through the Mal Translator Lodro Drakpa³⁰ came the Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra transmissions of *Chakrasamvara Tantra*,³¹ Naro Khechari Vajrayogini,³² *Homage to the Twenty-One Taras*,³³ etc., and the Yoga Tantra transmissions of the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*, *Sarvadurgati Parishodhana Tantra*, etc.

Through Bari Lotsawa Rinchen Drukpa (1040-1112, abbot of Sakya from 1102-1110) came the transmissions of the *Collection of One Hundred Sadhanas*, the practices of Arapachana Manjushri, Achala, Amoghapasha, Vajrapani, etc., and numerous other Ritual and Conduct Tantras.³⁴

In addition to these new transmissions, the early Sakya also continued the old transmission of Vajrakilaya.³⁵

Many of the most widespread and popular practices of Tibetan Buddhism today originally were conveyed through the early Sakya. Major exceptions however from their corpus of writings were the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*,

Vajrabhairava and Black and Red Yamantaka Tantras,³⁶ and *Kalachakra Tantra*.³⁷ The early Sakya had received the *Guhyasamaja* transmissions, including a sadhana,³⁸ but the absence of any writings or practice manuals in the *Sakya Kabum* by the early Sakya indicates that they did not regard the practice of *Guhyasamaja* to be as significant as others. Nevertheless, Sonam Tsemo quotes the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* and its commentarial literature extensively in *The Yogini's Eye*, so the importance of the *Guhyasamaja* to the development of Buddhist Tantra was thoroughly recognized. As was the case with the *Kalachakra*, the *Guhyasamaja* transmission that continued in the Sakya lineage down to the present day is that given to Sakya Pandita by Shakyashribhadra.³⁹ The focus on the *Hevajra* and *Chakrasamvara* Female Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras as the major Tantra cycles is another of the defining features of the early Sakya.

Controversies Addressed by The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra

Sonam Tsemo's extensive use of the objection and reply literary device,⁴⁰ the nature of many of the stated objections about the *Hevajra Tantra* Cycle system, and the general content of *The Yogini's Eye* make clear that Sonam Tsemo felt called upon to defend the Sakya *Hevajra Tantra* tradition. The question is who was he defending against?

The nature of the objections primarily come from two directions: (1) unidentified objector(s) who believes that Guhyamantrayana is inferior to Paramitayana, or at least no better, and (2) adherents to the Arya (Noble) tradition of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, whose tradition they believe was at least in part imitated by Sonam Tsemo.

(1) The first point to understanding the historical context of *The Yogini's Eye* is that despite the prominence of the Guhyamantra in present-day Tibetan Buddhism and emphasis on the practice of the Tantras as the origin of today's still-existing lineages, the revival of Buddhism in Tibet in the tenth and eleventh centuries was driven by very strong monastic traditions with a far larger number of institutions, that for the most part limited orthodox Buddhism to the Shravakayana, Pratyekabuddhayana, and Bodhisattvayana,⁴¹ with Guhyamantrayana considered a relatively new unorthodox form of Buddhism at best, whose "excesses" needed to be limited. In this regard, it should be noted that even in the twentieth century, the dominant form of Buddhism in Tibet in

terms of numbers of practitioners was the monastic traditions of the Vinaya and Paramita, not the more colorful Guhyamantra, which was and still is considered a specialization. This was why in the twelfth century, Sonam Tsemo had to begin his book with an explanation and substantiation of the relationship of Guhyamantrayana to the earlier well-established vehicles.

The most famous figure to emphasize the practice of Vinaya and Paramita over that of Guhyamantra, and the one whose lasting influence is the strongest today, is the Indian master Atisha (982-1054),⁴² invited to teach in Tibet in 1042. His most celebrated composition, *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, is justly renowned as the source text for the voluminous later literature on the stages of the path.⁴³ However, the largely forgotten seven verses at the end, verses numbered 60-67, deal specifically with the practice of Guhyamantra and its most difficult controversy (at that time if not today as well). In these verses, Atisha states that a monastic must not take the secret and wisdom initiations or empowerments, the second and third of the four major Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra empowerments, as to do so would violate the monastic vow of celibacy. He goes further than that by quoting his teacher Paindapatika Avadhutipa that if the second and third initiations are unsuitable and unnecessary for celibate monastics, then they are also unnecessary for the laity, that is, everyone else. Even further, Atisha states that the preceptor or master empowerment, the first of the four, is sufficient for the practice of Tantra, particularly doing fire offerings and other offering rituals, mantra recitation, etc., and implies that in fact, if a practitioner has developed bodhisattva compassion and knows the emptiness and illusory-like nature of all phenomena, then that practitioner can do no wrong in the practice of Tantra (as long as they don't receive the second and third empowerments).⁴⁴

These positions on the practice of Tantra taken by Atisha are completely at odds with the *Hevajra* Cycle Tantras.⁴⁵ This conflict will be mostly addressed in volume 2 and subsequent volumes of the *Classics of the Early Sakya*, but some of the issues are indirectly addressed in *The Yogini's Eye*. Atisha does explicitly say that to completely denigrate and ignore the practice of Tantra is also a sacrilege. What Tantras are acceptable to practice? Atisha lists four Ritual and Yoga Tantras, then specifically states that one cannot go wrong with the Arya tradition of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*.

So given that the Sakya lineage had not yet come into existence (Sakya was founded in 1073), who was Atisha's admonitions regarding the practice of Tantra directed against? The primary target seems to have been the infamous and notorious Red Acarya, none other than Prajnagupta, the same one who is the

source for five of the Tantras of the eleven in the Sakya-recognized *Hevajra Tantra* Cycle! The grave faults committed by Prajnagupta seem to be two: (a) teaching that enlightenment is achievable through explicit and actual (not visualized) sexual ecstasy and (b) practicing the kidnapping of people to offer as human sacrifices to the dakinis during ganachakras (today known as tsoks).⁴⁶ The second supposed travesty of Buddhism does seem to be a vicious rumor as Atisha himself refers to the faults as being (a) a violation of celibacy and (b) the exercise of wrathful and violent occult powers against enemies, the latter being akin to what is otherwise known as black magic.⁴⁷ This second fault refers to the accomplishment and exercise of the fourth of the four common special occult powers, which were advocated by Atisha himself, making the issue not the practice itself but how it is implemented. It must be noted however that these same accusations were leveled against many other early practitioners and translators of both Male and Female Tantras.⁴⁸ As to the truth or falsity behind these accusations, the issues will be explored in depth in volume 2 and subsequent volumes of *Classics of the Early Sakya*. For now, there are two points to be made: (a) Prajnagupta's main teacher was the highly respected Ratnavajra, one of the six "gatekeeper" panditas of Vikramashila, and (b) the author of *The Blue Annals* includes a quotation from a Sakya historian asking "who would dare call such a great siddhesvara as the pandita Prajnagupta a heretical teacher, thus causing himself to fall into the bottomless hell?" Although not specifically stated, the spiritual ancestors of the Sakya, Gayadhara and the Drokmi Translator, must also have been implicated. In the years that Sonam Tsemo studied at Sangpu, he would likely have been directly confronted with this opposition to the practices of the *Hevajra Tantra* Cycle. Given the prestige of Atisha, Sonam Tsemo was faced with a big challenge to overcome.

(2) Next is to consider the source of the objections from adherents to the Arya (Noble) tradition of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, whose tradition they believe was at least in part imitated by Sonam Tsemo. There are many Tibetan transmission lineages for the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, but the primary transmission lineage of the Arya (Noble) tradition of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* in Tibet during Sonam Tsemo's time, and the one he would have had the most contact with, was that of the eleventh-century Go Translator Khukpa Lhetse (born ca. 1015).⁴⁹ The latter was a student of Gayadhara and the Drokmi Translator (among his other teachers), the last Indian and first Tibetan respectively, in what became the Sakya lineage. Khon Konchok Gyalpo, Sonam Tsemo's grandfather and founder of Sakya in 1073, studied the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* with Khukpa Lhetse. Khukpa

Lhetse's lineage passed on to Buton Rinchen Drup and then on to Tsongkhapa Lozang Drakpa. Hence, this tradition of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* is now in the Gelugpa lineage, for which there are several recent major publications as listed in the bibliography.

There does seem to have been a bit of bad feeling between the Go Translator and the Sakya lineage. First, Khukpa Lhetse tried to study with Drokmi, but was put off by Drokmi's demand to be paid large sums of money. Then among his seventy-two teachers of the *Guhyasamaja*, one was Gayadhara impersonating as Maitripa, who did give him his *Guhyasamaja* teachings, but withheld his *Hevajra* transmission that had been given to Drokmi.⁵⁰

One of Khukpa Lhetse's few compositions known to still exist is the lengthy major work, *General Summary of the Guhyasamaja*. Attributed to him is a book with the same title as on Sonam Tsemo's initial title page, *General Introduction to Tantra*; but unfortunately, it is not presently known to still exist (if it ever did). Given the lengthy and comprehensive nature of his book on the practice of *Guhyasamaja*, this *General Introduction* composition could have been a major antecedent to Sonam Tsemo's work, and the latter could have been written in response to it; but at the present time, we cannot know that with any degree of certainty.⁵¹ Accusations against others, including that of fabricating scriptures, seems to have been a habit of Khukpa Lhetse, also author of *Disputing Perverse Mantric Texts*, which claims that the Nyingma Tantras are fabrications of Tibetans.⁵²

Davidson speculates that the Guhyamantra detractors were abundant at the Kadampa monastery of Sangpu, where Sonam Tsemo studied for eleven years, but many other detractors of the Tantras also existed before and during Sonam Tsemo's time⁵³ (and right down to the present day for that matter).

Influence and Controversies Subsequent to the Composition of The Yogini's Eye

Beyond the objections that existed in Sonam Tsemo's time, some objections were made about his work by other scholars of the Tantras in succeeding centuries up to and including the present time. The principal detractor was Tsongkhapa, the founder of the Gelugpa lineage. His objections are primarily addressed in chapters 5 and 6 by later Sakya commentators.

In sharp contrast to the few objections made by Tsongkhapa is the recognition that Sonam Tsemo's *The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra* established the rigorous scholarly study of Buddhist Tantra in Tibet, and

all later Tantra scholars of all Tibetan Buddhist lineages followed the ground established by Sonam Tsemo with little deviation, even though Sonam Tsemo was rarely given credit by name. A careful reading of works now available in translation, notably written by Longchenpa and Jamgon Kongtrul, the latter writing seven centuries later, as well as others (including even to a large extent Tsongkhapa himself) will prove this significance of Sonam Tsemo's work; and these other works will be cited frequently in footnotes for the purpose of comparison.

Supplementary Study Guides to The Yogini's Eye

To date, a total of fifteen individual titles have been identified that constitute in whole or in part study guides and explanatory and supplementary works on *The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra, Volume 1*, written from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries and listed below in chronological order. All except number 10 are known to currently be in existence. Page numbers refer to the sections of books that are specifically pertinent to *The Yogini's Eye*.

1. *rGyud-sde sPyi'i rNam-bzhag-dang rGyud-kyi mNgon-par rTogs-pa'i sTon-thun Sa-bcad (Topic Outline of the Comprehensive Introduction to Tantra and Direct Knowledge of Tantra)*

by Grags-pa rGyal-mtshan (Drakpa Gyaltzen, 1147-1216)

in *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 6, pages 279-293.

A topical outline imbedded in and extracted from the original text, thereby included in the translation.

2. *dPal brTag-pa gNyi-pa'i 'Grel-par mDo rGyud-kyi Lung-drangs-pa'i 'Grel-pa*

(*Commentary on the Two-Part Tantra: The Commentary that Draws*

Out the Sutra and Tantra Canonical Sources

by Bu-ston Rinchen Grub (Buton Rinchen Drup, 1290-1364)

in *The Collected Works of Bu-ston*, volume 8, pages 1-29.

An elucidation of select quotations.⁵⁴ A complete translation has been included immediately subsequent to the quotation being elucidated.⁵⁵

3. *rGyud-kyi rGyal-po dPal Kye rDo-rje'i rGya-cher 'Grel-pa Nyi-ma'i 'Od-zer (The Solar Rays: Extensive Commentary on the Glorious Hevajra Tantra, the King of Tantras)*

by bLa-ma Dam-pa bSod-nams rGyal-mtshan (Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, 1312-1375)

in *Lam-'Bras sLob-bShad (Path and Result Explanation for Trainees)*, volume 9, pages 5-48.

A stand-alone introductory section on Tantra within a massive detailed commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra*. Some nonrepetitive sections have been included in this translation.

4. *Dag-ljon sKor-gsum-gyi Lung-'grel Lung-don gSal-ba'i Nyi-ma (The Sun That Illuminates the Meaning of Canonical Sources: Commentary on Canonical Quotations in the Three Cycles [of the Yogini's Eye, Precious] Tree, and Pure [Commentary])*⁵⁶

by Ye-shes rGyal-mtshan (Yeshe Gyaltzen, 1300s-1406)

in *rGyud-sde Kun-btus (Collection of All Tantra Classes)*, volume 32, pages 491-513.

For the most part an elucidation of select quotations that is a repetition

of Buton's elucidations. Those that are nonrepetitive are included in this translation.

5. *dPal Kye rDo-rje'i rGyud 'Chad-pa'i sNgon-'gro rGyud-sde sPyi'i rNam-bzhag-la Nye-bar mKho-ba'i Legs-bshad rDo-rje-chang-gi gSung la Chos-rje dPal-gyi rGyal-mtshan-gyis Zin-bris-su mDzad-pa'i gSung-rab (An Especially Needed Good Explanation: Notes on Talks by Vajradhara [Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo, 1382-1456]. Written by Choje Pelgyi Gyaltzen on the General Classification of the Tantras, Preliminary Explanation for the Glorious Hevajra Tantra)*⁵⁷

edited by A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams (Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, 1597-1659)

in *Collected Writings*, International Buddhist Academy Edition, volume 21, pages 1-82.

Expansion on many topics and issues, primarily in chapter 6; all nonrepetitive sections included in this translation.

6. *rGyud-sde sPyi'i rNam-bzhag (General Classification of the Tantras)*

by Shakya mChog-ldan (Shakya Chokden, 1428-1507)

in *Collected Works*, volume 8, pages 467-478.

Brief stand-alone text on many selected topics, most of which are included in this translation.

7. *rGyud-sde sPyi'i rNam-bzhag-pa'i gSal-byed Nyi-ma'i 'Od-zer (Solar Rays That Illuminate the Comprehensive Introduction to Tantra)*⁵⁸

by gLo-bo mKhan-chen bSod-nams Lhun-grub (Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, 1456-1532)

in *Selected Writings*, volume 4, pages 1-87.

Expansion on many topics and issues throughout, with all nonrepetitive sections included in this translation.

8. *sPyi-rnam brGal-lan 'Og-min gSal-byed Gong-ma'i dGongs-rgyan (Reply to Objections to the Comprehensive Introduction: Ornament of the Superior [Being's] Intent Clarifying Akanishta)*⁵⁹

by gLo-bo mKhan-chen bSod-nams Lhun-grub (Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, 1456-1532)

in *Selected Writings*, volume 4, pages 187-207.

Reply to objections pertaining to the understanding of Akanishta Ganavyuha in chapter 7. Mostly consists of lengthy quotations from the *Avatamsaka Sutra* and the *Vajrapani Abhisheka Tantra*. Not presently included in this translation.

9. *Tshul Dang-po gSum-gyi Don Nyung-ngu'i Ngag-gis sTon-par Byed-pa'i Legs-par bShad-pa Tshul gSum gSal-bar Byed-pa'i Rin-po-che'i rGyan (Precious Ornament that Illuminates the Three Methods: A Good Explanation that Instructs in Few Words on the Content of the First Three Methods)*

by Ngorchen dKon-mchog Lhun-grub (Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup, 1497-1547)

in *Lam-'Bras Tshogs-bShad (Path and Result Explanation for the Assembly)*, volume 1, pages 315-350.

Verse summary of the essential meaning of each chapter of the *The Yogini's Eye*, with some additional content. Translated in its entirety, with the relevant section placed at the beginning of each chapter of the translation.

10. Tshul bZhi sNgon-du 'Gro-ba'i rTsa rGyud-kyi bShad-pa Dag-ldan Go-sla Dang-bcas-pa (Explanation of the Four Method Introduction to the Root Tantra along with the Easy-to-Understand Pure Commentary)

by Nags-dgon sDom-brtson Dam-pa sByin-pa Grags-pa (Nakdon Domtson Dampa Jinpa Dakpa, late 1500s to early 1600s).

This book is referenced by Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam in number 11 below, but a copy is not presently known to exist. Presumably the significant content of this book was included in number 11.⁶⁰

*11. Tshul bZhi sNgon-'gro-dang bCas-pa'i Kye rDo-rje'i rTsa-ba'i rGyud brTag-pa gNylis-pa'i Don-'grel Khog-phub Legs-par bShad-pa rGyud-'grel sGo-brgya'i lDe-mig (Key to a Hundred Safes: Outline of the Contents of the Lucid Explanation of Tantra Commentary: Commentary on the Meaning of the Two-Part Hevajra Root Tantra Together with the Four-Method Introduction)*⁶¹

by A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams (Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, 1597-1659)

in *Collected Writings*, International Buddhist Academy Edition, volume 19, pages 609-640.

General study guide with all nonrepetitive sections included in this translation.

12. *Tshul bZhi sNgon-'gro-dang bCas-pa'i dPal Kye rDo-rje'i rTsa-ba'i rGyud brTag-pa gNyis-pa'i Tshig-'grel rGyud-bshad bsTan-par rGyas-pa'i Nyin-byed (The Daylighter Extensive Instruction on the Explanation of Tantra: Word Commentary on the Two-Part Hevajra Root Tantra Together with the Four Method Introduction)*⁶²

by A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams (Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, 1597-1659)

in *Collected Writings*, International Buddhist Academy Edition, volume 20, pages 42-156.

Paraphrase of the original with much-added explanation; all nonrepetitive sections included in this translation.

13. *Gangs-can bsTan-pa'i mNga'-bdag rJe-bstun Sa-skyapa'i Yab Chos Kye rDo-rje'i rGyud-gsum sNgon-'gro Tshul-bzhi-dang bCas-pa'i Don-'grel Zin-bris Rin-po-che'i gTer-mdzod (Precious Treasury of the Masters of Tibetan Exegesis, the Venerable Sakyapa Founding Fathers of the Dharma: Notes on the Meaning Commentary Together with the Four Method Introduction for the Three Hevajra Tantras)*⁶³

by A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams (Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, 1597-1659)

in *Collected Writings*, International Buddhist Academy Edition, volume 20, pages 531-546.

Abbreviated study guide with all nonrepetitive sections included in this translation.

14. *rGyud-sde sPyi'i rNam-bzhag bsDus-don Tshul-gsum gSal-rgyan Zhes-bya-ba'i Khog-phub Don-'grel Pad-dkar 'Phreng-mdzes (Beautiful Garland of White Lotuses: Content Outline Commentary Called Clear Ornament of the Three Methods Summarizing the General Classification of the Tantras)*⁶⁴

by A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams (Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, 1597-1659)

in *Collected Writings*, International Buddhist Academy Edition, volume 21, pages 86-102.

Topic headings for Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup's verse summary (number 9), included in prose translation headings.

15. *dGyes-pa rDo-rje'i rGyud-gsum-gyi sPyi-don sNgon-'gro'i Tshul-bzhi'i gSal-byed Legs-bshad Nyi-ma'i 'Od-zer (The Solar Rays: General Meaning of the Three Tantras of Hevajra, Elucidation of the Four Preliminary Methods)*

by sDe-gzhung Chos-dpal 'Jam-dbyangs Kun-dga' rNam-rgyal (Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, 1880s to mid-1950s),

in a single volume, pages 18-90.

General study guide including many explanations of select quotations and various other topics with much insightful material not included in any other study guide, all of which is included in this translation.

Translation

This present translation and edition has made use of a format first pioneered by Jeffrey Hopkins in *Maps of the Profound*,⁶⁵ to incorporate subsequently written commentarial and supplementary material on a source text into the translation of that source text under the appropriate subject headings, thereby

producing a new comprehensive and flowing edition that includes all material written on the given topics within one lineage. Each chapter opens with the verse summary of the subject matter by Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup, presented in italics. This is followed by the original prose text of Sonam Tsemo, including his source quotations. Inserted within Sonam Tsemo's text, separated by curved brackets, is the later commentarial and supplementary material primarily from nine of the above fifteen titles. This supplementary material is presented mostly in chronological order; that is, if a later author repeated what an earlier author said, the text is attributed to the earlier author and the later repetition is omitted. Later repetition of Sonam Tsemo's original writing is also omitted. Some of the later explanatory material is specific to Sonam Tsemo's source quotations, so that text has been inserted immediately after the quotations referred to. Additional source quotations have also been cited for the first time by later commentators. Wherever possible, the source location of the quotations has been identified in the footnotes.

Brackets are used throughout the book to designate additional language inserted by the present translator that does not occur explicitly in the translated texts, but is implied and is necessary for inclusion both for clarification and coherence for the English reader and for proper English grammar. Text appearing in parentheses is a translation of the previous term(s), usually book titles.

The objection/reply format is rarely explicitly identified as such wherever it frequently occurs in the original texts. Therefore, the present translator has inserted these identifiers in brackets wherever appropriate, for without them, the drift of much of the discussion would be incomprehensible to the general reader. While some of the objections are more like rhetorical questions, the identifier "objections" is used throughout for consistency of format.

Although it has now become more commonplace to remove footnotes to a separate section in the back of a book, footnotes here appear on the same page as the text to which they refer, as the present translator is one who always likes to read all the footnotes and finds it very awkward to have to keep flipping back and forth.

Several types of additional supplementary material are placed within the footnotes. First, additional interpretation and explanation by Hiroshi Sonami and the present translator not included within brackets has been placed in the footnotes to carefully distinguish it from the traditional writings. Second, references are provided to the large body of classical Buddhist literature to

which Sonam Tsemo and the other authors refer directly or indirectly, or to classic literature which will supplement the explanations in the translated text. One intent in providing these references is to direct the reader to the full translation of a work of classic literature that is only briefly quoted in the present translation so that the full context may be appreciated. An attempt has been made to identify the source and location for cited quotations wherever possible, in translations where existing, and in the untranslated (into English) collections of the Kahgyur and Tengyur (Derge edition) where there are no translations at present.

Every word of the original text was read, orally translated, and explained during weekly study sessions in 1978 with the Ngor Thartse Khenpo Sonam Gyatso and the present translator. When this book was first translated over thirty years ago, very few books of classic Buddhist literature were available in English, and many of those few were somewhat poorly translated. Now a large and growing body of classic Buddhist literature is available in English, and the general quality of the translation work being done today is truly excellent. Therefore, wherever available, references are to published translations so that the general reader will be directed to this valuable resource. This book has been written for the serious student of Tibetan Buddhism who does not read the Tibetan language, yet wishes to gain appreciation for the richness and depth of meaning of the classic literature. References to untranslated classics are given for the benefit of Tibetan readers. It perhaps should be stated at this point that although this book has not been written for professional academics, the attempt has been made to achieve present academic standards.

The reader must understand that many of the important topics introduced in this *Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra, Volume 1* will be explained in much greater detail in *Volume 2* and other subsequent volume in this series. Therefore, it is hoped that the discerning and questioning reader will be patient for the publication of succeeding volumes.

As for the translation of Tibetan technical terminology, years ago, the present translator was inclined to translate into English using strings of elaborate philosophical terminology, thinking thereby to be able to more precisely “capture” the full subtlety and depth of meaning. After years of attempting to ever more refine the technical translation terminology, the translator has abandoned that effort having come to fully realize, as Sonam Tsemo teaches us, that the actual terminology used has little significance in itself, what matters is the efficacy of the method of conveying the intent of the author and facilitating the comprehension of that intent by the reader.

Many Sanskrit words are now officially adopted into the English language, as evidenced by their inclusion in standard English dictionaries. Some examples are “karma,” “dharma,” “yoga,” “guru,” “mandala,” “mantra,” “tantra,” “Hinayana,” “Mahayana,” “buddha,” “bodhisattva,” “sutra,” and “nirvana.” Many Sanskrit words can be easily adopted into English because of the common Indo-European root of both Sanskrit and English.⁶⁶ Tibetan is in the Tibeto-Burman language family and has no common root with English, so adoption is not so easy given the unfamiliarity of spelling and pronunciation.⁶⁷ It is therefore generally pointless to translate words that already have been officially incorporated into English, except in some important contexts where the meaning can be effectively enhanced through translation. Other important words have not yet made it into the current dictionaries, but likely and hopefully will soon, so it is really pointless to translate them also, particularly when the translation terms are harder to truly understand than the “foreign” words themselves. Examples are “paramita,” “guhyamantra,” “vajrayana,” “mudra,” “dharmakaya,” “sambhogakaya,” and “nirmanakaya.” “Jnyana” is a bit of a tongue twister in English, so I have opted for the easier “gnosis” (with a silent *g*), an example of an English word that does well convey the sense of the Buddhist term. Key words are most appropriately and effectively comprehended from usage and context (and interpretation), no matter what actual specific translation terminology is used.

Translators

Ngor Thartse Khenpo Sonam Gyatso’s (1933-1987) full ordination name was Jamyang Kunga Tenpay Gyaltzen. He served as the seventy-fourth abbot of Ngor in the 1950s.⁶⁸ One of his early teachers was Khangsar Khenchen Ngawang Lodro Shenpen Nyingpo (1876-1952), one of the last two official additions to the Sakya Lamdre lineage, as their biographies were added at the end of the Lamdre biographies in volume 8 of the most recent edition of the Lamdre Lobshe.⁶⁹ In the later 1950s, he studied in Sikkim with Dzongsar Khyentse Chokyi Lodro (1893-1959) as his root lama.⁷⁰ Shortly after the death of Khyentse in 1959, Sonam Gyatso moved to Japan, adopted the name of Hiroshi Sonami (the equivalent of his Tibetan name in Japanese) and worked as an instructor and researcher at the Toyo Bunko Library.

In 1976, Hiroshi moved to the San Francisco Bay Area where his younger brother, Lama Kunga Thartse Rinpoche,⁷¹ had established a Sakya center called Ewam Choden. Settling in Oakland, he supported himself by making pottery and selling it as a street vendor on Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley. Hiroshi started to

accept a small group of private students who approached him for traditional studies. He married a performing musician and artist, Laetitia Sonami²²; and together they had a daughter, Chinzalee. He also worked for a time at the UC Berkeley East Asiatic Library.

In addition to private instruction, Hiroshi's primary effort throughout his later years was the preservation and republication of his lineage's literature and art. He began with the compilation and publication of *The Complete Works of the Great Masters of the Sa-skya Sect of Tibetan Buddhism*, the writings of the Five Founders (including Sonam Tsemo and Drakpa Gyaltzen) together with those of Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo and Gorampa Sonam Senge in a fifteen-volume edition published in Japan.²³ This was followed by the reproduction in India of the thirty-volume *Collection of All Tantras*,²⁴ and the fourteen-volume *Collection of All Sadhanas*²⁵ (available from the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center www.tbrc.com). He would also have produced an edition of the *Path and Result Instruction for the Disciples*,²⁶ but tragically about half of his original volumes were lost in shipment. His final and grandest project was the elaborate full-size and full-color reproduction of a set of paintings of the 132 Ngor Mandalas, complete with identification of all deities in the mandala retinues.²⁷ When this last reproduction was finished, Hiroshi told the present translator that now his life's work was done (with the understood implication that it was up to the present translator to complete our translation work). This statement I took rather ominously, however, and indeed not long after making it, he became seriously ill and then passed away.

After initially studying with other teacher's beginning in 1973, the present translator first met and began to study with Hiroshi Sonami in 1977. Work on *The Yogini's Eye: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra, Volume 1* began early in 1978. By the end of the year, the reading, explanation, and oral translation of the text had been completed. A draft translation of most of the book was written simultaneously with its study. The intent was to complete the translation for publication, but that was first postponed in order to go on to study the successive volumes to complete the traditional study of Sakya Tantra, volumes that will appear as subsequent volumes in this translation series. In the meantime, efforts to secure sponsorship to complete the translation work proved fruitless. Hiroshi then became ill, followed by an untimely and tragic death from stomach cancer (prevalent in Japan) in 1987. The present translator, in need of "getting a life," then returned to college to complete a degree in soil and water science from the University of California—Davis, in 1990, and went on to have a career as an environmental scientist with the state of California. The present

translator never totally gave up on the intention to complete the work started with Hiroshi and, after retirement in 2010, now has both the earned financial support⁷⁸ and time in which to do so.

Other books by students of Hiroshi and based on their studies with him have however already appeared in print. These include *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*⁷⁹ and *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture*⁸⁰ by Ronald M. Davidson, professor of religious studies at Fairfield University in Connecticut, and *A Study of the Dharmadharmatavibhanga, Volume 1* and *Volume 2*⁸¹ of a projected four-volume series, by Raymond E. Robertson, an independent scholar now living in Istanbul, Turkey.

It is with a strange mixture of elation and sadness that the present translator now makes available this translation. Elation over the fact that the work has finally been completed (at least for now), sadness that a draft of the work was nearly completed over thirty years ago, and that publication of this translation should have occurred many long years ago.

As for the current state of completion, there is much more work that the present translator could and would like to do, including locating the sources of more quotations, more reference to and analysis of related topics appearing in other translations from other lineages, and additional detailed explanations from Sakya sources. Yet such a process could go on without end, and the present translator does not have forever. So for various reasons, now is the time to stop and publish and move on to continue work on volume 2. The discerning reader will note the many places where additional information could be of benefit. It would be most reasonable to do a second edition of this first volume once the subsequent volumes in the series have been completed. It is hoped that this initial effort as it now stands may be of some benefit to someone.

Interested readers may write to the present translator at wayne@threebritts.com. The pointing out of errors supported by verifiable references to the classic literature are welcome.

Acknowledgments

The first and foremost acknowledgment is to the teacher and cotranslator of this volume, the late Ngor Thartse Khenpo Sonam Gyatso (Hiroshi Sonami), who so willingly and unselfishly accepted an aspiring yet unskillful and impoverished student and translator into his own materially impoverished circumstances so many long years ago. His unlimited wisdom and thorough knowledge of the ancient Sakya lineage of the *Hevajra Tantra* thoroughly inspired and informed this translation, although as is obvious as a result of his passing twenty-five years ago, all errors in the final translation are solely those of the present translator.

A special acknowledgment is to the late Gene Smith, the most extraordinary and accomplished bibliophile in the entire history of Tibetan Buddhism, who, in response to the simple pointing out of the misattribution in the authorship of one book, so very generously granted the present translator unlimited access to the vast online library of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, thereby greatly facilitating access to supplementary resources to complete this book. No one else has ever made such a generous material contribution to the completion of this final work. Special thanks also to the very helpful and skillful staff of the TBRC.

A very special acknowledgment is to Dr. Carolee GiaoUyen Tran, whose very special skill in deciphering and enabling the workings of the present translator's afflicted mind immeasurably facilitated this work. Her own Buddhist life story of great personal accomplishment and benefit to others rising from the tragedy and extreme dislocation of war has also been an enormous inspiration. Quite simply, without her assistance, this book would never have been completed.

An acknowledgment also needs to be made to Dr. Ronald M. Davidson, currently a professor of religious studies at Fairfield University in Connecticut, who was a full participant in the original study of Sonam Tsemo's *The Yogini's Eye* and who has gone on to write his own books initially derived from his studies with Hiroshi, but who has not participated in the completion of this present book.

Last but certainly not least, acknowledgment goes to my spouse, Teresa Fong, who, in addition to putting up with me for so many years, has provided complete support in all ways, including technical expertise to keep the computer functioning for this severely technologically challenged present translator.

Absolutely no direct financial assistance of any kind has ever been received at any time from any outside source for the completion of this book.

Om Swasti Siddham

Homage in touching head to feet of the venerable, true Lama.

Homage to the glorious Vajrasattva.

The magnificent guide Vajradhara pervades all beings in the universe,
Manifests in ordinary form to lead those of little imagination,
And brings the meritorious to the fruition of the limitless expanse of awakened
presence,
expression, and mind;
With joined palms, [I] touch [my] head to the feet of the Lama.

Seek the protection of the magnificent ally Vajrapani,
By whose compassion, in extremely wrathful form,
The radiance of a hundred thousand suns illuminates the meaning of nonduality,
And by [whose] expression of [the syllable] H_{UM} all obstacles are cleared away.

Author's Introduction

[Study of the] Tantras may be divided into attainment [path] and attained [result];

With the intent to hold to the content of the Lama's⁸² discourses,

Those who take great delight in detailed analysis

Must refer elsewhere for explanation of the meaning of the canon.⁸³

Here, with little elaboration, realization may be acquired with effort

Through faithfully following the Lama's discourses;

By just concentrating on the most important part of the discourses,

I will now write this summary of the systemization of the Tantras.

Even though [past] scholars have given very clear explanations,

[The purpose of this book is] to develop skill in composition and to increase the understanding of myself and others;

[Mature] birds fly in the sky with strong fully formed bodies,

But the young are not fully formed and must learn [to fly].

Here the vast majority of those who have realization regard it as appropriate to discuss general systemization at the beginning [of study] of the Tantras, in order to start out with knowledge of the distinction between the result to be accomplished and the path to that accomplishment [part 1]. In order to demonstrate the superiority (of Buddhist Tantra) over other systems for those who are engaged in the path, the next section is the origin and meaning of the titles of the Tantras [part 2]. In order to make it easier to understand the superiority of this path for those of low intellect, the next section is the explanation of the methods for interpretation [part 3]. In order to explain the stages in the development of the individual mindstream continuum during practice after the meaning of the Tantras is well understood, the next section is instruction in the direct knowledge of Tantra [part 4].⁸⁴ These four approaches, from the sayings of the Great Yogi Virupa, are the ford [of the river] crossed by the learned, the lamp that illumines all Tantras without exception, the stairway that ascends to the citadel of transcendence of suffering, a difficult [to achieve] realization [available] to those lacking in merit. Know that this [system] has the best of all features.

Part I
The Result and the Path

Chapter 1

Ultimate Result as the Reference Point at the Start of All Paths

Begin with two, attainment [path] and attained [result].

The attained is elimination and realization, the ultimate vajra level,

Just-as-is, the best of all vehicles.

Even though there are endless divisions of multiple methods,

Is it not true that there is [only] a single result?

Many circumstantial results⁸⁵ may be identified,

But just as [the fresh waters of] many rivers become a single [salty] taste in the ocean,

The entirety of the ultimate result is a single dharmakaya.

The correctness of that is made clear

In the Samputa Tantra, Manjushri Nama Samgiti,⁸⁶ and other [canonical sources].

In general, the ultimate result of the attainment of the path as a reference point is a single result termed the [thirteenth] level of unsurpassed complete perfect buddha.⁸⁷ [Buddha⁸⁸ may be described] in two ways: (1) an explanation of its characteristics and (2) its accomplishment as a single [ultimate result].

Characteristics of Buddha

First, what are the characteristics of buddha? There are three: (1) incontrovertible realization of the nature of reality, (2) [immersion in] supreme, untainted ecstasy, and (3) elimination of all stains of imperfections without exception.⁸⁹ These are known from the canon (*Hevajra Tantra* II, ii, 37; I, v, 13-14):⁹⁰

Because I have realization [of the true nature] of reality, I am Buddha.

Through realization of ecstasy, [Buddha is called] Vibuddha [Vajrasattva].

[Through] elimination of imperfections, Buddha is [called] Brahma [Vairochana].⁹¹

Three [results] are given, yet [in truth] there is only one, for the source [of the first two] is the [third,] elimination of imperfections. There are (a) imperfections of emotional states such as anger, (b) imperfections of thoughts that become obstacles to omniscience of the multiplicity of phenomena and omniscience of the intrinsic nature of all phenomena, and (c) imperfections of equanimity. These are known as the three imperfections and include all imperfections without exception. Elimination means total elimination. Accordingly, this is the supreme elimination. For example, not being asleep [as an elimination] is the same as being awake; this is the meaning of buddha.

For one who has achieved this (3) [elimination] within the continuum [of mind], there is (1) realization of the nature of reality both within the multiplicity of phenomena and the intrinsic nature of phenomena. In taking to heart the profound interconnection, the dharmakaya [arises] as the nonduality of the continuity of space and gnosis. For one who has achieved this, there is (2) ecstasy of realization, also known as the ecstasy of liberation, which has immeasurable special capacities of buddha, such as kaya and gnosis.⁹² Both of these features [realization and ecstasy] open and expand the mind like the blooming of a lotus flower; this is also the meaning of buddha, and is supreme gnosis.⁹³

Through each of these three characteristics, it is possible to extrapolate all other special capacities [of buddha]. Although in the numerous chapters of the Sutras and Tantras, and in the numerous treatises, many characteristics of buddha are described, here these three alone are explained by the Venerable Lama,⁹⁴ derived from the canonical scriptures of the *Hevajra Tantra* and *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*. Through these, all characteristics and special capacities of buddha may be known collectively.

Accomplishment as a Single Ultimate Result

With respect to accomplishment as a single ultimate result, there is (1) reason for certainty in one [ultimate result] and (2) resolution of objections.

Reason for Certainty

In general, although there are many different paths, there is just one ultimate

[result], as revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra I*, iii:

Why are there so many phenomena [of buddha as the result]?

Just as [many] rivers flow into the ocean,

So liberation is a singularity

That does not become multiple objectives.⁹⁵

As revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra Continuation*:

By the analogy of rivers and ocean, two components are illustrated...

Yet in the analogy of rivers flowing into the ocean there are [ultimately] no separate components...⁹⁶

There are many philosophical systems, yet there is only one nature of reality; there are many paths, yet there is only one ultimate [result]. Further, the ultimate result is the realization of the nature of reality. Since there are not multiple natures of reality, there are not multiple ultimate [results]. This single [result] that is the perfection of elimination and gnosis is a singularity [single buddha], not one that is of its own essence absorbed into the [Absolute] Self of the non-Buddhists.

Resolution of Objections

The resolutions are of (1) the misperception of multiple philosophies, (2) the misperception of three vehicles, [and (3) additional resolutions of objections].

Resolution of the Misperception of Multiple Philosophies

[Objection:] Since there are multiple philosophies, such as the [Absolute] Self of the non-Buddhists, then are there not multiple natures of reality?

[Reply:] There appear to be multiple, but they are just labels for conceptualizations of those who have no actual realization of the ultimate. For those who do have actual realization, all phenomena arise interdependently, and do not have any multiplicity whatsoever that is not included in profound [emptiness]. By analogy, there appear to be multiple [freshwater] rivers external to the ocean, yet [all of them] blend into the ocean as a single flavor [salty];

there is only one orb of the sun, yet it seems to rise as different [suns] when viewed from different regions; when a hundred blind persons touch one elephant, they each have their own sensation [of what an elephant is based on the part of the elephant they touch].

Resolution of the Misperception of Three Vehicles

[Objection:] Since the Bhagavan intended [to distinguish] three types [of practitioners], then does that not lead to three kinds of bodhi[-mind intent on enlightenment and three corresponding vehicles for its accomplishment]⁹⁷?

[Reply:] [It is true that the Buddha used] provisional meaning as a temporary guide for those of lesser [aptitude] and spoke of results of temporary paths. Here [in Tantra], there is accomplishment of a single result, the perspective of realization of the absolute just-as-is, the generation of bodhi-mind at the start of the path; instruction begins with this clarification. All of the treatises that delineate the absolute truth, such as the Madhyamaka treatises, make clear this intent. These [treatises] may be studied for more detail.⁹⁸

[Additional Resolutions of Objections]

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, Vol. 20, page 43, line 5: [Objection:] Is it not contradictory that each of the canonical traditions describes a multitude of different buddha characteristics?⁹⁹

[Reply:] There is no error [in this], as the descriptions of multitudes of different [characteristics] is an extended or abbreviated enumeration of capacities in order to generate enthusiasm among trainees who delight in one or another canonical tradition. There is no distinction as to whether one is or is not the ultimate result, as stated by the Great Omniscient One:¹⁰⁰

In summary, from the canonical tradition of the shravakas
Up to the great secret Unsurpassed [Yoga Tantras],
All explanations of the result have benefit
In that the distinctions generate enthusiasm.

The ultimate result as explained in the various canonical traditions does not make it necessary to definitively accomplish the path as explained in each [tradition]. [As explained] in this [and subsequent] chapters, the path of each of the three yanas¹⁰¹ (vehicles) certainly yields liberation from samsara (cyclic existence), but it is only possible to attain liberation from samsara, since it is

impossible to attain the ultimate result [of buddha] as the great liberation through just the Sutra path engaged in initially, as revealed in the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri)* verse 135:

{The methods of the multiple vehicles
Are distinguished for the benefit of sentient beings.}
Liberation [from samsara] is certain in the three vehicles,
But the [ultimate] result is present only through a single vehicle.¹⁰²

The Paramitayana (Transcendent Vehicle) asserts that the eleventh level of Universal Light is the ultimate result; however, in this chapter, it is not accepted as the ultimate result, although as explained in the canon both here [in Tantra] and in Paramita [Sutra], the gnosis of the eleventh level cannot be mistaken. Here [in the present context], [the eleventh and twelfth levels are still on] the paths of training,¹⁰³ while the next [thirteenth] is the level of ultimate result [no more training¹⁰⁴], which can be referred to in name only [by the Paramita, who have no direct knowledge of it].

Consequently, the twelfth level on the path of training
Has the same intent for both Tantra and the Conqueror (Buddha).¹⁰⁵

From a Paramita [source]:

After confusion regarding the explanation of the eleventh [level],
[Any] error in enumeration and characteristic definitive feature has been eliminated.

Accordingly, the ultimate result is a single intended result, not the dharmakaya, or sambhogakaya, or nirmanakaya [separately],¹⁰⁶ whether [the latter is] supreme or not supreme, but all of them together are the single intended ultimate attainment of elimination and realization.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 19, line 3: [Objection:] To begin, [what does it] mean to accept a definitive ultimate result?

[Reply:] In general, there are many different paths yet just one ultimate [result]. From the Vaibhashika (Great Exposition) canon through to Unsurpassed

Yoga Tantra, the result is explained as kaya and gnosis. Since the ultimate result is the same, there is nothing pertinent to speaking [in a manner] that diverts [attention] from capacities that are suitable for the intellect of each trainee. For example, from the Vaibhashika through the Madhyamika (Middle Way)¹⁰⁷ canon, all explanations of the capacities of Shakyamuni, such as the [ten] powers,¹⁰⁸ have the same characteristic buddha qualities.

[Objection:] Does this mean that buddha characteristics as explained in the Prajna Paramitayana (Transcendent Wisdom Vehicle) are the [ultimate] buddha characteristics of the eleventh level?

[Reply:] That is not definitive. The ultimate result of both Sutra and Tantra is elimination and realization. This is intended as a singularity with the equivalent characteristics as found in the ultimate. Progression through the first ten levels¹⁰⁹ can indeed occur through the Paramita path alone, but a path for progression to the eleventh level is absent [in Paramita]. Given dissimilar [to the result] characteristic defining features [in Paramita], progression through the remaining three levels [eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth] can only be through the Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra path.¹¹⁰ In the Paramita, the eleventh level can only be referred to by name, since there is no suitable characteristic defining feature. So, even though buddha is explained in Paramita, there is no buddha [that can be fully realized], so that [buddha] cannot be maintained as an inclusive parameter, since there is uncertainty with respect to resemblance to Shakyamuni.

[Objection:] According to the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra* quotation above, there is a single ultimate for all paths. So “why are there so many phenomena [of buddha as the result]” that are taught in the shravakas’ (listeners’) path and that of others and multiple outsider and insider (non-Buddhist and Buddhist) philosophies?

[Reply:] In the given analogy, “just as [many] rivers flow into the ocean, so liberation is a singularity,” as philosophies of the ultimate are a single flavor [salty in the analogy] “that does not become multiple” alternative “objectives.” According to the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra Continuation*, “by the analogy of rivers” that are philosophies and paths, “by the analogy of... ocean, two components,” the natural state and liberation, “are illustrated.”¹¹¹

[Objection:] As for the meaning of the resolution of misperception regarding

the three vehicles, since the Bhagavan's intention was that there are three types [of persons], does that not lead to three types of bodhi-mind?

[Reply:] The intent is to temporarily [focus] on the provisional meaning for those less fortunate who [nevertheless] have entered the Guhyamantra path, on just the attainment of the three bodhi-minds that are the result of the path that temporarily makes certain the renunciation of samsara. It is impossible to obtain the ultimate great bodhi-mind by the Sutra path alone; it can only be obtained on the Guhyamantra path, as stated in *Manjushri Nama Samgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri)* 135 [as above].

This indicates that there is only one ultimate result, called accomplishment of the single vehicle, the perspective of realization of the absolute just-as-is, the generation of bodhi-mind at the beginning [of the path] that eliminates fabricated exaggeration and deprecation through the insight of wisdom. This clarification is made at the beginning.}

Chapter 2

Actual Path

The path is learning specific methods

Focused on the corresponding [provisional] results to be obtained.

There are many [path] divisions designated by characteristic,

With each one either ordinary or extraordinary.

The ordinary [results] are inferior rebirth, superior rebirth, and liberation alone,

Three divisions of the path for attainment.

The first is that followed by the Nihilists,

In-between are creator theists (Shaivas) and the tradition of the best of the marginalists (Jains);

These are not paths of liberation, as subsequently recognized.

The last is the path of shravakas and pratyekabuddhas.

In order to guide various kinds of trainees,

In order to remove [doubts over] forks in the road for individuals and paths,

Divisions of ordinary paths are presented [or studied] first.

Then start down the riverbank of the [extraordinary] Mahayana intent on omniscience,

Elimination of suffering, and nonattachment to cyclic existence.

Discover the path to liberation, without clinging to tranquility,

Through the five phenomena, three natures, eight consciousnesses,

Two selflessnesses of reality, and seven superiorities.

There are four kinds of assertions about the Mahayana:

Belief in three results with either three paths or one path,

Belief in one result with either three paths or one path.

*The first two were [expressed as provisional] buddha intent,
The latter two are of definitive meaning,
As can be ascertained through [both] canonical authority and reasoning.*

There are two subtopics to the actual path: (1) definition of the path and (2) divisions of the path.

Definition of the Path

The path by definition is the means to attain a specific objective.

Divisions of the Path

The divisions are (1) ordinary paths and (2) extraordinary paths.¹¹²

Ordinary Paths

Ordinary paths include lower marginalists¹¹³ who hold nihilistic views,¹¹⁴ yet are reborn in inferior existences,¹¹⁵ and higher marginalists,¹¹⁶ such as Nudist Ascetics,¹¹⁷ strive only for rebirth in superior existences.¹¹⁸ Ordinary paths also include shravakas (listeners) and pratyekabuddhas (self-buddhas), who strive only for [self-]liberation.

Extraordinary Paths

Extraordinary paths have two subtopics: (1) extraordinary paths require the teaching of ordinary paths and (2) primary characteristics of the extraordinary Mahayana.

Extraordinary Paths Require the Teaching of Ordinary Paths

[Objection:] Why do extraordinary paths still need [to include] the teaching of ordinary paths?

[Reply:] There are three reasons: (1) to guide the diversity of sentient beings to the Mahayana, (2) to eliminate doubts about the path by knowing what is and is not conducive to the path [of liberation], and (3) to cut off the pride that the Mahayana could never have developed from within the continuums [of followers] of ordinary paths.

To Guide the Diversity of Sentient Beings

to the Mahayana

According to the *Uttaratantra (Unsurpassed Continuum)*, there are three kinds of sentient beings:

. . . those who have worldly desires, those who wish to be free of worldly desires, and those who have no strong desires either way... [119](#)

Those who have worldly desires are lower marginalists. Of those who desire tranquility, some are not skilled in the methods and some are skilled in the methods. Those not skilled in the methods are higher marginalists; those skilled in the methods are shravakas (listeners) and pratyekabuddhas (self-buddhas). The third [kind], those who regard the world and its quiescence equally, are bodhisattvas, as in the *Bodhicharyavatara (Entrance into Bodhisattva Practice)* IX, 52:

{For the benefit of those suffering with delusion,}
Liberating [them] from the limitations of desire and fear,
Accomplished while [still] living in samsara,
{[Can only be] a result of emptiness.} [120](#)

Learning about each of the three [paths] will eventually lead one to the Mahayana, which is the intent of the quotation [from the *Bodhicharyavatara* V, 100]:

Anything that is not practiced by buddha sons (bodhisattvas)
Does not exist.
{Likewise, there is no subject for learning
That does not become meritorious.} [121](#)

To Eliminate Doubts about the Path

By understanding all paths, a [clear] distinction can be made between various [perceptions of] reality. Upon developing an intuitive realization of the highest path, any inclination toward other paths is eliminated.

To Cut Off Pride

For those who have pride that the Mahayana could never have developed in

the continuum of someone who has the outlook of the higher marginalists, it is necessary to understand the real meaning of the Mahayana through realizing this is our path, and this is the other.

Primary Characteristics of the Extraordinary Mahayana

There are three primary characteristics of the extraordinary Mahayana: (1) definition of the extraordinary path, (2) how it surpasses ordinary paths, and (3) the four divisions of surpassing.

Definition of the Mahayana

The definition of the Mahayana is that it is the method of obtaining the result of complete omniscience.

How the Extraordinary Mahayana Surpasses Ordinary Paths

There are four ways in which [the Mahayana] surpasses ordinary paths: (1) by engaging in methods that eliminate suffering, (2) by nonattachment to the cycle of existence, (3) by engaging in the liberation methods of buddha yanas (vehicles), and (4) by entering the Mahayana which does not fixate on [self-]liberation alone, but demonstrates the path of equanimity of engagement and tranquility and nonduality of emptiness and compassion.

Surpasses by Engaging in Methods That Eliminate Suffering

[The Mahayana] engages in methods that eliminate suffering both in this life and the next life. Obtaining a general education [eliminates suffering in this life] by surpassing nomadic herdsman and others who are ignorant of the established order [of society]. Suffering in the next life is eliminated by generating in the continuum [of mind] the path to higher existences through believing firmly in the [law of] cause and effect of actions. This surpasses the deleterious philosophies of confused views, such as those of the Nihilists.¹²²

Surpasses by Nonattachment to the Cycle of Existence

If one desires to be free from suffering, yet does not now disassociate from the cycle of existence, there can be no liberation from suffering. Accordingly, if you wish to be liberated, adopt an attitude of disassociation from all transitory worldly affairs. The best of marginalists (Jains) correctly hold this attitude, yet do not engage in the actual methods [that lead to] liberation.

Surpasses by the Two Liberation Methods

There are two entrances into the liberation methods of the buddha yanas (vehicles): (1) taking the Three Jewels as the place of refuge and (2) accepting the four seals [of the principles of reality] as the indicators of the [Buddhist] canonical perspective.

(1) After taking refuge in the Buddha, resist attraction toward worldly teachers such as Ishvara and do not covet [attainment of] their level. After taking refuge in the Dharma, become accomplished through abandoning worldly paths [or objectives] that are harmful to sentient beings as well as the bases [for causing harm]. After taking refuge in the Sangha, do not seek the assistance of marginalists.

(2) Along with taking refuge is acceptance of the four seals [of the principles of reality] as indicative of the canon:

EVERYTHING CONDITIONED IS IMPERMANENT.

EVERYTHING EMOTIVELY TAINTED LEADS TO SUFFERING.

TRANSCENDENCE OF SUFFERING IS COMPLETE PEACE AND ECSTASY.

ALL PHENOMENA ARE SELFLESS.

If one has taken refuge in the Three Jewels, but has not accepted the four canonical indicators, then one is still a Buddhist, as for example the shravaka Vatsiputriyas (followers of Vatsi's Son).¹²³

[Objection:] Did not the Bhagavan declare that some are marginalists?

[Reply:] When he declared that “those who do not speak of the essencelessness of all phenomena in connection with the perfection of wisdom are not my students,” this was the deduction of the Chittamatra (Mind-Only) School and others. The above [points] do demonstrate the surpassing of all marginalist [perspectives].

Surpasses Hinayana by Enacting Equanimity and Nonduality

[Therefore,] entrance into the Mahayana surpasses [all other paths in three ways]: (1) by engaging in the elimination of suffering through the methods explained above, [the Mahayana] surpasses those who do not engage in [a conducive] spiritual pursuit; (2) [also from above] in taking hold of the Three Jewels, [the Mahayana] surpasses outsiders [or non-Buddhists]; (3) through enacting the equanimity of engagement and tranquility, [the Mahayana] surpasses both shravakas (listeners) and pratyekabuddhas (self-buddhas).

(3) How are shravakas [and pratyekabuddhas] surpassed? There are three ways: (a) by establishment of greater and lesser vehicles (Mahayana and Hinayana) based on canon or philosophy, (b) by establishment of greater and lesser vehicles based on path and result, and (c) by the preferred establishment of both canon [and philosophy] and path and result [as superior].

(a) The canon of the shravakas includes [some of] the Twelve Divisions of the Canon,¹²⁴ the Seven Abhidharma Treatises,¹²⁵ etc., which are well-known among those who [especially] take pride in abhidharma, which is the shravaka philosophy. What is not known to them is the Mahayana canon, particularly the Vaipulya (Exceedingly Vast Collection)¹²⁶ that includes the *Prajna Paramita (Perfection of Wisdom) Sutras* and the *Avatamsaka (Garland of Buddhas) Sutra*, etc.¹²⁷

The fine distinctions that can be made between these two [canons] are virtually limitless in number, but [may be summarized] in the quotation from the *Lankavatara (Journey to Lanka) Sutra* LXXXIV, 5:

Five phenomena, three natures,

Eight consciousnesses,

Two selflessnesses of reality:

These summarize all Mahayana.¹²⁸

The five [types of] phenomena are linguistic, rational, conceptual, absolute, and perfect gnosis. The three natures are imputational, other-powered, and thoroughly established. The eight consciousnesses are sight and the rest of the six senses, the defiled sense of self, and the basis for all consciousness. The two

selflessnesses are of persons and phenomena. These topics form the corpus of the Mahayana. Many more [philosophical] surpassings [may be found] in the writings of Nagarjuna, Asanga, etc.; refer elsewhere for details.¹²⁹

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 21, line 5: Linguistic [phenomena] are designations applied [by common consensus] to specific bases of designation, as in an explanation that uses terminology such as “pot.” Rational [phenomena] are apparent characteristics such as shape and form that are the basis of designation. Conceptual are phenomena of mind and mental events. Absolute is the [empty] space of phenomena where the nature of the two kinds of self [objects and individuals] for all outer and inner phenomena is devoid of any veracity. Perfect gnosis is specific awareness subjectively devoid of imperfect conceptualization while engaged with that [absolute].

For the three natures, [the first] imputational [nature] is those phenomena which cannot be proven to substantially exist; all substantive objects have a conventional designation formed conceptually. Other-powered [nature] is actual reality arising from interrelationships [between all things]. Divided into two pure other-powered is generated from conditions that are not imputed. The second impure other-powered encompasses the appearance of duality. Thoroughly established is phenomenality that is devoid of subject-object dichotomy. Divided into two, there is unchanging thoroughly established and incontrovertible thoroughly established. As the latter is the intent of a thoroughly established subject, what is placed in that [category] as compounded [phenomena] does not have the [true] characteristic of thoroughly established.

Six of the eight consciousnesses are actual components of awareness, such as that of form dependent on the eye and the other sense organs. The discontinuous defiled mind is consciousness of neutral imperfections [that are as yet neither positive nor negative actions]. The basis of all consciousness is the causes and conditions that develop from the totality of seeds derived from the habitual tendencies of perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields.

The two kinds of selflessness are selflessness of individuals, as no phenomena whatsoever can be established as “I” or “mine,” and the selflessness of phenomena, as transcendence of all extremes of propositions, such as existence and nonexistence.

Some of these five phenomena, etc., may be grouped together [with the three natures]. Linguistic and rational phenomena have imputational nature because the imputations of appearances as subject-object dichotomies within acts of

speaking and thinking are not [existent in] truth. The eight consciousnesses have other-powered nature because they become the basis for the multiplicity of appearances as conventional designations which are conceptualizations. The two kinds of selflessness [are thoroughly established nature] because they are [the absolute] just-as-is.}¹³⁰

(b) The surpassing of the Mahayana over the Hinayana on the strength of path and result comes from the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara (Mahayana Sutra Ornament)* XIX, 59-60:

Superior in focus,
Likewise, in twofold accomplishment,
In gnosis, in undertaking perseverance,
In skillful methods,
Superior in complete accomplishment,
Superior in buddha activity;
By reason of these seven superiorities,
The Mahayana is called the Great Vehicle.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 2, line 1: “Focus” is “superior” because the focus is on an immeasurably vast number of phenomena in the Sutras, *etc.* “Accomplishment” is superior because the “twofold accomplishment” is benefit for both oneself and others. “Gnosis” is superior because at the time of realization, there is knowledge of both kinds of selflessness. “Undertaking perseverance” is superior because it is performed with sincere devotion continuously for three incalculable eons. “Skillful methods” are superior because samsara (cycle of existence) is not completely abandoned, yet emotional and conceptual disturbances are completely removed. “Complete accomplishment” is “superior” because the [ten] powers and [four] fearlessnesses¹³¹ of unadulterated buddha-dharma are completely accomplished. “Buddha activity” is “superior” because superior manifest perfection of bodhi-mind and great nirvana (transcendence of suffering) are demonstrated perfectly over and over again. With these “seven superiorities,” the “Mahayana” is truly its namesake “Great Vehicle”.}¹³²

The first five [superiorities] go with the vehicle’s path; the latter two

superiorities of benefit to both oneself and others go with the vehicle's result. There is not just one method of categorizing the superiorities, as many have been spoken of, yet [all of] them can be known through inclusion within these [seven]. These [seven] may also be included within the two superiorities of compassion and wisdom. Accordingly, by way of both canon and path and result, Mahayana is the ultimate.

(c) [Objection:] If demonstrating the distinction in canon and philosophy between the two [Mahayana and Hinayana] is sufficient, why is [the distinction in] path and result necessary? Conversely, why would demonstrating the path and result [alone] not be sufficient?

[Reply:] Adherents of the shravaka canon say that the Buddha never spoke the vast Mahayana canon such as the hundred thousand "other" [canonical texts], which are not recognized by them. In order to refute [them], the distinctions of canon and philosophy have been made. Accordingly, the Mahayana has been compiled as [part of] the canon, and is now [accepted as] buddha intent.¹³³

Some Mahayanists, after they start studying the canon, say that they could never revert to shravakas (listeners) and pratyekabuddhas (self-buddhas). In order to counter this mistaken notion, the distinctions of path and result were demonstrated, since even after adopting Mahayana philosophy, without the seven superiorities, one's own mind could still revert to being a shravaka.¹³⁴

Four Divisions of Surpassing [in Path and Result]

The four divisions [of Mahayana surpassing Hinayana] take the positions of (1) three paths and three results, (2) one path and three results, (3) one path and one result, and (4) three paths and one result.

Three Paths and Three Results

The first is the assertion made by Asanga and others.¹³⁵ Through [the practice of] the shravaka [Hinayana] canon, [the levels of] arhat (defeater of negativism) and pratyekabuddha (self-buddha) may be attained; through [the practice of] the Mahayana canon, [the level of] buddha may be attained. In Mahayana, these three kinds of paths are described, since it is taught that in deviating onto [the first two of] these paths, [potential bodhisattvas or even buddhas] could turn into shravakas [or arhats] and pratyekabuddhas.

One Path and Three Results

The second is [the assertion made by] Chandrakirti that [the result of] arhat cannot be attained through the shravaka philosophy [or mode of practice].¹³⁶ Through the philosophy of the Mahayana,¹³⁷ the three kinds [of results are all eventually] liberating; shravaka philosophy is intended as just provisional meaning [that eventually leads to the bodhisattva level] in the Mahayana.¹³⁸

One Path and One Result

For the third, some assert that in reliance [solely] on the Mahayana path and given the right circumstances, only one result can be accomplished, ultimate buddha.

Three Paths and One Result

The fourth is the assertion of some scholars that, in accord with the *Saddharma Pundarika (True Dharma White Lotus) Sutra*, etc., and in reference to the parable of a householder [who sews a jewel into the robe of a drunk],¹³⁹ given the right circumstances all three paths ultimately [lead to] buddha, as stated in the *Lankavatara (Journey to Lanka) Sutra* LVI, 209-210:

After attainment of a samadhi body,
Awakening cannot occur for a whole eon,
In analogy with a person intoxicated
Who cannot sober-up for a whole lifetime.
In that way, they [eventually] become my [buddha] body,
Attainment of which is called buddha-dharma.¹⁴⁰

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 3, line 1: Shravakas [seek to] attain [the level of] arhat, as they are terrified of life; yet because they do not have the [necessary] methods and wisdom, [shravakas] are unable to attain the most important aspect of nirvana. When a lifetime of being tossed about by the force of past [actions] has come to an end, [shravakas attain a type of transcendence of suffering] given the name “nirvana like the extinguishing of a lamp.” Those able to pass beyond rebirth in the three [impure transitory] realms,¹⁴¹ through their mental [training] in transference [of consciousness] at death, will soon be in a state of equilibrium in a realm free of disturbance [to the mind]. At that moment, rebirth will occur in a lotus blossom in a completely pure [yet ultimately] transitory realm; [this is what is meant by] “after attainment of a samadhi body.” “In analogy with a person intoxicated” with alcohol “who cannot sober-up,” [a shravaka] drunk on

meditation passes out, unable to sober up “for a whole” eon. After a [sufficient] passage of time, Buddhas such as Amitabha were able to awaken [those with a samadhi body] after eliminating all defects in their knowledge, just as an intoxicated person is [eventually] able to awaken, after generating the bodhi-mind [devoted to enlightenment in order to benefit all sentient beings] through the [two] accumulations [of merit and wisdom], thereby [eventually] becoming buddha. In the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*, after answering the question about the reason for [using] conceptualization [in practice], and subsequent to taking empowerment, then:

{So here, what is the conceptualization?}
After generating bodhi-mind
In order to benefit all sentient beings,
Reliance on the practice of the sixth perfection
Is just that conceptualization.¹⁴²}

This tradition [the fourth] and the position of one path and one result [the third] are essentially the same, and I accept these as [ultimately] valid. The first two traditions can [also] be established as [buddha] intent through canonical sources and reasoning.¹⁴³ Accordingly, the actual path is the Mahayana that has the four surpassings [in canon, philosophy, path, and result, regardless of the division in number of paths and results]. These traditions have been explained extensively and clearly in the *Yuktisastika (Reasoning in Sixty Stanzas)*,¹⁴⁴ *Ratnavali (Garland of Jewels)*,¹⁴⁵ *Mahayana Uttaratantra (Unsurpassed Continuum of the Mahayana)*,¹⁴⁶ *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Great Vairochana) Tantra*,¹⁴⁷ etc.

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 25, line 2: [Objection:] What is meant when it is said that the first two methods [of the four divisions of paths and results above numbered 1 through 4 below] are proven as [provisional] intent through (a) canon and (b) reasoning?

[Reply:] (1a) For those who assert three paths and three results, they want [to start] training on the shravaka level, then progress to training in prajna paramita (perfection of analytic wisdom). The canonical justification comes from the *Saddharma Pundarika (True Dharma White Lotus) Sutra*:

I started with a single vehicle and in this way explained the dharma to sentient beings. All buddhist vehicles ultimately lead to omniscience. There is no second or third vehicle. [148](#)

(1b) The intent is accomplished through reasoning as in the *Madhyamakavatara (Entrance into the Middle Way)* VI, 79-80:

Those who are outside of the tradition of Nagarjuna
Have no method for tranquility.
For them, the relative and absolute truths degenerate;
With that degeneration, liberation cannot be accomplished.

{Conventional truth becomes the method
And absolute truth derives from the method;
Those who do not understand the distinction between the two
Enter a misguided path through mistaken thinking.} [149](#)

and as in the *Uttaratantra (Unsurpassed Continuum)* 84:

Why is it [known as] dharmakaya, tathagata,
Noble truth, absolute nirvana?
Because the qualities cannot be separated, like the sun and sunlight,
{There is no nirvana apart from buddha.} [150](#)

(2b) The assertion of one path and three results is stated in the *Madhyamakavatara (Entrance into the Middle Way)* I, 8:

{From the perspective of complete bodhi-mind on the first [bodhisattva level],
The growth in the power of merit has overcome
The [position of the] pratyekabuddhas, as expressed by the Able One [Shakyamuni Buddha];}
That becomes even exceedingly greater on [the seventh level called] Far Beyond. [151](#)

and in the auto-commentary:

{With the correct understanding in just this way
That transmigration does not in truth exist,}

A nirvana (transcendence of suffering) [is reached] where there is no dwelling [in this present life] and no taking [of rebirth for the purpose of benefiting others],

Like a fire that exhausts its source [fuel].¹⁵²

{ Yet bodhisattvas through their [greater] insight

And the [overwhelming] wish for certain bodhi,

Make the interconnections [from one life to the next] until bodhi [is reached]

Solely on [the strength of] compassion. }

It is explicitly explained in the *Ratnavali (Garland of Jewels)* as implied in canonical sources that after attainment of the remainderless nirvana of the shravakas (listeners) and pratyekabuddhas (self-buddhas), there is no taking of rebirth; this is the explanation for three ultimate results.

(3b and 4b) Now, the [definitive] intent of a single ultimate vehicle is proven by this quotation from the Result Chapter [written] by the venerable Chandrakirti himself [*Madhyamakavatara (Entrance into the Middle Way)* XI, 45-47]:

So, just like an expert who perfectly planned and built a beautiful city

As a rest-stop for caravans [crossing the desert] to the country of treasures,¹⁵³

Here, while your [three] vehicles provide a method for tranquility for the minds

Of [struggling] students, you spoke otherwise [of a single vehicle] to the adeptly trained retreatants.¹⁵⁴ }

The Venerable Lama [Kunga Nyingpo] did not express this delineation of the actual path,¹⁵⁵ because it had been explained elsewhere. [However, I] find it necessary to write about [this topic] in this chapter. Why is it necessary? When divisions in the path are made without establishing any basis for the division, and without [demonstrating] any commonality of the paths, the resulting division is not compelling. Guhyamantra and Paramita are both Mahayana, and when the commonality of Mahayana is not understood, incorrect ideas result.

In this Snow Country [Tibet], some followers of Guhyamantra¹⁵⁶ [as nonmonastics] and some shravakas [as monastics] profess allegiance to the Mahayana, but are too narrow-minded about what the Mahayana is, and [the latter] see as immodest and shameless acts [described] in the Guhyamantra¹⁵⁷

literature. Accordingly, in order to clarify these mistaken notions, the basis for the divisions is discussed in this chapter.¹⁵⁸

Chapter 3

Divisions of the Mahayana Path

The Mahayana that surpasses other [vehicles]

Has two divisions: Paramita and Guhyamantra.

These two correspond to trainees with dull and sharp faculties,

As well as path and result, distance and proximity, commonality and secrecy [respectively];

This [distinction] is well-known and proven by reasoning and canonical source.

Accordingly, the Mahayana is known as [either] common or mantra.

Here there are two [provisional] explanations for one [definitive] ultimate,

[Which those with] coarse intellect say is contradictory.

The result is explained according to each tradition.

By which method there is attainment [of the result] is uncertain,

As the Universal Light¹⁵⁹ result of the Paramita path

For many Tantras is not the ultimate result;

This is clarified in the root Mukhagama, its commentaries, and other [sources].

Divisions of the [Mahayana] path has four subtopics: (1) basis for divisions, (2) purpose of divisions, (3) number of divisions, and (4) significance of the names.

Basis for Divisions

The basis for the [two] Mahayana divisions is both textual tradition [or canon], and path and result, as was explained above [in chapter 2].

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 53, line 1: [In one respect,] there is no distinction among all Mahayana paths, Sutra and Tantra, as they are all buddha paths with respect to the wish [to attain] complete bodhi for the benefit of all sentient beings.}

Purpose of Divisions

There are two divisions in the Mahayana: Paramita Mahayana (Transcendent Vehicle) and Guhyamantra Mahayana (Immanent Secret Mantra Vehicle). The Mahayana that does not have the four specialties¹⁶⁰ is called Paramitayana. That which does have the four specialties is called Guhyamantrayana. These two paths do not exclude and do not contradict one another. The division is between generalized and specialized, and between having and not having the four specialties. The generalized is Paramitayana, because it is common to both paths. The specialized is Vajrayana [Guhyamantrayana], because it has the [four] specialties that are profound and vast and not known within the other. The distinction between the two is explained in detail below.

Number of Divisions

[The number] two paths and two results is certain, each of which can be proven through both reasoning and canonical source.

Reasoning for Two Paths

The justification for certainty of two paths is that in general, all dharma is explained in consideration of the individual as the basis for training, with two types of trainees [identified]. Generally speaking, a person with few emotions has a weak desire for specialization [in training] and wishes [to accomplish] bodhi through renunciation. In consideration of this person of [relatively] dull intellect, Paramitayana was explained. Someone with strong emotions has a great desire for specialization [in training] and is unable [to practice] renunciation. In consideration of this person of sharp intellect, who desires [to accomplish] unsurpassed bodhi-mind, Guhyamantrayana was explained.

[Objection:] If the Guhyamantra [practitioner] is said to have very strong emotions, then does that not indicate a lesser status and contradict the [supposed] superiority of Guhyamantra?

[Reply:] A person who has very strong emotions is not relegated to a lesser status, for a lesser status [would only be justified if the practitioner] was unable to rely on antidotes. Since [reliance on antidotes] can overcome very strong emotions, that is a powerful method, as stated in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara* (*Mahayana Sutra Ornament*):

For one who uses powerful methods,
Emotions become branches of bodhi-mind;
Buddha sons (bodhisattvas) have inconceivable [methods]
To pacify cyclic existence. [161](#)

For example, if you have nothing other than a [figuratively] small fire as an antidote, you are unable to rely on a big stick to burn up [emotions]; a very big stick will burn up [very strong emotions] with a big fire as an antidote, as the blazing fire becomes a reliable tool.

[Objection:] What if within the two, Paramitayana and Guhyamantrayana, there were methods for three levels of emotions, strong, medium, [and weak]? Then would not the specific correspondence be uncertain?

[Reply:] There is no contradiction in the present [twofold] division for individual [differences]; since [generally] two types of persons are certain, then two paths are also certain.

Canonical Sources for Two Paths

The Bhagavan revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

This Mahayana is the Great Vehicle encompassing the bodhisattva path and result. Accordingly, the application of the seven superiorities [162](#) is accomplished in the Paramita Sutras. The specialization of the Vajrayana surpasses that, as it has excellent features that enable the accomplishment of buddha in the present lifetime. [163](#)

Buddhaguhya stated in his *Summary of Vairochana's Enlightenment*:

The best benefit for both oneself and others has been taught in Sutras as Paramita practice, and [in Tantras] as Guhyamantra practice. [164](#)

{Notes from Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 25, line 5: As stated in the *Charya Melapaka Pradipa (Lamp that Integrates the Practices)* XI:

To accord with those who have lesser aspirations, a complete practice free of passion was taught. To accord with those who have greater aspirations, the practices of the perfections and levels were taught. To accord with those who have profound aspirations, a complete practice with passions was taught.

In Master Shantipa's *Commentary*:

To accord with those who have lesser aspirations, the Shravakayana was taught. To accord with those who have greater aspirations, the Paramitayana was taught. To accord with those who have profound aspirations, the Vajrayana was taught.} [165](#)

Reasoning for Two [Circumstantial] Results

The reasoning for two [circumstantial] results is the principle that a specific cause has a specific result, as for example, millet [is used for making beer] and wild rice [is used for food]. When there are two paths, there are [of necessity] two [circumstantial] results.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 40, line 4: Here the eleventh through thirteenth levels have special properties; earlier lamas asserted that there are three special properties: (1) object of elimination, (2) object of attainment, and (3) basis for purification.

(1) With respect to the special property of object of elimination, the Paramitayana cannot eliminate a very subtle imperfection of knowledge, [166](#) in which there appears to be a difference between samsara and [pure buddha] fields. This difference no longer appears on the thirteenth level.

(2) With respect to the object of attainment, by the eleventh level, all phenomena of samsara and nirvana are not perceived as a single flavor in the space of the incomprehensibility of mind just-as-is. That perception is made on the thirteenth level.

(3) With respect to the basis for purification, when bioenergy and [associated] mind in [all] thirty-two conductors are dissolved into the central conductor, the realization of the thirteenth level arises. This essential interdependency of the immediate cause is necessary for manifestation [of the thirteenth level]. Since

Paramita does not have the interdependency of the immediate cause and does not have the vision of the three realms as the essence of the mudra birthplace, without these the incomprehensible state cannot be attained. Since Guhyamantra does overcome all without exception [through] the interdependency of the immediate cause, it is superior.¹⁶⁷}

Canonical Sources for Two [Circumstantial] Results

As revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

In this life, either buddha or Vajrasattva can be attained. For someone who has not [yet] attained the incomprehensible state, [the result is] sugata or buddha; the indicated basis [or definitive result] is indicated by perfect Vajrasattva.¹⁶⁸

When the elimination [of all imperfection] has not been fully accomplished, that is the Paramita result [when a bodhisattva approximates sugata¹⁶⁹ or buddha]. When all [buddha qualities] are manifested, that is the Vajrayana [or Vajrasattva] result. Refer to the extensive resources of both reasoning and canon for a deeper understanding.

{Yeshe Gyaltsen, page 495, line 2: “In this life, either buddha or Vajrasattva can be attained.” For some, gnosis is appearance-as-is of all knowable objects, such that appearance-as-is is emptiness and gnosis-as-is is appearance. Further, emptiness-as-is is appearance. When all are brought together at one time, these are called the “incomprehensible state.” When [realization of the intrinsic nature of phenomena] just-as-is is “not [yet] attained,” “that is sugata or buddha,” the eleventh level known in Paramita. The “indicated basis” is the thirteenth level of Vajradhara, the indicator is “perfect Vajrasattva.”¹⁷⁰}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 27, line 2: To explain that deeper understanding there are three topics: (1) timespan for accomplishment, (2) what is actually accomplished, and (3) explanation of the distinction [between buddha and Vajrasattva].

(1) [The timespan for accomplishment] comes from the *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra*:

Upon entering Guhyamantrayana,
Buddha [can be achieved] in this lifetime.[171](#)

and the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

[Here,] individuals can accomplish buddha,
And nowhere else.

(2) Accomplishment of buddha and accomplishment of Vajrasattva come from
the *Mahamudra Tilaka (Essence of the Great Seal) Tantra XXVIII*:

Complete knowledge of all phenomena
Is definitively buddha.
With supreme knowledge of mahamudra
Comes glorious Vajrasattva.[172](#)

(3) [The explanation of the distinction] comes from the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

Gnosis is the appearance-as-is of everything that can be known whatever it is, such as birth. Appearance-as-is is gnosis; gnosis-as-is is appearance, yet is emptiness; emptiness-as-is is appearance. These are engaged all at one time, so no distinction between them can be comprehended. If that just-as-is cannot be fully realized, that is sugata or buddha which is engagement on the eleventh level, [the highest] known to the Paramita.[173](#)

In other words as revealed in the *Mahamudra Tilaka (Essence of the Great Seal) Tantra XXVIII*:

Someone who does not know mahamudra
Is a buddha, not a yogi.[174](#)

In the *Commentary*:[175](#)

Someone who does not know mahamudra is a Bhagavan buddha, not a great yogi, and is without knowledge of the great Vajrasattva.¹⁷⁶

Manifestation of gnosis is the indicated basis of the thirteenth level of Vajradhara, for which the indicator is called perfect Vajrasattva.

As is said in the *Samputa Tantra Continuation*:

When a scent elephants eats fragrant ketaka flowers, they turn into actual musk. When common elephants eat them, they turn into actual dung. This is not a fault of the ketaka flowers. In the same way, through the application of a special meditation to the sequential purification of passion, and other [emotions], a superior result matures. {For example, if milk is drunk by a snake, it turns into actual poison; alternatively, if milk is drunk by a human, it develops into actual nectar.}¹⁷⁷

Son of a Noble Family, since the nature of special meditations on passion have no inadmissible transgressions, through their practice actual superior results can come about. Actual superior results can come about through [the practice of] one or another of the superior Tantras. {As in the example of the ketaka flowers, a superior sequential practice¹⁷⁸ can purify the nature of passion.}¹⁷⁹

The union with nothing more to learn, called Vajradhara, has three inseparable characteristics: (1) dharmakaya as a nonconceptual presence sealed with clear light, (2) sambhogakaya that acts to enjoy the taste of dharma by [assuming] the form of the great Vajradhara to the bodhisattvas on the tenth level, and (3) nirmanakaya that exhibits multiple manifestations to [bodhisattvas on] the ninth level and below, and to the pure among ordinary people, as in the *Pancakrama (Five Stages)* I, 6:

Remaining in the samadhi of union

There is no more training of any kind as before.¹⁸⁰

From a *Commentary*:¹⁸¹

Then, the practitioner arises as if awakening from sleep. On the strength of the habitual tendency of a mind committed since beginningless time [to attain buddha for the benefit of all sentient beings], just on the nature of that, [the practitioner's mind] remains in the samadhi of the undifferentiable union of the relative and absolute [truths], the union of perceptible form and non-perceptible form, the union of blending and binding. Arising from that samadhi and remaining in one-pointed concentration, the practitioner displays miracles as long as samsara

exists and teaches progressively the multitude of dharmas and works for the benefit of sentient beings through superior samadhis. This is the ultimate, called no more training whatsoever, because it is the attainment of the dharmadhatu (dharma space) gnosis that makes definitive the result without any projection of object acted upon, action, and actor.

Limitless buddha capacities may be delineated, such as the powers, the five gnosés such as the mirrorlike, and many enumerations of characteristics, such as abiding in the manner of the two truths and a form that generates great knowledge of nondual gnosis.¹⁸²}

[Resolution of Objections]

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 31, line 5: [Objection:] Given that what is called buddha is the highest of elimination and realization [as defined in chapter 1], how could it be correct [to attempt] to progress even higher?

[Reply:] There is no mistake [in wanting to progress higher]. There are many stages and levels in the realization of buddha, as stated in the *Madhyamaka Vatara (Entrance into the Middle Way) I, 1*:

Shravakas and midlevel buddhas [pratyekabuddhas] arise from the Able

One [Shakyamuni],

{Buddhas arise from bodhisattvas;

A compassionate mind, wisdom of nonduality,

And bodhi-mind are the source of the Conqueror's descendents [bodhisattvas].¹⁸³}

This quotation explains three levels of buddha: high, average, [and low]; the highest level buddha is Vajradhara, as in the *Mukhagama (Manjughosa's Speech) Commentary* by Master Vitapada:

There is no transgression [in seeking to become] superior to the gods; bodhisattvas are superior to them, buddhas are superior [to bodhisattvas], and the great Vajradhara who has the seven unions¹⁸⁴ is superior [to buddhas].¹⁸⁵

Accordingly, in Paramita one cannot progress higher than the result of its own path which is complete awakening on the eleventh level, as there is no other result that is higher [in Paramita] than that intent. This is the same as how

buddha is explained to shravakas and pratyekabuddhas.

[Objection:] Yet, does this not contradict the statement in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

... So liberation is a singularity... [186](#)

[Reply:] There is no mistake. For example, just as it is necessary for arhats to enter the Mahayana path, an individual who has entered the Paramita path must eventually enter the Guhyamantra path in order to accomplish the [seven] unions of Vajradhara, since it is the ultimate of all paths, as stated in the *Mukhagama (Exalted Speech)*:

In contrast to a path of suffering for three eons, [187](#)
Equivalent to that superlative bodhi, [188](#)
{Upon attainment [of which], accumulation by the yogi
Of even a little ecstasy is not hard.
As it is a step higher than the intellect
Of devotion, effort, samadhi, wisdom, and mindfulness,
The only object of meditation is this path
Of supreme Samantabhadra, the source of [true] happiness.} [189](#)

As in the *Pancakrama (Five Stages)*:

Someone who does not train in these aspects
Cannot quickly attain the [ultimate] result. [190](#)

Therefore ultimately, the Guhyamantra path alone leads to [complete] liberation, as stated in the *Pancakrama (Five Stages) V, 28*:

Among buddhas as many as
The number of sand grains in the Ganges River,
Those that have eliminated [any idea of] existence and nonexistence from entering their mind

Have accomplished the essence of mahamudra.¹⁹¹

The accomplishment of the Vajradhara union of the Guhyamantra path is impossible to attain without dependence on the path of immediate cause, as stated by Master Shridhara:¹⁹²

Here the unsurpassed prescribed method
Is with the knowledge consort of all buddhas;
Someone who is ignorant just passes over it
And thereby cannot achieve the supreme accomplishment.

As stated by Dharikapa:¹⁹³

Other methods cannot attain buddha...

Accordingly, it is proper to have engaged in Paramita prior to the Guhyamantra path. By means of that [Paramita path], the levels can be traversed up through the tenth. Upon even just a little reliance on the immediate cause activity,¹⁹⁴ momentarily the two hidden levels [eleventh and twelfth] and the final half-level will be traversed, manifesting the Vajradhara level [thirteenth].

[Objection:] So does that mean that there is an imperfection in not being able to [completely] eliminate [defilements] on the Paramita path?

[Reply:] It does. Even in Tantras such as the *Samputa* statements are not conclusive, so what of the explanations of the Paramitayana? The *Samdhi Nirmocana (Explanation of the Definitive Intent) Sutra* explains that there are both obscurations and errant residual proclivities on the eleventh level.¹⁹⁵

[Objection:] Does meditation on the path of Ritual, Conduct, and Yoga Tantras result in attainment of the Vajradhara union?

[Reply:] No, it does not result in attainment. In Master Buddhajnanapada's *Mukhagama (Manjughosa's Speech)*:

Who among ordinary people
Comprehends the supreme gnosis.

Shravakas do not comprehend,
{And pratyekabuddhas also do not comprehend,}
Yogacara and Madhyamaka.
Bodhisattvas do not comprehend;
Even amongst the highest of all buddhas
There is a little incomprehension.¹⁹⁶

As stated in the *Least Part Commentary*:¹⁹⁷

[In this context,] the highest buddhas are the buddhas of the Ritual, Conduct, and Yoga Tantras.

In summary, there can be no Guhyamantra path without having first proceeded through the Paramita path, and there can be no attainment of the thirteenth level result without dependence on the [Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra] Guhyamantra path.}

Significance of the Names [of the Divisions]

The names of the paths are indicative of the practice of Paramita and the practice of Guhyamantra. [The same is true] for Mahayana and Vajrayana, and for Bodhisattva Corpus and Vidyadhara Corpus [of the canon]. The pairs of names may be understood as either general or specific. If nothing more than the general [is to be indicated], then the names are general; in order to be more specific, specific names are used. An analogy is the distinction between copper [general] and a copper pot [specific].

In order to understand how this is so, [take the example] from the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

Reliance on the practice of the sixth perfection
Is just that conceptualization.¹⁹⁸

The [sixth] analytical wisdom perfection [referred to here] is [in the context of] Guhyamantra; hence, it refers to the great knowledge woman of Guhyamantra as revealed from the consort of the Conqueror.¹⁹⁹

Accordingly, names can have great significance, such as Groundless Vehicle and Non-Groundless Vehicle, Causal Vehicle and Resultant Vehicle, Common Mahayana and Uncommon Mahayana. The explanation of the significance of these names can be found in chapter 4 on specific characteristics [of the path].

Chapter 4

Specific Characteristics of the Path

The two parts of the Mahayana are [distinguished by] renunciation and nonrenunciation of the ground.

The ground can be approached through five determinants:

*Source, condition, location, complete application, and total environment.*²⁰⁰

In this chapter, [the only determinant is] the source of conditions, the five sense objects of desire.

Given a distinction in method [between renunciation and nonrenunciation],

Ground is so called because it creates both samsara and nirvana [cyclic existence and its transcendence].

Initially, experience of [sense] objects generates conspicuous attachment.

From that, a profusion of conceptualizations arises

As (1) lack of pure awareness, (2) craving, and (3) grasping, the conceptual and emotive part of all defilements.

Next, the committing of actions is (4) volitions and (5) becomings;

These are the action part of all defilements.

Next, the seven steps in the generation part of all defilements

[Give birth to] the six [kinds of] living beings: (6) consciousness,

(7) Name and form, (8) six sources [of sense perception], (9) contact,

(10) Feeling, (11) birth, and (12) aging and death.

Through these twelve steps combined into three groups [of defilements],

Cyclic existence revolves again and again in the lives [of sentient beings];

This is called the interdependence of all defilements.

Through recognition of the true nature of the initial experience of objects,

Through the end of conspicuous attachment, the lack of pure awareness ceases.

Likewise, [everything] up to aging and death also ceases;

This is called the interdependence of purification.

For this reason, [sense] objects on their surface can be the cause for either bondage or liberation;

Yet with no fundamental difference [with respect to sense objects themselves],

Bondage and liberation are determined by changing conditions.

Through realization that the sufferings of cyclic existence

Derive from actions and emotions, by distinguishing objects and defilements,

Objects are seen as poison and the enemy.

Separating from them makes that perception a meditation of ecstasy.

The vows of discipline make the self-centered mind uncondusive [to conspicuous attachment].

Through studying and analyzing, the nature of [sense] objects is discerned.

For the passionate, ugliness; for the analytical, counting breaths;

For the angry, loving kindness; for the confused, the path of interdependence.

Further, through meditation on the absolute, there is complete elimination.

After completely enveloping living beings with great compassion,

The practice of the Paramita path is the ten perfections.

A person who belongs to the Mahayana family

With commitment takes refuge in the Three Jewels;

Through the vows of intending and entering the generation [of bodhi-mind], the continuum[of mind] is bound.

Method and wisdom are accomplished through generosity, etc., [followed by] commitment and activities.

Entering the faultless is the first level of the path of seeing;

Bringing sentient beings to complete maturation [goes up to] the seventh level.

Pure realms and indeterminate transcendence of suffering,

After these two are the three [final] irreversible levels.

Manifest bodhi-mind is the demonstration of nirvana (transcendence).

These are the ten stages of the path, and the realization of the result.

Since in dependence on the six perfections there is crossing over to the other shore [of the unity of] becoming and quiescence,

This is called the Paramitayana (Cross-Over Vehicle).

Since in dependence on this [path] even the most determined

Linger for three incalculable eons or more, [this is also called] the Hetuyana (Cause-Based Vehicle).

Since for a person who possesses passionate means

[Sense] objects are an aid to giving rise to gnosis,

The Tantras extol [with mantras] reliance on [sense] objects.

Since the objects themselves are not binding,

And the revertible thoughts dependent on them are binding,

The best method is to eliminate the thoughts [and not the objects]

Through skill in the specialized methods of the generation and completion [processes].

The gradual elimination of what must be eliminated turns those [sense objects] into aids.

Because it protects [the mind] from deterministic characteristics and thoughts, this [vehicle] is called Guhyamantra.

Since in conferring the transformation of the three doors [ordinary body, speech, and mind] into the three vajras [enlightened body, speech, and mind],

[Both] path and result are traversed, [this vehicle is also called] the Vajrayana (Indestructible Vehicle).

Since this meditation is on aspects of the result and approximates the result,

This [vehicle] is [also] called the Palayana (Resultant Vehicle).

After learning about divisions of the path, in order to clearly understand them, specific characteristics will be explained. First, the path of Paramitayana will be outlined, since it is the common or basic path. Next, Guhyamantra will be outlined, in order to show specialization with respect to [Paramitayana].

Paramitayana

The four subtopics are (1) delineation of the ground that can turn into either samsara (cyclic existence) or nirvana (its transcendence), (2) method of

practicing the path by renunciation of the ground, (3) outline of the path of Paramitayana, and (4) length of time on the path to accomplish the result, once the causal vehicle has been established.

Delineation of the Ground of Cyclic Existence and Its Transcendence

The two subtopics are (1) characteristics of the ground and (2) the ground as the common source for the creation of both cyclic existence and its transcendence.

Characteristics of the Ground

Generally, ground can be approached through five determinants: source, condition, proximity, preliminary, and situation. Here, we will just do the source of the conditions. What is the source? In detail, there are many, such as the perceptual composites, elements, and fields; but in brief, there are the five sense objects of desire. How can [the ground be] summarized as the five? Mind is the creator of [both] cyclic existence and its transcendence. The objects [of mind] are [traditionally] either six or twelve in number,²⁰¹ yet just the five [sense objects] are the ground, as there are none that do not pertain to these five.

The Ground as the Common Source for the Creation of Both [Cyclic Existence and Its Transcendence]

[Objection:] So is the ground common to both cyclic existence and its transcendence or [is transcendence] separate [from the ground]?

[Reply:] It is in common.

[Objection:] Yet isn't transcendence the renunciation of desire for the ground so that [the ground] could not be in common [with transcendence]?

[Reply:] Renunciation is indeed correct, yet since renunciation requires objects [to renounce], that makes the ground [in common] with transcendence, as in the *Abhidharmakosha (Manifest Dharma Treasury)* I, 7-8:

{Composite phenomema include
Form and the other of the five perceptual aggregates.}
These are the ground of the passage of time and talk,
In association with renunciation, in association with the ground.

{These conditioned phenomena
That are characterized by defilements represent a struggle,}
[Attendant] with suffering, its origin, transitory existence,
A situational perspective, and [engendering] life.[202](#)

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 4, line 1: The “five perceptual aggregates” are “composite phenomena”; and since they have passed by, do move on, and will pass away, and since they are consumed by impermanence, they represent “the passage of time.” “Talk” is speech, which is the enunciation of the essence of letters. The “ground” or mother [of talk] is words. Together with meanings that are expressed with this word and that word, this is the “ground” of “talk.” Since the “ground” together with meaning is spoken, that composite [phenomena] is the “ground” of “talk.” The transcendence that eliminates all composite phenomena without exception is the “renunciation.” Since all phenomena are to be eliminated, [composite phenomena] are “in association with renunciation.” Since there is an associated cause, [composite phenomena] are “in association with the ground.”

“Suffering” refers to the emotive five perceptual aggregates that are composites in suffering, in disharmony with the Noble Ones. “Origin” refers to the origin of suffering. “Transitory existence” refers to transitoriness and degeneration. “A situational perspective” is the situation that comes about through the expansion of the [self-centered] perspective of me and mine. “Life” is when these five perceptual aggregates are put into action through birth and origin.}

Ground for Cyclic Existence

To begin [the twelvefold chain of interdependent causation], the way in which the ground for cyclic existence is enacted is first just by experiencing the sense object. Nonrecognition of the true nature of that [sense object], through clinging to [the idea of] I and mine, generates conspicuous attachment. Dependent on that, the profusion of conceptualizations arises, called (1) lack of pure awareness [or nescience], (2) craving, and (3) grasping. These [three] are the conceptual and emotive part of all defilements [afflictions and affectations of mind].

Dependent on those are the committing of virtuous and nonvirtuous actions, [called] (4) volitions [or predispositions] and (5) becomings [or impulses]. These

two are the action part of all defilements.

From those [actions] come living beings, [who then experience] the seven sufferings called (6) consciousness, (7) name and form, (8) six sources [of sense perception], (9) contact, (10) feeling, (11) birth, and (12) aging and death. These seven are the generation part of all defilements.²⁰³

These twelve stages of becoming [life] in cyclic existence are grouped into [the categories of] three defilements, as in the *Lalitavistara (Play of Vast Parts) Sutra XIII*:

Those born by the power of unawareness and craving, becoming
Humans, gods, and [denizens of] the three lower existences,
Cycle through the five kinds of living beings;
Analogous to a potter's spinning wheel.²⁰⁴

Ground for Transcendence of Suffering

How does the transcendence of suffering arise from the [same] ground? There is first just the experience of the sense object. Then through analysis, the true nature of that [object] becomes known. Accordingly, attachment to that [object] does not conspicuously arise, and unawareness ceases. [Self-centered] actions are not committed; because actions are not committed, the generation part of all defilements does not occur, and the progressive descent [into suffering] ceases, as stated in the *Mula Madhyamaka Karika XXVI*, 11-12:

Unawareness ceases through knowledge
By meditation on just-as-is;

When sequential links come to cessation,
Subsequent links in the chain do not manifest.²⁰⁵
{The mass of suffering will thereby
Come to complete cessation.}

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 4, line 6: When “unawareness ceases,” compound actions cannot become the source [of suffering]. How does unawareness come to

cessation? Cessation comes from “meditation” on the incontrovertible nature “just-as-is” of the chain of interdependent causation. With perfect insight into the origin of interdependent causation, not even the tiniest speck of matter can have self-identity as a referential object. All materiality assumes the nature of emptiness as if [only] a reflected image. When engaged in this way, not even the subtlest phenomenon can become objectified. With nonobjectification, there can be no obscuration, and unawareness ceases. Absent obscuration, no [karma inducing] actions are taken, and compounded actions cease. Upon the cessation of unawareness, the “sequential links” leading to rebirth “come to cessation,” and the “subsequent links in the chain” of compounded actions leading to aging and death “do not manifest.”}

Ground for Both Cyclic Existence and Its Transcendence

Accordingly, there is no [pre]determination that objects just as they are will become the ground for only one of [either] cyclic existence or transcendence of suffering, as that would be conditioned on awareness-in-itself or lack of pure awareness. For example, a sword fought over by antagonists goes to the stronger. When a lotus flower²⁰⁶ is eaten by a white elephant, the dung produced does not smell; but when eaten by a black elephant, the dung produced does smell. Milk is nectar to a child, but poison to a snake; jewels when pierced through can be strung, but when not cannot be strung. As revealed in the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* II, ix, 9:

The precious five sense objects
Which are so desired in cyclic existence,
When impure, become poison,
When pure, become like nectar.²⁰⁷

Method of Practicing the Path by Renunciation of the Ground

The path of the Paramitayana is practiced by renunciation of the ground. First is (1) the perspective on uncondusive objects, then (2) the method of renunciation.

Perspective on Uncondusive Objects

A careful investigation into the sufferings of cyclic existence will result in revulsion. [Motivated] by revulsion, the search for the cause of this suffering will find that it derives from actions, which in turn derive from defilements [of mind] that are dependent on [sense] objects. Accordingly, [the conclusion is

reached that sense] objects are the cause of suffering, and generate uncondusive perceptions, which further are objects of dissatisfaction. There are many source quotations that express this, as in a Sutra:

Desires are like a poisonous leaf...

and from the *Shishya Lekha* (*Letter to a Trainee* by Chandragomin):

Objects are like poison, delightful when first experienced;

Objects are like poison, the fruit is unbearably bitter;

Objects are like poison, gloomy with obscuration by ignorance;

Objects are like poison, unpredictable and difficult to reverse the effect.²⁰⁸

Since so many [sense] objects are considered uncondusive [to enlightenment], develop the perception that freedom from desire is ecstasy.

Actual Method of Renunciation

Initially, after taking refuge in the Three Jewels out of fear of cyclic existence, renunciation is practiced by upholding the vows of discipline. Afterward, conviction comes through listening to [the reading of] scriptures, and thinking rationally, thereby gaining knowledge about the true nature of [sense] objects. Subsequently through meditation, all attachment to objects is eliminated.

There are two types of meditation, relative and absolute. [In the relative,] those with excessive passion meditate on the ugly side of beauty [for example, the “foulness” in a beautiful woman’s or man’s body]; those with excessive thoughts count breaths; those with anger and resentment meditate on love and the like; these practices are [intended] to stabilize the mind. Subsequently, the object of meditation is the four mindfulnesses that are an antidote to the four deceptions of purity, pleasure, permanence, and individual self-identity.²⁰⁹

Absolute meditation is renunciation through meditation that everything is devoid of true nature, as is said [in the *Shishya Lekha*]:

For the passionate and acquisitive in the three worlds,

Buddha spoke of the similitude with illusions, mirages, reflections, and apparitions.²¹⁰

[Objection:] If shravakas have a path that is just renunciation, how is Paramitayana superior?

[Reply:] It is true that [Paramitayana] has much in common with earlier paths, but also has later specializations in the path. Paramitayana does have just renunciation of the ground in common with shravakas, yet the Mahayana has features as explained above [in chapter 2] that are specializations in perspective and practice.

Outline of the Path of the Paramitayana

The two subtopics are (1) outline of the actual path itself and (2) method that brings the path to full realization.

Outline of the Actual Path

In general, there are an inconceivable number of different outlines of the path. Here at this time, they are grouped into the practice of the six perfections,²¹¹ into the source for the complete motivation for great compassion, and into the ten perfections that include the [four] practices subsequent to the perfection of analytical wisdom, as in the *Madhyanta Vibhaga (Middle Beyond Extremes)* V, 5:

Generosity, discipline, patience, perseverance,

Meditation, wisdom, method,

Intention, power, and gnosis:

These are known as the ten perfections.²¹²

In addition to these ten divisions, there are an inconceivable number of other outlines, such as the three trainings [discipline, meditation, and analytical wisdom], and the two accumulations [merit and gnosis], which can be referenced elsewhere.

Method That Brings the Path to Full Realization

There are ten steps as revealed in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara (Mahayana Sutra Ornament)* XIX, 61-62:

[Buddha] family, commitment to dharma,
Likewise, generation of [bodhi-]mind,
The performance of generosity, etc.,
Becoming the faultless,
Completely bringing all sentient beings to [spiritual] maturation,
Pure [buddha] realms,
Indeterminate [or nonlocalized] transcendence of suffering,
Supreme bodhi[-mind] and its demonstration.

There are also four steps [as revealed in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara XX, 41*]:

Attainment of the levels [starts with] commitment,
Then engagement in the pure activities,
Subsequent realization, through the entryway
Of accomplishing the levels: these are the four [steps].²¹³

By the names of these stages or levels, everything there is to explain about the generation of [bodhi-]mind and Paramita can be known. First, “family” refers to a fortunate source [a potential trainee]. When the source has thoroughly developed compassion and taken refuge in the Three Jewels, this is the “commitment to dharma.” Then, the ground for entrance into the practice is the “generation of [bodhi-]mind.” Next is the start of the actual Paramita practice, [“performance of generosity, etc.”]. The “four,” [starting] with “commitment” [verse 41], are the “levels [of] . . . activities.” Then, “becoming the faultless” bodhisattva is the attainment of the first [stage to the buddha] level. Next, “completely bringing all sentient beings to [spiritual] maturation” continues through the seventh level. Then, the [next] two, “pure [buddha] realms” and “indeterminate [or nonlocalized] transcendence of suffering” refer to the [final] three irreversible levels. These [ten stages] constitute the path. Then, “supreme bodhi and its demonstration” is the great nirvana and complete enlightenment, [followed by] working for the benefit of sentient beings as the result.²¹⁴

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 34, line 6: “Attainment” of

“commitment” to the Mahayana is the “level” of commitment activity. At the time of the level of commitment activity, there is “engagement” in the ten dharma “activities.” Clear realization of the space of all phenomena [begins] from the first [bodhisattva] level. Retention of the spontaneous accomplishment of gnosis [starts] from the eighth level. These four are the divisions in levels.}

In this way, by the practice of completely purifying the three rounds [of subject, object, and interaction, in the case of the act of giving, the giver, the gift, and the recipient] with the six perfections, one is able to reach the supreme buddha level; this is [what is meant by] Paramita (Cross-Over). Proceeding along this path is Yana (Vehicle) or proceeding to the result is Yana.

Length of Time on the Path to Accomplish the Result

How long will it take on this path to accomplish the result? Even for the best, accomplishment will take three incalculable eons;²¹⁵ for the average, thirty-six; for the slowest, an uncountable number. Accordingly, [even for someone who is a viable] source, [accomplishment] will take a very long time; hence, this is given the name “source [or causal] vehicle.” As the saying goes, a slow pace is no pace at all. Further, since a cause such as going to meet the lama [is intended to] accomplish a dissimilar result, such as [achieving the buddha] features of wheels on the hands and feet, for the present, the source has no similarity whatsoever with the result [or in other words, only at the actual moment of the result are the cause and result similar]. As the saying goes, the sprout is the source of barley.

This is enough for now. The result that is accomplished by this path has been explained above [in chapters 1-3]. This concludes the explanation of the common path, the delineation of Paramita.

Guhyamantrayana

The delineation of the second path [Guhyamantrayana] also has four subtopics: (1) practice of nonrenunciation of the ground, (2) delineation of Guhyamantra conduct, (3) delineation of the Vajrayana, and (4) following explanation of the length of time [required] to accomplish the result, delineation of the Palayana.

Practice of Nonrenunciation of the Ground

The three subtopics are (1) reason for nonrenunciation of the ground, (2) methods of nonrenunciation, and (3) manner of liberation.

Reason for Nonrenunciation of the Ground

The ground as explained above is the five sense objects of desire. Since these are the components of the ground, how can they be renounced? Further, how is a person who has a large amount of attachment capable of renunciation? [The answer is that] there is nothing to renounce, as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara* (*Vajra Canopy*) *Tantra* VIII:

Through passion the world is born... [216](#)
... Yet by this same passion, comes liberation.

And the *Guhyasamaja* (*Compilation of Secrets*) *Tantra* VII:

Since the passionate wish for gnosis,
[They must] always rely on the five benefits of desire. [217](#)

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 5, line 4: The “passionate” have attachment to the acquisition of material objects. Those who “wish for [nondual] gnosis” must rely on and train in all [conducive] activities. All sentient beings have “desire” for acquisition. The act of “relying on” and “always” training in all activities involving the “five” sense objects has “benefits,” and these “benefits” bestow buddha [awakening].}

Yet, how can one not be bound by these objects? Those without skillful methods are bound, as is the case with the average person. For those with skillful methods, the very [objects of desire] become aids to liberation, similar to poison and fire. Accordingly, sense objects are not intrinsically binding and are only binding because of revertible thoughts that are dependent on them. As a result, through eliminating the actual source of bondage [ordinary mind], sense objects become contributory to liberation, as revealed in the *Hevajra* (*Joyous Vajra*) *Tantra*, II, ii, 50:

The never-ending actions of humans

Become binding again and again;
With skillful methods, the very same
Become liberating from the bonds of existence.²¹⁸

What are the skillful methods that eliminate the source of bondage?

Methods of Nonrenunciation of the Ground

The two methods for nonrenunciation of the ground are gaining skill in (1) the generation process and (2) the completion process.

Generation Process

For the generation process,²¹⁹ there is gaining skill in the methods of (1) one's own primary deity and (2) individual [retinue] deities.

One's Own Primary Deity

Thorough richness of enjoyment [of existence] comes from the perception that whatever subject-object appearances there are, [all] are just oneself as one's own deity, as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra VII*:

For all desired enjoyments [of the five senses]
Rely on whatever is desired;
Make offerings to both oneself and others
Through the [meditation] practice of one's own deity.²²⁰

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 5, line 6: "All" five [sensual] riches of "desired enjoyments," in accord with "whatever" oneself desires and however pleasures are experienced with the five desired riches, "make offerings to both oneself and others through the meditation practice" in the nature "of one's own deity".}

In like manner, there are quotations from other sources. Given a focus on just these few [subject-object appearances that correspond to aspects of the primary deity], ordinary thoughts are reversed.

Individual Retinue Deities

In becoming skilled in the methods of the individual [retinue] deities, given that an endless number of fine distinctions in subject-object [appearances] have

been made, each one of the latter may be perceived as an individual [retinue] deity, as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra XVII*:

In summary, all [five] of the tathagatas
Overcome the five perceptual aggregates [one to each];
For the vajra fields [of sensual perception],
There is the supreme bodhisattva mandala.²²¹

and the *Hevajra Tantra I*, ix, 13(-14):

Form is well known as Gauri,
Sound is Chauri,
Smell is Vetali,
Taste is well-known as Ghasmari,
Touch is called Bhucari,
The space of [mental] phenomena is Khecari;
By their continual complete purity,
[Their] practitioners will accomplish that very [purity].²²²

For those who delight in a vast array [of phenomena of sensual experiences, meditation on the individual retinue deities] will completely destroy all emotions and conceptualizations [derived from] attachment to [both] common [experience], and holistic [experience]. Accordingly, the source of bondage is common emotions and conceptualizations; in perceiving the features of the [individual retinue] deities, ordinary [perception] is stopped, and all [defiled emotions and conceptualizations] are gradually eliminated.

Completion Process

For gaining skill in the methods of the completion process, any method that is suitable can be used,²²³ that generates a samadhi without conceptualization, and that transforms objects into “colors”²²⁴ to enable their complete fulfilling enjoyment, as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra Continuation*:

The practice of the completion process

Derives from wisdom and means;
Perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields are [divine] forms,
This mantra makes certain the application.²²⁵

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 6, line 2: Infinite expressions of mantra deities is “wisdom”; “means” is their unification as [representing] the absolute. “Perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields” “derive from” them [mantra deities] and are meditated upon as the “forms” of the deities. Developing from that is the “mantra,” which “makes certain the practice” of [perceiving] oneself [and all environments] as divine. By always maintaining the yoga of [divine] pride, all actions and defiling emotions and thoughts are confidently believed to be naturally pure, which eliminates all fear of defiling emotions and thoughts. This is similar to antelope having no fear of the lion; that fearless mind is a mantra so that everywhere [the antelope goes] it has a singular superiority, and [thereby] acts like the lion. How can there be confidence in the perfection of actions and emotions and thoughts? This is [through] the “completion process,” whereby any focus on the features of oneself as the deity, any focus on the environment of the earth, etc., is the “process” of infinite divine “completion” [or perfection]. The best “application” is keeping this in mind, which is confidence in complete purity. This is as expressed by Shantipa [Ratnakarashanti].}

Accordingly, the cause of bondage is [ordinary mind’s] emotions and conceptualizations; as these are cleared away for a samadhi without conceptualization, all bonds are gradually freed.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 45, line 1: There are two completion process methods in which to become skilled: the [chandali] self-infusion method and the mandala-chakra [other-infusion] method.²²⁶ The first is to gain experience in all actual appearances as having become in reality a single self-arising gnosis. The second is to gain experience in all actual appearances as having become in reality a single simultaneous gnosis. This is because there is nothing else that does not pertain to simultaneous gnosis, mind-as-is as a focus of comprehension or as its own actuality as it takes on the appearance in reality of the multiplicity of all actual appearances.}

Manner of Liberation

In general, the cause of bondage is conceptualization alone, specifically ordinary conceptualization. Deriving from that, defiling emotions and thoughts gradually develop. The two methods [generation and completion processes] purify the nature of the cause [of bondage], whereby sense objects become “colors” and reliance on sense objects becomes an aid as an antidote, as in the above example, and as revealed in the *Hevajra Tantra* I, ix, 6-7:

The eyes see forms,
Sounds are heard by the ears,
Smells are sensed by the nose,
The tongue experiences tastes,
The body touches material objects,
The mind attains ecstasy, etc.;
Made poisonless through purification,
These are to be relied upon. [227](#)

Initially, antidotes have little strength and sense objects can be harmful; this is called “the time when appearances become the enemy.” During intermediate strength [of antidotes], reliance on the same can sometimes be harmful and sometimes beneficial; this is called “the time when appearances become multicolored.” Both of these [times] acquire the name of meditative equipoise. Finally, with great strength of antidotes, sense objects are made an aid to realization. That moment is called “the time when appearances become spiritual friends” and “when the five poisons become medicine.” When samadhi becomes continuous, it is called “superior meditative equipoise,” as revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra* I, iii:

The pathway [sense] for each of the given sense organs
Becomes the reality of the latter.
A yoga of nonequipoise [in meditation],
Is the continuous best equipoise. [228](#)

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 6, line 6: The “pathway” for the eye and “each of the” six “given sense organs” for a short time gives “reality” to the [sense] object. The nature of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and thought is the true nature of “reality.” The true nature of all phenomena is the beginningless and

endless phenomenal space. The “reality” [of the six senses] becomes an “equipoise” [meditation] on each of the six [sense] objects. In the line of verse “a yoga of nonequipoise,” [the term “nonequipoise”] uses an old word form [in Tibetan] that [correctly] means post[equipoise] accomplishment. The commentary explains the line of verse as “a yoga of postequipoise,” where “postequi” refers to Vajradhara as the bodhi-mind transcending suffering without projection and “poise” means “continuous” retention. “Yoga” is an intense commitment to that [postequipoise]. Therefore, “forms” and the rest [of the sense objects] as they appear separately to the eye, and the rest [of the sense organs] are just the “reality” of Vajrasattva by virtue of the “continuous” commitment “yoga.” “Equi” refers to all circumstances pure and impure; “poise” refers to the bodhi-mind of inseparable emptiness and compassion. That is retention of the self-essence.}

[As revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra* II, ii:]

Viewing various forms,
Listening to sounds,
Speaking and laughing,
Tasting various flavors,
Performing all actions;
When the mind does not go anywhere else
That yoga of awareness
Is the continuous yoga.²²⁹

These and other quotations explain the continuous yoga.²³⁰

Delineation of Guhyamantra Conduct

This method of nonrenunciation of the ground is called Guhyamantra conduct. To answer the question as to what is Guhyamantra conduct, there are [two questions]: (1) what is the meaning of mantra and (2) what is the conduct.

Meaning of Mantra

There are five subtopics: (a) general origin of mantra, (b) [definition of] the word “mantra,” (c) meaning of mantra, (d) divisions of mantra, and (e) derivation of the mantra syllables or meaning of the sounds. The details can be learned elsewhere.²³¹ For now, the definitive meaning of mantra is that which protects the mind from thoughts and characterizations.

Guhyamantra Conduct

Conduct that accords with that [definitive mantra definition], Guhyamantra conduct, is the vows of vajra body, speech, and mind of buddha,²³² as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra Continuation*:

The explanation of the syllable “man” is mind
That arises from whatever conditions
Of sense organs and their objects.
“Tra” means protective actions,
Which are explained as the vows and commitments
For freedom from worldly transitory activities.
Protection by all vajras
Is called Guhyamantra conduct.²³³

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 7, line 3: The self-centered “mind that arises” in dependence on “conditions of sense organs and their objects” in essence is called “man.” Alternatively, the *Sound Element*²³⁴ says that “man” is knowledge, [which here means that] “man” is the gnosis of emptiness. Through elimination of both defilements [emotions and thoughts], Samantabhadra²³⁵ is attained. ““Tra’ means protective actions” which is complete nonforsaking [of vows and commitments]. There are two kinds of “worldly transitory activities,” childish and noble. The “vows” provide definite “freedom from” childish “worldly transitory activities.” “Freedom from” noble “worldly transitory activities” refers to “commitments,” where “protection” is continuous conduct. “Vajras” refers to the essence of the yoga, which “is called Guhyamantra conduct” of “all” tathagatas. “Mantra” is just gnosis of the inseparability of emptiness and compassion; branches of conduct are “Guhyamantra conduct”.}²³⁶

From the *Stages of the Benefits of Empowerment*:²³⁷

The meaning of the word “mantra” is nonduality of emptiness and compassion.
The dual method is the nonduality
Of emptiness and compassion;
This is called Guhyamantra.

Everything can be learned from other sources, such as the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*.²³⁸

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 615, line 2: Mantra [may be defined] in three ways: (1) definition, (2) divisions, and (3) derivation of the term.

(1) The definition of “mantra” is nondual gnosis that is the mind of all buddhas of all time, as revealed in the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

All mantras are characteristic
Of the mind of all buddhas.
The definition of mantra is explained
As perfection and the space of all phenomena
In which the essence of dharma is accomplished.

(2) There are three divisions: (a) Vidya-mantra, (b) Dharani-mantra, and (c) Guhyamantra, according to the *Samanya Guhya (General Secret) Tantra*:

The division of all mantras
Is known as three:
Vidya-mantra is true method,
Dharani-mantra is true wisdom,
And Guhyamantra is nondual gnosis.²³⁹

(3) For the derivation of the term “mantra,” “man” is mind and “tra” is protect. Therefore mantra is for the purpose of protecting the consciousness of mind from the fears of samsara, as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra Continuation*:

“Man” is mind,
“Tra” means protection;
This is characteristic of true mantra.²⁴⁰

Accordingly, since mantra is the necessary link between source, path, and result, it accomplishes continuity, [as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra Continuation*:]

The meaning of tantra is interconnection,
The explanation of which has three aspects:
Ground, nature, and result.²⁴¹

As revealed in the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

Tantra is the expression for continuity,
Which refers to the belief in continuity [within the cycle of] of samsara.²⁴²

Delineation of Vajrayana

This same [path] is [also] called Vajrayana. Here “vajra” refers to the vajra (indestructible) body, speech, and mind of buddha. “Yana” (vehicle) means to proceed along the path and to proceed to the result. To proceed along the path of the vajra body, speech, and mind of buddha is the “yana.”²⁴³ The first [step] is to generate bodhi-mind for the duration [until enlightenment], the same as is done in Paramita. Then, at the time of entering the mandala and receiving empowerment, the master confers the transformation of the [ordinary] body, speech, and mind of a trainee into the vajra body, speech, and mind of buddha. In a manner not separate [from the conferment], meditation on the two processes [generation and completion] of the path yields the vajra body, speech, and mind of buddha; this is the conduct. Given that [ordinary] body, speech, and mind and all defiled emotions and thoughts are in truth vajra [in nature], then the path is to progressively making clearer and clearer that awareness as vajra [quality]. Then, when the thirteenth level of the result is accomplished and vajra body, speech, and mind is made explicit,²⁴⁴ the proceeding to this is the yana, as stated in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

As for passion, aggression, and nescience,
Always take delight in [their] vajra [quality];
That is the buddha method

Called the Vajrayana.²⁴⁵

Delineation of Palayana

[The subtopics for delineation of Palayana are (1) length of time on the path to accomplish the result and (2) delineation of the Palayana.]

Length of Time on the Path to Accomplish the Result

How long does it take to accomplish the Vajrayana? (1) The most capable individuals can accomplish during one lifetime. (2) Average can accomplish during the intermediate state [between death and rebirth]. (3) Less capable can accomplish in seven lifetimes, and (4) least capable in sixteen lifetimes.

(1) The reference for the first is from the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra XIII*:

Through this the Great Persona of Dharma
Has arisen from the indivisible three kayas;
Adorned with an ocean of gnosis,
Accomplishment comes in this lifetime.²⁴⁶

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 7, line 7: The samadhi of meditation on Amitabha is here “the Great Persona of Dharma,” the Lord of speech, the “indivisible three kayas.” “Adorned with an ocean of gnosis” that is generated or arises from the Great Vajradhara, [refers to] remaining in the samadhi of the completion process, by which attainment can be gained “in this lifetime.”}

(2) Accomplishment in the intermediate state was stated by the Lama, and is also in the *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra VI*:

Given that not long after leaving the body,
{Unsurpassed gnosis is accomplished}
Even by those who have not made effort
{What is there to say about those who make effort?}²⁴⁷

Accomplishment “not long after leaving the body” means in the intermediate

state.

(3) Accomplishment in seven lifetimes comes from the *Guhya Kosha (Secret Treasury) Tantra*:²⁴⁸

If having been correctly given empowerment,
By receiving empowerment in this life,
Siddhis (special powers) can be attained, even without meditating,
Within seven lifetimes.

(4) Accomplishment in sixteen lifetimes comes from the *Five Vows*:

Without any downfalls,
Accomplishment can come in sixteen lifetimes.

Delineation of the Palayana

If you do not think that these accomplishments can be made by an ordinary person, or are intended [only] for a superior person, [the answer is that these] accomplishments can be made, as stated in the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

Derived from Paramita [practice] alone,
Accomplishment can not be made [even within an] incalculable eon.
If a practitioner makes effort [in Guhyamantra],
Transcendence of suffering [can occur] in this lifetime.
Through vision alone,
Transcendence [can occur] in sixteen lifetimes.
None other than an ordinary person
Can become a buddha.

Accordingly, since the result can be accomplished without any difficulties, this [path] is called the Palayana (Resultant Vehicle). Further, because meditation is at present on features of the [buddha] result, this [path] is also called the Palayana, as in the quotation:

The five manifest enlightenments²⁴⁹

Are the virtuous heart of all buddhas.

{Yeshe Gyaltsen, page 498, line 3: This quotation is from the *Samputa Tantra*. “The five manifest enlightenments are the essential heart of all buddhas;” by means of that method, all buddhas of all times [past, present, and future] have [gained] enlightenment. By doing this meditation at the present time and making oneself into a buddha, the result of Guhyamantra is made into the path.}

As has been shown, the Guhyamantra tradition includes the result together with the path. Right in the present [life], clear realization can be completed all at one time. Because of similarity [of the path] with the result, this is called the Palayana.²⁵⁰ For example, a very beautiful human being is called a god. This is no ordinary path.

Chapter 5

Guhyamantrayana Specialization Surpasses Paramitayana

*Sutra and Guhyamantra are two aspects that are equally pervaded unerringly
By the single characteristic of the bodhisattva's motivation,
To fully realize the space of all phenomena
And attain the ultimate result of perfect buddha.*

*Given the situations of individuals on the Paramita path,
A conceptless gnosis cannot be generated;
The gnosis derived from Guhyamantra empowerment and path
Actually realizes the space of all phenomena by example,
Which is called the indicator example gnosis.
Praised in all Tantras, since it is not self-awareness,
It is correctly nonconceptual;
Since by this one is quickly guided to the indicated true gnosis,
This is called the nonambiguous path.*

*As many skillful means as there are in the common [Mahayana] path,
There are even more, such as visualizations, [mantra] recitations, and the two processes,
Means that accomplish both the supreme and mundane siddhis [special powers],
Multiple methods of profound and vast means.*

*Difficult activities difficult to accomplish are expounded in Paramita;
[Guhyamantra] practices can be easily accomplished without difficulty,
Without physical and mental torment from very strenuous practices difficult to perform.*

*Since with reliance on the faultless skillful methods of Guhyamantra,
Even an ordinary person who makes a special effort*

*Can quickly [reach] the result [faster] than others, [indicative of] acute faculties.
These four [characteristics indicate] the specialization of Guhyamantra with
respect to Sutra.*

*The manner in which others have raised objections
Has elicited many replies,
Which clarify and expand on past assessments.*

After delineating each path [Paramitayana and Guhyamantrayana], the specialized methods of Guhyamantra conduct will now be demonstrated.

[Assertions by Others Regarding Specialization]

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 611, line 5: There are three traditional assertions regarding [Guhyamantra] specializations, [by the three masters: (1) Shantipa, (2) Buddhajana, and (3) Nagarjuna].

Ratnakarashanti's Assertions

Some, such as Master Shantipa [Ratnakarashanti], believe that there is no specialization with respect to the source and the result, but that there is specialization only with respect to the path.²⁵¹

No Source Continuity Specialization

A single [type of] individual is the source continuity basis for both [Paramitayana and Guhyamantrayana]. There is no specialization with respect to the single purpose of generating bodhicitta after having been born into the Mahayana family that has superiority over [others] in the four continents [after birth] in Jambuling, superiority over the [other] six kinds [of sentient beings] in having a human body, and superiority over [others who have] leisure and opportunity [but are wasting it in not entering the Mahayana].

No Result Continuity Specialization

There is no specialization with respect to the result, as by way of both [vehicles] there is no specialization regarding [the attainment of] the level of buddha. If there were, there would then be the fault of [making a judgment as to] a better or worse [kind of] buddha.

Path Continuity Specialization

What then is the specialization? There is specialization with respect to the path. Paramitas take a long time to traverse the path with great difficulty. Merit can only be completed over [a timespan of] three immeasurable eons through difficult [practices] such as giving away one's head and eyes. [In contrast,] the Guhyamantra path is easy to accomplish, and great value [can be realized] in a short time without difficulty. For those [practitioners] with the best ability, buddha [can be accomplished] in the present lifetime, with average ability in the intermediate state [between death and rebirth], and with lesser ability in seven to sixteen lifetimes.

Buddhajnanapada's Assertions

Master Buddhajnanapada asserts that there is no specialization with respect to the result, but that there is specialization with respect to the source and the path.

Source Continuity Specialization

In Prajnāparamitayāna, the source is made into the path. The source for elimination is the ten [actions] with negative [consequences].²⁵² The source for accomplishment is the four immeasurables,²⁵³ the four actual [means] for gathering [followers],²⁵⁴ the six perfections,²⁵⁵ etc., all of which are made into the path.²⁵⁶

Path Continuity Specialization

In Guhyamantra, the result is made into the path. The yogic practitioner has self-awareness that perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields have the identity of the three kayas and five gnoses of buddha. Further, the five perceptual aggregates have the nature of the five [Buddha] families, the five physical elements have the nature of the five objects, perceptual elements and fields have bodhisattva nature,²⁵⁷ [these together constitute] nirmanakaya. Self-awareness of that-just-as-is and the experience of ecstasy are sambhogakaya. The clear light aspect as the nature of that-just-as-is is dharmakaya. As long as there is no realization that these [buddha features] are present within the continuums of sentient beings, by the power of nescience there is [only] wandering in cyclic existence.

Through reliance on the specialized methods of the Guhyamantra, yogic practitioners gain realization through making the result into the path. Those with the best ability can attain buddha in the present lifetime, those with average

ability in the intermediate state, and those with lesser ability in subsequent lifetimes. According [to this tradition], there is specialization in the path but not in the result, same as [the first tradition].

Nagarjuna's Assertions

Master Nagarjuna and others assert that there is specialization with respect to all three: cause [source], path, and result.

Source Continuity Specialization

Source and path specialization are the same as explained above. The source specialization is as revealed in the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

Know that who now engages in
The great accumulation of the secret
Will attain the irreversible level
Of the offspring of the Conqueror himself.

And as revealed in the *Sambhuti*:

Buddha is difficult to find in ten million eons,
Yet when bestowed within a single lifetime
Of effort exerted,
Is called resultant fruition.

Path Continuity Specialization

The path specialization is as revealed in the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

Through application of dharma techniques,
Secret liberation will truly occur
In just a single lifetime,
The supreme accomplishment as the greatest pleasure and more.

And as revealed in the *Guhyagarbha (Secret Essence) Tantra*:

This is the definitive great secret;

There is no definitive meaning other than this,
[Which includes all] Conqueror mandalas without exception.

Result Continuity Specialization

As for result specialization,

There are two aspects to the ultimate:
Clear light and union.

The two aspects of clear light and union occur under the circumstances of ultimate buddha. Clear light as the objective of emptiness is pertinent to Paramita; union as nondual gnosis is the specialization of Guhyamantra. There are three unions [with emptiness]: reality, knowledge, and gnosis. The first two are appropriate to the Paramita; the gnosis union is the specialization of Guhyamantra. Since in Paramita the [true] cause has not been preliminarily established, the result does not occur. Since in Paramita there is no empowerment, simultaneous gnosis cannot be realized, and the result of nondual gnosis cannot arise. At the time of [experiencing] gnosis in the third empowerment of Guhyamantra, mind-itself as simultaneous gnosis is made explicit. In traversing that path, the result is ultimately nondual gnosis, as revealed in the *Kalachakra (Wheel of Time) Tantra*:

Guhyamantra Vajrayana
Has ultimate nondual gnosis
That is superior to [all] others.

And as revealed in the *Arrangement of Gnoses Tantra*:

The result of Vajrayana
Is the sixth Buddha, Vajradhara;
Through nondual yoga
Comes completely perfect bodhi-mind.

Other Assertions

Lama Vajrasana²⁵⁸ said that Guhyamantra makes divinity and ecstasy into the path, whereas Paramita does not. Drokmi²⁵⁹ said that Paramita makes logical

inference into the path, while Guhyamantra makes direct perception into the path.}

Tripitakamala's Assertions

The superiority of [Guhyamantra] specialization is explained in the *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)* by Tripitakamala:²⁶⁰

With a single intent, (A)²⁶¹ nonambiguous,
(B) Through multiple methods, (C) without difficulty,
(D) Made effective by sharp faculties:
These are the specializations of Guhyamantrayana.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 8, line 1: As for the result that is nondual omniscience, there is no distinction between the two yantras (vehicles) of Guhyamantra and Paramita; they are one. There are [however] four [path] distinctions, which are the specializations of Guhyamantrayana.²⁶²

Nonambiguity Specialization

(A) By remaining in the analytical wisdom perfection, Paramitas purify the three components [subject, action, and object] and can [meaningfully] engage in generosity by giving away their heads, hands, and feet, as well as other [actions]. Guhyamantras [assert that] giving away one's head and other [body parts] is not appropriate to the Paramita. To acquire the name Paramita is to have "gone [completely] over to the other shore" which means to completely fulfill all wishes and benefits [of sentient beings] at one time. Yet, in comparison with knowledge of the effects of samadhi, ordinary methods such as giving away one's head are lessened [in value]. The very best method is to become proficient in the samadhi of nondual means and wisdom maintaining an unbroken continuity, by the power of which imperfections are exhausted, a nontransmigratory state [stopping ordinary rebirths] is attained, and [acting for] the benefit of [all] sentient beings becomes possible as [if in possession of] the wish-fulfilling gem [realization of the true nature of mind]. At that time, by bestowing the benefit wished [by all sentient beings, to be completely free from suffering], the generosity perfection is fulfilled. Through perfecting the discipline of benefiting sentient beings, the discipline perfection is fulfilled. Through forbearance in causing harm to others and bringing comfort to all, the forbearance perfection is fulfilled. Through accomplishing all benefits and

obtaining all wishes and necessities at one time, the perseverance perfection is fulfilled. Through attaining a samadhi that is the presence of all meditations, the meditation perfection is fulfilled. Through these fulfillments, the wisdom perfection is fulfilled. In this way, the method of accomplishing the six perfections [paramitas] is unambiguous [in Guhyamantra].²⁶³

Multiple Methods Specialization

(B) Paramita teaches methods of liberation such as asceticisms, vows, and difficult attainments. These [methods] are not suitable to tame those with very strong emotions who do not fit in with those who [favor] tranquility and certainty. Guhyamantra begins with identifying which emotion is the strongest, through [such techniques as] dream [analysis], [noting the mandala deity on which] the flower falls, descent of gnosis beings, binding the mudra, and [type of] activities.²⁶⁴ In accordance with those [indications], for the passionate there is Amitabha, for the aggressive there is Akshobya, for the conceited and greedy there is Ratnasambhava, for the envious and cynical there is Amoghasiddhi,²⁶⁵ likewise for the [corresponding] five female [Buddhas]. The mantras and samadhis of Yamantaka and the other ten Krodha²⁶⁶ [correspond] to the ten very strong subsidiary [emotions]: shamelessness, immodesty, jealousy, avarice, arrogance, regret, drowsiness, depression, anger, and disingenuousness. Likewise, the six Bodhisattvas [correspond] to the six engaged awarenesses [senses]. Mind and all mental events are demonstrated by the samadhi that has the nature of gods and goddesses that correspond to one's own type [of strong emotion]. This is the [buddha] mind mandala that demonstrates great intelligence in clearing away coarse conceptualizations.

The [buddha] speech mandala is demonstrated in order to tame individuals who are unable to enter an inexpressible samadhi, who are unable to firmly establish the certainty of [the absolute] just-as-is [emptiness] in the form kayas with [visualization of] an immeasurable number of very coarse faces, hands, etc., and who are unable to settle [a stable] mind within subtle mind and mental events. Further, since all letters are in essence mantra and also permeate all speech, specific deities, mantras, and samadhis can be indicated by visualizing separate parts of speech. Short and long *a*, *am*, and *ah* are associated with the male and female Amitabha; short and long *i* are associated with the male and female Amoghasiddhi; short and long *u* and *e* are associated with the male and female Akshobya; short and long *ri* are associated with the male and female Ratnasambhava; short and long *li* and *o* are associated with the male and female Vairochana; the five alphabetic groupings of [four] letters [each] starting with *ka*,

ca, *ta* [dental], *ta* [palatal], and *pa* are associated with the [five] sets of four goddesses. The appropriate type of samadhi is indicated by those [letters].²⁶⁷

The [buddha] body mandala samadhi, the samadhi, mantra, etc., of the complete mandala [structure], is indicated for those who are unable to initially apply subtle meditation [of buddha mind and buddha speech] to strong attachment to coarse objects.²⁶⁸

Based on these three [body, speech, and mind mandala] samadhies, liberation can come about by generating the perfect gnosis through realization of the absolute [emptiness]. Through insight into the states of mind and [seven types of] hidden propensities of sentient beings, four classes of Tantras were revealed.

(1) Ritual Tantras teach that it is impossible to have a stable mind without performing solitary bathing, purification, mandala [rites], fire offerings, difficult ascetic practices, and mantra recitations.

(2) Conduct Tantras teach that mind is to be clearly focused on the absolute [reality as-it-is] while continuing to attend to the sequential [purifying] rituals as in the Root [Ritual] Tantras.

(3) Yoga Tantras primarily teach yoga [meditation] while including a few parts of rituals from Conduct Tantras in order to benefit wavering perceptions toward multiple activities [while attempting] a single-minded intent on meditation on the absolute [nature of reality].

(4) Maha Yoga [Unsurpassed Yoga] Tantras teach nonengagement in dualistic perceptions with respect to all actions and all reality through the strength and skills [acquired] in previous lives. In this way there are multiple methods.²⁶⁹

Without Difficulty Specialization

(C) As to the evident desires of any sentient being at any time and place, these [multiple methods] can be applied definitively without difficulty; through easy and pleasurable methods, bodhi-mind can be attained. The very actions of people that would ordinarily result in hellish experiences can, through these methods, liberate them from the bonds of worldly existence.²⁷⁰ For those with the best sharp faculties, there is [the practice of] mahamudra; for those with average of the best faculties, there is jnanamudra; for those with the least of sharp faculties, there is samayamudra; for those with exceptionally dull faculties, there is karmamudra.²⁷¹ When applied to the [appropriate] given desire, these methods are without difficulty.²⁷²

Sharp Faculties Specialization

(D) Since skill in the methods and [knowledge of] the absolute are unambiguous, [these methods] can be made effective by those with sharp faculties. These [now complete] the four specializations.

This is the explanation according to the *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)*; the detailed explanation [to follow] by the Precious Master [Sonam Tsemo] appears slightly dissimilar in its arrangement.} ²⁷³

[Our Own Analysis of Assertions of Specialization]

The three main topics are (1) single intent of realization, (2) actual techniques that are specialized methods of realization, and (3) resolution of objections.

Single Intent of Realization

The single intent is to fully realize dharmadhatu (space of all phenomena) [gnosis], just as-is, and attain the result of buddha, with bodhi-mind as the method of accomplishment; there is no specialization [with respect to the intent].

{Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo in *Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam*, volume 21, page 26, line 6: The single intent [as source continuity] is emptiness beyond extrapolation, the perspective of realization. The single intent [as path continuity] is the experience of the conduct of the six perfections, such as generosity. The single intent [as result continuity] is the focus on a singular [ultimate] buddha, the result to be accomplished.}

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 47, line 1: There is (1) a single intent with respect to the perspective to be realized, (2) a single result to be attained, and (3) a single method of attainment.

(1) Phenomena-as-is as explained in Paramitayana is devoid of all limits of extrapolation; that meaning is in no way a specialization expressed [only] in Guhyamantra.

(2) Just as the thirteenth level of Vajradhara is the ultimate result in Guhyamantra, it is also the ultimate result in Paramita, since the thirteenth level of Vajradhara is the final result to be attained in all vehicles [combined].

(3) There is only one bodhi-mind, since both relative and absolute bodhi-mind are the foundation of the path in both Paramitayana and Vajrayana.}

Specialized Methods of Realization

Regardless [of the single intent], there are four [Guhyamantra] specialized methods for generating just that [realization] in the one's own continuum: (1) an unambiguous perspective on realization, (2) multiple methods for accomplishing the result, (3) accomplishment of bodhi-mind without difficulty, and (4) acute faculties for quickly accomplishing the result.

Unambiguous Perspective on Realization

(A) In general, the perspective is the natural state of reality. Just that natural state of reality is free of elaboration, but all Mahayana is similar in not realizing [that natural state] without buddha awakening. Paramita uses analogies and reasoning to gain realization, but the way it is done makes it impossible to eliminate conceptualization that is not covered by this one-dimensional analysis. In contrast, Guhyamantra generates gnosis within the [individual] continuum [of mind] at such time as descent of gnosis during the third empowerment, having specialization in direct realization without the elaboration [of analysis].

{Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 27, line 1: [Guhyamantra] specialization is an unambiguous method for the realization of emptiness. In Paramitayana, realization of emptiness of true [individual] nature is by way of the reasoning of singular and multiple.²⁷⁴ After discerning emptiness through specific cognitions of insight, there is nothing in addition [to that method] other than single-pointed equipoise meditation. Here [in Guhyamantra], in addition to that practice, there are many methods for quick realization of emptiness, such as emptiness at the time of descent of gnosis, experiential [emptiness] at the time of the third empowerment. Further at the time of descent of gnosis, mind-as-is is generated in the aspect of great ecstasy, which makes for a clear and direct realization of emptiness. Some yoga manuals explain the descent of supreme gnosis as the arising of actual gnosis on the first [bodhisattva] level. In the sequence of the four classes of Tantra from greater to lesser, the system for the unsurpassed descent of gnosis does not occur in the other three classes; however, there is a system for descent of gnosis in the three lower classes.²⁷⁵}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 68, line 2: In the Paramita tradition, other than just realization of phenomena-as-is through the method of general intent [or object generality]²⁷⁶ by means of analogies and

reasoning, there is no generation of conceptless gnosis with clear direct vision. In the Vajrayana tradition, circumstantially for each individual [practitioner], there is what is called direct clear vision of phenomena-as-is through a method of example that is exceedingly greater in clarity than the method of realization in Paramita. That, designated by the term indicator example gnosis, can quickly lead to indicated true gnosis,²⁷⁷ the method of realization of which is ambiguous [or obscured] from the Paramita perspective. By means of an unambiguous [method], Vajrayana is specialized, as stated in the *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)*:

Expert [practitioners] who have great compassion,
With discernment acquire a supreme method
For attainment of an invariable state
That humbles ordinary methods.²⁷⁸}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 619, line 1: Through the techniques that are used [to bring about] the descent of gnosis during the empowerments, individuals with exceptional ability are able to realize the perspective [of gnosis] at that time. Through chandali yoga²⁷⁹ heating and melting, etc., during the secret empowerment comes a perspective of realization. Through dependence on an actual or visualized consort during the wisdom [mudra] gnosis [or third] empowerment, [the trainee] is actually guided through [the experience of] the four pleasures of gnosis.²⁸⁰ [This experience] and others [constitute] an unambiguous [perspective].}

Multiple Methods for Accomplishing the Result

(B) There are multiple methods for accomplishing both (1) common and (2) supreme results. (1) Common results begin with invisibility and extrasensory perception and continue to great enjoyment, great wisdom, and long life. For Paramita, these can be developed gradually through methods such as generosity; yet if desired in this life, there are no other methods other than those that are worldly and ordinary. For Guhyamantra, there are immeasurable methods of accomplishment (sadhanas) such as Manjushri²⁸¹ and Vasudhara,²⁸² which can be accomplished without difficulty and become a support for bodhi-mind.

(2) For supreme results, there are many methods, which may be divided into (a) methods for absolute profound realization and (b) methods for relative vast realization. (a) Of the former, Paramita has no other knowledge than what they

call freedom from projections. In Guhyamantra, meditation on the generation process alone demonstrates the sixteen kinds of emptiness. For the generation of a samadhi beyond thought, there are immeasurable methods, such as the chandali yoga of the completion process.

(b) For the vast there are two: vast realizations such as the structure of world systems and vast activities. Again, Paramita has nothing other than common features, while through meditation on a single mandala, Guhyamantra gains complete knowledge of both since they have inconceivable methods, such as offering tormas, which enable both realization and activity. Therefore, multiple methods is a specialization [of Guhyamantra].

{Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 27, line 5: [Guhyamantra specialization is] by way of multiple methods for the accomplishment of both (a) supreme and (b) common siddhis (special powers).

(a) Multiple methods for supreme accomplishment include (4) Maha Yoga [or Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra] generation and completion processes as the source for accomplishing the resultant two kayas [dharmakaya and rupakayas, the latter including both sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya].

(3) In Yoga [Tantra] on down, there are both yoga with signs as the source for accomplishing form [rupa-]kayas, and yoga without signs as the source for accomplishing dharmakaya. [Yoga] with signs in Yoga Tantra [consists of] generation of oneself as a buddha, entrance of the gnosis deity, and application of the four mudras.²⁸³

(2) In Conduct Tantra, [yoga with signs consists of] generation of oneself as a buddha and summoning a buddha to come before [you], to acquire siddhis through mantras and mudras.²⁸⁴

(1) In Ritual Tantra, [yoga with signs consists of just] summoning a buddha to come before [you], to acquire siddhis through mantras and mudras.²⁸⁵ These [multiple methods] are not explained in Paramitayana.

(b) There are also multiple methods for accomplishment of common [siddhis]. In Paramitayana, if great enjoyments are desired from the practice of generosity [and other perfections], one has to wait for enjoyments as a later result [in future lifetimes]. If [enjoyments are] desired in this lifetime, there is no method other than common or worldly ones, such as agricultural cultivation. In Guhyamantra, by practicing [meditations] such as Vasudhara and Jambhala for three months or

more, immeasurable enjoyments arise. If great wisdom is desired, in Paramitayana there is nothing other than absorbing great wisdom from extensive reading of the Buddhist canon. In addition to the latter, by practicing Guhyamantra [meditation] such as Manjushri for six months or more, very great wisdom can be gained.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 68, line 6: As many as are the skillful methods in Paramita for accomplishment of buddha, beyond that there are inconceivably profound and vast skillful methods [in Vajrayana] for accomplishment of common siddhis, such as the eight great siddhis (special powers), great enjoyment, great wisdom, longevity, and so on, and for the uncommon siddhi of supreme mahamudra. These are grouped into eleven [methods for] clear realization of method continuity.²⁸⁶ Paramita has few methods for accomplishment of buddha, whereas Vajrayana has many specialized methods, as stated in the *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)*:

In order to accomplish benefits for all sentient beings,
The most important of sentient beings [Buddha] revealed
Supreme methods in four divisions [of Tantras]
To those with expansive intellects, the omniscient [bodhisattvas].²⁸⁷}

Accomplishment of Bodhi-Mind without Difficulty

(C) For Paramita, the path entails difficult activities and difficult attainments that have great obstacles [to accomplishment]. For Guhyamantra, there are activities that easily accomplish bodhi-mind, and thereby are a specialization.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 69, line 3: In Paramita, there are difficult violent practices, such as giving away one's head, hands, and feet as gifts, that cause physical and mental torment; [but that are considered] necessary to attain the ultimate result. In Vajrayana, there are [relatively] easy and enjoyable practices, an easy path to the accomplishment of bodhi-mind that attains the ultimate result. Given that, for Paramita, there are great difficulties in the accomplishment of buddha, whereas Vajrayana specializes in having few [difficulties], as stated in the *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)*:

Whatever is desired,

To that very [desire] is made a definitive application [of dharma];
Shakyamuni stated that the ultimate purpose
Was attainment of [the absolute nature of that very same] object of desire.[288](#)

As revealed in the *Root [Hevajra] Tantra* II, ii, 50-51:

Whatever are the unforgivable acts
By which humans are bound,
{Given the [application of] skillful methods, the very same [acts]
Lead to liberation from the bondage of [cyclic] existence.

By passions the world is bound;
By the very same passions, [the world] can become liberated.
This meditation of transformations
Is unknown to marginalist Buddhists.} [289](#)

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 619, line 5: [Since in Guhyamantra] the path has been made easy, it is without difficulty.

Copulating, embracing and holding hands,
Smiling, and gazing:
These are definitively the four kinds of Tantra. [290](#)

(1) In Ritual Tantra, it is just as easy as gazing, as easy as focusing attention on the face and hands of a deity [visualized] in front [of the meditator].

(2) In Conduct Tantra, it is as easy as just focusing attention on laughter, as in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra*:

Vairochana's smiling face...

(3) In Yoga Tantra, it is just as easy as focusing attention on embracing, as in the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*:

Then the Vajra King and others placed a hand on one shoulder...

(4) In Unsurpassed [Yoga Tantra], it is just as easy as the two sexual organs of the male and female deities copulating whether or not their lips are actually joined.

In general Mahayana, there is nothing that is easy other than the very purifying practice of shamata. Yet in Guhyamantra, when taken sincerely [without duplicity or guile], the common and ordinary as here distinguished by the four kinds of passion can be experienced as the four corresponding pleasures [of divinity] without difficulty.}

Acute Faculties for Quickly Accomplishing the Result

(D) Paramitayana [requires] only dull faculties, as the fastest that complete buddha awakening can be reached is three incalculable eons. For Guhyamantra, quick accomplishment is in one lifetime, average accomplishment is in the intermediate state [between death and rebirth], and slow accomplishment is in seven or sixteen [lifetimes]. This has been explained above in chapter [4] on the conduct of the Hetuyana (Cause Vehicle) and Palayana (Result Vehicle)²⁹¹ and indicates the [degree of] specialization.²⁹²

Resolution of Objections to the Specializations

[Objection: These Guhyamantra specializations are just the invention of Tripitakamala and have no basis in canonical sources.]

[Reply:] {Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 29, line 4: As for canonical sources, these words were not written just for the pleasure of Master Kripitikamala,²⁹³ but are taken from language in the Tantra canon, which has been made the basis [for the specializations]. These four specializations have been taught in just four verses of the commentary which were made the basis, but were written as just one, where there are up to ten [other?] categories in the auto-commentary.²⁹⁴

For example, the root *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra* revealed:

The bodhi-mind of Vairochana
Is devoid of subject and object,

And perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields.
Equivalent to the selflessness of phenomena,
Mind itself is unoriginated from the very beginning.²⁹⁵

Master Nagarjuna made this the basis for writing his *Bodhicitta Vivarana (Commentary on Bodhi-Mind)*.²⁹⁶

The *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)* states that

. . . these are the specializations of Guhyamantra treatises.²⁹⁷

The superiority of Guhyamantrayana is also given in the *Tattva Dashaka (Ten Absolutes)* of Master Maitripa.²⁹⁸

What are the Tantra canonical sources [for the four specializations]? The venerable Go [Lotsawa] in his *Outline (stong-thun) of the Guhyasamaja Tantra*²⁹⁹ gives them as the *Siddhikara Tantra*, the *gNyan-phul-byung Commentary on the Chakrasamvara Tantra*,³⁰⁰ and the *Vidyottama Maha (Extensive Supreme Pure Awareness) Tantra*.³⁰¹ The first is the *Susiddhikara (Well-Accomplished) Tantra*,³⁰² which [can be classified as] either a Ritual or Dual Tantra. In words added to the *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)*, it is considered an Unsurpassed [Yoga Tantra].

[Objection:] Is there not a contradiction between the *Susiddhikara Tantra* canonical source and the *Vidyottama Maha Tantra* canonical source?

[Reply:] There is no contradiction that occurs in any single word of the multiple canonical sources, as revealed in the root words of the *Uttaratantra (Unsurpassed Continuum)*, in one single verse, 154:

Here, there is nothing whatsoever to be cleared away,
{Not even the tiniest thing to make room for;
With a perfect vision of the perfect view
Of perfection, that is complete liberation.}³⁰³

and in the root words of the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara (Mahayana Sutra Ornament)*³⁰⁴ and likewise as occurs in many Sutras, and also as occurs in the twenty-second chapter of the *Unsurpassed Yamari Tantra*³⁰⁵ and in the

Unsurpassed *Achala (Unmovable) Tantra*.³⁰⁶ Here, the later explanations of the Venerable Sakyapa father and sons follows the commentarial tradition of the masters, such as the method of explanation in the *Nayatraya Pradipa (Lamp of the Three Methods)* of Sripitakamala,³⁰⁷ the scholar Jnanakirti,³⁰⁸ the sovereign [king] Master Metripa,³⁰⁹ and the Indian Vajrapani.³¹⁰ }

There are four [types of] objections to these [four] specializations [that need] to be resolved: (1) resolution of objections to a single intent, (2) resolution of objections that the four [Guhyamantra] specializations are invalid, (3) resolution of objections that [the specializations] contradict the divisions of the canon and classes of literature, and (4) resolution of objections that there is no time to practice Guhyamantra.

Resolution of Objections to a Single Intent

There are two [single intent] controversies to be resolved: (1) controversy over dissimilar intents and, (2) given similar [intent], controversy over the consequence of provisional meaning [instead of definitive meaning].

Controversy over Dissimilar Intents

[Objection:] [Among] followers of Paramitayana, there is a certain fool who has become angry toward Guhyamantrayana because of hostility toward the profound meaning. In his own words, the controversy is that “the intent of Guhyamantrayana and Paramitayana are different. In Paramitayana, the result is differentiated as the gnosis [mind] and kaya [body] of buddha, as [reached by way of] the [six] perfections and [ten] levels, and explained as emptiness and compassion, and so on. The Vajrayana explanation of the generation and completion processes does not have the same intent.”

[Reply:] That is not correct; Guhyamantrayana explains the intent as just [the same as in Paramitayana], as revealed in the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri, also known as Net of Illusion) Tantra* 43-44:

{He [Manjushri] has attained the ten perfections,
Dwells in the ten perfections,
And purifies the ten perfections}
Through his method for the ten perfections.

He is the powerful ruler of the ten levels

And is thoroughly present on the ten levels.

As the possessor of the ten pure knowledges,

{He is the holder of the ten pure knowledges.}³¹¹

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 11, line 4: In explaining and guiding by “the method” of the two truths, or by “the ten perfections,” [all] authoritative literature possesses the method of the ten perfections. Possessing [the ten levels] from the first level of joy to the tenth level of dharma clouds becomes of primary importance such that “he is the powerful ruler of the ten levels.” By having entered them through the bodhisattva method, he comes to be “thoroughly present on the ten levels.” The “ten knowledges” are knowledge of suffering, origin, cessation, path, exhaustion, nonarising, phenomena, subsequent realization, the relative, the intimately familiar, and the literal. The holder of the ten pure knowledges becomes the actual essence of the ten pure knowledges. Since here the intimate familiar knowledge is explained as the same as the path knowledge and completely pure knowledge, [the former] is clearly included within the path knowledge.³¹² This is in the tradition of the *Manjushri Great Commentary*³¹³ and is not the arrangement in the *Kalachakra Tantra* tradition.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 37, line 2: Knowledge of suffering is knowledge of the nonarising of suffering. Knowledge of the origin [of suffering] is knowledge of the elimination of the origin. Knowledge of cessation is knowledge of the cessation of suffering. Knowledge of the path is knowledge of the eight noble paths. Knowledge of exhaustion is knowledge of permanent exhaustion [of negativity]. Knowledge of nonarising is knowledge of the nonarising of the continuity of worldly existence. Knowledge of phenomena is knowledge that the five perceptual aggregates are like an illusion. Knowledge of subsequent [realization] is knowledge that derivations from the base [of sense perception] are impermanent. Knowledge of the relative is knowledge of such as the minds of others. Intimately familiar knowledge is the path knowledge and completely pure knowledge. Knowledge of the literal is the omniscience of gnosis without [objective] reference.}

Further, as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra XIII, 7:*

There is no difference with respect to emptiness and compassion,

For any mind they are the best meditation;

Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha

Are also taught. [314](#)

Are these not included in all vehicles? Likewise, they are an integral part of all Tantras. I have not written [on this topic] at greater length out of fear of being excessive.

Further still, Guhyamantra meditation on a single [external] mandala in the generation process, or even on just one's own body [internal mandala], demonstrates everything completely as [in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*?]:

The four sides [of the mandala] which are not unequal,

Are the four entryways of the [four] faculties of mindfulness. [315](#)

You who talk without understanding the canon are in a very low position.

Given Similar Intent, Controversy over the Consequence of Provisional Meaning

[Objection:] Given [the conclusion that the] intents are similar, is it sufficient to have demonstrated that [definitive] meaning through the four sides [of the mandala], etc., or has it become provisional meaning through application of other Guhyamantra meanings, and other terminology with other meanings?

[Reply:] That [latter alternative] is not so. In order to answer this question, [first it is necessary to] answer the question as to what are provisional meaning and definitive meaning and what is the distinction between them. Here, provisional is spoken of as a method for leading the less fortunate to the benefit of engaging the true intent; definitive is spoken for the benefit of [directly] engaging the fortunate in the truth. This is stated in *Madhyamaka Vatara (Entrance into the Middle Way)* VI, 97:

{In this way, the discussion in the scriptures must be understood.}

Those Sutras whose meaning does not explain [the absolute] just-as-is,

{Express the provisional meaning as a guidance to realization;}

Those whose meaning is emptiness are known as definitive meaning. [316](#)

{Yeshe Gyaltsen, page 499, line 2: “Those Sutras” that do not make explicitly clear that interdependent causation has been specified as unoriginated, and so on, become the source for entrance into identitylessness and in that way “express provisional meaning” explained as meaning that gives “guidance.” [Those Sutras] that explicitly clarify interdependent causation as having the “meaning of emptiness are known as definitive meaning.”}

[Objection:] So it is said, but given these words [that still leaves] the question as to what is emptiness and true intent. Is [emptiness intended] to indicate taking the position of negation [lack of inherent existence] as wisdom of just-as-is, or alternatively, does it refer to the inseparability of the two truths as the true intent? Here, if these words are meant to demonstrate that the definitive meaning is inseparability of the two truths as beyond [all] extrapolation, is this to be demonstrated explicitly or implicitly? If the demonstration is to be explicit, then by whom, given that it is inexpressible, as stated by Padmava [Padmavajra]:

This may be so, yet what just-as-is

Not even the Conqueror [Buddha] could say.

Given that even the Venerable Lichavyi Vimalakirti was unable to demonstrate, then there is no one who could express it.³¹⁷ Given that it is not possible to demonstrate explicitly, then wherever the special words “inseparability” and “emptiness: are used as terminology, is that then a Sutra of definitive meaning?

[Reply:] The same terminology is used in the Guhyamantra canon, where the meaning as understood by terminology alone is not the absolute. Since in dependence on the terminology realization is to be gradually developed, and through [the use of terms such as] four sides [of the mandala], equanimity realization [as the inseparability of samsara and nirvana] is also [gradually] developed, then Guhyamantra has definitive meaning. Yet since that [absolute] is explained implicitly in the entire Buddhist canon, it is not possible to distinguish between Sutras of provisional meaning and definitive meaning.

If only the negation aspect of wisdom is taught, and this is considered to be the definitive meaning, then that is also often expressed in the Guhyamantra [canon]. The Paramita has provisional meaning through instruction on many aspects such as perceptual aggregates, elements, and sources, levels and paths,

etc. As a consequence, since there are an inconceivable number [of provisional meanings] in each Paramita Sutra and Guhyamantra [Tantra], all of them are multihued [with provisional and definitive meanings]. The venerable Maitreya said that all Sutras can be explained through the four enigmatic expressions and the four articulations.³¹⁸

In the *Arya Bodhisattva Pitaka (Noble Bodhisattva Compendium)* is an explanation of eight dissimilar [pairs] of characteristics for provisional meaning and definitive meaning:

- Provisional meaning engages the path;
- Definitive meaning engages the result.
- Provisional meaning establishes the relative [truth];
- Definitive meaning establishes the absolute [truth].
- Provisional [meaning] regulates actions to be taken;
- Definitive [meaning] instructs in the exhaustion of actions and emotions.
- Provisional [meaning] instructs about all emotions;
- Definitive meaning instructs in the aspects of purification.
- Provisional meaning generates aversion to cyclic existence;
- Definitive meaning is the nonduality of samsara and nirvana.
- Provisional [meaning] instructs [through] multiform letters and syllables;
- Definitive meaning is the profound and difficult realization.
- Provisional [meaning] delights sentient beings with many words;
- Definitive meaning easily uses few words.
- Provisional meaning principally explains the self, etc.;
- Definitive meaning instructs on selflessness.

Accordingly, Guhyamantra makes the definitive meaning abundantly clear.

[Objection:] So given these considerations, by the reasoning of Paramita explaining the four mindfulnesses and Guhyamantra explaining the four entryways, etc., then is not Guhyamantra provisional meaning?

[Reply:] When explained in that way [in the quotation above], there is nothing whatsoever [in Guhyamantra] that could be explained as provisional meaning. What may start out as provisional meaning subsequently becomes Guhyamantra

definitive meaning.

The four mindfulnesses are part [the first four branches] of the thirty-seven branches of bodhi-mind and have (1) terminology, (2) practice, and (3) ultimate goal.

(1) As for terminology alone, [Paramita and Guhyamantra are] the same; in order to start out a beginner, [the four mindfulnesses] are first taught in Paramita, then are taught the same here [in Guhyamantra] for the purpose of eliminating doubts about the path.

(2) As for practice, Paramita follows [the understanding of] the terminology through the gradual practice of just the generality aspects³¹⁹ that takes a long time. Guhyamantra follows the meaning and quickly develops realization; by teaching the practice all at once, this path is faster and superior.

(3) As for ultimate goal, with accomplishment [Guhyamantra] displays as absolute the mandala, *etc.* Paramita has real wisdom once the sixth [of ten] levels [has been accomplished]; for now it has similarity [to Guhyamantra] through the practice of the stages of the path resembling that [real wisdom]. Accordingly, through similarity of ultimate result, there is one meaning, the definitive meaning primarily demonstrated and accomplished through Guhyamantra.

Resolution of Objections That the Four Specializations Are Invalid

There are three objections to be resolved with respect to the [question of] invalidity of the four specializations: (1) resolution of the objection that the specializations are similar [for both Paramita and Guhyamantra]; (2) resolution of the consequence that if dissimilar, the [Guhyamantra] path is deviant; and (3) resolution of the consequence that Ritual and Conduct Tantras are not Guhyamantra.

Resolution of the Objection That the Specializations Are Similar

[Objection:] In the words of a Paramita, the contention is “what is so superior about your Guhyamantra specializations? Paramita has similar specializations.”

(A) Does nonambiguity refer to paths or persons? Ambiguity and nonambiguity are not applicable to the path. With respect to persons, Guhyamantras have ambiguous vision, while Paramitas have unambiguous

vision.

(B) As to the second, multiple methods, again there is similarity, since [Paramita] vision has an inconceivable number of path divisions, such as three natures [of reality], two truths, and six perfections.

(C) As to the third, without difficulty, again there is similarity. Paramita tells of the bodhisattva Noble Dharma who engaged with all five senses in sex with sixty-eight thousand women as a single practice; the bodhisattva Always Crying [had sex] with five hundred daughters, such as daughters of merchants, as a single practice. There must be no doubt that some bodhisattvas had wives and children.³²⁰

(D) The fourth, sharp faculties, is also similar. The learned in the methods of Maha Guhyamantra have said that if a bodhisattva who has attained acceptance³²¹ of the unarisen [nature of] phenomena so believes, enlightenment as unsurpassed bodhi-mind can be had within seven days. [However,] for a beginner there is no way bodhi-mind can be accomplished any faster than three incalculable eons.

In this way, the objection is that the four specializations are in fact similar [for both Paramita and Guhyamantra].

[Reply:] We accept that the explanation of similarity of the paths is partially true and that there can be no argument against the Guhyamantra path since it accomplishes the same single intent. Yet, Guhyamantra still demonstrates superiority through specializations.

(A) For the first [objection], nonambiguity, the question was asked above as to whether this applies to paths or to individuals. It is true that there are both ambiguous and nonambiguous individuals, and it is also true that the path is neither ambiguous nor nonambiguous. [However,] there is a path that instructs ambiguously and a path that instructs nonambiguously. Accordingly, Guhyamantra is the path made for nonambiguous individuals as it explicitly instructs through examples of the absolute just-as-is. Paramita is the path made for ambiguous individuals as it does not instruct in that way.

(B) As to the second [objection] that there is similarity in multiple methods, it is indeed true that Paramita has many methods and that Guhyamantra does not reject these paths. Beyond that, Guhyamantra specializes in an inconceivable number [of methods], such as the two processes [of generation and completion] as methods for supreme accomplishment, and such as recitation [of mantra] and fire offerings³²² as methods for common accomplishments, as was explained above [in chapter 4].

(C) As to the third [objection] that there is similarity in being without difficulty, these Paramita accounts are intended for exceptional individuals [only]. [Bodhisattva] Noble Dharma had attained the power of mantras, and [bodhisattva] Always Crying had heard sounds from the sky, as their paths of accumulation. They had also attained within their continuums the path of application through difficult practices, and the path of vision without coming or going. Through these, they were not bound [in samsara] by their passions. Yet for other individuals whose passionate natures are well established, Guhyamantra retains specialized methods that have superiority in transformation to bodhi-mind. If passions were permitted for Paramita beginners, they would be unable to overcome those passions. That is not an appropriate path for instruction.

(D) As to the fourth [objection] that there is similarity in having sharp faculties, [in Paramita] the attainment of the incontrovertible acceptance of the nonarising of phenomena [does not occur until] the eighth level.³²³ That attainment [requires] a delay of two incalculable eons,³²⁴ a very long time. In Guhyamantra, with particular effort a beginner can become a buddha in one lifetime, at the time of death, in the intermediate state, in seven lifetimes, or at least in sixteen lifetimes. [This demonstrates] having sharp faculties, as was explained in the canonical references above in chapter [4] delineating the Palayana.³²⁵

Thus, [Guhyamantra] does have specializations [that are dissimilar to Paramita].

Given That [the Specializations Are] Dissimilar, Resolution of the Consequence That the [Guhyamantra] Path Is Deviant

There are three subtopics: (1) resolution of the objection that nonambiguous would mean that the true [gnosis of the path of] vision [would be directly evident], (2) resolution of the objection that many methods without difficulty deviates from the path, and (3) resolution of the objection that demonstrating sharp faculties without extensive activities is similar to the shravaka path.

Resolution of the Objection That Nonambiguous Would Mean That the True [Gnosis of the Path of] Vision [Would be Directly Evident]

(A) [Objection:] You Guhyamantras [claim] that gnosis is generated at the

time of [the third] empowerment and [subsequent] meditation practice, that through the lama it is generated with certainty that this is the absolute just-as-is. Is this the real absolute just-as-is, or is this [merely] a method for gaining familiarity through a representation? What is this method? How is it superior to the logic of singular or multiple [or same or different]? If this is the actual absolute, then the vision of truth [the first level on the third path] would become [directly evident at the time of the third empowerment].³²⁶

[Reply:] Some ambiguous [persons] assert that there is no distinction between comprehension of this [representation] and the vision of [the absolute] just-as-is. One's own body takes on appearance, yet is not separate from mind. In order for mind to become free of conceptualization, what would have to be done to become unhindered by [the body as a] representation and an attachment? If you think that this practitioner's body, which at this present time is a vast net [of entanglement] must be done away with in order to become liberated, then the only appropriate thing to do would be to commit suicide.³²⁷

[Objection:] That would constitute an infraction [of the refuge vow not to kill].

[Reply:] Since once acceptance³²⁸ has been accomplished, falling into lower levels of existence cannot occur, then by [committing suicide] how could there be a downfall from the vision of truth? That would be a laughing matter [as a joke].³²⁹

[Objection:] I [the Paramita] am the one who is accomplished. Because of your impurity [of sensual desires], you have exhausted [or wasted] your vision.

[Reply:] If you are not lying to yourself, that is good. Do not be so obviously proud.

[Objection:] What if I have just a little vision?

[Reply:] Then that cannot be the [actual] first level on the path of vision, since that [small amount of] vision would have to precede [true vision].

[Objection:] What if I had previously gained realization [of true vision], but now it has deteriorated?

[Reply:] If in that way you had previous realization of the absolute just-as-is that then deteriorated, then the path of vision would have deteriorated, which would be a laughing matter. Alternatively, as a consequence of the circumstances of realizing the absolute just-as-is, it would be possible to demonstrate [buddha] capacities such as shaking the one hundred times ten million world systems,³³⁰ since there would be no distinction in that realization. Where there is no distinction in realization, there is no distinction in capacities of [realization of] phenomena-as-is. For example, just like a buddha. Believing this to be true gnosis would entail these errors and uncountable others.³³¹ We believe that it is just the [indicator] example [gnosis].

[Objection:] How does that [realization of gnosis during the third empowerment] have the distinction [of superiority] over methods such as [analytical reasoning of] the nonexistence of singular or multiple?

[Reply:] There is a distinction as the mind cannot become empty of thoughts just by knowledge of the nonexistence of self-identity. Here, the part of the realization of gnosis that is beyond elaboration as [experienced] at the time of the [third] empowerment resembles the [true] gnosis on the path of vision. This [false claim of yours to have realized true gnosis on the path of vision] is analogous to believing that you have viewed the moon when you have seen the indication of the moon's reflection on water. As a result, there may be no obscuration,³³² but [the experience itself] cannot become the true [path of] vision. If after realizing the example gnosis [during the third empowerment], that is not [followed up with] practice to develop the skill [of gnosis], then there is a reversal of the entering into gnosis. This is a very big mistake that brings gnosis to cessation. Accordingly, the practitioner cannot have any conceited attitude with respect to supreme realization, but must make a great effort with all diligence [to turn example gnosis into true gnosis]. If this is not done, there can be no meaningful gnosis, and the nature of phenomena will be [nothing but emptiness as] negation.³³³

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 74, line 1: Some believe that the indicator example mahamudra gnosis is the path of vision and that the reason it is not possible to actually demonstrate the twelve hundred [buddha] capacities such as shaking the one hundred times ten million world systems is that the [practitioner's] body is bound in a vast net [of entanglement]. Under this circumstance, committing suicide would be the right thing to do, since after

death it would be possible to demonstrate these [capacities]. Yet killing oneself would constitute an infraction. Given that accomplishment of acceptance on the shravaka path of application gives confidence of not falling back into lower existences, then how could there be a downfall after [the accomplishment of] the Mahayana vision of the truth? That much [as far as recognition of a contradiction] is certain. Having been previously attained, could it [the path of vision] now deteriorate? If attainment of the path of vision could deteriorate, then the irreversible indication attained through the Mahayana path of application as explained by Maitreya would be a laughing matter.}

Resolution of the Objection That Many Methods without Difficulty Deviates from the Path

[Objection:] (B) The statement that the multiple methods [of Guhyamantra], such as the generation process and [yogic manipulation of] conductors, energies, and vital fluids [in the completion process], accomplish the supreme siddhi as the method of realization of what is absolute just-as-is is not correct. Here, the generation process can only lead to the form kayas [sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya], and the absolute just-as-is [dharmakaya] is the same as in Paramita. Since marginalists also practice multiple methods such as [volitional control of] conductors, energies, and vital fluids, how can these be [Buddhist] methods [that lead to the absolute]? Further, multiple methods for accomplishing common siddhis includes methods for killing and controlling sentient beings, which causes harm to them. How can [someone who has] such a bodhi-mind perspective remain for long in the higher realms of beings?

(C) Further, in regard to the statement that bodhi-mind can be accomplished easily without difficulty [through Guhyamantra], since the lustful could become accomplished just by practicing promiscuously, then anyone could become accomplished. To say that accomplishment results from unrestrained engagement with sensuous objects as long as there is awareness of that just-as-is [the absolute nature of reality] is the same perspective as the Samkhyas.³³⁴

(B) [Reply:] As to the contention that accomplishment cannot come from the generation process, Guhyamantra itself also states that accomplishment cannot come from a focus solely on the aspects of the generation [process]. Liberation can [only] come by [also] doing the meditation of the completion process and having the knowledge of how to join them [the two processes] in union. Accordingly, [the practice of the two processes in Guhyamantra] is specialized with respect to Paramita and surpasses through manifestly accomplishing inconceivable purposes such as (1) thoroughly clarifying all knowledge of the

multiplicity of phenomena and the intrinsic nature of all phenomena within the absolute nature of a single deity; (2) combining [into one practice] the entirety of the path, such as the six perfections, etc.; (3) continuously completing the [two] accumulations [of merit and wisdom]; and (4) pacifying all factors un conducive [to accomplishing buddha] in this lifetime.

If the statement is made that [practices involving] the energies, etc., that belong to marginalists cannot be a part of the [Buddhist] path, that raises the question as to whether everything without exception that belongs to marginalists must be rejected or not? If not rejected, then be quiet! If rejected, then since [practices] such as generosity and discipline [the first two of the six perfections] also belong to marginalists, they would also have to be rejected.

[Objection:] The taking of refuge, bodhisattva vow, and complete purification of the triple retinue [of generosity: giver, gift, and recipient] are what makes [the Paramita practice of generosity] superior to the marginalist's practice of generosity, and so forth.

[Reply:] Here [in Guhyamantra] it is the same. The taking of refuge, bodhisattva vow, and complete purification of the triple retinue are what makes [Guhyamantra] meditation practice on conductors, energies, and vital fluids superior to [what is otherwise the same practice as] the marginalists.

(B) [Objection:] Again, since multiple methods such as killing and seducing cause harm to sentient beings, they cannot be [Buddhist] methods.

[Reply:] That is easy to say, but here [it is important to] know the distinction between superior and nonsuperior individuals. Superior individuals are spoken of in Paramita, as [for example the analogy] in the *Ratnakuta Collection* [of Sutras]:³³⁵

Just as urban sewage becomes fertilizer when applied to sugar cane fields,

So the sewage of emotions becomes fertilizer when applied to the bodhi fields of the bodhisattvas.

Likewise, when Captain Great Compassion hurled a spear into an evil person and killed him, many things happened such that negativity was eliminated for many eons. Yet here [in Guhyamantra], acts such as killing out of anger must

cease, as revealed in the canon [*Hevajra Tantra* I, xi, 6-7]:

{Here killing must not be done
As it would definitely be a degeneration of vows.

Everything can be done, except for
Deceiving sentient beings which must not be done.}
Just by harming sentient beings,
[Maha]mudra siddhis cannot be obtained.³³⁶

[Yet] for one skillful in the methods, it is permitted.³³⁷

[Objection:] This may indeed be fine for a superior individual, but for a lesser individual, it cannot be a good thing to apply it here [in Guhyamantra].

[Reply:] It is also not a good thing when reliance on the discipline of renunciation and reliance on the teachings on emptiness become tainted.

[Objection:] It is true that it is not a good thing, yet it is still a [legitimate] path for the inferior because the seed of a predilection toward liberation will be planted.

[Reply:] Know that it is exactly the same here [in Guhyamantra practice].³³⁸

(B) {Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 74, line 4:
[Objection:] Some say that the generation process is the cause for only the form kayas [sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya], and that it is not possible to become liberated by that [practice alone]. Since conductors, energies, and vital fluids are [subjects of] marginalists, then they are not [proper] methods for the accomplishment of buddha.

Since killing, seducing, and other such acts are harmful to sentient beings, [the perpetrators] cannot accomplish higher and better existences. [With these practices,] how would it be possible to attain a bodhi-mind perspective [to benefit all sentient beings]?

[Reply:] I do believe that the supreme cannot be accomplished just by focusing on the generation process. It is explained in the Tantras that liberation

can only be known through meditation on both the generation and completion processes in union, since it is explained that in dependence on the generation process [alone], it is possible to manifest realization [only up to] the sixth level. Conductors, energies, and vital fluids are [the subjects of] marginalists; but since they are not secured as [skillful] methods, they have not become binding [toward liberation]. When secured with [skillful] nonconceptual methods, they very much become methods for the accomplishment of buddha.

The generation process, [system of] energies, chandali, etc.,
Are not separate from the two [Buddhist] processes...

This states that these techniques are part of the [proper] practice of the profound completion process.

I do believe that killing, seducing, and other [such acts] are done out of self-interest by not the best of people and do cause harm. Yet whether by the best or not the best of people, they can be done with an attitude that recognizes the usefulness of the instructions that is not exclusive to the Vajrayana, but that is also asserted by the Paramita to be a [proper skillful] method for the accomplishment of buddha. [First, the admonition against acting in self-interest is] as revealed in a Tantra:

Acts that can be harmful to sentient beings
Are never to be done... [339](#)

If they are injurious to the Three Jewels
Do not contemplate them with tolerance...

[Then, the Sutra allusion to taking otherwise prohibited actions for the benefit of other sentient beings is] from the *Ratnakuta Collection*:

Just as the unclean waste of urban residents
Is beneficial to the orchards and sugarcane fields,
So the waste defilements of bodhisattvas
Can generate benefit for buddha and dharma. [340](#) }

(C) [Objection:] What about the question concerning the promiscuous practices of the lustful?

[Reply:] Since Paramitas cannot practice eating and other activities continuously [even when desirous with hunger or gluttony], they cannot continuously make offerings to the Three Jewels.³⁴¹

[Objection:] If one [continuously] thinks about [unselfishly] nourishing the worms in one's own body [when eating] and making offerings to the Three Jewels, then there is no contradiction.

[Reply:] Here [in Guhyamantra, the practice is also] maintained by those skilled in the methods so that wavering of the mind is brought to cessation.³⁴²

[Objection:] So the paths are equivalent.

[Reply:] That is indeed true. Since [Paramita] has the same root and commonality of the path, there is no disagreement with Guhyamantra; but since [Guhyamantra] clearly teaches many specific and easy practices, it surpasses through specialization. By analogy, adding teachings on emptiness and vastness to the shravaka [or Hinayana] canon turns it into the Mahayana canon of the Buddha. With clear instruction, superiority [of Mahayana over Hinayana, and Guhyamantra over Paramita] is demonstrated through these specializations.

(C) {Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 30, line 6: [Objection:] Some [such as Sonam Tsemo] have said that since the revelations were [made separately] for the purpose of training passionate trainees in Guhyamantra, and training dispassionate trainees in Paramita [respectively], then there [would seem to be] justification for dividing these vehicles into two, with meditation on a path that does not renounce passion for sensual pleasures and meditation on a path that does renounce passion [for sensual pleasures]. Here, this needs to be explained. The trainees of both vehicles [actually] meditate on paths that do not abandon passion for sensual pleasures and also meditate on paths that do abandon passion for sensual pleasures. Since both have both, it is not possible to distinguish separate vehicles on the basis of that specialization [alone]. Now there are many lay bodhisattvas who have entered the path of Paramitayana and have not

abandoned noncelibacy. There are many who are learned in skillful methods, such as the Brahmin Boy Star, who make allowance for noncelibacy when it is associated with great benefit for others. There are also many trainees of Guhyamantrayana who have abandoned craving for sensuality. For others, it is not possible to be free from the passion of desires during the time leading up to buddha awakening, but after buddha awakening it would be a mistake not to abandon those [passions]. ³⁴³

[Reply:] What is it that both types of trainees should not do? For each of them [passion for desires] is uncommon, and for the majority of trainees that is determined when first starting out on the path. It is not that it is just appropriate for the practice of the path of that [Guhyamantra] vehicle without purposely abandoning passion for sensual pleasures, rather it is dependent on whether or not one has the good fortune to be able to turn passion into an aid on the path and a cause for liberation. Given that, it is correct to distinguish between individuals when initially entering a given vehicle, even when it is not a division in the vehicles [themselves].

Likewise, whether or not the path is embellished with ecstasy is distinguished by [whether there is] piercing to the heart of mind or body. ³⁴⁴ If the ecstasy is the very pure kind that derives from shamata (calm abiding) meditation, ³⁴⁵ that is indicative of Paramitayana. If it is the great ecstasy that derives from the [yoga practices pertaining to] emission and absorption of the white and red elements, ³⁴⁶ that can be nothing else that is not [or can be nothing but] Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantra].

(B) [The vehicles] cannot be distinguished on the basis of perspective, since both of them have the same perspective of the realization that is beyond elaboration. [The vehicles] cannot be distinguished on the basis of the conduct of practice, as the practice of the six perfections is essential for both of them. [The vehicles] cannot be distinguished on the basis of generation of bodhi-mind, as they are equivalent in the necessity of generating an outlook [based] on the wish to attain buddha in order to benefit sentient beings.

Then by what can they be distinguished? For both vehicles, the primary purpose is the manifest wish to benefit others and not to attain bodhi-mind [just] for oneself. For that [wish] to actually be granted to trainees, the buddha that accomplishes that purpose is not dharmakaya, it is the aspects of the form kayas [rupakayas including sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya]. The wisdom of profound realization accomplishes dharmakaya; vast skillful means

accomplishes the form kayas. There is no distinction [between the vehicles] on the basis of the wisdom of profound realization. There is however a great distinction in the dissimilarity in how the body [is regarded] on the path as practiced in sadhanas of the form kayas. That is what makes for two vehicles. When Paramitas meditate on the absolute [nature] of phenomena just-as-is without elaboration, that is meditation on a path that resembles the dharmakaya aspect. They have no path of meditation that has similarity with the display of features and characteristics of the form kayas. When Paramitas meet and escort lamas, etc., because [lamas] have attained a similitude of the features and characteristics based on those of a Chakravartin (Universal Monarch, Monarch who Transforms the World),³⁴⁷ this continuation of [familiarity with] the features and characteristics is a cause [or source] for [later] accomplishment [on the part of the trainee]. Yet as a cause for actual accomplishment, [Paramita] does not have the practice of deity yoga in which [a practitioner] meditates on oneself as a divine form adorned with the features and characteristics. Guhyamantra does have [deity yoga in all four classes], the accomplishment of which [in (4) Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra] is revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra I*:

Through the yoga of buddha pride
Buddha can be definitively accomplished.
Because the teacher has thirty-two features
And eighty primary characteristics,
Accomplishment can be made through that method,
The method that takes on the form of the teacher.³⁴⁸

[Deity Yoga in (3) Yoga Tantra is expressed in] the *Sarva Rahasya (All Secret) Tantra*:

To summarize, buddha definitively arises
From the gnosis of samadhi;
Without the realization of buddha yoga
There can be no attainment through buddha yoga.³⁴⁹

As well as in the First Part of the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation of All Tathagatas) Tantra*.³⁵⁰

Through [the practice] of vajra body, speech, and mind
In meditating on the buddha form,
[Down to] one's own minutest particles,
Buddha will be perfected.

The method in (1) Ritual Tantra and (2) Conduct Tantra was explained by Buddhaghosa in his *Commentary of the Summarized Meaning of the Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Great Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra*.³⁵¹

Here in the progression [of practices] with signs and without signs, two forms of the actual divine body are taught through the specification of two kayas, one completely pure [dharmakaya] and one not completely pure [rupakaya].

[This explanation] could be extended with many more quotations from the canon. In the inner tradition of Ritual Tantra, generation of oneself [as the deity] is proof for acknowledgement that it is so [that all Tantras accomplish the form kayas through deity yoga].³⁵²

(C) Generally speaking, it is said:

The revelations of the corpus of dharma are [all] the same
In being [intended as] an antidote to [bad] behaviors.

The reason tathagatas revealed the dharma was for the purpose of eliminating emotional and conceptual defilements from the continuums of trainees. For those individuals able to practice renunciation, for whom it is easy to break the bonds to sense objects, liberation comes from the teaching of Paramitayana. For those individuals who desire to attain [liberation for all sentient beings] through the essence of unsurpassed bodhi-mind, yet are unable to practice renunciation as it is difficult to break the bonds to sense objects, liberation comes from the teaching of Vajrayana. As this was the intent, the revelations were made in this way.

(C) [Objection:] You are causing harm as [has been done] elsewhere, as in the

Carya Melapaka Pradipa (Lamp That Integrates the Practices), where it is explained that the revelations of dispassionate activities are for capturing those whose desires are few, and the revelations of passionate activities are for capturing those whose desires are deep.³⁵³ That is not correct. Individuals who are expert in the practice of Shrivakayana can have either the ability or nonability to renounce passion for sense objects. Among individuals who are expert in the practice of Vajrayana there are many who do have the ability to renounce passion for sense objects.

Elsewhere it was revealed [in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra XIII, 6*]:

Ritual Tantra is for the lowest,
{Not Ritual [Conduct Tantra] and Yoga [Tantra] are for the next highest,
Superior Yoga [Tantra] is for superior sentient beings,
Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantra] is for even higher than that.}³⁵⁴

[The presumption] that the four classes of Tantra were revealed in order to capture the four gradations of individuals ranging from dull to sharp intellect is not correct. Among individuals who are expert in the practice of Ritual Tantra, there are many who have sharp intellects, and among individuals who are expert in the practice of Unsurpassed [Yoga Tantra], there are many who have dull intellects.

The canonical sources generally state that deity yoga is an excellent [practice]. Yet the generation process deity yoga is derived from certainty of emptiness, and that emptiness is coincident with deity yoga that has the base and derivative [mandala and deity] aspects of form. Given that instruction, there is not even the slightest superiority of Vajrayana over Paramitayana that has been demonstrated,³⁵⁵ even though this is not explained in Ritual Tantra, in the meditation on the form [kayas] of the deity as oneself, adorned with [buddha] features and characteristics. In general, deity yoga is the one way in which Vajrayana accomplishes [some] superiority over Paramitayana. This has been explained in the section on multiple methods for supreme accomplishment. Yet while it may be appropriate to distinguish [differences] in individuals when they initially enter a vehicle, it is not correct to separate the vehicles [themselves on that basis].

[Reply:] There is no contradiction or conflict. If it is suitable to distinguish

between individuals when they initially enter a vehicle, then it is necessarily suitable to separate the vehicles [also on that basis]. This has been stated as the viewpoint of individuals who are expert in the practice of these vehicles. In this one instance, you [the objector] have hindered [the understanding of] your Tantra canonical sources by adding words to [the writings of] Master Kripitakamala [implying that] when noninclusion in Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantra] does not extend to the [three] lower classes of Tantra, one-sidedness results.³⁵⁶ In the method of explanation of the early Sakya lamas, this was taken as an indication of inclusion. To separate the paths into renunciation and nonrenunciation of the ground is not a fabrication of the Sakyapas. It is explained in the same way in the *Tattva Siddhi (Accomplishment of the Absolute)* by Shantirakshita,³⁵⁷ *Carya Melapaka Pradipa (The Lamp That Integrates the Practices)* by Aryadeva, and the *Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra* by Master Vitapada. Here, Rendawa³⁵⁸ has said that the significance of two engagements [in the path], by way of including or not including deity yoga and reliance on the ground [of sense objects] incorporated into the path, has become the one essential point. So sensual pleasures can be made into the path only for a yoga [system] that includes them, but [for a yoga system that] does not include them, there is no source for incorporation into the path.

[Objection:] Given that in (4) Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra sensual pleasures are incorporated into the path, how can that be acceptable in the three lower classes of Tantra?

[Reply:] (3) In Yoga Tantra, reliance on sensual pleasures is similar to Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, but not [fully] incorporated into the path. However, reliance on their portion of sensual pleasure [embracing] is one [part] incorporated into the path. (2) Likewise, even though Conduct Tantra is not similar to Yoga Tantra, there is a portion [smiling] that becomes one part [of the path].

(1) Even though Ritual Tantra is not similar to Conduct Tantra, there is a portion [gazing] that becomes one part [of the path].

Through mindfulness of buddha dharmakaya, [emptiness of] sensual pleasures are made into the path. Through mindfulness of buddha form kayas, faultless sensual pleasures [that do not cause harm to others] are made into the path. [In this context, there are three important points to be made:]

(a) Through the perception of everything appearing as illusory, there can be enjoyment of sensual pleasures in Paramitayana. Here the enjoyers themselves

of sensual pleasures, sensual pleasures that are enjoyed, and ways of enjoyment are all perceived as emptiness. Thereby there are distinctions [between Paramitayana and Guhyamantrayana] in the conduct of enjoyment, individual meditator, and method of realizing emptiness.

(b) In Guhyamantra, after [the sensual pleasure of] uniting with the mudras, they are [meditatively] arranged in [different] locations in the body which itself is perceived as just an illusion.

(c) Through knowledge of sensual pleasures as faultless, their enjoyment can be had in all four classes of Tantra without distinction [between them].}

Resolution of the Objection That [Demonstrating Sharp Faculties without Extensive Activities] Is Similar to the Shravaka Path

(D) [Objection:] Given that Guhyamantras have sharp faculties and can become accomplished within one lifetime or within the intermediate state [between death and rebirth], they cannot obtain other than an inferior result because it is done much too quickly. Here there is similarity with the analogy of barley and salu rice.³⁵⁹ Given that it is claimed that shravakas can quickly become liberated within three lifetimes, then only the inferior result of an arhat can be accomplished within those three lifetimes. [Shravakas] cannot accomplish unsurpassed bodhi-mind, the supreme result of accomplishing buddha, because they do not practice the very extensive bodhisattva activities that involve many difficult actions. Accordingly, since it is stipulated that Guhyamantras have sharp faculties, yet do not practice extensive activities, then they also gain an inferior result as do shravakas.

[Reply:] Some masters say that through Guhyamantra [practice] accomplishment can come in one lifetime, since [someone with] sharp faculties can properly accomplish [up to] what is called the mahamudra siddhi (special power) on the first level,³⁶⁰ in one lifetime. The Paramita path is the same, since it is asserted that upon attaining [patient] acceptance of the nonorigination of all phenomena [on the eighth level] through Paramita [practice], bodhi-mind can be accomplished within seven days.³⁶¹

Further, the learned Pelyangkyi Zhay³⁶² stated:

Through the method of Guhyamantra practice,
Comes attainment of the life span-determining vidyadhara;
Having a [long] vidyadhara life span

Is the explanation for the accomplishment of buddha [within one lifetime].

The intent here is [to ask the question as to] what contradiction can there be between having practiced many difficult actions over innumerable lifetimes [in contrast with doing less difficult practices for one very long lifetime]? Both the *Samputa Tantra* and the *Vajradaka Tantra*³⁶³ revealed that “the accomplishment of long life comes from the accomplishment of extracting the essence [in external and internal alchemy],” also with the same intent [of lengthening the life span in order to have longer to practice dharma]. The Venerable One [Kunga Nyingpo] referred to the quotation in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra X*:

Bodhisattvas are conquerors of an ocean
And a Vajrasattva³⁶⁴ life is attained.³⁶⁵

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 12, line 1: “Bodhisattvas” as present in the faces of the trainees are designated “conquerors” as they are close to conquering [accomplishing all of the buddha] capacities. As they are present within them, there is an “ocean” [of the capacities] of conquerors, and that ocean becomes the most precious of all places.}

Chandrakirti said that a Vajrasattva life is a healthy one without illness and without [prematurely] coming to an end. Similarly, when a very strong effort is made during a [single] lifetime, even with an imperfect body, a nonconceptual samadhi can be developed, and all the benefits of accomplishing paranormal abilities can be gained. At the moment when those have been perfected through acting for the benefit of an inconceivable number of sentient beings, the very extensive bodhisattva activities are completed, as revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

For those [who develop] bodhicitta,
For those, negativity is completely overcome.

After giving the gift of one’s body,
Then, [bodhisattva] activities are completely enacted.

Accordingly, when the accumulations [of merit and wisdom] cannot be completed even in a very long time, the [seemingly interminable] sufferings of cyclic existence continue. Yet the accumulations can be completed in a short time, as [for example during just] seven circumambulations while reciting the single verse of praise for Tathagata Tishya (Star King) which are said to be equivalent to seven eons of accumulations [following the Paramita path]. This explanation by the Venerable One [Kunga Nyingpo] unites the understandings and shows that there is no contradiction between the assertions of the two earlier masters [Pelyangkyi Zhay and Chandrakirti].³⁶⁶

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 76, line 1: [Reply:] Some scholars explain that the revelation of accomplishment [of buddha] within a single lifetime refers to the attainment of the supreme siddhi of mahamudra within this lifetime, established from the first level in dependence on the unsurpassed path [of Tantra]. Established from the first level refers to the lower limit of the supreme siddhi of mahamudra. The quotation from the learned Pelyangkyi Zhay [above] asserts that the establishment of the attainment of the supreme siddhi of mahamudra is made manifest on the thirteenth level of Vajradhara by the very body that has been accomplished during a vidyadhara lifetime. Here [in this book] both of these assertions are made. The quotation above from the *Samputa Tantra* and the *Vajradaka Tantra* that “accomplishment of this [vidyadhara] lifetime comes about through extracting the essence [alchemy]” is equivalent to the former [quotation from Pelyangkyi Zhay]. The above quotation from the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra* and [the statement by] Chandrakirti are also equivalent. How are they equivalent? Bodhisattvas who have attained the first level in dependence on the unsurpassed path are able to achieve complete buddha in a single moment of a great wave of bodhisattva conduct in dependence on the specialized skillful means of Guhyamantra. It is therefore possible to complete the two accumulations [of merit and wisdom] within a short period of time and accomplish vidyadhara immortality.}

Resolution of the Consequence That Ritual and Conduct Tantras Are not Guhyamantra

[Objection:] If Guhyamantra surpasses [Paramita] with the four specializations, then Ritual and Conduct Tantras³⁶⁷ cannot be [part of]

Guhyamantra, because they do not have the specializations of (A) accomplishing bodhi-mind without ambiguity,³⁶⁸ and (C) with ease without difficulty.³⁶⁹ Just because [a text or tradition is] called Tantra is an insufficient reason [for it to be considered Guhyamantra]. [If Ritual and Conduct Tantras are included in Guhyamantra, then] there would be the extreme consequence that Paramita [Sutras] would also have to be called Tantras.

[Reply:] This is in all ways analogous to the contention that absent the four seals [principles of reality]³⁷⁰ as indicative of the Buddha's word, [a written record] cannot be considered Buddhist. How can noble shravakas who do not accept that all phenomena are selfless, and Vatsiputriyas (Followers of Vatsi's Son)³⁷¹ who do not accept that everything conditioned is impermanent, appropriately be Buddhist? If the answer is that these [four seals] have not been explained [to them] completely, being hidden from those with lesser comprehension, then the same [reasoning] applies in this present context.³⁷²

Since Ritual and Conduct Tantras have transference of divinity,³⁷³ they have (A) nonambiguity,³⁷⁴ and since they allow for ecstasy only through gazing and smiling [not additionally including embracing and copulating as in Yoga and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras], they are (C) without difficulty.³⁷⁵ This is not explained in detail here.³⁷⁶ Accordingly, from the perspective of Maha Yoga Tantra [Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra] there is [at least] a little specialization [in Ritual and Conduct Tantras]; and from the perspective of Paramita, Guhyamantra [in the form of Ritual and Conduct Tantras] has a great deal of specialization.

Resolution of the Objection That [the Specializations] Contradict the Canonical Divisions and Classes of Literature

[Objection:] According to the Sutras, there are no words of the Buddha that are not included in the Three Collections [Vinaya, Sutra, and Abhidharma]. Because you have a separate Guhyamantra Collection, that would make Four Collections and thereby contradict the Sutras.

[Reply:] That is not so, since the Three Collections are the intent of Paramita and are not held in common with Guhyamantra. Because [Guhyamantra] is unknown [in Paramita], here there is a specific specialized Vidyadhara Collection. This is similar, as for example, to the Mahayana being unknown to shravakas.

[Objection:] That may well be true, but in order to include [the Vidyadhara Collection] in the way [the Collections were] conceived, it is still necessary to include it within either the Three Collections or the Twelve Divisions of the Canon.

[Reply:] In accordance with [the Twelve Divisions of] the Canon, there is an Exceedingly Vast Collection³⁷⁷ that includes all vehicles; Guhyamantra is also included within that [Collection]. Further, the Maha Yoga Tantra called *Manjushri Mayajala (Manjushri Net of Illusion)* revealed:

This originates in the Great Exceedingly Vast Bodhisattva Collection called the *Avatamsaka . . .* ³⁷⁸

The *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Great Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra*³⁷⁹ and the *Manjushri Mula Kalpa (Root Comprehension of Manjusri)*³⁸⁰ say the same thing.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 49, line 5: [There is also a supporting quotation] from the *Subahu Paripricha (Questions of Subahu) Tantra* I:

I will explain Guhyamantra using the Sutra method... ³⁸¹
. . . Listen to me with conviction, Subahu.}

As for Three Collections, Master Abhayakaragupta³⁸² says that [the purposes of] the three are that Vinaya teaches discipline, Sutra teaches mind, and Abhidharma teaches wisdom. Some say that Abhidharma primarily teaches nonconceptual acts. The Venerable One [Kunga Nyingpo] said that the Sutra Collection teaches the three trainings³⁸³ and primarily teaches reasoning as the training of a superior mind. Definitions of the Three Collections are stated in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara (Mahayana Sutra Ornament)*, XI, 3-4:

Transgressions, sources, reform, and restoration;
Person, corollary, interpretation, and determination;
These [two sets of four] are the Vinaya dharma.

Given elucidation, repetitiveness, outshining with brilliancy, and realization,
These [four define] Abhidharma.

When context, characteristic,
Content and meaning are expressed, that is Sutra.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 12, line 2: “Vinaya” is recognized by means of [the subjects of] “transgressions, sources, reform, and restoration.” There are five classes of “transgressions”: defeating offenses, partially defeating offenses, downfalls, offenses that must be individually confessed, and minor infractions. There are four “sources” for the transgressions: ignorance, senseless talk, excessive emotions, and lack of commitment. “Reform” from transgressions comes from reflection, not from punishment. There are seven [means of] “restoration” from transgressions: (1) confession; (2) acceptance of correction such as being given [additional] training; (3) relaxation [of a rule] if specifically permitted and accompanied by [additional] training; (4) open-mindedness on the part of the monastic community regarding the basis of the training; (5) a complete change in base by a change in male-female characteristics, for transgressions not in common for both monks and nuns; (6) [developing] a perfect specific understanding that surpasses the [ordinary] specific understanding of dharma regulations; and (7) attainment of dharma exactly-as-is, for that attainment through the vision of truth precludes even the slightest of transgressions.

Four components of the Vinaya are to be recognized. (1) “Person” refers to the promise to take on the training in dependence on the person [making the promise]. (2) “Corollary” refers to when a person speaks of a mistake, the teacher gathers the monastic community and enacts [again] the promise to take on the training. (3) “Interpretation” refers to when the basis for the training has [only] been briefly explained, and a [more detailed] interpretation is given. (4) “Determination” refers to determining whether or not a transgression has occurred.³⁸⁴

“Given elucidation, repetitiveness, outshining with brilliancy, and realization,” “Abhidharma” is acknowledged. Dharmas that give “elucidation” to the direction to nirvana are Abhidharma, since they instruct on the truths, the gates to liberation, and the corresponding [thirty-seven] branches of bodhi-mind. When the dharmas are taught over and over again, taught multiple times to distinguish each dharma as existent, nonexistent, devoid of form, etc., that

“repetitiveness” is Abhidharma. Dharmas that “outshine with brilliancy” are elucidated, since the objections of adversaries are overcome by debate and the grounds for debate. When leading to the “realization” of the meaning of the Sutras, that is Abhidharma.

“When context, characteristic, content, and meaning are expressed, that is Sutra.” “Context” explains where, by whom, and why. “Characteristic” refers to the relative and absolute truths. “Content” includes the perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields, food, interdependent causation, etc. “Meaning” is [buddha] intent. When these [four topics] “are expressed, that is Sutra.”³⁸⁵

These characteristics of Sutra as stated by Asanga are equal [in defining the category] as for the Abhidharma [literature]. The Guhyamantra Canon in common [with the *Avatamsaka* and others] is also called the Sutra Collection.³⁸⁶

Resolution of Objections That There Is No Opportunity to Practice Guhyamantra

[Objection:] Just as some conceited shravakas [think that they] are actually Mahayanists, so Guhyamantras [think that their] “true” dharma surpasses [Paramita] in specialization. There is now no opportunity to [actually] practice [Guhyamantra], since (1) there are no masters and trainees who possess the [required] qualifications; (2) if [the vows are] safeguarded there are great benefits, but if unsafeguarded there are great detriments; (3) it is impossible to maintain the vows; (4) in these bad times troubled with many sufferings, accomplishments [of practice] cannot be attained.

[Reply:] That is not correct. (1) Indeed it would be very difficult to find [someone who has] all of the qualifications, yet a vajra master can be found who has [at least] some suitable [qualifications] as expressed in the Tantras and treatises, such as [in the *Gurupanchashika* (*Fifty Stanzas on the Guru*) 8]:

Steadfast, disciplined, intelligent,

Patient, straightforward, never duplicitous... [387](#)

If this were not so, [then by analogy] since it is very difficult to find among the five [ranks of] monastic preceptors anyone who has [all of] the respective five sets of twenty-one [qualifications], monastic ordination would have to come to an end.³⁸⁸

(2) Given that if [Guhyamantra vows are] unsafeguarded there are great detriments, similarly if all true dharmas are unsafeguarded, the dharma cannot properly be entered. If it is thought that there are benefits just from hearing the true dharma, then that is the same here.

(3) To say that it is impossible to maintain the vows is not correct. In the same way that it is easy to maintain full monastic [vows] if one is capable [of maintaining] novice monastic [vows], it is possible to enter into Guhyamantra without stumbling, if the three common bodhisattva disciplines are maintained.³⁸⁹

(4) Since in these bad times [ordinary] actions are not suitable, it is impossible to accomplish the result by any [means] other than Guhyamantra, as revealed in the *Yogini Samcara (Complete Activity of the Yoginis) Tantra XVI, 1-4*.³⁹⁰

Otherwise, in a later time,

In the ending age, one will be unable to attain accomplishments;

{Attention will be diverted elsewhere,

There will be no joy in [the practice of] mudra, mandala, and [mantra] recitation,

And much suffering from hunger and thirst.

[Then] those who make effort and focus intent

On [the practice of this] self[-generation] yoga,

Will be able to totally go however far they wish

To [the realization of] Heruka gnosis.

Practitioners who hear from far away

And immediately gain insight}

Will comprehend this dharma

Such that all intentions will be realized.

This quotation [implies that] through Paramita [practice], accomplishment cannot be made in this degenerate era but can be made through Guhyamantra, as also revealed in the *Heruka Bhyudaya (Manifestation of the Blood-Drinker) Tantra*:³⁹¹

In assuming Heruka,

Accomplishment comes in this degenerate age.³⁹²

Accordingly, it is exactly in this present time that it is appropriate to enter into Guhyamantra [practice].

As has been [explained above], Guhyamantrayana methods are specializations surpassing Paramitayana; even though the Venerable One [Kunga Nyingpo] explained this circumstance elsewhere, it has been necessary to write about it here. Comprehension of these intentions can be extensively expanded through canonical sources and reasoning.

Chapter 6

Classes and Cycles of Tantras

*It is well-known that some assert four [classes of] Tantra were revealed
For vedic, brahmanical, and erotic Marginalists,
And those whose behavior is equal parts passion, aggression, and nescience,
In order to gradually guide them into subsequent accord [with Buddhist Tantra].*

*Just as Vatsiputriyas (Followers of Vatsi's Son) believe that
The self is inexpressible as either singular or plural [psychophysical] aggregates,
So in Ritual Tantra gnosis deity is believed
To be neither the self [meditator] nor the painted image [of the deity in front].
Just as Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas believe truly in
Partless atoms and partless moments of awareness,
So in Conduct Tantra, commitment and gnosis [deities] are asserted to be separate.
Just as pratyekabuddhas do not accept perceptual objects as truly [existing],
But do say that perceiving awareness is truly [existing],
So in the Yoga Tantra tradition, commitment and gnosis [deities] are united,
And afterward the gnosis deity departs.
Just as Cittamatras and Madhyamikas assert that object and subject are nondual,
Commitment and gnosis [deities] are inseparable in Unsurpassed [Yoga Tantra].
Through these four methods of generating [the deity], four classes of Tantra are definitive;
This is a famous assertion of certain great [masters] of the past.*

*Sentient beings of the Desire Realm satisfy their changing lusts
Through gazing, smiling, embracing, and coupling;
This tradition properly uses eroticism [to distinguish]
Four classes of Tantra in accord with just the respective permitted pleasure.*

*For four [degrees of] trainees: lesser, average, greater and superior,
The number and sequence of four classes of Tantra are definitive.
Rituals of body and speech, conduct of both [body and mind] equally,
Primacy of samadhi, and nothing except samadhi,
Are demonstrated by Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras [respectively].*

*By combining Unsurpassed Yoga with Yoga, the three Tantras
Are termed the outer, inner, and secret;
This is how the practice of Yoga is distinguished as asserted by Anandagarbha and others.
Those who assert four [classes] also accept outer, inner, and secret
As do those who prefer five or six classes.
There is no contradiction whether [or not the classes are] lumped or split.
Using the logic of four persons, empowerments, and paths,
[Classes of] Tantra as four in number are well-known and proven to scholars.*

*Maha (Great) Yoga Tantra [is divided into] three: Method, Wisdom, and Nondual.
They are distinguished by words in the introduction,
By generation process deities, by two types [of techniques] for the
completion process,
By purification [practices] of subsequent activity, by [intended] trainees of the Tantras,
By whether steps [in the processes] are many or few, male or female
[orientated], with method or wisdom [emphasis], etc.
Among these, [the distinction between] method and wisdom is most important;
Those that have both are Nondual Tantras.
For this reason, the Hevajra is proved to be a Nondual Tantra.
These [criteria] establish just a small number [of Nondual Tantras];
Yet purposely, the Guhyasamaja and others are explained
As Nondual in the Great Bodhisattva Commentaries,
Which are here a circumstance for disputation.*

Tantras which precede the explanatory are basic, root Tantras.

Subsequent Tantras that give explanation are the explanatory.

Root Tantras are classified as either extensive or abbreviated;

Explanatory Tantras are classified as in common or uncommon.

There are six ways that a Tantra can become explanatory:

(1) by making clarification, (2) by appending,

(3) by having [only] slightly dissimilar methods, (4) by making summarization,

(5) by generating certainty in cross-correspondence, and (6) by distinguishing words and meanings;

When most of these are established as complete, then [a Tantra] is explanatory of the root.

There are three ways of engagement [in practices] that are definitive for most:

(1) sequential development through all three continuities of source, path, and result,

(2) reverse of that as individual progression engagement, and

(3) disordered starting and stopping on a whim.

Words and meanings [in passages] may be abbreviated or expanded.

[Generally,] four lines constitute a verse of poetry,

Yet as explained in canonical texts, starting with two lines

Going up to six lines constitutes a verse;

In that way, numbers of verses may be counted.

In prose passages, nine syllable separation dots make one line,

Four of these are counted as one verse.

The extensive root Hevajra Tantra has 500,000 verses,

32 parts, and 30,000 chapters;

The abbreviated root Hevajra Tantra has two parts.

There are many methods for and assertions regarding identification of the latter,

Yet as the summarization of direct knowledge in the Five Hundred Thousand Verses [edition], [it constitutes] the final two [of thirty-two] Parts;

Such is the assertion of the [Sakya] father and sons without fear of partisanship.

The Vajra Panjara Tantra demonstrates that summarization of words and meanings

In the Five Hundred Thousand Verses makes it comprehensible.

The Seven Hundred Thousand Verses [edition] is the master root Tantra.

These [three] root Tantras are not divided into root and explanatory.

The [five] Tilaka cycles and the three Rali cycles

Are asserted to be continuation Tantras to the Five Hundred Thousand Verses.

The uncommon explanatory Tantra is the Vajra Panjara,

As it elucidates just the abbreviation of the extensive root Tantra.

The other that is a common explanatory Tantra is the Samputa,

Which the Lord of Union [Indrabhuti] asserts is called the elucidator

Of three million six-hundred thousand cycles of Tantras.

But at present, there are [only] seventeen other Tantras that are actually benefited

Through summarization of the most important profound meaning:

(1) Two-Part [Hevajra], (2) Vajra Panjara, (3) Sarva Buddha Samayoga,

(4) Mayajala, (5) Chaturpita, (6) Mantra Omsa,

(7-10) Four great [Guhya-]Samaja cycle Tantras not including the Sandhi Vyakarana,

*(11-15) Five root and explanatory Tantras that are the [Secret] End [class] in Maha
(Great) Yoga,*

(16) Tattvasamgraha, and (17) Vajra Shekhara.

In all, seventy-two classes of Tantras are known,

Such as the Seven Vajra Bhairava Kalpas and Tara Ocean

Among the many Tantras that teach endless miscellaneous actions [of mundane siddhis];

But [only seventeen of] these Tantras are said to be elucidated [by the Samputa].

Root and explanatory [Tantras] have three types [of engagements]:

(1) individual progression [Hevajra], (2) disordered [Vajra Panjara], and (3)

sequential development [Samputa] engagements.

The root Hevajra Tantra is abbreviated in the Introduction, expanded in Part One,

And extensively expanded by the subsequent Part [Two].

*After the Vajra Panjara Tantra is summarized in the first chapter,
The explanation is expanded in the remaining fourteen chapters.
The Samputa Tantra is abbreviated in the Introduction,
Expanded slightly in the meaning of symbols, expanded [more] in Part One,
And extensively expanded in the remaining Parts [Two] through Ten,
With words and meanings differentiated in the Continuation Tantra.*

*The root Hevajra Tantra has 750 verses.
At the end may be 27 delightful subsidiary verses
That instruct on the preparation of medicinal substances, etc.
The rest [750 verses] occur at the end of the Five Hundred Thousand Verses [in the final]
two Parts.
The explanatory Vajra Panjara Tantra has 1,025 verses;
The Samputa Tantra has 2,803 verses.*

*The number of Guhyamantrayana cycles of great method are inconceivable,
Yet according to the Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra,
Can be combined into 34,000 [as follows]:
Kalpa [4,000], Ritual [4,000], Conduct [8,000], Dual [6,000], Method [12,000].
According to the Samvarodaya Tantra, there are six million in Method [Maha Yoga] Tantras,
Sixteen million in Female [Wisdom Yogini] Tantras,
Five hundred and one million in Paramita [Sutras],
And eight hundred million in Hinayana [Sutras].
Even though each of these indicators is [given as] a definitive number
Of verses, [in fact], the [total] number [must] exceed that.
Since shravakas with their lesser wishes can draw out
What is said to be 84,000 dharmas,
Then there are an inconceivable number of divisions in the Mahayana tradition.*

Now, specific delineation of Guhyamantrayana will be explained in two

subtopics: distinguishing classes of Tantras and origin of Guhyamantrayana [chapter 7]. For the first [this chapter], there are three subtopics: (1) division of all Guhyamantra into four classes of Tantras, (2) specific divisions of the Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra class, (3) delineation of Method and Wisdom Nondual Tantras, and (4) explanation of the enumeration of the Tantras.³⁹³

[Division of All Guhyamantra into] Four Classes of Tantra

The four classes of Tantra are called Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.³⁹⁴ This classification was the one described in the best writings of past lamas, where the manner in which the fourfold classification is definitive was demonstrated, and the manner in which a three-, five-, and sixfold or more division is not contradictory was shown. The discussion [of the fourfold classification of Tantra usually] has five subtopics, but here four subtopics are easier to comprehend: (1) [derivation of] the definitive number of four classes of Tantra, (2) definitive number and sequence, (3) meaning of the names [of the four classes], and (4) resolution of contradictions.

[Derivation of] the Definitive Number of Four Classes of Tantra

The three subtopics are (1) division into four in order to convert outsider marginalists with their four divergent types of activity by virtue of [four] wrong conceptions; (2) division into four classes of Tantra in accord with four different methods for generating the deity, which in turn is in accord with the literature of the four different Buddhist philosophical systems of the determinant [or causal] vehicle; and (3) division into four in order to teach the bodhi-mind path that uses and does not renounce the four degrees of passion of sentient beings in the Desire Realm, since Guhyamantra was primarily revealed for those sentient beings in the Desire Realm.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 51, line 2: The Great Sakya (Kunga Nyingpo) in his *General Classification of the Tantras* identified six different methods for assigning the Tantras into four classes. [The first three correspond to the three above. The remaining three are] (4) four gradations of intelligence in individuals, from dull to sharp; (5) four branches of content and methods of engagement;³⁹⁵ and (6) the lack of contradiction with five, six, or other divisions of classes.³⁹⁶ Nyen Puljungwa Tsuktor Gyalpo³⁹⁷ asserted the first five [of the

above] methods. The Lord of Dharma, Sakya Pandita, spoke of three [further] methods for assigning [the Tantras into four classes]:

The division into four classes of Tantra

Is demonstrated by means of four castes of humans,³⁹⁸

Four ages, and [four sets and degrees of] emotional defilements;³⁹⁹

These are in accord with the Tantras.⁴⁰⁰

Division Into Four in Order to Convert Outsider Marginalists

The root of outsider marginalists is adherence to the Vedas as the valid source from which other [sects] branch off. Among them are four ways of engaging in the Vedic [tradition]: (1) the lustful are followers of the Great God [Shiva or Ishvara], espousing passion as dharma; (2) the forceful are followers of Vishnu, espousing violence as dharma; (3) the muddled are followers of Brahma, espousing purification as dharma;⁴⁰¹ (4) those by virtue of having all three conditions equally are followers of all three, and espouse all three [practices] as dharma. None of these accept the Three Refuges [of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha] nor maintain a perspective of selflessness nor retain the specialized [practices] of those skilled in methods; [all of these] are the cause of [rebirth in] inferior existences. In order to convert them, it is necessary to have analogous practices [with which they are familiar]. When so instructed and engaging [in the practices], the four classes of [Buddhist] Tantra are explained to them in order to guide them to unsurpassed bodhi-mind through the alchemical transformation of skilled methods.⁴⁰²

[Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra Revealed for] Shaivas [with a Predilection toward Lust]

For lustful followers of the Great God [Shiva or Ishvara], the result to be attained is visualization of the sambhogakaya form of Maheshvara. After receiving complete empowerment in their own tradition, they practice vase breathing instructions, Garuda instructions, and others. After gathering together on special occasions to perform the ritual, male practitioners line up on the right, and female practitioners line up on the left. In the center, a lamp is lit as the ninth limb. As it burns, the tip bends over; after it falls into [a bowl of] water, the “mothers,” “sisters,” and others engage in sex.

Gautama women are the lamp,

Their vaginas are the hollow space for the fuel,
Their pubic hair is the smoke,
[The penis] entering within is the charcoal [fuel],
[Ejaculating] semen is the sparks.
In that human flame,
The divine seed is consumed,
From which a human is conceived.⁴⁰³

Likewise, the five meats and five nectars are consumed in canine and pig practices. The many [participants] are referred to as canine practitioners, bovine practitioners, and so on. Since they do not maintain the perspective of the two kinds of selflessness [personal and phenomenal] and do not have specialization in skillful methods such as compassion, they are [only] establishing the cause of such downfalls as [rebirth in] inferior existences.

Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra was revealed because it was necessary to mimic their practices in order to convert these [practitioners], as in the words of the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra VII*:

Because the passionate desire gnosis
They [must] always rely on the five sense objects.⁴⁰⁴

After finding a girl [like a] blue utpala [flower],⁴⁰⁵
Honor her with passion.

As also stated in the *Samvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra I, 3-4*:⁴⁰⁶

{All women are a [karma-]mudra illusion
Of supreme nonduality;}
Of all illusions,
Women are the very best.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 14, line 7: Among “all illusions,” such as magicians tricks, medicines, mantras, precious gems, etc., the “illusion” made by “women” acting as a “karmamudra” is “the very best.” The reason for this is that from reliance on such women comes the vivid experience indicative of three

types of gnosis: appearance, augmentation, and attainment [that actually occur at the time of death].}

In this way, all Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras speak of comprehensive passionate activities. When instructed in these mimicking practices to gain entrance [into Buddhist practice], the entrants are also instructed in a perspective devoid of expectations [of individual desires having external validation], such as [seeing] a sixteen-year-old prajna [female consort] as the sixteen kinds of emptiness, and are instructed in extensive activities as skilled methods, such as great compassion [for all sentient beings], in order to gain entrance into unsurpassed bodhi-mind.

[Conduct Tantra Revealed for] Vaishnavas [with a Predilection toward Violence]

For the forceful followers of Vishnu who espouse violence as dharma, the result to be attained is visualization of the nirmanakaya form of Vishnu. They make offerings by sacrificing animals, humans, and even one's own body in front of an altar of their god, as stated in the *Veda of Making Offerings*:

During this intervening time period,
Tie up six or seven animals,
Horses being the purest kind;
If fewer [are available], do it with three animals.

Ksatriya (royalty or warrior caste) kill ksatriya,
Brahmins kill brahmins,
Untouchables [kill] vaishyas (merchant or producer caste),
The stupid kill the stupid.

With the wish to attain [a status within] a particular caste,⁴⁰⁷ they make offerings through the act of killing [a member of] that [same caste]. Since those who espouse violence as dharma have no access to any skillful methods, they [only] create the cause for [rebirth in] inferior existences.

Conduct Tantra was revealed by the Bhagavan because it was necessary to mimic their practices in order to convert these [practitioners], as in the words of the *Krodha Vijaya Kalpa Guhya (Secret Rite of Complete Wrathful Victory)*

*Tantra I, 1-2:*⁴⁰⁸

The Bhagavan Manjughosha's
Wrathful name is Yamantaka.
{[Brandishing] a sword with flaring tongues of flame,
Forceful and powerful,}
Upon seeing him, all other wrathful ones
Drop all of their weapons.⁴⁰⁹

This explains the fearful [Buddha] embodiment; further in the same text, VI:

Next, here is the act of killing which,
When it has the proper application,
Can be accomplished without dread [of consequences];
This act of killing is the supreme killing.⁴¹⁰

Oh, this killing is good!
This killing is not killing;
As long as the killing is pure, [there is] liberation,
By this killing, bodhi is attained.⁴¹¹

Then, after arising [from meditation],
Kill with a flaming sharp sword;
Take the flesh and blood
And make an offering of a drink of nectar.⁴¹²

Also from the *Vajrabhairava Kalpa (Vajrabhairava Rite) Tantra*:⁴¹³

Here, for the mantras who wish to kill...

These and other quotations are indicative of great fierceness and wrathfulness.

When instructed to mimic these practices to gain entrance [into Buddhist practice], entrants are also instructed in skillful methods:

In order to convert the violent,
This application is always spoken of;
Acts that cause great harm to the Three Jewels
Are explained to no one else.

Yet, those who have bodhicitta
Can here become accomplished, and nowhere else;
Here, all vows of the Tathagatas
Are accomplished.

Yet this killing is not that of sentient beings who kill with defiling thoughts and emotions...

With these quotations, Conduct Tantras reveal the intent of skillful methods in order that all will become established in unsurpassed bodhi-mind.⁴¹⁴

[Ritual Tantra Revealed for] Brahmanas [with a Predilection toward Nescience]

For muddled followers of Brahma who out of their nescience espouse purification as dharma, the result to be attained is visualization of Brahma as dharmakaya. First, the brahmin empowerment is performed for those born as a brahmin; through empowerment after their twelfth year, they have a second life [born-again]. Forty-eight powers accrue from this act, by which they become of very pure caste. Their actions are made pure activities as prescribed in accordance with the four Vedas. Upon first arising, they take a constitutional walk of a specified distance, then wash three times with earth and three times with water. Then taking an image of Brahma, kusha grass, and a vase [for purification water], they perform a fire offering to the Fire God (Agni). In first coming before Agni, the sacrificial practices of the Yajur (Yajna) Veda are made beneficial. Recitations and sacrificial offerings are performed, such as the inner deity becoming supreme, and making an offering to the precious place for fire offerings.

As for the practice of fasting:

[Whether] for one evening, or three evenings

Or for seven: for just one day
That someone [performs] the fasting ritual,
Their [next] life will become a superior existence.

Further, they purify faults by bathing on a riverbank:

Just as clothes that are washed with soap [or the five cow products]
Become spotless,
Likewise bodies washed with offerings,
While bathing on a riverbank, become clean.

Through practicing purifications, they believe they will become liberated. In this way, for those who believe that purification is dharma yet are devoid of skillful methods, their fixation on their own caste and dharma and despising of others is the cause of [rebirth in] inferior existences.

The Bhagavan revealed Ritual Tantras for the purpose of mimicking their practices and converting them, as in the *Susiddhikara (Well-Accomplished) Tantra*: ⁴¹⁵

Make torma offerings to the deity with
Meat, alcohol, onions, garlic, leeks,
Rapeseed oil, sesame, radishes, wine, and demon flesh;
When making offerings to Gulang (Maheshvara), do not eat the torma.

After reciting [purifying] mantras,
Eat and drink soup made from the three white foods,
Roots, stalks, fruits, vegetables,
Clarified rapeseed oil, curds, and boiled milk.

After eating and bathing at the [appropriate] time,
Make a circle of lighted lamps and a string of burning incense;
After offering food, without meat and alcohol, to the deity,
Sit on a bundle of kusha grass and begin to recite mantras.

With such instruction in making pure food, [purifying] practices, bathing, and

fire offerings, [trainees] become exhilarated.

Those [trainees] then enter [Buddhist practice] . . .

As revealed in the *Subahu Paripriccha (Questions of Subahu) Tantra*:⁴¹⁶

The Tathagatas did not speak of fasting
In order to purify the body of one child;
The Tathagatas spoke of fasting
In order to make meditation easier.

The purification of faults by washing with water gave strength to the bodhisattva prayer of the Naga King Madro...

Ritual Tantra was revealed in order to establish unsurpassed bodhi-mind through gradually applying the inner skillful methods.

[Yoga Tantra Revealed for] All Three Combined

Those who on the strength of equal parts of the [three emotional defilement] conditions are followers of the three [Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma] visualize all three as objects of attainment and espouse all three [passion, violence, and purification] as dharma. When they meet with a teacher who espouses passion as dharma, they practice lustful activities. When they meet with [a teacher who] espouses violence as dharma, they practice harmful activities. When they meet with [a teacher who] espouses muddledness as dharma, they practice purification. They practice these activities without any hindrance, and being without skillful methods, [they are only creating] the causes [for rebirth in] inferior existences.

The Bhagavan revealed Yoga Tantra for the purpose of mimicking their practices and converting them. In the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*,⁴¹⁷ “Part One: Vajradhatu,” all of the deities possess passionate demeanors in order to convert the lustful. In “Part Two: Conquering the Three Realms,” all of the deities have a ferocious demeanor in order to convert the violent and eliminate multicolored [multiple personalities] through the use of violence. In “Part Three: Training Sentient Beings,” all of the deities have peaceful

demeanors in order to convert the nescient. In “Part Four: Accomplishment of All Purposes,” all deities have multicolored demeanors in order to convert the indefinite.⁴¹⁸ Further, mantra recitations for all rites in this *Tantra* are revealed as recitations for any of the multiplicity of practices such as ablutions. As revealed to the uncertain in this way, they become persuaded to enter [into Buddhist practice], and for these entrants, Yoga Tantra was revealed in order to guide them to unsurpassed bodhi-mind through the bestowal of all the Tathagatas’s skillful methods for liberation.

Accordingly, the four classes of Tantra are for [the purpose of] converting the four kinds of misguided marginalist practitioners of the Vedas. This is well-known as the assertion of past scholars such as Subhutipalita and Anandagarbha⁴¹⁹ in accordance with the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*.⁴²⁰

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 13, line 6: Another division on the basis of the four [sets and degrees of] defilements to be eliminated was made in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliant Lamp Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra)*:⁴²¹

Ritual Tantra as taught was intended for excessive and moderate nescient types of people. Conduct Tantra was taught for diminutive nescient types of people. Yoga Tantra was taught for types of people with moderate passion, aggression, and nescience. Superlative Yoga Tantra was taught for types of people with excessive passion, aggression, and nescience. Yogini Tantra was taught for types of peoples with exceptionally excessive passion, aggression, and nescience.}

[Resolution of Objection]

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 40, line 6: These explanations are not in evidence.⁴²² [Objection:] Someone has said:

Let’s say that the intent of what was revealed was to train one and another of these four types of individuals. The specific dissimilarities in entrants cannot be identified by means of the four classes of Tantra, because all four individuals could be trained under each of these [classes of Tantra]. It is very much invalid to assert that these classes of Tantra are necessary to train primarily [only] one type of individual [each]. Since the primary trainees of the Mantrayana are the best trainees who have entered the Conqueror’s teachings, then it is unnecessary that one would have had to have a prior engagement with opposite viewpoints [before entering the Mantrayana]. There would also be the contradiction that those who had engaged in the correct philosophical systems [from the beginning] could not become the primary trainees of these classes of Tantra since they had not first engaged in the opposing philosophical systems. This is not the assertion of Master Anandagarbha in his *Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*, since he did not say that [the purpose was] to convert the violent followers of Vishnu when those followers are actually passionate [and not violent].⁴²³

[Reply:] Yet a defining feature of your own tradition is that stages of the path instruction is for three gradations of persons: high, average, and low.⁴²⁴ Is the teaching intended to train primarily only one type of trainee, or all three types of individuals? The former [contention] is invalid, since the instruction for only the superior person would then have to train all three types of individuals. For the latter [contention], how could the training instruction primarily for an inferior person be for an individual who sought to acquire only the most exalted [instruction]. Yet the requestor of the Venerable One's [Atisha's] *Lamp for the Bodhi Path* was Lha Lama Jangchub O who had generated the intention of supreme bodhi so that [the book] cannot be primarily training instruction for an inferior person since it is primarily training for an individual who seeks to reach only the most exalted [level].⁴²⁵

Further, is the instruction in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* intended to train only those passionate followers of Vishnu or all those who engage in passionate activity? Who is intended as primarily the trainee? The former [contention] is invalid since the training is for the passionate, violent, and nescient.⁴²⁶ If the latter [contention], then the primary trainees of that Tantra would be the superior [passionate] individuals who have already entered the Conqueror's teachings for that reason. Further, there would be the contradiction that those who had engaged in the correct philosophical systems could not become primary trainees of the *Kalachakra Tantra* if they had not first engaged in the opposing philosophical systems. Therefore, the thirty-five million Brahma rishis, such as the Rishi Sun Chariot, could not become primary trainees of the *Kalachakra Tantra*.⁴²⁷

Division into Four in Accord with Four Different Methods for Generating the Deity

The division into four classes of Tantra, through four different methods for generating the deity, is in accord with the four different Buddhist philosophical systems.

[Ritual Tantra Revealed for Oneself] Inviting the Gnosis Deity to Merge with the Present Deity Image

Shravakas of lowest faculty, called Vatsiputriyas (Followers of the Son of Vatsi), and average faculty, called Vaibhashikas (Particularists) from the [Western] Land of the Setting Sun, believe that an individual self exists in accord

with this sutra statement by the Bhagavan:

Monastics, where there is a burden, there is also a carrier of the burden... [428](#)

Further, [the two schools assert that] the [five psychophysical] aggregates are inexpressible as a permanent [self], since the aggregates of this life will be cast away, and the aggregates of the next life acquired. The aggregates are also inexpressible as impermanent, because [the effects of] the acts committed in this life are experienced by the self in the next life. The aggregates are inexpressible as that [self] since the aggregates are impermanent. The aggregates are inexpressible as other [than the self] since the aggregates are continuous. Accordingly, the belief is that the individual [self does exist but its nature] is inexpressible.

Likewise, Ritual Tantra revealed a method of [buddha deity] generation whereby after displaying [an image of a deity] painted on cloth in front [of oneself], making offerings and performing purifications, then the method of inviting the gnosis deity [to merge with the deity image] in front is performed. The recitation of the mantra revolving in the [deity's] heart is the method for acquiring siddhis (special powers), such that [the gnosis deity] resembles a guide. This is in accord with the philosophical system in that there is a belief in the gnosis deity [as an existent self]; but that it is not the painted image, and is not oneself, as oneself is ordinary [and not divine], as stated in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*:

. . . without the true ecstasy of the gnosis deity, without pride in oneself as the deity

. . . is engagement in Ritual Tantra. [429](#)

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 53, line 2: In Ritual Tantra, there is no generation of oneself as the [buddha] deity. After generation of the commitment deity [representational or symbolic deity] in front on painted cloth, etc., siddhis are acquired in a manner as if [the gnosis deity were present as] a guide.}

[Conduct Tantra Revealed for] Oneself as the Commitment Deity Inviting the Gnosis Deity

into the Present [Deity Image]

Next, in the philosophical systems of the shravakas, the highest [faculty] is the Kashmiri Vaibhashikas (Particularists), who together with Sautrantikas (Sutra Adherents) do not believe that there is an individual self, based on the canonical passage by the Bhagavan that says:

Deeds exist, their fruition exists, but an actor does not exist.

They do believe however that objects of perception absolutely exist as atoms and that perceiving subjects absolutely exist as moments of awareness.

The method of deity generation revealed in Conduct Tantra is similar to that [belief]. Oneself is generated as the commitment deity, who then invites the gnosis deity [actual deity] to come before them. From [the recitation of] the mantra revolving in their hearts comes the method for acquiring siddhis, such that [the gnosis deity] resembles a [supportive] companion.⁴³⁰ This method of generating two deities resembles the philosophical system that believes in [an ultimately existing] subject and object.

[Yoga Tantra Revealed for] Gnosis Deity Entering Oneself as the Commitment Deity [Then Departing]

Next, noble pratyekabuddhas [believe that] objects of perception do not exist naturally, since their [composite] atoms can be divided into six parts, but that the perceiving subject does exist as moments of awareness, since the moments cannot be divided into parts,⁴³¹ as stated in the *Abhisamayalamkara* 83:

Since concepts about objects are eliminated,

But [concepts about] subjects are not eliminated,

The follower of the path [of a believer in this system] resembles a rhinoceros.⁴³²

The tradition of Yoga Tantra has a method of [buddha deity] generation that accords with this [belief]. After generation of oneself as the commitment deity, the gnosis deity enters into oneself; this resembles the belief that both subject and object are relatively existing [but ultimately only the gnosis deity is existing, and afterwards departs].⁴³³

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 18, line 5: Similar to the belief of the Chittamatra (Mind Only school) that external objects do not exist in truth, yet self-awareness devoid of subject and object does exist in truth, in Yoga Tantra after oneself is generated as a commitment deity, the gnosis deity enters, mantras are recited, and at the end [of the meditation], the gnosis deity is requested to depart.}

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 53, line 3: In Yoga Tantra, the commitment and gnosis deities are said to be inseparable and equivalent in meditation. However, after attainment [of siddhis], the gnosis deity departs.}

[Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra Revealed for] Gnosis Deity Entering Oneself as the Commitment Deity and Not Departing

Next, for the Mahayana:

Because there is no perceived object, there is no perceiving subject...

This is the belief of Chittamatra⁴³⁴ and also Madhyamaka (Middle Way) [schools], with acceptance that both object and subject [exist or appear only] in the relative sense [but do not exist in truth in any manner in the ultimate sense].

The [buddha deity] generation method of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra resembles that [acceptance]. First, oneself is generated as a commitment deity, then is entered by the gnosis deity, similar to acceptance that both object and subject [only exist relatively]. Similar to nonacceptance that both [exist] ultimately, the gnosis deity is not asked to depart, so this is called the method of deity generation with a nondeparting gnosis deity.⁴³⁵

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 53, line 4: In Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, commitment and gnosis deities are inseparable, both in meditation and after accomplishment [of meditation].}

Past authorities have said that determination of four classes of Tantra by these

four dissimilar methods of [deity] generation is the position of venerable Nagarjuna and others,⁴³⁶ following the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*.⁴³⁷

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 85, line 2: The *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra XIII*, 6 states:

Ritual Tantra is for the lowest,

Non-Ritual [Conduct Tantra and] Yoga [Tantra] are for the next highest,

Superior Yoga [Tantra] is for superior sentient beings,

Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantra] is for even higher than that.⁴³⁸

From [*The Vast Absolute:*] *Commentary [on Difficult Points]* by Devakulamahamati]:

In Ritual Tantra, visualization of a [buddha] deity is not separate from an external representation. Practices such as purification and taking vows are done assiduously. The practice is to visualize externally apart from oneself.

In [Conduct Tantra and] Yoga [Tantra], visualization of oneself and the Chakravartin (Universal Ruler) gnosis [deity] are of one flavor.

In Superior Yoga [Tantra], the practice is great ecstasy that is the supreme pleasure derived from intercourse with one's own knowledge woman.

In Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantra], visualization is of the supreme ecstasy that is the union of vajra (penis) and padma (vagina) in oneself as the [male-female united] deity.⁴³⁹

[Resolution of Objections]

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 4, line 2: Rinpoche [Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo] has said that the venerable [Sonam] Tsemo said that the establishment of four classes of Tantra based on four different methods of [deity] generation is asserted by Noble Nagarjuna, Master Anandagarbha, and others, derived from the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*.

[Objection:] But this is not in evidence.⁴⁴⁰ Someone has said:

Some Tibetan lamas have claimed that four classes of Tantra are established by way of four dissimilar methods of deity generation that accord with four expressed Buddhist philosophical systems. They explain that this assertion was made by Nagarjuna and his [spiritual] sons, and Jnanapada and his followers, based on the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*. These are masters of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, and the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya* is an explanatory Tantra for the *Guhyasamaja*. In the section on Ritual Tantra [in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya*] it appears to be determinable that there is only the explanation that there is no pride in oneself as a [buddha] deity and no ecstasy [over the arrival] of the gnosis deity, but nothing whatsoever appears that could be understood as in accord with [one of the] four philosophical systems. While there may be a connection between pratyekabuddhas and the method of generation in Yoga Tantra, pratyekabuddhas are not one of the [standard] expressed four philosophical systems. Since there is no content in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya* canonical source that can be interpreted as lack of self-generation in Ritual Tantra, [this contention of a correlation] is invalid.⁴⁴¹

[Reply:] Here it is difficult to claim that there is never any explanation of this by Master Anandagarbha. The *Vairochana Mayajala Tantra* VII revealed:

It is known that there are three [deity] yogas:

(1) Blessing [by the gnosis deity], (2) complete identification [of commitment and gnosis deities],

And (3) complete transformation of form [of commitment deity to gnosis deity];

These yogas were praised by the Buddha.⁴⁴²

In his *Commentary*, Anandagarbha explained this source statement of the three [deity] yogas as follows:

(1) blessing yoga is intended to convert those who assert that external objects exist in truth,⁴⁴³
(2) complete identification yoga is intended to convert Chittamatra [followers of the Mind Only school], and (3) complete transformation of form yoga is intended to completely convert Madhyamika [followers of the Middle Way school]. The first yoga [blessing] is said to be the practice of Ritual Tantra.

There may be nothing explicitly said that can be [strictly] understood as in accord with the four [standard Buddhist] philosophical systems, yet if it was

necessary to reveal four classes of Tantra in order to convert outsider marginalists,⁴⁴⁴ then it is even much more valid to reveal [four] classes of Tantra in order to convert [followers of] the four described insider Buddhist philosophical systems. While pratyekabuddhas are not one of the [standard] four described philosophical systems, since the Chittamatra philosophical system did acknowledge [a philosophical position] for pratyekabuddhas, the significance of that [correlation] is proven,⁴⁴⁵ whether or not the content of the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya* canonical source has it that there is no self-generation in Ritual Tantra. }

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 45, line 6: Rinpoche [Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo] has said that initially, when the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya* stated that there is no pride of oneself as the deity [in Ritual Tantra], the meaning is that there is no generation of oneself as the [commitment] deity and no entrance of the gnosis deity. This was certainly expressed by earlier lamas, in the *Yamari Krishna (Black Enemy Yamari) Tantra*,⁴⁴⁶ and in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra Commentary*.⁴⁴⁷ Buddhaguhya and others said that there is [just] no explanation of self-generation [of oneself as the commitment deity] and entrance of the gnosis deity [in Ritual Tantra], but since they believed that the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Great Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra* was a Ritual Tantra, they could have mixed up the intent and analysis of Ritual and Conduct Tantra. Other scholars said that it was the intent of the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra* that [the visualization methods of] Yoga Tantra could be appropriately applied to the methods of Ritual and Conduct Tantra. For example, similar mantras and deities, such as Sodrang⁴⁴⁸ and Marichi that appear in Ritual Tantras, also appear in the *Samti (Samputa Tantra)* and other Unsurpassed [Yoga] Tantras, but as to whether or not the intended [visualization methods] of Unsurpassed Tantra also extend [to Ritual Tantra] needs to be analyzed as to whether Ritual Tantra achieves self-generation under its own intent.

[Objection:] Since self-generation does exist in the latter part of the *Amoghapasha Kalpa*,⁴⁴⁹ that settles [the question of] intent as to whether or not there is self-generation in Ritual Tantra. When [self-generation is] explained as nonexistent [in Ritual Tantra] in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya*, the intent is that after arising from [deity] meditation, there is no pride [in oneself] as the deity in

postmeditation [contemplations].

[Reply:] That is not correct, since it is explained as in the vast dedication of the root of virtue in the *Fifteen-deity Vajravidarana Sadhana* written by Master Buddhaguhya. Before the dedication of root virtue, it says to make offerings to the noble ones and oneself receives the blessing as Karma Vajrasattva. After completion of the sadhana, then as the vajra mudra is touched to the heart and [the mantra] V_{AJRA} A_{TMA} K_{ONYA} H_{AM} is recited, all karmavajras receive blessing as Vajrasattva, and actions to be performed during this time period are to be done with the pride of Vajrasattva.

Further, this [objection] is contradicted by masters who have drawn knowledge of self-generation from the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi* and *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Empowerment of Vajrapani) Tantras* [both of which are Conduct Tantras, and applied it] to Ritual Tantra, as in the words of the *Vajrapani Abhisheka Tantra*:

For one who has performed the bodhisattva practice, the practice that is the entry into Guhyamantra is to make oneself into the form of a [buddha] deity, generating divine pride beyond any doubt. It is suitable whether walking, standing, or sitting; without wavering [from this] at any time. Then Shantimati, for one who has performed the bodhisattva practice, the practice that is the entry into Guhyamantra also has the great bodhisattva discipline.[450](#)

This [above objection] would contradict the explanation to stay in divine pride whatever one is doing, whether it be walking, sitting, moving, or being still. In the *Commentary to the Dhyana Uttara (Meditation Continuation)* [by Buddhaguhya]:

Since knowledge of the explanation of oneself generated as a divine body has been drawn from Conduct Tantra, and since Conduct Tantra is thereby designated as Ritual Tantra, it is assumed that the two classes of Ritual and Conduct Tantra are one and the same.

[Objection:] Yet in your tradition after the number of four classes of Tantra is made definitive, then it is asserted that Conduct Tantra has to be superior to Ritual Tantra. Accordingly that would contradict Buddhaguhya's tradition that divine pride is sworn to as a valid cognition and is never not to be present. Someone has said:

The meaning of the statement in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya* that Ritual Tantra does not have self-generation is intended for an individual who cannot practice the four branches of meditation⁴⁵¹ such as the large part⁴⁵² and pranayama (breathing yoga). Just the definition of self-generation as explained by Master Buddhaguhya means that deity yoga as in the four branches is the same in Ritual and Conduct Tantra. By virtue of what [practice] is for trainees for such as the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi*, is also revealed for Ritual Tantra. By virtue of what [practice] is for trainees of both Ritual and Conduct Tantra, no distinction can be applied, and there is no difference in the fundamental nature of these [two classes of] Tantra. In the *Commentary on the Dhyana Uttara (Meditation Continuation) Tantra*, [visualization is] set on [two] bases, mind, and sound, “the [first] base has the nature of the tathagata body, and the second base is oneself in the form of a deity.”

This explanation is to make oneself into a divine body; this proves that there is no way that that this [self-generation] is not asserted in Ritual Tantra. Given that the four branches [of visualization] that are referred to here and in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi* are similar, then the meaning of the term “base” [as used] here, if it were not correctly applied to the base of generating oneself as the deity, then the base of the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi*, as referenced to two lines [of verse or the second foot or base], would have to be asserted as not teaching self-generation as the deity, and there would be no distinction.⁴⁵³

[Reply:] This statement is not correct. The reason it is said that there is no self-generation is intended for individuals who are unable to stabilize one-pointed [shamata] meditation.

[Objection:] Yet to say that in Ritual Tantra there is no meditation on oneself in a divine body cannot be concluded to apply [in every circumstance], since self-generation is present in the content. If that were asserted, a revelation that there is no self-generation in Ritual Tantra, then there could be no recognition of characteristics of buddha, with the error that [buddha] would be concluded as provisional intent.

[Reply:] Yet given that the primary trainees in Ritual Tantra are those that are unable to stabilize one-pointed meditation, if [self-generation in Ritual Tantra] were asserted, there would be the error of concluding that the path taught to the primary trainees of Ritual Tantra would not meet the definition of a [Buddhist] path.

[Objection:] Given those who say that the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi* is a Ritual Tantra, then Ritual Tantra is accomplished on the strength of Conduct

Tantra. A distinction between Ritual and Conduct Tantra is made by virtue of the [distinction in] trainees, and to not make a distinction by way of this fundamental [difference in trainees] is very much a mistake. The meaning is expressed with respect to trainees, since it is not found in the content of those Tantras.

[Reply:] As to the meaning of ground in the *Dhyana Uttara (Meditation Continuation) Tantra*, it is correctly explained that the first ground is the tathagata body; the second ground is the moon mandala essence that is present as its own illusion.⁴⁵⁴ In the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi Tantra*, the first ground is the one's own body generated as the [commitment] deity; the second ground is revealed as the buddha body [gnosis deity]. Master Buddhaguhya in his *Commentary on the Dhyana Uttara (Meditation Continuation) Tantra* said that to explain the meaning of the ground as the reverse of that is incorrect.

[Objection: According to Tsongkhapa:]

Although the entrance of the gnosis deity into oneself was not explained by either Buddhaguhya or Varabodhi, it is still appropriate as it was so explained by many other Indians. If it were not appropriate, the reason would be that oneself and the gnosis deity could not be accepted as one [being], and would have to remain separate as two. That is not correct, since on the strength of accepting that one's own body, speech, and mind are inseparable from the [buddha] deity's body, speech, and mind, it is said that all body motions and positions are mudras, and all words are mantras.⁴⁵⁵

[Reply:] It is not correct to assert that [in Ritual Tantra], the gnosis deity resides in oneself, as stated in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi Tantra* V, 3-4:⁴⁵⁶

{Letter is bodhicitta;
The second is called sound.}
The [first] base is to make the form of one's own body
Infused with one's own [meditation] deity.
The second base is perfect buddha,
Known as the supreme of the two-footed [humans].
{Mantra practitioners imagine the latter to be present
On the pure moon disk.
[Mantra] syllables are sequentially and

Uniformly arranged in the center of that [moon disk].}

This contradicts the explanation that the second base is a gnosis deity established in front.⁴⁵⁷

[Objection:] That [statement] refers to the Conduct Tantra tradition, whereas here this is Ritual Tantra which is different.

[Reply:] But you yourself have said that the two Tantras cannot be separated on the basis of trainees. This [conclusion] would contradict the avowed statement that by definition [the two Tantra systems] are indivisible.

[Objection:] Further, it is incorrect to say that there is never any self-generation in Ritual Tantra, for that would contradict the tradition of Buddhaghya.

[Reply:] After you have projected this error onto others, there is an internal contradiction as you yourself do not accept the valid cognition or logic of Buddhaghya.

[Objection:] Yet, since your own tradition asserts that the four classes of Tantra are definitive and that Conduct Tantra is more profound than Ritual Tantra, [this position] is harmful by making erroneous what was said above.

[Reply:] Because there are two previous positions, it is incorrect that both Buddhaghya's and Varabodhi's assertions [represent] a single tradition of the existence of self-generation [in Ritual Tantra]. In examining the statement by Varabodhi:

Accordingly, all three of these realms are mind only...

Once everything is understood to be [mind that is emptiness] similar to the sky, then that aspect of one's own mind expands in semblance of a moon disk, which is bodhicitta meditation.

[Objection:] As arranged in the stage of mantra recitation, multifarious light

rays issue from that [moon disk]. After all sentient beings are satiated [with the light of bodhicitta], light rays return in the form of all tathagatas and are contemplated as entering the moon disk of one's own mind.

[Reply:] First is meditation on bodhicitta, then that is transformed into a moon disk. The mantra is arranged on [and around the moon disk], then divine bodies emanate from it for the benefit of all sentient beings. With the contemplation that they are drawn back in and reenter the moon disk, nothing is said in any of these sadhanas about meditation on oneself as a [gnosis deity] divine body.

[Objection:] Someone⁴⁵⁸ has said that in Conduct Tantra, it is essential to have the invitation and entrance of the gnosis deity, as revealed in the *Vajrapani Abhisheka* [*Vajrapani Empowerment*] *Tantra*:

For one who has done the bodhisattva practice, . . . [459](#)

This is explained as performing divine pride under all circumstances whatever is being done, such as traveling, sitting, moving, positioning, *etc.*

[Reply:] When it is explained that one must remain in divine pride at all times, it is necessary to invite and draw in the gnosis deity, but that is not applicable generally. Specifically, in the tradition of only one individual was it explained to remain in divine pride at all times [in the practice of both Ritual and Conduct Tantras]. Whenever it is necessary to adopt the entrance of the gnosis deity, that becomes the tradition of Master Buddhaguhya.

Accordingly, the practice of Ritual Tantra is extensively covered by Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, is controlled by Yoga and Conduct Tantras, and is set on its own terms in Ritual Tantra.

[Ritual Tantra According to Each of the Four Classes]

[Ritual Tantra may be practiced in accord with the three higher classes of Tantra as well as its own class.]

Ritual Tantra According to Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra

Sadhanas for Trisamayavyuha,⁴⁶⁰ Vasudhara,⁴⁶¹ and Marichi⁴⁶² are not directly associated with any of the two hundred and forty-three sadhanas written by

Nagarjuna, Nun Lakshmi, Master Chandragomi, and others, nor to any of the two hundred and forty-two sadhanas in the *One Hundred Root Sadhanas*, *One Hundred and Fifty Sadhanas*, and *Ocean of Sadhanas*. Likewise, Master Abhaya[karagupta] stated in his *Vajramala [Mandala Rituals]* that Bhutadamara,⁴⁶³ Zungdranga,⁴⁶⁴ and Marichi, as explained in the six outer mandalas, are certified with the seals of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, and within which are explained as deity yogas of the generation and completion processes.⁴⁶⁵

The method of practicing these is as follows: [begin with] accumulations and invitation [to the buddha deity], praising and offering, making confessions, and meditating on the four immeasurables.⁴⁶⁶ After these accumulations of merit and gnosis have been made, the complete four branches are performed: (1) self-generation as a deity through the three rites, or the seed within the protective circle or celestial palace; (2) blessing of [buddha awakened] body, speech, and mind; (3) summoning and entering of the gnosis deity; and (4) empowerment and certification with the symbol of the Lord of the buddha family that is covered with an Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra symbol.⁴⁶⁷

Yet when there is no reliance on the four [higher] empowerments, on the yoga of the two processes, and the pledge substances of the five meats and the five nectars, even then this manner of the path of self-generation as the deity by means of the complete four branches is applicable [to Ritual Tantra in the context of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra].

Ritual Tantra According to Yoga Tantra

As revealed in the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*:

Essence, mudra, and mantra types [of mandalas]

Have been made on their own as explained in [this] section;

By their accomplishment, all [are included].

Root, dharani, dharma, and karma mandalas are explained in Yoga Tantra. Essence, mudra, and mantra mandalas are explained in Ritual and Conduct Tantra. Through understanding this distinction, [it may be seen that the three types of mandalas] that are made in both Ritual and Conduct Tantras are also accomplished as explained in the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*. The ritual for the single Vairochana mudra mandala is understood to be applicable to both Ritual and Conduct Tantras.

The method [of deity yoga] as applicable to many Conqueror [buddha] deities is to first perform those [rites] that are similar to what is commonly practiced: [establishing] the protective enclosure and accumulating [merit], applying to the [buddha] representation [statue or painting], binding the [hand] mudras, performing the general preliminaries, and meditating on Vajrasattva. Then, visualize the celestial palace in front with oneself located in the eastern gate, generate the thirty-three Conqueror deities within the celestial palace, enter the gnosis deities within them, and make certification with the symbols of the four mudras.⁴⁶⁸ Even though this is not seen [notated] on the margin of any Indian or Tibetan ritual [sadhana] texts, the great siddha Anandagarbha in his *Commentary on the Vairochana Mayajala* clearly stated that these rites are methods applicable to Ritual and Conduct Tantras [when practiced according to Yoga Tantra].

Ritual Tantra According to Conduct Tantra

This is the [same] method of explanation as the Ritual Tantra tradition of Buddhaghosya.

Ritual Tantra According to Itself

There is no generation of oneself as a buddha in Ritual Tantra, since not even a single word is spoken describing generating oneself as a deity among the approximately three hundred cycles of Ritual Tantras that are found in Tibet, and since there is no mention of self-generation in the *Commentary on Vajravidarana* written by Padma Jungnay and in the *Purification Rites*⁴⁶⁹ by Master Vajra Gocha. Likewise, there is also no explanation [of self-generation in Ritual Tantra] in the Tantras of the upper classes [Conduct, Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga]. As in the words of the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya*:

[The practice is] performing extreme purifications out of a fixation on fear [such as trepidation over one's own divinity], without the true ecstasy of the gnosis deity, without pride in oneself as the deity, and without the miraculous sphere of activity... [The intended accomplishment is] thorough discernment through conceptualization of the causes of imperfection. {The means of accomplishment is engagement in Ritual Tantra.}⁴⁷⁰

Likewise, self-generation in Ritual Tantra was not explained in the *Commentary on Yamari Krishna (Black Enemy Yamari) Tantra* by Master Shridhara, in the *Commentary on Chakrasamvara* by King Indrabhuti, in the *Commentary on the Guhyasamaja* by Jinadatta, and in the *Commentary on the Guhyasamaja* by Master Vitapada.

In this way, because Conduct Tantra has generation of oneself as a buddha [commitment deity], it is considered to be more profound than Ritual Tantra.

Yoga Tantra is even more superior, as in addition it is considered to be superior because the buddha [gnosis deity] is summoned and enters into oneself, is mixed inseparably through application of the four mudras (seals), and mind is settled in the combined ecstasy of the gnosis and commitment deities. In the tradition that includes these three, the supreme siddhi of mahamudra can be accomplished in this lifetime. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra is especially superior to the Yoga Tantra tradition because of entrance of the gnosis deity and similitude of liberation made into the path. Just as in order to clean a stained cotton cloth, it is necessary to wash it in its own [dyed] water, so in addition to the basis held [in the three lower classes of Tantra] to be cyclic existence propelled by the tainted perceptual aggregates that have flung out actions [with consequences] and defilements, [in Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra], all the habitual tendencies of the three [bardos]: birth, death, and the intermediate state [between death and rebirth] are massed together as one and made into the basis for purification [in the development process]; so it is singularly necessary to make the similitude of cyclic existence into the path with deity yoga as the means of purification.}

Division into Four in Accord with Four Degrees of Passion

Since Guhyamantra was revealed for sentient beings of the Desire Realm, and since they have four degrees of passion, there are definitively four classes of Tantra in order to teach the bodhi[-citta] path that makes use of [four degrees of passion] and does not renounce them.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 37, line 3: This is the tradition of the great siddha and powerful yogi Virupa and his followers, as revealed in the root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* II, iii, 54:

By gazing, smiling,
Embracing, and uniting two [organs],
The intentional language of the four classes of Tantra
Has never been known.⁴⁷¹

Likewise, as revealed in the *Sambhuti Tantra*:

The four facets of gazing, smiling,
Holding hands, and uniting,
Establish the four [classes of] Tantra in the manner of insects.

“In the manner of insects” refers to the analogy of insects in wood that eat the wood thereby consuming the wood [that is their passion]. In the same way, through the four classes of Tantra, individuals of the four types experience their passions through the transformation of the four kinds of passion into gnosis of great ecstasy thereby consuming [their passions].⁴⁷² }⁴⁷³

[Ritual Tantra Revealed for Those Who Express] Passion through Gazing

For the Mastery Over Others’ Creations Deities of the Desire Realm,⁴⁷⁴ their passion is satisfied just by gazing. [In accordance,] Ritual Tantra permits ecstasy in only that way, as revealed in the Ritual Tantra *Vajra Usnisa (Vajra Crown)*:⁴⁷⁵

All the mandala deities
Are always drawn on white cloth;
With the males gazing at the females,
And the females gazing back at the males.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 86, line 5: As an antidote, Ritual Tantra reveals as a path of ecstasy the pleasure of male and female deities being satisfied just gazing at each other, as in the *Detailed Ritual*:

The Bhagavan will praise the frowning...

On the right side, the goddess Tara shyly bends down her body and fixes her eyes on the Supreme Offering Mudra. On the left, a beautiful girl of the padma family shyly fixes her eyes on Amoghapasha in the same manner as in Guhyamantra.}

[Conduct Tantra Revealed for Those Who Express] Passion through Smiling

For the Enjoying [Their Own] Creations Deities of the Desire Realm, beyond gazing their passion is satisfied just by smiling. Conduct Tantra permits ecstasy in only that way, as revealed in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra*:⁴⁷⁶

The Great King Vairochana is drawn
With a pleasing smile on the face...

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 87, line 2: As an antidote, Conduct Tantra proclaims as a path of ecstasy the supreme pleasure of male and female deities being satisfied just by smiling at each other, as revealed in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra II*, 26-27 and 44:

The hero Avalokiteshvara
Sits on a throne of white lotuses,
Similar to shells, jasmine, and the moon,
Drawn with a slight smile on his face
And Amitabha resting on his head.
On his right is the great goddess
Known as Tara,
Virtuous and eliminating fear.

The goddess on his right,
Called Buddhalochana (Eye of the Buddha),
Has a slight [growing] smile on her lips,
With a body of unequalled intense radiance
And a mandala of light [extending out] one fathom [about six feet];
She is the mother of Shakyamuni.}⁴⁷⁷

[Yoga Tantra Revealed for Those Who Express] Passion through Embracing

For both the Joyful and Free from Conflict Deities of the Desire Realm, in addition to gazing and smiling, their passion is satisfied just by holding hands and embracing. Yoga Tantra permits ecstasy in only that way, as revealed in the *Paramadya (Supreme Original) Tantra*:

All mandala deities
Are shown with arms embracing...

and the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

To especially passionate spiritual women who are beautiful,
Yogis offer their lips;
With hands in the great mudra,
They tightly embrace arms.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 87, line 6: As an antidote, Yoga Tantra proclaims as a path [of ecstasy] the special pleasure or pleasure beyond pleasure of male and female deities being satisfied just by holding hands with each other, as revealed in the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

The goddess called Chacho,
His own goddess wrapped around his middle
With her head attached to his chest,
She gazes out to all
Holding the hand of the Bhagavan.

and in the *Paramadya (Supreme Original) Tantra*:

To the side is the Great Vajra
Who endeavors to brandish an arrow
While proudly clasping hands
And raising the crocodile banner.}

[Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra Revealed for Those Who Express] Passion through Intercourse

For the Thirty-Three [Groups of Deities], the Four Lines [or Groups] of Great Kings, humans, and others, in addition to the above [gazing, smiling, and embracing], passion is satisfied only by uniting two sex organs. Unsurpassed

Yoga Tantra permits ecstasy in only that way, as revealed in the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* II, iii, 28:

Through joining the bolla (penis) and kakkola (vagina),
Ecstasy is experienced.⁴⁷⁸

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 12, line 1: In the words of the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

The supreme queen of the tathagatas
Is to be visualized as Lochana and the others;
Through the uniting of two organs,
Buddha siddhis are obtained.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 88, line 6: As an antidote, Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra proclaims as a path the simultaneous [pleasure] ecstasy of male and female deities being satisfied only in union with each other, as revealed in the *Sambhuti (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

The selfless union together as one,
Uniting as two with pleasure,
Has a nature without waves.

and the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*:

After asserting the penis in the vagina,
Meditate with buddha mindfulness.}

These passions of the Desire Realm are definitive, as stated in the *Abhidharmakosha (Treasury of Abhidharma)* III, 69:

Intercourse occurs [in the stages of]
Gazing, smiling, holding hands, embracing, and joining the two.⁴⁷⁹

The corresponding four classes of Tantra are also definitive, as stated in the *Hevajra Tantra* II, iii, 54.⁴⁸⁰

In accordance with these quotations, this is said to be the assertion of the Master Bhavabhadra and others.⁴⁸¹ This tradition⁴⁸² is also the best for elucidating the division of Tantra into five classes.⁴⁸³

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 89, line 3: This [latter] tradition is most excellent. Just these [three bases for establishing the four classes of Tantras as described above: (1) four predilections for defilements, (2) four different methods for generating the deity, and (3) four degrees of passion,] were asserted by Venerable Sonam Tsemo; but the Lord of Dharma, Sakya Pandita, asserted three additional methods for division [into four classes of Tantras], the least of which [four emotions] is similar to the latter assertion of Sonam Tsemo.⁴⁸⁴ [The first two are the four castes of Indian society and the four ages.]

Division into Four in Accord with Four Castes [of Indian Society]⁴⁸⁵

[(1) Ritual Tantra was revealed for the brahmin (officiating) caste, (2) Conduct Tantra for the vaishya (producing) caste, (3) Yoga Tantra for the ksatriya (ruling) caste, and (4) Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra for the shudra (laboring) caste.]

[Ritual Tantra Revealed for] the Brahmin (Officiating) Caste

The brahmin (officiating) caste view liberation as an ascetic practice involving bathing and purification. Ritual Tantra was revealed to teach liberation through mantra recitation and fire offerings to the class that regards these as most important, as revealed in the *Subahu Paripriccha (Questions of Subahu) Tantra* XI:

After applying a mud wrap to the body,
Immerse in pure Ganges River water
Purifying [oneself] as long as desired.
After getting out, face the north or east.

Then after washing the feet and hands with water,
Display them [wrapped] outside the knees;
While balanced in a squatting position,
[Keep] close contact, without sound, without gurgling.

Then, again starting recitation,
Compassionately delight in purification and recitation.
Instead of always acquiring,
Eat the alms food, making effort [to turn it into] divine food;
In that body, enter the Guhyamantra.

Just as tongues of flame spread in the great heat of summer
And completely burn up the jungle so that no tangle [remains],
So the fire of mantra recitation, when inflamed by the breath of discipline,
[Issues] tongues of flame of great perseverance that burns up all faults.⁴⁸⁶

[Conduct Tantra Revealed for] the Vaishya (Producing) Caste

Further, Conduct Tantra was proclaimed for the vaishya (producing) caste who are unable to practice vigorous asceticism and difficult techniques, who do not engage in degrading actions and therefore disparage making external purifications primary, who make the inner yoga of [combining] method and wisdom primary, yet are still taught a few external actions as they do not abandon them [entirely]. This is revealed in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra IX*, 1-3 and 5-6:

One alone or one with one,
Recite mantras both mentally
And also whispered,
Always practicing the supreme yoga.
The branches of the mantras are to be done equally,
Do not do them in any other way.
The uniting of inner and outer
I have explained in four parts.
Further, a mundane focus
Is unsurpassed.

The supermundane is to be done mentally,
Eliminating drawing back in, *etc.*
The deity [and yourself] are made as one
Maintaining no distinction,
With the nature of minds inseparable,
Not to be practiced in any other way.⁴⁸⁷

[Yoga Tantra Revealed for] the Ksatriya (Ruling) Caste

Yoga Tantra was proclaimed in order to convert the ksatriya (ruling) caste who are also unable to do difficult practices and delight in engaging in the five sensual pleasures. Just as in the royalty caste there are kings, queens, princes, waitresses, maids, female servants/slaves, butlers, male servants/slaves, and messengers/envoys, so the five tathagatas in the mandala have the manner of kings, the four female “soul mates” have the manner of mudras, the sixteen bodhisattvas have the manner of princes, the four such as Vilasa (Graceful Sensuality) have the manner of queens, the female flower holders have the manner of waitresses, the female incense holders have the manner of head maids, female butter lamp holders have the manner of female messengers/envoys, female perfume holders have the manner of female servants/slaves, Vajra Hook has the manner of a head butler, Vajra Noose has the manner of a waiter, Vajra Chain/Shackle has the manner of a male messenger/envoy, and Vajra Control has the manner of a male servant/slave. As stated in the *Commentary on the Comprehension of the King of the Three Worlds*:

For example, as is necessary about everything said to the great King of the Worlds in this gate of actions, Vairochana has the manner of the great Dharma King and Vajrapani has the manner of all retinue; view it in this way.

Also as revealed in the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*:

In the same way that the supreme seal of the king
Is a law that is invariably difficult to overrule,
So the image of the supreme being
Is well known as having the character of a [royal] seal.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 13, line 3: As revealed in the

Paramadya (Supreme Original) Tantra:

In the same way as possessing whatever one wishes
Amongst all desirable enjoyments,
Through application of [the yoga of] oneself as the deity,
Make offerings to oneself and others.}

[Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra Revealed for] the Shudra (Laboring) Caste

Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra was proclaimed using intentional terminology with instructions for what are otherwise disparaged actions, for the shudra (laboring) caste who eat everything without [consideration for] purity, and commit all [manner of] bad actions. Those who have few conceptions eat everything such as the five meats and five nectars without any discriminating thoughts, as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

In eating feces and urine as food,
They become vessels for accomplishment.

Elephant flesh and horse flesh
Are eaten as if food.

Also as revealed in the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra II, 8*:

By this *Samayoga*
All things are to be performed,
Which invariably includes such offenses
As bad eating habits and bad behavior. [488](#)

This manner of differentiating [the classes of Tantra] is derived from the writing of the scholar Alamkakashala in his *Commentary on the Explanatory Tantra Vajramala (Vajra Rosary)*, and as revealed in the short *Chakrasamvara (Center of Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*:

Ritual [Tantra] accords with the purification [practices] of the Brahmins;
Superior to that is Conduct [Tantra] of the merchant caste;
Yoga [Tantra reflects] the many associations of kings and their retinues.
This is the firm base for liberation from the beginning.
This beautiful [correlation] taught to you,
Has not been taught to others.

This is the explanation as given by Buton.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 616, line 4: According to the *Guhyasamaja Tantra Continuation*:

From the perspective of the four castes [of Indian society],
Four classes of Tantra are explained:
Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, and Unsurpassed.} [489](#)

[Division into Four in Accord with the Four Common Time Periods of the Day and Night]

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 15, line 5: As stated in the *Vimalaprabha (Stainless Light) [Commentary on the Kalachakra Tantra by Pundarika]*:

[Conduct] Tantra smiling corresponds to the juncture of the first time period.
[Ritual] Tantra gazing corresponds to the juncture of the third time period.
[Unsurpassed Yoga] Tantra massaging the breasts corresponds to the juncture of the fifth time period.
[Yoga] Tantra holding of hands corresponds with the juncture of the seventh time period.} [490](#)

[Division into Four in Accord with the Four Ages]

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 16, line 1: The Master Krishnacharya stated in his *Guhyatattva Prakasha (Clarification of the Secret Absolute)*:

The division of the four ages
Becomes the division into the four Tantras.

Corresponding with the four ages: Perfection [Full], Three[-Quarter], Two[-Quarter], and Conflict Ages, are the four Tantras: Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga.⁴⁹¹

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 45, line 1: Here the four classes of Tantra are explained from the perspective of the four ages. However, this is not separate from the division into four through the perspective of the four types of passion. For the trainees of the Perfection [Full] Age, primarily just gazing has the passion that is able to remove the lust of that passion. For the trainees of the Three[-Quarter] Age, in addition, smiling [has the passion that is able to remove the lust of that passion]. For trainees of the Two[-Quarter] Age, in addition, holding hands [has the passion that is able to remove the lust of that passion]. For trainees of the Conflict Age, in addition, the joining of the two organs one into the other has the passion that is able to remove the lust of sexual intercourse. The four classes of Tantra were revealed in order to convert [the passionate].⁴⁹²

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 616, line 3: According to the *Complete Compilation of all Perspectives Tantra*.⁴⁹³

The first Perfection [Full] Age corresponds to Ritual Tantra;

The second Two[-Quarter] Age corresponds to Conduct Tantra;

The third Three[-Quarter] Age corresponds to the Yoga Tantra;

The [fourth] Conflict Age corresponds to Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantra].⁴⁹⁴

[Division into Four in Accord with the Habitual Tendencies of the Four States of Mind in a Typical Daily Cycle]

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 15, line 2: As revealed in the abbreviated *Kalachakra (Time Cycle) Tantra*:

From the left face of the Lord Conqueror, Ritual Tantra was revealed, and from the right face, Yoga Tantra. Wisdom Tantra [was revealed] from the east [front face], and yet again the ksatriya [ruling] caste Yogi Tantra from the west [back] face.

On the strength of the habitual tendency of awaking from sleep and attachment to coarse external objects, Ritual and Conduct Tantras were revealed

by the left face [of Kalachakra]. On the strength of the habitual tendency to dream and become attached to appearances of mind alone, Yoga Tantra was revealed by the right face. On the strength of the habitual tendency to turn to deep sleep and become attached to the decline of all external conceptualization in a nonconceptual state, Yogini Tantra was revealed by the front face. On the strength of the fourth habitual tendency⁴⁹⁵ and attachment to ecstasy, the ksatriya [ruling] caste Yoga Tantra was revealed by the back face.}⁴⁹⁶

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 45, line 4: Further, Rinpoche stated that four classes of Tantra [have been differentiated] from the perspective of the four common time periods, the four human castes, the four [states of mind, starting with] wakefulness, etc.; but since these delineate the four Unsurpassed Tantras in the Kalachakra [system], it is incorrect to apply them here.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 621, line 1 and page 625, line 3: The statement that the faces of Kalachakra are [equated with] Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra is not intended and not definitive. As revealed in the *Kalachakra Tantra*:

From the root [front] face, Wisdom Tantra was revealed;

From the right face, Yoga Tantra was revealed;

From the left face, Ritual Tantra was revealed;

From the back face, ksatriya [ruling] caste Yoga was revealed.

“Wisdom Tantra” is the *Kalachakra* itself. “Yoga Tantra” refers to the six family Guhyasamaja Kalachakra mandala. “Ritual Tantra, etc.” refers to the *Chakrasamvara* in the *Kalachakra* tradition. “Ksatriya [ruling] caste” refers to the Great Samvarachakra.}⁴⁹⁷

Definitive Number and Sequence⁴⁹⁸

The division into four classes of Tantra is in accord with the four individual degrees of ability, as the intent revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra XIII*, 6:

Ritual Tantra is for the lowest,
Non-Ritual [Conduct Tantra] and Yoga [Tantra] are for the next highest,
Superior Yoga [Tantra] is for superior sentient beings,
Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantra] is for even higher than that.⁴⁹⁹

Individuals with weak intellect and lesser faculties delight in external purification rituals; for their benefit Ritual Tantra was revealed to teach external rituals. For the next highest level of individuals [who prefer] activities that include both outer body and speech and inner samadhi, Conduct Tantra was revealed for their benefit. For superior individuals whose activities primarily [involve] just samadhi, Yoga Tantra was revealed for their benefit. For those individuals who are even more superior and practice nothing other than specialized samadhi, Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra was revealed for their benefit. This is the position of the Masters Virupa and Dombhi-Heruka who acquired spiritual powers by following the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* where it says:

In order to train four kinds of individuals, the definitive four [classes] are for dissimilar modes of entrance...

Entrance into Tantra in accord with just this system is the best tradition.⁵⁰⁰

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 14, line 2: According to the *Commentary* [on the above verse]:

In Ritual Tantra, visualization is on an external representation⁵⁰¹ of a deity while strong effort is made to follow instructions on purification, *etc.* In the application [or Conduct] of Ritual, visualization is [still] on the external other than oneself. In Yoga, visualization is on oneself and a chakravartin (world monarch) gnosis [being] as having a single flavor. In Superior Yoga, the practice is the great secret of supreme pleasure that derives from sexual intercourse with one's own knowledge woman. In Unsurpassed Yoga, visualization is on supreme ecstasy that is generated from the union of the vajra and lotus of oneself as the deity [in union].⁵⁰²

Meaning of the Names of the Four [Classes of] Tantras

[Three subtopics are (1) meaning of the names according to each class, (2) meaning of the names according to the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*, and (3) subdivisions of the four classes.]

[Meaning of the Names According to Each Class]

[The subtopics are meaning of the names of each of the four classes of Tantras: (1) Ritual Tantra, (2) Conduct Tantra, (3) Yoga Tantra, and (4) Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.]

Ritual Tantra

Why is Ritual Tantra so named? It is because the teaching of external physical and verbal acts is emphasized, as stated in the *Commentary to the Dhyana Uttara (Meditation Continuation)*:⁵⁰³

This Tantra is called Ritual Tantra because it primarily teaches external physical and verbal acts.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 22, line 4: Since it primarily teaches external rituals such as bathing and purification,⁵⁰⁴ it is called Ritual Tantra, as stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp) [Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra]* by Chandrakirti]:

A Tantra that promulgates bathing, changing clothes three times, fasting, etc., is a Ritual Tantra.}

Conduct [or Dual] Tantra

Why is Conduct Tantra so named? It is because practices are in equal parts physical and verbal actions and samadhi, as stated in [Buddhaguhya's] *Summary of the Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Great Vairochana) Tantra*:⁵⁰⁵

This Tantra is called Conduct Tantra because it has practices that both lessen [the emphasis on] purifications and counter worldly [inclinations].

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 22, line 6: Since it primarily teaches disciplined⁵⁰⁶ activity, or activity that is equal parts outer physical and verbal activities and inner samadhi, it is called Conduct Tantra, as stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp) [Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra]* by Chandrakirti]:

When primarily involving disciplined activity, siddhis, and miraculous appearances, it is called Conduct Tantra.

Dual Tantra is so named because while primarily teaching inner samadhi yoga, it attracts trainees who also have an interest in external rituals. Since it also teaches the activities of Ritual Tantra, it is called Dual Tantra, as stated in [Buddhaguhya's] *Word Commentary to the Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Great Vairochana) Tantra*:⁵⁰⁷

This Tantra is not a Tantra that primarily combines method and wisdom, but since it attracts trainees who have an interest in ritual and teaches activities that are similar to rituals, then it can be designated and known as either Ritual Tantra or Dual Tantra.}

{Shakya Chokden, page 471, line 4: Dual Tantra is so named because it has generation of oneself as a buddha similar to Yoga Tantra and yet does not have invitation of a gnosis deity [into the self-generation commitment deity visualization] similar to Ritual Tantra.}

Yoga Tantra

Why is Yoga Tantra so named? It is because samadhi is primarily taught, as stated in the *Tattvasamgraha Tattva Alokakari (Definitive Illumination of the Definitive Compilation Tantra)* [by Anandagarbha]:

This Tantra is called Yoga Tantra because it emphasizes the teaching of samadhi.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 23, line 3: Because it primarily involves meditation on the inner yoga of means and wisdom, it is called Yoga Tantra.}

{Shakya Chokden, page 471, line 5: Yoga Tantra is so named because it has the deity yoga that invites the gnosis cycle deity into both oneself [as the commitment deity] and [the deity visualization] in front.}

Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra

Why is Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra so named? It is because nothing except a special form of samadhi is taught, as revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

The Bhagavan was asked to explain the essence
Of unsurpassed hidden gnosis.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 14, line 3: Since this is not within the sphere of activity of others except for tathagatas, it is “hidden” and is the great secret, which is “gnosis,” bodhi-mind. Since it does not reside [separately] within either cyclic existence or its transcendence and since there is nothing superior to it, it is “unsurpassed.” Since emptiness is stable as the single flavor, that is its “essence.”}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 41, line 6: “Hidden gnosis” that will be accomplished through Unsurpassed Yoga is gnosis that is the thirteenth level of Vajradhara, and for Paramitas and others is very difficult to comprehend. It is “unsurpassed” since there is nothing else superior to it. The “essence” that the “Bhagavan was asked to explain” is the self-arisen source of all buddha bodhi-mind.}

Also revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

The Bhagavan was asked to explain the essence
Of unsurpassed bodhi-mind,
The supreme body, speech, and mind
That is the secret of all tathagatas.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 14, line 5: The source of the inseparability of the three: “body, speech, and mind,” is the clear light that is “bodhi-mind.” The result is designated by name as “supreme body, speech, and mind.” Since “all tathagatas” do not teach [this] to those remaining in Ritual Tantra and other [lower Tantras], it is “secret.” Since it is exceptionally “secret” to them, and thereby becomes “supreme,” it is “unsurpassed.” Since it is free from all imperfections, it is the “essence.”}

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 23, line 4: Because yoga that is the union of the generation and completion [processes] is primarily taught, and since

it is the supreme of all Tantras for which there is no other Tantra that is superior, it is the Unsurpassed Mahayoga Tantra, as stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp)* [*Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra* by Chandrakirti]:

Tantra that teaches the generation and completion processes, etc. is called Highest Yoga...

and as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

E-ma-ho! These methods that accomplish bodhi-mind
Are very difficult to find;
As it is the supreme of the highest Tantras,
This Tantra is called the *Guhyasamaja*.

and the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*:

The best of all Tantras...

and as stated in the *Commentary*:

Since it is superior to Ritual and Conduct Tantras, etc... } [508](#)

[Meaning of the Names According to the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*]

{Shakya Chokden, page 472, line 1: The definition of each Tantra [class] is now explained in accordance with the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Collection of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*:⁵⁰⁹

Ritual Tantra

After the continuum of mind has been matured through just enactment of the water and silk hanging empowerments,⁵¹⁰ seed syllables are arranged in the heart of the painted depiction [of the buddha deity] in front without the cycle of inviting the gnosis deity. While oneself remains ordinary, instruction is primarily in methods for acquiring siddhis [from the image] as if from a master. An

example is [methods by which] the *Amoghapasha Kalpa* reveals the rite of fasting.

[Objection:] Yet in the *Ocean of Sadhanas*, the *Root One Hundred Sadhanas*, the *One Hundred and Fifty Sadhanas*, and in accordance with the commentaries on Ritual Tantra, is deity [yoga] explained as self-generation, invitation of the gnosis deity, empowerment, application of the seal of the lord of the buddha family, etc.?

[Reply:] Indeed, generally it is, as for example, in the *Avalokiteshvara Tantra* of the Ritual Tantra [class]. Those [methods] can be found in Ritual Tantras alone, and through scholars who have written commentaries on the intention [of Ritual Tantra], the masters who have been granted attainment of Vajradhara. There is no contradiction [in the application of these sadhana methods to Ritual Tantra], as they are present in all four [classes], as [stated] in the commentaries that accord with Conduct, Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras. As was stated by Sakya Pandita [in *Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes* III, 285]:⁵¹¹

Where there is no [explicit] self-generation in Ritual Tantra,
Perform them in the tradition
That follows the Yoga Tantra,
Where self-generation in the sadhana is spoken of.

[Self-generation of oneself as the buddha deity] is not a fabricated innovation, as these masters practiced in this way in order to be granted attainment of Vajradhara.

Conduct Tantra

After the continuum of mind has been matured through just the vajra, bell, and name empowerments, buddha is generated [in the form of a commitment deity] both in front and as oneself. Seed syllables are arranged within the heart of both oneself and [the deity] in front, without the cycle of inviting the gnosis deity [into the self-generation as the commitment deity]. Instruction is primarily in methods for accomplishing siddhis [granted] as if [oneself and the deity] were friends. An example is the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra*.

Yoga Tantra

After the continuum of mind has been completely matured through the empowerments up to the vajra master, buddha is generated [in the form of a commitment deity] both in front and as oneself, and the invitation [is issued to start] the cycle of the gnosis deity. Until such time as one has passed on to the natural state, one must never be separated from the pride of oneself as the [buddha] deity. In the end, what is primarily taught is the rite for definitively passing on [to the natural state]. An example is the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Collection) Tantra*.

[Objection:] Yet, given the water, crown, silk hanging, vajra, bell, and name empowerments are proclaimed in Conduct Tantra, what are the specific five empowerments, such as the water, etc., in Yoga Tantra?

[Reply:] In Conduct Tantra, there are no empowerments pertaining to each of the five buddha families. In Yoga Tantra, there are the five knowledge empowerments pertaining to the five buddha families,⁵¹² as stated by Sakya Pandita [in *Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes* III, 270 and 226].⁵¹³

In Conduct Tantra, there is no designation
To accomplish the purpose of the five families.

The separate forms and colors of the five families,
And the separate emblems,
Are revealed in Yoga Tantra.

Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra

After the mind continuum is matured through the four [highest] empowerments,⁵¹⁴ until bodhi-mind is attained, the gnosis deity cycle continues, while methods for supreme accomplishment are taught through the yoga of two processes [generation and completion]. This class is divided into three: Male Yoga Tantra, Female Yoga Tantra, and Nondual Tantra.

Male Yoga Tantra primarily teaches the generation process as method, and additionally the completion process as wisdom. Three well-known Male Tantras are *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets)* in order to convert the passionate, *Yamantaka* in order to convert the violent, and *Mayajala (Web of Illusion)* in order to convert the nescient.

Female Yoga Tantra primarily teaches the completion process as wisdom, and

additionally the generation process as method. For the latter, the Nakpopa *Chakrasamvara* [lineage] practices purification by womb birth, the Luipa *Chakrasamvara* [lineage] practices purification by egg birth, and the Dribuwa *Chakrasamvara* [lineage] practices purification by spontaneous birth.⁵¹⁵

Nondual Tantra teaches the generation and completion processes equally. An example is the *Hevajra Tantra* I, i, 7:

Listen while I explain

Method and wisdom as the essence of this *Tantra*.⁵¹⁶

Here no assertion is made that what are called Nondual Tantras constitute a separate [class] from Male and Female Tantras; rather, Nondual Tantras are those enacted especially with more compassion than Female Tantras, and more profound [wisdom] than Male Tantras. The *Kalachakra Tantra*, *Hevajra Tantra*, and others are asserted [to be Nondual Tantras]. Accordingly, Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra is the most profound among the four classes of Tantra, since in reliance on the yoga of the two processes, methods leading to buddha may be demonstrated in one lifetime.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 616, line 1: As revealed in the *Vajra Hridaya Lamkara (Vajra Essence Ornament) Tantra* XI:

The Sugata's Mantra Tantra

Is completely explained in four parts.⁵¹⁷}

{Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 617, line 1: In Ritual Tantra, the ultimate [view] is emptiness that brings productions of all phenomena to rest. The relative [view] is oneself as the commitment deity receiving siddhis in the manner of a servant from a master as the gnosis deity.

In Conduct Tantra, the ultimate view is phenomenality-as-is that brings productions of all phenomena to rest. The relative [view] is acquisition of siddhis by oneself as the commitment deity from the gnosis deity in the manner of equals and spiritual friends.

In Yoga Tantra, the ultimate view is emptiness as all facets of words that bring

productions of all phenomena to rest. The relative [view] is oneself as the commitment deity receiving spiritual infusion from the gnosis deity nondually, similar to turning iron into gold.

In Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, the ultimate view is emptiness, phenomenality-as-is, as the natural purity of all phenomena. The relative [view] is acquisition of siddhis and spiritual infusion after nonduality of oneself as the commitment deity and the gnosis deity has been made brilliantly clear just-as-is.}

{Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 621, line 6: Ritual Tantra is the class of Tantra in which oneself is not generated as the [buddha] deity. After the deity has been invited in front [of oneself], and offerings and other rituals have been performed, oneself engages in activities such as bathing and other purifications. As [individually or separately] identified, the few of these Tantras [out of the number originally known in India] that [now] exist in Tibet are about one hundred and fifty.

The basis for Conduct Tantra is that it is the class of Tantra in which oneself is generated as the [commitment] deity, but the gnosis deity is not summoned to enter. As [individually] identified, there are nine that [are now known to] exist [in Tibet].⁵¹⁸

The basis for Yoga Tantra is that it is the class [of Tantra] in which the gnosis deity is summoned to enter, but [oneself as the commitment deity] does not receive the four [highest] empowerments and [does not practice] the two processes. As [individually] identified, there are about seventeen that [are now known to] exist [in Tibet].⁵¹⁹

The basis for Unsurpassed [Yoga] Tantra is that those [unified commitment and gnosis deities] receive the four empowerments and [practice] the two processes.⁵²⁰}

[Subdivisions of the Four Classes]

[Next, the subdivisions of each of the four classes of Tantra are delineated.]

Ritual Tantra

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 63, line 6: Among the four classes of Tantra, Ritual Tantra is a very large class that is described as having six entrances. Five of them are (1) Tathagata type, (2) all the Great Padma (Lotus) mandalas that have detailed rituals, (3) Vajra type, (4) Mani (Jewel) type, and (5)

Elephant type. Teachings that are given, along with the specific associated rituals, for gods and demigods and others, that are not associated with these [above] five types but are transmissions that have [sufficient] spiritual power are called (6) Mundane type of Tantra.

(1) Tathagata type Tantras were revealed by a tathagata such as Shakyamuni. (2) Padma type were revealed by Avalokiteshvara. (3) Vajra type were revealed by Vajrapani. (4) Mani type were revealed by Manibhadra. (5) Male Elephant type so-called were revealed by the god Rishi. Vast type were revealed by both Pancika [or Pancaka] and his consort Trokma. (6) Mundane type [Ritual] class of Tantras were explained by each individual god and demigod who had faith in the Buddha and who were [sufficiently] spiritually empowered by the Teacher.

The purpose of (1) Tathagata type [Ritual] class of Tantra is to primarily elicit benefits through [accomplishing] the supreme siddhi (buddha). [The purpose of] (2) Padma type is to grant the eight most sacred things. [The purpose of] (3) Vajra type is to tame harmful demons. [The purpose of] (4) Mani type is to ameliorate the harmful effects of poverty. [The purpose of] (5) Vast [Elephant] type is to prevail in battle, to extend lifespans, etc. [The purpose of] (6) Mundane type is to pacify evil spirits.

As for the number of canonical texts in each of these six subdivisions, both (1) Tathagata type and (2) Padma type have thirty million and five hundred thousand. (3) Vajra type has seventy million. (4) Mani type has one hundred and thirty thousand. (5) Vast [Elephant] type has twenty-five thousand. (6) Mundane type has an infinite number.⁵²¹ The numbers of verses in these numbers of canonical [Tantras] are given in *Commentary to the Subahu Paripriccha (Questions of Subahu) Tantra*.⁵²²

Conduct Tantra

Conduct Tantras are of three types: (1) Tathagata, (2) Padma, and (3) Vajra. There are many subdivisions within these [three] categories.

At present, four of the [male] Tathagata type Tantras have been translated into Tibetan are (1) root *Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra*,⁵²³ (2) its *Continuation Tantra*,⁵²⁴ (3) *Manjushri Mula (Manjuhsri Root) Tantra*,⁵²⁵ and (4) *Siddhi Akavira (Accomplishment of the Single Hero) Tantra*.⁵²⁶

The female Tathagata type is [represented by] *Marichi Kalpa (Radiant Comprehension) Tantra*.⁵²⁷

The wrathful Tathagata type is [represented by] *Achala Paramitabala*

*Parakrama Vinayabhasita Kalpa (Comprehension of Training as a Courageous Immeasurable Unmovable Force)*⁵²⁸ and *Krodha Vijaya Kalpa (Comprehension of the Wrathful Conqueror) Tantra*.⁵²⁹

The Vajra type includes *Varjapani Abhisheka (Empowerment of Vajrapani) Tantra*⁵³⁰ and *Bhuta Damara (Taming Demons) Tantra*.⁵³¹

These nine are the only [presently existing Conduct Tantras], as the Padma type Tantras have not yet materially appeared.⁵³²

Yoga Tantra

The Yoga Tantra class has six branches: (1) root, (2) continuation, (3) continuation to the continuation, (4) explanatory, (5) equivalent, and (6) branch continuation. Two others may be included: extensive root Tantras and short abbreviated Tantras.

The root is [primarily represented by] the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Collection) Tantra*.⁵³³

The continuation is [primarily represented by] the *Mahasamaya Tattva (Definitive Great Vow) Tantra*.⁵³⁴

The continuation of the continuation is [primarily represented by] the *Vairochana Mayajala (Vairochana Web of Illusion) Tantra*.⁵³⁵

The explanatory is [primarily represented by] the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*.⁵³⁶

The equivalent is [primarily represented by] the *Paramadya (Supreme Original) Tantra*.⁵³⁷

The branch continuation is [primarily represented by] the *Sarvadurgati Parishodhana (Complete Purification of All Bad Existences) Tantra*.⁵³⁸

There are many subdivisions within each of these [categories].

Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra

The subdivisions of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra are the same as explained above: the three of Method, Wisdom, and Nondual Tantras, or the two of Yogi and Yogini tantras which are [alternative] names for Method and Wisdom Tantras, as are Male and Female Unsurpassed [Yoga Tantras]. Prajnajala referred to them as Highest Yoga and Unsurpassed Yoga [Tantras, respectively]. When subdivided, there are a very large number [of categories]; this is explained in detail elsewhere.⁵³⁹ }

Resolution of Objections

There are two subtopics to the resolution of objections to four as the definitive number of classes of Tantra: (1) no contradiction with the assertion of [two,] three, five, six, [or seven] classes of Tantra and (2) reason that four is the definitive number.

No Contradiction with [Two,] Three, Five, Six, [or Seven] Classes of Tantra

[Objection:] If there are only four classes of Tantra, yet some scholars assert that there are [two,] three, five, six, [or seven], is that not a contradiction that negates a definitive number of four classes of Tantra?

[Reply: Each nonfour class division is explained below.]

[Two Classes]

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 24, line 1: [Objection:] All of the Tantras that have been grouped into four, five, or more classes can be combined into two: outer and inner, as revealed in the *Vajra Hridaya Lamkara (Vajra Essence Ornament) Tantra XI*.⁵⁴⁰

With knowledge of the division into inner and outer,
The division of [all] Tantras can be known.

Also [as stated] by Abhaya[karagupta]:

Vajradhara captured the essence of the lineage progression
In four outer and inner vajras;
But when teaching the mandala and other rituals,
[Only] two classes of Tantra were projected.⁵⁴¹

[Reply:] The clear assertion here is that when Tantras are combined into two classes: Outer Tantra consists of Ritual and Conduct Tantras and Inner Tantra consists of Yoga and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 621, line 3: According to the *Vairochana Mayajala (Vairochana Web of Illusion) Tantra*, Ritual,

Conduct, and Yoga are Outer Tantras, and Unsurpassed Yoga is Inner Tantra.}

Three Classes

[Objection:] The assertion that there are three classes of Tantra was made by Buddhaghya:⁵⁴²

The divisions of Ritual, Conduct, and Yoga
Are asserted to be the three classes of Tantra.

[Reply:] Here, Yoga Tantra and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra may be combined, since the intent is just to emphasize samadhi. This tradition is asserted by many scholars.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 19, line 1: [Objection:] Some have explained that in accordance with the *Commentary on the King of the Three Realms Kalpa*, three [classes] include Dual Tantra. For if deity [yoga] has been specified as two [outer and inner], then there is the contradiction that not setting aside a Dual Tantra class means that Conduct [Dual] Tantra cannot be explained as a separate class.

[Reply:] The intent of these scholars is that there are only two deity yogas [outer ritual and inner yoga], and there is no error in setting aside [a class] that has both parts of ritual and yoga.

[Objection:] There is a contradiction when it is said that there are [only] three classes as in the *Commentary on the Vajra Nectar Tantra*:

All Tantras are one among Ritual, Conduct, and Secret Tantra.

[Reply:] There is no error, since with the intent to take external ritual seriously, both Ritual and Conduct Tantra can be taught as [either] inclusive in Ritual Tantra [or separate], and since inner featureless samadhi [in Secret Tantra] can be divided into two on the basis of lesser or greater emphasis [in Yoga and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras].}

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 38, line 5: In the tradition of the great siddha Anandagarbha, the meaning of the quotation:

In the outer and secret vehicles there are three...

is that outer refers to Ritual and Conduct Tantras, and inner [secret] refers to Yoga Tantra. The tradition of this master does accept Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, but includes it within Yoga Tantra as it is not set apart as being more profound. The statement in the Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, *Vajradaka*:

Outer, inner, and secret are the three vehicles...

is taken as the source for the acceptance [of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra as the secret class], but in accordance with the Master Abhya[karagupta], the reading should be:

In the outer and secret vehicles there are three...

Yet according to these scholars, in the *Ear of Corn Instructions*, Yoga Tantra is made the secret [class], and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra is added on top [without forming a separate class]. Abhaya[karagupta] understands the acceptance of two classes of Tantra as in the *Vajramala (Vajra Rosary) Tantra*:

Tantras are understood
As divided into outer and inner;
Through the teaching of mandala rituals, etc.,
Two classes of Tantra were proclaimed.

When Guhyamantra is separated into two, outer and inner: Yoga Tantra and below is outer, and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra is inner.}

Five Classes

[Objection:] The tradition⁵⁴³ that asserts five classes of Tantra derives from the

*Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Collection of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra:*⁵⁴⁴

The great bodhisattvas then inquired: “Bhagavan, what are the (1) practices, (2) rites, (3) intended accomplishments, and (4) means of accomplishment for each of these [five classes of Tantra]?”

The Bhagavan responded with this revelation: “Absolute truth derives from (1) the [completion] process [practice of] self-infusion since it gives a superb demonstration in how bodhi-mind is derived from passion. (2) [The practitioner assumes] the form of a chakravartin (universal emperor or sovereign) in the samadhi of great ecstasy and perfectly dwells in the bhaga (vagina) of the [vajra] queen consort in the center of an encircling entourage of queen consorts. (3) [The intended accomplishment is] thorough discernment of the marvelous vajra words [in the Tantras] that run counter to [normal standards] of worldly behavior by means of the six determinations [methods of interpretation].⁵⁴⁵ (4) The means of accomplishment is engagement in Maha (Great) Yoga [or Unsurpassed Yoga] Tantra.

(3) [The intended accomplishment is] thorough discernment of the ten principles,⁵⁴⁶ such as the (1) practices derived from the arrangement of the knowledge goddesses coincident with the surrounding mandala and (2) [rites of] accomplishment of enlightened activities.⁵⁴⁷ (4) The means of accomplishment is engagement in Dual [or Yoga] Tantra.

(3) [The intended accomplishment is] thorough discernment of (1) [the practice of] features of the visualization of the mudras (symbolic hand positions) of Ritual Tantra, [including] (2) [rites of] a very vast number of miscellaneous actions. (4) The means of accomplishment is engagement in Conduct Tantra.

(1) [The practice is] performing extreme purifications out of a fixation on fear [such as trepidation over one’s own divinity], without the true ecstasy of the gnosis deity, without pride in oneself as the [buddha] deity, and without the miraculous sphere of activity, (2) [together with the rites of miscellaneous actions]. (3) [The intended accomplishment is] thorough discernment through conceptualization of the causes of imperfections. (4) The means of accomplishment is engagement in Ritual Tantra.

(3) [The intended accomplishment is] thorough discernment (1) [through the practice of Ritual Tantra] of (2) [the rites of] the eight great siddhis [paranormal abilities] including mantra, medicine, fire offering, powder, eye ointment, and rapid walking.⁵⁴⁸ (4) The means of accomplishment is engagement in Kalpa Tantra.⁵⁴⁹

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 42, line 5: “Absolute truth derives” from the clear light “since it gives (1) a superb demonstration” of the attainment of the level of “bodhi-mind derived” from making “passion” for necessary sensual objects into the path.

Arising from the ultimate clear light, (2) “[the practitioner assumes] the form of a “chakravartin (universal emperor or sovereign)” in the appearance of a passionately dressed [divine] body “in the samadhi of great ecstasy, and perfectly dwells” in a playful manner “in the bhaga (vagina) of the vajra queen consort in the center of an encircling entourage of queen consorts.” (3) [The

intended accomplishment is] the explanation of the meaning of the “marvelous vajra words [in the Tantras] that run counter to [normal standards] of worldly behavior” such as wandering where there is nowhere to wander to, “by means of the six determinations [methods of interpretation].” (4) Demonstration [of the means of accomplishment] is “engagement” in Unsurpassed “Maha (Great) Yoga Tantra.”

(3) [The intended accomplishment is] the path that is based upon “discernment” of the meaning of the Tantras “through the ten principles,” which includes (1) the conduct of deity yoga derived from visualization of the “arrangement of the knowledge” [holders] “coincident” in the “mandala” circle together with the “surrounding” “goddesses,” along with (2) performance of “enlightened activities,” *etc.* (4) “The means of accomplishment is engagement in Dual Tantra” or Yoga Tantra.

(3) [The intended accomplishment is] the level of buddha by those skillful methods that are therein taught, (1) [the practice] thoroughly conducted⁵⁵⁰ by means of the four-branched repetition,⁵⁵¹ *etc.*, those “features” that have started out with the “visualization of the mudras” and mantras “of Ritual Tantra,” [followed by] instruction on outer bathing and purification, inner deity yoga, and other (2) [practices including] “a very vast number of miscellaneous actions.” (4) “The means of accomplishment is engagement in Conduct Tantra.”

(1) [The practice is] “performing extreme purifications out of a fixation on fear” of inner actions such as visualization of oneself as having a deity’s body, “without the true ecstasy of the gnosis deity” entering into oneself, “without pride in oneself” having the face and hand features of a divine body, and “without the miraculous sphere of activity” as is explained in the higher classes of Tantra, (2) [together with the rites of miscellaneous actions]. (3) [The intended accomplishment is the level of] buddha through the path of meditation on the wisdom of specific cognitions, through the “thorough discernment through conceptualization” of apprehending the truth of the “causes of imperfections” [inherent] in the sufferings of cyclic existence. (4) “The means of accomplishment is engagement in Ritual Tantra.”

(3) [The intended accomplishment is] primarily the (1) [Ritual Tantra practice] accomplishment of (2) [the rites of] “the eight siddhis including mantra, medicine, fire offering, powder, eye ointment, and rapid walking. (4) The means of accomplishment is engagement in Kalpa Tantra.”}

The scholar Nagarjuna and others asserted that there are five classes of Tantra

in accordance with this [above] quotation.

[Reply:] The separating out of Kalpa Tantra was intended just to indicate an emphasis on outer actions, as it is actually included within Ritual Tantra.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 19, line 5: There is no error as Ritual Tantra can be divided into two, Ritual Tantra where greater emphasis is placed on accomplishment of the supreme siddhi (buddha) and Kalpa Tantra where greater emphasis is placed on accomplishment of common siddhis. Both are in essence still Ritual Tantra.}

{Shakya Chokden, page 470, line 6: The reason that Kalpa Tantra is separated out from Ritual and Conduct Tantras is because it explains generating oneself as a buddha which is not in Ritual Tantra, and because it does not explain vajra, bell, and name empowerments [which are in Conduct Tantra]. Some of these are *Tara Kalpa*, *Achala Kalpa*, etc.}

[Objection:] Other [assertions of five classes] end up as just different names [for the same five classes], but another tradition that asserts five [classes] comes from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* II, iii, 54:

By gazing, smiling,
Embracing and uniting of two [organs],
The intentional language of the four classes of tantra
Has never been known. [552](#)

Only four classes are mentioned, yet a fifth is implied, that is the assertion of the Master Virupa and others. The five are Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Supreme Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras.

[Reply:] The justification for these [five] is to separate out a higher status for the *Hevajra Tantra*, yet both Supreme Yoga Tantra and Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra include unsurpassed secret gnosis, [such that there is an actual] division of [only] four.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 19, line 6: [Objection:] Shantipa in his

Outline of the Three Vehicles stated:

The vehicle that is vast and profound [Vajrayana] has five classes called Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Maha (Great) Yoga, and Unsurpassed Yoga.

In *Honoring India* it is stated:

There are five [classes of] method Tantras: Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Unsurpassed Yoga, and Unexcelled Yoga.

From the *Commentary on the Vajramala (Vajra Rosary) Explanatory Tantra*:

The Tantras taught by the Bhagavan were grouped according to the application of five tantric methods into Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Maha (Great) Yoga, and Yogini Tantras.

From the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp) [Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra by Chandrakirti]*:

There is a division into Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Highest Yoga, and Yogini Tantras.

These references [all] contradict the above explanation [of four classes of Tantra].

[Reply:] The Method Maha (Great) Yoga Tantra class was separated out because it instructs in excellent methods that use profound symbols and words that counteract the perishable world. Since the latter two [classes in all examples given] primarily teach the profound yoga that is the nonduality of method and wisdom, there is no contradiction in grouping them into a single Maha (Great) Yoga [Tantra] class.}

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 39, line 3: In the tradition of the Master Shantipa, five classes of Tantra were asserted. Ritual, Conduct, and Yoga are three, with Unsurpassed divided into Male Unsurpassed and Female Unsurpassed. The Master Kripitaka also asserted five classes: Ritual, Conduct,

and Root, with Unsurpassed divided into Male Unsurpassed and Female Unsurpassed. In the tradition of both Masters Bhavabhadra and Damkadasha, five classes are also asserted, in reference to *Hevajra Tantra* II, iii, 54 above, where Female Tantra is added to the four to make five. Among all these divisions, there are none that cannot be included in the four classes.}

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 55, line 6: Master Bhavabhadra defined five classes as Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Method Maha Yoga, and Wisdom Maha Yoga.⁵⁵³}

Six Classes

[Objection:] The scholar Kamala and others⁵⁵⁴ assert six classes of Tantra in accordance with a quotation from the root *Chakrasamvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra* LI, last verse:

From a division into as many as
Sutra, Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Secret [Yoga], and [Secret] End,
Sentient beings of many different persuasions
Will take delight in them.⁵⁵⁵

Sutra refers to Kalpa Tantra, then after Ritual, Conduct, and Yoga, Secret Yoga includes the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra* as well as others; Secret End [Tantra] is the sixth [division], for the *Chakrasamvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*.

[Reply:] This division into six ends up just demonstrating the number of dharmas [or practices], for in actuality, there is no progression beyond the above four [classes]. Ritual Tantra teaches external rituals in order to covert the lowest; Kalpa Tantra is separated out with the intent of just indicating fine points of paranormal accomplishments. The so-called Secret End Tantra that is spoken of separately refers to the Yogini Tantras. Since there are other traditions that believe at present there are no nirmanakayas (tulkus) residing in the human world, [those that recognize the Secret End class] believe that if they can now enter the twenty-four special places⁵⁵⁶ of the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* tradition, they can come closer to accomplishing paranormal abilities. Further, [they believe that] it will become easier to understand other literary expressions in the Tantras when they have been elucidated by other future nirmanakayas and

bodhisattvas [who will reside in the twenty-four special places].⁵⁵⁷

However, there is nothing that needs to be amended in the revelation of the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* by the original Buddha. The presence of many faulty [interpretations of] symbols and expressions [in the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*] was not a part of my Lama's oral instructions, and [the above interpretation as the reason for six classes] cannot be explained by others. Even scholars such as Shantipa, who is renowned as having the two kinds of omniscience, was unable to write about this in a commentary [on the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*]. Accordingly, to make a separate class [of Tantra] just because the literary expressions [of a given Tantra] are difficult to understand [does not constitute a true separate class,] for there is nothing that can be separated out of the unsurpassed gnosis of secret meaning.⁵⁵⁸

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 38, line 4: An alternative sixfold classification of Tantras is Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Unsurpassed Yoga, Male such as *Guhyasamaja*, and Female such as *Hevajra*. [Male Tantra] is also Secret Tantra and Female Tantra is Secret End Yoga Tantra.}

{Shakya Chokden, page 470, line 7: The Master Vajraghanta and others asserted that there are six classes: Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Maha (Great) Yoga, [Anu Yoga as in Anuttara Yoga or] Unsurpassed Yoga, and Secret Yoga Tantras. The latter three are divisions of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra. The *Guhyasamaja*, *Yamari*, and others are designated as Maha (Great) Yoga Tantras. The *Hevajra* and others are designated as [Anuttara Yoga or] Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras. The *Chakrasamvara* is designated as the Secret End Yoga Tantra.⁵⁵⁹}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 620, line 6: The six classes are Ritual, Conduct, Yoga, Male Unsurpassed, Female Unsurpassed, and Female of the Female called the Secret End Yoga.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 97, line 1: The *Chakrasamvara Tantra* was revealed only by an earlier sambhogakaya and was not fabricated by others. It presently exists in either other kinds of language, languages of other beings [other than human], or in a human language that is mostly archaic words that have not been made clear and rendered in a

contemporary language. It cannot be explained through linguistic analysis without depending on a lama's special instructions, and it is even reported that the renowned Shantipa, with the two kinds of omniscience in debate, was unable to write a commentary. Yet even though it is set apart just because its means of expression is difficult to understand; nevertheless, since its content is instruction in the expressed meaning of unsurpassed secret gnosis, it is not separate from the Unsurpassed [Yoga Tantra class].}

[Seven Classes]

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 20, line 4: [Objection:] In the Noble Lord's [Atisha's] *Commentary on the Lamp of the Path*, he explains that there are seven classes of Tantra: Ritual, Kalpa, Conduct, Dual, Yoga, Maha (Great) Yoga, and Unsurpassed Great Yoga.⁵⁶⁰

[Reply:] There is no contradiction. Since Kalpa Tantras, such as the *All-Inclusive Kalpa*,⁵⁶¹ teach primarily very detailed rituals for the accomplishment [of mundane siddhis] such as the pill, eye ointment, etc., in essence, they can be included in Ritual Tantra. Those that are asserted to be Dual Tantras, such as the *Mayajala (Web of Illusion) Tantra*⁵⁶² and *Lotus Dancer Tantra*,⁵⁶³ may be included in either Conduct or Yoga Tantra as appropriate.}

Reason That Four Is the Definitive Number

There are three reasons why four is the definitive number [of Tantra classes, pertaining to] (1) persons, (2) empowerments, and (3) paths.

Person

The Bhagavan revealed the Tantras for the benefit of sentient beings. Since sentient beings are definitively of four types,⁵⁶⁴ then there are definitively four classes of Tantra. An analogy is that six sense consciousnesses occur as subjects, since there are six sense objects.

Empowerment

Since there are definitively four types of imperfection⁵⁶⁵ that need to be purified, and there are definitively four [sets of] empowerments⁵⁶⁶ to enact the purifications, there are definitively four classes of Tantra to teach them. An analogy is that precious stones have a weathering [or oxidation] layer that must be removed in order to have the definitive corresponding wealth.

Path

When four types of individuals have obtained the four methods of maturation [empowerment], there is of necessity four methods of practicing the path⁵⁶⁷ and there are definitively four classes of Tantra to teach those [paths]. The analogy is the same as above.

Accordingly, since there are definitively four persons, empowerments, and paths, there are definitively four classes of Tantra. This has a natural logic.

Table 1: Reasons or Bases for Four Definitive Classes of Tantra

Classes of Tantra	Ritual	Conduct	Yoga	Unsurpassed Yoga
Subdivisions	Tathagata Padma Vajra Mani Elephant/Vast	Tathagata Padma Vajra	root continuation cont. of cont. explanatory equivalent branch	Male/Female Yogi/Yogini Method/Wisdom Nondual
Types of persons	lesser	average	greater	superior
Imperfections to be purified	physical	verbal	mental	death, intermediate state, and rebirth
Empowerments	water crown vajra bell name	five buddha family knowledge	vase or master secret wisdom gnosis fourth	
Practice emphasis	external ritual	external/internal balance	internal samadhi	superior samadhi
Relationship between meditator and buddha deity	gazing	smiling	embracing	copulating
Deity yoga	front-generation only without entrance of gnosis deity	self-generation as commitment deity with entrance of gnosis deity into front-generation only	self-generation as commitment deity with entrance of gnosis deity then requested to depart	self-generation as commitment deity with union with gnosis deity not requested to depart

Three Divisions of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra

Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra has three subdivisions: (1) Maha (Great) Yoga Method Tantra, (2) Wisdom Tantra, and (3) Method/Wisdom Nondual Tantra. Each has three distinctions: (1) in verbal expression, (2) in expressed meaning, and (3) in interlocutor or trainee.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 17, line 2: Unsurpassed or Maha (Great) Yoga Tantra is designated as either Method or Wisdom Tantra. Method Tantras primarily teach the vast absolute; are for the purpose of training persons of our own [Buddhist] schools; purify the perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields through the features of male deities; and describe the features of deities as similar to those of transitory worlds. Wisdom Tantras are for the purpose of training marginalists [non-Buddhists], women, and those who have [a predilection for] the profound, have mandalas with many goddesses that are similar to those [of the marginalists], purify the inner conductors and bodhicittas (vital fluids), and primarily describe the features of deities as different from those of transitory worlds.}

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 56, line 2: Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra may be definitively divided into two, Male Tantra and Female Tantra, as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra* XIII, 5:

For the purpose of training men,
Maha Yoga Tantras were taught.
For the purpose of gathering consorts [and training women],
Yogini Tantras were taught. [568](#)

As revealed in the *Vajra Hrdaya Lamkara (Vajra Essence Ornament) Tantra* XI:

{All Dakini Tantras
May be understood in this same sequence;
The division of all Tantras

May be understood as the division of outer and inner.

Accomplishment will come through those perfectly received
From the lama who teaches the inner [division].
It was just with this intent here
That all Tantras were taught by the sugatas.}

This *Vajra Hrdaya Lamkara Tantra*
{Is a Daka Tantra;
The last of all Tantras [to be revealed],
It has the meaning that was not expressed in the others.} [569](#)

As revealed in the *Vajramala (Vajra Rosary)Tantra*:

Through Male and Female Yoga [Tantras] . . .

As revealed in the *Chandra Guhya Tilaka (Essence of the Secret Moon) Tantra*: [570](#)

Through passion, aggression, and nescience,
[Male] Tantras are definitively of three types...

The method of dividing Male Tantras into three types and Female Tantras in six ways can be learned elsewhere [see below].

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 97, line 4: The Maha Yoga class of Tantra has a threefold division: (1) Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras that primarily demonstrates the path of vast skillful methods are Maha Yoga Method Tantras or Male Tantras, (2) Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras that primarily demonstrate the path of profound wisdom are Maha Yoga Wisdom Tantras or Female Tantras, (3) Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras that demonstrate both [paths of skillful methods and profound wisdom] inseparably or equally are Nondual Tantras or Method/Wisdom Dual Tantras, as was revealed:

Male Tantras primarily demonstrate vast skillful methods,
Female Tantras primarily demonstrate profound wisdom,
Nondual Tantras demonstrate both;
For this reason, *Hevajra* is the perfect Nondual Tantra.

“Yoga” refers to the demonstration of the expressed meaning of nondual method and wisdom. “Maha (Great)” refers to the best of all Tantras. “Unsurpassed” refers to the fact that there are no higher Tantras. Explanation of these terms is the entrance into the triple continuity, as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

E-ma-ho! This method for accomplishing bodhi-mind
Is very difficult to find;
As it is the very best of the highest Tantras,
This Tantra is called the *Guhyasamaja*.

and as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*:

E-ma-ho! The best of all Tantras
Is the Dakini Tantra,
Whether it is [thought to be] easy to understand or difficult to understand,
Or whether it is [thought to have] knowledge or lack of knowledge.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 626, line 1: As for Male Tantras... the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* [cycle] is for the purpose of training the passionate. According to the Noble Father and Sons [lineage],⁵⁷¹ [this cycle] can be divided into the root Tantra,⁵⁷² the continuation Tantra,⁵⁷³ and the explanatory Tantras, [the latter of which include] the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis)*,⁵⁷⁴ *Sandhi Vyakarana (Declaration of the Intent)*,⁵⁷⁵ *Vajramala (Vajra Rosary)*,⁵⁷⁶ and *Chaturadevi Paripriccha (Complete Questions of the Four Goddesses)*.⁵⁷⁷

According to the Jnanapada tradition and the *Vajra Hridaya Lamkara (Vajra Essence Ornament) Tantra*, for the purpose of training the aggressive, there are the *Krishna Yamari (Black Yamari)*,⁵⁷⁸ *Yamari Krishna (Black Yamari Enemy)*,⁵⁷⁹ *Zhonnu Dongdruk (Youthful Six Faces)*,⁵⁸⁰ and *Vajrabhairava Kalpa*

(*Vajrabhairava Comprehension*)⁵⁸¹ *Tantras*.

For the purpose of training the nescient, the *Mayajala (Net of Illusion)*⁵⁸² and other *Tantras* [were revealed].

As for Female *Tantras*, [there are the subdivisions of six buddha families] as revealed:

Akshobya, Vairochana, Ratnasambhava,
Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi, and Vajrasattva

In the Akshobya family are the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra)*,⁵⁸³ *Chakrasamvara (Supreme Ecstasy)*,⁵⁸⁴ *Buddha Kapala (Buddha Skull)*,⁵⁸⁵ *Mahamaya (Web of Illusion)*,⁵⁸⁶ the three of the *Arali cycle*,⁵⁸⁷ and the *Kalachakra (Cycle of Time) Tantras*.⁵⁸⁸

In the Vairochana family are the three *Chaturpita (Four Thrones)*⁵⁸⁹ and *Achala (Unshakeable) Tantras*.⁵⁹⁰

In the Ratnasambhava family is the *Vajra Amrita (Vajra Nectar) Tantra*.⁵⁹¹

In the Amitabha family are the *Loka Natha Pancadasaka (Fifty Verses of the Lord of the World)*⁵⁹² and *Kurukulla Kalpa (Comprehension of Kurukulla) Tantras*.⁵⁹³

In the Amoghasiddhi family are the *Gonpo Ngonjung*⁵⁹⁴ and *Namastere Ekavimsati Stotra (Praise with the Twenty-One Honors of Tara)*.⁵⁹⁵

In the Vajrasattva family is the *Yatha Labdha Khasama (Discovering the Equivalent of the Sky) Tantra*.⁵⁹⁶

For all six families equally, there is the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*⁵⁹⁷ and *Chandra Guhya Tilaka (Essence of the Secret Moon) Tantra*.⁵⁹⁸ }⁵⁹⁹

[Distinction Between] Maha Yoga and Yogini Tantras

[The three subtopics are (1) distinction in verbal expression, (2) distinction in expressed meaning, and (3) distinction in interlocutor or trainee.]

Distinction in Verbal Expression

The Master Krishnacharya stated in his *Guhyatattva Prakasha (Illumination*

of the Secret Absolute):⁶⁰⁰

In the [Maha] Yoga Tantras, what the tathagatas
Revealed [begins with] “Thus have I heard...”;
Which in the Yogini Tantras is
“Abiding always in the universal self [nature],
In the delight of the supreme secret...”

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 14, line 7: [With respect to the last two lines,] “secret” refers to all tathagatas. Since they are the essence of the space of all phenomena, the “great [supreme] secret” refers to the origin of all phenomena [symbolized by a tetrahedron pointing downward] within which levels are stacked on the summit of Mount Sumeru.

Alternatively, “within” that same “great [supreme] secret” means within the vagina of the copulating goddess.

Alternatively, that same “great [supreme] secret” refers to the vaginas of the four female buddha consorts who have the nature of the four elements and are located within the four conductor centers (chakras), such as Buddha Locana who has the nature of earth and is located within the nirmana[kaya] center in the navel.

Alternatively, “great [supreme] secret” is emptiness, which is the vagina of [the female embodiment of] the Perfection of Wisdom, who “abides” in an invariable manner. This “great secret” becomes “supreme” in that it is the very best transcendence of the transitory world without exception.

Alternatively, [the “secret”] becomes “supreme” because it offers the “supreme” gnosis.

Alternatively, at the time of the “supreme” transcendence of suffering, that result is the payoff; since there is the complete elimination [of suffering and imperfection], it is called the “supreme” payoff.

Alternatively, it is “supreme” when the outer enemy, emotional afflictions that are the circumstances of the cause [of suffering and transitory existence], is conquered and destroyed.

Since what makes for “delightful” is immersion in great ecstasy through perfect union with unlimited goddesses such as Locana, “within” refers to the sphere of activity that generates “supreme” ecstasy.

Since the “universal self” is the self of all tathagatas, it is the entirety of the “great [supreme] secret.”

Alternatively, it is the “universal self” because it is the self of five kinds of gnosis.

Alternatively, “universal” refers to Vajradhara; since that “self” delights in the “supreme” great “secret,” that is called the “universal self.” This indicates the very best place.

“Always abides” means to never go away forever, since it has the nature of multiplicity. This refers to the actuality of four kayas as arising continuously and having the nature of always being in the present [moment]. This is abiding in the center of unlimited [buddha] consorts as explained above.}

In accordance with this quotation, [Maha] Yoga Tantras such as the *Guhyasamaja* (*Compilation of Secrets*) begin with forty syllables [starting with] “Thus have I heard...” Yogini Tantras such as the *Chakrasamvara* (*Supreme Ecstasy*) begin with [sixteen syllables starting with] “Within the supreme secret that is delightful...” The root *Hevajra Tantra* begins with “Thus have I heard...” The *Vajra Panjara* (*Vajra Canopy*), [as an uncommon explanatory Tantra to the *Hevajra*], begins with “Within the supreme secret that is delightful...” Both [introductions] occur in the *Samputa* (*Perfect Union*), a Method/Wisdom Nondual Tantra [that is also a common explanatory Tantra to both the *Hevajra* and *Chakrasamvara*].⁶⁰¹

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 57, line 6: Nondual Tantras have the expressions “omniscient gnosis kaya, solar kaya,” etc.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 98, line 4: A Tantra that begins, “Thus have I heard... ,” [starting] the proclamation of the forty introductory syllables, is a Male Tantra. A Tantra that leads “within the supreme secret that is delightful... ,” the proclamation of the sixteen introductory syllables, is a Female Tantra. A Tantra that has both in entirety is classified as a Nondual Tantra. The *Hevajra* [cycle] constitutes a Nondual Tantra in that the *Hevajra* has the first, the *Vajra Panjara* has the second, and the *Samputa* has both.}

{Dezhung Chopel, page 47, line 4: The forty syllables constituting, “Thus have I heard...” [in Sanskrit] are E V_{AM} M_A Y_A S_{HURU} T_A M_E K_{AS} M_{IN} S_A M_A Y_E B_{HA} G_A V_{AN} S_{AR} V_A T_A T_{HA} G_A T_A K_A Y_A V_{AK} C_{IT} T_A H_{RI} D_A Y_A V_{AJ} R_A Y_O S_{HID} B_{HA} G_E S_{HU} V_I J_A H_A R_A. }⁶⁰²

Distinction in Expressed Meaning

There are three parts to the distinction in expressed meaning: (1) distinction in the generation process, (2) distinction in the completion process, and (3) distinction in the purification [practice] of subsequent [postmeditation] activity.

Distinction in the Generation Process

The *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra* revealed:

Of all [five families of] buddhas, [the five] dakinis
Are the best sangha [Buddhist community];
Since [practices with] the five dakinis are the highest accomplishment,
These are explained in Dakini [or Yogini] Tantras.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 16, line 1: The “five dakinis” families of the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* have the nature of “all [five families of] buddhas.” Since they have accomplished the power of flying, in accordance with explanation of words with concealed [meaning], they are called flyers [dakinis] as they fly through the sky. Since [practices with them] are the “highest accomplishment,” with the “five dakinis” of the five supreme “sangha” families the “best” dakinis; and since they cultivate the killing of [harmful] living beings, counter [perverted] perspectives, and gather consorts, [the Tantras that explain these activities] are called “Dakini [or Yogini] Tantras” that have the essence of the three continuities [source, path, and result].}

In accordance with this quotation, when male deities are primary, [that is indicative that] method continuity is most important. When female [deities] are primary, [that is indicative that] wisdom continuity is most important. Yogini Tantras instruct [on wisdom continuity in the form of five] tathagata dakini bodies [exemplified] by the words “buddha dakinis.” [Maha Yoga Tantras] such as the *Guhyasamaja* instruct on method continuity [in the form of five] buddha deity bodies. Even though in the *Hevajra Tantra* the male [deity] is primary,

there are also dakinis, making it a Nondual Tantra.⁶⁰³

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 58, line 1: In Male [Method] Tantras, the celestial palace is generated together with the four elements and Mount Sumeru joined as a single body, as visualized in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*. In [Female] Wisdom Tantras, [the celestial palace is] generated on top of the four elements together with Mount Sumeru, as visualized in the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*. Where both are implied in Nondual Tantra, first the four elements together with Mount Sumeru are generated, then the celestial palace is generated with them joined as a single body, and on top of the four elements together with Mount Sumeru, as visualized in the *Kalachakra Tantra*.

In Male Tantras, faces and hands of the central male and female deities are described as equal [in number], as purification of day and night equally, as in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*. In Female Tantras, faces and hands of the central male and female deities are described as unequal [in number], as purification of [unequal] previous and subsequent periods of day and night, as in the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*. Where both are implied in Nondual Tantra, faces and hands of the central male and female deities are described as unequal [in number]; but faces and hands of the retinue deities are described as equal [in number], as in the *Kalachakra Tantra*.

In Wisdom Tantras, while the method [central male deity] remains immobile, actions such as summoning [the gnosis deity] to enter the wisdom [central female deity] are performed. In Method Tantras, while the wisdom [central female deity] remains immobile, actions such as summoning [the gnosis deity] to enter the method [central male deity] are performed.

In Male Tantras, [deities are] described [as wearing articles that] resemble worldly customs, such as jewel ornaments and silk clothes. In Female Tantras, [deities are] described [as wearing articles that] are contrary to worldly customs, such as [standing on] platforms made of corpses and [wearing] bone ornaments and clothes made from human skins.

Likewise, Female Tantras have cemeteries [surrounding the mandala celestial palace], and Male Tantras do not have them.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 99, line 1: When a male deity is in the center of the mandala, and many male deities are in the retinue,

that is [indicative of] a Male Tantra. When a female deity is in the center, and many female deities are in the retinue, that is [indicative of] a Female Tantra. When both are equally represented, that is classified as a Nondual Tantra.

[Objection:] Does not [the presence of] the Nairatmya [female deity] mandala make [the *Hevajra Tantra*] a Female Tantra mandala?

[Reply:] There is no contradiction with classification [of the *Hevajra Tantra*] as a Nondual Tantra. Even though having one or the other complete [mandalas], that does not make classification as one or the other [definitive], as classification is determined by which is complete in the majority [of the Tantra].⁶⁰⁴

Distinction in the Completion Process

As revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra XIII, 2-3:*

Perfections of wisdom as means
Are explicitly called yoginis.
Because it gives instruction on those very ones
{Through mahamudra union,}
{This yogini *Vajra Panjara*}
Is called a Yogini Tantra.
{This method of all perfections
Can be accomplished through meditation alone.}

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 16, line 3: [Tantras] that summarize “perfections of wisdom as means” to ecstasy through what is called the mandala-chakra [practice] that purifies vajra mind, “are explicitly called yoginis.” Since engaging with “those very ones through mahamudra union,” this [*Vajra Panjara*] “is called a Yogini Tantra.”}⁶⁰⁵

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 47, line 5: The women who are the base or “perfections of wisdom as the means are explicitly called yoginis.” For the demonstration of natural and simultaneous nondual gnosis, in the generation process goddess mandalas are primary, and in the completion process simultaneity is made manifest “through mahamudra union” of mudras [female practitioners] and means [male practitioners] visualized as deities.

“Because it gives instruction” in the manner of reliance “on those very” female embodiments of wisdom as others’ bodies, “this yogini *Vajra Panjara* is called a Yogini Tantra.”}

In accordance with this quotation, those [Tantras] that [primarily] teach the mandala-chakra completion process, the wisdom technique, are [called] Wisdom Tantras. Those [Tantras] that [primarily] teach the subtle vital fluid and other [self-infusion completion] processes are [called] Method Tantras. Those that teach both are Nondual Tantras.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 59, line 1: Female Tantras teach karmamudra and tumo yoga; Male Tantras teach illusory body and clear light.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 626, line 6: As for the distinction between male and female yoga [practices], Vajracharya has stated:

It is the progression of generation and completion processes
That is known as the practice of yoga;
Yogini [Tantras] focus especially on the completion process.

Male Tantras, such as the *Guhyasamaja*, take as the basis of purification death, intermediate state and rebirth, to which is applied the purifications, making the resultant three kayas into the path. As for [the actual practice of] the generation process, [Male and Female Tantras] are similar. However, for the completion process in Male Tantras, other than just a little [work with] breath energy in the vajra recitation practice, the vase breathing exercise and tumo [heat yoga] have not been found in the authoritative canonical sources. Here in the *Hevajra Tantra*, vase breathing, tumo, the four chakras, etc., are present, which is indicative of a Female Tantra. In Male Tantra, there is reliance on a mudra [female consort] at the time of empowerment, but there is no mudra practice during the [subsequent] subtle [vital fluid] meditation practice. Master Aryadeva explained that in the *Guhyasamaja*, when practicing [postmeditation] activity, [one must] engage in Wisdom Tantras, for it is that class of Tantras that has vase breathing, heat yoga, mudra at the time of meditation practice [learned] in the mudra gnosis [empowerment], etc., as in Female Tantras. Those that do not have

this are Male Tantras, [even though] it is said to be of utmost importance. Any Unsurpassed Tantras that explain this correctly are [called] Nondual Tantras.

As for the meaning of the term “yoga,” in the tradition of Unsurpassed Tantras:

Yoga is not just means,
Nor is yoga only wisdom;
It is the union of means and wisdom
That the tathagatas explained as yoga.

Therefore, it is the union of wisdom and means that is explained as yoga.)⁶⁰⁶

Distinction in the Purification [Practices] of Subsequent [Postmeditation] Activity

[Maha] Yoga Tantras demonstrate purification of coarse perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields as revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

In summary, the five perceptual aggregates
Are all of the Conqueror Tathagatas [Five Buddhas].

[Yogini Tantras demonstrate purification of conductors] as revealed in the *Chakrasamvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*:

Dakinis in these locations
Are perfectly present through beautifying the form of conductors...

[Purification of] both [perceptual aggregates, etc., and conductors] were revealed in the [Nondual] *Hevajra Tantra* I, ix, 8-9 (9-10) and II, iv, 24 (26):

Vajra corresponds to the form aggregate;
{Further, Gauri is expressed as the feeling [aggregate];
Variyogini is the perception [aggregate];
Vajradakini is the conception [aggregate];

Nairatmyadakini is the consciousness aggregate.
Through the continuous purification of these [aggregates],
Practitioners will accomplish exactly that.} [607](#)

{For the sixteen times two conductors
Revealed in the Buddha Nature Chapter,}
There are two conductors for each of the yoginis
Correlated in the order as given. [608](#)

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 99, line 5: Male Tantras primarily demonstrate purification of coarse perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields. Female Tantras primarily demonstrate purification of subtle conductor elements. Nondual Tantras are so classified as they demonstrate both.}

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 57, line 3: Further, there is specialization with respect to correspondence. In Method Tantra, oneself and all visible components of existence are meditated on as aspects of male deities, as in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*:

In summary, the five perceptual aggregates
Are well-known as the five Buddhas;
The vajra fields of sense perception
Are the supreme mandala of bodhisattvas.

In Wisdom Tantras, oneself and all visible components of existence are meditated on as aspects of goddesses, [as in the *Hevajra Tantra* II, iii, 51-52 and I, ix, 13-14 (14-15):

Eyes are Mohavajra (Nescience Vajra);
{Ears are Dvesavajra (Agression Nairatmya);
Nose is expressed as Matsaryavajra (Avarice Gauri);
Mouth is Ragavajra (Passion Variyogini);
Body is Irsyavajra (Jealousy Vajradakini);
Mind is Nairatmyayogini.

Sattvas, with this tool

The sense organs will be purified.} [609](#)

Form is always explained as Gauri;

{Sound is well-known as Chauri;

The part of smell is Vetali;

Taste is well-known as Ghasmari;

Touch is explained as Bhuchari;

Dharmadhatu (realm of mind) is Khechari.

Through the continuous purification of these [sense perceptions],

Practitioners will accomplish exactly that. [610](#), [611](#)

Distinction in Interlocutor or Trainee

As revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra XIII, 5*:

For the purpose of training men,

[Maha] Yoga Tantras were explained;

For the purpose of gathering consorts [training women],

Yogini Tantras were explained. [612](#)

Since the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets)* and other Tantras revealed:

Then, Maitreya and the other bodhisattvas asked...

these are Method [Male] Tantras. Since the *Vajradaka* and other Tantras revealed:

Then, after goddesses made offerings and prostrated,

They asked these questions of the Bhagavan...

these are Female [Wisdom] Tantras. The *Hevajra Tantra* has both method and wisdom in nonduality, [as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra IV, 11*]:

The *Hevajra* is a [Maha] Yoga Tantra

[For whom] the First [Part] was explained by the Conqueror;
The latter [Second Part] is a Yogini Tantra,
For that has the purpose of attracting [and retaining] women.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 100, line 2: In Male Tantras, questioners are primarily men. In Female Tantras, questioners are primarily women. Nondual Tantras are complete with both. For example, in part 1 of the root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*, Vajragarbha is the questioner; in part 2, Nairatmya is the questioner.}⁶¹³

[Objection:] The *Hevajra Tantra* is [not a Nondual Tantra but] a Yogini Tantra, as in this line of proclamation:

The *Hevajra Yogini Tantra*...

In the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, the *Hevajra Tantra* is included in the list of fourteen Female Tantras, where it was revealed:

. . . this explains the Dakini Tantras.

[Reply:] This is indeed true where it says that [the *Hevajra Tantra*] is a Yogini Tantra, but there is no contradiction with being a Method/Wisdom Nondual Tantra [as well], since of necessity a Nondual Tantra must also be a Wisdom [Yogini] Tantra. Further, where [the *Hevajra Tantra* I, i, 7] revealed:

Listen as I will now explain
This *Tantra* that is the essence of means and wisdom...

[and the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 11 revealed:]

This *Hevajra* is a [Maha] Yoga Tantra...

these canonical sources can be understood as explained above.

Table 2: Distinctions between Male and Female Tantras

Distinctions	Male/Yogi/Daka/Means Tantras	Female/Yogini/Dakini/
Wisdom Tantras		
Verbal Expression		

Introduction	forty syllables	sixteen syllables
Expressed Meaning		
Generation Process		
primary deities	male deities such as five buddhas	female deities such as five dakinis
retinue deities	mostly male	mostly female
celestial palace		
generation	together with four elements and Mount Sumeru	on top of four elements and Mount Sumeru
number of faces and		
hands	equal in central male and female deities	unequal in central male and female deities
gnosis deity	summoned to enter central male deity	summoned to enter central female deity
articles worn by deities	resemble worldly customs	contrary to worldly customs
cemeteries	none	surround mandala
Completion Process		
yogas as union practices	illusory body and clear light yogas	heat and sexual yogas
Postmeditation		
Activity		
purification practices	perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields as aspects of male deities	conductors and perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields as aspects of female deities
Interlocutors or Trainees	primarily men	primarily women

[Distinction According to the Go Tradition of the Guhyasamaja Tantra]

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap

Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 59, line 2: According to the noble Go tradition [of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*], Female Tantra makes as the path just gnosis generated at the time of empowerment, such as the experience at the time of the descent of gnosis, *etc.* Male Tantra teaches both the profound and the vast. Further, there are the three preliminary isolations of the completion process, the two main isolations of the completion process [illusory body and clear light] and the final union of the completion process. [The instructions for] the three preliminary isolations are (1) isolation of body as vajra body samadhi, (2) isolation of speech as vajra speech samadhi, and (3) isolation of mind as vajra mind samadhi.

(1) Meditate on oneself and all visible reality as Vajradhara alone. Meditate on every part of one's own body from the top of the head to the soles of the feet as the yoga practice of the true one hundred buddha families.

(2) Gain control over [the flow of] internal energies, such that all three of the arising, entering and remaining energies become vajra recitation.

(3) Given the two true knowledges of [the multiplicity of] phenomena and the nature of phenomena, for the first, after having generated the gnosis of great ecstasy in reliance on a karmamudra, convert the three minds of appearance, augmentation, and attainment into gnosis.

The content of the two truths of the completion process, which includes all of the paths up to this point [the three preliminary isolations], is not present in Female Tantras.⁶¹⁴

[Resolution of Objections]

[Objection:] As someone has said:

It is not possible to categorize Tantras as Male or Female according to whether or not they have bone ornaments or cemeteries, because there are a few on the right-hand side [in Male Tantras], and otherwise the *Vajrabhairava* [a Male Tantra] would become a Female Tantra because it describes cemeteries. Accordingly, given that is essential to categorize by way of the completion process, Male Tantras describe the completion process as specializing in illusory body and clear light practices, and Female Tantras describe the completion process as specializing in karmamudra and tumo [sexual and heat] yogas.

In what has been covered by the great siddha Krishnacharya as stated [above] in his *Guhyatattva Prakasha (Illumination of the Secret Absolute)*, if the Male Tantras have the introductory words, “thus have I heard... ,” while the Female Tantras substitute “within the supreme secret that is delightful... ,” then the

Hevajra Tantra would become a Male Tantra, or alternatively it would have to have the words “within the supreme secret that is delightful...” for an introduction [in order to be considered a Female Tantra].

[Reply:] In this way, the content of these canonical passages establishes the *Guhyasamaja* as a Male Tantra, and the *Chakrasamvara* as a Female Tantra. The *Guhyasamaja* Male Tantra has the content “thus have I heard...” while the *Chakrasamvara* Female Tantra has “within the supreme secret that is delightful...” for an introduction. The latter [Female Tantra] describes the four pleasures and simultaneous [gnosis]. Likewise, [Tantras with the introduction] “thus have I heard...” describe [primarily the completion process practices corresponding to Male Tantra]. This is the significance of the quotations.

Likewise, the great siddha Shaddha in his *Stages of the Lama Lineage* stated:

Where the vast absolute is described, that is Method Tantra;

Where the profound absolute is described, that is Wisdom Tantra.

Master Vitapada in his *Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra* stated:

Where the absolute of internal energies is described, that is Method Tantra;

Where the absolute of conductors is described, that is Wisdom Tantra.

By way of these quotations, it is possible to establish [a type of Tantra] under one or another circumstance, such as whether or not it has the six [jewel or bone] ornaments, whether or not it has cemeteries, *etc.* Jewel ornaments as are described in Male Tantra do not occur in Female Tantra. Bone ornaments as are described in Female Tantra do not occur in Male Tantra. Likewise, the same for cemeteries.

[Objection:] Alternatively, you cannot possibly indicate [distinctions between Male and Female Tantras from] all sides without exception, because a completion process specializing in illusory body and clear light does not occur in other Male Tantras except for the *Guhyasamaja*. How is it that cemeteries are present in the *Vajrabhairava Tantra*?

[Reply:] They are not described as a not in common specialization of Male Tantra, but are described because they are necessary to the accomplishment of

violent actions. For example, the violent action chapter of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* describes cemeteries.

Generation of the celestial palace from the melting of the four elements, equal purification of day and night, purification of previous and subsequent time periods, etc., that were mentioned by Rinpoche [Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo] are the dharma language of the *Kalachakra Tantra*.

[Objection:] What is a classification system not in common [between Male and Female Tantras]? The great siddha Vajracharya stated in his *Clarification of the Absolute Secret*:

Regarding the sequence of the generation and completion [processes],
[Maha] Yoga Tantra is known for the generation process,
Yogini Tantra is mindful of the completion process.

{Reply:] The completion process is appropriately taught in any [sub]class of [Unsurpassed Yoga] Tantra, yet it is not taught where the generation process is the main part taught in [Maha] Yoga Male Tantras. After the generation process has been made the basis for purification of death, intermediate state, and rebirth in any [sub]class of [Unsurpassed Yoga] Tantra, it is suitable to either teach or not teach deity yoga as the ability to make the purification. In addition to instruction in a definitive understanding of a substitute attainment, the completion process is the main part of instruction in Yogini Tantra. It is not definitive in short Tantras.

In consideration of whether or not the completion process is actually taught in the root *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, there is no actual instruction in the characteristics of the karmamudra nor the method for comprehending that purification process. In that which is concealed, among the three (1) relative illusory concealed, (2) three minds concealed, and (3) passionate dharma concealed, in the generation process there is instruction that explains the passionate dharma concealment.

In the great siddha Shridhara's *Unsurpassed Accomplishment* in the Krishna cycle of the *Yamari Tantra*, four empowerments are necessary for accomplishment. The words that instruct on these empowerments are revealed in the *Yamari Krishna (Black Enemy Yamari) Tantra VI*:

First is the crown empowerment
Second is the sword empowerment
The perfect union of vajra and bell [is the third]
Drinking the moon is the fourth. [615](#)

[and XI:]

After seeing the terrace with a banner,
Then the milk is accomplished.
{Through becoming skilled in single-mindedness of milk,
Mahamudra is thoroughly accomplished.} [616](#)

Since this [terminology] is not found elsewhere, it is difficult to accept instruction in a single profound completion process. For details, see the *Vajrabhairava Tantra Outline*.

Is the Hevajra Tantra a Male or Female Tantra?

So is the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* a Male Tantra or a Female Tantra? It is a Female Tantra [in the relative sense only]. The concluding statement in the *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra* is:

. . . the essential *Two-Part [Tantra]* . . . the *Great King of Tantras*, the *Hevajra Dakini Web Ecstasy Union Tantra*. [617](#)

[*Dakini Web Ecstasy Union*] is equivalent to *Dakini Jala Sambhara* in Sanskrit, where *Dakini* is sky-traveler, [*Jala* is web,] *Sam* is ecstasy, and *Bhara* is union. Since *Bhara* can also be translated as supreme, [the same title] can be translated as *Dakini Supreme Ecstasy*. The *Hevajra Tantra* I, iv, 2 states:

Then tathagatas in the form of Herukas... [618](#)

The *Pure Commentary* [on the *Hevajra Tantra* by Drakpa Gyaltsen] explains this:

Since the words “form of Herukas” identify this as a *Dakini Supreme Ecstasy Tantra*, in this *Tantra* the wrathful-passionate body form becomes primary.

Supreme Ecstasy can refer any one of three [Tantras]: *Chakra Ecstasy*,⁶¹⁹ *Illusion Ecstasy*,⁶²⁰ or *Hevajra Ecstasy*. The Venerable Rinpoche [Drakpa Gyaltzen] here intends the *Hevajra Ecstasy*.

Further, the Buddha revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* XIII, 4-5:

Dakini Ecstasy, Ocean of Ecstasy, Space

Great Pleasure, Power of Food, Secret Enjoyment,

Great Ecstatic Charm, and Golden Rain:

These are the eight Vajradaka Tantras that bring benefit.

Hevajra Mandala of All Buddhas,

Secret Treasury, Source of Vajra Nectar,

Union of Chakras, Canopy, and Source:

These are known as the six cycles of Yogini Tantra.⁶²¹

and

Further, since here accumulation of the vows

Of all buddha dakinis

Is in order to completely accomplish the five dakinis,

This is called a Dakini Tantra.

Saying that the five tathagata families are named for the five dakinis caused astonishment among the gathering that was listening to this dharma [talk]. In reply to the question, “what is the reason for designation with the names of the dakinis?” the Buddha replied, “I did not make this designation. In the worldly realm of radiant light, there exists the *King of Tantras*, called the *Vajra Definitive Expression*. Within it there is reference [to those who are] called taivehaya sagamane. These accomplish activities throughout the entire universe, and are well-known as dakinis.”

For this reason, the term “Dakini” [Tantra] is applied [to the *Hevajra Tantra*,

the *King of Tantras*].

Further in this tradition, an always logical person [such as] the great siddha Dhombipa, in his *Light of Nectar* makes reference to the *Hevajra Yogini Tantra*. The *Kumuti [Commentary]*⁶²² speaks of “the combined essence, the *Hevajra Goddess Tantra*.” The *Vajragarbha Commentary*⁶²³ draws on a passage from the *Extensive Tantra*:⁶²⁴

When yoginis [wisdoms] are everywhere active
Means [yogis] remain still,
Then provisionally I teach
Yogini Tantras to the [spiritually] immature.

When means is everywhere active
Wisdoms are settled,
Then I teach what is called
Provisional Method [Male] Tantras.

When wisdoms and means are equally present [and active],
The *Hevajra [Tantra that I teach]* is not one-sided;
Everything, the summarization of content, *etc.*
Is the essence of wisdom and means.⁶²⁵

When means [“remain still”], male deities are not active. Then when wisdoms [yoginis] such as Gauri are summoned and engaged, etc., acts performed are relative, as in “provisionally I teach Yogini Tantras to the [spiritually] immature.” When wisdoms [“are settled”], goddesses are not active. Then when means such as Hammer Yamataka and Cudgel Yamataka are summoned and engaged, etc., acts performed are relative, as in “I teach... provisional Method [Male] Tantras.” These quotations establish that the *Hevajra [Tantra]* is a Female Tantra [in the relative or provisional sense].

Then, the next two lines of verse give the definitive meaning, that in *Hevajra* “wisdoms and means are equally present [and active],” such that [*Hevajra*] is not one-sided in means, nor one-sided in wisdom, but is the *Tantra* that explains nondual wisdom and means. Yet, these two lines of verse are not exclusive to *Hevajra*. All Unsurpassed Tantras, such as *Guhyasamaja* and others, are definitively called Nondual Tantras. As to whether provisional [Male or Female]

or definitive [Nondual], they may be termed relative [Male or Female], but are [correctly] understood [as definitive] on the strength of such words as “in truth.”

The Manner in Which the Hevajra Tantra Is Superior to Other Female Tantras

The Dharma Lord Sakya Pandita in his *Explanation of the Fundamental Ashta Mantra* states:

As taught in the passage [in the *Hevajra Tantra* II, viii, 9-10]:

Start with giving the fasting and confession practice,
{Follow up with the ten trainings.
Then teach Vaibhashika philosophy
And likewise Sautrantika.
Next teach Yogachara,
Followed by Madhyamika.}

After all stages of Guhyamantra are understood,
Then begin with *Hevajra*.
{The trainee who practices with dedication
Will become accomplished, there is no doubt.} [626](#)

The less fortunate [must] start out gradually, being taught each subsequent path that is more profound than the preceding path, until taught *Hevajra* as the final [step]. The more fortunate can start out all at once, first entering Guhyamantra, then taught *Hevajra* after all [other] Guhyamantra.

This is indeed the teaching as clarified in *Hevajra Tantra* I, viii, 54-55 (52-53):

Through [the practice of] all Vedas, through the limits of all philosophical attainments,
Likewise [through performing] rituals for increasing [wealth], etc.,
No siddhis [are gained] that can purify worldly existence;
At the end of this life, there is [just another] rebirth.

Without [*Hevajra*], there can be no [supreme] siddhi
In either this transitory world or the next;
For whoever does not know *Hevajra*,
Weariness [in pursuit of siddhis] becomes useless. [627](#)

Here, “all Vedas” refers to the four philosophies created by outsiders and marginalists. “Philosophical attainments” designates our own [four Buddhist] categories. “Rituals for increasing, etc.” refers to deity yogas [that accomplish] pacifying, increasing, controlling, *etc.* For exhibiting these [rituals], deity yogas teach methods [intended] to accomplish mundane “siddhis” and “purify worldly existence” during this life. When this [effort] has been exhausted and the “[supreme] siddhi” has not been obtained, afterward one [just] takes “[another] rebirth” in the world of the “next” life. “In this transitory world” refers to when supreme siddhis are attained; they arise in addition to mundane siddhis.

[Objection:] Yet as also revealed in the root *Chakrasamvara Tantra*:

Whoever does not know the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*
Is like a fool who flays chaff [expecting to get grain].

and as revealed in the *Yamari Krishna (Black Enemy Yamari) Tantra XVII*:

In the *Yamari [Tantra]*, yantra is the ultimate,
As it is encompassed in the ultimate Tantra. [628](#)

[Reply:] The title *King of Tantras* is not applied to all Tantras in this [same] way. These [latter] are called Minister Tantras as they are not as profound. If they are just called Maha (Great) Tantras, the significance of the expression “Maha (Great)” is either that it was expressed just that one time and has no [real] significance, or that it just expresses praise by tathagatas. If the former, that [presumption of superiority] is just our own wishful thinking; if the latter, that would mean tathagatas would have spoken false words and which is an unacceptable [conclusion].

Accordingly, in all Tantras where the expression *King of Tantras* occurs [in

the title], each has an implication of uncommonness. For example, the expression *King of Tantras* occurs in the *Yamari* cycle, with the meaning that nothing is faster than this *Tantra* for accomplishment of pacifying, increasing, controlling, and killing actions through the practice of yantra. But is it so fast?

In the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, miscellaneous actions are explained in the third chapter only. For accomplishment of them, first there is training in [basic] concepts of the buddha vehicle. Then, empowerment in the mandala must be requested, and vows and commitments put in place, followed by training in single-mindedness on the new [Guhyamantra] vehicle. Next comes training in subtle vital essences, kalpa yoga. Then after accomplishment of that comes original yoga, vidya balancing⁶²⁹ activity to be conducted for six months. Accomplishment of revealed miscellaneous actions cannot be done any other way than that.

Further, the *Kalachakra Tantra* revealed twelve great actions. The accomplishment of miscellaneous actions requires, after the preliminaries of empowerment and generation process yoga, practicing withdrawal and meditative absorption until accomplishing the life form, then practicing pranayama (breathing yoga) until gaining control over internal energies.⁶³⁰ There is no other way to accomplish [miscellaneous actions].

Likewise, the *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra* explains the practice of the vajra sword as [first] to make a clay statue of Heruka and put it inside a temple. Upon placing a khatingka pill in the mouth of the statue, the accomplishment has been made; but it is also necessary that the accomplishment be made after the statue has uttered revelations when the pill has not yet been taken up in the hand, and so forth, and necessary to make accomplishment up to the time that the pill is naturally expelled. Here, after preliminary approximation [of the deity] has been performed, those with sharp faculties can become accomplished in the practice through meditation alone. Those with average faculties can become accomplished by adding yantra [yoga postures], and those with lowest faculties can certainly become accomplished by adding fire offerings.

[Objection:] So what is the reason that the *Hevajra Tantra* is more profound than other Female Tantras?

[Reply:] In general, unsurpassed bodhi-mind cannot be attained without gaining realization that the absolute nature of all phenomena is beyond all limitations of all projections. In the common tradition of the Mahayana, many methods for the realization of emptiness have been revealed. Among these

methods, the best method for the fastest manifest realization is the samadhi of the completion process. The completion process is explained extensively and clearly in this [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*. Sources for generating simultaneous gnosis, through methods that lead to actual melting [of vital fluids] and [generation of] ecstasy, yogas of [controlling] energies, tumo, karmamudra, etc., are taught clearly only in this [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* and not in any others.

[Objection:] Do not the five stages of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* also do this?

[Reply:] Indeed they do, but that is because of the special instructions that have been passed down through the oral transmission from Vajradhara to the Master Nagarjuna, and that have not come forth from explicit instructions in the root *Guhyasamaja Tantra* itself.

Likewise, the five stages of Ghantapa, the four stages of Krishna, etc., were also passed down through the oral transmission from Vajradhara to the great siddha Ghantapa and others and did not originate as explicit instruction in the root *Chakrasamvara Tantra*.)

Delineation of Method/Wisdom Nondual Tantras

Two subtopics are (1) general method of definitive [designation] and (2) specific delineation of the *Hevajra Tantra* [cycle].

General Method of Definitive [Designation of Nondual] Tantras

Four subtopics are (1) specification of root and explanatory Tantras, (2) manner of entrance [into practice], (3) abbreviated and expanded [sections], and (4) accounting of the number of verses.

Specification of Root and Explanatory Tantras

The definition of root Tantra is that which is the base for explanation and that originated first. The definition of explanatory Tantra is that which makes explanation and that originated subsequent [to the root Tantra].

Divisions are extensive and abbreviated root Tantras, and common and uncommon explanatory Tantras.

[Extensive and Abbreviated] Root Tantras

Very large extensive root Tantras were primarily revealed for the benefit of trainees at the time of the [original] turning of the wheel of the dharma [or cycle

of teachings].⁶³¹ Abbreviated [Tantras] were primarily revealed for the benefit of trainees who came at a later time, had shorter life spans, and lesser intellects that were unable to grasp the extensive Tantras.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 69, line 5: The Original Buddha proclaimed the extensive root Tantras to trainees during the Age of Perfection; and as those [trainees] had great merit, long life spans, and great wisdom, they were able to write down the [complete] text and to study and reflect [on it in its entirety]. After they practiced the generation and completion processes, they were able to attain both supreme and common siddhis.

[Objection:] So where are these extensive Tantras? The Rinpoche [tradition of Buton] has said that they exist in Tsanda Darjeling.

[Reply:] That is not correct. After extensive Tantras were proclaimed to trainees during the Age of Perfection, they did not become essential for trainees in the [present] Age of Conflict, and there was insufficient spiritual power for them to appear. As stated in Shantipa's *Commentary on the Yamari Krishna (Black Enemy Yamari) Tantra*:

Since only the wisdom of study and contemplation had been developed without the experience of tasting the nectar of meditation, it was thought that [wisdom] could not be enacted at the time of death; for that reason the intent was that there was [insufficient] spiritual power for the extensive Tantras to appear.

The significance of this is that the necessity of engaging in Guhyamantra is to practice generation and completion yogas. Sentient beings in the Age of Conflict are unable to write down [all] the words [of the extensive sources]. Even if it is thought that [sufficient] time has passed during this lifespan [to learn] through study and contemplation, the [buddha] intent is that there is [insufficient] spiritual power. Accordingly, even though in great vajra lands such as Urgyan, [extensive Tantras] have been placed unwrapped in the hands of gnosis dakinis, there is not a single transitory world [that can serve] as a receptacle [for them], for there is no living being such as a human that commonly appears in those [transitory worlds] who has accomplished the equivalent karma [necessary] for [enabling extensive Tantras] to appear.}

[Common and Uncommon] Explanatory Tantras

Common explanatory tantras elucidate multiple Tantra cycles, while uncommon explanatory Tantras elucidate [only] their own specific Tantra cycle. [Subtopics are (1) modes of explication and (2) resolution of objection.]

Modes of Explication

In general there are six modes of explication: (1) clarifying what is unclear, (2) appending to what is incomplete, (3) having similar passages, (4) [demonstrating] alternative methods, (5) summarizing the meaning, and (6) distinguishing words and meanings.

Clarifying What Is Unclear

How does an explanatory Tantra make clear what is unclear? [As an example,] the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, x, 27 revealed:

Whoever is empowered is distinguished,

Given [the transmission] according to the ritual of their own mandala. [632](#)

The meaning of empowerment in this quotation is unclear, but is made clear through the explanation in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*:

The infusion of vajra aggression [and other emotions] as spiritual power
Results in [the recognition of] five or six types [of trainees].

Just from this quotation alone from the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, the [correspondence of] each [trainee] type to a method of inclusion [in the Hevajra mandala] is explained.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 77, line 6: The tradition of the vase empowerment is not explained clearly in the root Tantra. The *Vajra Panjara Tantra* gives a clear explanation starting with the site ritual through to the vajra master empowerment.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 48, line 2: [In the *Hevajra Tantra* quotation] the meaning of empowered is unclear, but is explained clearly in this passage from the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*:

Empowerment will be made as contemplation of the vajra
Through complete vajra mind meditation
With all eight vases
Holding the water of each vidya [knowledge woman] and male counterpart.

[The meaning of empowered in this context] is nothing other than as quoted in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* [in the first two lines above]. A further passage clarifies the individual buddha families and their groupings:

The commitment of [buddha] speech is to meditate
On the five central mandalas... }

Appending to What Is Incomplete

What is incomplete in the *Hevajra Tantra* is revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, such as vajra names.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in *Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam*, volume 21, page 78, line 1: In the root Tantra, the attribution of vajra names in the name empowerment is incomplete. Because the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* explains the names of the five families, such as Playful Vajra, it is an appending [explanatory Tantra].}

Having Similar Passages

For example, both the *Two-Part [Hevajra]* and *Vajra Panjara Tantras* explain the fifteen female deity mandala of Nairatmya the same way.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in *Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam*, volume 21, page 78, line 2: The following occurs in the root *Hevajra Tantra* I, viii, 16 (15):

All goddesses are black in color,
Very wrathful, ornamented with the five mudras,

{One face, red eyes,
Hands filled with a curved sword and skullcap.} [633](#)

In the [uncommon] *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, an explanation is given using different words with the same meaning:

All goddesses are black in color with one face and two hands holding a curved sword and a skullcap...

In the [common] *Sambhuti Tantra*:

The goddesses are various colors...

By the power of inner elements, outer colors are explained as shades of white and red, and the primary [deity] is said to have one face and four hands.}

[Demonstrating] Alternative Methods

As for dissimilar variations, a few methods are taught [slightly] differently [in root and explanatory Tantras], such as the emblems and mantras of Gauri and others.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in *Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam*, volume 21, page 78, line 4: [Objection:] How can a Tantra be explanatory just by having a dissimilar method?

[Reply:] It becomes such by means of definitive result. In consideration of the fact that dissimilar methods are used in the single mandala of Nairatmya and the fifteen goddesses, that is possible because of [having the same] definitive result [regardless of the method used].}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 48, line 5: The emblems and mantras of Gauri and others are explained slightly differently as in:

Visualized as having a white form,
Holding an iron hook and pointing an index finger...

Om Dewa Picu Abhitishta...

The *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra* explains the practice in detail, while the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* has a summarization in ten lines of verse:

Through application of the vajra practice,
The vajra mudra is perfectly formed... }

Summarizing the Meaning

This is demonstrated in the explanatory Tantras as when the *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra* has an extensive discourse on [the topic of postcompletion process meditation] activity, which is then summarized in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*.

As a further [example], the Enlightenment of Vairochana [as the title of part 1 of the *Two-Part Tantra*] is the summarization of the words and meaning of the extensive [*Thirty-Part Hevajra*] *Tantra*.

Distinguishing Words and Meanings

The *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra* speaks [only] a little about proximate cause in [part 1,] chapter 8⁶³⁴ and elsewhere, but the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* reveals [this subject] clearly in chapter 15, with respect to time, etc.⁶³⁵

In the [abbreviated] root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*, just the names of conductors, such as “Inseparable,” are given [I, i, 16], and only the names [of pilgrimage sites] such as “Localized and Approximately Localized” [I, vii, 10]. Yet, the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*, in lines such as:

Inseparable [conductor] is located on top of the head
Through which [the fluid essence of] teeth and nails are said to flow...

gives the location [in the body], and in lines such as:

Localized refers to the [bodhisattva] level of exceeding pleasure,
Likewise approximately localized is the stainless [level].
Field is the third [level], the illuminator...

reveal clarification [of the pilgrimage sites as representing bodhisattva levels].

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 49, line 1: The *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra* explains just a little about proximate cause in [part 1,] chapters 8 and 10,⁶³⁶ etc. [as in *Hevajra Tantra* I, x, 20]:

Inseparable has the characteristic of siddhi,
As accomplished through mudra yoga.

Chapter 15 of the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* explains clearly the method for accomplishing the result together with the actual result specific to the method and time of accomplishment.}

[In conclusion, resources that] use these [above six] modes are called explanatory Tantras.

[Resolution of Objection]

[Objection:] While explanations that clarify what is unclear, and distinguish between words and meanings would properly constitute an explanatory Tantra, how can having similar passages, dissimilar variations, summarizations, and appendices to what is incomplete be considered an explanatory Tantra? Since all Tantras have different [elements], then solely by the fact of having one [element of explication] and not another, all [Tantras] can be explanatory Tantras of others interchangeably.

[Reply:] That is not so. When similar passages [in one Tantra] help to generate specific certainty regarding the meaning of [another] Tantra, [that first Tantra] becomes an explanatory Tantra [of the other].

As for dissimilar variations, when body color and hand implements are briefly given [in one Tantra] for a specific ritual of a specific deity, and when explained extensively [in another Tantra] as a dissimilar variation, [the latter] becomes an explanatory Tantra.

Further, when it becomes necessary to append [details] for an incomplete step in a ritual procedure, [another Tantra] with that appended [material] becomes an explanatory Tantra.

[Finally] as for summarization, when an extended revelation in a root Tantra has been made easier to understand [by summarization in another Tantra], the latter becomes the explanatory Tantra.

Manner of Entrance [into the Practice]

There are three manners of entrance [into the practice of Tantras]: (1) gradual development within the continuum of the individual,⁶³⁷ (2) [standard] sequential engagement, and (3) a progression that starts and stops on one's own whim [or desire].⁶³⁸

Abbreviated and Expanded Sections

This includes both the abbreviation and expansion of words and the abbreviation and expansion of meanings.

Accounting of the Number of Verses

From two to six lines of a specific meter [usually seven or nine syllables, sometimes more] form one verse of poetry. Prose passages are counted as sets of nine syllables [literally nine dot punctuations separating syllables], with every four sets correctly counted as one verse.

Specific Delineation of the Hevajra Tantra [Cycle]

Four subtopics are (1) root and explanatory Tantras, (2) manner of entrance [into the practice], (3) abbreviated and expanded sections, and (4) accounting of the number of verses.

Root and Explanatory Tantras

[Within the *Hevajra Tantra* cycle,] there are extensive and abbreviated root Tantras and common and uncommon explanatory Tantras.

Extensive Root Tantra

[The two subtopics are (1) identification of the extensive root Tantra and (2) resolution of objections.]

[Identification of the Extensive Root Tantra of Five Hundred Thousand Verses]

The extensive root Tantra has [either thirty or] thirty-two parts, thirty thousand chapters, and five hundred thousand verses, as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara* (*Vajra Canopy*) Tantra IV, 1-11.⁶³⁹

Enlightenment of Vajragarbha
Is Part One of the King [of Tantras],
Illusion is Part Two,
Vajra Dance is Part Three,
Part Four is Miscellaneous,
Vajra is Part Five,
Part Six is Great Power,
Part Seven is Unwavering Lord,
Part Eight is Dharani [Mantras],
The Dakini Kurukulle is Part Nine,
Part Ten is Training,
Vairochana is Part Eleven,
Siddhis is Part Twelve,
Tara is Part Thirteen,
Vajravarahi is Part Fourteen,
Part Fifteen is Great Splendor,
Nairatmya is Part Sixteen,
Yamantaka is Part Seventeen,
Humkara is Part Eighteen,
Songstress is Part Nineteen,
Fire Offerings is Part Twenty,
Consecration is Part Twenty-One,
The Great Mandala Part
Is Accepted as Twenty-Two,
Torma is Part Twenty-Three,
Part Twenty-Four is Preparation [for Empowerment],
Direct Knowledge is Part Twenty-Five,
Mudra-As-Such is Part Twenty-Six,
Actions is Part Twenty-Seven,
Songs is Part Twenty-Eight,
Dance of Ishvara is Part Thirty,
There is no Part Thirty-One.

Explained in thirty parts,
Numbering thirty-thousand [chapters],

Emā! This great ocean of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*

Was taught by Vajradahara
As the extensive [root] Tantra
For dakas and dakinis.

{The heart of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verse Hevajra*,
Vajradaka revealed
In a complete summarization, the pure essence,
That is the definitive [*Two-Part Hevajra*] Tantra.

The *Hevajra* [Maha] Yoga Tantra
Is the first [part] explained by the Conqueror;
Subsequently, [the second part] is the Yogini Tantra
That is for the purpose of attracting [and retaining] women.} [640](#)

Also, in the *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra* II, colophon:

. . . derived from the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra* . . .

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 49, line 3: The extensive Tantra is “explained in thirty parts,” with chapters “numbering thirty-thousand.” Words of the “dakas” part and the “dakinis” part number “*Five Hundred Thousand Verses*,” as extensive as a “great ocean.” “Vajradhara” revealed the *Hevajra Tantra*, when he “taught” this amazing “extensive [root] Tantra.” Since [so many] branches [or parts] were not suitable for future trainees, “Vajradaka [Hevajra] revealed” a “summarization” in two parts, thereby completely capturing “the pure essence” of the primary and most important meanings of the extensive *Hevajra Tantra*, “the heart of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*” edition. Those are “definitive” in numbering, thirty parts constitutes the extensive root “*Tantra*,” and two parts the “summarization.” For what “purpose” then is the sequence [of parts] in the [*Two-Part*] Tantra? The “first” part is the “*Hevajra* [Maha] Yoga Tantra” that was “explained by the Conqueror” for the benefit of male [practitioners]. “Subsequently,” the latter [second part] “is the Yogini Tantra that is for the purpose of attracting [and retaining] women.”}

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap

Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 70, line 6: A few excerpts from this source canonical text [the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*] are [cited] in treatises. Excerpts are included in the superior commentary, the *Vajragarbha Commentary*,⁶⁴¹ since [the author of that commentary] is the interlocutor of the Tantra himself. Excerpts are also in the inferior commentaries because the writers of those inferior commentaries had clearly seen [the extensive edition] in one of the great vajra locations, such as Shambhala. Indian panditas have excerpted short passages. Our own [lineage] lamas wrote down what was received from the siddhas, but did not write down what was [directly] seen in the volumes of the [extensive] root Tantra.

The [summary] content was revealed in the *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra*, the abbreviated root Tantra, given that the extensive root Tantra could not be retained [in the memory long enough to be fully written down] by later-born individuals who have shorter life spans, less insight, and duller intellects [relative to accomplished bodhisattvas]. The reason is given in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*:

Bhagavan, why has the extensive [version] been summarized? Bhagavan, since the vast majority of people in this [present] fortunate era have shorter lifespans, how would they retain this [extensive edition], how could they become [bodhi-] sattvas [capable of retaining]?

Vajradhara replied: For a time, some that become masters will commit root downfalls, some practitioners will practice the path of the ten nonvirtuous deeds, some persons will kill living beings, some will become passionately attached to one of a group of goddesses. For these reasons, the extensive Tantra cannot [now] be taught.}

[Resolution of Objections]

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 57, line 6: [Objection:] In his *Commentary on the Abhidhana Tantra*, the scholar Shugang Warma asserted that there are two [kinds of] root Tantras: (1) one that becomes the master [edition] and (2) one [extensive] that becomes the basis for explanation by an explanatory Tantra, such that Tantras are either root and branch or root and explanatory. Are these two root Tantras [master and extensive] the same [as extensive and summarized] or different?

[Reply:] These [that Shugang Warma has described] are two [different root Tantras], [root master] primary and [root extensive] needing explanation. [However,] the two [described above, the *Thirty-Two Part* and *Two-Part Hevajra Tantras*] are the same as what are called extensive and [summarized or]

abbreviated [root Tantras].

The Dharma King Lama Dampa [Sonam Gyaltzen?] asserted that there are four [kinds of] root Tantras: (1) one [master] that becomes the basis for a continuation [or supplementary] Tantra, (2) one [abbreviated] that becomes the basis for a commentary on the intention as an explanatory Tantra, (3) one [extensive] that becomes the basis for summarization in an abbreviated Tantra, and (4) one [master] that becomes the basis for many [Tantras contained in one] cycle. In this *Comprehensive Introduction*, a root Tantra is [understood to be] (2) the basis [abbreviated] for explanation by an explanatory Tantra.

[Objection:] Yet, the *Jnana Tilaka Tantra* XX, 1 revealed:

The most splendid *Tantra* of this great family
Is called the (1) *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*.
That is the master root *Tantra*,
The very best of the eight kayas.⁶⁴²

Is there not a contradiction in the explanation of the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verse Hevajra* as a root Tantra?⁶⁴³

[Reply:] There is no error, as the intended [meaning is that the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*] is a master root Tantra. Here, where the belief is that a root Tantra is the counterpart in a root/explanatory combination, it is definitively just the *Five Hundred Thousand Verse Hevajra*⁶⁴⁴ that is the extensive root Tantra that becomes the [summarized or abbreviated] basis for the two explanatory Tantras, *Vajra Panjara* and *Samputa*.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 102, line 1: [Objection:] If the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* is the extensive root Tantra, does that not contradict the statement that the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses* is the root Tantra in the above quotation from the *Jnana Tilaka Tantra*?

[Reply:] There is no mistake, as the latter [*Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*] is the master root Tantra. Here the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 9 revealed:

Numbering thirty-thousand [chapters],

Ema! This great ocean of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*
{Was taught by Vajradahara}
As the extensive [root] Tantra

Given the division into root and explanatory [Tantras], the extensive root Tantra is definitively just this very *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*.)

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 107, line 2: [Objection:] Now, someone has said that the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses* is the extensive root *Hevajra Tantra*, the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* is the intermediate [root *Hevajra Tantra*], and the *Abhidana One Hundred Thousand Verses* is the abbreviated [root *Hevajra Tantra*]. As revealed in the *Jnana Tilaka Tantra XX*, 1:

{Now listen, and I will explain}
How these *Tantras* sequentially came into existence:
The most splendid *Tantra* of this great family...

At the end of this one verse which has been extrapolated from before, back of that *Hevajra* “is given the name of *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*.”

Vajragarbha’s *Commentary* [on the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*] stated:

. . . to make exceedingly clear the short *Hevajra* that is the source Tantra, in the collection of the original Tantra by the Buddhas in *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*, one hundred verses was transformed a thousand-fold by *Hevajra* in the *One Hundred Thousand Verses Abhidana* collection of the King of Tantras. Otherwise for humans, comprehension of meaning is through commentaries that were written on the Conqueror’s teachings... [645](#)

and as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*:

. . . the definitive abbreviation of *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*, distinguishes all Tantras...

[Reply:] That is not correct. The *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra Tantra* is not an [extensive] root Tantra in the *Hevajra Tantra* [cycle] division into root and explanatory, since there are no canonical passages [from it] on which instruction is given in the commentary of the two explanatory Tantras [*Vajra Panjara* and *Samputa*], and since the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* explains that the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* extensive root Tantra is [the basis for] the division into root and explanatory [Tantras].

[Objection:] So is the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra* a root Tantra?

[Reply:] In general, it is just a [master] root Tantra since it is the Tantra that forms the basis for the [further] explanation of the continuation Tantras.}

Abbreviated Root Tantra

[Two subtopics are (1) identification of the abbreviated root Tantra and (2) resolution of objections.]

[Identification of the Abbreviated Root Tantra of Two Parts]

The abbreviated root Tantra has two parts, twenty-three chapters, and seven hundred and fifty verses.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 628, line 5: In general, the Original Buddha⁶⁴⁶ revealed [all] classes of Tantra. Shakyamuni repeated them, revealing [some Tantras] but not revealing [others]. He saw that in the Age of Conflict, the [relatively] short-lived sentient beings' attention to the [extensive] *Thirty-Two Part, Five Hundred Thousand Verses* edition would waver, such that the [true] flavor of the meditation could not be experienced. There was insufficient spiritual power for the first thirty parts of the extensive *Thirty-Two Part Tantra* to appear [in this present world]. The last two parts that summarize the meaning of the words [of the first thirty parts] were prepared and revealed for the purpose of converting the four Maras in Magadha. There, Vajragarbha [compiled] the abbreviated Tantra and attached the introduction. [The presently available edition] is the abbreviated Tantra, a miniature version of the [extensive] root *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Tantra*.}

[Resolution of Objections]

[Four subtopics are (1) resolution of the objection that the abbreviated root *Hevajra Tantra* is separate from and not a derivative or summarization of the

extensive root *Hevajra Tantra*, (2) resolution of the objection that the abbreviated root *Hevajra Tantra* is a derivative of the first two parts of the extensive root *Hevajra Tantra*, (3) resolution of the objection that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* or some other Tantra is the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*, (4) resolution of the objection that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* is part 32 of the extensive root *Hevajra Tantra*.]

[Resolution of the objection that the abbreviated root *Hevajra Tantra* is separate from and not a derivative or summarization of the extensive root *Hevajra Tantra*]

[Objection:] Is this abbreviated root Tantra derived from the extensive [*Thirty-Two Part*] *Tantra* or is it a separate Tantra? For some, such as the noble Pamting [brothers], it is a separate Tantra, asserting that the vast *Thirty-Two Part Tantra* was followed by a *Twelve-Part* edition, that followed by a *Nine-Part* edition, with this short *Two-Part* edition [being the currently available one].

[Reply:] That is not correct, as it would contradict the [above *Hevajra Tantra* colophon] quotation [here given in full]:

This [concludes] the Illusion Part [II] of the *Great King of Tantras*, in the essential *Two-Part* [*Tantra*], which is derived from the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra*; {this now completes the *Great King of Tantras*, the *Hevajra Dakini Web Ecstasy Union Tantra*.}⁶⁴⁷

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 59, line 4: [Objection:] Narotapa⁶⁴⁸ believed that the root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* had five dissimilar forms, ranging from the extensive *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* to the abbreviated *Two-Part Tantra*. Pamting and others believed that there were four root [*Hevajra*] *Tantras*: the extensive *Thirty-Two Part Tantra*, followed by a *Twelve-Part*, a *Nine-Part*, and the *Two-Part*. Some, such as the later Buton, believed that there were three root [*Hevajra*] *Tantras*: the extensive *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*, the subsequent *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*, and the abbreviated *Two-Part Tantra*.

[Reply:] In accord with the tradition of the Great Yogi [Virupa], there are [only] two [editions]: the extensive and abbreviated root [*Hevajra*] *Tantras*. The extensive is believed to have thirty-two parts, thirty thousand chapters, and five hundred thousand verses, as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, IV, 9-10 [above].

According to the *Vajra Panjara Ornament* [Commentary by Drakpa Gyaltsen]:

The extensive *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* is incomplete by 1800 [verses]. By the addition of both the *Two-Part*, with 777 verses, and the *Vajra Panjara* [with 1025 verses], the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* is made complete.

By counting the number of verses, the *Two-Part Tantra* and the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* are shown to be included in the extensive [*Five Hundred Thousand Verses*] Tantra. Yet the assertion of the venerable Sonam Tsemo is that the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* are complete in the extensive *Thirty-Part Tantra*. This is considered equivalent to what is actually revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*. Buton stated that the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* exists in the quaking Chadana continent. The Master Shantipa stated that [sufficient] spiritual power was not evident at present [for the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* to appear in our world].

[Objection:] The abbreviated Tantra is this *Two-Part Tantra*, yet is it a separate or a derivative Tantra [with respect to the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*]?

[Reply:] Some believe that it is a separate Tantra, but that is not correct. In reference to the colophon [at the end of part 2] of the *Two-Part Tantra*:

This [concludes] the Illusion Part [II] of the *Great King of Tantras* . . . derived from the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra* . . .

and Vajragarbha's [*Hevajra Tantra*] *Commentary* I, 4 statement, it is proven to be a derivative Tantra:

This abbreviated Tantra has been well extracted

From the great Tantra, the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*;

Here in seven hundred and fifty verses,

The many vajra words are explained. [649](#)

[Objection:] Some say that [the *Two-Part Tantra*] is a derivative of the first two parts of the extensive [*Five Hundred Thousand Verses*] Tantra.

[Reply:] This is not correct, as it is contradicted by the two passages from the *Hevajra Tantra* I, xi, 12 and II, i, 5 [see below].

Our own position is that the *Two-Part Tantra* is a derivative Tantra and is the abbreviated Tantra, since it is a derivative of parts 31 and 32 of the extensive Tantra, and since it is a summarization of the extensive Tantra with nothing important left out. This is supported by the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 9-10 [as above].}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 103, line 3: [Objection:] The Nepalese Panting brothers⁶⁵⁰ asserted that the *Two-Part Tantra* is a stand-alone Tantra as it is neither a derivative from another Tantra, nor a summarization of the meaning of another Tantra.

[Reply:] That is not correct. This [*Two-Part Tantra*] is an abbreviated Tantra in that it is a summarization of everything profound and essential expressed in the first thirty parts of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*. It is also a derivative Tantra as it is an extract from the last two parts of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*. This is indicated in the *Hevajra Tantra* colophon [above], as well as in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 10 [above], Vajragarbha's [*Hevajra Tantra*] *Commentary* I, 4 [above], and the *Pure [Hevajra Tantra] Commentary* [by Drakpa Gyaltsen]:

Vajradhara, the Lama of [all] sentient beings,
Divided [the canon] into three classes (1) Sutras,
(2) [Lower Tantras of] Ritual, Conduct, and Yoga,
And (3) Highest Yoga Tantras.

The content of the *Two-Part Tantra* is the essence
Of the very profound master *Hevajra* in *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*.
Its seven hundred and fifty verses of vajra words
Summarize what was revealed [in the extensive edition];
I pay honor by touching my head to its feet.}

[Resolution of the objection that the abbreviated root [*Hevajra*] Tantra is a derivative of the first two parts of the extensive root [*Hevajra*] Tantra]

[Objection:] Further, some such as Narotapa⁶⁵¹ assert that this [Two-Part] *Tantra* is extracted from parts 1 and 2 of the extensive [Thirty-Two Part] *Tantra*, as it is revealed in the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra* IV, 1:

Enlightenment of Vajragarbha
Is Part One of the King [of Tantras],
Illusion is Part Two...

Since these parts have the same name as [the two parts of] this [abbreviated *Two-Part Hevajra*] *Tantra*, the “Enlightenment of Vajragarbha Part One of the King” and the “Illusion Part,” and since the introduction occurs at the beginning of [both] *Tantras*, [the connection is justified].

[Reply:] That is not correct, as it is revealed here [in the *Hevajra Tantra*] I, xi, 12 and II, i, 5:

Previously in Part Twelve
This was explained extensively and is now summarized.

In accordance with the ritual in the preceding *Tantra*,
Present offerings and water for washing the feet, same as before... [652](#)

The explanation of these words in the quotations [shows] the invalidity [of Narotapa’s assertion].⁶⁵³

[Further,] just having the same terminology is an insufficient reason [for equating the parts]. [For example,] in part 1 of this [abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*], chapters 4 and 12 are both entitled the “Chapter on Empowerment,” but they are not the same.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in *Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam*, volume 21, page 72, line 6: [Objection:] Someone has said:

Since I myself have not seen the [first] two [parts] of the extensive root [*Hevajra Tantra*], I do not know if [the contention that the abbreviated *Two-Part Tantra* is an extract of parts 1 and 2

of the extensive root *Thirty-Two Part Hevajra Tantra*] is correct, but when [the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*] says “previously in Part Twelve...”, counting upward [or backward] there are ten chapters above [or before] chapter 11, and counting downward the chapter 1 would be the tenth. If chapter 1 is counted as the eleventh and chapter 2 is counted as the twelfth, then the explanation of the Kurukulle mantra in chapter 2 is summarized briefly in chapter 11 [of the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*].⁶⁵⁴

[Reply:] That manner of numbering is not very intelligent. In the *Hevajra Tantra* I, ii, 19:

The mantra of Kurukulle is OM KURUKULLE HRIH SVAHA.

is given but [the practice is] not explained. Since the explanation is given in just three and a half verses in I, xi, 12-15, that [interpretation] is contradicted by “this was explained extensively and is now summarized.” The assumption has also been made that there is no distinction between [the terms] chapter and part. The translated [Sanskrit] word for chapter is *parichedha* and the translated [Sanskrit] word for part is *kalpa* [and the word *kalpa* is what appears in the Sanskrit text].⁶⁵⁵ Further, since neither of us has seen the extensive root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*, clarification of this canonical source must come from Vajragarbha’s *Commentary*.

The words [of the above quoted contention] may sound good, but here they just don’t add up. However, they must add up when it comes to the [explanatory] *Sambhuti* [*Samputa*] *Tantra*. Given that an extensive introduction occurs in the *Samti* [abbreviation for *Samputa*], if an extensive introduction was not revealed in [part 1 of] the extensive root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*, it would be incorrect for [an extensive introduction] to occur in the explanatory [*Samputa*] *Tantra*.⁶⁵⁶

Just because two sections have the same name does not mean that they are the same. [For example,] in [part 1 of the abbreviated] *Hevajra Tantra*, both chapters 4 and 10 are titled “Empowerment,” yet in the same way [as parts 1 and 2], these two [chapters] are not the same. Therefore, this [*Two-Part Tantra*] has been lifted from the last two parts of the thirty-two parts of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*. As revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 9-10:

Explained in thirty parts,
{Numbering thirty thousand [chapters],

Ema! This great ocean of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*
Was taught by Vajradahara
As the extensive [root] Tantra}
For dakas and dakinis.

{The heart of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra*,}
Vajradaka revealed
In a complete summarization, the pure essence,
That is the definitive [*Two-Part Hevajra*] Tantra.

According to this quotation, after the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* was revealed up through thirty parts, then Vajragarbha and the other dakas, in order to attract Vajranairatmya and the other dakinis, summarized in two parts the content of the previous thirty parts, “the pure essence” as revealed by the Vajradaka [who is] Hevajra. “That is the definitive [*Two-Part Hevajra*] Tantra.”

The twenty-seven verses at the end [of the *Two-Part Tantra*],⁶⁵⁷ that explain a pleasing summary and describe materials to be employed, was not lifted [from the last two parts of the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra*]. Therefore, what became the [abbreviated] root [*Two-Part*] Tantra was lifted from the last two parts of the extensive root [*Thirty-Two Part*] Tantra, [with the exception of the final twenty-seven verses that were added on]. What became the abbreviated [*Two-Part*] Tantra was a summarization of the content of the preceding thirty parts.

[Objection:] That is not correct because words of introduction occur at the beginning of this [abbreviated root *Two-Part Tantra*].⁶⁵⁸

[Reply:] When this abbreviated [*Two-Part*] Tantra was revealed by our Teacher [Buddha Shakyamuni], it was not repeated again for another retinue circle [audience]. This [present introduction] is an abbreviation of that abbreviated buddha speech, revealed as the introduction at that time.⁶⁵⁹ As stated in *Gathering the Vajra Words Commentary on Difficult Points*:⁶⁶⁰

Here when the Bhagavan nirmanakaya remained in Jambuling for as long as eighty years, he did not reveal the precious Tantras over and over again. They were revealed one time only. Accordingly, this time [referred to in the introduction] is the only time that is more special than any other.

[Objection:] The translator Shrivajra has said that in the way that the Ngokpas and previous venerable ones responded to this contradiction, [they understood] that the delineation was just on one occasion and not [repeated] again. Even the venerable Drokmi who was very learned in the content of the Tantra [made the same assertion], yet I would reply that knowledge of painting cannot be known just from words. When it is explained in that way, the reference to the Kurukulle revelation in part 12 contradicts the revelation in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*:

The Ninth [Part] on Kurukulle
Is in thirty thousand verses.

That would depend on the source of the translation [*Hevajra Tantra* I, xi, 12]:

Previously in Part Twelve,
This was explained extensively and is now summarized.

If [this quotation] is [also] in part 31, and if counting upward [or backward], then two sets [or series] of twelve [parts each] previous would get back to part 9 [if counting part 30 as one, then part 20 as one].

[Reply:] The mandala and sadhana of Kurukulle was previously revealed in part 9 [of the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra*], taught in thirty thousand verses. Part 12, the part on siddhis, revealed the miscellaneous actions such as pacifying, increasing, controlling, and terrifying, based on the [practice of] Kurukulle [in part 9]. In this [*Two-Part Tantra*] chapter 11, what is taught is just a summarization of the act of controlling. This has been said by Putrang Salway Nyingpo and others. You cannot make a judgment just on words alone. If you take twelve, and then twenty and twelve, that contradicts the statement “the previous twelve.”

Yet between the Ngokpas, Shrivajra, and others, someone said that [the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*] is not incomplete without the twenty-seven verses at the end. In three [places] in the beginning, middle and end of the Tantra [there is a letter A_H]: E_{VAM} [at the beginning], A_{KARO} [in the middle], and “the shape of A_H in the anthers of a flower” [at the end].⁶⁶¹ Stamping with the seal of these three letters A_H has the nature of signifying the three gates to liberation. For example,

in the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri)*, the stamping with the seal of the three A_H letters at the beginning, middle and end⁶⁶² [indicates] completeness [of the *Tantra*] from start to finish.}

Accordingly, this [*Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*] is not the first two [parts of the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra*], but the last two. Since it summarizes the meaning of the preceding *Tantra*, it is the summary *Tantra* and also the derivative *Tantra*. How is this known? As the [*Hevajra Tantra* colophon] revealed:

. . . derived from the *Thirty-Two Part [Tantra]* . . .

and as the explanatory *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 9a revealed:

Explained in thirty parts...

continuing [verses 9-10] after giving it the name of the *Thirty-Part [Tantra]*:

. . . for dakas and dakinis.

The heart of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra*,
{Vajradaka revealed}
In a complete summarization, the pure essence,
That is the definitive [*Two-Part*] *Tantra*.

These quotations [prove that] this [*Two-Part Tantra*] is parts 31 and 32. The *Vajra Panjara Tantra* demonstrates that the *Two-Part Tantra* is both mistakenly [thought] to be the first [two] parts of the extensive [*Thirty-Two Part*] *Tantra*, and makes it known that it is the last [two] parts. Further, starting from the beginning, the entire content of the extensive [*Thirty-Two Part*] *Tantra* is summarized without anything [of importance] left out, as in *Vajra Panjara Tantra* I, 1:

The inanimate sky, bright and clear... [663](#)

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 16, line 5: The “sky” is the lotus, which is a white tetrahedron, the mudra of the origin of the dharma of the four vidyas, with a point downwards and a broad side facing upward, marked with double vajras and lotuses. “Inanimate” refers to the earth mandala, a yellow cube that originates from the syllable L_{AM}, and is marked with vajras in the corners. “Bright” refers to the water mandala, a white orb marked with vases, which originates from the syllable V_{AM}.}

Then at the end, the *Two-Part Tantra* is summarized in *Vajra Panjara Tantra* XV, 6-7:

{I, in your presence
As you reside in the consort’s dharma,
Have heard at one time
The entire extensive [*Thirty-Part Tantra*] edition.}

I have also heard these words [in the *Two-Part Tantra*],
In another period of this one time
In the presence of the Bhagavan
Dallying [in sexual union] with the consort’s dharma,
The gazes, attraction, great symbols,
Power to bring benefits, such as [making] rain,
Generated [summarized] from that [extensive] path. [664](#)

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 50, line 2: These words outline the body of the root Tantra. Accomplishment of the four categories of actions, such as downfalling, is done through “gazes.” “Attraction” is in order to acquire yoginis as assistants. “Great symbols” are physical and verbal in order to recognize those who have taken the vows. Various actions are grouped together as “rain” making, etc., and magic shows that have the “power to bring benefits” to those with little faith. Summarization of the complete content of the Tantra includes rigidifying the bodies of the dangerous, expelling them to other places, rigidifying armies, performing black magic, visualizing the stacked geometrical shapes of the natural elements, visualizing the bodies of yoginis as the support

for proximate cause [practices], the outer and inner locations, the five manifest enlightenments as the source for action, empowerments, nonconceptual gnosis, conceptual samadhi, and generation processes.}

This latter refers to the summarization in two parts. Therefore, the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* reveals the purpose in summarizing the extensive [*Thirty-Part*] *Tantra* and makes known that [the summarization] is the subsequent [and final] *Two-Part Tantra*.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 108, line 2: [Objection:] Further, someone has said that the abbreviated root Tantra is the first two parts of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*, as it is stated in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 1 and 8:

Enlightenment of Vajragarbha
Is Part One of the King [of Tantras],
Illusion is Part Two,
Vajra Dance is Part Three...

. . . Dance of Ishvara is Part Thirty,
There is no Part Thirty-One.

The revelation is that the Enlightenment of Vajragarbha Part and the Illusion Part are the first two parts of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*. Regarding the last three parts, the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* IV, 9 revealed:

Explained in thirty parts...
. . . For dakas and dakinis.

and the *Commentary on the Mahamudra Tilaka* explained:

Part 30 is Vajrapani, part 31 is Daka, and part 32 is Dakini.

[Reply:] There is no error. In the beginning of the canonical *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, [the contention that the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*] is the first two parts [of the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra*] is strengthened by the revelation that the first two parts and the last two parts of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* have the same name. Yet, given that the supplement to the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* and the *Commentary on the Mahamudra Tilaka* say that “it is not that there are no names at all,” but that names can be attributed to one or another such that it is not possible to prove that the name of the last two parts is not the Enlightenment of Vajragarbhā, etc. This is explained in the same way as otherwise many names were revealed for the different Tantras of Vajrapāni. Think!}

[Resolution of the objection that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* or some other Tantra is the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*]

[Objection:] Some say that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* is the abbreviated Tantra.

[Reply:] This is not so, as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* itself, IV, 11:

The *Hevajra* [Maha] Yoga Tantra
Is the first [part] explained by the Conqueror;
Subsequently, [the second part] is the Yogini Tantra
That is for the purpose of attracting [and retaining] women.

This quotation reveals that the *Two-Part Tantra* is the abbreviated Tantra. The first [part] was revealed for the benefit of male trainees; the subsequent [second part] was revealed for the benefit of female trainees. Since this feature does not appear in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, but does appear in the *Two-Part Tantra*, then the *Two-Part Tantra* occurred subsequent to the extensive [*Thirty-Part*] *Tantra* and is the Tantra that summarizes the content.

[Objection:] Yet there are some who say that neither the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* nor the *Two-Part Tantra* is the abbreviated Tantra, that there is another [abbreviated Tantra].

[Reply:] Since there is no evidence for this [other Tantra], these are as false words. Accordingly, [the conclusion is that] this [*Two-Part Tantra*] is the abbreviated Tantra. The elimination of the mistake of [confusing] similar titles, and the uncertainty in the reasoning regarding the presence of the introductory section, have been explained above.

[Resolution of the objection that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* is part 32 of the extensive root *Hevajra Tantra*]

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 109, line 2: [Objection:] Some believe that there are no more than thirty parts to the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* and some believe that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* is the thirty-second part.

[Reply:] That is not correct. The former [contention] is contradicted by the statement in Vajragarbha's *Commentary (on the Hevajra Tantra)*:

[Extracted from] the 32 great parts of the root *Hevajra Tantra* in *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* is a short Tantra that in length is two parts that are identified with [the titles] Complete Enlightenment and Web of Illusion, separated into 22 distinct chapters, and 750 verses. This is the abbreviated Tantra perfectly taught by the Bhagavan Vajrasattva.⁶⁶⁵

The latter [contention] is contradicted by the revelation in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*:

From the extensive *Hevajra* in *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*
This complete essence has been extracted.

since this explains that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* was extracted after the complete *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* was revealed.}

Uncommon and Common Explanatory Tantras [and Continuation Tantras]

Uncommon Explanatory Vajra Panjara Tantra

The uncommon explanatory Tantra of the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* is the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy)*.⁶⁶⁶ [It is uncommon] since it elucidates only the *Five Hundred Thousand Verse* and *Two-Part Tantras*.

With respect to the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, the scholar [Devakula-]Mahamati⁶⁶⁷ and others said that it is the abbreviated [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*. Some [other] scholars assert that this and the *Two-Part Tantra* are interwoven [or interchangeable as explanatory Tantras]. There is no contradiction in these [positions]. The *Two-Part Tantra* summarizes the profound meaning of [methods for gaining] direct

knowledge in the extensive [*Five Hundred Thousand Verses*] *Tantra*. Since the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* summarizes all parts of both words and meanings in the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*, there is no contradiction in [both being] reciprocal abbreviated Tantras, even though [the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*] does not summarize [the methods for gaining] direct knowledge. Therefore, these two *Tantras* are interwoven as explanatory Tantras, since one is elucidated by the other.⁶⁶⁸

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 77, line 1: In the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, the speaker is Hevajra and the dharma audience is the deities arranged in the *Vajra Panjara* mandala of the consolidated [five buddha] families. Since here the explanation of the two process yogas [generation and completion] is only *Hevajra* [based], this is an uncommon explanatory Tantra of the *Hevajra*. In both India and Tibet, there is no one who does not accept that this is an explanatory Tantra of the *Hevajra*.}

Common Explanatory Samputa Tantra

The common [explanatory Tantra] is the *Samputa (Perfect Union)*,⁶⁶⁹ since it elucidates many cycles of Tantras. King Indrabhuti believed that it was the explanatory Tantra for 3,600,000 Tantra cycles; but at the present time, there are [only] sixteen or seventeen [Tantra cycles] that are actually benefited.

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 76, line 2: In King Indrabhuti's *Commentary on the Sambhuti*, it is said to be the explanatory Tantra for 3,600,000 Tantras. In Buton's *Commentary [on the Sambhuti]*, it is said to be applicable to thirty-two Tantras. The venerable Sonam Tsemo said that it was actually beneficial for only sixteen or seventeen Tantras. Of these, [in addition to the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*], it is most importantly an explanatory Tantra for the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets)*, *Vajra Chaturpita (Four Vajra Thrones)*, *Chakrasamvara (Center of Supreme Ecstasy)*, and [four others] ending in *Guhya*,⁶⁷⁰ because it clarifies their uncommon philosophical systems.}

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 61, line 5: The seventeen Tantras that are augmented [by the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*] consist of five Male

[Unsurpassed] Tantras, ten Female [Unsurpassed] Tantras, and two Yoga Tantras.

The first five are:

- (1) *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets)*,⁶⁷¹
- (2) *Vajramala (Vajra Rosary)*,⁶⁷²
- (3) *Chaturdevi Paripriccha (Complete Questions of the Four Goddesses)*,⁶⁷³
- (4) *Vajrabhairava (Fearful Vajra) Kalpa*,⁶⁷⁴ and
- (5) *Yamari Krishna (Black Enemy Yamari)*.⁶⁷⁵

The ten Female [Unsurpassed Yoga] Tantras are:

- (1) *Two-Part Hevajra (Joyous Vajra)*,
- (2) *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy)*,⁶⁷⁶
- (3) *Mahamudra Tilaka (Essence of Mahamudra)*,⁶⁷⁷
- (4) *root Chakrasamvara (Center of Supreme Ecstasy)*,⁶⁷⁸
- (5) *Abhidhana (Clearly Elucidated)*,⁶⁷⁹
- (6) *Vajradaka*,⁶⁸⁰
- (7) *Heruka Bhyudaya (Manifestation of the Blood Drinker)*,⁶⁸¹
- (8) *Yogini Samchara (Complete Activity of the Yoginis)*,⁶⁸²
- (9) *Mayajala (Web of Illusion)*,⁶⁸³ and
- (10) *Vajra Chaturpita (Four Vajra Thrones)*.⁶⁸⁴

The two Yoga Tantras are:

- (1) *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle)*⁶⁸⁵ and
- (2) *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation of All Tathagatas)*.⁶⁸⁶

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 50, line 6: There are presently seventeen Tantras that are actually benefited by the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*, as [listed] in Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup's *The Ornament that Clarifies the Three Methods*.⁶⁸⁷

Two-Part (Hevajra), Vajra Panjara, Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra,⁶⁸⁸ *Mayajala*,

Chaturpita, Mantra Omsa,⁶⁸⁹

The four great *Tantras* of the *Samaja* cycle that do not include *Sandhi Vyakarana (Intent of the Canon)*.⁶⁹⁰

The five root and explanatory *Tantras* of the Secret End Yoga,⁶⁹¹

Tattvasamgraha and *Vajra Shekara*:

This summarizes the most important seventeen [Tantras] of profound meaning.

Many [other] *Tantras* teach an infinite number of miscellaneous actions [of mundane siddhis],

Such as the *Vajrabhairava Kalpa* and *Tara Ocean*.⁶⁹²

In all, seventy-two *Tantra* cycles are known,

But these [seventeen] are said to be elucidated by this [*Samputa*] *Tantra*.

The four great *Tantras* of the *Guhyasamaja* cycle are:

(1) root *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets)*,

(2) *Vajramala (Vajra Rosary)*,

(3) *Chaturdevi Paripriccha (Complete Questions of the Four Goddesses)*,

(4) *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Collection of All Vajra Gnosis)*.⁶⁹³

The five Secret End [Tantras] are:

(1) root *Chakrasamvara (Center of Supreme Ecstasy)*,

(2) *Abhidhana (Clearly Elucidated)*,

(3) *Heruka Bhyudaya (Manifestation of the Blood Drinker)*,

- (4) *Yogini Samchara (Complete Activity of the Yoginis)*, and
(5) *Vajradaka*.⁶⁹⁴

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltsen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 76, line 4: Certain ancient yogis claimed that the Vajradhatu [method] of [five] manifest enlightenments⁶⁹⁵ was taught in the *Samputi*. Rinpoche [Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo] said that [for the *Samputi Tantra*] to dispense with its own yoga system and adopt the [method] of [five] manifest enlightenments of other Unsurpassed Tantras is a mistake made by unlearned scholars. While it certainly is thought that it is incorrect to adopt the yoga [method] of [five] manifest enlightenments from [other] Unsurpassed Tantras, nevertheless, that makes it difficult [for the *Samputi*] to serve as an explanatory Tantra for Ritual Tantras such as *Vajrapani Bhuta Damara (Taming Demons)*⁶⁹⁶ and *Marichi (Radiant)*.⁶⁹⁷ Yet, the *Sambhuti* does serve as an explanatory Tantra for the *Tattvasamgraha* [a Yoga Tantra] as it is essential in order to establish and analyze it. In the path tradition of the great siddhas Padmavajra, Shantipa, and others, the *Sambhuti* was considered unnecessary as an explanatory Tantra; but in the special Lamdre (Path and Result) instructions in the tradition of the great siddha Virupa, the *Samputi* is a necessary explanatory Tantra following the revelation of the root *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra*.}

[Continuation Five Tilaka Tantras and Three Arali Tantras]

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 62, line 1: [Objection:] What about the five [Tantras] of the *Tilaka* cycle, and the three [Tantras] of the *Arali* cycle that are also included with the root and explanatory *Hevajra* [cycle]?

[Reply:] When distinguishing root and explanatory Tantras in the *Hevajra* [cycle], these [eight] are not included among them. But when distinguishing between the master root and continuation Tantras, they are included within the continuation Tantras, as revealed in the *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra*:

When the *Hevajra Tantra* [cycle] is divided into seven,⁶⁹⁸ the five of the *Tilaka* cycle are called continuation Tantras.

The five *Tantras* of the *Tilaka* cycle are:

- (1) *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis)*,⁶⁹⁹

- (2) *Jnana Garbha (Heart of Gnosis)*,⁷⁰⁰
- (3) *Mahamudra Tilaka (Essence of the Great Seal)*,⁷⁰¹
- (4) *Tattva Pradipa (Lamp of the Absolute)*,⁷⁰² and
- (5) *Druppa Ngetan*⁷⁰³ (*Definitive Demonstration of Accomplishment*).⁷⁰⁴

The three *Tantras* of the *Arali* cycle are also included in the *Hevajra* continuation *Tantras*:

- (1) *Anavila (Stainless) Arali*⁷⁰⁵ which clarifies the Hevajra body mandala,
- (2) *Rigi Arali*⁷⁰⁶ which clarifies the Hevajra kaya yoga, and
- (3) *Vajra Arali*⁷⁰⁷ which is accepted as strengthening [or complementing] the other two.}

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 79, line 1: Later Sakyapas metaphorically refer to the three greater and the three lesser [*Tantras*]. The three greater are those above.⁷⁰⁸ The three lesser are the three in the *Arali* cycle: the *Vajra Arali*, *Rigs-kyi Arali*, and *Anavila [Arali]*. The venerable Gayadhara stated that these three were heard by a single yogini in Singala who is in the lineage coming down from the Powerful Great Siddha Yogi [Virupa]. These three are set within [or are extracts from] the [extensive *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*] *Hevajra Tantra*. [The first two] are set within since the *Anavila* explains the Hevajra body mandala, and the *Rigs-kyi Arali* explains the Hevajra kaya and the Trailokya Akshobhya mantra. The *Vajra Arali* is similarly set within as it complements and strengthens the other two. Other [components of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra Tantra*] are not known to have appeared.

Further, the continuation *Tantras* of the [extensive root *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*] *Hevajra Tantra* are called the five of the *Tilaka* cycle: *Mahamudra Tilaka (Essence of the Great Seal)*, *Jnana Garbha (Heart of Gnosis)*, *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis)*, *Tattva Pradipa (Lamp of the Absolute)*, and the *Druppa Ngetan Tiklay (Essence of the Definitive Demonstration of Accomplishment)*.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 629, line 4: The Master Prajnaguhya arrived in Tibet carrying the five *Tilaka* cycle [Tantras]. [He] evidently [believed] these to be explanatory Tantras [rather than continuation Tantras] of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* as follows. The *Mahamudra Tilaka* is an explanatory Tantra of the [extensive] root Tantra. The *Jnana Tilaka* is an explanatory Tantra of the latter [*Mahamudra Tilaka*]. The *Tattva Pradipa* and the *Jnana Garbha* summarize the profound essence of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*. As to whether or not the *Druppa Ngetan Tiklay*²⁰⁹ was ever translated into Tibetan, a copy may have existed before but none exists now.}

Resolution of Objections

{Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 79, line 5: [Objection:] The Rinpoche [Buton] tradition believes that these Tantras are extensions of the root *Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra*: the *Mahamudra Tilaka Tantra* is a continuation, the *Jnana Tilaka Tantra* is a continuation of the continuation, *Jnana Garbha Tantra* is the essence Tantra, the *Tattva Pradipa* is the absolute Tantra, and the *Druppa Ngetan Tiklay Tantra* is the result Tantra.

A certain later Sakya geshe²¹⁰ has said that if these [*Tilaka Tantras*] are made part of the *Hevajra Tantra* [cycle] that is not good, and if they are not so made [a part], that is not good either. If they are not made, then these are explanations of the many metaphors used in the Hevajra generation and completion [processes]. If they are so made, then it appears difficult [to determine] which is a root Tantra and which an explanatory Tantra, where none are either extensive or abbreviated root Tantras, and where none are either common or uncommon explanatory Tantras.

[Reply:] These [positions] appear to have involved very little thought. The extensive root [*Five Hundred Thousand Verses*] *Tantra* was revealed by the Original Buddha; the five of the *Tilaka* cycle were revealed subsequent to that [extensive] root *Tantra*. That was the precept of Indrabhuti and others. These [*Tilaka Tantras*] were manifested as continuations of the extensive root *Tantra*, as revealed in the *Mahamudra Tilaka Tantra* I, 2:

The Ocean of Gnosis, the [*Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*]⁷¹¹*Hevajra*
Is the master root *Tantra*.
I request you to explain whatever [it contains],
Because it is the most important

Of the [other] six⁷¹² interconnected Yogini canonical sources.⁷¹³

Accordingly, extracted [or derived] from the [master root] *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses* edition is the [extensive root] *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* edition. The *Mahamudra Tilaka* is a continuation of the latter, the *Jnana Garbha* is a continuation of the continuation, the *Jnana Tilaka* is an uncommon explanatory Tantra, the *Druppa Ngetan Tiklay* is an essence Tantra; and after having completed the practices of these *Tantras*, the method for obtaining the result of the three kayas is explained in the *Tattva Pradipa*, as revealed in the *Jnana Tilaka Tantra XX*, 1-5:

Now listen, and I will explain
How these *Tantras* sequentially came into existence:
The most splendid *Tantra* of this great family
Is called the (1) *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*.
That is the master root *Tantra*,
The very best of the eight kayas.⁷¹⁴
The explanation of that is called
The (2) *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra*.
The splendid (3) *Mahamudra Tilaka*
Is recognized as a continuation of the latter.
The *Tantra* known as the (4) *Jnana Garbha*
Is a continuation of the continuation.
The delightful words of the (5) *Jnana Tilaka*
Are a great secret that is an explanatory Tantra.
The beautiful face of the (6) *Druppa Ngetan Tiklay*
Is the essence.
The title of the (7) *Tattva Pradipa*
Identifies it as a result Tantra.
Here I have explained the seven.⁷¹⁵}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 105, line 6: [Objection:]
Are there not exactly just four *Hevajra Tantras*?

[Reply:] If the *Hevajra Tantra* was divided into two root and two explanatory

Tantras, then there would be exactly just four. [However,] in general that is not definitive. When a division is made into a master root Tantra and continuation Tantras, then the former is the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra*, and the latter are the five in the *Tilaka* cycle and the three in the *Arali* cycle. There are none of these [latter eight] that can be [identified as] root or explanatory [in order to fulfill a fourfold] division into root and explanatory [Tantras].

[Objection:] Is there a reason that these are all [considered to be part of the cycle of] *Hevajra Tantras*?

[Reply:] There is a reason, as stated in the *Jnana Tilaka Tantra*:

When the *Hevajra Tantra* [cycle] is divided into seven, the five of the *Tilaka* cycle are called continuation Tantras. [In addition,] since the *Anavila (Stainless) Arali* clearly describes the Hevajra body mandala, and the *Rigs-kyi Arali* clearly explains the yoga of [generating] the Hevajra body, these can also be established as *Hevajra* continuation Tantras. The *Vajra Arali* can further be established as a *Hevajra* continuation Tantra through implication of the other two.}

Manner of Entrance [into the Practice]

For the root *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra*, the manner of entrance [to the path] is progressive [for an individual trainee].

For the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*, the manner of entrance is the [classic] gradual [stages of the path] development within the continuum of an individual [mindstream].

For the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*, there is no [established method of] progression, entrance [to the path] is in response to a disturbance [or stimulus].

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 109, line 6: The [abbreviated] root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* first instructs on result continuity, followed by method continuity, then source continuity.⁷¹⁶ After the individual in training has developed concepts about the result, they will then gradually enter the path on account of what they have learned. This is the same in essence as the *Abhisamaya Lamkara (Ornament of Clear Realization)*⁷¹⁷ which begins with instruction on omniscience.

The *Samputa Tantra* first instructs on source continuity, then method

continuity followed by result continuity. This is the sequential development of clear realization in the individual mindstream continuum, and also is the sequence of the meaning of cause and effect.

The *Vajra Panjara Tantra* instructs in no definitive sequence, as it has an arbitrary order in consequence of starting and stopping on one's own whim or rationalization. [Therefore,] the three root and explanatory [*Tantras*] follow three [distinct] sequences: (1) sequential as an individual [trainee] would enter, (2) arbitrary [sequence], and (3) a logical progression of sequential development.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 51, line 5: In the root [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*, the manner of entrance is what would be sequential for an individual mindstream. Similar to a merchant who engages [in commerce] after envisioning trading profits, first the result to be attained is explained, followed by the method continuity, then the maturing empowerment is taught as the entrance to the path.

The *Samputa Tantra* follows a sequential progression of development [source, method, and result] in a [typical or average] individual mindstream. Part 1, chapter 2 of the [*Samputa*] *Tantra* starts [with source continuity], since [buddha nature is] naturally present as the source for the complete accomplishment of all siddhis for all sentient beings. Then from part 2 on, [the *Samputa Tantra*] teaches method continuity, with demonstration of the most important methods for supreme mahamudra siddhi, and methods for average and lesser siddhis. Then the result of the methods is explained in the upper section of the part 1, chapter 3, the lower section of the main part of part 1, and part 10, chapters 2 and 3.

The *Vajra Panjara Tantra* has no set sequence [of development], having an arbitrary order starting and stopping on own's own whim or rationalization.}

Abbreviated and Expanded Sections

The root *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* has three, the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra* has two, and the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra* has five.

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 52, line 3: The root *Hevajra Tantra* consists of three abbreviated and expanded sections: (1) an excellent [abbreviated] introduction that constitutes an outline of the body of the *Tantra*, and [two expanded sections], (2) part 1 that explains how to accomplish the stages of direct knowledge, and (3) part 2 that clarifies [part 1].

The *Vajra Panjara Tantra* has two sections: (1) the [abbreviated] introduction in chapter 1 that summarizes the content of the *Tantra*, and (2) chapters 2 through 15 that give the expanded explanation.

The *Samputa Tantra* has five abbreviated and expanded sections: (1) the [abbreviated] forty vajra syllables, beginning with E V_{AM} M_A Y_A,⁷¹⁸ that summarize the entire content of the *Tantra* through the method of interpretation of the six instructions,⁷¹⁹ (2) the section from the phrase “by the Bhagavan...” through to “listen as I will explain...”⁷²⁰ that is an expanded explanation of the title and a small part of the meaning of the introduction summarizing all tantra as the three continuities, (3) [the rest of] part 1 that expands a little further, (4) part 2 through part 10 that expands with a detailed explanation, and (5) a *Continuation* [or supplement] that explains the meaning of each [key] term.}

Number of Verses

The root *Hevajra Tantra* has 750 verses, the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* has 1,025 verses, and the *Samputa Tantra* has 2,803 verses.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 62, line 6: The root Tantra has 777 verses, but because 27 verses at the end are not included, the actual number is 750.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 111, line 3: [Objection:] Is the abbreviated root Tantra in its Tibetan edition the complete last two Parts of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Tantra*? King Chandrabhadra asserted that [the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*] was complete [in 750 verses] because it demonstrated the full meaning of the three gates to complete liberation as symbolized by the three letters A_H [at the beginning, middle, and end],⁷²¹ just as in the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri) Tantra*.⁷²²

[Reply:] According to our own lama tradition, [the concluding] 27 verses were set aside and not translated because they were not a necessary part for future trainees as [they concern the development of common siddhis through] miscellaneous actions requiring material goods.⁷²³ If they had been translated, they would have made a delightful summary at the end of part 2, chapter 12. If complete, that would make 777 verses total, but here [in the edition currently in use] there are no more than 750 verses. According to the *Pure Commentary* [by Drakpa Gyaltsen], the present *Two-Part* edition has 750 verses, but if complete,

would have 777 verses.}

Enumeration of the Tantras

[The two subtopics are (1) number of titles and verses and (2) number of dharmas.]

Number of Titles and Verses

What is the number of Tantras in each of the four classes? According to the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Collection of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*:

Great [Unsurpassed] Yoga Tantra, has twelve thousand titles, that when subdivided become limitless.

Dual [Yoga] Tantra has six thousand [titles];

Conduct Tantra has eight thousand [titles];

Ritual Tantra has four thousand [titles];

Kalpa Tantra has four thousand [titles].

These total thirty-four thousand [titles].[724](#)

This enumeration is revealed for the five classes of Tantra; the enumeration of the Yogini Tantras is not given [separately].

According to the *Samvarodaya (Union Derived Great Ecstasy) Tantra XXII*, 2-3:

The number in [Great] Yoga Tantras

Is definitely sixty million;

Likewise, the number in Yogini Tantras

Is one hundred sixty million.

[Sutras explaining] the transcendent method

Number five hundred one million,

Sutras other than Mahayana

Are said to be eight hundred million.[725](#)

Therefore, [since the numbers in the above quotation must refer to the number of verses,] the numbers [in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*] are not the numbers of verses, but the [numbers of] Tantras and Sutras with distinct titles. Otherwise, how could it be that Ritual Tantra would number four thousand

[verses], when the *Amoghapasha Sutra (Kalpa)*⁷²⁶ alone numbers eight thousand?⁷²⁷ Likewise, it is seen that there are a large number of verses in each [Tantra class], given that there are one hundred thousand in the [extensive] *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*, seven hundred thousand and five hundred thousand in [the two extensive editions of] the *Hevajra Tantra*, eighteen thousand in the [extensive] *Sarva Buddha Samayoga Tantra*,⁷²⁸ etc. Accordingly, the number [of verses] in all of the Tantra classes is uncountable.

Number of Dharmas

As revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra XIII*, 4-5:

Dakini Ecstasy, Ocean of Ecstasy, Space
Great Pleasure, Power of Food, Secret Enjoyment,
Great Ecstatic Charm, and Golden Rain:
These are the eight Vajradaka Tantras that bring benefit.
Hevajra Mandala of All Buddhas,
Secret Treasury, Source of Vajra Nectar,
Union of Chakras, Canopy, and Source:
These are known as the six cycles of Yogini Tantra.⁷²⁹

Among these fourteen *Tantra* cycles, only six can be recognized as Yogini Tantras, as all fourteen can not be viewed as Yogini Tantras. For example, according to the root *Chakrasamvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra XXVII*:

What is proclaimed in the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*,
{Is also proclaimed in the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*,}
What is proclaimed in the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*;
Is also proclaimed in the *Paramadya Tantra*,⁷³⁰
And proclaimed in the *Vajrabhairava Tantra*.
What is there accomplished through mantra recitation and fire offerings,
Is here accomplished through meditation alone.⁷³¹

Therefore, that these [four] Tantras [excluding the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*] specifically cannot be viewed [as Yogini Tantras] is demonstrated as well for all other Tantras that make mantra recitation and fire offering the principal practices.

{Yeshe Gyaltzen, page 501, line 4: For the passage in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*, “*Dakini Ecstasy . . .*,” a revised translation is given in the *Vajra Panjara Ornament Commentary*.⁷³²

Delightful Dakini, Ocean of Ecstasy,

Space, Golden Rain,

Great Pleasure, Ghasmari,

Extreme Amusement, and Secret Charm:

These are the eight Tantras by which Vajradakas bring benefit (to others).

Hevajra Mandala of All Buddhas,

Secret Treasury, Source of Vajra Nectar,

Union of Chakras, Canopy, and Source:

These are famous as the six Yogini Tantras.

Among these eight *Tantras* through which dakas benefit others, the first four are root Tantras, and the latter four are explanatory Tantras:

(1) *Delightful Dakini (Dakini Ecstasy)* is the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*;⁷³³

(2) *Ocean of Ecstasy* is the *Dakaranva (Ocean of Dakas) Tantra*;⁷³⁴

(3) *Space* is the *Khasama (Equal to Space) Tantra*;⁷³⁵

(4) *Golden Rain* is the *Chatuhpita (Four Thrones) Tantra*;⁷³⁶

(5) *Great Pleasure* is the *Chandra Guhya Tilaka (Essence of the Secret Moon) Tantra*;⁷³⁷

(6) *Ghasmari (Power of Food)* is [the *Samputa Tantra*];

(7) *Extreme Amusement (Secret Enjoyment)*;⁷³⁸

(8) *Secret Charm (Great Ecstatic Charm)*.⁷³⁹

Among these six famous Yogini *Tantras*, the *Vajra Panjara* is an explanatory Tantra for the *Hevajra*, the *Heruka Bhyudaya* is an explanatory Tantra for the *Chakrasamvara*, and the *Source of Vajra Nectar* is an explanatory Tantra for the *Secret Treasury*:

- (1) *Hevajra Mandala of All Buddhas* is the *Hevajra Five Hundred Thousand Verses* that teaches the mandala of the five Conquerors;⁷⁴⁰
- (2) *Secret Treasury*;⁷⁴¹
- (3) *Source of Vajra Nectar* is the *Vajra Amrita Tantra*;⁷⁴²
- (4) *Union of Chakras* is the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*;⁷⁴³
- (5) *Canopy* is the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*;⁷⁴⁴
- (6) *Source* is the *Heruka Bhyudaya (Heruka Manifestation) Tantra*.⁷⁴⁵

All fourteen of these *Tantra* cycles are Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras, yet the first eight place slightly more emphasis on skillful means, and the latter six place slightly more emphasis on wisdom. }

In this way, if Tantras are divided into three, four, or five classes, then if each class is divided into six [buddha families and so on,] an uncountable number [of subclasses] is contained in each one. Since according to the shravakas with their smaller wishes, 84,000 dharmas were proclaimed, then it can be understood that there are an endless number of divisions in even the abbreviated Mahayana tradition.⁷⁴⁶

Chapter 7

Origin of Guhyamantra

*As many as were the deeds displayed by the perfect Buddha [Shakyamuni],
Shravakas believe that they were done independently [of other buddhas];
Shakyamitra who holds to the Yoga [Tantra] tradition,
Believed that deeds displayed after the ascetic practices
Were done independently, thereby erroneously [interpreting] faultless canonical sources.*

*Unmistaken lamas asserted the tradition that
The perfect Buddha [Shakyamuni had been such] for uncountable prior eons.*

The location [for attaining buddha] is [Akanishta] Ganavyuha.

*There are many transitory worlds such as Saha
Set within Kusumatala Garbha Alamkara Ksetra.*

*Likewise, there are many set within
Sambhogakaya realms such as Ocean [of Transitory Worlds].
The location where tathagatas with their bodhisattva retinues
Reside is Akanishta Ganavyuha.*

*Set within is all nirmanakaya realms,
Where deeds of nirmanakayas are displayed in each location
In accord with the beliefs of trainees.*

*Conquerors [buddhas] never deviate from dharmakaya,
For dharmakaya abides eternally as [emptiness of] universal space.*

*The [scope of] limitless enactment of [buddha] intent
Is indeed the endless transitory worlds to be conquered [spiritually liberated].
Sambhogakayas as described*

*Have retinues of tenth-level bodhisattvas,
Who for as many worlds and sentient beings needing [spiritual] maturation,*

*Have the ability to thoroughly generate [visionary] appearances without limitation.
The correctness of this has been set forth faultlessly.*

*As the Son of the Conqueror [Sarvarthasiddhi] abided in unperturbable meditation
In that location [Akanishta Ganavyuha], the conquerors were [impelled] to fully arise.*

*In a single voice, all tathagatas spoke of the procedure
For generating the outer bodhi-mind manifestations and
Expounded the transmission of corresponding mantras.*

*As that Bodhisattva [Sarvarthasiddhi] remained in equipoise,
He correctly envisioned himself as a tathagata kaya
Naturally with five gnoses of bodhi-mind manifestations.*

*Then, when all tathagatas entered his heart, the five bodhi-mind manifestations Were
stabilized, [so that he] became a single complete buddha.*

*As a complete buddha, he became the source
For natural clear light of gnosis,
Universal equanimity of all tathagatas.*

The first and fifth bodhi-mind manifestations are explained as accomplishing dharmakaya;

The second and third accomplish sambhogakaya;

The fourth accomplishes supreme nirmanakaya.

Others state that bodhi-mind manifestations should be sequential;

Then, four kayas would be attained by the granting of the four empowerments

By buddhas directly from their hearts.

Through vajra sattva empowerment, svabhavikakaya;

Through vajra dharma [empowerment], sambhogakaya;

Through vajra ratna empowerment, dharmakaya;

Through vajra karma empowerment, nirmanakaya;

Through these empowerments of the four secrets, bodhi-mind is attained.

Then, through name empowerment comes the inseparable

Three kayas as Maha Vairochana.

Hence, [Maha] Vairochana is dharmakaya and sambhogakaya;

*Dharmakaya is the so-called Vajradhara exhalation,
Sambhogakaya is the tathgatas' exhalation.
Nirmanakaya is explained as being both.*

*Simultaneous with the [outer] sequence of bodhi-mind manifestations,
The inner bodhi-mind manifestations result in complete buddha
Through strengthening bodhicitta and the energies of great objects within the central
conductor,
By skillful practitioners of the close approximation practice.
As the [full] delineation of this is found in the Direct Knowledge of Tantra,
Here, that direction is just pointed to with certainty.*

*In Akanishta [Ganavyuha], perfect buddha as teacher,
Supreme being of dharmakaya and sambhogakaya,
Turns the cycle of profound and vast dharma
Of the eternal Mahayana, in the midst of retinues
Of gathered nirmanakayas, independent tathagatas,
And tenth-level bodhisattvas.*

*The sambhogakaya that does not depart from Akanishta [Ganavyuha]
Appears [multiple] like the reflections of the moon on the surfaces of water;
The Mahayana is taught by supreme nirmanakayas
To trainees that become accomplished in multifarious locations.
All Guhyamantra classes of Tantras are revealed in that [same] way.*

*In that way, a single sambhogakaya teacher
With intent [built] on the strength of objectless compassion,
Uninterruptedly demonstrates unfathomable deeds
Using an array of methods, for as many
As are trainees in vastly widespread worlds
And for as long as cyclic existence has not emptied out.*

*Specifically, the nirmanakaya Buddha, son of [King] Shuddhodana,
Displayed many ordinary acts
And taught the method of bodhi-mind that accords with the transitory world,
During the Golden Age in Jambuling.*

*Three kinds of retinues were said
To be further along than the path of great accumulation.
Specifically, compilers are leaders of the retinues
[Starting with] the nondual gnosis of the teacher [Vairochana],
[Through to] other faces of the manifestations of bodhisattvas.
In Akanishta [Ganavyuha], Kusumatala-Garbha-Alamkara-Ksetra,
Saha, and the one special among humans [Jambuling],
Respectively, [the compilers] are known as Vajrasattva,
Samantabhadra, Lord of Secrets [Vajrapani], and Ananda.*

*Three stages of dharma cycles for three kinds [of trainees]
Were not turned sequentially in different locations.
Through unlimited arrangements of kayas, voices, and intents,
For trainees, ordinary and extraordinary,
The turning of the dharma cycles of Sutra and Guhyamantra, on the surface appearing
separate,
Were in fact revealed by the teacher [Vairochana] all at once.
Distinguished by lesser and greater motivations of trainees,
Progressive dharma stages appeared to be separate, yet were [revealed] all at once,
Definitively as a single method and in a single location.*

*All secret Tantras were revealed prior [to Shakyamuni]
By supreme nirmanakayas for the accomplishment of trainees.
The majority were [re-revealed as recitations] by Shakyamuni himself,
But not including the Tattvasamgraha and Chakrasamvara [Tantras].
Revelment as a recitation was also made by other manifestations.*

*If the Guhyamantra path existed prior to Shakyamuni,
Then does that contradict [what is said in] the Guhyasamaja Tantra?
That is just the exaggeration of that dharma [cycle],
For the definitive truth is that the Guhyamantrayana
Is revealed by all buddhas of the three times.
Therefore, since there is a single gnosis for [all] teachers,
There is no contradiction in the names that are used for Shakyamuni.*

*Among three types of compilations of the Conqueror's teachings,
(1) First is the compilation of the Three Baskets [Vinaya, Sutra, and Abhidharma] by the
three Aryas (Nobles)
At a gathering of five hundred faultless arhats
In Vimalayana Cave.
Subsequently, there were second and third compilations [of this type].*

*(2) Likewise, some assert that the Mahayana Sutras
Were compiled at a sangha gathering
Of nine hundred million bodhisattvas
In a southern region called Vimalasambhava.
Nevertheless, the compiler of the entire Mahayana [canon]
Was Bodhisattva Vajrapani.*

*(3) As for special method for compiling Guhyamantra practices,
Others have incorrect ideas.
The intent of errorless canon and treatises
Is that when Tathagata [Vairochana] engaged the King of Orgyan [Indrabhuti] and his
court,
With mandala manifestations
He brought them to complete [spiritual] maturity.
At that time, Vajrapani compiled all of the Tantras.
In ultimate truth, the teacher and the compiler*

Are not separate, but to those of lesser aptitude, they appear [to be two].

The Lord of Secrets [Vajrapani] then gave back all of the Tantras

To the King and his court in that land.

Next, through the power of decay and deterioration, that region [of Orgyan] came to an end

And turned into a great lake [filled] with nagas who were brought to [spiritual] maturity.

There, all of the Tantras were written down in volumes [by Vajrapani] and given

To the hand-walkers [nagas] who spread them.

Subsequently, these [Tantras] were well received

By accomplished masters, such as Visukalpa,

From the nagas who had turned into heroes and dakinis.

Here in the Noble Land [India] and the Ranges of Snow Mountains [Tibet],

The best people [mahasiddhas] disseminated them widely.

The above assertions are laid out as documented,

And have been made precise through extensive research.

I dedicate the virtue from making these fine distinctions

So that [all sentient beings] may attain the omniscience of the Dharma King.

Origin of Vajrayana has two subtopics: (1) refutation of wrong views of others and (2) delineation of beliefs of the uncommon Mahayana.

Refutation of Wrong Views of Others

Two [wrong] views are the beliefs of shravakas and the common Mahayana. There are six subtopics concerning both: (1) length of time [required] to make accumulations [of merit and knowledge], (2) time of buddha awakening, (3) place [of buddha awakening], (4) manner [of attaining buddha awakening], (5) actions [displayed after buddha awakening], and (6) manner of residing after transcendence of suffering. For [each of] these, both the initial assertion and its refutation should be comprehended. These can be explained in detail by an instructor, but have not been [included here] out of fear of writing too many

words.⁷⁴⁷

Beliefs of the Uncommon Mahayana

Delineating beliefs of the uncommon Mahayana has six subtopics: (1) duration of completely perfect buddha; (2) location [of attaining buddha]; (3) manner of [attaining] buddha; (4) after [attaining] buddha, manner of turning the Mahayana dharma cycle; (5) in general, manner of enacting endless buddha deeds; and (6) specific explanations of the occurrence of buddha manifestations in Saha Worlds.

[Continuous] Duration of Completely Perfect Buddha

[Objection:] The scholar Shakyamitra believed that in an earlier time, [the historical Buddha was] a bodhisattva independent in his own continuum [who was reborn] as the son of King Shuddhodhana, and who accomplished all benefits and made difficult attainments. Then, after [attaining] buddha in Akanishta (Below None) in a mental body, as a physical manifestation [Shakyamuni] demonstrated the method of becoming buddha.⁷⁴⁸

[Reply:] That is not correct. A Sutra says that after spending the prior incomprehensible number of eons as the Bhagavan, the perfect Buddha demonstrated [buddha awakening] through birth in the Shakya family, which contradicts [Shakyamitra's contention]. Accordingly, the assertion of the *Avatamsaka Sutra* and Mahayana scholars such as Vasubandhu, Chandrakirti, Anandagarbha, and Bhavyakirti is that after spending a prior uncountable number of eons as a completely perfect buddha, he demonstrated the way to enlightenment in manifestation as the Buddha Shakyamuni in this subsequent Golden Age. Our [Sakya] lama lineage also asserts this. In this way, for an inconceivable number of past eons, the Buddha remained [a buddha], continuing to reside ever longer, as is revealed [in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra I, iii*]:

{Then, after making offerings to the Bhagavan and paying homage, all tathagatas made a request in these words:

Bhagavan, please explain the essence
Of the unsurpassed secret gnosis.

Then, after learning of the request made by all tathagatas, the Bhagavan entered into the

samadhi called gnosis vajra lamp, the essence of all Tantras. Then he revealed the [ultimate] secret of all Tantras:

In the supreme secret joyousness [of gnosis]
Eternally abides universal Being;
The supreme ecstasy of Vajrasattva
Is the actual sattva of all buddhas.
This is the [true] Bhagavan yoga. }

Stable and eternal is Supreme [Being],
{Discoverable in each individual churning mind,
An eternal nature that is difficult to suppress.} [749](#)

[Akanishta Ganavyuha] Location of Attaining Buddha

The location is known as Ganavyuha (Richly Adorned), also known as Akanishta (Below None), [750](#) as stated by the scholar Vakishvarakirti:

While his mind remained in the absolute, marvelous Ganavyuha,
He became the pinnacle of the Shakyas, in order to benefit beings of Jambuling.

[As revealed] in the *Lankavatara Sutra*:

In the delightful place called Akanishta
That transcends [realms of] heavenly classes [of deities],
There the perfect Buddha became enlightened;
Here [in Jambuling] as the nirmanakaya, [again] enlightenment [was demonstrated].

The meaning of Akanishta (Below None) is revealed in the introductory passage of the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*:

The Bhagavan was residing with the King of the Akanishta Gods... [751](#)

According to Master Anandagarbha's *[Tattvaloka] Commentary*: [752](#)

The Akanishta God is the original god, a bodhisattva of the tenth level and the oldest son of Bhagavan Vairochana. This [god's] residence is also the residence of the original buddha.

[Objection:] So where is Akanishta (Below None)? Some unlearned people say that Akanishta is above the heavenly realms, that what is called Akanishta is another place of Ishvara or Maheshvara that is above and beyond those [heavenly realms].

[Reply:] That is not correct, as such an explanation cannot be found anywhere in the canonical literature. There is another place that is above that, explained as the place of the tenth level, and not explained as the residence of sambhogakaya. Accordingly, all of these are small transitory realms. Because they are founded on the perishable, they are called transitory realms and are impermanent; [however,] Ganavyuha (Richly Adorned) is not perishable,⁷⁵³ as revealed in the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

This is the delightful perfect Akanishta (Below None),
The imperishable perfect realm
Where buddha dharma
Arises in the manner of sambhogakaya.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 16, line 6: This is the place where Bhagavan Vairochana became the first among superiors; because it is revered above any other place, [it is called] “Akanishta (Below None).” Since there is no circumstance for imperfection, it is “perfect.” Since it is blissful without pain, it is “delightful.” Since there is no opportunity for the three emotive afflictions [passion, aggression, and depression], it is a “perfect realm.” Since there are no manifest constructions created by actions and afflictions, it is “imperishable.” There true “buddha dharma arises” in the secret “manner of sambhogakaya.”}

So what is [Akanishta]? According to the *Noble Buddha Avatamsaka [Sutra]*, an uncountable number of transitory worlds, such as Saha (Endurance), are set within what is called Kusumatala-Garbha-Alamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers). An uncountable number [of these latter universes] are set within what is called the Ocean of Transitory Worlds. Tathagata Vairochana holds the Ocean of Transitory Worlds in “the palm of his hand” as if it were a gnosis lake in a great glacier-covered range of mountains.⁷⁵⁴ This

[Ocean of Transitory Worlds] is the place where the Bhagavan resides with a retinue of great bodhisattvas; it is called the Ganavyuha (Richly Adorned) Realm, where dwells perfect buddha [manifestation] as sambhogakaya. All smaller regions with nirmanakaya buddhas lie within it.

In a progressive sequence of [advancing] intellect [for how nirmanakaya buddhas manifest], for some [historic] Buddha [Shakyamuni] appeared in Jambuling; for some [Buddha Shakyamuni] performed [enlightened] acts after becoming the Buddha in Akanishta (Below None) of the heavenly realms; for some bodhisattvas, the Bhagavan appeared as Buddha [simultaneously] in a billion transitory worlds [each comprised] of four continents, the Great Thousand of the Three [Orders of Magnitude] Thousand⁷⁵⁵ [Transitory Worlds]; for some, [the Buddha] taught in a single buddha field [sphere or universe that encompassed] all transitory realms of Kusumatala-Garbha-Alamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers), as described in the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*⁷⁵⁶ and the *Arya Achala Kalpa Tantra Raja (The Noble Unwavering Comprehension King of Tantras)*⁷⁵⁷:

Then the Bhagavan acted to completely fill with light all transitory realms of Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra...

[Therefore,] according to degree of intellect, the residence of nirmanakaya buddhas has manifested variously.

If it is thought that there must be realms that are even more vast than those of sambhogakaya buddhas [Akanishta Ganavyuha], it is impossible to disprove, even though no explanation [of such] is found in the Sutras, Tantras, and treatises. Here, [this account] is written based on the Lama's [Kunga Nyingpo's] talks and the explanation in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*, *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*, etc.

What is vaster than [Akanishta Ganavyuha] is the entire universe, which is the dharmakaya field. Accordingly, as revealed in the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*:

Bhagavan Maha (Great) Vairochana forever resides throughout the entire universe with vajra-like body, speech, and mind as tathagatas... ⁷⁵⁸

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 17, line 2: This indicates a distinction between

Vairochana and “Maha Vairochana.” Vairochana is the defining kaya of the five tathagatas, the manifest complete buddha residing in Akanishta [Ganavyuha], whose nondual appearance as mind and mental events becomes the source for generation of Vajrasattva and other [sambhogakayas].

“Maha Vairochana” has the defining characteristic of the beginningless and limitless dharma “universe,” the nature of great objectless compassion. In order that sentient beings can be brought to complete maturity, in accord with their portion of the inherent strength of gnosis of the selflessness of phenomena, Vairochana and other kayas “forever reside” and are permanently located “throughout the entire universe” and throughout all time with no outer or upper limit, becoming “vajra-like body, speech, and mind.”}

From this perspective, buddhas are dharmakaya; given that their intentions and actions are limitless, then their fields are limitless also.

The definitive scope of the realms described above is that sambhogakayas appear only to tenth-level bodhisattvas. Just to the extent of the explanation that these great bodhisattvas have enacted complete maturation of sentient beings and complete purification of buddha realms, Akanishta [Ganavyuha] may be called the residence of the King of the Gods. Just to the extent of what was explained previously with respect to these great bodhisattvas, [Akanishta Ganavyuha] may be called the ultimate residence. These topics have been explained by scholars in detail [elsewhere].

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 67, line 6: An inconceivable number of transitory worlds such as Saha (Endurance) are set within Kusumatala-Garbha-Alamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers). An inconceivable number of the latter [universes] are set within the vast Ocean of Transitory Worlds. That [vast Ocean of Transitory Worlds] is held in the palm of the hand of Akanishta [Ganavyuha] Vairochana [as if] a lake in a great glaciated range, as described at the beginning of chapter 11 in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*:

Bhagavan, the vast Ocean of Transitory Worlds lies completely within the center of the palm of Vairochana’s hand as a glacial lake of tathagata gnosis as in a great glaciated range. The Buddha is present there in a kaya form [sambhogakaya]. The highest mountain in the Ocean of Transitory Worlds is Sumeru, where Samantabhadra⁷⁵⁹ is present in the body image of the God Brahma, completely holding the Great Thousand of the Three Orders of Magnitude

[Objection:] Some earlier lamas made the identification of Akanishta [Ganavyuha] as explained in this *Comprehensive Introduction* with both words and [interpretations of] meaning that were incorrect.

[Reply:] The Ocean of Transitory Worlds does not occur as a literary convention in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. For it to be said that Akanishta is explained in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* as a nirmanakaya [and therefore a transitory] realm is not actually found in the *Sutra*. The explanation is that many transitory worlds lie within Akanishta [Ganavyuha], with Akanishta itself not so specified, as in the *Precious Compilation*: [761](#)

To say that Akanishta [Ganavyuha] is not a transitory world as its sphere of activity transcends the three realms [of desire, form, and formlessness] ends all unintended [interpretations of] meaning.}

How the Teacher Became the Buddha in That Residence

There are two subtopics: (1) progression along outer bodhi-mind manifestations and (2) progression along inner bodhi-mind manifestations.

Progression along the [Five] Outer Bodhi-Mind Manifestations

There are two subtopics: (1) actual method by which the teacher became a buddha [according to the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*] and (2) method for accomplishing the three kayas as a single flavor [according to the *Vajra Shekara Tantra*].

Actual Method by Which the Teacher Became a Buddha [According to the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*]

The [content for this] topic comes from the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*: [762](#)

The dharmakaya realm of tathagatas equals the [infinite] extent of space, as many as are [the totality of] sambhogakaya realms; there [in the transitory worlds of latter sambhogakaya realms] the great Bodhisattva named Sarvarthasiddhi (Accomplisher of All Benefit) completed the accumulations [of merit and gnosis] over immeasurable eons. Acting to purify as many as are these [transitory] worlds, and to mature as many as are the sentient beings [within them], he established the intent: “I will become unsurpassed complete and perfect bodhi-mind.” After settling in Bodhimanda [or Bodhgaya] within Ganavyuha (Richly Adorned), he entered into a

nonfluctuating, balanced state of meditation.

Then, the tathagatas that filled all of those [sambhogakaya] realms became aroused and all of them came before the Bodhisattva displaying their sambhogakaya form. When the Bodhisattva arose from that nonfluctuating samadhi, [the tathagatas] spoke to him: “Son of the Buddha Family, how will you become manifestly perfectly awakened in the unsurpassed complete and perfect bodhi-mind?” Then, the Bodhisattva arose and after paying respects made the request: “Bhagavans, since I have been unable to find [bodhi-mind], I request that [you explain to me] how that which is the tathagatas precisely as they are can be accomplished.”

The tathagatas then spoke all in one voice, [directing Sarvarthasiddhi] to recite the naturally efficacious mantras [as many times] as wished, while [remaining] in a meditative equipoise that is specific cognition of mind-itself, and so forth as the dharma is expounded [in the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*]. The Bodhisattva, from within the meditative state, manifested as Buddha through the nature of five bodhi-minds and five gnoses. [Then the new Buddha] requested of all the Bhagavan tathagatas that he gain a felicitous vision of the body of all Bhagavan tathagatas. Then they spoke of the single flavor of all buddhas that reside in the heart of all tathagatas, thereby stabilizing the manifestation of bodhi-mind. In so being, the tathagatas become the source for natural clear light of gnosis, everywhere the equality of all tathagatas, transforming arhats into complete and perfect buddhas.

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 55, line 6: From the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra* (with annotations):

(1) Then, all tathagatas spoke these words in unison: “Son of the Buddha Family, in the meditative state of observing your own mind, gain accomplishment by reciting this naturally efficacious mantra [for as long] as you wish: OM CHITTA PRATI VEDHAM KAROMI.”

Annotation: After gaining the benefit of [meditative] experience, the special instruction is expounded.

Then the Bodhisattva Sarvarthasiddhi spoke to all the tathagatas: “Bhagavan tathagatas, I will gain realization of such through a moon disk in my heart.”

Annotation: The realization of the clear light radiance of mind-itself, the identity of the sixteen emptinesses [as experienced] within meditation, takes on the appearance of just billowing fire that as subsequent attainment takes the form of a moon disk [located in the heart chakra]. This first bodhi-mind manifestation⁷⁶³ is from specific discernment of bodhi-mind, which awakens the nature of Akshobhya, mirrorlike gnosis that is the very essence of bodhi-mind.

All tathagatas then replied: “Son of the Buddha Family, since the nature of mind is radiant clear light, that [mind] becomes purified in this way, just as a white cotton fabric may be transformed with paint [into a thangka].”

(2) Then, in order to increase knowledge of the naturally radiant mind of clear light, all tathagatas recited: “OM BODHICHTTA UTPADAYAMI.” The natural efficacy of this mantra is the generation of the mind of great bodhisattvas. Then after generating bodhi-mind as explained by all tathagatas, the Bodhisattva said: “What appears as a moon mandala is envisioned as that moon mandala.”

Annotation: The significance is that after employing the method for purifying [defilements concealing] naturally pure mind within meditation, bodhi-mind that is free of all impurities is generated that in subsequent attainment is the vision of a second moon mandala. This second bodhi-mind manifestation is from the generation of bodhi-mind, which awakens the nature of Ratnasambhava, equanimity gnosis that is the very essence of the perfection of generosity.

(3) All tathagatas replied: “You have manifestly well accomplished Samantabhadra generation of the mind that is the essence of all tathagatas. In order to stabilize Samantabhadra generation of the mind of all tathagatas, visualize the form of a vajra on the moon mandala in your own heart with this mantra: OM TISHTA VAJRA.”

Annotation: After gaining the benefit of [meditative] experience, the special instruction is expounded.

The Bodhisattva said: “Bhagavan tathagatas, I envision the vajra that is above the moon mandala.”

Annotation: The significance is that after manifesting emptiness with no objective focus within meditation, Samantabhadra bodhi-mind is generated that in subsequent attainment is envisioned in the form of a vajra above the moon mandala. This third bodhi-mind manifestation is from the stable vajra, which awakens the nature of Amitabha, gnosis of specific cognition that is the very essence of the perfection of analytic wisdom.

(4) All tathagatas replied: “This mantra stabilizes that vajra which is the Samantabhadra mind of all tathagatas: OM VAJRA ATMA KONYA HAM.”

Annotation: The special instruction is expounded together with the mantra.

Then, the entire extent of vajradhatu [vajra space]—body, speech, and mind of all tathagatas that have entered into equanimity throughout all space—enters into the sattva vajra [vajra as buddha body] through the spiritual power of all tathagatas. Then, all Bhagavan tathagatas empowered the great Bodhisattva Sarvarthasiddhi with the name Vajradhatu. Then, the Bodhisattva Vajradhatu spoke these words to all tathagatas: “Bhagavan tathagatas, I see clearly the [buddha] body of all tathagatas.”

Annotation: Upon accomplishing realization, the significance is that after nonconceptual gnosis that does not objectify within meditation as realization of nonobjectified emptiness [is manifested], in subsequent attainment, [that realization] is envisioned in the form of a five-pointed vajra formed from the tiniest [vajra] particles of the essence of all tathagatas. This fourth bodhi-mind manifestation is from the nature of the vajra, which awakens the nature of Amoghasiddhi, gnosis of accomplishing actions that is the very essence of the perfection of perseverance.

(5) All tathagatas replied: “Great Sattva, . . .

Annotation: Even though you [Bodhisattva Sarvarthasiddhi as Vajradhatu] now envision the essence of the vajra formed from the tiniest particles of all tathagatas, you do not yet envision [yourself as] with a buddha body that is perfectly complete with all features and characteristics. Given that perspective,

. . . meditate on the sattva vajra [vajra as buddha body] while reciting this mantra as [many times as] you wish, such that oneself becomes naturally formed as a buddha body with all superlative features: OM Y^{ATA} SARVA TATHAGATAS T^{ATA} HAM.”

Annotation: The special instruction is expounded.

Then, after these words were spoken, Great Bodhisattva Vajradhatu...

Annotation: The significance is that through visualization meditation [Bodhisattva Vajradhatu is transformed into] a buddha body as Vajrasattva [or

Vairochana] with all the supreme features and characteristics.

. . . completely manifested as a buddha tathagata, . . .

Annotation: The fifth bodhi-mind manifestation is from [the single flavor] that is just as all tathagatas, which awakens the nature of Maha Vairochana, actuality of the dharmadhatu gnosis that combines all buddhas as one.

. . . and then in honoring all tathagatas, [Tathagata Vajradhatu as Buddha Vajrasattva/Vairochana] made the request: “All Bhagavan tathagatas, please endow me with the spiritual power to make stable [the transformation of] myself as a completely manifested buddha.” Then, after these words were spoken, all tathagatas entered into the sattva vajra [buddha body] of the Tathagata Vajradhatu. Then at that very instant, Bhagavan Tathagata Vajradhatu completely manifested buddha gnosis of equanimity of all tathagatas. He entered into the samaya of the secret mudra of equanimity gnosis, the vajra of all tathagatas. He entered into the secret mudra of equanimity gnosis, the precious empowerment, the vajra of all tathagatas. Realization of equanimity gnosis is the natural purity of all phenomena of all tathagatas. Arhats [and bodhisattvas] then become completely perfect buddhas, tathagatas that become the source of gnosis, the natural clear light that is complete equanimity of all tathagatas. Then, all tathagatas emitted sattva vajras from their own hearts, generating equanimity gnosis of all tathagatas, and empowered [Tathagata Vajradhatu as Buddha Vajrasattva/Vairochana] with the precious empowerment of the jewel that originated from the sky, generating everywhere dharma gnosis of the faculty of Avalokiteshvara [compassion], and completely establishing the activities of all tathagatas.

Annotation: These instructions on the five bodhi-mind manifestations that have been sequentially developed are taught as bodhi-mind manifestation meditation instructions for trainees who have not yet arrived [as buddhas]. This is buddha exactly in this single moment of definitive meaning; it is not possible for the five gnosés present in a previous [moment] to separate and not be present in a subsequent [moment].}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 119, line 1: The nirmanakaya that appears to others to be trained is the exhalation of tathagatas; the nirmanakaya that appears as itself is the exhalation of Vajradhara. Accordingly, the five buddha families as sambhogakayas and nirmanakayas must be divided into two each: buddhas appearing as themselves, and [buddhas] appearing for others to be trained, as in [the traditions of] the *Hevajra*, *Chakrasamvara*, *Guhyasamaja*, and other *Tantras*. Appearances as themselves are principally gnosis dharmakaya; appearances for others must assume human

form. The explanation is that four foundation mandalas are transformed into four kayas, and the derivative ground for all [consciousness] is transformed into exceedingly pure svabhavikakaya.

As a result, the explanation is that both mirrorlike gnosis and dharmadhatu [dharma space] gnosis are dharmakaya buddha appearing as itself, both equanimity gnosis and specific cognition gnosis are sambhogakaya buddhas appearing as themselves, and accomplishing actions gnosis is nirmanakaya buddhas appearing as themselves.

[Objection:] As for svabhavikakaya buddha appearing as itself, what is its characteristic [source]?

[Reply:] Svabhavikakaya must not be divided into one or another, as the characteristic of svabhavikakaya is that just-as-is. What has been combined as the ground for all [consciousness] is faultlessly transformed into exceedingly pure svabhavikakaya, as it cannot appropriately [be transformed into] gnosis dharmakaya and on down.}

Method for Accomplishing the Three Kayas as a Single Flavor [Through Four Empowerments According to the *Vajra Shekara Tantra*]

In that [previous] way, three kayas of manifestly complete buddha are accomplished. The first and last [or fifth] bodhi-mind manifestations accomplish dharmakaya. The second and third accomplish sambhogakaya. The fourth accomplishes nirmanakaya. Some [in accord with the *Vajra Shekara Tantra*] believe that because the first [bodhi-mind] is mirrorlike gnosis, [it accomplishes] sambhogakaya [instead of dharmakaya]. Some assert that bodhi-mind manifestations should be [developed] in order [as in the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*], then four kayas are attained through the bestowal of the four empowerments, as in the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

Then, through four dharma empowerments
Arising from the heart
Of all buddhas,
The Able One [Sarvarthasiddhi] became empowered.
The bodhi-mind empowerment
Made [him] into Vajrasattva.

[Therefore,] the vajra sattva empowerment
Is filled with resultant bodhi-mind.

This quotation and subsequent [verses describe] the bodhi-mind, analytic wisdom, generosity, and perserverance empowerments.

These four empowerments explain the three kayas.
Vajra sattva empowerment
Is taken as svabhavikakaya.
Vajra dharma empowerment
Is taken as sambhogakaya.
Vajra ratna [jewel] empowerment
Is likewise [buddha] features and distinguishing characteristics.
Great gnosis of all buddhas
Has the essence of dharma equivalent to space.
Vajra karma [action] empowerment
Is taken as nirmanakaya.
Through these four secret empowerments
Bodhi-mind of completely [perfect] buddha is attained.
Then through the [fifth] name empowerment,
The Able One became Maha Vairochana,
With complete realization of dharma-as-is,
And realization of dharma and sambhoga [kayas].

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 17, line 5: After becoming buddha through the [five] bodhi-mind manifestations, all tathagatas resided in [Sarvarthasiddhi's buddha] heart, and immediately afterwards became thoroughly stabilized through the spiritual power of mantra. Then, all buddhas arose from the moon and vajra in the heart of Vairochana, through "four dharma empowerments" explained below.

(1) At that time, "the Able One" was "empowered" as Vairochana, since this is the one method for the ultimate just-as-is with the nature of the Tathagata Buddha family such as "Vajrasattva." With the bodhi-mind that has made equality completely free from deterioration, [the Able One was] "filled with resultant bodhi-mind" from the empowerment. This is the body of "Vajrasattva"; after bodhi-mind is

completely perfected through the “vajra sattva empowerment,” this “is taken as svabhavikakaya.”

(2) All sentient beings have tathagata essence [buddha nature] present in their own guise; this is the manner of dharma space. The sense of manner is to have nothing whatsoever that is either material or immaterial. Dharma space is to become without any fault of imperfection; this is the great manner of dharma space. That, being unmired in the swamp of afflictions mistakenly viewed, becomes the nature of the Padma Buddha family. Through the vajra dharma empowerment, “sambhogakaya” is taken.

(3) Over three incalculable eons, the four gifts: dharma, [beneficial] material wealth, fearlessness, and the gift of love were perfected [by the future Buddha]. The beneficial result of generosity was that he became equal to the entire Ratna Buddha family, equivalent to [the infinitude of] the sky. Through the generosity empowerment, etc., the jewel was obtained that makes all sentient beings joyous and washes away the dirt of avarice. Through this vajra ratna [jewel] empowerment, [Sarvarthasiddhi] came to have the thirty-two excellent [buddha] features and eighty excellent distinguishing [buddha] characteristics.

(4) Over three incalculable eons, [the future Buddha] performed difficult practices of Paramitayana rather than other [easier practices] of Guhyamantra. Complete purification of the three components [actor, action, and acted upon] as a result of the perfection of perserverance is natural clear light of gnosis, which was accomplished as [as a result of practices of] ever-increasing specialization in the continuums of both himself and that of [other] trainees. Great gnosis of all buddhas is the essence of the Karma Buddha family. The ultimate [result] of the perfection of perserverance was that he became equal to the entire Karma Buddha family, possessing the essence of dharma-as-is equivalent to [the infinitude of] the sky. The dirt of laziness was washed away through the vajra karma [action] empowerment, “taken as nirmanakaya.”

These four—bodhi-mind, analytic wisdom, generosity, and perserverance—are the four dharma empowerments, the four vajra yoga empowerments that are the inseparability of means and wisdom. Through these four empowerments, there is accumulation of the finest

qualities of buddha nature. Through these “four secret empowerments”: [taken as] svabhavikakaya, sambhogakaya, [buddha] features and distinguishing characteristics, and nirmanakaya, “bodhi-mind of completely [perfect] buddha is attained.”

(5) “Then through the name empowerment, the Able One became Maha Vairochana,” immaterial selfless “dharma-as-is” of all dharmas, “complete realization” that transcends objects of conceptualization, but also the very “realization of dharma and sambhoga [kayas].”}

Dharmakaya is devoid of all production and becomes the inseparability of mind-as-is and absolute [literally such-as-is] dharma space. Sambhogakaya is manifest accomplishment of gnosis nature kaya. Nirmanakaya is enlightened action for one’s own benefit [and for the benefit of others]. Sambhogakaya is Vairochana and dharmakaya is Maha Vairochana.

[Objection:] Since [sambhogakaya and dharmakaya] appear as [Vairochana and Maha Vairochana], what is the distinction between Vairochana and Maha Vairochana?

[Reply:] The identity of the kayas of the five tathagatas of manifest complete buddha in Akanishta [Ganavyuha] is Vairochana. The heart of nondual mind and mental events is Maha Vairochana. Alternatively, Vairochana is the so-called relaxed exhalation of the [five] tathagatas; Maha Vairochana is the so-called relaxed exhalation of Vajradhara. Nirmanakaya is [the expression of] both relaxed exhalations.

{Yeshe Gyaltzen, page 505, line 2: From mind and mental events of that nonduality comes the source [Maha Vairochana] for generating Vairochana, Vajrasattva, and other [sambhogakayas]. The characteristic of dharma space without beginning or end is Maha Vairochana. Given that through the power of the nature of great objectless compassion, gnosis of nonexistent phenomena and persons, sentient beings will be brought to spiritual maturity in accord with their allotment [of merit], the kayas of Vairochana and others will reside and remain as vajra body, speech, and mind permanently throughout all space and throughout all time that never comes to an end.}

Table 3: Steps in the Buddha Awakening of Bodhisattva Sarvarthasiddhi in Akanishta According to the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*

Sequence	1	2	3	4	5
Meditation	sixteen emptinesses	purified mind	nonobjective emptiness	nonconceptual gnosis	buddha visualization
Mantra	OM CHITTA PRATI VEDHAM KAROMI	OM BODHICHITTA UTPADAYAMI	OM TISHTA VAJRA	OM VAJRA ATMA KONYA HAM	OM YATA SARVA TATHAGATAS TATA HAM
Subsequent Attainment	moon disk in heart	second moon disk	vajra above moon	tathagata essence absorbed into vajra	buddha body features and characteristics
Essence	bodhi-mind	generosity	analytic wisdom	perseverance	compassion
Bodhi-Mind Manifestation	specific discernment	generation	stabilization	vajra essence	complete equanimity
Gnosis	mirrorlike	equanimity	specific cognition	accomplishing action	dharma space
Buddha Nature	Akshobhya	Ratnasambhava	Amitabha	Amoghasiddhi	Maha Vairochana
Kaya	dharma	sambhoga	sambhoga	nirmana	dharma

Table 4: Empowerments for Bodhisattva Sarvarthasiddhi in Akanishta According to the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*

Sequence	1	2	3	4	5
Empowerment	vajra sattva	vajra dharma	vajra ratna	vajra karma	name
Buddha Family	Tathagata	Padma	Ratna	Karma	Vajra
Buddha	Vajrasattva	Amitabha	Ratnasambhava	Amoghasiddhi	[Akshobhya as] Maha Vairochana
Quality	bodhi-mind	analytic wisdom	generosity	perseverance	complete realization
Defilement Overcome	deterioration	imperfection	avarice	laziness	conceptualization

Kaya	svabhavika	sambhoga	buddha features and characteristics	nirmana	dharma
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Progression along the Inner Bodhi-Mind Manifestations

The manner of progression through the inner bodhi-mind manifestations is the [same] sequence as at the time of the outer bodhi-mind manifestations, except that the manner is as derived from the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra XV*:

Accomplished in a single day,

The two-day ritual... [764](#)

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 69, line 2: From the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*:

At the end of the seven-day practice of the approximate cause... }

By this method, the energy of objects⁷⁶⁵ and bodhi-mind are strengthened in the central conductor, and [become] complete bodhi-mind manifestations. This will be explained in detail in the *Direct Knowledge of Tantra*.

In this way, the definitive meaning of the manner of the teacher's bodhi-mind manifestations have been explained.⁷⁶⁶

How the Bhagavan Turned the Dharma Cycles

There are two ways: (1) turning the invariable buddha dharma cycle of definitive meaning and (2) turning the supreme manifestation cycle to each trainee in each location.

Turning the Invariable Buddha Dharma Cycle of Definitive Meaning

Five subtopics are the best of (1) location, (2) teacher, (3) retinue, (4) duration, and (5) dharma.

[Akanishta Ganavyuha] Location

The location is [Akanishta] Ganavyuha, as explained above.

[Dharmakaya and Sambhogakaya] Teachers

[Subtopics are (1) definition of teacher and (2) reply to objections.]

[Definition of Teacher]

The teacher as explained above is completely perfect buddha who has the nature of dharmakaya and sambhogakaya.

[Resolution of Objections]

[Objection:] Given a sambhogakaya as the teacher that teaches dharma to the retinues, then since a dharmakaya teacher does not [actually] teach dharma, how could it be [implied that dharmakaya] also teaches?

[Reply:] Since the heart of a [sambhogakaya] teacher is dharmakaya, then [dharmakaya] also teaches, even though [under that circumstance] dharmakaya acts through the assumption of a [sambhogakaya] form. In that activity of teaching dharma, the [dharmakaya] teacher is called [a sambhogakaya] Vajradhara [or Vajrasattva], as in these words from the *Tattvasamgraha* (*Definitive Compilation*) *Tantra*:

E-ma-ho! I am the self-arising,
Sattva Samantabhadra who teaches;
Given that [act of] teaching, the bodiless
Assumes a sattva body.⁷⁶⁷

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 19, line 4: “E-ma” indicates amazement. “Self-arising” indicates self-arising as a [sambhogakaya] Bhagavan buddha himself. Always having goodness and virtue without causing harm, [he is] “Samantabhadra” (All Good). Since as a heroic spiritual being [sattva], he is inseparable [from dharmakaya] and has “steadfastness of sattva.”⁷⁶⁸ If you think how could someone have amazement over Samantabhadra as [representing] all buddhas, the reason is “steadfastness.” Having the nature of nondual gnosis, [Samantabhadra is] “bodiless” without form. Propelled by prior motivation, he “assumes a sattva body,” becoming visible as Vajrasattva form kaya, as [supreme] being for trainees.}

Through the actions of Vajrasattva kaya, dharma is taught.

[Objection:] Does that not become two teachers [dharmakaya and

sambhogakaya] giving a single teaching?

[Reply:] It does not, since the two [kayas] are inseparable. If they were separable, then dharmakaya would have to assume a form. Concerning this, the *Chandra Guhya Tilaka (Vital Essence of the Secret Moon) Tantra*⁷⁶⁹ revealed:

I grant the spiritual power of all buddhas
In a supreme form [sambhogakaya] as wished;
I also grant the spiritual power of all buddhas
As supreme dharmakaya.

This shows that there is a single teacher. Alternatively, there is no error in having two teachers, since the sattva [sambhogakaya] teacher [Vajrasattva] is responsible for [teaching] the assembled retinue [of bodhisattvas], and the other [dharmakaya] teacher is responsible for [teaching] tathagatas [who do not require a sattva form].

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 70, line 1: [Objection:] (1) Here [in this context], according to Naydruk,⁷⁷⁰ the precious Buton,⁷⁷¹ and others, in the *Amnaya Manjari (Instructions as Clusters of Grain Commentary)*⁷⁷² [it was stated that]:

On the strength of dharmakaya, individual manifestations that take the form of Chakrasamvara, Guhyasamaja, Hevajra and other [buddha deities] appear before those to be trained, and these are nirmanakayas. They are buddha manifestations that are exactly analogous to nirmanakayas that are revealers in the Paramita manner.

[Therefore,] Guhyamantra revealers are not believed to have sambhogakaya features of faces and [multiple hands holding] implements, based on the statement that there are also other [similar] nirmanakaya manifestations [that are revealers of Sutras].

(2) The scholar Redawa, in his *Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*,⁷⁷³ said that Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras were revealed only by the nirmanakaya Shakyamuni for the benefit of passionate people and that sambhogakayas did not reveal them since there are no passionate trainees among the retinues associated with sambhogakayas.

[Reply:] (1) The first position is not correct. The meaning of the source

Amnaya Manjari, according to the viewpoint of Sonam Tsemo,⁷⁷⁴ is that Guhyasamaja and others are supreme nirmanakayas,⁷⁷⁵ whereas Shakyamuni and others are lesser nirmanakayas. Given this terminology, it is not correct that teachers [of Tantras] have no sambhogakaya features of faces and [and multiple hands holding] implements. If that were so, then [there would be a contradiction] as it says in the thirty-ninth [part of the] *Amnaya Manjari*:

The personage of a female knowledge woman is a sambhogakaya. This is called the great ecstasy kaya as elucidated in the *Samputa Tantra* alone.

As elucidated in the [*Samputa*] *Tantra*, [the revealer] Vajrasattva has features of faces and [multiple hands holding] implements, [altogether] three faces, six hands, and a consort [and therefore has a sambhogakaya form].

(2) The second position is also not correct. [First,] (a) is it meant that all [classes of] Guhyamantra Tantras were not revealed by sambhogakayas, or (b) only that Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras were not revealed [by sambhogakayas]?

(a) If the first, that would contradict the explanation that all Ritual and Conduct Tantras, such as the *Trisamaya Vyuha*,⁷⁷⁶ were revealed in Akanishta [and therefore revealed by a sambhogakaya]. The [Yoga Tantra class] *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra* states that it was revealed by a sambhogakaya in Akanishta, Maha Vairochana:

Bhagavan Vairochana manifested bodhi-mind in Akanishta; subsequently he initially revealed to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra and others...

It would be in error to say that the first section of the [*Tattvasamgraha*] *Tantra* was not revealed at that time even though that section was proclaimed in order that passion could be eliminated through passion, given [the true statement] that there are no passionate individuals in sambhogakaya retinues. The purpose in revealing the first section is for just that [passion], as Maha Vairochana states:

This was revealed in order to eliminate passion through passion...

(b) If the second [alternative contention that only Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras were not revealed by sambhogakayas because there are no passionate trainees

among the retinues of sambhogakayas were true, there would be a contradiction], as revealed in the [Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra] *Yogini Samcara (Complete Activity of the Yoginis) Tantra*:²⁷⁷

What is taught in brief by nirmanakayas,
And extensively taught in the revelations of sambhogakayas,
Is henceforth still not complete in extensive versions,
As the [final] passing away from suffering has not been taught.

The explanation is that expanded extensive root Tantras [such as the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*] were revealed by dharmakaya [for tathagatas], extensive [root Tantras such as the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* were revealed] by sambhogakayas [for high-level bodhisattvas], and abbreviated [root Tantras such as the *Two-Part Tantra* were revealed] by nirmanakayas [for ordinary humans]. Otherwise, there would be the erroneous [conclusion] that sambhogakayas could not perpetually express [all] dharma [which includes teachings for the passionate].

As stated in the *Abhidharmakosha*:

The mass of dharma that is revealed is equivalent
To the [number of] antidotes for [karmic] actions...

Passionate trainees and others have eighty-four thousand afflictions, for which eighty-four thousand dharmas were revealed as antidotes for their actions. [So if it were claimed that the Tantras could not have been revealed in Akanishta,] given that there are no afflicted individuals in the retinues of sambhogakayas, that would contradict the statement in Master Kamadhenu's *Commentary on the Two-Part [Hevajra] Tantra*:²⁷⁸

This [*Tantra*] was revealed by a sambhogakaya, even though this pinnacle of form is present in Akanishta...

Since what in that section is termed the pinnacle of form is also the ultimate of form [sambhogakaya], then [if the above claim were true] revelation in that [passionate] language [as contained in the *Hevajra Tantra*] could not have been

made in the pure land of Akanishta [whereas in fact it was so revealed].⁷⁷⁹}

Retinues [of Tathagatas and Bodhisattvas]

Retinues have two [divisions]: (1) tathagata retinues and (2) bodhisattva retinues. As to the first [tathagata retinues], all of space is seen to be filled with tathagatas, just as a sesame pod is filled with sesame seeds.⁷⁸⁰ As to the second [bodhisattva retinues], it is said that the [number of] bodhisattvas is also inexpressible.

Each of these [two divisions] has (1) retinues as manifested for each [sambhogakaya], and (2) separate independent retinues.

Retinues as Manifested for Each [Sambhogakaya]

Manifestation is gnosis kaya and its heart, essence of dharmakaya, explained as Vajrasattva in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra*, as all tathagatas in the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*, and as revealed in the *Vajra Shekhara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

E-ma-ho! I am gnosis pure in all aspects;

E-ma-ho! I am close attainment of buddha;⁷⁸¹

E-ma-(ho)! This circle of dancers

Beguiles as gnosis itself.⁷⁸²

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 19, line 7: When all buddhas asked Vajradhara the meaning of pinnacle, Vajradhara rose from samadhi and spoke to all buddhas. “E-ma” expresses amazement. Supreme Being of dharmakaya has original nature of “gnosis pure in all aspects.” Supreme Being of sambhogakaya is “close attainment of buddha.” Like a “circle of dancers” where only one [dancer] may have [multiple] appearances [in different costumes], buddhas who have created nirmanakayas are nondual “gnosis itself,” yet “beguile” for the benefit of others, which is a great wonderment.}

As revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

I am the explainer, I am the dharma,

I also have my own gathering [retinue] of listeners.

As stated in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara (Mahayana Sutra Ornament)* IX,
60-65:

{Buddha bodies may be distinguished
As svabhavikakaya [or dharmakaya] and sambhogakaya,
Another [a third] is nirmanakaya;
The first is the foundation of the other two.

All realms of sambhogakaya
Are distinguished by [the features of] gathered retinues,
[Buddha] field, name, kaya,
Enjoyment of complete dharma, and activity.

Svabhavikakaya is uniform, subtle,
Yet interconnected with the latter [sambhogakaya],
Which is asserted to be the source for the enactment of [dharma] enjoyments,
Displayed as nine [dispensations such as] rejoicing.

Buddha manifestations as nirmanakayas
Are believed to be countless.
All aspects of the best of the two benefits [for oneself and others]
Are present in these two [sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya].

By constantly teaching craftsmanship, rebirth,
Great bodhi-mind and nirvana,
Nirmanakaya manifestations of buddha
Have great skillful means for bringing about liberation.

Buddha kayas should be known
As grouped into these three kayas.}
By these three kayas, [two] demonstrate the nature
Of these benefits, [while the third, dharmakaya] is the foundation. [783](#)

Nirmanakaya is for the benefit of others.
Sambhogakaya is for the benefit of oneself.
Dharmakaya demonstrates both benefits.

This quotation says that sambhogakaya is for its own benefit; hence [in this case], the retinue is of its own benefit.

Separate Independent Retinues [of Tathagatas and Bodhisattvas]

Yet as separate independent retinues, how is that to be understood? It is known as explained in some Sutras and through the *Uttaratantra* (*Unsurpassed Continuum*):

The relativity of the two kayas is for others' benefit...

Bodhisattvas on the tenth level are explained as appearing to sambhogakayas; tathagatas are inseparable from dharmakaya, yet [these two retinues] gain liberation through separate [independent] continuums. In order to make all of these [retinues] a single intent, quotations are consolidated in one.

[Continuous] Duration

Duration is a continuous presence, as [in the *Samputa* (*Perfect Union*) *Tantra* I, iii]:

Stable and eternal is Supreme [Being] . . . [784](#)

and from the *Samputa Tantra Continuation*:

Bhagavan does not move from Akanishta...

[Continuous] Dharma [Cycles]

Dharma is the continuous turning of the dharma cycles of the profound and vast Mahayana,^{[785](#)} the invariable dharma cycle.

Turning the Cycles of Supreme Nirmanakaya [Manifestations] for Individual Trainees in Separate Locations

Five subtopics are the best of (1) teachers, (2) retinues, (3) duration, (4) locations, and (5) dharma.

[Supreme Nirmanakaya] Teachers

The teacher is sambhogakaya Bhagavan who, while not leaving Akanishta [Ganavyuha], turns dharma cycles through individual [supreme] nirmanakaya [manifestations] to different trainees in different locations. In analogy, it is like when the moon rises in the sky and reflections of the moon appear on all [bodies of] water. Specifically, supreme nirmanakayas will appear to trainees who are set on the level of accomplishment or higher.⁷⁸⁶

Retinues [of Accomplished Trainees]

Retinues of [supreme nirmanakaya] manifestations are the same independent ones as above, those who are set on the level of accomplishment and higher. How is this known? It is known as explained by the manifestation of the *Trailokyavijaya (Conqueror of the three Realms) Kalpa*:⁷⁸⁷

Once all sentient beings of the three realms have entered into the mandala, in the not distant future they will become accomplished...

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 124, line 5: [Objection:] Nevertheless, is it not definite that supreme nirmanakayas are only for those actual trainees who are set on the level of accomplishment or higher?

[Reply:] No, it is not definite. Indeed it is so that primary [trainees] are set on the level of accomplishment, yet some individuals with pure karma after taking empowerment in the nirmanakaya [manifestation's] mandala, do not take long to gain accomplishment.}

[Continuous] Duration

Duration is continuous.

[Unlimited] Locations

Locations are indefinite [as to any boundary]. Specifically, if you ask in what locations dharma was revealed by supreme nirmanakaya [manifestations] of the sambhogakaya teacher Vairochana after becoming buddha, in general they are unlimited, but here a few will be mentioned. Not long after the Bhagavan [attained] complete manifest buddha, he revealed in the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*:

Not a long time elapsed after Bhagavan Vairochana [attained] complete manifest buddhahood, before the heart of all tathagatas, called Samantabhadra, arrived there, wherever are the peaks of the highest mountains, wherever are multistoried buildings, etc. The nirmanakaya [manifestation] of vajra space engaged in explanation...

Likewise the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi (Enlightenment of Vairochana) Tantra* revealed:

Bhagavan Great Vajradhara sat a lion throne [formed from] bodies of bodhisattvas, in the palace of vast dharma space, where gathered many vidyadharas... [788](#)

[Likewise,] the *Arya Acala (Noble Unmoving) Tantra* revealed:

Bhagavan resided as energy, in all these transitory worlds called Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers) . . .

Likewise, the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra* revealed:

Bhagavan resided in the empowerment temple... in Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers) . . .

Likewise, the *Shri Paramadya (Noble First Supreme) Tantra* revealed:

Bhagavan resided in the location of the Lord of Gods, [called] Controlling the Enjoyable Manifestations for Others...

Likewise, the *Chaturpita (Four Thrones) Tantra* revealed:

Residing in the Pure Land [of the Gods], [Bhagavan] spoke these words through omniscience...

Likewise, the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra* and others revealed:

Bhagavan resided in the vagina of the Vajra Queen, the body, speech, and mind of all tathagatas...

Likewise, the *Chakrasamvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra* and others revealed:

Abiding always in the universal self [nature],

In the delight of the supreme secret... [789](#)

[Mahayana] Dharma [of Sutras and Tantras]

The dharma is the Mahayana. In summary, an inconceivable variety of dharmas were expressed for different trainees, yet at a single time and in a single place, spoken with different arrangements of bodies and speeches as an inexpressible [number of] Sutras and Tantras, as revealed in the *Sandhi Vyakarana (Declaration of the Intent) Tantra*:⁷⁹⁰

Without discursiveness, without disturbance,

A single satisfying vajra word yet,

In accord with consideration for [the diversity of] trainees,

There are many specializations [in teaching dharma].

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 20, line 3: “Without discursiveness” of the eighty natures, such as passion and intermediate passion, “without disturbance” by [the discursiveness of] analytical thought, “satisfying” as the embodiment [kaya] of illusory relative [truth], “a single word” demonstrates the inseparable union of clear light and absolute truth, the “vajra” indivisible by discursive thought. Yet, “in accord with consideration for [the diversity of] trainees, there are many specializations” of vehicles and philosophies.}

Manner of Performing Endless Buddha Deeds

This is the general explanation of the manner of performing endless buddha deeds. While turning of dharma cycles is certainly one of those deeds, since it is the most significant, it has been explained [separately] above. These [buddha] deeds are limitless; but in summary, there are five subtopics: (1) performer, (2) motive for performance, (3) duration, (4) locations, and (5) manner of performance.

Performer

The performer of benefits [for others] is a completely perfect buddha as explained above, magnificent [Maha] Vairochana as the singularity or One [Supreme] Being of dharmakaya and [Vairochana as the two] form kayas. According to the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

Tathagata Vairochana is the singularity in all transitory worlds, abiding on the strength of previous prayers.

Does that mean that other teachers do not endure? According to the canon, only one has appeared to us, yet for the liberation of many diverse other continuums [including other than human], more countless than atoms in a [buddha] field, [other buddha manifestations and activities] can never come to cessation.

Motive for Performance

The motive for performing benefits is the inherent power of objectless great compassion, on the strength of which [vast] prayers have been made, as in the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*:

With the power of stainless [great] compassion continually arising,
Accomplishing [vast] prayers for unceasing phenomenality-as-is [emptiness],
With endless supreme effort to accomplish benefits for living beings,
The [Supreme] Being of great compassion continuously appears.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 20, line 4: “Continually” over many eons, there have appeared, by means of [vast] prayers and great compassion, mandalas of [buddha] capacities that have the nature of gnosis that entirely comprehends each precious [buddha] family. Through conducting difficult practices over and over again, the complete accumulation of negativity is cleared away, and on the strength of amassing the two accumulations [of merit and wisdom], “the power of stainless great compassion continually arises.” On the strength of “accomplishing vast prayers” focussed on the realms of sentient beings while engaged in purifications on the path, deeds are performed in accord with that [great compassion], such that “unceasing phenomenality-as-is [emptiness]” appears in the continuums of trainees. Possessor of “endless supreme effort to

accomplish benefit for living beings, the [Supreme] Being of great compassion continuously appears” for living beings through application of actual [buddha] capacities.}

Duration

What is the duration of performing deeds for the benefit of sentient beings? After [achieving] buddha in prior uncountable eons, [Vairochana] abides for as long as it takes to empty out the worlds of sentient beings, performing deeds for the benefit of sentient beings uninterruptedly throughout [all] duration, as was revealed [above]:

With the power of stainless [great] compassion continually arising...

As was said by the Master Chandrakirti in his *Madhyamakavatara (Entrance into the Middle Way)* XI, 48-49:

As many as are the minutest atoms
In all the different buddha fields of the [ten] directions including all sugatas without exception,
For that number of eons, you have passed on to true, supreme bodhi-mind;
Yet this secret is not the introduction for others.

Conqueror, as long as supreme amelioration has not come about for all transitory worlds,
As long as space has not come to an end,
Given birth by the mother of wisdom, how could you possess the highest tranquility,
Without exercising the method of a mother’s love [for all sentient beings]?⁷⁹¹

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 21, line 1: Bhagavan buddhas have certainly closely demonstrated transcendence of suffering by way of arising as nirmanakayas. What then is the motive for Bhagavan nirmanakayas but a measure for the duration till complete bodhi-mind is manifested [for all sentient beings]? “As many as are... buddha fields of the [ten] directions including all sugatas without exception” that become regions of buddha gnosis, “as many as are the minutest atoms,” “for that number of eons, you have passed on to true supreme bodhi-mind.” Yet the length of time you Buddha have had bodhi-mind, the length of time you have resided [as such] is a “secret” that cannot be told

even to the exceptionally devoted as it is difficult for them to act who have not yet accumulated the root of virtue, but it may be explained to those exceptionally devoted who have accumulated immeasurable merit.

“Conqueror” Buddha, “as long as supreme” buddha “amelioration has not come about” for all the detriments of “all transitory worlds,” “as long as space has not come to an end” and has not been destroyed, having been “given birth by the mother” of the perfection “of wisdom,” having turned to “a mother’s” magnanimous “love,” “how could you possess” [as a nirmanakaya] the transcendence of suffering that becomes “the highest tranquility” without preserving the “exercising” of that “method”? You know that you must remain for as long as the span of time for the future buddha embodiment for those who do not possess it. }

Locations

Wherever [buddha] deeds are performed, they are empowered with primary significance, as revealed in the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

After demonstrating continuity in worldly realms, Bhagavan Vairochana completely purified those worldly realms through the previous practice of bodhisattva conduct.

Some of those worldly realms are forming, some are decaying, and some are stable; yet all sentient beings in all of those realms have the good fortune of being completely secured [by Vairochana] who makes performance of deeds for their benefit of primary importance. Further, gnosis, prayers, and compassion of Tathagata [Vairochana] is unrestricted [in any way] and is enacted throughout the universe, as revealed in the *Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*:

Completely existing [through the nature of] magnificent Vajrasattva
Throughout [all] regions of the entire universe;
Since as the master of accomplishment he completely enacts
All, and entrance into his own [realm].

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 21, line 7: Just as in the example of pressing sesame seeds in a sesame pod shows that they are permeated with sesame oil, all actual worlds and inhabitants “throughout all regions of the entire universe” are

permeated without restriction with superlative mandalas. These are “existing” and are “completely” derived through the nature of “magnificent Vajrasattva.” “Since as master of accomplishment he completely enacts” through performance of ritual acts by means of enlightened activities, he illuminates “all” appearances of spiritual qualities and prepares [the way of] “entrance into his own” realm.}

Manner of Performance

Before each sentient being, [Vairochana] resides and enacts deeds for their benefit using diverse methods, as revealed in the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

Bhagavan Vairochana is present as a reflection before all sentient beings in all worldly realms...

Further, [Vairochana] is present simultaneously [everywhere], performing infinite diverse deeds for the benefit of sentient beings, as revealed in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

For some, great bodhi-mind,

For some, subsequent conduct [of bodhisattva deeds],

For some, bodhi-mind manifestation,

For some, complete encompassment of a retinue...

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 22, line 3: Because they are great miracle workers, all buddhas create manifestations; and in exhibiting and demonstrating superb happiness for the benefit of others, they enact playfulness and engagement in reality itself. To give an example of one type, after our teacher became a King called Rapsel (Extremely Radiant), as the Buddha Shakyamuni, he generated the wish for bodhi-mind, and as the [Buddha] Marmedzay (Shining Lamp), he generated engagement in bodhi-mind. From Buddha Shakyamuni through [Buddha] Yulchor Kyong (Regional Protector), in making seventy-five thousand offerings, the first immeasurable [eon] was completed. From [Buddha] Marmedzay (Shining Lamp) through [Buddha] Wangpo Gyaltzen (Banner of Sovereignty), in making seventy-six thousand offerings, the second immeasurable [eon] was completed. From [Buddha] Lekdzay (Virtuous Action) through [Buddha] Osung (Guardian of the Light), in making seventy-seven thousand offerings, the third immeasurable [eon] was completed.⁷⁹² During these

times, [Buddha Shakyamuni] also became a bodhisattva and, as the Bhagavan, sequentially completed practices in accord with the [six] perfections, starting with generosity.

Then, for the benefit of others, he was born [first deed] as a Gaden (Joyful Heaven) deity, Dampa Tokkarpo (Sacred White Crown). From this deity realm, he then descended [second deed] in the form of an elephant and demonstrated supreme entrance into the womb of Mahamayadevi (Great Goddess Manifestation). Then, after ten months had passed, he was born [third deed] into the great Shakya family as an exceptionally pure human, attendant with many miracles, and ornamented with buddha features and characteristics. Then, as a youth he engaged [fourth deed] in recreation and pleasure, [took] queens [fifth deed] as spouses; and as exhorted by the gods, he became disillusioned and developed renunciation [sixth deed]. Then dispensing with all great entertainments for the sake of [generating] bodhi-mind, following his practice of austerities [seventh deed], [he proceeded] to Vajrasana [where he was] surrounded by three hundred and sixty million demons [eighth deed]. He overcame and subdued them [ninth deed] with displays of loving kindness.⁷⁹³

As requested by Brahma, he proceeded to Varanasi and, after turning the dharma cycle there [eleventh deed], displayed great miracles in Shravasti. He refuted and converted outsider non-Buddhists through the use of dharma logic. To the Mahayana trainees with the sharpest faculties, he closely displayed [himself] as master of all siddhis, assuming the form of Vajradhara and others, and closely taught the Vajrayana. To the nonentering Maheshvara and to those who had entered the mandala of the King of the Three Realms, he displayed [himself] as having the body of the King of the Three Realms for the purposes of [conducting] training. For all conceptualizations such as training living beings, etc., he closely displayed great siddhis as the unsurpassed Supreme Being.)⁷⁹⁴

[To continue,] as revealed in the *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra*:

For some, through Tantras and treatises,

For some, securing through deeds... ⁷⁹⁵

[Objection:] Accordingly, as said that throughout endless time, the Bhagavan as a singularity performs deeds through an inconceivable number of manifestations, isn't that due to the power of the equality of all phenomena-as-is

[in emptiness]?

[Reply:] No, it is not, as understood from the statements in the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

The Bhagavan through the previous practice of bodhisattva conduct...

In those worldly realms, that very Bhagavan...

Accordingly, these endless deeds, in endless places, through endless time are for those of lesser aptitude who are untrained, for Master Chandrakirti clarified that it is difficult [to train those] who have only faith. As stated ultimately by Master Nagarjuna and also [revealed in] the *Samucchaya (Complete Compendium) Sutra*:

For all buddhas and bodhisattvas, it is very difficult to find faith in the vast [dharma] . . .

In addition, [I have composed] a verse of interlude:²⁹⁶

Vast capacities of the Bhagavan are not an object for discursive analysis
And can only be found through the speech and power of the Lama;
Noble ones take delight in explaining the secrets to those with faith,
And even go so far as to appropriately forgive the extremely violent among their retinue.

In this way, compassionate performers of beneficial deeds never become depressed or exhausted and continue to perform them for limitless sentient beings for their unceasing and endless benefit; these [performers] are perfect buddhas.

Specific Explanation of the Origin of the [Shakyamuni] Buddha Nirmanakaya [Manifestation] in the Saha World

Now will be told how these deeds specifically originated with the buddha nirmanakaya [manifestation] in the Saha World. This [topic] is [typically] explained in eight parts, but in order to make it easier to grasp, is here given in five parts: (1) how the nirmanakaya originated, (2) how the retinues appeared, (3) how the dharma cycle was turned, (4) how the revelations were compiled,

and (5) how [the revelations] spread among humans.

How the Nirmanakaya Originated

How [the nirmanakaya] arose has four subtopics: (1) locations, (2) duration, (3) method of becoming buddha, and (4) deeds.

Location

As for locations, generally as was explained above, [possible locations] are inconceivable [in number]; yet now for a time, [responsibility for] the Saha world system has been assumed, and within that [world system] the southern of the four central continents, Jambuling, has been taken on as the present purpose.

Duration

The duration is inconceivable yet [presently] has been conceived as the Fortunate Age. After the teacher [accomplished] buddha awakening and turned the profound and vast dharma cycles such as the Vajrayana [as a sambhogakaya in Akanishta], he first appeared as Shakyamuni in Jambuling [Jampudvipa]. According to the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*, as revealed in the root Tantra, continuation Tantra, and continuation of the continuation [Tantra], and as revealed in the Proximate Combination chapter:

Descended among humans
With purpose and for the benefit of all sentient beings,
Lord [Buddha] turned the supreme vajra cycle,
And became thoroughly accomplished.

Then, descending from the summit of Sumeru to Bodhimanda, the Bhagavan took a grass [mat] beneath a bodhi tree in order to conform to [the expectations of] the transitory world for its benefit...

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 23, line 6: Nirmanakaya Vairochana revealed the Tantras from the summit of Mount Sumeru and, after granting permitting empowerments, “descended among humans with purpose” of accomplishing the manifest wishes of sentient beings, such as humans, and acting “for the benefit of all sentient beings,” such as humans. Then he started out to conduct training by turning the “vajra cycle,” turning the cycle of the three yantras, “supreme” in being the best, [including] manifesting mandalas and generating pride [of being

the deity]. [When he had finished] up through thoroughly displaying the best manifestations [of buddha activities], “Lord [Buddha] . . . became thoroughly accomplished.”}

According to the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

After Vajrapani [received] empowerment from the great Bodhisattva Samantabhadra in Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers), then in the transitory world called Saha (Endurance), the Bhagavan assumed the name Shakyamuni. After overcoming Mara [as the personification of negativity] in the transitory world of Jambuling [Jampudvipa] within the four continent system, he manifested complete perfect buddha as bodhi-mind... [797](#)

Method of Becoming Buddha

The method by which the teacher became buddha had already been definitively secured, yet in order for the tathagata teacher to act in conformity with the transitory world as a nirmanakaya, he once again demonstrated the method of buddha awakening as the essential characteristic of buddhas, as revealed in the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*:

The gods spoke: “Friends, even though manifest complete buddha had been previously secured, in order to act in conformity with transitory worlds, again unsurpassed bodhi-mind was demonstrated...

Then, after overcoming Mara during that night, the next morning he manifested complete buddha as unsurpassed completely perfect bodhi-mind, acting for the benefit of all sentient beings without exception.

[Objection:] According to the excellent tradition of Master Shakyamitra, [becoming a buddha] took place in between “taking a grass [mat]” and “[later] that night”. [798](#)

[Reply:] That is not correct according to the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

Following empowerment secured while present in Gaden (Joyful Heaven), concluding the performance of deeds, dharma was taught through the ultimate transmission of great complete nirvana.

Deeds

These deeds as performed by the tathagata teacher, starting with residence in Gaden through to entering nirvana, are eight, twelve, or sixteen in number [depending on the tradition], or are incalculable. These are commonly known according to the tradition of the *Lalitavistara Sutra* and other [canonical sources].

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 73, line 3: The *Vajra Panjara Tantra* speaks of eight deeds, common [Mahayana] canonical sources such as the *Avatamsaka Sutra* speak of [the standard] twelve deeds, the *Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra* has sixteen deeds, and the *Sambuti Tantra* has thirty-two deeds.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 70, line 6: The [set of] eight deeds comes from the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra* VIII:

This supreme occurrence [mahamudra siddhi], Bhagavan [form kayas derived from dharmakaya]

Turning the dharma cycle (7),

[Entering a] family [through birth to a king and queen] (2), manifesting complete bodhi-mind (6),

Likewise, ascending to a god [in Gaden] (1),

Rising up to leave the palace (4),

Assuming renunciation (5),

Taking rebirth [being reborn after entering the womb, etc.] (3), and

Demonstrating complete transcendence of suffering (8).⁷⁹⁹

The *Avatamsaka Sutra* and other [canonical sources] explain twelve deeds.⁸⁰⁰ The *Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra* reveals sixteen. When these [various traditions] are [all] taken together as one, [the intent is the same], to eliminate all conceptualization and benefit sentient beings; yet as sixteen they are, (1) demonstrating taking rebirth, (2) manifesting in a palace [born to royalty], (3) happily playing as a youth, (4) assuming renunciation, (5) sitting down on Vajrasana (Vajra Seat), (6) taming demons without degeneration, (7) manifesting enlightenment, (8) turning the true dharma cycle, (9) joyfully descending from the gods, (10) displaying a great many miracles, (11) taming

the Norkyong (Jewel Protecting) elephant, (12) [illegible],⁸⁰¹ (13) putting an end to controversies, (14) having a continuously [full] alms bowl, (15) converting surrounding worldly beings, (16) [becoming] the bodhisattva regent [next in line to become a buddha], (17) completely transcending suffering, and (18) [becoming] the great Dharma King of the Three Worlds. By combining (10) displaying miracles and (13) ending controversies into one and by accepting (16) prime minister [bodhisattva regent] as (18) Dharma King of the Three Worlds, that makes sixteen [total]. Beyond these, there are immeasurable [additional] deeds.}

How Retinues Appeared

There are two ways: (1) generally how fortunate retinues [appeared] and (2) specifically how compilers appeared.

How Fortunate Retinues Appeared

Generally, Bhagavan Vairochana completely retained [as trainees] those who made prayers that were brought to complete fruition as bodhisattvas, [who therefore had accomplished the level of] the path of great accumulation and above. In accord with both the family of shravakas and family of bodhisattvas, some [had accomplished] the path of great accumulation, some heat, some pinnacle, some endurance, some supreme [levels of the path of application], and some up to entering the great levels of bodhisattvas starting with the path of vision. These also included those retained who had been reborn in the one direction of equivalent good fortune.

[Objection:] It is not true that those above the path of accumulation [could have been in Vairochana's retinue] for many [reasons] such as having had visions of buddhas, but [also with] an incompatible perspective that would [eventually] have lead to being born in hell realms?

[Reply:] That is not correct. There are those who hold incompatible perspectives until having a true vision [of emptiness], because of the negative effect of misguided actions and the power of unethical spiritual friends. There are those who fall to lower existences, as long as they have not yet attained endurance. Yet given these [circumstances], what is to be done in order to have buddha vision? These misguided actions can be lessened and [their performers] completely brought to maturation.

How Compilers Appeared

Specifically, the compiler is the Bhagavan [in whom] all dharma is embedded in his heart; there is no other who is suitable. Dharma embedded in his heart is inconceivable gnosis; there is no other as powerful.

In general, shravakas do not have the abilities of buddhas and have no eloquence for expounding on dharma. Bodhisattvas have their own eloquence and do explain dharma in front of tathagatas, yet all of them are unsuitable as compilers. Why? Through [the vow of] bodhi-mind, the Bhagavan manifested as a bodhisattva [Samantabhadra], for it is Vajrasattva in [Akanishta] Ganavyuha who, with a bodhi-mind that is beginningless and endless, is the [Supreme] Being of all tathagatas and assumes a form kaya. As was explained above [in the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*⁸⁰²]:

E-ma-ho! I am the self-arising
{Sattva Samantabhadra who teaches;
Given that [act of] teaching, the bodiless
Assumes a sattva body.}

[Vajrasattva] entrusted to Bodhisattva Samantabhadra the leadership for teaching in Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers), who made the pledge to accept [responsibility] for the diverse circumstances of birth within emerging and decaying worlds.

In this Saha (Endurance) World in the Golden Age, the chief of Yaksha demons, Vajrapani, is master of all teaching and all secrets, as revealed in the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

After receiving the blessing of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, the blessing to completely secure living beings throughout the passage of time, in order to continuously carry out buddha deeds, one after another without break...

After receiving empowerment from Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, [Vajrapani] was entrusted to teach that...

Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, after making the pledge to teach the prior conduct of Bhagavan Vairochana in all worldly realms of Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers), assumed control over and tamed Yaksha demons. In Saha (Endurance) in the center of Jambuling, in Changlocan, the great chief of Yaksha demons dwells in a wilderness land...

For the sake of humans, Elder Ananda spoke of extraordinary secrets...

Then, this will be explained to the best retinues of the completely perfect Buddha:

It is so, Manjushri has become King Shuddhodana,

Avalokiteshvara has become Mayadevi,

Samantabhadra has become Elder Ananda... [803](#)

In this way, the qualities, deeds, empowerments, etc., of compilers are known from the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*, the *Incomprehensible Secret Sutra*, etc.

How the Bhagavan Turned the Dharma Cycles

Two subtopics are (1) method for turning the ordinary dharma cycle and (2) method for turning the extraordinary Vajrayana [cycle].

Method for Turning the Ordinary Dharma Cycle

Two subtopics are (1) refutation of incorrect ideas of others and (2) statement of our own assertions.

Refutation of Incorrect Ideas of Others

[Objection:] Some who are uninformed say that the Bhagavan turned the dharma cycle in three stages. (1) The initial turning of the dharma cycle of four [noble] truths as provisional meaning was for shravaka types [of trainees] in Varanasi. For them, the emphasis was on the assumption of existence. (2) The middle turning of the dharma cycle on Vulture [Flock] Mountain and other [locations] taught emptiness as essencelessness. For those [trainees], the emphasis was on the assumption of nonexistence. (3) The final turning of the dharma cycle in Shravasti and elsewhere started from essencelessness, then turned to the well-distinguished definitive meaning of the three cycles. According to the *Samdhi Nirmocana (Explanation of the Definitive Intent) Sutra*:

(1) The Bhagavan initially taught, from the Sage's Pulpit in Deer Park in Varanasi, the four noble truths to those genuinely engaged in the Shravakayana. This turning of the cycle generated amazement and admiration. Who among either gods or humans had ever in the world

turned an equivalent dharma? Yet this turning of the dharma cycle of the Bhagavan was surpassable, partial, of provisional meaning, and became the basis for controversy.

(2) Then, starting with the lack of an essence of phenomena, that there is no origination, no cessation, an original state of rest, and a natural complete transcendence of suffering, the Bhagavan turned the second dharma cycle. He generated amazement and admiration by extensively speaking of emptiness to those genuinely engaged in the Mahayana. Yet this turning of the dharma cycle of the Bhagavan was surpassable, partial, of provisional meaning, and became the basis for controversy.

(3) Then, starting with the lack of an essence of phenomena, that there is no origination, no cessation, an original state of rest, and a natural complete transcendence of suffering, the Bhagavan turned the third dharma cycle. He generated extreme amazement and great admiration, by making very fine distinctions for those genuinely engaged in all Yanas. This turning of the dharma cycle of the Bhagavan was unsurpassable, not partial, of definitive meaning, and did not become the basis for controversy. ⁸⁰⁴

According to the *Prajna Paramita (Perfection of Wisdom) Sutra*:

Kye-ma! The second turning of the dharma cycle in worldly realms...

[Reply:] That is not correct. If it were true that three different dharma cycles were turned, then they would have been turned sequentially in different places, which cannot be substantiated.

[Objection:] Why can it not be substantiated?

[Reply:] It cannot be substantiated as it results in many errors, such as a contradiction between canon and reason, failure to contradict the arguments of shravakas, and casting aspersion on sugatas.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 74, line 4: Shravakas have stated:

Having gone to Deer Park in Varanasi,
The turning of the unsurpassed cycle
Was marvelous and splendid.

In the region of Varanasi, starting with the four noble truths, the turning of the dharma cycle was repeated three times in twelve parts. That was done for the [spiritual] maturation of shravaka and pratyekabuddha types of trainees.

For followers of the common Mahayana, (1) the turning of the [first] cycle of the four noble truths as revealed in Varanasi placed a heavy emphasis on establishing existents [such as the five aggregates, etc.].

(2) The second turning of the cycle on Vulture Flock Mountain and other locations was the turning of the cycle of indefinable characteristics, the prajna-paramita (transcendent wisdom) dharma that taught that everything is without essence. As revealed, a heavy emphasis was placed on maintaining that everything is nonexistent in order to counter the previous emphasis on existents. The first two turnings of the cycles did not teach the Middle Way that avoids all extremes of existence and nonexistence.

(3) The third turning of the dharma cycle as in the *Samdhi Nirmocana (Explanation of the Definitive Intent) Sutra* and other sources, as revealed in Shravasti, Vulture Flock Mountain, and other locations, teaches only uncharacterizable pure awareness. As revealed to those who speak of the absence of any essence:

In the search for that very thing, initially
Everything was said to exist
With acceptance of the knowledge of just that.
Then later there was a distancing [or separation] . . .

In accordance with this statement, some believe that (1) the first revelation taught just the four noble truths and its knowledge. Afterward, (2) there was the turning of the cycle without definable characteristics. In that way, some believe that the three steps [cycles] are fine just as they are.}

Statement of Our Own Assertions

We believe that in accord with the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara (Mahayana Sutra Ornament)* at the time the revelation of the Mahayana was accomplished,

it arose all at once without prior prophecy, as revealed in the *Sandhi Vyakarana (Declaration of the Intent) Tantra*:

Without opinion, without contention,
The single pleasing vajra word
Became separate and multiple
In accord with the aptitudes of trainees.

Diverse dharmas appeared for diverse trainees as a single revelation of the Bhagavan at a single time.

[Objection:] Does this [interpretation] not contradict canonical sources as how it was explained in the *Samdhi Nirmocana (Explanation of the Definitive Intent) Sutra*?

[Reply:] That canonical source did not say that different dharmas were spoken at different times in different places. In that way, the arrangement by [topics of] speech was as separate dharmas for [diverse] trainees even though there was [in actuality] a single speech given at a single time. Enactment for the benefit [of others resulted in] arrangement by kaya (embodiment) as explanations given by many different embodiments at different locations at a single time.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 75, line 5: However, the correct view is that revelation of the dharmas of the three yantras was made all at one time, so that to some inconceivable [mind] manifestations of tathagatas [were demonstrated], to some arrangements of kayas [were demonstrated], and to some arrangements of speeches [were demonstrated]. The assertion that this definitive sequence was made in consideration of the vast majority of [diverse] trainees among the people of Jambuling is precisely the intent of that great person, Sonam Tsemo.}⁸⁰⁵

Method for Turning the Extraordinary Vajrayana [Cycle]

Two subtopics are (1) in actuality how the [Vajrayana] cycle [of continuous revelation] was turned and (2) resolution of objections.

In Actuality How the [Vajrayana] Cycle [of Continuous Revelation] Was Turned

In general, the manner of turning dharma cycles is known [to include] the revelations of Guhyamantra. Yet to explain more specifically, in general, all Guhyamantra was revealed by supreme nirmanakayas [Guhyasamaja, Hevajra, and others] prior to [the manifestation of Buddha] Shakyamuni. Later, [some Guhyamantra canon cycles] were (1) revealed as repetitions by Shakyamuni, [some cycles] were (2) revealed as repetitions not [by Shakyamuni], and [some cycles] were (3) revealed by other manifestations [of Vairochana].

(1) An example of a revelation as a [later] repetition [by Buddha Shakyamuni] is the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*. Initially, Samantabhadra revealed the introduction to the [Vajrapani] *Abhisheka Tantra* in the transitory realm of Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers). Then the Saha (Endurance) introduction was revealed in the city of Pelyonchan as the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*, as likewise:

At present, Jambuling, *etc.*

Are vast regions for [turning] dharma cycles,

[Including] the White Land and the Realm of the Gods.

[Guhyamantra] dharma that was revealed as Tantras that were spoken to ordinary [transitory] people, such as the Five Venerable Companions,⁸⁰⁶ [and in ordinary transitory places,] can be classified by speech [content]. [Guhyamantra] dharma that was revealed as spoken to extraordinary retinues, and in extraordinary places, such as the Magnificent Drepung Chorten (Treasure Mound Stupa),⁸⁰⁷ can be classified by kaya [embodiment of the revealer].

(2) [Tantras] not revealed as later repetitions [by Buddha Shakyamuni] include the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*, where is revealed at the beginning of the *Tantra* that after the *Tantra* was completed, it descended among humans. This means that [the *Tantra*] was taught after it had been passed down to Jambuling [other than through the agency of Buddha Shakyamuni]. The *Chakrasamvara Tantra* was also not revealed as a later repetition, as asserted by the Master Bhavyakirti in his *Commentary on the Root Chakrasamvara Tantra*:

This enumeration of dharma is a beginningless tantra [continuity], as it was present prior to Bhagavan Shakyamuni. When [revelations] such as the *Prajna Paramita [Sutras]* declined due to [the ravages of] time such as in the

Conflagration Eon, Bhagavan Shakyamuni once again made revelations. In contrast, such is not the same with the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*, which is inexpressible [in ordinary language] in buddha realms, practiced by heroes and heroines⁸⁰⁸ among others, and once present does not decline.

(3) [Tantras] revealed by other manifestations [of Vairochana] are the majority of Tantras, such as the *Guhyasamaja*.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 128, line 1: [For example,] when Bhagavan Buddha taught as the Guhyasamaja [supreme nirmana-]kaya manifestation, he then revealed the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*; when Bhagavan Buddha taught as the Yamantaka [supreme nirmana-]kaya manifestation, he then revealed the *Yamantaka Tantra*.}

As revealed in the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*:

Then, Vajrapani, leader of all tathagatas, spoke to all tathagatas and bodhisattvas: “Bhagavans, [this Tantra] cannot have been revealed previously to all tathagathas until the passage of as many eons as the number of atoms in all buddha fields. Bhagavan tathagatas and arhats, [this Tantra] cannot be revealed until after the nirvana of the completely perfect Buddha Marmedzay, and [not] even during the period of the great Able One, the Buddha Osrung. Why? Bhagavans, at the time for explaining the meaning of the Maha Guhya (Great Secret), there was no one among sentient beings deserving [to hear it].”

Because some scholars interpret the expression “not revealed during the period of the Buddha Osrung” as implying that revelation was made by [Buddha] Shakyamuni, they [incorrectly] think that [these Tantras] were spoken by Shakyamuni.

[Objection:] Yet what about when the place of arising is said to be the vagina of the Vajra Queen?

[Reply:] Some say that means the revelation was made when the Bhagavan was still gestating in the womb of his mother, saying that is the meaning of the vagina of the Vajra Queen. That is nonsense.

[Objection:] Why is it nonsense?

[Reply:] Because that is not explained anywhere in the Tantras, Kalpas, or treatises, and is not an account that is well-regarded. It is known [only] as a fabrication made by fabricators.

Alternatively, other scholars have accepted this account [of revelation of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* as a later repetition]. When the Bhagavan was residing in the great city of Shravasti, at a distance of three hundred miles in a country called Orgyan, there was a King Indrabhuti. Early one morning, a monk saw many objects fall from the sky. He did not know what they were. He asked the ministers, but they did not know either. Then, he inquired among the citizens, one of whom said that “in the city of Shravasti, three hundred miles from here, there resides a Buddha, the son of King Shuddhodana. These [unknown objects] are [or belong to] his retinue.” When King [Indrabhuti] listened, and when he heard the name of the Buddha, the King showed evident faith and bowed in that direction with palms joined and holding flowers. He had a vision of the Buddha residing in Shravasti together with his retinue. Having generated faith in the compassion and omniscience of the Bhagavan, he made a wish to travel there at noon the next day through the miraculous power of rapid walking.

He arrived together with his retinue [into the presence of] the Bhagavan at noon the next day. The King and his retinue then made offerings and petitioned, “We ask to be liberated from the sufferings of this world.” The [Bhagavan] replied, “The [necessary] method is to renounce domestic affairs and become homeless.” [The King] inquired, “Since we have great desire for the enjoyments of passion, is there a method for liberation that does not eliminate these [enjoyments]?”

At that time, in order to retain those passionate people, the Bhagavan entered the vagina of the Vajra Queen and, in the center of the retinue of the Queen, granted empowerment to King Indrabhuti so he could gain liberation in his [present] lifetime. In the same way, [the Buddha] pronounced the Vajrayana dharma to bring about liberation for the King and his retinue. This was taught and entrusted to the Secret Custodian [Vajrapani] who then wished to compile them.⁸⁰⁹

Others say that this well-known story describes a time-period of compilation of the [Vajrayana] dharma, yet it is to be understood that the accounting of dharma [compilation] has been continuous⁸¹⁰ since beginningless time. How? As revealed in the *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra XXVIII*:

“In the future, who will explain the true Secret Tantras to deserving sentient beings?”
Bhagavan [Buddha] replied: “Magnificent Lord Vajrapani will explain.”

{The female bhagavans then asked:
“Lord, you gave us this amazing
Deluge of gnosis nectar.
How did the Great Lord Vajrapani
Come into existence,
Such that each word spoken by you
The Sovereign Conqueror, King of Gnosis,
Was a word of his?”

Bhagavan [Buddha] replied:
“Some of you have asked a perfect question,
Female bhagavans, listen carefully.}
Great Lord Vajrapani
Is Vajradhara, Universal [Supreme] Being.
There is continuous creation and destruction
In infinite transitory worlds,
Yet nothing whatsoever is originated from him,
The self-arisen Supreme Ishvara (All-Mighty),
{Who is Vajrapani,
The unoriginated twelve gnoses.
From the original five summits
The five Tathagatas arose.
From the periphery came the five elements,
From the center came the six types of sentient beings.
Given the concealed significance of all perspectives,
[Vajrapani] enacted a multiplicity of forms.

To some, Vajradhara,}
To some, a form of buddha,
To some, a form of heruka,
{To some, a tathagata,
To some, a form of bodhisattva,
To some, present as one of the shravakas,

To some, the explicator, Joyous Padma,
To some, present as a reader,}
To some, writer of Tantras and treatises,
To some, the archiver...”⁸¹¹

In order to retain the passionate in ancient times of the birth and death of transitory worlds, the Bhagavan displayed unorthodox magic, such as entrance into the vagina of the [Vajra] Queen, and made revelations that in later time were brought to light through the compilations of Vajrapani. Ancient stories that explain the compilations are found in the *Secret Accomplishment* described below. Further, some scholars say, as according to the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri)*:

Revealed by past buddhas,
To be revealed by future buddhas,
Arising complete from the present buddha,
This is what is revealed again and again.

Revealed initially [by Vairochana] and revealed [again] by the present Buddha [Shakyamuni], [Tantras] are revealed continuously.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 76, line 5: Specifically, the *Hevajra Tantra* was revealed initially by the sambhogakaya [Vairochana], intermediately by the supreme nirmanakaya [Hevajra], and later as a repetition by the mighty Shakyamuni in Jambuling. As stated in the *Commentary on the Vajramala Tantra*:

Subsequently, there was the great teaching of the magnificent *Hevajra Tantra* here in Jambuling for the purpose of subduing the four Maras. The teaching of the abbreviated Tantra included the explanatory⁸¹²*Tantra*.⁸¹³

Therefore, both the abbreviated and extensive⁸¹⁴*Hevajra Tantras* were revealed [as a repetition] by Shakyamuni himself. Further, the *Commentary [on the Two-Part Hevajra Tantra]* written by Master Kamadhenu states:

Here, the Bhagavan resided for eighty years in Jambuling, and in all that time this precious [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* was not revealed over and over again, but was revealed just one time. Accordingly, that time alone surpassed all other times.

Therefore, the nirmanakaya Shakyamuni revealed [the *Hevajra Tantra* just one time] in Jambuling.}

Resolution of Objections

There are two subtopics regarding the resolution of objections to the revelation of Guhyamantra: (1) resolution of objections regarding the time of revelation and (2) resolution of objections regarding the teacher.

(1) [Objection:] Is there not a contradiction between the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri)*, which explains that revelation [of the Tantras] was made by all buddhas of the three times, and the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*, which explains that there was no revelation [of the Tantras] between [the appearances of] Buddhas Marmedzay and Osrung?

[Reply:] Some in accord with the tradition of Jnanapada assert that [continuous] revelation is under the control of sambhogakaya Buddha [Vairochana], and [periods of] nonrevelation are under the control of nirmanakayas, when not expressed by nirmanakayas, and during that time also not expressed by [compiler] Vajrapani himself. Here, the “in-between period” means that there has been no gap between what happened before and what happened after.

[Objection:] Yet, some claim that [continuous] revelation refers to other Guhyamantra [Tantras] in general and that nonrevelation refers only to the *Guhyasamaja [Tantra]*.

[Reply:] However, it is asserted by many, such as Master Chandrakirti [in the *Guhyasamaja* lineage], that [continuous] revelation is the definitive meaning and nonrevelation is just [a provisional meaning] exaggeration concerning the *Guhyasamaja*. For example, this is the same as saying that all buddhas make [continuous] revelations, yet [particular] turnings of dharma cycles have not [necessarily] occurred in transitory realms. This is [also] the same as rejecting the statement that all buddhas and bodhisattvas become apprehensive [about

teaching Vajrayana and hence are reluctant to teach Vajrayana at certain times and places]. [This is also] the same assertion as saying that all buddhas make one and the same revelation, but while [a revelation] may have been heard elsewhere at a given time, [that revelation] was not [necessarily heard here [in Jambuling]. This clarifies the [apparent] contradiction between revelations being made again and again [continuously], and being heard at specific times [only].

Master Aryadeva made this assertion in his *Charya Melapaka Pradipa (Lamp That Integrates the Practices)*:

Extracted from perfect Tantras, the division of sadhanas [practice manuals] shines light [on the meaning of the Tantras] like a butter-lamp, but it is incorrect [to claim] that they preceded [the Tantras]. Since in the time of the Perfect, One-Third and One-Half Eons, there were the very best of qualities [amongst practitioners], absolute just-as-is was demonstrated by means of vast numbers of words and the code words in the Tantras, such that realization could be gained by them [alone and sadhanas were therefore unnecessary]. Now, in the Confrontation Eon... [815](#)

As indicated in this quotation, [Aryadeva] made the assumption that from the Perfect Eon and beyond the Tantras existed; but sadhanas did not, such that when Shakyamuni arose in the Confrontation Eon, [the Tantras] had already been in existence before him.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 131, line 2: Droway Gonpo Pakpa⁸¹⁶ asserted that [continuous] revelation by buddhas of the three times was intended for the best trainees, and that [periods of] nonrevelation were intended for ordinary trainees [only].}

(2) [Objection:] If [the Tantras] existed prior to Shakyamuni, then the name [for the Buddha] in the following [Tantra] quotation could not refer only to Shakyamuni:

The supreme Lion of the Shakyas,
After conquering the host of very violent demons
With his great power [of gnosis],
Transcended suffering after turning the cycle.

[Reply:] This name does indeed occur [in the Tantras], but given that there is

no distinction between Bhagavan Vairochana of former time and [Buddha] Shakyamuni of present time, then [this name] was spoken by the compiler in order to use an exalted name that would eliminate any distinction [between sambhogakaya Vairochana and nirmanakayas]. For example, Venerable Maudgalyayana committed many prior deeds during immeasurable past lifetimes; yet the Bhagavan explained that those deeds by Maudgalyayana were experienced or matured in the same Maudgalyayana and not in any other earth, water, fire, or air. Therefore, there is no contradiction in [using] a name for Shakyamuni [in the Tantras].

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 131, line 5: Therefore, it must be understood that it is ultimately true that the Guhyamantrayana was revealed [continuously] by all buddhas of the three times, and that what it was said in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* is just an exaggeration of that Tantra:

What was not revealed is not spoken of, and cannot be spoken of...}

How the Revelations Were Compiled

There are three subtopics: (1) how [three] coincident compilations of the Shravaka[yana] were made, (2) how the Mahayana was compiled, and (3) how the Guhyamantra was compiled.

How [Three] Coincident Compilations of the Shravaka[yana] Were Made

The complete Shravaka[yana] canon [was compiled] after five hundred arhats gathered at Vimalayana Cave. Sutras were compiled by Ananda, Vinaya was compiled by Upali, and Abhidharma was compiled by Kashyapa.⁸¹⁷

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 78, line 3: This was the first compilation [of the Shravakayana]. Subsequently, Yasha and seven hundred other arhats gathered and expressed [concern over] ten material [acquisitions being made by other monks]. After purifying [renewing] their vows, they repudiated the ten improper bases [of conduct].⁸¹⁸ This was the second compilation.

Then much later, the four root sects of the monastic community, as had been taught for a long time by the monk Mahadeva, subdivided into eighteen different

sects⁸¹⁹ after many different viewpoints and practices had developed. At that time, three hundred years had passed since Buddha [Shakyamuni] had transcended suffering [passed away]. In order to bring an end to these differences, the Arhat Senge (Lion) in Jalandhara established a [common] basis [for all monastic communities]. This is asserted to have been the third compilation.}

How the Mahayana Was Compiled

Some scholars say that the Mahayana Sutras were compiled in the southern region called Vimalasambhava in a gathering of 900 million bodhisattvas. However, this is in great error as [this gathering] never took place.⁸²⁰ Nevertheless, both the Guhyamantra and the uncommon Mahayana were compiled by Vajrapani. The scholar Vasubandhu stated in his *Prajna Paramita Commentary*:

After venerable Maitreya had made the request of Bodhisattva Vajrapani, he stated under oath within the retinue that “I have heard this *Prajna Paramita*.”

As to whether [the Mahayana] was compiled in various locations, this can neither be refuted nor proven.

How Guhyamantra Was Compiled

Two subtopics are (1) refutation of incorrect views of others and (2) statement of our own assertions.

Refutation of Incorrect Views of Others

[Objection:] Here, some say that there is a quotation that occurs in the *Samvarodayottara (Continuation of the Confirmation of Great Ecstasy) Tantra*:⁸²¹

One hundred and twelve years
After I have gone from here,
The definitive essence of my teachings
Will become well-known in the three realms of the gods.
In the southeast of Jambuling
On a mountain called Shri.
Through blessings the equal of my compassion,
A King called Ja
Will be given permission by Vajrapani

[To bring them forth] for the best among humans.
As this will accomplish supreme bodhi-mind,
The pouring from one vessel to another should always be venerated.

According to this, twenty years after Shakyamuni passed into nirvana, in the southeast of the region of Zahor called Orgyan, uncountable numbers of books written with molten vaidurya in golden volumes descended onto the palace roof of King Ja or Indrabhuti. These were read and understood by the King, who became accomplished by practicing them. Some say that the King did not comprehend them, and after inviting the monk Kukuri [to help explain them], they were still not [completely] understood. After comprehending a chapter called *Vajrasattva's Vision*, and practicing it, the complete set of eighteen [Maha Yoga] Tantras became known as *Vajrasattva's Vision*. Then the King and his retinue all became accomplished [in practicing them].⁸²² There are many stories that are told such as how these then spread to others, but I will not write them here.

[Reply:] Why not write about these [accounts]? Because fabricators have spoken about whatever substantiates their own fabrications. What is the fabrication? It is that Vajrapani explained [the Tantras] to King Ja, [even though] this cannot be refuted [since there are “self-serving” authoritative sources]. If accomplishment through practice could be gained just by looking at volumes [of books], that would contradict the statement:

Taking on Guhyamantra by oneself
Is the sole cause for embodiment in hell,

and contradict the explanation that accomplishment cannot occur without a lama.

Furthermore, the claim that the country of Orgyan lies in a southeast direction contradicts what is obvious and commonly known.⁸²³ Who could write about so many false stories such as these? They must be discarded. Likewise, there are many other contradictions here and there, such as in the divisions of the classes of Tantras, as explained by these [proponents]. Because the refutations can be learned elsewhere, they have not been written here.

[Objection:] Nevertheless, how can the canonical *Samvarodayottara* (*Continuation of the Confirmation of Great Ecstasy*) Tantra be interpreted when

it says “will become well-known in the three realms of the gods”?

[Reply:] In the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*, there is indeed a prophecy that in the city of Tikirti in the southeast region, King Radiant Moon would be granted empowerment in the manifest mandalas by Vajrapani, followed by turning the cycle of [Guhyamantra] dharma, but there was no prophecy that the dharma would be compiled in Orgyan.

Statement of Our Own Assertions

As to our own assertions as to how Guhyamantrayana was compiled, this is how I heard it from my own Lama [Kunga Nyingpo], which is the same as appears in the Tantras, such as in the *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra XXVIII*:

“In the future, who will explain the true secret Tantras to deserving sentient beings?” The Bhagavan replied: “Magnificent Lord Vajrapani will explain.”⁸²⁴

[Likewise] in the Yogini Tantra called *Secret Lamp*:⁸²⁵

“In the future, who will understand and explain the great secret Tantras?”

The Buddha replied: “In a place called Shri Maha Vajra in the northwestern region of Orgyan, King Indrabhuti will understand and explain [the Tantras], clarifying them for sentient beings.”

“Is King Indrabhuti a master of the ten levels?”

The Buddha replied: “He was the one who was lauded as the King in the *Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra*. The gnosis kaya of Vajrapani is a master of the ten levels, and his nirmanakaya [King Indrabhuti] is also a master of the ten levels.”

Accordingly, the location for compilation was Orgyan, the compiler was Vajrapani, and the time [of compilation] was after the Bhagavan’s passing into nirvana. This account has been spoken of above,⁸²⁶ when Indrabhuti asked questions of the Bhagavan when he resided in Shravasti.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 134, line 2: From the *Vajrapani Abhisheka (Vajrapani Empowerment) Tantra*:

After receiving the blessing, in order that Bodhisattva Samantabhadra could continuously enact buddha deeds one after another without interruption, the blessing was completely retained from the time of empowerment...

After receiving empowerment, Bodhisattva Samantabhadra was permitted to teach...

After the Bodhisattva named Samantabhadra made prayers to be taught the activities of Bhagavan Vairochana in the transitory universe of Kusumatala-Garbha-Alamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers), he was able to fully gain control over the Nojin and [compel] the great leader of the Nojin in Changlochen (Willow Grove)⁸²⁷ in the center of Jambuling [the southern continent] in this Saha (Endurance) World to remain in the remote wilderness...

From the *Uncommon Secret*:⁸²⁸

Afterward, the very best retinue of the completely perfect Buddha will be explained. Thus Manjushri will become King Shuddhodana [father of Shakyamuni], Avalokiteshvara will become Mayadevi [mother of Shakyamuni], Shridevi will become Drakdzin [wife of Shakyamuni], Vajrasattva will become Rahula [son of Shakyamuni], Nirvaranaviskambhin will become Shariputra [disciple of Shakyamuni], Lhawangpo will become Lhajin, Samantabhadra will become elder Ananda...

Therefore, within the country of Orgyan, the compilers were Samantabhadra and Vajrapani. At a later time, elder Ananda was made a compiler at the time when the Bhagavan was present.}

What was the manner of compilation? The Bhagavan taught those with a passionate nature by enacting miraculous [manifestations]. Vajrapani, Lord of all tathagatas, revealed [the Tantras] for the lustful minds of the passionate, to enact maturation of their continuums after granting empowerment to all who were deserving, as revealed in the *Secret Accomplishment*:⁸²⁹

After transforming into a body ornamented with the thirty-two characteristics of a great being, with a vajra mind and gnosis [perceiving] the nature of illusion, the [Supreme] Being [as Vajrapani] taught buddhas and bodhisattvas the definitive absolute, [beginning] with the expression “Thus have I heard...”

Here is the compiler,
No other exists,
The sole [Supreme] Being who speaks,
The vajra mind that enacts the Tantras.

Accordingly, understand that for those inclined toward definitive meaning, the main body of a Tantra that is introduced by “Thus [have I heard] . . .” [expresses] the essence of what is to be practiced. Understand that for those of lesser aptitude, Bhagavan Vajrapani compiled what he heard from Bhagavan [Vairochana]. Know that at the time buddhas and bodhisattvas were taught the lineage accounts as “Thus have I heard... ,” compilations were made at the time Bhagavan [Vairochana] was present.⁸³⁰

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 136, line 3: For those of lesser aptitude, the teacher and compiler just appear to be separate; in the ultimate sense, the two are one.}

In this way, Vajrapani compiled all Tantras and gave them to King [Indrabhuti] and his retinue. After they [practiced them and] attained siddhis (special powers), [they became] naturally accomplished heroes and yoginis. Then the country of Orgyan became deserted, and there arose a great lake filled with nagas (serpents). Then Vajrapani wrote down all Tantras in golden volumes with molten vaidurya. Vajrapani brought the nagas in that great lake to [spiritual] maturity and entrusted the volumes of the Tantras to them. Then the nagas gradually transformed into human form and built a city on the shores of the lake. Through practicing the Vajrayana, most of them [the naga humans] attained [siddhis]. Those that did not become accomplished did not transform into humans. Most of the women became dakinis.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 136, line 3: [To clarify and slightly modify the above,] after the Bhagavan had liberated King Indrabhuti and his retinue, all Tantras were entrusted to Vajrapani. After he had compiled all Tantras, they were given to King Indrabhuti and his retinue by which they attained siddhis. This Indrabhuti is the greater one. Then after a long time, the country of Orgyan became deserted, and there arose a great lake filled with

nagas (serpents). Then Vajrapani wrote down all Tantras in golden volumes with molten vaidurya. Vajrapani brought the nagas in that great lake to [spiritual] maturity and entrusted the volumes of the Tantras to them. Through practice, most of them attained siddhis. Those that did not attain [siddhis] became humans and built a city on the shores of the lake. Through practicing the Vajrayana, most of them [the naga humans] attained siddhis. Most of the women became dakinis.} ⁸³¹

This account is today a famous legend, and Orgyan is known as the Land of the Dakinis. Gradually it came about that kings of that country practiced only dharma. This legend is elucidated in the *Commentary to Simultaneous Accomplishment*. Today, there are those who claim to be descendents of the first King Indrabhuti and have lately assumed his name. The Orgyan of the northern region is called the Land of Excellence.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 80, line 3: [There were three kings of Orgyan named Indrabhuti. The Indrabhuti mentioned above is the greater Indrabhuti.] Some say that during the time [that nagas transformed into humans], the middling Indrabhuti wrote the *Jnana Siddhi (Accomplishment of Gnosis)*. At that time, only kings of that country possessed the dharma. The lesser Indrabhuti wrote the *Accomplishment of the Absolute* and other [texts] that gradually appeared. The legendary history of kings of that land is clearly explained in the *Commentary to Simultaneous Accomplishment*. Some later scholars made a refutation stating that accounts of the origin of Guhyamantra did not appear in the *Commentary to Simultaneous Accomplishment*, saying that the explanation of the legend of how the kings attained accomplishments ends up not reaching [satisfying] the basic intent [of the Buddha].}

How [Tantra] Revelations Spread to Other Lands

It is said that in the southern region, a King Visukalpa, who adhered to the Shravakayana, had a dream in which he traveled to Orgyan and heard about attaining [the level of] Vajradhara in one lifetime. After he awakened, he had no doubt that he had [actually] traveled there. In Orgyan, he had met a woman [who was a dakini]. After serving her, he was blessed by her and given the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* and *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*. He then carried them back to the southern region and spread them there. ⁸³²

In the same way, many masters brought out many [other] Tantras from

Orgyan. It is said that the *Hevajra Tantra* was brought out by the great master Dombi Heruka.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 81, line 3: [The *Hevajra Tantra*] was also brought out by the Lord of Yogins, Virupa himself; there is no contradiction [in attributing the drawing out] to both.⁸³³}⁸³⁴

[Objection:] Some say that Master Nagarjuna stole [the *Hevajra Tantra*] while pretending to be a fool.⁸³⁵

[Reply:] That is a laughing matter. Why is it a laughing matter? Because it denigrates a master, and [someone] who is on the first [bodhisattva] level is without any pretense [that would lead] to stealing. That also denigrates a dakini if he had stolen it [from her], for how else would he have acquired the books if she had not recognized him as Nagarjuna [and taken him for a fool instead]? That [story] also denigrates our own dharma, as it would then be a lineage derived from stolen books.

In the same way, Master Kukuripa brought out the *Mahamaya Tantra*, and Master Lalitavajra brought out the *Vajrabhairava Tantra*. There are an inconceivable number [of instances of Tantras being brought out]. Accounts of these masters and accounts of how these Tantras were translated into Tibetan can be learned elsewhere.⁸³⁶

This [account] of the origin of Guhyamantra was written [based] primarily on my Lama's words;

The multitude of Tantras, Sutras, and treatises have been well summarized;

In one place clarification has been made while eliminating any fabrication;

May the Noble Ones be pleased!

Part II
Meaning of Titles

Chapter 8

Meaning of the Hevajra Tantra Cycle Titles

*Illuminated through comprehensive titles, glorified through ornamental titles,
That do honor to the close approach to pacification [of cyclic existence],
Listen while I now explain the learned tradition of the significance of [Tantra] titles
That brings realization of the meaning of “tantra” just through understanding the titles
alone.*

*Supreme nondual gnosis is mind-itself,
The nature of which is beyond all expression,
Whose defining characteristic is clarity, and whose awareness is continuous.
Expressed meaning is termed continuity [tantra],
Whose open dimension is continuity of meaning, and
Whose expression is inexpressible as the space of all phenomena;
Accomplishment of the expressed is no laughing matter.*

*In actuality, the three of source, method, and result [continuities] are inseparable,
Yet by working backwards, the division into three is made.*

*From the beginning beyond fabrication yet, although mind-itself [has seemingly become]
polluted,
That the result can be generated through conditions is source continuity.*

*Dharma conditions elicit result[continuity] from source [continuity],
Through method continuity that is the practice of the maturing and liberating paths.*

*After all momentary imperfections have been eliminated by method [continuity],
Result continuity is the [full] manifestation of awakened qualities.*

Specifically, for all Tantra titles,

Composition commonly starts with [the result continuity of] completely perfect perfect buddha gnosis,

With the other two [source and method continuities] implied.

Composition of most [Tantra] titles is indicative of result [continuity].

Some are composed for both method and result [continuities as well];

Likewise, some are seen that are composed for means of expression [such as]

[The name of] the compiler, length of compilation, etc.

Specifically, the title of the Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra is the

Result continuity of the nondual union of

Joyous compassion that benefits sentient beings and the

Great supreme vajra of objectless wisdom.

Given that, the text also points to path and source [continuities]:

Natural “Joyous Vajra” is the source union of clear light and emptiness;

Practice “Joyous Vajra” is the path union of means and wisdom;

Result “Joyous Vajra” is the union of the two kayas.

Indivisible essence [of all three] is transformation into awakened qualities.

Since the nature of source continuity is not suppressed by discursive thought,

Method continuity eliminates incidental discursive thought,

And result continuity is liberation from [all] incidental discursive thought,

The title “King of Tantras” is ascribed [to Hevajra].

Likewise the Samputa (Perfect Union Tantra) title is indicative of result [continuity].

For the [Comprehensible King] Superior [Sky Traveler] Vajra Canopy Tantra,

“Superior” means far distant from imperfections that have been eliminated,

Dharmakaya is inconceivable as “Sky,” and as “Traveler” [moves] equally [throughout] space,

[Two] form kayas magically “Travel” in the “Sky” through [buddha] realms.

“Vajra” is objectless wisdom,

*“Canopy” is great gnosis that permeates everywhere,
“Comprehensible” is comprehension through discursive thought;
[Therefore,] this [title] designation is principally from the side of result[continuity].*

*Literary expression that demonstrates the expressed three continuities
Is the understanding of letters, words, and phrases
Which take form as the association between language and meaning;
That expression is the definition of language continuity.*

*As an aid to the generation of meaning in a continuum [of mind]
And to have the result of language continuity present in a [comprehending] mind,
Language continuity is made into volumes [of written] compositions,
From the words spoken as explanation by the noblest birth [buddha].*

*Since according to Abhi[dharma] literature, words, phrases, and letters
Belong to [either the category of] form or compositional aggregates,
Does this not contradict that language continuity appears as a relative perception?
Since [the former] is the assertion of the two schools of shravakas,
Whereas all of Mahayana believes that all appearances are relative
And that relative perception is an illusion,
There is no error of contradiction [with respect to] earlier literature.*

*Sambhoga[kaya] dharma speech continuity as in all Tantras,
For bodhisattvas in attendance to sambhogakayas,
Is accepted in composition as an uncommonly known style [of writing],
With all definitions, designations, and terms used as above.*

*Expressed [meaning] is nondual gnosis, meaning continuity;
Purpose is to take to heart [the practice] of the three continuities;
Reason for the purpose is to manifest the inseparability of the three continuities;
Interrelationship is cause and effect as method and method derivative.*

Source continuity is the supreme object of study, contemplation, and meditation;
Method continuity is thorough purification through perspective, meditation, and activity;
Result continuity is ultimate elimination, realization, and awakened action;
May language continuity retain, protect, and increase this virtue!

The two main topics are (1) expressed meaning of tantra [as continuity] and (2) means of literary expression in Tantras.

Expressed Meaning of Tantra [as Continuity]

There are five subtopics: (1) general explanation of the term “tantra,” (2) threefold division of tantra, (3) delineation of the [threefold] terminology, (4) delineation of means and wisdom in the title of the [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*, and (5) [the *Hevajra Tantra* cycle as] the “King” [of Tantras].

General Explanation of the Term “Tantra”

In general, “tantra” refers to nondual [subject-object] gnosis that is mind-itself. When there is an unbroken stream from beginningless time of a defective mind through to [the perfect mind of] buddha, that continuity is called “tantra,” as in the *Continuation of the Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*, the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*, and the *Mayajala (Net of Illusion) Tantra*:

Continuity is called “tantra” . . .

Threefold Division of Tantra

Continuity of mind is threefold: source, method, and result continuities. First, source continuity is the circumstance of sentient beings [caught] in the cycle of existence. In between, method continuity is entrance into the [spiritual] path. [At the end,] result continuity is the result of accomplishing gnosis kaya. From the *Continuation of the Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra* XVIII, 34:

Continuity is called “tantra”;
When divided, continuity has three aspects:
Ground, nature,
And inalienability.

Nature is the source aspect,
Ground is termed method,
Accordingly, inalienability is the result;
These three summarize the meaning of “tantra.”⁸³⁷

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 72, line 3: The meaning of what “is called tantra” is “continuity.” “When divided, continuity has three aspects.” What are they? “Ground” is method continuity; “nature” is mind which is source continuity; “inalienability” is result continuity. [These four lines] are the summary. In detail, “nature” is the phenomenon of mind just-as-is, “aspect” is the clear light of tathagata essence which is source continuity, because it is the “source” of path and result dharmas. The “ground” or source of result continuity is the maturing and liberating paths together with auxiliary [practices], which “is termed method,” since the arising and presence of result continuity is dependent on that method. “Accordingly,” because it is not possible to be alienated [from buddha] by a collection of incidental imperfections, “inalienability is the result” continuity, since it is the result of the path. “These three summarize” all “meaning” expressed in “tantra.”}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 137, line 5: Mind-itself has been free from any fabrications from the very beginning, yet just its single characteristic of clarity is an unbroken continuity from sentient beings to buddhas; when the [right] conditions have been met with, a suitable result is generated. The *Hevajra* [*Tantra*] is the undivided demonstration and designation of essence of indivisible wisdom and means. As the *King* [of Tantras], [*Hevajra*] acts to overcome the nature of conceptualization and eliminate incidental conceptualization.}

Delineation of the [Threefold] Terminology

[The threefold terminology is (1) source continuity, (2) method continuity, and (3) result continuity.]

Source Continuity

Source refers to a cause that is at present unmaterialized, yet upon meeting with common circumstances results in a commensurate effect, as in the example of a seed planted in a pot. Accordingly, when at present a mind just-as-is has not yet been able to actualize buddha, but upon meeting with the [appropriate]

means buddha then arises, that is termed the source of buddha. From the *Hevajra Tantra* II, iv, 69:

Sentient beings are buddhas,
Yet temporarily are afflicted with faults,
Who after purification manifest as buddhas. [838](#)

How is the source continuous? Circumstantially, sentient beings fall into one of the six [buddha family] types, which lead to [the method of] many maturing and liberating paths and diverse results. Yet, given that the essence of mind is unchanging, that [source] continuity is “tantra.” From the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*:

As long as the sky does not fall,
For that length of time, mind also endures.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Gyaltzen, page 27, line 5: Source continuity is the complete enrichment with virtuous practices of the mindstream continuum of a member of the Mahayana family. Alternatively, it is the mind of sentient beings just-as-is.}

Method Continuity

Method is the means that when applied to the source elicits the [intended] result, as does water and fertilizer [applied to seed planted in a pot]. Here, method is the maturing and liberating paths with corollary practices, as [implied] in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

In order to increase gnosis in sentient beings,
Methods were taught by buddhas.

How is the method continuous? Since the lineage of instruction is unbroken, then experience of samadhi is also unbroken, as in the *Samputa Tantra*:

Authentic commentaries, teachers,

Canon and subsequent [commentaries], pure awareness of just-as-is,
Hidden meaning of the main content is knowledge
That continues through the lineage from one [member] to the next.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 24, line 1: “Authentic commentaries” have the best benefit for oneself as from Vajrasattva, because they alone explain the incontrovertible dharma and no other. For that reason, [make] a close connection with “teachers” who have “pure awareness of just-as-is.” There is no other [way] to become learned than the excellent admonition to engage in habitual activity of acceptance and rejection with respect to other than that which makes a direct perception of reality itself, together with the source of what is accepted and rejected. “Hidden meaning” is the essence of what is expressed that is not an activity, such as making easy [to understand] the definitive meaning of “canon and subsequent [commentaries]” under causal circumstances. The “main content” becomes clear under the circumstances of the result through the progression of study, contemplation, and meditation. This is made manifest as the highest ultimate. That is “knowledge” through special instruction that “continues through the lineage from one [member] to the next.”}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 72, line 3: [There are four authenticities:] (1) “authentic canon,” the complete buddha corpus, (2) “authentic... subsequent [commentaries]” that unravel the incontrovertible [buddha] intent, such as [distinguishing] provisional meaning and definitive meaning, (3) “authentic... teachers” who give instruction on the above without mistake, and (4) “authentic” practice of “pure awareness of just-as-is,” as gnosis that is the indicated meaning.⁸³⁹ “Hidden meaning” in the delineation of these four is the “main content,” the two processes [of generation and completion], “knowledge” of special instruction “that continues through the lineage” of venerable lamas “from one to the next.”}

Also in the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, viii, 56:

Like the continuous flow of water
And the bright flame tip of the oil lamp,
Day and night, the [*Hevajra*] practitioner
Always remains in meditative equipoise.⁸⁴⁰

From the *Bodhicharyavatara (Entrance into Bodhisattva Practice)* I, [17-]19:

{Although great results arise while in cyclic existence,
From a mind intent on bodhi,
Continuous merit does not arise
The same as for a mind engaging in bodhi.

When in order to completely liberate
Infinite realms of sentient beings,
The mind [of engagement] is completely taken on
With an incontrovertible intent,

Then, even when asleep or not conscientious,
The force of merit [of that engagement]}
Thoroughly arises in vast amounts equal [in extent] to the sky
In a continuous, unbroken stream.

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 24, line 5: After completely taking on or generating the bodhi-mind of engagement, “even when asleep or not conscientious, the force of merit” has a specialty of duration in being a “continuous, unbroken stream,” has specialty of quantity in being “in vast amounts” and [has specialty of] scale in “thoroughly arising... equal [in extent] to the sky.”}

Result Continuity

Result is that which becomes manifest based on a [corresponding] source, such as flowers and ripened fruit [grown from seeds planted in a pot]. When mind-itself accomplishes buddha, that is called the result, as in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

Eight [indicators realize] the wish of yoga practitioners,
For the meaningful result of buddha.

{Yeshe Gyaltzen, page 509, line 2: The first of the “eight” indicators is recognition of the vision of lamp[like] forms. [This and the subsequent seven

lead to] the attainment of the “meaningful” ultimate “result of buddha,” accomplishment of [supreme] siddhi that is “the wish of yoga practitioners.”}

How is the result continuous? It is continuous because the flow is permanently unbroken, as in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara IX*, 66:

{These three [kayas] are equivalent
In basis, intention, and action;}
These [three] are eternal
By nature, ceaseless, and continuous.⁸⁴¹

Dharmakaya is “by nature” permanent and is “continuous” because it is invariable. Sambhogakaya is “continuous” because perfect [full] utilization of phenomena is “ceaseless.” Nirmanakaya is “continuous” because the [“ceaseless”] cycle of beneficent activity is unbroken. From the *Samputa Tantra*:

Acting continuously, the Bhagavan does not transcend to Akanishta.

As sentient beings continuously wander, recycling through a multitude of phenomenal gateways, completely pure Bhagavans reside simultaneously [with them] in the cycle of existence.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 27, line 6: Result continuity is accomplishment of the Supreme Being Maha Vairochana with four kayas and five gnoses that possess [all] inalienable awakened qualities, such as ten powers.⁸⁴² Also included are special qualities of the common path. In the *Charyamela Pakapradipa Commentary* by Shakyamitra:⁸⁴³

The meaning [of tantra] includes three aspects:
Source, method, and result.
Source is the Mahayana family
Adorned with virtuous practices.
Method has two aspects:
Empowerment and associated practices.
Result is accomplishment of three kayas as well as common [siddhis],

Or alternatively, is [complete] elimination [of all imperfections].

What is it that is continuous? Sequential circumstances of the six kinds [of sentient beings], many maturing and liberating [practices] of the path and various results are all continuous; the lineage of oral instructions and experiences of samadhi are unbroken; nature of dharmakaya is permanent, sambhogakaya is continuous enjoyment of phenomena, and nirmanakayas [engage in] continuous activities [of benefit to all sentient beings].}

Delineation of Means and Wisdom in the Titles of [Literary] Tantras

Having explained the general meaning of tantra [as the three continuities], now the meaning of [titles of] specific [literary] Tantras will be explained. [Two subtopics are (1) meaning of Tantra titles generally, and (2) meaning of the title *Hevajra Tantra* specifically.]

[Meaning of Tantra Titles Generally]

(1) Starting with the most common [type], Tantra titles are designated according to result continuity, completely perfect buddha gnosis, with source and method continuities having implied association with the titles. Examples are the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra)*, *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets)*, and *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantras*.

(2) Some [Tantra titles] are designated according to both result and method continuities, such as the *Tattvasamgraha (Definitive Compilation) Tantra*.

(3) Some titles refer to method continuity only, such as the *Susiddhikara (Well-Accomplished) Tantra*.

(4) Likewise, some are titled after the name of the petitioner, such as the *Subahu Paripricha (Questions of Subahu) Tantra*.

(5) Some are titled based on the length of the volume, such as the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Tantra*. There are many other [kinds of titles].

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 30, line 1: As for the purpose in the composition [of Tantra titles], in general the names of titles alone should convey meaning, through knowledge of conventional and designated meanings of the

names. When spoken in the Sanskrit language, [titles] are genuine originals that invoke [beneficial] habitual associations [or collective memories]. When titles are spoken in the Tibetan language, the meaning is easy to understand and the words are easy [for Tibetans] to remember. When spoken in both languages, the combination of the languages presents to the intellect a little of the translation method⁸⁴⁴ and [engenders] recollection of the graciousness of the translators.}

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 26, line 1: [For example,] in Sanskrit the title is *Hevajra*, in the language of snow-bound Tibet the translated title is *Kye Dorje (Joyous Vajra)*, *Tantra* is [translated as] *Gyu (Continuity)*, *Raja* is *Gyalpo (King)*, and *Nama* is *Zhejawa (as Titled)*.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 633, line 3: In general, the reasons that [Tantras are] designated just by titles is that [titles] are easy for interpreters to express, easy for listeners to understand, and easy to commonly take or leave through knowing the subject matter based on the terminology. Specifically, the reason for designating the title of the *Hevajra Tantra* is that upon hearing this title, persons with the best faculties can gain realization of the meaning of tantra, persons with average faculties can grasp with certainty what is expressed, and persons with the least faculties can make associations with the meaning of the title.}

[Meaning of the Title Hevajra Tantra Specifically]

Take as one example, *Hevajra Tantra* I, i, 7 [where the title is defined within the Tantra]:

He is great compassion,
Vajra expresses wisdom;
Means and wisdom are the essence of this *Tantra*.
Listen, as I will now explain.⁸⁴⁵

He refers to compassion, which is means; wisdom resembles the *Vajra*. Accordingly, *Hevajra* is the union of great objectless compassion and great wisdom of buddha, which is result continuity.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 26, line 2: *He* refers to great

compassion, which is the part of means. In general, there are three kinds of compassion:

(1) First is compassion focussed on sentient beings, where the wish is made for freedom from the three kinds of suffering and the causes of suffering while focussed on the mass of all sentient beings without any left out. This takes the form of the wish [for all sentient beings] to enter the city of great ecstasy.

(2) Second is compassion focussed on [the nature of] phenomena, in which the three realms [of sentient beings] are just mind, since sentient beings do not exist in the ultimate sense. Accordingly, the focus on just mind takes the same form as the first.

(3) Third is nonobjectified compassion, in which all phenomena are discerned as without [inherently existing] substance. This [compassion] has the feature of focusing on that [emptiness].

The first [compassion] is for beginning bodhisattvas; the second is for bodhisattvas who have entered the [ten] levels; the third is the noble heart compassion of buddhas.

Vajra is the part of wisdom, ultimate gnosis that illuminates the inseparable nature of the two truths [relative and absolute], indivisible like vajra [diamond].}

Out of necessity, there is also a path [method continuity] *Hevajra* for accomplishment of result [continuity], and a source [continuity] *Hevajra*, [thereby constituting] the triple continuity *Hevajra*, as stated by Dinaga:

Nondual perfection of wisdom

Is the gnosis of tathagatas;

In application of the meaning of what is to be accomplished,

That phrase is used for both the canon [source] and the path [method].

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 24, line 6: The actuality of the “perfection of wisdom” is ultimate “gnosis” of nonduality of subject and object. That is “tathagata,” completely perfect buddha. By “application” of the result “to be

accomplished” to that [source], the cause is closely designated by the “phrase” for result. In the “canon,” the expressed intent is the “perfection of wisdom,” for which there is expression that gives close direction to that [intent]; the name expressed implies [a means of] expression.}

{Yeshe Gyaltzen, page 509, line 3: By “application” of the result “to be accomplished” to that [source], by the approximate application of the expressed meaning of the “perfection of wisdom” to that [method], both the “canon” and progression in stages along the “path” are designated by the “phrase” “perfection of wisdom.” The source is designated by the name for the result, and the expression is designated by the words for the expressed.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 74, line 1: The two venerable brothers⁸⁴⁶ said:

Hevajra is nonduality;
Hevajra is gnosis.
Language for both canon and path
Contains the meaning to be accomplished.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 140, line 4: For the meaning of the title *Hevajra Tantra*, *He* (Joyous) is great compassion that passionately pursues benefits for sentient beings that turn into gnosis at the time of result [continuity]. *Vajra* (*Indestructible*) is objectless wisdom that also turns into [gnosis]. Union of both is here demonstrably indicated by [the title] *Hevajra* as result continuity. Implied within that [title] is *Hevajra* as source continuity, union of clear light and emptiness within the continuum of sentient beings, and *Hevajra* as method continuity, union of the two processes within the continuum of practitioners. Literary *Hevajra* is the canonical *Hevajra* appearing as an accumulation of letters, words, and phrases. Accordingly, among these four:

The first *Hevajra* [result continuity] has a demonstrable characteristic;
The latter three [*Hevajras*] are designated [by implication].
For the two venerable brothers,
Hevajra is nonduality,

Hevajra is gnosis.
Language for both canon and path
Contains the meaning to be accomplished.}

Source Continuity

How can the nondual means and wisdom [result continuity] of *Hevajra* [also] be source continuity? The *Continuation to the Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra XVIII* revealed:

Union of wisdom and means
Is explained as a yoga [unity practice];
One part is immaterial wisdom,
Means [as the other part] has material character.^{[847](#)}

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 25, line 1: “Yoga” as in Yoga Tantra is “union of wisdom and means,” where “yoga” is “explained” as inseparable union. What are the “wisdom and means” that are in union? “Wisdom” is absolute truth as the radiant light that has been immaterial in nature from the very beginning; “means” is relative truth as the illusory body that has “material character.” When it is said that perfect union is the nature of “wisdom and means,” “wisdom” is emptiness and gnosis that realizes that [emptiness], [such that] “wisdom” is also a single flavor with emptiness. “Means” is objectless great compassion that brings benefit to beings and has the nature of simultaneous great ecstasy. This “wisdom and means” becomes inseparable, and the nature of this “wisdom and means” as perfect union is the essence of a united pair.}

Means as manifold material appearance of subject and object, etc., refers to the life cycle (samsara) [of those to be trained]. Wisdom as underlying reality beyond all projections [of the self] is transcendence of suffering (nirvana). Inseparability of these two is *Hevajra* source continuity, as revealed [in the *Hevajra Tantra* II, iv, 32-34 or 36-38]:

{This that is called samsara,
This [same] is nirvana;}
Anywhere else apart from samsara,
Nirvana cannot be realized.

Forms, sounds and more of samsara
{Feelings and more of samsara,
Sense organs of samsara,
Anger and other [emotions] of samsara,}
Are [all] phenomena of nirvana.

{Through confusion, samsara takes form;
Without confusion, and with purification of samsara,
Samsara is transformed into nirvana.}[848](#)

Method Continuity

Nonduality of means and wisdom in method continuity is the samadhi [perfection of mind] of the maturing and liberating paths along with auxiliary practices, that are derivative from the presence of source continuity. Empowerments of the maturing path are means; generation and completion processes of the liberating path are wisdom. Within the empowerments, vase empowerment is means and the upper three empowerments are wisdom. In the liberating path, generation process is means and completion process is wisdom. Within the generation process, male aspect is means and female aspect is wisdom. Within the completion process, practice with referent is means and practice without referent is wisdom. Means and wisdom may be applied many times in each of these [subsets]; in fact, there are none to which means and wisdom cannot be applied. In the literature, there are many of these divisions to which means and wisdom [can be applied], too many for all of them to be written here. In this way, the path is *Hevajra* method continuity.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 27, line 3: In the completion process, self-infusion is means and mandala-chakra is wisdom. In the first, practice with referent is means and practice without referent is wisdom. In the second, the accomplishing male is means and the knowledge female is wisdom.}

Result Continuity

For nondual means and wisdom in result continuity, form kayas [sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya] are means and dharmakaya is wisdom. Within form kayas, appearance of the male aspect is means and appearance of the female aspect is wisdom. Within dharmakaya, the wisdom continuum that is free

from all reference points is wisdom; gnosis of great compassion is means. From the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra II*, ii:

As nature of nonelaboration,
Wisdom is well-known.
Like the wish-fulfilling gem, great compassion
Acts for the benefit of all without exception.
Wisdom present without referent
And great compassion [present] without referent,
Simultaneous with mind, become a singularity,
Like space [merged] with space. [849](#)

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 74, line 4: “Wisdom is well-known” as “nature of nonelaboration,” [with respect to] actual existence or nonexistence of all phenomena, *etc.* As such, [wisdom] subdues the extreme of samsara. Accordingly, by means of “great compassion” without conceptualization, “great compassion acts” as wished “for the benefit of all” trainees “without exception,” “like a wish-fulfilling gem.” As such, [great compassion] subdues the extreme of nirvana, as stated in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara*:

Through wisdom, involvement in the world is not present;
Through compassion, tranquility is not present.

In that way, the means of attaining the result of union of wisdom and method is through meditation on inseparability of wisdom and method: “wisdom present without referent, and great compassion [present] without referent,” “simultaneous with mind” as gnosis, is a continuum of space that has “become a singularity” as a singular experience, as for example, the singular experience of “space [merged] with space” inseparably.}

In this way, *Hevajra* as result is also *Hevajra* as [result] continuity.

[Threefold Continuity in the Full Titles of] the Hevajra [Cycle] as the “King” of Tantras

[The subtopics are threefold continuity in the full titles of the three primary

Tantras of the *Hevajra Tantra* cycle: (1) *Shri Hevajra Tantra Raja*, (2) *Maha Samputa Tantra*, and (3) *Arya Dakini Vajra Panjara Maha Tantra Raja Kalpa Nama*.]

[Threefold Continuity in the Full Title of the *Shri Hevajra Tantra Raja*]

Hevajra is [called] the “*King*” of Tantras because, given the nature of source continuity, it cannot be overcome by discursive thought; through method continuity, all incidental discursive thought is eliminated; through result continuity, it cannot be overcome by any incidental discursive thought.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 634, line 3: When applied to source continuity, *Shri (Magnificent)* refers to indivisible gnosis of the essence of mind since it becomes the magnificence of [both] cyclic existence and its transcendence. *He (Joyous)* refers to the variety of manifestations of pure awareness. *Vajra (Indestructible)* refers to emptiness which is the nature of [pure awareness]. *Tantra (Continuity)* refers to the continuous flow [of mind] from beginningless time. *Raja (King)* refers to natural clear light since it rules over all phenomena.

When [applied to] experiential method continuity, *Shri (Magnificent)* refers to magnificence of one [who becomes] accomplished. *He (Joyous)* refers to exhortation to virtue which is the nature of the accumulation of merit. *Vajra (Indestructible)* refers to overcoming all conceptualization through emptiness which is the accumulation of gnosis. Alternatively, when applied to empowerments, *He* refers to the vase empowerment and *Vajra* refers to the three supreme empowerments. When applied to the path, *He* refers to the two processes together with auxiliary practices and *Vajra* refers to gnosis that is the perspective of nonconceptualization. [When applied] to the two processes, *He* refers to the generation process and *Vajra* refers to the completion process. When applied to [postmeditation] activity, *He* refers to Kundhara activity and *Vajra* refers to Samantabhadra activity. When applied to [the practice of] proximate cause, *He* refers to the arousal of the knowledge woman by the practitioner and *Vajra* refers to the generation of the gnosis of ecstasy and emptiness through the knowledge woman. As associated with all [of the above], *Tantra (Continuity)* refers to the unbroken stream [of mind] and *Raja (King)* refers to conquering all discordant factors or to illumination of gnosis.

[When applied to result continuity,] *Shri (Magnificent)* refers to indivisible

gnosis that is resultant buddha mind since it becomes the magnificence of cyclic existence and its transcendence, as revealed:

Shri refers to nondual gnosis...

He (*Joyous*) refers to two form kayas derived from great objectless compassion since they [joyfully] act for the benefit of sentient beings. *Vajra* (*Indestructible*) refers to dharmakaya derived from gnosis of nonconceptual wisdom since it is indivisible by concepts, as revealed [in the *Hevajra Tantra* I, i, 7]:

He is great compassion and
Vajra is expressed as wisdom.

Tantra (*Continuity*) refers to permanence that is unchanging dharmakaya, stability that is the five certainties of sambhogakaya,⁸⁵⁰ and unceasing action that is nirmanakaya, since [the three kayas] will remain for as long as the self-centered minds of sentient beings churn and as long as cyclic existence continues to turn, as revealed in the *Sambhuti* (*Perfect Union*) *Tantra* I, iii:

Stable and eternal is Supreme [Being],
Discoverable in each individual churning mind,
{An eternal nature that is difficult to suppress.}⁸⁵¹

Raja (*King*) refers to the separation of imperfections from continuity of mind-itself, ending in purity and clearing away the darkness of ignorance, since that is illumination, and is [also called] *Raja* (*King*) since [gnosis] controls all of cyclic existence and its transcendence.}

[Threefold Continuity in the Full Title of the *Maha Samputa Tantra*]

The title of the *Maha Samputa* (*Great Perfect Union*) *Tantra* has the same meaning [as the *Hevajra Tantra*]. In that title, *Perfect Union* has the identity of [nondual] means and wisdom, same as *Hevajra*. Here, “*Great*” is synonymous with “*King*.” Accordingly, the same explanations as above apply, which are also

known as essence of the triple continuity.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 141, line 1: In the same way, the title of the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra* is indicative of result continuity that is perfect union. The other two [continuities] are implied.}

[Threefold Continuity in the Full Title of the *Arya Dakini Vajra Panjara Maha Tantra Raja*]

The meaning of the title *Arya Dakini Vajra Panjara Maha Tantra Raja Kalpa Nama (Comprehensible King of Tantras, Called Superior Sky Traveler, Vajra Canopy)*. *Superior* means far superior over erroneous, negative phenomena. *Sky* refers to dharmakaya, equal to the sky in being as inconceivable as the sky. *Traveler* refers to two form kayas, which [in the form of dakinis] can magically travel throughout all buddha realms. *Vajra* is emptiness, nature of wisdom. *Canopy* refers to interconnection of a latticework [frame], a connotation for gnosis that permeates over and across [everything, interwoven] with great compassion of tathagatas as means. Nonduality of means and wisdom is the result as complete perfection of buddha. *Tantra* is triple continuity, same as before. *Superior Sky Traveler* is application of result continuity to method [continuity]. *Comprehensible* comes from the *Vajra Shekara (Vajra Pinnacle) Tantra*:

All phenomena are [ultimately] formless,

Yet, form is here [used] as a demonstration [of ultimate nature].

[The nature of] all phenomena is not expressible in words,

Yet, language is here [used as] instruction [on ultimate nature].

Accordingly, it is a wonderment of phenomena

That here through comprehension⁸⁵² [of phenomena] there is what is called comprehensibility [of ultimate].⁸⁵³

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 25, line 5: “All phenomena” such as “form” ultimately are “formless,” yet conventionally are now [accepted as] “form” as a “demonstration” within the sphere of comprehension of sentient beings. “All phenomena” of cyclic existence and its transcendence are ultimately not “expressible in words,” yet conventionally “language” is now [used for] “instruction” within the sphere of comprehension of sentient beings. Formless is

yet demonstrated as form; the inexpressible is yet instructed through language. That formless appearing as form, and the inexpressible appearing as language, do not now appear as contradictions is a “wonderment of phenomena” that instruct as objects of “comprehension,” the realization of which is “comprehension,” called “comprehensibility.” That which is comprehended is referred to as the *Comprehensible*.)

King means the same as before. All together, the meaning expressed in [the full title of the *Vajra Panjara*] *Tantra* is *Gnosis That is NonDuality of Mind, Means and Wisdom Combined into One, Identity of the Three Continuities*.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 141, line 2: For the *Arya Dakini Vajra Panjara (Superior Dakini Vajra Canopy) Tantra Raja Kalpa (Comprehensible King of the Tantras)* . . . ⁸⁵⁴ both result and method continuities are demonstrably indicated, while source continuity is implied.

Accordingly, [the title of] each *Tantra* is indicative of expressed meaning, in that it contains some portion of the three continuities which is the meaning to be expressed. Some demonstrably indicate only result continuity, with the other two [continuities] implied. Some demonstrably indicate method continuity, with the other two implied. Some demonstrably indicate both of these first two [continuities], with source continuity implied. For some [*Tantra* titles], each of the three [continuity] components is implied, so that a specific direction is uncertain.

These three continuities are called the *King*, as source continuity is naturally nonoppressed by conceptualization, method continuity eliminates incidental conceptualizations, and result continuity is free from incidental stains.}

Literary Expression of the Tantras

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 632, line 1: Within the volumes and amassed texts that constitute the means of literary expression [of *tantra*], the one that is designated the *Hevajra Tantra* is the *Tantra* that has language that is the means of expression [of the three continuities], as in the explanation of the venerable Great Sakyapa in his *Clarification of the Meaning of the Instructions*:⁸⁵⁵

The *Hevajra [Tantra]* is the very condensed meaning of
The Mahayoga *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*,
[Containing] language that instructs on the three continuities,
Indivisibility of compassion and emptiness.

[Objection:] If gnosis itself is [naturally] present as nonduality of mind, of what necessity is the literary expression of the Tantras?

[Reply:] For those who have realization of [the true nature of] mind, there is no necessity [for literary expression], yet for those who do not have realization of [the true nature of] mind, there is necessity for instruction.

[Objection:] So if one has realization of the essence of mind, what is the necessity?

[Reply:] Since realization of [the true nature of] mind is dharmakaya, other paths without realization of this very mind are lacking the essence. Since realization of the essence of mind is the necessity, then it is also a necessity that those ignorant in the steps for gaining that realization receive instruction by means of terminology and conventional understanding [of language], beginning with receiving empowerment, then attaining common siddhis [leading up to the supreme siddhi of buddha]. Instruction in expressed meaning through linguistic means of expression is the [cause-effect] interrelationship that accomplishes the purpose of expressed meaning as accomplishment [of buddha]. This is just as the venerable Great Sakyapa⁸⁵⁶ said, details of which may be found in accord with the writings of the great being Sonam Tsemo.}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 634, line 3: *Shri (Magnificent)* refers to Tantras that explain to listeners profound expressed meaning in strings of verbal expressions, since [Tantras] generate magnificence of realization. *He (Joyous)* refers to consonants that are method letters. *Vajra (Indestructible)* refers to vowels that are wisdom letters. *Tantra (Continuity)* refers to continuous string of words. *Raja (King)* refers to illumination of expressed meaning or demonstrated superiority over other expressed meanings.}

Verbal expression in Tantras has two main topics: (1) actual literary expressions in Tantras and (2) purposes and interrelationships derived from those

[literary expressions].

Actual Literary Expression in Tantras

The two subtopics are (1) commonly used language and (2) uncommonly used language.

Commonly Used Language

Commonly used language has three subtopics: (1) formulations of literary expression, (2) compositions, and (3) resolution of objections.

Formulations of Literary Expression

Letters, words, and phrases are all used to express the meaning of the three continuities, each of which is understood through the association between common language and common meaning [sound or term generality and object generality].⁸⁵⁷

Compositions

Compositions [of Tantras] are used as aides to generating the absolute in the continuums [of minds of sentient beings], starting as buddha speech, through to the language of compilers [or interpreters], to the written texts. Why are these compositions made? These compositions are made in order to have the result of language continuity present as language in comprehending minds, and in order to have a cause [or imprint] for language continuity developing in the comprehensible minds of others who do not yet have realization.

Resolution of Objections

[Objection:] If [the meaning of] language continuity is established through one's own relative perception,⁸⁵⁸ does that not contradict the statement in the *Abhidharmakosha* I, 25:

There are 80,000 compilations of dharma
Which are the speech of the Accomplished One [Buddha];
These are [composed of] names [stems] and [contextual] words
Which are included in either the form or compositional aggregates.⁸⁵⁹

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 26, line 1: What is [the nature of] “speech of the Accomplished One,” of which there are “80,000 [individual] compilations of

dharma” [constituting the] corpus of Buddha revelations? In the tradition of those who believe [Buddha speech] to be “[contextual] words,” [the speech] is “included in the form aggregate.” In the tradition of those who believe it to be in the nature of “names [stems],” [the speech] is “included in the compositional aggregate,” since it is a nonassociated “compositional aggregate.”}

[Reply:] There is indeed a contradiction, because as expressed this is the perspective of Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas, whereas we believe that [phenomena] are just relative perception.⁸⁶⁰

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 28, line 4: Sautrantikas believe that the relative perception of the Conqueror’s Canon is a combination of the form perceptual aggregate and the sound [verbal language] sense field. Vaibhashikas believe that it is a combination of composite perceptual aggregates such as the amassing of words and composite perceptual aggregates nonassociated with mind.

Among Chittamatras, the treatises of Vijnaptimatras, [such as] the *Commentary on the Madhyantavibhanga*, [state that the Conqueror’s Canon] can be the appearance of any amassing of letters, words, and phrases. Further, in the treatises of the Vijnaptimatras, [the Conqueror’s Canon] is the special appearance of verbal language for [the express purpose of] attainment of gnosis transcendent of suffering. In connection with the explanation in the *Mahayana Samgraha*, there is the assertion that [the Conqueror’s Canon] is the appearance of verbal language [comprised] of individual [words] and lines of verse compiled as the relative perception of shravakas and subsequently given facets of meaning.

[Objection:] Does this mean that the works of the Buddha are [just] the relative perception of the [recollected] speech of shravakas?

[Reply:] For them, since it has come under their control, that is the language as it is spoken. But as the Guhyamantra [Tantras] and their treatises are discovered in dreams under the control of [buddha] deities, then their composition in the volumes [of the Kahgyur and Tengyur] become a [direct] aid to the generation [of buddha] in the continuums [of minds of sentient beings].}

[Objection:] If [literary] Tantra expression takes the form of names or words as it appears to relative perception, does everything [all expression] become a Tantra?

[Reply:] No, when the form of names and words is just the verbal expression of Tantra; yes, when the expressed [meaning of] Tantra demonstrates the three continuities.

[Objection:] Does it not follow that since many of the Kalpa and Ritual Tantras do not teach continuity, they cannot [truly] be Tantras, whereas Paramita [Sutras] that teach continuity [in fact] become Tantras?

[Reply:] In part this is true, since the [Paramita] treatise *Uttaratantra* (*Unsurpassed Continuum*) teaches continuity, whereas in the detailed rituals of the *Marichi Kalpa*⁸⁶¹ and many other Ritual Tantras, [designation as a Tantra] is by attribution [only].

[Objection:] Does this not contradict the division of four classes of Tantras above?

[Reply:] [No,] since those attributed [as Tantras] that primarily contain detailed rituals of method continuity in the end demonstrate the meaning of continuity, they are [still correctly called] Tantras.

Uncommonly Used Language

The nature of Tantra literature as language uncommonly known comes from the *Vajra Shekara* (*Vajra Pinnacle*) Tantra:

In order to benefit all sentient beings,
The enjoyments [sambhogakayas] of buddha dharma[kaya],
Are compelled by buddha compassion
To correctly reveal the content of Tantras.⁸⁶²

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 26, line 2: How does the “content of Tantras” originate? “In order to benefit all sentient beings,” both the “enjoyments [sambhogakayas] of... dharma[kaya]” of completely perfect “buddha” are “compelled by” great objectless “buddha compassion” to manifest nirmanakayas and turn the cycle of dharma teaching to “correctly reveal the content of

Tantras.”}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 76, line 2: Alternatively, “in order to benefit all sentient beings, the enjoyments [sambhogakayas] of buddha dharma[kaya]” revealed the [Tantra] Mahayana to bodhisattvas. “Compelled by buddha compassion,” books of the expressed “content of Tantras” were “correctly revealed,” when appearing to the minds of yoga practitioners.}

Literary expression of Tantras, the dharma of sambhoga[kayas], is [initially] a formulation for Akanishta bodhisattvas; derived from that, composition refers to literary expression of Tantras from [nirmanakaya] revelations to the minds of present [and past] yoga practitioners through to [the actual writing of] books. Which [Tantras] are valid? Both formulation [in Akanishta] and composition [in the human realm] constitute [valid] literary expression of Tantras.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 29, line 5: [Uncommon] composition is the relative perception of letters, words, and phrases that are revelations to the minds of yoga practitioners through to [the actual writing of] books. A *King Tantra* is one that is the best of Tantras, in that it teaches the three continuities, etc., or is the supreme of the Mahayoga class of Tantras. Alternatively, it is one that [demonstrates how] source continuity has the fundamental quality of not being oppressed by discursive thoughts, how method continuity eliminates incidental discursive thoughts, and how result continuity is also unoppressed by incidental discursive thoughts.

There are many facets of composition, such as analogy, meaning, length, individuals [present], location, time, activity, *etc.* Here though, the [primary] facet of composition is the expressed meaning, the source, method, and result continuities as taught by Hevajra.}

Four Purposes and Interrelationships Derived from That [Literary Expression]

[Two subtopics are (1) four purposes and interrelationships in general and (2) four purposes and interrelationships specific to the *Hevajra Tantra*.]

[Four Purposes and Interrelationships in General]

The four purposes and interrelationships are (1) expressed [intent], (2) purpose, (3) reason for the purpose, and (4) interrelationships.

Expressed [Intent]

Expressed [intent] is the three continuities.

Purpose

The purpose is to put into practice the three continuities for the benefit of oneself and others.

Reason for the Purpose

The reason for the purpose is ultimately the third [result] continuity.

[Objection:] What distinction is there between the [initial] formulation of verbal expression in the Tantras and method continuity? What distinction is there between the reason for the purpose and result continuity?

[Reply:] What is called the [verbal] expression is the commonality of the three [compositions]: [formulation by the dharmakaya/sambhogakaya, composition in the mind of the yogi, and composition in a book] as revelation in an individual discerning mind. The third [result] continuity is [part of] expressed [intent]; the reason for the purpose is [the same as] actual accomplishment of the result. Further, nonduality of emptiness and compassion is the expressed [intent]. The purpose is the practice [of nonduality] that creates the circumstances⁸⁶³ for the result. The reason for the purpose is the actual accomplishment of result continuity.

Interrelationships

Throughout, the interrelationships are the method and the derivative of the method, the cause, and the result.

Accordingly, through this instruction on the four parts of the purposes and interrelationships applied to the meaning of the name “tantra,” “tantra” is correctly explained [as continuity].⁸⁶⁴ This leads to the instructions on the method of interpreting the Tantras [in part 3 following], where [determining] the purpose and expressed [intent] of the Tantras becomes most important.

[Four Purposes and Interrelationships Specific

to the *Hevajra Tantra*

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 30, line 3: The three subtopics are (1) reason [for the *Hevajra Tantra*], (2) summation [of four purposes and interrelationships], and (3) three phrases.

Reason [for the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*]

The reason [for the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*] is to make it easier to understand the meaning for those trainees of lesser intellect who are unable to comprehend the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* and other [extensive Tantras]. As it is present,⁸⁶⁵ it will engage readers apart from any doubts [about it].

Summation [of Four Purposes and Interrelationships]

The verbal expression of this [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* is the thirty-two chapters that constitute the *Two-Part Tantra*.

Expressed [Intent]

That which is expressed is source continuity and method continuity as made explicit by the teacher of this *Tantra*, the Bhagavan Vajrasattva.

Interrelationships

Interrelationships [are threefold]. (1) The interrelationship between expressed meaning and verbal expression is that the expressed three continuities are the verbal expression by this *King of Tantras*. (2) The interrelationship between teacher and content of the teaching is that the teacher of the content of this [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* has the identity of result continuity, and that is who gives the teaching. (3) The interrelationship between cause and result is that source and method continuities manifest result continuity.

Purpose

The purpose is realization of the meaning of this [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* by trainees who have done the preliminaries of entering the mandala and receiving empowerment.

Reason for the Purpose

The reason for the purpose is to next attain the [supreme] mahamudra siddhi, the actual resultant Vajradhara.

Three Phrases [Exemplifying] Purposes and Interrelationships

What are the words of the canon used to teach expressed [meaning]? Later, listen to Hevajra when he says:

Listen to my explanation of this Tantra
The essence of method and wisdom...

Expressed [meaning] is the three continuities, the reason for the purpose of the actual teachings. Verbal expressions used are implicit teachings of the purpose and interrelationships. For example, in the [opening] words of the introduction [to the *Hevajra Tantra*], “thus” refers to expressed [meaning], “have I heard” refers to the interrelationship of verbal expression and expressed meaning, and “the essence of the body, speech, and mind of all tathagatas” refers to the actual teaching of the reason for the purpose.

Dedication to the Desired Deity

Dedication [to the desired deity] may be (1) concordant, (2) subsequently concordant, and (3) subsequent to both.

Concordant Dedication

A concordant dedication accords with expressed [meaning] of the treatise, even though it does not [necessarily] accord with the wish of the treatise expert.

Subsequently Concordant Dedication

A subsequently concordant dedication accords with the commentator’s wish, even though it does not accord with the expressed [meaning] of the treatise.

Dedication Concordant with Both

A dedication concordant with both accords with expressed [meaning] of the treatise and the wish of the treatise expert. This is [called] subsequent for both or the manifest concordant dedication.

An example of this dedication is “To the glorious Hevajra.” “Glorious” means possessing the accumulation of merit and gnosis. “Hevajra” is the identity of the union of great compassion and emptiness. “To” is the grammar of the fourth reason. Either the author or the translator is the one who is making [the dedication]. The time [for making the dedication] is prior to starting to write or to translate. The purpose is to pacify obstacles, as the pacification of obstacles generated from a lack of merit counteracts that lack of merit through the merit generated by expressing the awakened qualities of the Bhagavan in the dedication.

The manner of making the dedication is to offer the unsurpassed three doors [body, speech, and mind of one’s being]. [Dedication] with body is to touch all five appendages to the ground. [Dedication] with speech is by means of expressing the accumulation of awakened qualities. [Dedication] with mind is in the way of mindfulness of awakened qualities. “Unsurpassed” refers to engagement with the above identity [of Hevajra]. As stated in the *Pancakrama (Five Stages)*:

Like pouring water into water,

Or like pouring oil into oil,

The dedication here is what is explicitly manifest

As the gnosis [of Hevajra] himself [realized] by oneself [making the dedication].}

[Summation]

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 76, line 4: [For a short summation of this entire chapter,] the great Venerable Sakyapas explained the revelation [of the Tantras] as condensed in the meaning of the titles as twofold: (1) tantra as the expressed meaning and (2) Tantras as literary expression.

Tantra as Expressed Meaning

Mind-itself, without beginning and never discontinuous is continuity [tantra]. Supreme Being as the inseparability of wisdom and method is Hevajra. Having a

nature that cannot be overpowered by discursive thought, elimination of incidental conceptualization is King. Accordingly, nondual gnosis of mind itself is tantra as expressed meaning.

Tantras as Literary Expression

The book that is a collection of [written] vocalizations is the expression that is designated with the title *Hevajra Tantra*, Tantra here being expressed words, as explained by the venerable great Sakyapa in his *Clarification of the Meaning of the Instructions*.⁸⁶⁶

The best summary of the meaning of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*

Great Hevajra Yogini Tantra

Is nonduality of wisdom and compassion

The sound of which demonstrates three continuities.

[Objection:] If nondual gnosis of mind is [already] present in oneself, then what is the purpose of Tantras as expressed?

[Reply:] For those who have realization [of the true nature] of mind, there is no purpose; yet for those with no realization [of the true nature] of mind, the purpose is explanation [of the same].

[Objection:] Then what is the purpose of realization of mind-as-is?

[Reply:] Realization of mind is dharmakaya. Other paths that do not realize mind-as-is are devoid of essence. Accordingly, realization of mind-as-is is the reason for the purpose. This is taught as branches of realization for the uneducated by means of terminology and conventional designation, after starting with empowerment. Attainment of common siddhis is the purpose. Through these literary expressions, expressed [meaning] is taught. The consequence is that through expressed meaning, the reason for the purpose is accomplished. This summarization clarifies this [present] chapter on the meaning of titles of Tantras.}

Part III
Methods for Interpretation

Chapter 9

Methods for Interpreting the Language and Meaning of the Tantras

*In honor of the Lords of the inseparable three secrets,
Holders of Guhyamantra (Secret Mantra) have the supreme instructions
For methods of interpreting all secret Tantras unknown to others;
Here ornaments that reveal the great secrets will be briefly delineated.*

*For knowledge [of expressed meaning], there are three of general [purpose], hidden
purpose, and ultimate intent;*

*For [means of] expression, there are characteristic [explicit], symbolic syllable
[implicit], and specially designated contextual [usage];*

These are called the Six Instructions that elucidate,

Foremost among all methods of interpretation.

What is termed general [purpose] is common to two:

(1) Six perfections, [thirty-seven] branches of bodhi-mind, five paths, ten levels,

Are expressed [meaning] common to both Sutra and Guhyamantra,

Therefore, the perfections, etc. are termed general [purpose].

(2) Through the maturing vase empowerment together with the connected

Generation process and associated branches of the path,

One accomplishes both ordinary and supreme siddhis,

Since the generation process is training for both, it is termed general [purpose].

What is termed hidden [purpose] is not well-known to those [commoners],

But are special dharmas obtained in the higher [three] empowerments.

Conductors, syllable codes [shapes and sounds], energies, self-arising chandali,

Are all part of the expressed [meaning] pertaining to the secret empowerment,

Inclusive in the hidden [purpose] of the self-infusion [method].

Method and wisdom, vajra and lotus,

Bodhicitta and the four simultaneous pleasures, etc.

Are associated with the wisdom [mudra] gnosis empowerment;

All of them are termed the hidden [purpose] of the mandala-chakra method.

Since essence gnosis energy and the rest that are associated

With the fourth [empowerment] are not separate from that [third empowerment],

Most include it in the hidden [purpose] of the mandala-chakra [method].

What is termed ultimate [intent] is the result of that path.

General purpose ultimate is the [eleventh] level of All Brilliance,

Described as the result common to both Sutra and Guhyamantra.

The hidden [purpose] ultimate is the thirteenth Vajra level

Attained through the path of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.

The All Brilliance level is not the actual ultimate,

But since it is an approximation, that term is attributed to it.

Accordingly, [special] techniques for gaining knowledge of kaya and gnosis

That are not explained in Paramita are derived

From Guhyamantra revelations and thus are of hidden purpose.

Characteristic explicit [means of expression] interprets the meaning of Tantra language

In accordance with [conventional] language and terminology as actually taught.

There are two attributed actual [conventions] of terminology derived from syllables:

Whether appropriately the definition is without[added] reasoning or with [added] reasoning.

Pertaining to the first are [examples] such as “the sun in the sky”

That is well-known commonly, and such as “the illuminator”

That is well-known to scholars of the treatises

Where reasoning and purpose do no harm to the convention.

By way of three dharmas where expressed is not that,

With commonly attributed terminology subsequently applied.
Actual terminology without[added] reasoning is autonomous,
And with [added] reasoning is all attributed terminology
Explained with certainty as is characteristic of what is called buddha awakening,
Even though there are errors [in interpretation] as a consequence of attributed terminology.
As a result of these two, there are interpretations that are autonomous and
Supervenient [or extraneous], with no certainty in each case.
Accordingly, there is an interpretation that accords with a section that
Either has or does not have a reason for engaging the language.
Given that it is not [always] possible to understand [language] as it is actually used.
[In interpreting] the meaning of phrases derived from groupings of words,
Passages may be combined or separated, divided into verbs and other [parts of speech].
After being well-separated, through the four styles of
Lion manner of gazing, frog [manner of] jumping, four gaits of the tortoise, and
Female tiger manner of a leaping, the subject matter of the report is made
Alternatively together with [statement of] purpose, summarization of content,
Terminology meaning, pauses [or breaks], and objection and reply [formats].⁸⁶⁷

Meaning as interpreted above cannot [always] be found in the canon;
Some [passages] need to be interpreted through symbolic implicit [means of expression].
[For example,] “starting with N_A, G_A, and H_A...”
Extends into nara, gavi, and hasti,
[Such that] interpretation [of the meaning] is drawn out from the sound of the syllables.
[For another example,] H_{UM} expresses emptiness of object and subject;
This interpretation comes from breaking apart the syllable as follows:
From the sound of the letter H_A comes grahaka, the object,
And grahacha, the subject;
Attaching the vowel U to the letter S_{HA} yields shunyata [emptiness];
The top circle representing the letter M_A [extends] to manota, meaning self-conscious mind.
The four syllables: E V_{AM} M_A Y_A are the four chakras;

*Since this interpretation is derived from similarity of shape, and not a literal explanation,
This is called interpretation by similarity in shape.*

The symbolic explicit expressed meaning is used extensively

In the Great Secret class of Tantras,

Where much [understanding of] the canon is dependent on identification of symbols;

After learning this method [of interpretation], certainty is developed.

*When understanding is lacking through characteristic explicit and symbolic implicit [means
of expression],*

Tathagatas made use of code words, such as

Madana for chang [beer], and [bala for] meat.

*All [of these require] special instruction as specially designated contextual usage And as
these constitute endless expressions of specific examples*

*Some of which seem to be common [usage], there is no standard [that can be used] to
clarify them.*

What is interpreted through characteristic explicit [means of expression]

For general and hidden purposes, and ultimate intent [expressed meanings],

*Is also referred to as literal expression, definitive meaning, and nonrequired buddha intent,
respectively.*

*When the same three [expressed meanings] are interpreted through symbolic implicit and
special instruction [or specially designated contextual usage, as means of expression]*

*Those are also interpreted as figurative expression, provisional meaning,⁸⁶⁸ and required
buddha intent: these [altogether] are the six determinations.*

*There is also a four method system, where the four are linguistic meaning of each and every
[passage],*

General and hidden purposes, and ultimate intent.

All of these [methods of] interpretation are encompassed in the six instructions.

In summary, interpretations can be separated into either five or six [expressed meanings],

Which are then subdivided by three means of expression,

Which are then accepted as fifteen or eighteen instructions on methods of interpretation.

The [method of] interpretation of the meaning of canonical literature that is well-known

everywhere is multicolored interpretation,
Where characteristic explicit means of expression is the primary one used,
And separate passages of canonical language [are identified] as demonstrating
One or another of the three aspects of expressed meaning:
General or hidden purpose, or ultimate intent.
Some canonical language that demonstrates the profound and the vast,
Interprets the meaning of Tantras like a wish-fulfilling jewel
Through a method of interpretation where the three [expressed meanings]: general and
hidden purposes, and ultimate intent, are all indicated [in each passage].
This is an uncommon tradition of interpretation
That belongs to a lineage that is fearless.

Natural purity of perceptual aggregates, elements, and fields,
Gaining expertise in profound methods of maturation and liberation,
And means of attaining both supreme and common results,
Are the three aspects: ground, path, and result, of direct knowledge.
After all language and meaning of the Tantras has been well delineated [through the six
instructions],
Interpretation through three continuities is application
Of the direct knowledge of the meditation experience of a single individual.
This method will be elucidated [subsequently] in the Direct Knowledge of Tantra.
This method of interpretation may be multicolored explanations,
Or each word may be interpreted through all three continuities.
In most cases, understanding is possible through knowledge previously [gained].

Form principle [corresponds with] body, vase empowerment, and nirmanakaya;
Mantra principle [corresponds with] speech, secret empowerment, and sambhogakaya;
Empowerment dharma principle [corresponds with] mind, the third [empowerment], and
dharmakaya.
Interpretation is given in four parts [by separating out] what is termed ultimate dharma
[principle],
[Which corresponds with] energy, the fourth [empowerment], and svabhavikakaya.

*When the two dharma principles have been made into one,
The three aspects have [corresponding] sources, empowerments, paths, and results.
Here, the three principles [may be applied] in a multicolored fashion,
Or all three: form, mantra, and dharma, may all [be applied] to each passage.
When subdivided into four, [all with corresponding] source, empowerment, path, and result,
This application has either twelve or sixteen modes of interpretation, whichever is more suitable.*

*Resultant sambhogakaya, [fivefold] pattern of the bases of purification,
Secret empowerment, and the self-infusion [practice correspond to] embryo emplacement.
Likewise, dharmakaya, five months [of gestation] in the womb,
The third empowerment, and the messenger [practice correspond to] water emplacement.
Nirmanakaya, duration of life, vase empowerment,
And the features of deities in the generation process [correspond to] form emplacement.
Svabhavikakaya, circumstances of death,
The fourth empowerment, and [the vajra-wave practice] path [correspond to] formless emplacement.
Each of these may be combined with the three [continuities]: source, path, and result;
Or likewise [as above], the four emplacements may constitute a set of four
Subdivisions in each of the four paths, starting with the generation process.
The method of interpretation of four emplacements
May explain specific passages of the canon.
A single passage cannot be demonstrated in four parts [of emplacements];
Instead, three [sets of] emplacements [correlated with] source, path, and result
[Provide a] correct interpretation when applied to single passages of the canon,
As most [passages] are interpreted by the equivalent means of the three continuities.*

*Definitive purity that is all dharmas unoriginated from the beginning,
Component divinity purity that is the [divine] features of faces and hands of all sentient beings,
Awareness-in-itself purity that is whatever appears is mind-itself:
These are the three fundamental purities of source continuity.*

*Definitive purity that is the perspective that cuts off all exaggeration and depreciation,
Component divinity purity that is the generation process [visualization] of features of the
divine body,*

Awareness-in-itself purity that is the completion process gnosis of great ecstasy:

These are the three purities of method continuity that purify imperfections.

Definitive purity that is svabhavikakaya free of faults,

Component divinity purity that is the [two] form kayas with features of faces and hands,

Awareness-in-itself purity that is dharmakaya realization of gnosis:

These are the three purities of result continuity free of imperfections.

Here, the three purities may be a multicolored explanation

[Applicable individually] to each and every passage in the canon.

Yet [all three] are not applicable to single passages in the canon;

Instead, there are many sections that are appropriately interpreted

As the three purities of source, path, and result.

This method of interpretation is the same as the previous.

Invisible, abbreviated definitive,

Five seeds, actual hidden truth,

Concealed lotus, pleasure of the navel,

Gathering of all beings, and endless ecstasy:

Since among these eight secrets, the first and last,

The source and result, nonrealization and realization of the natural state of being,

Are of a single essence, that makes [a total of] seven secrets.

These in sequence are source [continuity], maturing empowerment,

Generation process, perspective of realization,

Self-infusion, and auxiliary branches of the path.

[The eighth,] result to be attained, is implied by the first.

Here, all canonical literature may be interpreted as multicolored,

Yet most methods of interpretation cannot be applied [simultaneously to each passage].

This method of interpretation is the same as [the structure of] direct knowledge of tantra.

*Durjayachandra's five-branch system for [interpreting] the meaning of Tantras;
Jnanapada's [four] branches of approximation and accomplishment,
And the three secrets of the Chakrasamvara Tantra,
Are also asserted as methods of interpretation that are equivalent to the most common
[above].*

*The manner of explanation by applying multiple methods of interpretation
Such as general and hidden purposes, and ultimate [intent applied] to single passages
Is not at present seen in all Tantra literature.
Yet, for some difficult parts, such as Introductions,
Interpretations of multiple [meanings] make them apparent to all.*

*The method of interpretation that has multicolored explanations of [given] passages
Cannot be taught as multiple interpretations [of the same passage].
Since it is possible to explain entire Tantras from beginning to end
Through the tradition of interpretation that has come down for each section,
Then there is no error involved in [separate] interpretation for each combined segment.*

*The explanation called the "Seven Ornaments" that is well-known in the Arya
[Guhyasamaja Tantra] cycle
Is entirely included within the content of this [our own] tradition of interpretation.
Even though their tradition is the one followed for other great Tantras,
It is only the terminology that is not the same [in ours].
Since ultimate intent has been well established as a single meaning,
There is no mistaking the meaning of words in all the buddha canon.
These methods of interpretation generate certainty.*

*Given that application of this method is a priceless jewel
That is replete in each expressed meaning and means of expression,
I dedicate to [all] sentient beings the virtue of explaining these methods of interpretation
For the Tantra that illuminates many other Tantras.*

[The two topics are (1) methods of interpretation and (2) resolution of objections.]

Methods of Interpretation

There are innumerable instructions on methods for interpreting Tantras, but according to the lamas of our lineage, there are six [that are most important]. In order for readers to more readily grasp the meaning and more easily understand [the literature], there are (1) six instructions. In order to realize that the mindstream is one continuous flow, there are (2) three continuities. In order to enact the path of empowerment, there are (3) three principles. In order to make the resultant four kayas into the path, there are (4) four emplacements. In order to have the intent to eliminate all discordant factors, there are (5) three purities. In order to make secret and conceal what is not part of the vessel, there are (6) seven secrets.

Six Instructions [and Related Methods]

[The subtopics are (1) explanation of six instructions, (2) application of each means of expression to each expressed meaning, (3) six determinations method of interpretation, (4) how the methods are applied to interpretation of the Tantras, and (5) additional methods of interpretation.]

Explanation of Six Instructions [According to the Khasama Tantra]

The six instructions derive from the *Khasama (Equivalent to the Sky) Tantra*:

- (1) Symbolic syllable implicit, (2) characteristic explicit, and
- (3) Special contextual means of expression, (4) general purpose,
- (5) Hidden purpose, and (6) ultimate intent [of expressed meaning];⁸⁶⁹

Through just these, Tantras [can be understood] with certainty.

Three instructions pertain to expressed meaning, and three instructions pertain to method of expression. First, [the three expressed meaning instructions] are general purpose, hidden purpose, and ultimate intent [interpretations]. The three

linguistic [methods] are characteristic explicit, symbolic syllable implicit, and specially designated contextual usage interpretations.

{Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 84, line 1: This six instructions method of interpretation is also explained in the same way in the *Commentary on the Jnana Tilaka (Essence of Gnosis) Tantra* by Jnanavarma.} ⁸⁷⁰

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 636, line 5: This six instructions method of interpretation is based on the *Sambuta Tantra*⁸⁷¹ and the *Kaya Vak Chitta (Enlightened Body, Speech and Mind) Tantra*.⁸⁷²}

Expressed Meaning—General Purpose

General purpose has two types of commonality: (1) Paramita vehicle general purpose and (2) generation process general purpose.

Topics that are explained in the Paramita vehicle such as the thirty-seven steps in [attaining] bodhi-mind, the five paths, and the ten levels are also used to instruct in Guhyamantra revelations in common [with the Paramita vehicle], hence are called general purpose.

Since meditation practices of the generation process are performed to attain both the supreme accomplishment of mahamudra and common siddhis (special powers), this is also a general purpose in common.

These were explained by Master Chandrakirti [in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp) Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

That which overcomes consternation over [the superceding of]
The well-established Sutras, etc.,
And that which is the generation process,
Are explained as general purpose.⁸⁷³

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 26, line 4: [An experience of] “consternation” over [the superceding of] “well-established Sutras,” which in “etc.” includes Abhidharma and Vinaya, can come about because of a lack of confidence, and being consumed with doubt, concerning the purpose of Guhyamantra Vajrayana. The explanation of the similar [thirty-seven] branches of bodhi-mind, the three

doors to liberation, etc., is for the purpose of making an impression on the mind and “overcoming” dissatisfaction [transformed] to satisfaction; therefore, because the explanation is in common with the outer deterministic [vehicle], it has a “general purpose.” When the “generation process” is “explained,” since it is common to all Vajrayana, it also has a “general purpose.”}

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 33, line 1: When followers of the Sutras, shravakas, and others are [first] taught Guhyamantrayana, they experience consternation upon hearing about the [tantric] vows that contradict their own [established] moral discipline. In order to overcome that [consternation], common general purpose has been taught by the Conqueror as an expressed [meaning] of Guhyamantra, including the [thirty-seven] branches of bodhi-mind, the five paths, etc., in accord [with Sutras, etc.].

Uncommon general purpose is the generation process, the well-known demonstration of the samadhis of (1) initial conjunction, (2) supremely victorious mandala, and (3) supremely victorious action.⁸⁷⁴ All three [samadhi] realms are then generated from bodhicitta⁸⁷⁵ alone, with bodhicitta described as coming from the union of the two organs [of the central male and female mandala deities]. This is general [purpose] in that both supreme and common siddhis are in common the object of this meditation.}

Expressed Meaning—Hidden Purpose

Hidden purpose is hidden [from the common] because it pertains to the upper level and not to the lower level, where the upper level refers to attainment of the three higher empowerments [for the completion process], and the lower level refers to attainment of the vase empowerment [for the generation process]. [In the upper level,] the term “method” can refer either to the self-infusion method or to the mandala-chakra method; the term “bodhicitta” can refer to either relative bodhicitta [sexual fluids] or absolute bodhicitta [union of ecstasy and emptiness], as in the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* II, iv, 28-31 (or 32-35):

{Vajragarbha inquired: “By what method can bodhicitta be generated?” The Bhagavan replied:}

There is the self-infusion method,

And comparatively the mandala-chakra method in sequence;⁸⁷⁶

In the manner of both relative and absolute,

Bodhicitta can be well generated.

{As relative, [it is white] like jasmine [flowers];
As absolute. it assumes the form of ecstasy.
Sukhavati [the place of ecstasy] is the female lotus {vagina},
Which has the nature of E-Vam,
The residence of buddhas,
Bodhisattvas, and Vajradhara.} [877](#)

The term “gnosis” can refer to either self-arisen or simultaneous gnosis. [878](#)

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 542, line 3: The self-infusion hidden [purpose] includes the secret empowerment path and its branches. It is “hidden” because it is not known to those who have only received up through the vase empowerment. The mandala-chakra hidden [purpose] includes the wisdom [mudra] gnosis empowerment path and its branches, as well as symbolically the fourth empowerment and its branches. These are “hidden” because they are not known to those who to have only received up through the secret empowerment.}

As an apt example, all of the explanations pertinent to the three secret dharma mandalas are of hidden purpose. The explanation of the three mandalas is given in both the *Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra* and the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra Continuation*:

One mandala is called body,
Another mandala is called bhaga,
There is also the bodhicitta mandala;
These are the three mandalas. [879](#)

Body mandala can indicate the macro structure of the body through to the micro conductor network mandala. Bhaga mandala can indicate the vajra [penis] and lotus [vagina] of the method [male practitioner] and wisdom [female practitioner] through to the syllable codes present within the conductor network. Bodhicitta mandala can indicate the relative vital fluids present [within the conductor network] or the absolute samadhi of ecstasy and emptiness that can be derived from them. As an adjunct to the above, all of these [mandalas] can also

indicate the activating essential gnosis energy, hence the hidden purpose [in the terminology used].

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 34, line 3: As stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp)* [*Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

The three stages of vajra recitation, self-infusion, and mental purification are the hidden interpretation, the explanation of the three hidden aspects.

Sequentially, these [methods] are (1) purification of passion through recitation of passion, etc.; (2) accomplishment of the mantra kaya of the essence of energy and syllable codes; (3) envisioning of the generated deity by means of illusions and the other twelve examples, through the yogas of rapid samadhi and appearance attainment, etc.; (4) and envisioning the gnosis of clear light that blends the three gnoses into a single flavor. The three gnoses are (a) appearance, (b) increase of appearance, and (c) the attainment of appearance that purify mind that is the essence of the three consciousnesses, sequentially through mantra and mudra. As stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp)* [*Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

The hidden is so because it has the essence of
Concept of the three gnoses;
Superior instruction is the dharma of passion,
Realization of the relative truth.} [880](#)

Expressed Meaning—Ultimate Intent

The ultimate is that beyond which nothing further can be attained, which is buddha gnosis. The ultimate has two parts: (1) general purpose ultimate that is the eleventh level known to the in common [Paramita] vehicle and (2) hidden purpose ultimate that is the twelfth and thirteenth levels known [only] in the Guhyamantra [vehicle]. [881](#)

[Objection:] The counterargument can be made that there cannot be two ultimates, because if the general purpose were the ultimate no enlightened

qualities superior to it could be developed and therefore there could be no hidden purpose ultimate, or if superior qualities could be developed there could not be a general purpose ultimate.

[Reply:] Superior qualities can be developed, as dharmadhatu gnosis is not explained in Paramita but is explained in Guhyamantra, and nothing beyond the three kayas is explained in Paramita whereas fourth and fifth kayas are explained in Guhyamantra.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 35, line 3: Superior qualities can be developed. Since the Paramita ultimate cannot be accomplished through a special path to liberation, such as the generation and completion [processes], then it is an ultimate that can be surpassed. Since the hidden purpose ultimate does have attainment through a special path, then that ultimate is a result that cannot be surpassed, as revealed in the *Manjushri Namasamgiti (Reciting the Names of Manjushri)*:

Sugatas have taught to those to be trained

Determinant [Paramita] features such as the Exceedingly Joyful [level];⁸⁸²

Through engaging in those [Guhyamantra] purposes,

That [Paramita] realization can be surpassed.⁸⁸³}

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 144, line 6: The first ultimate is the gnosis of the eleventh level of Universal Radiance,⁸⁸⁴ explained as the result common to both Sutra and Guhyamantra. However, that is not the [true or final] ultimate result and is so designated only because it is a close approximation. The second ultimate is the gnosis of the thirteenth level of Vajradhara that is attained through the path of Guhyamantra. That [latter] gnosis is a result that greatly surpasses the former [Paramita result], a self-appearance of omniscience that has [in total] four kayas and five gnosés.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 78, line 4: The [definition of] dharmadhatu [dharma space] gnosis is that dharma is buddha dharma and space is the source. Space is naturally pure in [all] aspects, such that pure gnosis eliminates even the tiniest incidental stains, as stated in the *Jnanasiddhi (Accomplishment of Gnosis)*:

At the time of imperfections of knowledge and emotions,
Then liberation from all [of them]
Is exceedingly pure gnosis
That is vajra-like supreme yoga.

In explaining gnosis, Paramita has no explanation for the term “gnosis”; yet here in Vajrayana, dharmadhatu gnosis is explained as the inseparability of gnosis and dharmadhatu.

Further, Paramitayana Sutras introduce three kayas, and the *Suvarna Prabha Sottama (Pure Golden Light) Sutra*,⁸⁸⁵ *Samdhinirmochana (Definitive Commentary on Buddha Intent) Sutra*,⁸⁸⁶ etc., explain only three kayas; there is not a single Sutra that explains four [or more] kayas. They are not even revealed in the *Taking Measure Commentary on Buddha Intent*.⁸⁸⁷ Master Nagarjuna extolled three kayas; Maitreya in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara* clearly revealed the delineation of three kayas;⁸⁸⁸ in the *Uttaratantra*, after the [revelation of] two kayas, absolute and relative, three are clarified through subdividing sambhogakaya into two; the method present in the content of the *Abhisamyalamkara* is text that instructs on only three kayas.⁸⁸⁹ In the *Commentaries on the Prajnaparamita* by the second Tupwang Rongton Choje⁸⁹⁰ and the two Most Omniscients,⁸⁹¹ there are extensive presentations using [both] canon and reasoning. Upon reading these, one will discover deep insight, which begins with an explanation of four kayas; but the similar cause kaya is combined with sambhogakaya, so that [in the end] only three kayas are explained. I will not reference [more] canonical sources, as the writing would get too lengthy.

[Objection:] Does not the *Illumination of the Meaning*⁸⁹² give an explanation of four kayas?

[Reply:] In that [source], the Vairochana tradition does explain four kayas, and that becomes the only Paramitayana [related] explanation of four kayas. Since some in the earlier lineage expounded that gnosis was absent in buddha, that became the reason for the belief that in Paramitayana, gnosis is absent in buddha.

The four kayas of Guhyamantra are revealed as four in Tantras [that refer to] Vajrasattva, etc. Buddha-nature that is dharmakaya beyond all propositions [about it] is called Vajrasattva. Great bodhisattvas that are satiated with Supreme

Vehicle dharma deriving from great gnosis are sambhogakaya called Mahasattva. Progression to [enacting] vows at the end of the path, thereby spontaneously accomplishing benefit for limitless sentient beings, is nirmanakaya called Mahasamayasattva. The inseparability of these three kayas is svabhavikakaya called Vajragarbha. In order to come to know additional special qualities of four kayas, they are designated with these alternate names such as Vajrasattva. The fifth kaya, in addition to the above four, is very pure svabhavikakaya.}

Likewise, in the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

For some [hold the view that] what is inconceivable cannot be made manifest; for them sugata is buddha [alone]. [For others both] the basis for [buddha] characteristics⁸⁹³ and the demonstration of [buddha] characteristics is perfectly shown as Vajrasattva.

This quotation indicates that in Paramita, the knowable cannot be known except through [external] appearance as other. [The knowable] is called other for in Paramita, gnosis is knowledge of everything [that appears] as other in [external] form; in Guhyamantra, everything that appears [internally] to oneself [or in itself without reference to an external] can be known, and by this is superior [to the Paramita vehicle].

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 81, line 1: With respect to the quotation from the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*, the meaning is that [gnosis] cannot be known through [the practice of] Paramita except for substitute appearance as [conceptual] knowledge, whereas [gnosis] can be known in self-appearance through [the practice of] Guhyamantra. According to the *Elucidation of the Essential Points [Commentary on the Samputa Tantra]* by Sonam Tsemo, “what is inconceivable” is the self-appearance of gnosis in everything that can be known. Appearance itself is gnosis; gnosis itself is appearance. Emptiness [itself is gnosis]; [gnosis itself is] emptiness. [Both] are engaged as one, in a single moment of time.

However under present [circumstances], ordinary individuals can only progressively imagine [gnosis] conceptually, based on conventional designation.⁸⁹⁴ Yet it is difficult to imagine gnosis as it is described [in that manner]. Accordingly, gnosis is not attained through the eleventh and twelfth levels. “Sugata” is the transcendence [achieved] through the path of ecstasy.

Paramita explains that as being “buddha.” They know how [gnosis] is not attained, but can Paramita explain how it is attained? [Paramita] cannot so explain, [yet the following attempts have been made:]

- (1) Some Paramitas say that at the time of [realization of] buddha, engagement in mind and mental events has come to rest, so if mind exists, then they think that it becomes conceptualization [only].
- (2) Some [Paramitas] believe that buddhas have minds, so that if transcendence of suffering has eliminated mind, then buddhas cannot have transcendence of suffering.
- (3) Some say that gnosis is a transformation [of ordinary consciousness].
- (4) Some do not believe that there is such a transformation.
- (5) Some say that [gnosis] is the subsequent attainment after [achieving] equanimity.
- (6) Some say that there is no subsequent attainment after [achieving] equanimity.

There is no way that all of these [positions] can be explained as a single revelation without contradiction. Accordingly, attainment of incomprehensibility is “the basis for [buddha] characteristics and the demonstration of [buddha] characteristics [that] is perfectly shown as Vajrasattva.”

To summarize this meaning, appearance of the knowable and self-appearance of gnosis, as the manifestation of the inseparable three emptinesses, the natural state of buddha gnosis, are alone the thirteenth level. That which does not manifest [on the thirteenth level] is known in the manner of substitute appearance [of gnosis]. Here the venerable Sonam Tsemo said:

Small buddha is that of the shravakas; average buddha is that of the pratyekabuddhas; great buddha is the eleventh and twelfth levels of Paramita.

From the *Commentary on the Praise of Nairatmya*.⁸⁹⁵

Through [all of] these that are designated as buddha, there is a single meaning that is not the conjunction of [all the] tiny pieces of [conventional] designation. Accordingly, self-appearance is the thirteenth [level] alone; substitute appearance is the twelfth level and below.}

[Objection:] Further, the contention can be made that it is incorrect to ascribe any ultimate to general purpose.

[Reply:] It is correct to do so, because [the general purpose ultimate is] a close approximation [of gnosis], for example, as in the *Abhisamayalamkara* I, 71:

After transcending the ninth level, gnosis
Is placement on the buddha level;
That is known as the
Tenth bodhisattva level.⁸⁹⁶

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 26, line 6: The [buddha] family level, level of eight, level of insight, darkening level, level beyond passion, level of the realization of past actions, shravaka level, pratyekabuddha [self-buddha] level, from the level of extreme pleasure [first] through to the well understood level [ninth] are the “bodhisattva levels.” After completely “transcending the ninth level,” “placement on the level” of engagement in the result of “buddha,” by which “gnosis” has become the foundation for empowerment in action, is also known as the “tenth bodhisattva level.”}

This is the same as explaining the tenth level as the buddha level.⁸⁹⁷

[Objection:] The contention is made that there is a contradiction when the teaching of emptiness and the like is explained as the ultimate, as by Chandrakirti (*Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp)* [*Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]):

Clear light is thoroughly demonstrated
And union is realized;
In explaining the end as twofold,
End is a word for reaching an endpoint.⁸⁹⁸

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 27, line 2: By progressive stages of mudra and samadhi, the complete attainment of the four absolutes is made manifest, as the “clear light is thoroughly demonstrated” on the stage of manifest bodhi-mind. “Union is realized” as a blending into one of illusory body as relative truth and clear light as ultimate truth. The explanation is of reaching “the end as twofold,” yet the sense of “end” is as “a word for reaching an endpoint,” not deriving a product and not reaching a separate stage.}

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 36, line 4: There are two: method of engaging clear light and union of cause and result. The first can be distinguished through the perspectives of shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, Madhyamikas, and Guhyamantras. The second is the inseparability of the two truths, the mahamudra of the Great Vajradhara beyond all duality, the attainment of unsurpassed kaya.}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 83, line 2: “Clear light” is the ultimate of Paramita, and further is “thoroughly demonstrated” as the ultimate natural state of reality. “Union” is the ultimate of Guhyamantra and is “realized” as the ultimate path. “In explaining the end as twofold,” emptiness of clear light has been made an end, and union of the two truths has been made an end. [The statement] “End is a word for reaching an endpoint” means that there are no further stages other than that, and there is nothing further to be gained.}

[Reply:] There is no contradiction, for emptiness [clear light] and union represent two modes [of the ultimate]. The attainment of one ultimate [emptiness] is demonstrated as an object of common intellect. When following the tradition that only ascribes the terminology as an object of common intellect, this is explained as Paramita and general purpose. The [second] ultimate [union] is attainment of buddha. Clear light is dharmakaya, union is sambhogakaya.

In this way [as above], the division of the expressed meaning into three is explained as having six [parts].

Means of Expression [or Language]— Characteristic Explicit Means

There are three means of expression [or use of language]: characteristic explicit means, symbolic implicit means, and specially designated contextual usage.

Understanding the canonical language [of the Tantras] begins with characteristic explicit means of expression including (1) terminology commonly known, (2) terminology known from treatises, and (3) terminology defined through metaphor derivations.

(1) As an example of terminology commonly known, a bright and hot orb in the sky, made from fire-crystal, is known as the sun.

(2) Likewise [for the sun], examples known from the treatises are twelve [signs of the zodiac], hundred light rays, lotus friend, illuminator, and day-lighter.

(3) As the sun has many special qualities, such as possessor of twelve houses, opener of the lotus, dispeller of darkness, and conqueror of the night, that also serve as metaphor derivations and are suitable as appellations [of name by function], these [three] examples [of how to designate the sun] are presented as explicit [literal and figurative] means of expression.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 145, line 3: The characteristic explicit means of expression is an interpretation that [closely] follows the words and terminology [commonly] defined as written in [canonical] literature and for which it is easy to understand the expressed [meaning]. The expressed [meanings] that are difficult to understand are analyzed individually by means of combining separate words or by distinguishing verbs and other [parts of speech]. An interpretation [can be made] by means of taking hold of the most important basis, like the gaze of the lion; by analyzing the title of each chapter, like a jumping frog; by analyzing the meaning of each word without skipping any, like the motion of a tortoise; by cutting off [contradictory] positions in responses to objections, like a leaping female tiger.}

Means of Expression [or Language]—Symbolic Implicit Means

Symbolic syllable means of expression cannot be determined by [explicit] metaphor derivation in canonical language, but can be determined by [implicit] derivation for each letter [in one of three ways]: (1) comprehension through

extension of syllable phonetics, (2) comprehension through phonetic extension after syllable separation [into letters], and (3) comprehension through similarity in syllable shape.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 37, line 3: The symbolic implicit means [of expression] is what is used by scholars who apply linguistics and logic to the desired end [of expression in accord] with phonetic treatises [lexicographies], and demonstrated by bhagavans in the same manner, as stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp)* [*Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

Scholars of external treatises

Make superb use of phonetic treatises

To instruct in accomplishment;

This is the definitive interpretation of symbolic implicit means.} [899](#)

(1) An example of the first method is the expression $N_A G_A H_A A S_{HVA}$, which cannot be understood [explicitly] as written; but through phonetic extension, N_A becomes *nara* which is a human, G_A becomes *gavi* which is a cow, etc. [900](#)

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 37, line 4: The extension of phonetics is the adding on of syllables to make a definite word. For the example of $N_A G_A H_A$, the five kinds of flesh are indicated. No actual reason for this can be found, rather through the adding on of additional syllables an interpretation as a definite word [can be made].}

(2) An example of the second method is the syllable H_{UM} which means devoid of subject-object dichotomy. This meaning cannot be understood [explicitly] as written, but by breaking apart the syllable and by phonetic extension, H_A becomes *grahaka* which is an object grasped [by the mind], and H_A also becomes *grahacha* which is mind as subject. [901](#) Taking the vowel U and adding it to SH_A becomes SH_U for *shunyata*, meaning emptiness. The circle on top [of H_{UM} as written in Sanskrit] represents MA for *manota*, which means perception by mind. Hence by extrapolation, [H_{UM} is shown implicitly to mean] mere perception empty of subject and object.

(3) An example [of the third method], comprehension through similar shape, is the syllables E V_{AM} M_A Y_A.⁹⁰² which are used to represent [the four chakras or conductor centers located in the] navel, heart, throat, and head. This [interpretation] cannot be understood explicitly, but may through symbolic shape; [for example,] as E has a shape similar to a triangle, it represents the nirmanachakra located in the navel.

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 83, line 6: The syllable E represents the navel nirmanachakra [manifestation chakra] as the knot of conductors [coming together at the navel] resembles a triangle. The syllable V_{AM} represents the heart dharmachakra [phenomena chakra] as it resembles the shape of a heart. The syllable M_A represents the throat sambhogachakra [enjoyment chakra] as the letter M_A is similar to [the word for] eye.⁹⁰³ The syllable Y_A represents the head mahasukrachakra [great ecstasy chakra] since [the shape of] the letter Y_A resembles the shape of a skull.}

Means of Expression [or Language]— Specially Designated Contextual Usage

There are certain syllables that cannot be comprehended [as words] because they are either not commonly known [explicitly] or known through treatises or known [implicitly through extension of sound, or similarity to the shape of letters] in the syllables, but only through usage as ascribed by the Buddha, a contextual usage comprehended through special instruction. An example is *chang*, which is commonly known as beer and is known in the treatises as an intoxicating agent, but here [in the Tantras] is known as *madana*, as it is so designated by the Tathagata,⁹⁰⁴ and not as the object of pleasure in ordinary human activity [which is the common meaning of *madana*]. Other examples are vegetables which are known as *malindha*, and food which is known as *tripita*.⁹⁰⁵ As stated by Chandrakirti [*Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp) Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

Words such as *kotakhya*

Cannot be [comprehended either] through common usage or treatises,

But [only] as a special usage [designated] by tathagatas;

These are known as nonliteral [figurative] expressions.⁹⁰⁶

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 27, line 4:

Kotakhya, Kotava, Kota,

Kotavashca, Kutiraka,

Kolakhya, Kolava, Kola,

*Kolavashca, Kolastatha*⁹⁰⁷

These are not words such as man and woman which are well-known in the world. These are not words such as the Four [Noble] Truths and the Three Supreme Jewels which are well-known in the treatises. In order to create confusion for those who read the books without attending a scholar's teaching, the tathagatas revealed nonliteral expressions such as these to designate [for example] the ten internal energies: life[-giving], downward clearing, stabilizing, upward flowing, permeating, flowing, fully flowing, completely flowing, strongly flowing, and definitively flowing.}

[Application of Each Means of Expression to Each Expressed Meaning]

Application to General Purpose—Paramita Vehicle

Next is to apply each of the three means of expression to each of the three or six expressed meanings; examples will be given for both comprehension of common expression and comprehension of specific usage in the Tantras.

Example of Characteristic Explicit Means of Expression

Starting with general purpose of the Paramita [vehicle], an example of characteristic explicit means of expression is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, iii, 1]:

First, love is the object of meditation... ⁹⁰⁸

“First” refers to the sequence [of four], “love” is the wish for the happiness [of others] and not to be separated from the source of happiness, and “object of meditation” refers to the manner of contemplation by yoga practitioners. This

language [is to be understood explicitly] just as is, as known both commonly and in treatises.

Example of Symbolic Implicit Means of Expression

An example of symbolic implicit means of expression is:

As hungry ghosts demonstrate, very strongly abiding...

How do Paramitas think that hungry ghosts abide? The word for hungry ghosts is *preta*. *Prati*⁹⁰⁹ means very strongly; *eta* means to have gone. Therefore, [hungry ghosts] abide by having very strongly gone over to conceptual thinking. Likewise, what does Paramita itself mean? *Para* is supreme, meaning buddha; *mita* means to go. [Therefore, Paramitas] are said to go to the level of buddha.

Example of Specially Designated Contextual Usage

An example of specially designated contextual usage is:

Sattva is the nature of body, *rajas* is the nature of speech, and *tamas*⁹¹⁰ is the nature of mind...

Someone [such as a Paramita transcendentalist] could think that [by use of these terms] Guhyamantras hold to the heretical [non-Buddhist] Samkhya philosophy, but the explanation is that [in this context] *rajas*, *tamas*, and *sattva* are symbols [respectively] for *parikalpita* [imaginary or imputed nature], *paratantra* [dependent nature], and *parinispanna* [thoroughly established nature].⁹¹¹ This is analogous to meditating on the twelve hands [of Hevajra]. One could question why there should be twelve hands, but the explanation is that [the twelve hands are symbolic of] the twelve links of interdependent origination.⁹¹²

In general, when Paramitas enter into Guhyamantra, they may not grasp the meaning of the two processes [generation and completion] and think that those [processes] are not [an appropriate Buddhist] path. In order to overcome consternation, they are taught that “some [Tantra language] is literal, some is implicit, and some is symbolic.” This [category of] Paramita general purpose is instructive for getting started [on the Tantra path without hesitation or

reluctance], as expressed in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*:

After hearing startling vajra words, some may express disparagement; for them, the explanation of the general purpose is the means to avoid contradiction.

Application to General Purpose—Generation Process

Example of Characteristic Explicit Means of Expression

Next, for general purpose of the generation process, an example of characteristic explicit means of expression is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, iii, 6]:

A vajra arises from H_{UM},
Black in color and very fearful;
Located in the navel center of the vajra
Is yet another H_{UM} upon which to meditate. [913](#)

This verse is understood just as it is written.

Example of Symbolic Implicit Means of Expression

An example of the symbolic implicit means of expression is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, xi, 8-9]:

{Now for performing the eating vows:}
Starting with N_A, G_A, and H_A,
Then S_{HVA} at the end, and S_{HVA} at the beginning.
{In order to accomplish the Hevajra siddhi,
In the same way, the five nectars are to be consumed.} [914](#)

Nara is human flesh; *gavi* is cow [flesh], etc. These [syllables] are explained by extending [or drawing out] the sound, and instruct on the food vows.

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 84, line 5: N_A, G_A, and H_A are the first letters of words. These are explained as follows: N_A is *nara*, human

flesh; G_A is *gavi*, cow flesh; H_A is *hasti*, elephant flesh. S_{HVA} as the last letter of a word refers to *ashva*, horse flesh. S_{HVA} as the first letter of a word refers to *Shvan*, dog flesh. [These terms] instruct on the eating vows.}

Example of Specially Designated Contextual Usage

An example of specially designated contextual usage is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, iii, 9]:

Cauri holds the deer sign... [915](#)

Cauri is a consort of the Great Maheshvara [Hevajra]; the [deer] symbol shows that she has the body of a Vairochana dakini:

The sign of the deer is the moon;

The latter is the symbol for bodhichitta vital fluid.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 39, line 6: This reveals that the Vairochana dakini holds a skullcap filled with white moonlike nectar that is [bodhichitta] vital fluid.}

Application to Hidden Purpose—Completion Process Self-Infusion

Example of Characteristic Explicit Means of Expression

Next, for hidden purpose of the self-infusion practice, an example of characteristic explicit means of expression is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, i, 23 (24)]:

There are sixty-four conductor lobes in the [navel] nirmanachakra,

{Eight conductor lobes in the [heart] dharmachakra,

Sixteen conductor lobes in the [throat] sambhogachakra, and

Thirty-two conductor lobes in the [head] mahasukrachakra.} [916](#)

Example of Symbolic Implicit Means of Expression

An example of symbolic implicit means of expression is the four syllables: E

V_{AM}M_AY_A, indicative of the four chakras [conductor centers] by way of similarity in shape [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, i, 21-22 (23):].

{For E V_{AM}M_AY_A:

E is Lochana;

V_{AM} is Mamaki;

M_A is Panduradevi;

The shape of Y_A is called Tara.} [917](#)

Example of Specially Designated Contextual Usage

An example of specially designated contextual usage is the instruction to meditate on the four chakras and the three main conductors using the code of dharma-, sambhoga-, and nirmana—as awakened body, speech, and mind [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, i, 21 (22):]

{Dharma and sambhoga and mirmana are awakened body, speech, and mind.} [918](#)

Application to Hidden Purpose—Completion Process Mandala-Chakra

Example of Characteristic Explicit Means of Expression

Next, for hidden purpose of the mandala-chakra practice, an example of characteristic explicit means of expression is:

Embracing, kissing, etc.,

These various techniques are taught... [919](#)

The meaning of this passage is to be understood exactly the way it is written.

Example of Symbolic Implicit Means of Expression

An example of symbolic implicit means of expression is the two syllables E and V_{AM} as symbols for space [vagina] and secret [penis], explained by similarity in shape.

Example of Specially Designated Contextual Usage

An example of specially designated contextual usage is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* II, iii, 60]:

The vajra [penis] is called bolla,

And the lotus [vagina] is called kakolla.⁹²⁰

Application to Ultimate Intent

Example of Characteristic Explicit Means of Expression

Next, for ultimate intent as expressed meaning, an example of characteristic explicit means of expression is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, i, 2]:

. . . where the Venerable One [Hevajra] as the essence of the body, speech, and mind of all tathagatas is even vastly more secret than [what is already] secret.⁹²¹

Example of Symbolic Implicit Means of Expression

An example of symbolic implicit means of expression is the word for residing, *vijahara* [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, i, 1]:

Thus have I heard: The Bhagavan was residing in the bhaga [vagina] of the Vajra Queen, the essence of body, speech, and mind of all tathagatas...⁹²²

[*Vi* extends to] *vicitra* which means many kinds; [*ja* extends to] *janma* which means people; [*ha* extends to] *hara* which means to steal. Therefore, [*vijahara* means] stealing away the [samsaric] minds of many kinds of people to be trained, indicative of nirmanakaya.

Example of Specially Designated Contextual Usage

An example of specially designated contextual usage for ultimate intent is [from the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* I, v, 12-14]:

Called *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Shiva*,

Sarva, *Vibuddha*, *Tattva*:

{*Brahma* is [the name for] buddha as it is free from imperfections;

Because of engagement, *Vishnu* is the name given;

Shiva is [sonamed for] always being virtuous;

Sarva is present as the Lord of all;
Tattva is [sonamed for] true ecstasy;
Vibuddha is the realization of ecstasy.⁹²³

These names are explained as the five kinds of gnosis.

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 85, line 1: This explains the five gnoses: (1) mirrorlike gnosis is [named] *Brahma* because it is free from the two imperfections, (2) space for all phenomena gnosis is named *Vishnu* because it is engaged in all phenomena, (3) accomplishing actions gnosis is (named) *Shiva* because bodhi always acts virtuously towards sentient beings, (4) equanimity gnosis is [named] *Sarva* because the equal presence of gnosis in all samsara and nirvana is similar to the Samkhya belief in a primary entity present in all pure transformation, and (5) individual cognition gnosis is [named] *Tattva* because it is the ecstasy of realization of the true absolute just-as-is, [similar to what was taught by] the Nirgrantha (Naked Ascetic Jains) teacher Devajinata.⁹²⁴ These five gnoses are *Vibuddha* since they are realization of imperishable ecstasy and the single flavor of space for all phenomena.}

As above, when ultimate intent is combined into one, applying sets of three [means of expression] to each of five [expressed meanings] makes [a total of] fifteen [examples]. When ultimate intent is twofold, that makes eighteen [separate] instructions for the methodology of interpretation.

Six Determinations Method of Interpretation [According to the Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra]

There are instructions for another method of interpretation called the six-sided explanation of six determinations that comes from the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*.⁹²⁵

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 41, line 1: As stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp)* [*Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

Provisional meaning and definitive meaning,

Required buddha intent and nonrequired buddha intent,
Literal expression and figurative [expression];
These are known as the six determinations.[926](#)

[Provisional Meaning]

[Provisional meaning] instructs on only the generation process for those individuals who are crafty and doubtful.

For the less fortunate, the Conqueror
Concealed the interpretation as provisional meaning.[927](#)

[Definitive Meaning]

[Definitive meaning] instructs on all practices involving inner conductors, the hidden meaning taught just-as-is.

When true meaning is superbly taught,
It is revealed as definitive meaning.[928](#)

[Required Buddha Intent]

[Required buddha intent] is instruction in the absolute just-as-is, using language that is contradictory to common usage, for those who accept the absolute just-as-is.

For sentient beings who accept the supreme,
Absolute just-as-is dharma is superbly taught.
Through application of [seemingly] contradictory language,
What is revealed is required buddha intent.[929](#)

[Nonrequired Buddha Intent]

[Nonrequired buddha intent] is instruction in the absolute just-as-is using language that is well-known and not contradictory [to common usage], for those who have great devotion but little faculty for becoming receptacles for instruction on the absolute just-as-is.

In order to clarify the supreme and bring realization

For sentient beings with little faculty,
Absolute just-as-is is definitively taught
With interpretation that has nonrequired buddha intent.⁹³⁰

[Literal Expression]

[Literal expression] uses straightforward language free of ultimate meaning and language just as it was revealed to teach practices involving complex rituals that instruct on extensive activities such as drawing the various mandalas and so forth.

Practices involving detailed rituals of the mandala, etc.,
Are revealed in straightforward [language],
Interpretation with profound meaning absent;⁹³¹
This is revealed as literal expression.⁹³²

[Figurative Expression]

[Figurative expression] is similar to interpretation using special instructions.

{Words such as *kotakhya*
Cannot be [comprehended either] through common usage or treatises,
But [only] as a special usage [designated] by tathagatas;
These are known as nonliteral [figurative] expressions.}⁹³³

These methods of interpretation can be used for explanations for both the public and private students.

Explanation for those who wish to hear it
Is divided into two kinds:
Interpretations that can be taught to [public] assemblies
And interpretations for [private] students [only].

[Passages] which are literal expression,
Nonrequired buddha intent, and provisional meaning,
Or that have linguistic meaning, and general purpose meaning,
Are expressions that can be explained to [public] assemblies].

Figurative expression, and definitive meaning,
Likewise interpretations with required buddha intent,
And hidden [purposes] and ultimate [intent],
Are preferably explained [only] to [private] students.} [934](#)

The equivalent of characteristic explicit means of expression for both kinds of general purpose expressed meaning is called literal expression. The equivalent of both symbolic implicit means of expression and specially designated contextual usage for both kinds of general purpose expressed meaning is called figurative expression. The equivalent of characteristic explicit means of expression for hidden purpose expressed meaning is called definitive meaning. The equivalent of both symbolic implicit means of expression and specially designated contextual usage for hidden purpose expressed meaning is called provisional meaning. The equivalent of characteristic explicit means of expression for ultimate intent expressed meaning is called nonrequired buddha intent. The equivalent of both symbolic implicit means of expression and specially designated contextual usage for ultimate intent expressed meaning is called required buddha intent [see table].

Table 5: Correspondence between Methods of Interpretation of the Tantras

<i>Khasama Tantra</i>	<i>Khasama Tantra</i>	<i>Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra</i>
EXPRESSED MEANING	MEANS OF EXPRESSION	
general purpose— paramita	characteristic explicit	literal expression
	symbolic implicit	figurative expression
	specially designated contextual usage	figurative expression
general purpose—generation process	characteristic explicit	literal expression
	symbolic implicit	figurative expression
	specially designated contextual usage	figurative expression
hidden purpose—completion process self-infusion	characteristic explicit	definitive meaning
	symbolic implicit	provisional meaning
	specially designated contextual usage	provisional meaning
hidden purpose—completion process mandala chakra	characteristic explicit	definitive meaning
	symbolic implicit	provisional meaning
	specially designated contextual usage	provisional meaning
ultimate intent— general purpose	characteristic explicit	nonrequired buddha intent
	symbolic implicit	required buddha intent
	specially designated contextual usage	required buddha intent
ultimate intent—hidden purpose	characteristic explicit	nonrequired buddha intent

	symbolic implicit	required buddha intent
	specially designated contextual usage	required buddha intent

How the Methods Are Applied to Interpretation of the Tantras

These [six] instructions on the methodology of interpretation may be applied to the interpretation of Tantras in two different ways: (1) one of the three expressed meanings may be designated as the meaning of a given canonical passage and (2) explanation can be made by applying each of the three expressed meanings to each passage.

[Application of One of Three Expressed Meanings to a Given Canonical Passage]

In the first method, characteristic explicit means of expression is the most important; symbolic implicit means of expression and specially designated contextual usage are used to interpret only a few sections. Some canonical passages are explained as general purpose, some as hidden purpose, and some as ultimate intent. Where [individual] words, names, and letters are involved, interpretation is through symbolic implicit means of expression. [Elsewhere,] explanation is straightforward from the text. Explanations that are in accord with what is commonly known from the literature of the Buddha's revelations and the commentarial literature are called interpretations that are generally accepted. Where characteristic explicit means of expression predominates, that is referred to as interpretation through characteristic explicit means of expression.

[Application of Each of Three Expressed Meanings to a Given Canonical Passage]

The second way [of applying this method of interpretation] is for a given [canonical] passage to be given a general purpose Paramita interpretation in order to ameliorate the consternation of those with narrow intellect towards [practices that appear to be] in conflict with the Paramita [vehicle]. [The same passage] is given a general purpose generation process interpretation for those who take delight in ritual. To those who are inclined toward the profound, [the same passage] is given [a hidden purpose] interpretation in accord with either chandali practice or mandala-chakra practice, for those who take delight in

[working with] their own bodies or who passionately rely on a mudra's [consort's] body [respectively]. [The same passage] is given an ultimate intent interpretation in order to create a common object of faith for those who are lacking deep realization, and in order to create an exemplary [approximate] realization through samadhi for those who do have deep realization.

[Additional Methods of Interpretation]

[Two additional methods of interpretation are (1) four-method interpretation and (2) fourfold interpretation.]

[Four-Method Interpretation According to the Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra]

Likewise, it is possible to have many more sets [of methods of interpretation]; the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra* has [another] set, designated the four-method interpretation, that includes a [general] linguistic meaning [means of expression] interpretation along with general purpose, hidden purpose, and ultimate intent [expressed] meanings.⁹³⁵ The linguistic meaning interpretation of this traditional lineage is also the multicolored interpretation as [described] above.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 43, line 2: As stated in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp)* [*Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

{After instruction that distinguishes the six determinations,}

What is expressed may also be subdivided in this manner of interpretation:

Linguistic meaning, general purpose,

Hidden [purpose] and likewise ultimate [intent].⁹³⁶

[Fourfold Method of Interpretation According to Virupa's Lamdre]

There is [another method of interpretation] designated the fourfold interpretation, which includes general purpose, both self-infusion and mandala-chakra hidden purposes, and ultimate intent as the four. There is no contradiction in the understanding of any [of these sets], as the method of interpretation given here is particularly appropriate for gaining comprehension of all the Mahayoga [or Anuttarayoga] class of Tantras. As some scholars have said:

Outer, secret, likewise inner
And absolute: these are the four meanings
[Corresponding to] mandala, karmamudra,
Physical body, and natural presence.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 148, line 2: The wish-fulfilling gemlike [method] of interpretation of the meaning of the Tantras is the four expressed meanings [as follows]: one general purpose, two hidden purposes, and one ultimate intent. This makes for an amazing interpretation [by applying] the four to the interpretation of single vajra words, such as those in the Introduction to the [*Hevajra*] *Tantra* and the root mantra of the male deity [Hevajra]. This method of interpretation is derived from the uncommon tradition of special instruction explanation of the fearless venerable Dharmapala Virupa. This method of interpretation of the Great Powerful Yogi can be used to gain understanding of all Tantras.}

These methods of interpretation are understood to be in accord [with those given above].

The Three Continuities ***[According to the Guhyasamaja Tantra]***

When buddha intent is [focussed] on the continuous flow of mind, the three continuity interpretation [is the one used], as in the *Continuation to the Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra XVIII*, 34:

Continuity is called “tantra”;
When divided, continuity has three aspects:
Ground, nature,
And inalienability.
Nature is the source aspect,
Ground is termed method,
Accordingly, inalienability is the result;
These three summarize the meaning of “tantra.”⁹³⁷

The two subtopics are (1) instructions on the method of interpretation and (2) how the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras.

Instructions on the Method of Interpretation

[The three aspects are] source continuity, method continuity, and result continuity.

Source Continuity

For source continuity, all sentient beings are pure by nature of phenomena [as the pure state of mind] in the manner of transcendence of suffering. The phenomena [of mind] as its way of abiding may be extensively divided into thirty-five components, including psychophysical aggregates [five components], perceptual elements [twelve components], and perceptual fields [eighteen components], or summarized as just body, speech, and mind.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 43, line 6: Source continuity is nondual mind just-as-is. Its nature is made manifest through [generation process] practices of [visualizing] the protective circle, [tetrahedron symbol of] dharma source, celestial palace, thrones, and three samadhis.}

Method Continuity

Method continuity is the method of practice, including the maturing path of empowerment and the liberating path of the generation and completion processes, together with the auxiliary practices of both of the two [processes].

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 44, line 1: Method continuity is the ground that is formed by maintaining and depending on bodhi-mind. It is the accumulation of practices including generation of the mandala, duties of master and trainee, miscellaneous activities, accomplishment of siddhis, training, taking vows, and the principle of pure awareness discipline.⁹³⁸}

Result Continuity

For result continuity, after [spiritual] maturation through empowerment as abiding in the source, and then after practicing meditation of the generation and completion processes as obtained through the empowerments, [ten bodhisattva] levels are attained through arising the samadhi of realization within continuity of mind and what becomes manifest as buddha kaya and gnosis just-as-is.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 44, line 2: Result continuity is inalienability, or the impossibility of alienation [from buddha] after purification of all discordant factors without exception, the nonlocalized transcendence of suffering.}

This topic is not discussed in detail here as it will be explained extensively in [*Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra, Volume 2:*] *Direct Knowledge through Practice*.

How the Method Is Applied to Interpretation of the Tantras

Here the same two ways as above [are applied]. (1) Some [passages] explain source continuity, some explain means continuity, some as the maturing path, some as the liberating path, and some explain result continuity; this is the multicolored [web] of explanation. (2) Each passage may also be explained in terms of each of the three continuities.

In this way, through interpretation of canonical content by literal language [of the three expressed meanings], by symbolic syllable implicit [mode of expression] through the six instructions, and by application to direct knowledge of meditative experience through the three continuities, these two methods of interpretation are most important.

Three Principles [According to the Khasama and Mahamaya Tantras]

The three principles method of interpretation is used to make empowerments into the path, as in the *Khasama (Equivalent to the Sky) Tantra*:

The principles are mantra, form, and dharma;[939](#)

Through these three applications

The meaning of the Tantras can be entered

Without being enveloped with the faults of materialism.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 44, line 4: And as in the *Mahamaya (Great Illusion) Tantra*:

The principles of mantra, form, and dharma
Are known as the three aspects of application;
Through these three aspects of gnosis,
There can be no envelopment in the faults of materialism.} [940](#)

The two subtopics are (1) explanation of the three principles and (2) how the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras.

Explanation of the Three Principles

[The three principles are (1) form, (2) mantra, and (3) dharma.]

Form Principle

First is the form principle, the generation process that demonstrates the essence of the physical body as nirmanakaya, after the physical body has received the vase [first] empowerment.

Mantra Principle

Second is the mantra principle, the chandali [tumo or heat yoga practice] that demonstrates the essence of speech as sambhogakaya, after [ordinary] speech has received the secret [second] empowerment.

Dharma Principle

Third is the empowerment dharma principle, [mandala-chakra sexual yoga practice] that demonstrates the essence of mind as dharmakaya, after [ordinary] mind has received the mudra-gnosis [third] empowerment.

Fourth is the ultimate dharma principle, [the vajra-wave practice] that demonstrates energy as svabhavikakaya, after the entirety of [ordinary] body, speech, and mind together with energy have received the fourth empowerment. When the empowerment dharma principle and the ultimate dharma principle are combined into a single dharma [principle], there are [a total of] three principles.

To make these more specific [to the three continuities], [ordinary] body is the basis for purification which is source continuity; vase empowerment is the maturing path and generation process is the liberating path [of means continuity]; nirmanakaya is result [continuity]. These four external dharmas are [collectively] termed the form principle. The other three [principles] may be

specified and ordered in the same way.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 149, line 3: For the outer form principle, the basis for purification is the body, the means for purification is the vase empowerment, the liberating path is [the practice of] the generation process, and the result is nirmanakaya.

For the inner mantra principle, the basis for purification is speech, the means for purification is the secret empowerment, the liberating path is [the practice of] self-infusion, and the result is sambhogakaya.

For the secret dharma principal, the basis for purification is mind, the means for purification is the wisdom [mudra gnosis] empowerment, the liberating path is [the practice of] mandala-chakra, and the result is dharmakaya.

For the ultimate dharma principal, the basis of purification is the essence gnosis energy, the means for purification is the fourth empowerment, the liberating path is [the practice of] the vajra-wave, and the result is svabhavikakaya.}

Table 6: The Three Principles Expanded to Four

PRINCIPLE	BASIS FOR PURIFICATION	MEANS FOR PURIFICATION	LIBERATING PATH	KAYA RESULT
outer form	ordinary body	vase empowerment	generation process	nirmana-
inner mantra	ordinary speech	secret empowerment	self-infusion or chandali	sambhoga-
secret dharma	ordinary mind	mudra gnosis empowerment	mandala-chakra	dharma-
ultimate dharma	gnosis energy	fourth empowerment	vajra wave	svabhavika-

How the Method Is Applied to the Interpretation of the Tantras

There are [the same] two ways: (1) A mixture of interpretations in a Tantra

means that some sections explain the body of the form [principle], some the maturing path of form, some the liberating path of form, some the result of form, some explain speech as the basis of purification of the mantra [principle], some explain the sambhogakaya result, and so forth.

(2) The second method of interpretation applies [all three principles], form, mantra, and dharma to a given passage, then applies each [of four subcomponents:] source, empowerment, path, and result, to the [same] passage, resulting in twelve [different] explanations, or sixteen [different] explanations if the dharma [principle] is divided into two [empowerment or secret and ultimate].

This method of interpretation is very extensive⁹⁴¹ and is similar in direction to the methods of the six instructions and the three continuities [as explained] above.

Four Emplacements ***[According to the Surya Chakra Tantra]***

In order to make the resultant four kayas into the path, the four emplacements are explained as the fourth method of interpretation, as in the *Khasama (Equivalent to the Sky) Tantra*:⁹⁴²

Embryo, water, form,
And likewise formless;
These are the four emplacements
That are definitive for the Tantras.⁹⁴³

The two subtopics are (1) explanation of this method of interpretation and (2) how the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras.

Explanation of the Four Emplacements

First, sambhogakaya corresponds to embryo emplacement, because there is engagement in ecstasy [in the formation of the embryo]. Dharmakaya corresponds to water emplacement, for it is of one flavor only, like pouring water into water, or like a drop of water with no sides, edges, or corners of conceptual thinking. Nirmanakaya corresponds to form emplacement because there are features of face and hands. Svabhavikakaya corresponds to formless emplacement since everything is absorbed into it.

In the same way that the result [continuity] four kayas are the four

emplacements, the source continuity basis for purification also has four emplacements. In accordance with sentient beings generated from a womb, first when the mother and father are engaged in the pleasure of sexual intercourse, a sentient being in the intermediate state [between death and rebirth] is attracted to that experience of pleasure and subsequently enters [the mother's] womb. That engagement resembles sambhogakaya and is embryo emplacement. When the intermediate state being's consciousness lapses into unconsciousness in the medium of the [combined] blood and semen, [the sequential embryonic development] beginning with a mass of cells is water emplacement [resembling dharmakaya]. When [limbs and] senses are completely formed into the shape of a body, there is form emplacement [resembling nirmanakaya]. At the time of death, there is formless emplacement [resembling svabhavikakaya].

Since the four emplacements are both source and result, they can be implicitly connected in the same way to the four empowerments and the four paths. Each of the [four] paths [associated with the four empowerments] has a set of the four emplacements. For example, [in the generation process visualization practice of the vase empowerment], the [generation of the] source Vajradhara through to the emission of [the circle of] goddesses corresponds to embryo emplacement. Source Vajradhara melting into light corresponds to water emplacement. Raising the resultant [Vajradhara] through to the empowerment corresponds to form emplacement. Dissolution of [mandala] deities corresponds to formless emplacement. This is expressed [as one possible correspondence, as applied to the Six-Branch Abhisamaya], likewise there are immeasurable other correspondences as [described] in the *Samputa Tantra*, part 5, chapter 2.

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 45, line 4: In correspondences with result [continuity], sambhogakaya corresponds with embryo emplacement since it is the enjoyment of the happiness and ecstasy of Mahayana dharma. Dharmakaya corresponds with water emplacement since space and gnosis are a single flavor, like water poured into water, or since concepts [figuratively] in the shape of corners are missing, as in a drop of water. Nirmanakaya corresponds with form emplacement since it has assumed the shape of displaying [buddha] features and characteristics. Svabhavikakaya corresponds with formless element since all [the other] three kayas are absorbed into its realm.

The four emplacements are also in correspondence with the source continuity [as described by Sonam Tsemo]. There is also correspondence with the [maturing path] empowerments and the liberating path [practices]. Vase

empowerment corresponds with embryo [emplacement], since through the essence of the six [buddha] families, there is enjoyment of sensual pleasures. Secret empowerment corresponds with water [emplacement] since empowerment is through the continuous flow of bodhicitta which has the nature of water. Wisdom [mudra] gnosis empowerment corresponds with form [emplacement] since empowerment is given through the form [or body] of the mudra. Fourth empowerment corresponds with formless [emplacement] since it is free from all limits of projections, such as forms. Correspondences with the generation process of the liberating path⁹⁴⁴ [are as described by Sonam Tsemo]. Likewise, [the four emplacements] may be juxtaposed with the two hidden [practices of the liberating path completion process], which may be known [elsewhere].}

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 86, line 2: Likewise, it is easy to make the correspondence with the four paths, as each of the four paths has the four emplacements. The generation process has been made clear in the text [above]. The four emplacements correspond with self-infusion practice in that embryo emplacement [corresponds] with the four elemental vital fluids that are emplaced within the four chakras, and further are intermingled in the descent of the basic vital fluid. Water emplacement [corresponds] with self-awareness [derived] from that [practice]. Form emplacement [corresponds] with [the experience of] ecstasy. Formless emplacement [corresponds] with nonconceptualization. For correspondences of mandala-chakra [practice], embryo emplacement is the intercourse of means and wisdom [male and female practitioners], water [emplacement] is self-awareness, form [emplacement] is ecstasy, and formless [emplacement] is nonconceptualization.⁹⁴⁵}

Table 7: Four Emplacements

Emplacement	Basis for Purification	Empowerments	Generation Process	SELF-INFUSION	MANDALA CHAKRA	BUDHHA KAYA
Embryo	womb entrance	vase	source Vajradhara to goddess circle	vital fluids in chakra centers	intercourse	sambho;
Water	cell mass	secret	source Vajradhara	self-awareness	self-awareness	dharma-

			melting into light			
Form	body development	mudra gnosis	result Vajradhara to empowerment	ecstasy	ecstasy	nirmana
Formless	end of life	fourth	dissolution of mandala	nonconceptualization	non-	
conceptualization	svabhavika-					

How the Method Is Applied to Interpretation of the Tantras

There are the same [two ways] as before: (1) A multicolored mixture of interpretations [in a Tantra] means that in some chapters the emplacements are applied to source, in some applied to result, and in some applied to path [continuities].

(2) [Sometimes a set of] the four emplacements may be applied to each passage. Where that cannot be done, then [the trilogy of] source, path, and result may be applied, same as the three continuities as explained above.

Three Purities [According to the Hevajra Tantra]

In order to eliminate all discordant factors, the three purities are explained as the fifth method of interpretation, as in the *Hevajra Tantra* I, ix, 1-3:

[The purity of] everything certainly substantial
Is called definitive purity;
Then, by separation into parts
It is called [purity] by divinity;

{The five aggregates, the six sense faculties,
The six sense sources, and the five elements
Are naturally pure, [yet need]
To be purified of the imperfections of emotions and knowledge.}

Awareness-in-itself is the self purity;
There is no liberation by any other purity.
{In order to purify substantive objects,
[There must be] the supreme great ecstasy of awareness-itself.}⁹⁴⁶

The two subtopics are (1) explanation of this method of interpretation and (2) how the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras.

Explanation of the Three Purities

The three purities—definitive purity, component divinity purity, and awareness-in-itself purity—may be grouped under source continuity, method continuity, and result continuity.

For the three [purities] of source continuity, the definitive nature of all phenomena as unoriginated from the beginning is definitive purity. Forms appearing as bodies with faces and hands are component divinity purity. All appearances created by mind-itself are awareness-in-itself purity.

For the three purities of method continuity, the perspective that cuts off all exaggeration and deprecation by listening [or reading] and reasoning is definitive purity. The [practice] path of the generation process is component divinity purity. [The practice of] the completion process is awareness-in-itself purity. These [three parts of method continuity] are subsequent to empowerment, to which the three purities may also be applied.

For the three purities of result continuity, svabhavikakaya is definitive purity, the two form kayas [sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya] are component divinity purity, and dharmakaya is awareness-in-itself purity.

Table 8: Three Purities

PURITY	SOURCE CONTINUITY	METHOD CONTINUITY	RESULT CONTINUITY
definitive	nature of all phenomena	perspective	svabhavikakaya
component divinity	divine forms	generation process	two form kayas
awareness-in-itself	appearances by mind-itself	completion process	dharmakaya

How the Method Is Applied to Interpretation of the Tantras

[There are the same two ways as before:] (1) A multicolored mixture of interpretations [for different sections of a Tantra] may be explained as applied to

each of the three continuities.

(2) The three purities cannot properly be applied to each passage, because the explanation through application of source, method, and result continuities to each passage is a complete method of explanation, and [the three purities] can be understood the same way as the explanation of the three continuities.

Seven Secrets [According to the Samputa Tantra Continuation]

The sixth method of interpretation, the seven secrets, comes from the eight in the *Continuation to the Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra*:

Secret is the invisible,
Secret is the abbreviated definitive,
Secret is the five seeds,
Secret is the actual hidden truth,
Secret is the concealed lotus,
Secret is the pleasure of the navel,
Secret is the gathering of all beings,
Secret is the endless ecstasy;

These explain the literature of Tantra.⁹⁴⁷

{Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 47, line 2: The seven secrets are explained for the purpose of making secret [the path of direct knowledge] and handcuffing those who are not [suitable] receptacles.}

The two subtopics are (1) explanation of this method of interpretation and (2) how the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras.

Explanation of the Seven Secrets

[Objection:] How can there be [only] seven secrets when the [*Samputa*] *Tantra* mentions eight?

[Reply:] Only [the first] seven have the word secret, while the eighth is characterized by inexpressibility. With respect to both the endless ecstasy and invisible secrets, since the invisible secret refers to true realization in source continuity, and endless ecstasy refers to the [resultant] demonstration of realization, then there is [only] one [referent] truly present [thereby making a

total of seven distinct secrets]. Since there is no source [as a point of origin] for the demonstration of truly present realization [of endless ecstasy], then the eighth [secret] is said to be inexpressible and is not included [as an explicit explanation in the canon].

The abbreviated definitive refers to the maturing path of empowerment. The five seeds refer to the generation process. The actual hidden truth refers to the [path] perspective of realization. The concealed lotus refers to the [completion process] mandala-chakra practice. The pleasure of the navel refers to the [completion process] self-infusion practice. The gathering of all beings refers to [supplementary branches] of the path.

How the Method Is Applied to the Interpretation of the Tantras

The application of multiple methods of interpretation to specific passages [in a Tantra] is not discussed [again] as it is the same as for the above methods of interpretation. The application of a mixture of interpretations to the significance of [different] letters in the canonical literature, associations made under any given circumstances, are the same as in direct knowledge.

Table 9: Five Path Structural Methods of Interpretation

<i>Guhyasamaja Tantra</i>	<i>Khasama and Mahamaya Tantras</i>	<i>Khasama Tantra</i>	<i>Hevajra Tantra</i>	<i>Samputa Tantra</i>
THREE CONTINUITIES	THREE PRINCIPLES	FOUR EMBLACEMENTS	THREE PURITIES	SEVEN SECRETS
SOURCE CONTINUITY		ALL FOUR EMBLACEMENTS	ALL THREE PURITIES	invisible secret
body	form principle			
speech	mantra principle			
mind	dharma principle			
gnosis energy	dharma principle			
METHOD CONTINUITY				
Maturing Path			ALL THREE PURITIES	definitive secret
vase empowerment	form principle	embryo emplacement		
secret empowerment	mantra principle	water emplacement		
wisdom gnosis empowerment	dharma principle	form emplacement		
fourth empowerment	dharma principle	formless emplacement		
Liberating Path perspective			definitive purity	hidden truth secret
generation process	form principle	ALL FOUR EMBLACEMENTS	divinity purity	five seeds, gathering secrets

completion process — chandali	mantra principle	ALL FOUR EMPLACEMENTS	awareness purity	navel pleasure secret
completion process— mandala chakra	dharma principle	ALL FOUR EMPLACEMENTS	awareness purity	concealed lotus secret
completion process— vajra wave	dharma principle	ALL FOUR EMPLACEMENTS	awareness purity	
RESULT CONTINUITY				[endless ecstasy secret]
nirmanakaya	form principle	form emplacement	divinity purity	
sambhogakaya	mantra principle	embryo emplacement	divinity purity	
dharmakaya	dharma principle	water emplacement	awareness purity	
svabhavikakaya	dharma principle	formless emplacement	definitive purity	

With respect to these [above] methods of interpretation, some scholars have an explanation of five branches of Tantra content that is similar. The five branches are (1) branch of preliminary empowerment; (2) branch of direct realization of the path, the two processes [of generation and completion]; (3) branch of companion vows and commitments, the assistant to the path; (4) the branch of stabilizing activities; and (5) branch of accumulated [paranormal] abilities as the result. This explanation includes the common result as the two: (1) the lesser of pacification (and the other three actions) and the middling of the (eight) great abilities and (2) the supreme result of buddha.

Further, from the *Continuation to the Guhyasamaja (Compilation of Secrets) Tantra*,⁹⁴⁸ there are either four or five branches: (1) approximation, (2) accomplishment, (3) near accomplishment, (4) great accomplishment, and (5) the branch that is common to all. This is also a similar method of interpretation [as the above].

Also, in the *Chakrasamvara (Short Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*, there are the path of the secret and the result of the secret, included in what are called the branches of making perfection, another similar method of explanation.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 155, line 1: In the *Chakrasamvara (Short Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*, there are the path of the secret and the result of the secret, and a third, the component that perfects everything. The interpretation by means of these is included in the six instructions.}⁹⁴⁹

In summary, there are two applications for instructions in methods of interpretation: (1) grouped aspects [of meaning] may be applied [individually] to separate passages and (2) multiple meanings may be applied to [each] passage, with application of each explanation to each passage. Application of multiple meanings is appropriate whenever it is applied in accord with previous [methods]. Application [of one meaning in each method of interpretation] to each [separate] passage is also appropriate whenever it is applied, as in accord with the latter seven secrets. Further, in [books using the systemization known as] direct knowledge, [subject matter is] organized by the three continuities. [Books that interpret] primarily the meaning of the terminology use the characteristic explicit [means of expression].⁹⁵⁰

[Five Branches of Direct Knowledge According to Durjayachandra's Hevajra Tantra Commentary]

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 152, line 3: Another method of interpretation tradition is that in Master Durjayachandra's *Commentary [on the Hevajra Tantra]*, who asserts that the linkages of all chapters can be made by means of the five branches of direct knowledge⁹⁵¹ as conjoined with the analogy of three special qualities [required] of a ruler who is about to engage in battle, [five components for seizure of another country, and three acquisitions of warfare for attainment of power]. The three special qualities by which a ruler can claim another country as his own are (1) birth in a [royal] family among many [ordinary] family lineages, that is, an unbroken succession of kings; (2) accomplishment of a physical body without faults, such as Gudik,⁹⁵² etc.; (3) obtaining empowerment as the king's regent, through a ritual derived from the Vedas.

The seizure of another country is [carried out] by means of five components: (1) component of government that establishes security by putting an end to negative prospects such as having one's own country conquered and plundered by another, while [enabling] conquest of other governments through warfare; (2) component of cavalry that [enables] travel to a distant country using horses and

elephants that takes their breath away through exhaustion; (3) component of supporters that include ministers worthy of praise, and four or five kinds of military divisions;⁹⁵³ (4) component of advisors that include masterminds with the ready skills [necessary] to conquer in battle; (5) component of prediction that is essential knowledge of interrelated conditions such as astrological signs that indicate augmentation of one's [own forces] and diminishment of others' [forces].

Pertinent to these [components] is attainment of power through three acquisitions of warfare: (1) land, (2) allies, and (3) wealth.

In accord with this analogy, [starting with the three special qualities,] (1) birth in a royal lineage is the practice of completion process meditation, (2) accomplishment of a faultless physical body is the practice of generation process meditation, and (3) receiving empowerment as the regent of the dharma king is the attainment of [meditative] heat. Alternatively, (1) birth in the royal lineage of the Mahayana is [the development of] compassion and wisdom, (2) accomplishment of a faultless physical body is [accomplishment of] the vajra body, and (3) receiving empowerment as the regent of the dharma king of the three realms is completion of the [four] empowerments.

The practitioner who has these three special qualities progressively overcomes all discordant factors by means of the five components: (1) the component of government is the perspective of the completion process that conquers through warfare against the two discordant defilements together with habitual tendencies that put a stop to the ravaging/plundering of the country of experience by the poison of manifest [self-aggrandizing] opinions; (2) the component of cavalry is the generation process that takes the breath right out of ordinary conceptualization; (3) the component of supporters is the union practice with yoginis that elicits the benefits generated, the realizations not generated before; (4) the component of advisors is the recitation of mantras as in the [auxiliary] rituals explained in the Tantras; (5) the component of prediction is knowledge of the special instructions by which all energies and vital fluids within the conductor system [are made to] enter the central [conductor].

[In analogy with the three acquisitions of warfare,] (1) land is the inner region [the internal body], (2) allies are the [system of] conductors, and (3) wealth is the pleasure over which control is gained. After sequentially traversing the twelve levels, there comes buddha awakening. As stated in the *Kaumuti Commentary*:

The union practice, the sadhana,

The warfare, the prediction,
And the government protection against failure
Are asserted as the five components of Guhyamantra.

Land, allies, and wealth
Are the three acquisitions of warfare;
For these to be acquired,
Warfare will be engaged in.}

Resolution of Objections

Resolutions to three objections to these methods of interpretation are (1) resolution [of the objection] that multiple methods of interpretation are meaningless, (2) resolution [of the objection] that taking all explanations as a whole has the consequence of being explanations for the [public] assembly [instead of private students], (3) resolution [of the objection] that having multiple methods of explanation has the consequence that they are the [seven ornaments] explanation methods of others.

Resolution [of the Objection] That Multiple Methods of Interpretation Are Meaningless

[Objection:] If multiple [interpretations] are applied to each passage as you say, that is meaningless, since multiple explanations are presently opaque [or nonapparent].

[Reply:] That is true, multiple [interpretations] applied to all passages are presently opaque, because in this present degenerate age, it has become impossible [to have full comprehension] because of [generally] weak intelligence and effort. Yet, in penetrating to the core of these methods of interpretation and applying the interpretations to some difficult passages and to summarizations such as the introductory statement, then everything becomes clear and all [contexts] can be designated by a single process.

Resolution [of the Objection] That Taking All Explanations as a Whole Has the Consequence of Being Explanations for the [Public] Assembly [Instead of for Private Students]

[Objection:] In each manner of interpretation, the only [passages] that can be explained to the [public] assembly are of linguistic meaning, as stated by Master Chandrakirti [in the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp) Extensive Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra*]:

[Passages] which are literal expression,
Nonrequired buddha intent, and provisional meaning,
Or that have linguistic meaning, and general purpose,
Are expressions that can be explained to [public] assemblies.

Figurative expression, and definitive meaning,
Likewise interpretations with required buddha intent,
Hidden [purpose] and ultimate [intent],
Are preferably explained [only] to [private] students.⁹⁵⁴

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 27, line 7: “Literal expression” is extensive explanation of revealed language such as [pertaining to] mandala-chakra, fire offerings, comprehension of accomplishing the very large number of actions, and activities performed under those circumstances. Explanation with “nonrequired buddha intent” is teaching absolute dharma in a manner that is exceedingly clear and easy to understand for those sentient beings who have dull intellects yet have faith to be able to gain realization of the profound absolute. “Provisional meaning” is the explanation of hidden profound meaning for the benefit of those sentient beings without good fortune to guide them [to that profound meaning]. “General purpose” serves to counteract remorse for having [initially] engaged in the Sutras, *etc.*⁹⁵⁵ “General purpose” also refers to the generation process. Both of these general purposes [as well as the first four methods of interpretation] “can be explained to [public] assemblies.”

“Figurative expression” was explained above [under specially designated contextual usage]. “Interpretations with required buddha intent” were revealed through application of words that run counter to worldly usage for the finest teaching of absolute dharma to those individuals with precious intellects, sentient beings who long for the supreme. “Definitive meaning” is the finest teaching of true meaning for those passages that [otherwise] explain only provisional meaning.

There are three “hidden intents”: (1) Passionate dharma hidden intent is the finest teaching of dharma that cannot be uttered to a [public] assembly, with words describing passionate dharma as the union of the two [sexual] organs, *etc.* (2) Illusory body hidden intent is the stage of self-infusion, the realization of the relative truth that is characterized by the twelve examples of illusion.⁹⁵⁶ (3) The hidden three minds hidden intent is the essence of conceptualization, analysis,

and meditation, the three gnoses of appearance, increasing appearance, and near attainment appearance that have the complete three consciousnesses—mind, mental events, and lack of awareness—along with energy, the Vajradhara kaya that is attained through actions.

“Ultimate [intent]” is the teaching of the stages of clear light and union along with the three hidden [minds or intents] which “are preferably explained [only] to [private] students.”}

{Yeshe Gyaltsen, page 512, line 6: Linguistic meaning [omitted from Buton’s explanation above] is explanation in accord with terminology for those who take delight in the content of the terminology of treatises.}

[Reply:] That [objection] is not correct. Neither of these two systems [alone] can provide a complete explanation of the Tantras. Both can be explained to [private] students, but the complete explanation of the Tantras cannot be given to the [public] assembly. Accordingly, that [above objection] is not so, as according to Master Chandrakirti’s [*Pradipodyotana (Brilliantly Illuminating Lamp) Extensive Commentary [on the Guhyasamaja Tantra]*]:

When it is seen that for some [of the public], each part of required buddha intent and other [related] interpretations cannot be explained, that becomes omitted.

[Objection:] Why then are there two methods of explanation?

[Reply:] The explanation for the [public] assembly covers the entirety of the Tantras by means of [applying] the three instructions on means of expression to the two general purposes. The entirety of the explanation is given to those with the intellectual capacity for the profound and vast, such that students can become masters. The interpretation of the linguistic meaning along with that of the hidden and ultimate intents may be explained to [private] students and when combined with the complete explanation that also teaches the general purpose, then students with weak intellects are able to acquire the benefit of accomplishment.

{Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 546, line 5: Accordingly, in this chapter on the interpretation of the *Hevajra Tantra*, the

interpretation of the vase empowerment and the associated generation process may be explained to the [public] assembly. The interpretations of the higher empowerments and the associated completion process may be explained to [private] students.}

Resolution [of the Objection] That Having Multiple Methods of Explanation Has the Consequence That They Are the [Seven Ornaments] Explanation Methods of Others [According to the Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra]

[Objection:] Some have stated that although many instructions on methods of interpretation have been applied here, the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra* has [a more complete system] which is called the seven ornaments.⁹⁵⁷ The seven ornaments are (1) five settings [of the Tantras], (2) four valid reasons [for practice], (3) six determinations [of interpretation], (4) four methods [of interpretation], (5) two types of teachings, (6) [five] types of students, and (7) two truths. Here [in this book, the seven ornaments] are incomplete. Further, the explanation [used] here [that includes] general purpose, hidden purpose, etc., also derives from the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*, in the [*Guhyasamaja Tantra*] tradition of the Noble Father and Son scholars [Nagarjuna and Aryadeva]. This [method of interpretation] does not exist in the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra*, so here it is imitated. [Such an act] is foolish even among the large number of fools, [an attempt] to aggrandize just one's own tradition to the detriment of others, as unconscientious as the long-living gods.

[Reply:] I have never said that our [Sakya] lama [lineage] did not speak of the so-called seven ornaments, in fact these [methods of interpretation as described above] are complete [in our own lineage as well]. How are the seven ornaments included?

(1) Settings [parameters of discourse] include five components: (a) names or titles of Tantras, (b) reasons [benefits for intended audiences], (c) composers, (d) measures, and (e) purposes.

(2) Four families are (a) continuity, (b) basis, (c) derivation of terminology, and (d) motive. Both of these [first two ornament sets] can be learned from the chapters on “Classes of Tantra” [chapter 6], “Origin [of Guhyamantra]” [chapter 7], and “Meaning of Titles” [chapter 8].

- (3) Six determinations,
- (4) four methods, and
- (5) two types of teaching [public and private] are taught in instructions on methods of interpretation [in chapter 9 above].
- (6) Types of students and
- (7) two truths can be learned in the *Direct Knowledge of Tantra*.⁹⁵⁸

Thereby, it can be known that all these methods of explanation [seven ornaments] are included here.

[Five Settings of the Tantras]

{Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 86, line 6: The five components of the settings ornament are:

- (a) names or titles of Tantras;
- (b) reasons for revealment for the benefit of passionate people, etc.;
- (c) composers as Vajradhara;
- (d) measures as [numbers of] short subdivisions in the sequence of chapters; and
- (e) [three] purposes are (1) pacification, etc.,⁹⁵⁹ as the lowest, (2) eight siddhis as the intermediate, and (3) attainment of buddha as the highest.

[Four Valid Reasons for Practice]

There are [two sets of] the ornament of four valid reasons [for practice]: [the first set of] four is to empower dispassionate nirmanakayas, [the second set of four is] to empower passionate [nirmana-]kayas.

[For the first set,]

- (a) valid reason of continuity is [re]birth in the human family in [the southern continent of] Jambuling [and thereby have access to the Buddhist teachings].
- (b) [Valid reason of] basis is renunciation of a householder's life.
- (c) [Valid reason in] the category of terminology is strict reliance on

the instructions of Vinaya vows.

(d) [Valid reason of] motive is to manifest the result of dharma practice that is difficult to accomplish.

[For the second set,]

(a) valid reason of continuity is [re]birth in making [oneself] into either the principle [buddha deity] or [one of the other deities of the] five buddha families in the complete mandala.

(b) [Valid reason of] basis is return to a single buddha family.

(c) [Valid reason in] the category of terminology is strict reliance on maintenance of the [Tantra] vows of the five [buddha] families.

(d) [Valid reason of] motive is to manifest the result of enjoyment of sensual pleasures such as a [divine] graceful sensuality.

[Six Determinations of Interpretation]

(a) Provisional meaning is instruction in the generation process alone; hidden profound meaning is for the less capable who wish to accomplish common siddhis [through the generation process and auxiliary activities].

(b) Definitive meaning is instruction in the completion process, etc., for the [more] capable who wish for supreme [siddhi].

(c) Required buddha intent is instruction using words that conflict with worldly meanings, for sharper intellects who wish for supreme [siddhi], absolute dharma of clear light and union.

(d) Nonrequired buddha intent is instruction clarifying absolute dharma for duller intellects who [also] wish for supreme [siddhi].

(e) Literal expression is instruction clarifying physical and verbal activities of mandala and tormas rituals, *etc.*

(f) Figurative expression is revelation using coded language that is not known either commonly or in treatises.

[Four Methods of Interpretation]

(a) Linguistic meaning is instruction through just adding on letters/syllables by means of grammar and logic [linguistic analysis].

(b) General purpose includes the content of Paramita and other⁹⁶⁰

interpretations and just the generation process [among Tantra topics].

(c) Hidden purpose includes the content of the completion process and its gnosis.

(d) Ultimate intent is the interpretation [derived from the experience of] clear light, the actual or Paramita ultimate, and union, which is the Guhyamantra ultimate.

[Five Types of Students]

(a) Utpala-like individuals grasp many lectures while hearing them, then promptly forget them.

(b) White lotus-like [individuals] hear many lectures and do not forget the meaning of what they have heard, but they are unable to instruct others.

(c) Lotus-like [individuals] have dedication, compassion, and sharp awareness; but they easily forget the meaning of what they have heard.

(d) Sandalwood-like [individuals] have great pride with little listening, so they say a lot that is valueless and they are unable to [beneficially] influence others.

(e) Jewel-like [individuals] have pure discipline and wisdom with expertise; after hearing just one Tantra, they can teach well and are distinguished by good behavior. Among these five types of individuals, the first four are selected for public teaching, and the latter is selected for [private] instruction teaching. This is the ornament of types of [student] receptacles.

[Two Types of Teaching]

(a) Public teaching includes [use of] literal expression, nonrequired buddha intent, and provisional meaning [three of the six determinations], and linguistic meaning and general purpose [two of the four methods of explanation].

(b) [Private] instruction teaching includes figurative expression, definitive meaning, and required buddha intent [remaining three of the six determinations], and hidden purpose and ultimate intent [remaining two of the four methods of explanation].

[Two Truths]

- (a) Relative truth includes the generation process, *etc.*
 (b) Ultimate truth includes clear light and union [practices].⁹⁶¹

Table 10: Subclasses of the Seven Ornaments of Tantra Interpretation

Ornaments of the Tantras	Subdivisions	<i>Comprehensive Introduction to Tantra</i>
(1) five settings	(a) titles of Tantras	volume 1, chapter 8
	(b) reasons for revelation	volume 1, chapter 6
	(c) composers	volume 1, chapter 7
	(d) measures	volume 1, chapter 6
	(e) purposes	volume 2
(2) four valid reasons	(a) continuity (b) basis (c) category of terminology (d) motive	volume 2
(3) six determinations	(a) provisional meaning (b) definitive meaning (c) required buddha intent (d) nonrequired buddha intent (e) literal expression (f) figurative expression	volume 1, chapter 9
(4) four methods	(a) linguistic meaning (b) general purpose (c) hidden purpose (d) ultimate intent	volume 1, chapter 9
(5) five types of students	(a) utpala (b) white lotus (c) lotus	volume 2

	(d) sandalwood (e) jewel	
(6) two types of teaching	(a) public (b) private	volume 1, chapter 9
(7) two truths	(a) relative (b) ultimate	volume 2

[Objection:] What about the question of the imitation of these [methods of] others' explanations? They are here an imitation because they do not exist in your own tradition of explanation. Having seen them in another tradition of explanation, every single one of them was well imitated. Not even the names appear within the [*Hevajra*] *Tantra*, and since they have been made clear in other Tantras, they have [here] been imitated.

[Reply:] First, not every single one has been well imitated as you say. The Venerable Cycle [*Guhyasamaja Tantra* lineage of Nagarjuna and Aryadeva] does have the four methods and six determinations. Our [lineage] has what are called the six instructions which are in the *Khasama (Equivalent to the Sky) Tantra* and which are the equivalent.

[Objection:] How can these [different systems of interpretation] have the same meaning?

[Reply:] Know that [all of] these methods [of interpretation] explain buddha intent extremely well without any fallacy. Furthermore, the six determinations, four methods, and six instructions were [all] employed [as interpretive tools] in the same manner. Since there are [here] many other instructions on methods of interpretation, such as the three principals and four emplacements, we would here have had to imitate any [or all] of these systems [as well]. Accordingly, how can others comprehend our system of [seemingly] limitless methods of interpretation, knowledge of which comes from [our] untarnished lineage of accomplished lamas?

Understanding of these methods comes from the completely perfect pandita [scholar] named Virwapa [or Virupa}, the venerable elder dharma protector and powerful yogi. Having engaged in the essence of accomplishment, he received

actual empowerment from the nirmanakaya Gnosis Dakini. He then attained the level of great accomplishment, and with that body, he manifested mahamudra. All [other] Buddhists and non-Buddhists cannot accomplish even the smallest part [of Virupa's accomplishments]. Even today he is honored by all as the Powerful Lord.

Next, [another] powerful yogi called Dombi Shri Heruka is famous as a disciple of Virwa[pa]. He also received empowerment [directly] from Gnosis Dakini. After engaging in the Samantabhadra practice in the region of Rada [Orissa?], his [ordinary body] was transformed into a magnificent Heruka body with the eight powers of a Bhagavan, as which he then traveled equally to all transitory worlds. Take to heart the meaning of Tantra just-as-is and has been [presented], as that [meaning] is known through the [two] unbroken lineages starting directly from these [two yogis].

Accordingly, this [Hevajra] lineage is Virwapa, his student Nagpopa [Kanha], his student Damaba [Damarupa], his student Avadhutipa, his student Gayadhara (?-1103). Also [a second Hevajra lineage starts with] Dombipa, his student Alalavajra, his student Nagtropa, his student Garbharipa, his student Jayashri Shantipa, his student Mitup Dawa, his student Pawo Dorje [Viravajra, also known as Prajnendraruci]. Both Gayadhara and Pawo Dorje were students of the Great Drokmi Translator Shakya Yeshe (993-1077), who gave appearance [to the Hevajra lineage] in all the Glaciated Ranges [Tibetan Himalayas].

Now today, when giving explanations of the complete [cycle of] the *Hevajra Tantra* as translated by the Great Translator [Shakya Yeshe], one becomes as if the compiler of Tantras. Of the [names of the] students of the Great Translator, one ends in Nyingpo [Salway Nyingpo], likewise one ends in Gyalpo [Konchok Gyalpo (1034-1102), the author's grandfather], one ends in Rikpa [Seton Kunrik (1030-1118)], one ends in Nangwa, and another ends in Nyingpo [Kunga Nyinpo (1092-1158), the author's (1142-1182) father]. From the Lama [whose name] ends in Rik [Seton Kunrik (1030-1118)] comes the lineage of the second Lama [whose name] ends in Barwa [Zhangton Chobar (1053-1135)].

As an analogy, four rivers flow from Madro Lake, the waters divide then reunite, [until all] flow equally into the Great Ocean.⁹⁶² [Likewise,] our lama [lineages] also reunite in the Great Ocean of Dharma.⁹⁶³

[Objection:] It is improper to here make clarifications, when those are present within the Tantras themselves; it is unnecessary to provide any explanation when it is sufficient just to read the Tantras.

What of the explanations given through lamas' special instructions? [If special instructions such as Lamdre were a necessity,] how could the entirety of Guhyamantra [ever] be explained if there were no special instructions [for all parts of it]? While these special instructions may have been made clear through the transmitted canon and thereby became useful [for spiritual maturation], special instructions given alone separate from the canon [are subject to] the introduction of much innovative terminology by reformers or fabricators [and therefore can become questionable].

In support of this [contention], there occurs the quotation:

Tantras can be understood through Tantras...

Also, from the *Commentary on the Hevajra Tantra* by Vajragarbha:

The *Hevajra Tantra* makes understandable the words of the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* and the *Chatuhpita Tantra*. Likewise, the *Chatuhpita Tantra* and the *Hevajra Tantra* [are made understandable] through the words of the *Short Chakrasamvara Tantra*. {The definitive meaning is made understandable through the *Mahasamvara (Great Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra* and the words of the *Paramadibuddha (Supreme Original Buddha) Tantra*.⁹⁶⁴ Tantras such as these are always made understandable by other Tantras and by extensive explanations, for those who wish to follow the path by way of the commentaries.}⁹⁶⁵

{Buton Rinchen Drup, page 29, line 1: Based on the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra*, the meaning of the *Chakrasamvara (Center of Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*⁹⁶⁶ and *Chatuhpita (Four Thrones) Tantra* can be well understood. The *Hevajra Tantra* and the fifty-one chapter summation Tantra, the abbreviated *Chakrasamvara (Center of Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*, can be understood based on the *Chatuhpita (Four Thrones) Tantra*. Based on the *Kalachakra (Time Cycle) Tantra* and the great *One Hundred Thousand Verse Samvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*,⁹⁶⁷ the entire definitive meaning can be understood.}

{Yeshe Gyaltsen, page 513, line 4: The *Chatuhpita (Four Thrones) Tantra* and the *Hevajra (Joyous Vajra) Tantra* are understood through the fifty-one chapter abbreviated *Chakrasamvara (Supreme Ecstasy) Tantra*.}⁹⁶⁸

[Reply:] That all Tantras without exception are interconnected one to the other is not so. The meaning of the quotations is that lamas' special instructions that generate definitive knowledge of root Tantras can be understood through [other explanatory] Tantras. Accordingly, because most other methods of interpretation [such as are used in the tradition of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*] are understood through just sadhana instructions and analyzing the writings of panditas, there is only a one-sided explanation called "explanation of Tantras as sadhanas." Here, the explanation of Tantras is an instruction method for all Guhyamantra called "explanation of Tantras as wish-fulfilling gems."⁹⁶⁹

Epilogue

This *Comprehensive Introduction to [Buddhist] Tantra* is *The Yogini's Eye*;
This precious treasury of the canon generates vast insight,
A lamp that illuminates the profound Sutras and Tantras,
A mirror that reflects the limitless intent of the Conqueror [Buddha].

This book clarifies the Lama's⁹⁷⁰ talks;
Through including insights from Sutras, Tantras, and treatises
Controversies have been analyzed [and resolved]
To my own personal satisfaction, not for my material gain.

Beyond that, I have written well [this book as] an easy to use reference
To [the teachings of] venerable lamas and gathered dakinis;
And a reference for the amelioration of impediments on the path,
Until such time as the three kayas can be attained, [as is the Buddha's] loving intent.

By virtue of this composition, may all sentient beings
Complete the accumulation of merit and wisdom,
And accomplish Vajradhara,
The pinnacle of the glorious ten levels.

This now completes *A Comprehensive Introduction to [Buddhist] Tantra, Volume 1: Systemization and Interpretation*. May limitless sentient beings gain realization here, and obtain an expansive intellect that becomes supreme.

This [epilogue] was appended by the yoga practitioner Sonam Tsemo.

This superior being [Sonam Tsemo] gained special powers to grasp the meaning of what he heard. He had a thoroughly purified mind that glittered like refined gold and that illuminated all like the beacon [of the moon] whose cooling light completely bathes the sides of the snow-covered mountains [Himalayas] that are the greatest of all. He manifested a level of knowledge over which trepidation had no hold. He overcame the hosts of darkness and ignorance with

the radiant light of the dawn of irrefutable omniscience.

This great person who was a member of the Khon family fully completed all accumulations of merit [sonam] and wisdom and became the pinnacle [tsemo] crown jewel of this world including the gods. He came to be revered as a great scholar who was an ornament of the world. After gaining the siddhis (special powers) of a vidyadhara,⁹⁷¹ he manifestly passed away to Sukavati.⁹⁷²

Some sections of what he wrote are difficult for beginners to bear in mind because of the difficult meter [and hence understanding] of the lines of verse [quotations].⁹⁷³ Compelled by some [of my] spiritual companions and granted permission through the pronouncement of both a very venerable sugata and human being [Drakpa Gyaltsen⁹⁷⁴], I, [Sakya Pandita] Kunga Gyaltsen, the young member of the Khon family, regretful at having been born at the sacred Sakya hermitage at a later time,⁹⁷⁵ who has wisdom [gained] from engaging in reasoned [discourse], have taken on the responsibility of [revising and] making [this book] much easier to understand.

May you have the vision of dakas [and dakinis],
Their forms soaring in the limitless sky.
May you make effort as do the companions
Of flowers [bees] in their collection of honey.

Topic Outline

I. The Ultimate Result as the Reference Point at the Start of All Paths

A. Characteristics of buddha

1. Incontrovertible realization of the nature of reality
2. Immersion in a supreme, untainted ecstasy
3. Elimination of all stains of imperfection without exception

B. Accomplishment as a single ultimate result

1. Reason for certainty
2. Resolution of objections
 - a. Resolution of the misperception of multiple philosophies
 - b. Resolution of the misperception of three vehicles
 - c. Additional resolutions of objections

II. The Actual Path

A. Definition of the path

B. Divisions of the path

1. Ordinary paths
2. Extraordinary paths
 - a. Extraordinary paths require the teaching of ordinary paths
 - 1'. To guide the diversity of sentient beings to the Mahayana
 - 2'. To eliminate doubts about the path
 - 3'. To cut off excessive pride in the Mahayana
 - b. Primary characteristics of the extraordinary Mahayana
 - 1'. Definition of the Mahayana

2'. How the extraordinary Mahayana surpasses ordinary paths

a'. By engaging in methods that eliminate suffering in both this and the next life

b'. By nonattachment to the cycle of existence

c'. By the two liberation methods of taking refuge and accepting the four seals

d'. Surpasses Hinayana through enacting the equanimity of engagement and tranquility and nonduality of compassion and emptiness

1". Distinction based on canon

2". Distinction based on seven superiorities of path and result

3". Resolution of objection over requiring both distinctions

3'. Four divisions of surpassing

a'. Three paths and three results

b'. One path and three results

c'. One path and one result

d'. Three paths and one result

III. Divisions of the Mahayana Path

A. Basis for the divisions

B. Purpose of the divisions

C. Number of divisions

1. Reasoning for two paths

2. Canonical sources for two paths

3. Reasoning for two circumstantial results

4. Canonical sources for two circumstantial results

5. Resolution of objections

D. Significance of the names of the divisions

IV. Specific Characteristics of the Path

A. Paramitayana

1. Delineation of the ground of cyclic existence and its transcendence
 - a. Characteristics of the ground
 - b. The ground as the common source for the creation of both
 - 1'. Ground for cyclic existence
 - 2'. Ground for transcendence of suffering
 - 3'. Ground for both cyclic existence and its transcendence
2. Method of practicing the path by renunciation of the ground
 - a. Perspective on unconducive objects
 - b. Actual method of renunciation
3. Outline of the path of the Paramitayana
 - a. Outline of the actual path
 - b. Method that brings the path to full realization
4. Length of time on the path to accomplish the result

B. Guhyamantrayana

1. Practice of nonrenunciation of the ground
 - a. Reason for nonrenunciation of the ground
 - b. Methods of nonrenunciation of the ground
 - 1'. Generation process
 - a'. One's own primary deity
 - b'. Individual retinue deities
 - 2'. Completion process
 - c. Manner of liberation
2. Delineation of Guhyamantra conduct

- a. Meaning of mantra
- b. Mantra conduct
- 3. Delineation of Vajrayana
- 4. Delineation of Palayana
 - a. Length of time on the path to accomplish the result
 - b. Delineation of Palayana

V. Guhyamantra Specialization Surpassing Paramitayana

A. Assertions by others regarding specialization

- 1. Ratnakarashanti's assertions
 - a. No source continuity specialization
 - b. No result continuity specialization
 - c. Path continuity specialization
- 2. Buddhajnanapadas assertions
 - a. Source continuity specialization
 - b. Path continuity specialization
- 3. Nagarjuna's assertions
 - a. Source continuity specialization
 - b. Path continuity specialization
 - c. Result continuity specialization
- 4. Other assertions
- 5. Tripitakamala's assertions
 - a. Nonambiguity specialization
 - b. Multiple methods specialization
 - c. Without difficulty specialization
 - d. Sharp faculties specialization

B. Our own analysis of assertions of specialization

- 1. Single intent of realization

2. Specialized methods of realization

- a. Unambiguous perspective on realization
- b. Multiple methods for accomplishing the result
- c. Accomplishment of bodhi without difficulty
- d. Acute faculties for quickly accomplishing the result

3. Resolution of objections to the specializations

a. Resolution of objections to a single intent

1'. Controversy over dissimilar intents

2'. Given similar intent, controversy over the consequence of provisional meaning

b. Resolution of objections that the four specializations are invalid

1'. Resolution of the objection that the specializations are similar for both Paramita and Guhyamantra

2'. Given dissimilarity, resolution of the consequence that the Guhyamantra path is deviant

a'. Resolution of the objection that nonambiguity means that the true gnosis of the path of vision would be directly evident

b'. Resolution of the objection that many methods without difficulty deviates from the path

c'. Resolution of the objection that demonstrating sharp faculties without extensive activities is similar to the shravaka path

3'. Resolution of the consequence that Ritual and Conduct Tantras are not Guhyamantra

c. Resolution of the objection that the specializations contradict the canonical divisions and classes of literature

d. Resolution of objections that there is no opportunity to practice Guhyamantra

VI. Classes and Cycles of Tantras

A. Division of Guhyamantra into four classes of Tantra

1. Derivation of the definitive number of four classes of Tantra

a. Division into four in order to convert outsider marginalists asserted by Subhutipalita and Anandagarbha as revealed in the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*

1'. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra revealed for Shaivas with a predilection for lust

2'. Conduct Tantra revealed for Vaishnavas with a predilection toward violence

3'. Ritual Tantra revealed for Brahmanas with a predilection for nescience

4'. Yoga Tantra revealed for all three combined

5'. Resolution of objection

b. Division into four in accord with four different methods for generating the deity asserted by Nagarjuna and Shantipa as revealed in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*

1'. Ritual Tantra revealed for oneself inviting the gnosis deity to merge with the present deity image

2'. Conduct Tantra revealed for oneself as the commitment deity inviting the gnosis deity into the present deity image

3'. Yoga Tantra revealed for the gnosis deity entering oneself as the commitment deity then departing

4'. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra revealed for the gnosis deity entering oneself as the commitment deity and not departing

5'. Resolution of objections

6'. Ritual Tantra according to each of the four classes

a'. Ritual Tantra according to Unsurpassed Yoga

Tantra

b'. Ritual Tantra according to Yoga Tantra

c'. Ritual Tantra according to Conduct Tantra

d'. Ritual Tantra according to itself

c. Division into four in accord with four degrees of passion asserted by Virupa and Bhavabhadra as revealed in the *Hevajra Tantra*

1'. Ritual Tantra revealed for those who express passion through gazing

2'. Conduct Tantra revealed for those who express passion through smiling

3'. Yoga Tantra revealed for those who express passion through embracing

4'. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra revealed for those who express passion through intercourse

d. Division into four in accord with four castes of Indian society asserted by Alamkakashasha in the *Vajramala Commentary*

1'. Ritual Tantra revealed for the brahmin officiating caste

2'. Conduct Tantra revealed for the vaishya producing caste

3'. Yoga Tantra revealed for the ksatriya ruling caste

4'. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra revealed for the shudra laboring caste

e. Division into four in accord with the four common time periods of the day and night asserted by Pundarika in the *Vimalaprabha Kalachakra Commentary*

1'. Conduct Tantra revealed for the first time-period juncture

2'. Ritual Tantra revealed for the third time-period juncture

3'. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra revealed for the fifth time-period juncture

4'. Yoga Tantra revealed for the seventh time-period juncture

f. Division into four in accord with the four ages asserted by Krishnacharya

1'. Ritual Tantra revealed for the full perfection age

2'. Conduct Tantra revealed for the three-quarter age

3'. Yoga Tantra revealed for the two-quarter age

4'. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra revealed for the conflict age

g. Division into four in accord with the habitual tendencies of the four states of mind in a typical daily cycle from the *Kalachakra Tantra*

1'. Ritual and Conduct Tantras revealed for the habitual tendency to awaken from sleep

2'. Yoga Tantra revealed for the habitual tendency to dream

3'. Yogini or Female Tantra revealed for the habitual tendency to deep sleep

4'. Yogi or Male Tantra revealed for the habitual tendency to ecstasy (orgasm)

2. Definitive number and sequence asserted by Virupa and Dombhi Heruka as revealed in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*

a. Ritual Tantra for individual with weaker intellect and lesser faculties

b. Conduct Tantra for the next highest level

c. Yoga Tantra for superior individuals

d. Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra for even more superior individuals

3. Meaning of the names of the four classes

- a. Meaning of the names according to each class
 - b. Meaning of the names according to the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*
 - c. Subdivisions of the four classes
4. Resolution of objections
- a. No contradiction with two, three, five, six, or seven classes of Tantra
 - 1'. Two classes
 - 2'. Three classes
 - 3'. Five classes
 - 4'. Six classes
 - 5'. Seven classes
 - b. Reason that four is the definitive number
 - 1'. By reason of persons
 - 2'. By reason of empowerments
 - 3'. By reason of paths
- B. Three divisions of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra
1. Distinction between Maha Yoga and Yogini Tantras
- a. Distinction in verbal expression
 - b. Distinction in expressed meaning
 - 1'. Distinction in development process
 - 2'. Distinction in completion process
 - 3'. Distinction in purification practices of subsequent postmeditation activity
 - c. Distinction in interlocutor or trainee
 - d. Is the *Hevajra Tantra* a male or female Tantra?
 - e. Manner in which the *Hevajra Tantra* is superior to other female Tantras
- C. Delineation of method/wisdom nondual Tantras
1. General method of definitive designation of nondual Tantra

- a. Specification of root and explanatory Tantras
 - 1'. Extensive and abbreviated root Tantras
 - 2'. Common and uncommon explanatory Tantras
 - a'. Modes of explication
 - 1". Clarifying what is unclear
 - 2". Appending to what is incomplete
 - 3". Having similar passages
 - 4". Demonstrating alternative methods
 - 5". Summarizing the meanings
 - 6". Distinguishing words and meanings
 - b'. Resolution of objection
 - b. Manner of entrance into the practice
 - 1'. Individual trainee sequence
 - 2'. Standard sequence
 - 3'. Arbitrary order with no set sequence
 - c. Abbreviated and expanded sections
 - d. Accounting of the number of verses
 - 1'. Poetry accounting
 - 2'. Prose accounting
2. Specific delineation of the *Hevajra Tantra* cycle
- a. Root and explanatory Tantras
 - 1'. Extensive root Tantra
 - a'. Identification of the extensive root Tantra as the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*
 - b'. Resolution of objections
 - 1". Resolution of the objection of multiple kinds of root Tantras
 - 2". Resolution of the objection that the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses* is the extensive root Tantra

2'. Abbreviated root Tantra

a'. Identification of the abbreviated root Tantra

1". Identification of the abbreviated root Tantra as the *Two-Part*

2". Identification of the abbreviated root Tantra as a derivative of the last two parts of the extensive root Tantra

b'. Resolution of objections

1". Resolution of the objection that the abbreviated root Tantra is separate from and not a derivative/summarization of the extensive root Tantra

2". Resolution of the objection that the abbreviated root Tantra is a derivative of the first two parts of the extensive root Tantra

3". Resolution of the objection that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* or some other Tantra is the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*

4". Resolution of the objection that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* is part 32 of the extensive root *Hevajra Tantra*

3'. Uncommon and common explanatory Tantras and continuation Tantras

a'. Uncommon explanatory *Vajra Panjara Tantra*

b'. Common explanatory *Samputa Tantra*

c'. Continuation five *Tilaka Tantras* and three *Arali Tantras*

d'. Resolution of objections

b. Manner of entrance into the practice

1'. Individual trainee sequence of result, method, and source continuities in the *Hevajra Tantra*

2'. Standard sequence of source, method, and

result continuities in the *Samputa Tantra*

3'. Arbitrary order with no set sequence in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*

c. Abbreviated and expanded sections

1'. One abbreviated and two expanded sections in the *Hevajra Tantra*

2'. One abbreviated and one expanded section in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*

3'. One abbreviated and four progressively expanded sections in the *Samputa Tantra*

d. Accounting of the number of verses

1'. 750 verses in the *Hevajra Tantra*

2'. 1,025 verses in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*

3'. 2,803 verses in the *Samputa Tantra*

D. Enumeration of the Tantras

1. Number of titles and verses

2. Number of dharmas

VII. Origin of Guhyamantra

A. Refutation of wrong views of others

B. Beliefs of the uncommon Mahayana

1. Continuous duration of completely perfect buddha

2. Akanishta Ganavyuha location of attaining buddha

3. How the teacher became buddha in that residence

a. Progression along the five outer bodhi-mind manifestations

1'. Actual method by which the teacher became a buddha according to the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*

2'. Method for accomplishing the three kayas as a single flavor through four empowerments

according to the *Vajra Shekara Tantra*

- b. Progression along the inner bodhi-mind manifestations
4. How the Bhagavan turned the dharma cycles
- a. Turning the invariable buddha dharma cycle of definitive meaning
 - 1'. Akanishta Ganavyuha location
 - 2'. Dharmakaya and sambhogakaya teachers
 - a'. Definition of teacher
 - b'. Resolution of objections
 - 3'. Tathagata and bodhisattva retinues
 - a'. Retinues as manifested for each sambhogakaya
 - b'. Separate independent retinues of tathagatas and bodhisattvas
 - 4'. Continuous duration
 - 5'. Continuous dharma cycles
 - b. Turning the cycle of supreme nirmanakaya manifestations for individual trainees in separate locations
 - 1'. Supreme nirmanakaya teachers
 - 2'. Retinues of accomplished trainees
 - 3'. Continuous duration
 - 4'. Unlimited locations
 - 5'. Mahayana dharma of Sutras and Tantras
5. Manner of performing endless buddha deeds
- a. Performer
 - b. Motive for performance
 - c. Duration
 - d. Locations
 - e. Manner of performance
6. Specific explanation of the origin of the Shakyamuni Buddha nirmanakaya manifestation in the Saha World

- a. How the nirmanakaya originated
 - 1'. Location
 - 2'. Duration
 - 3'. Method of becoming Buddha
 - 4'. Deeds
- b. How retinues appeared
 - 1'. How fortunate retinues appeared
 - 2'. How compilers appeared
- c. How the Bhagavan turned the dharma cycle
 - 1'. Method for turning the ordinary dharma cycle
 - a'. Refutation of incorrect ideas of others
 - b'. Statement of our own assertions
 - 2'. Method for turning the extraordinary Vajrayana cycle of continuous revelation by supreme nirmanakayas
 - a'. In actuality how the cycle was turned
 - b'. Resolution of objections
- d. How revelations were compiled
 - 1'. How three coincident compilations of the shravakayana were made
 - 2'. How the Mahayana was compiled
 - 3'. How Guhyamantra was compiled
 - a'. Refutation of incorrect views of others
 - b'. Statement of our own assertions
 - e. How Tantra revelations spread in other lands

VIII. Meaning of the *Hevajra Tantra* cycle titles

- A. Explanation of the expressed meaning of tantra as continuity
 - 1. General explanation of the term “tantra”

2. Threefold division of tantra
3. Delineation of the threefold terminology
 - a. Source continuity
 - b. Method continuity
 - c. Result continuity
4. Delineation of means and wisdom in the titles of literary Tantras
 - a. Meaning of Tantra titles generally
 - b. Meaning of the title *Hevajra Tantra* specifically
 - 1'. Source continuity
 - 2'. Method continuity
 - 3'. Result continuity
5. Threefold continuity in the full titles of the *Hevajra* cycle as the “*King*” of Tantras
 - a. Threefold continuity in the full title of the *Shri Hevajra Tantra Raja*
 - b. Threefold continuity in the full title of the *Maha Samputa Tantra*
 - c. Threefold continuity in the full title of the *Arya Dakini Vajra Panjara Maha Tantra Raja*

B. Literary expression in Tantras

1. Actual literary expression in Tantras
 - a. Commonly used language
 - 1'. Formulation of literary expression
 - 2'. Compositions
 - 3'. Resolution of objections
 - b. Uncommonly used language
2. Four purposes and interrelationships derived from that literary expression
 - a. Four purposes and interrelationships in general
 - 1'. Expressed intent

2'. Purpose

3'. Reason for the purpose

4'. Interrelationships

b. Four purposes and interrelationships specific to the *Hevajra Tantra*

1'. Reason for the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*

2'. Summation of four purposes and interrelationships

a'. Expressed intent

b'. Interrelationships

c'. Purpose

d'. Reason for the purpose

3'. Three phrases exemplifying purposes and interrelationships

3. Dedication to the desired deity

a. Concordant dedication

b. Subsequently concordant dedication

c. Dedication concordant with both

C. Summation

1. Tantra as expressed meaning

2. Tantras as literary expression

IX. Methods for interpreting the language and meaning of the Tantras

A. Methods of interpretation

1. Six instructions and related methods

a. Explanation of six instructions according to the *Khasama Tantra*

1'. Expressed meaning—general purpose

2'. Expressed meaning—hidden purpose

3'. Expressed meaning—ultimate intent

4'. Means of expression or terminology/language
—
characteristic explicit means

5'. Means of expression or terminology/language
—
symbolic implicit means

6'. Means of expression or terminology/language
—
specially designated contextual usage

b. Application of each means of expression to each expressed meaning

1'. Application to general purpose—Paramitayana

a'. Example of characteristic explicit means of expression

b'. Example of symbolic implicit means of expression

c'. Example of specially designated contextual usage

2'. Application to general purpose—generation process

a'. Example of characteristic explicit means of expression

b'. Example of symbolic implicit means of expression

c'. Example of specially designated contextual usage

3'. Application to hidden purpose—completion process self-infusion

a'. Example of characteristic explicit means of expression

b'. Example of symbolic implicit means of expression

c'. Example of specially designated contextual usage

4'. Application to hidden purpose—completion process mandala chakra

a'. Example of characteristic explicit means of expression

b'. Example of symbolic implicit means of expression

c'. Example of specially designated contextual usage

5'. Application to ultimate intent

a'. Example of characteristic explicit means of expression

b'. Example of symbolic implicit means of expression

c'. Example of specially designated contextual usage

c. Six determinations method of interpretation according to the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*

1'. Provisional meaning

2'. Definitive meaning

3'. Required buddha intent

4'. Nonrequired buddha intent

5'. Literal expression

6'. Figurative expression

d. How the methods are applied to interpretation of the Tantras

1'. Application of one of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage

2'. Application of each of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage

e. Additional methods of interpretation

1'. Four method interpretation according to the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*

a'. Linguistic meaning

b'. General purpose

c'. Hidden purpose

d'. Ultimate intent

2'. Fourfold interpretation according to Virupa's *Lamdre*

a'. General purpose

b'. Self-infusion hidden purpose

c'. Mandala-chakra hidden purpose

d'. Ultimate intent

2. Three continuities according to the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*

a. Instructions on the method of interpretation

1'. Source continuity

2'. Method continuity

3'. Result continuity

b. How the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras

1'. Application of one of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage

2'. Application of each of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage

3. Three principles according to the *Khasama* and *Mahamaya Tantras*

a. Explanation of the three principles

1'. Form principle

2'. Mantra principle

3'. Dharma principle

a'. Empowerment dharma principle

b'. Ultimate dharma principle

b. How the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras

- 1'. Application of one of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage
 - 2'. Application of each of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage
4. Four emplacements according to the *Surya Chakra Tantra*
 - a. Explanation of the four emplacements
 - 1'. Embryo emplacement
 - 2'. Water emplacement
 - 3'. Form emplacement
 - 4'. Formless emplacement
 - b. How the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras
 - 1'. Application of one of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage
 - 2'. Application of each of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage
5. Three purities according to the *Hevajra Tantra*
 - a. Explanation of the three purities
 - 1'. Definitive purity
 - 2'. Component divinity purity
 - 3'. Awareness-in-itself purity
 - b. How the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras
 - 1'. Application of one of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage
 - 2'. Application of each of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage
6. Seven secrets according to the *Samputa Tantra Continuation*
 - a. Explanation of the seven secrets
 - 1'. Indivisible secret
 - 2'. Abbreviated definitive secret
 - 3'. Five seeds secret

- 4'. Actual hidden truth secret
- 5'. Concealed lotus secret
- 6'. Pleasure of the navel secret
- 7'. Gathering of all beings secret

b. How the method is applied to interpretation of the Tantras

- 1'. Application of one of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage
- 2'. Application of each of three expressed meanings to a given canonical passage

7. Five branches of direct knowledge according to Durjayachsndra's *Hevajra Tantra Commentary*

B. Resolution of objections

- 1. Resolution of the objection that multiple methods of interpretation are meaningless
- 2. Resolution of the objection that taking all of the explanations as a whole has the consequence of being explanations for the public assembly instead of for private students
- 3. Resolution of the objection that having multiple methods of explanation has the consequence that they are the seven ornaments explanation methods of others according to the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra*

a. Five settings

- 1'. Titles of Tantras
- 2'. Reasons for revealment
- 3'. Composers
- 4'. Measures
- 5'. Purposes

b. Four valid reasons for practice

- 1'. Continuity
- 2'. Basis
- 3'. Category of terminology

4'. Motive

c. Six determinations of interpretation

1'. Provisional meaning

2'. Definitive meaning

3'. Required buddha intent

4'. Nonrequired buddha intent

5'. Literal expression

6'. Figurative expression

d. Four methods of interpretation

1'. Linguistic meaning

2'. General purpose

3'. Hidden purpose

4'. Ultimate intent

e. Two types of teachings

1'. Public

2'. Private

f. Five types of students

1'. Utpala

2'. White lotus

3'. Lotus

4'. Sandalwood

5'. Jewel

g. Two truths

1'. Relative

2'. Ultimate

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Endnotes

- 1 The collected writings of the three early Sakyapas constitute volumes 1-9 of the *Sa-skya bKa’-’bum* (*Collected Writings of the Sakya*).
- 2 For the life and influence of Sakya Pandita and Shakyashribhadra see *The Entrance Gate for the Wise* (Section III): *Sa-skya Pandita on Indian and Tibetan Traditions of Pramana and Philosophical Debate* by David P. Jackson, Arbeitskreis Fur Tibetische Und Buddhistische Studien, 1987, Volume 1, pages 15-37; *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions Among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems* by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, pages 3-35; *The Dharma’s Gatekeepers: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York Press, 2008, pages 9-14.
- 3 For a complete catalog of the *Lam-’bras Tshogs-bshad* and the placement of the first three volumes of *Classics of the Early Sakya* within it, see *The Triple Tantra* by Panchen Ngawang Choedak, translated by Lama Choedak Yuthok, Gorum Publications, 1997, pages 383-384.
- 4 The *rGyud-sde Kun-btus* (*Compendium of All Tantra Cycles*) practiced by the Sakya lineage was compiled by the first Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (1820-1892), who was the previous incarnation of Hiroshi’s primary teacher.
- 5 *rGyud-kyi mNgon-rtogs Rin-po-che’i lJon-shing*, in the *Sa-skya bKa’-’bum* (*Collected Writings of the Sakya*), Volume 6, pages 1-278.
- 6 *Sa-skya bKa’-’bum* (*Collected Writings of the Sakya*) Volume 6, pages 387-652.
- 7 *Sa-skya bKa’-’bum* (*Collected Writings of the Sakya*) Volume 7, pages 1-146.
- 8 *Sa-skya bKa’-’bum* (*Collected Writings of the Sakya*) Volume 4, pages 1-524.
- 9 *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 338-343, 359-369. The representation of Sonam Tsemo in paintings has a lifelike quality and may be presumed to somewhat reflect his actual appearance (page 326). See also <http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=400>.
- 10 For detailed information on Chapa and his relationship with Sonam Tsemo, see extensive references in *Resurrecting Candrakirti: Disputes in the Creation of Prasangika* by Kevin A. Vose, Wisdom Publications, 2009. See also *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005; *Scripture, Logic, Language: Essays on Dharmakirti and his Tibetan Successors* by Tom J. F. Tillemans, Wisdom Publications, 1999; *Recognizing Reality: Dharmakirti’s Philosophy and its Tibetan Interpretations* by Georges B. J. Dreyfus, State University of New York Press, 1997.

- [11.](#) For a description of the significance and content of this book, see *The Dharma's Gatekeeper: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York Press, 2008.
- [12.](#) For one perspective that the significance of Sonam Tsemo's writings was the unprecedented assistance provided to aspiring scholars, see *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 368-369.
- [13.](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, Volume 19, page 618, line 1. This book is no longer known to be extant.
- [14.](#) *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)* Volume 1, pages 54-74.
- [15.](#) *Lam-'bras sLob-bshad (The Path and Result Teachings for the Trainee) Tradition of the Sa-skya Lam-'bras (Path and Result)*, Volume 11, *Pod-ser (Yellow Book)*, pages 323-325.
- [16.](#) *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum*, Volume 1, pages 8-29. A draft translation of the *Brief General Introduction to Tantra* was prepared by Stephen Aldridge and Hiroshi Sonami in 1977.
- [17.](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, Volume 19, page 618, line 2.
- [18.](#) For more information, see below in this introduction.
- [19.](#) The supposition of the existence of this book seems to be based on a statement in the very brief English introduction to the *gSang-'dus sTong-thun* (TBRC W15436-6065), that such a title is listed by one Akhu Rinpoche.
- [20.](#) See below. This title was specifically attributed to Sonam Tsemo, and not his nephew Kunga Gyaltzen, later known as Sakya Pandita, who edited the final edition.
- [21.](#) Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 19, line 1.
- [22.](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, Volume 20, page 27, line 2.
- [23.](#) See *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems* by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, pages 11-12.
- [24.](#) *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, page 353. The second and third books will appear as volumes 2 and 3 of the *Classics of the Early Sakya*. The fourth book has already been translated as *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes* by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltshen, translated by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002.
- [25.](#) See *A Saint in Seattle: The Life of the Tibetan Mystic Dezhung Rinpoche* by David P. Jackson, Wisdom Publications, 2003, pages 38, 80, 104, and 589, note 150.
- [26.](#) *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977. See the section on controversies below.
- [27.](#) These new books include *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005; *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005; *The Dharma's Gatekeeper: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist*

Scholarship in Tibet by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York, 2008; *Resurrecting Candrakirti: Disputes in the Creation of Prasangka* by Kevin A. Vose, Wisdom Publications, 2009.

[28.](#) See *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, page 273, and for another Prajnagupta transmission, page 202. On page 429, note 107, Davidson makes a stab at identifying the five *Tilaka Tantras*, but only two from his list are included in the five identified by Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo, Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, and Amezhab Ngawang Kunga Sonam. In *Tibetan Renaissance* on page 154, four *Tilaka Tantras* are listed, three of which are in the Sakya lineage identified five. Of these five, the fifth one did not exist in the time of Amezhab Ngawang Kunga Sonam, and he states that he has not been able to determine if it was ever translated into Tibetan, or even if it ever existed. On Prajnagupta and the Sakya, see also *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, pages 52-53, 56, and 231, note 109. Prajnagupta is a very controversial figure in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, as described in more detail below.

[29.](#) Despite the controversy surrounding these continuation Tantras, all are included within the Derge Kahgyur, the four existing of the five *Tilaka Tantras* are placed immediately subsequent to the *Hevajra* and *Vajra Panjara Tantras*, and two of the three *Arali Tantras* are separated in order only by the *Buddha Kapala* and *Mahamaya Tantras*.

[30.](#) For detailed information on the Mal Translator, see *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, pages 141 and 247, note 192; *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 174-175 and 296. No dates appear to be available for him.

[31.](#) All three classic practice lineages of the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* were conveyed through the early Sakya, including that of Luhpa, the same lineage that is now a primary practice of the Gelugpa. See the bibliography for a list of books available in English for this practice. For early Sakya writings on the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*, see *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 2 (almost the entire volume); volume 5, pages 224-317; volume 7, pages 484-752; and volume 8, pages 1-112.

[32.](#) This lineage of the very popular practice of Vajrayogini that was transmitted through the early Sakya is the very same one practiced today by the Gelugpa, for which see the extensive list of books available in English in the bibliography. For Drakpa Gyaltzen's writings on Naro Khechari Vajrayogini, see *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 8, pages 120-135.

[33.](#) For details on the *Homage to the Twenty-One Taras* and how it was transmitted through the Sakya, see *The Blue Annals* by the Go Translator Zonu Pel, translated by George N. Roerich, Motilal Banarsidass, 1976 (1949), pages 1050-1052. For the significance of Drakpa Gyaltzen to the transmission of *Homage to the Twenty-One Taras*, see *The Cult of Tara: Magic and Ritual in Tibet* by Stephan Beyer, University of California Press, 1973, page 13, and *In Praise of Tara: Songs to the Saviouress* by Martin Willson, Wisdom Publications, 1986, pages 26 and 111. For Drakpa Gyaltzen's writings on *Homage to the Twenty-One Taras*, see *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 8, pages 272-395. For the large number of books in English on this most widespread practice, see the bibliography.

[34.](#) For a detailed presentation of the life and teachings of Bari Lotsawa, see *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005,

pages 295-299. He is also credited with transmitting the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*, *Vajrayogini*, *Chatuhpita Tantra*, etc. See also *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 273, 315, and 341; *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, page 245, note 178. For texts of his transmissions, see *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 8, pages 597-708.

[35](#) For Drakpa Gyaltsen's writings on Vajrakilaya, see *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 8, pages 710-800.

[36](#) As with the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, the early Sakya had received the transmissions of these Tantras, as in part indicated by Sonam Tsemo's references, but there is only one brief Black Yamantaka sadhana by Drakpa Gyaltsen, *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 8, pages 230-260. The full transmission that continued through the Sakya lineage was received by Sakya Pandita, and the first complete set of practice manuals were written by Chogyal Pakpa, *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 14, pages 466-627. See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 291.

[37](#) Although quoted three times by later commenters, Sonam Tsemo makes no reference to the *Kalachakra Tantra*, which did not formally enter the Sakya lineage until Sakya Pandita. See *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, pages 70-71, 165, and 260, note 282 on the transmission of the *Kalachakra Tantra* to Sakya Pandita and his student Marton. The first *Kalachakra* practice text was written by his student, Chogyal Pakpa, see *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 13, pages 624-659. For his father's and brother's knowledge about the *Kalachakra Tantra*, see *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 301 and 345. Although not a part of the early Sakya, because of its great importance today, the bibliography includes a listing of books available in English on the practice of *Kalachakra*.

[38](#) The *Guhyasamaja Tantra* may be the oldest Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra and was first introduced into Tibet during the Nyingma period. Khon Konchok Gyalpo, Sonam Tsemo's grandfather, had received the transmission from the Go Translator Khukpa Lhetse, *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, page 273. Kunga Nyingpo had received the transmission from Nam Khaupa Chokyi Gyaltsen, *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, pages 137, 143, and 248, note 199.

[39](#) *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, pages 165-167, 143, and 248, note 199. The first Sakya *Guhyasamaja* practice manuals were written by Chogyal Pakpa, *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 14, pages 342-464. Jamgon Kongtrul makes reference to both of these transmissions on pages 278 and 306. There are no writings on the *Guhyasamaja* and *Kalachakra* transmissions in Sakya Pandita's writings, but there are in those of his student and successor, Chogyal Pakpa (1235-1280). A *Kalachakra* sadhana is in the *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum (Collected Writings of the Sakya)*, volume 13, pages 624-659, and a *Guhyasamaja* empowerment ritual, Jnanapada lineage history,

and a sadhana are in *Sa-skya bKa'-'bum*, volume 14, pages 342-464.

- [40.](#) The objection and reply format is used by Sonam Tsemo and later commenters in all chapters except 2, 3, and 4, which nevertheless also have content defending the *Hevajra Tantra* system, and Tantra in general.
- [41.](#) See *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 84-116; *The Blue Annals* by the Go Translator Zonu Pel, translated by George Roerich, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1976, pages 77-101; *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 243-252.
- [42.](#) There is a large literature on the life of Atisha, but in particular, see *Atisha and Tibet: Life and Works of Dipamkara Srijnana in Relation to the History and Religion of Tibet with Tibetan Sources* by Alaka Chattopadhyaya, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1967.
- [43.](#) For translations of the source text, see *Atisha's Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment: An Oral Teaching by Geshe Sonam Rinchen*, translated by Ruth Sonam, Snow Lion Publications, 1997; *The Complete Works of Atisha: The Lamp for the Path and Commentary Together with the Newly Translated Twenty-Five Key Texts*, translated by Richard Sherburne, Aditya Prakashan, 2000. The most significant of the stages of the path literature derived from it is *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* by Tsongkha-pa, Three Volumes, translated by the Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee, Snow Lion Publications, 2000-2004.
- [44.](#) These viewpoints are found in Atisha's own commentary on the verses, *The Complete Works of Atisha: The Lamp for the Path and Commentary Together with the Newly Translated Twenty-Five Key Texts*, translated by Richard Sherburne, Aditya Prakashan, 2000, pages 293-307. In his own commentary, *Atisha's Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment: An Oral Teaching by Geshe Sonam Rinchen*, translated by Ruth Sonam, Snow Lion Publications, 1997, the contemporary Geshe Sonam Rinchen takes very different viewpoints. On page 133, he says that "the secret, wisdom, and word initiations permit us to practice the stage of completion. We must receive all four (including the vase initiation)." The Geshe explains the three highest initiations on pages 141-143, then states "this restriction... (on the secret and wisdom initiations) . . . applies to ordinary people, not to those with high realizations" and celibates "may give and receive the secret and wisdom initiations, using the power of visualization and imagining union with a consort." In *Illuminating the Path to Enlightenment: A Commentary on Atisha Dipamkara Shrijnana's Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, translated by Geshe Thupten Jinpa, Thupten Dhargye Ling Publications, 2002, the Dalai Lama presents the same translation of the verses by Ruth Sonam, but without adding any commentary for explanation.
- [45.](#) What is particularly ironic is that in his younger years, Atisha's primary practice was that of the *Hevajra Tantra*! See *Atisha and Tibet: Life and Works of Dipamkara Srijnana in Relation to the History and Religion of Tibet with Tibetan Sources* by Alaka Chattopadhyaya, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1967, pages 71-76.
- [46.](#) For information on Prajnagupta and the tenth-and eleventh-century controversies on whether Guhyamantra was even Buddhism, see *Atisha and Tibet: Life and Works of Dipamkara Srijnana in Relation to the History and Religion of Tibet with Tibetan Sources* by Alaka Chattopadhyaya, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1967, pages 291-297 and 350-351; *The Blue Annals* by the Go Translator Zonu

Pel, translated by George Roerich, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1976, pages 696-697, 1049-1050.

[47.](#) See *The Complete Works of Atisha: The Lamp for the Path and Commentary Together with the Newly Translated Twenty-Five Key Texts*, translated by Richard Sherburne, Aditya Prakashan, 2000, pages 295-299.

[48.](#) A notable example is Ralo Dorje Drak, the transmitter of what eventually became the Gelug tradition of Vajrabhairava and Yamantaka, see *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 129-141, and particularly 138.

[49.](#) For a detailed overview of the Tibetan lineages of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 276-289. For information about the transmission lineages of the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* and the Go Translator Khukpa Lhetse's in particular, see *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 139-140, 164.

[50.](#) *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 167, 178, and 182.

[51.](#) *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 261-262, 314-315, 361. The fact that Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo (1382-1456) in chapter 5 references only the *General Summary of the Guhyasamaja* on the issue of the specialization of Guhyamantra over Paramita, and not a *General Introduction to Tantra* by the same author, lends credence to the nonexistence of the latter.

[52.](#) For a synopsis of the content of this book, see *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 152-153.

[53.](#) *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 153-154, 339-340.

[54.](#) Buton did not see fit to write a commentary on the entire text, rather he wrote his own nested set of three *Comprehensive Introductions to Tantra* (abbreviated, abridged, and complete). Even though a seemingly exhaustive commentator on all Buddhist Tantra, Buton did not write a commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra* (in spite of the title of the elucidation of quotations) and *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*, apparently considering the commentaries by Drakpa Gyaltsen to be sufficient. He did however write a massive commentary on the *Samputa (Perfect Union) Tantra* (volume 8, pages 217-948) and some other related texts. This was the extent of his writings with respect to the Sakya lineage of Tantra. Sometimes designated a Sakyapa, Buton was the most prominent member of the Zhalu tradition, for which the major Tantra system is the *Kalachakra Tantra*, which is not a part of the Sakya heritage.

[55.](#) Davidson unfortunately repeats an observation made by Ruegg that Buton “found many errors in the quotations and attributions to sources.” As may be seen from this translation, such is not at all the case. No “correction” is made to the identification of any literary sources, and the only time Buton provides an explanation that is seemingly significantly divergent from that of Sonam Tsemo, in the explanation of the four superiorities of Guhyamantra, he adds that “the detailed explanation (to follow) by the Precious Master (Sonam Tsemo) appears (only) slightly dissimilar in its arrangement.” See *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, page 369.

- [56.](#) This is number 203 in *Hevajra and Lam-'bras Literature of India and Tibet as Seen through the Eyes of A-mes-zhabs* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Reichert-Verlag, 2008, pages 66 and 151.
- [57.](#) This is the book that Jan-Ulrich Sobisch calls *Ngorchen's Correct System*, as edited by A-mes-zhabs. See *Hevajra and Lam-'bras Literature of India and Tibet as Seen Through the Eyes of A-mes-zhabs* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Reichert-Verlag, 2008, page 23, note 27a, and page 247. See also *Life, Transmissions, and Works of A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams, the Great 17th Century Sakyapa Bibliophile* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 2007, pages 306-307 and 319-320.
- [58.](#) See *A Noble Abbot from Mustang: Life and Works of gLo-bo mKhan-chen* by Jowita Kramer, Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 2008, pages 182-184. Kramer deduces that this book was written between 1506 and 1508.
- [59.](#) See *A Noble Abbot from Mustang: Life and Works of gLo-bo mKhan-chen* by Jowita Kramer, Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 2008, page 186. Kramer likewise deduces that this book was written between 1506 and 1508.
- [60.](#) See *Hevajra and Lam-'bras Literature of India and Tibet as Seen through the Eyes of A-mes-zhabs* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Reichert-Verlag, 2008, page 67.
- [61.](#) This is the book that Jan-Ulrich Sobisch calls A-mes-zhabs' *Hevajra Commentary*. He identifies that the book was written in 1623. See *Hevajra and Lam-'bras Literature of India and Tibet as Seen through the Eyes of A-mes-zhabs* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Reichert-Verlag, 2008, page 245. See also *Life, Transmissions, and Works of A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams, the Great 17th Century Sakyapa Bibliophile* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 2007, pages 317-319.
- [62.](#) This is the book that Jan-Ulrich Sobisch calls A-mes-zhabs' *Hevajra Word Commentary*. He identifies that the book was written in 1648. See *Hevajra and Lam-'bras Literature of India and Tibet as Seen through the Eyes of A-mes-zhabs* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Reichert-Verlag, 2008, page 245. See also *Life, Transmissions, and Works of A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams, the Great 17th Century Sakyapa Bibliophile* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 2007, pages 321-322.
- [63.](#) This is the book that Jan-Ulrich Sobisch calls A-mes-zhabs' "Three Tantras." He does not identify a date of composition. See *Hevajra and Lam-'bras Literature of India and Tibet as Seen through the Eyes of A-mes-zhabs* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Reichert-Verlag, 2008, page 47, note 122b, and page 245. See also *Life, Transmissions, and Works of A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams, the Great 17th Century Sakyapa Bibliophile* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 2007, page 323, where the date of composition is said to possibly be between 1635 and 1644.
- [64.](#) See *Life, Transmissions, and Works of A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bSod-nams, the Great 17th Century Sakyapa Bibliophile* by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 2007, pages 326-327, where the date of composition is said to be 1623.
- [65.](#) Snow Lion, 2003.
- [66.](#) Where these Sanskrit words are used, they are written without diacritical marks, using the system first employed by Jeffrey Hopkins in *Meditation on Emptiness*, Wisdom Publications, 1983, pages 21-22.

- [67.](#) There are exceptions of course, “lama” being a common and well-known one.
- [68.](#) See *A Saint in Seattle: The Life of the Tibetan Mystic Dezhung Rinpoche* by David P. Jackson, Wisdom Publications, 2003, pages 158-159, 240, and 626, note 612. A picture of Sonam Gyatso appears on page 159. See also the autobiography of his father, *In the Presence of My Enemies: Memoirs of Tibetan Nobleman Tsipon Shuguba* by Sumner Carnahan with Lama Kunga, Clear Light Publishers 1995, pages 17, 85, 107-109. His picture appears on page 143 and again on page 194 with the Dalai Lama. A collection of photographs Hiroshi made at a young age in Tibet is available online, www.himalayanart.org/exhibits/ancient_photographs/. A biographical sketch is also available online, but has some inaccuracies and omissions: http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Thartse_Khen_Rinpoche.
- [69.](#) The other of the last two official additions to the Lamdre lineage was Gaton Ngawang Lekpa (1864-1941). Hiroshi told the present translator about what a great inspiration the life of Gaton had been for him, even though he apparently was never able to meet him in person. See *The Triple Tantra* by Panchen Ngawang Choedak, translated by Lama Choedak T. Yuthok, Goram Publications, 1997, page 369. For biographical information on both lineage holders, see *A Saint in Seattle: The Life of the Tibetan Mystic Dezhung Rinpoche* by David P. Jackson, Wisdom Publications, 2003.
- [70.](#) For information on the life of Dzongsar Khyentse Chokyi Lodro, see *A Saint in Seattle: The Life of the Tibetan Mystic Dezhung Rinpoche* by David P. Jackson, Wisdom Publications, 2003, pages 51, 191-198, and 239-241. On page 241 is the account of how Dezhung Rinpoche learned of Dzongsar Khyentse’s last words and testament from Hiroshi, indicative of how close Hiroshi was with his primary teacher. Dzongsar Khyentse may well have been the greatest teacher of the twentieth century; and although his primary lineage was Sakya, and he was the teacher of Dezhung Ajam, Dezhung Rinpoche, Sakya Trizin, Jigdral Dagchen, Dagmo Kusho, as these references document, he was also famous as the teacher of many Nyingma and Kagyu lamas who became prominent in the West, including Dilgo Khyentse, Choyam Trungpa, Tarthang Tulku, and Sogyal Rinpoche. For Dilgo Khyentse’s studies with Dzongsar Khyentse, see *Brilliant Moon: The Autobiography of Dilgo Khyentse*, translated by Ani Jinba Palmo, Shambala, 2008. For Sogyal Rinpoche’s studies with Dzongsar Khyentse, see *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* by Sogyal Rinpoche, Harper San Francisco, 1993. A picture of Hiroshi with Sogyal at the time they were both studying with Dzongsar Khyentse is included in the set referenced in footnote 65 above.
- [71.](#) Lama Kunga was formerly the Ngor Thartse Zhapdrung, vice abbot of Ngor Monastery. Please see his website at www.ewamchoden.org. He has maintained a very active Sakya meditation center for forty years, bringing countless benefits to many.
- [72.](#) Laetitia has continued to have a very successful career as a composer and performer, faculty member, and lecturer.
- [73.](#) Toyo Bunko Library, 1968.
- [74.](#) *rGyud-sde Kun-btus*. This collection was originally compiled by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (1820-1892), and a detailed table of contents to this collection may be found in *The Autobiography of Jamgon Kongtrul: A Gem of Many Colors*, translated by Richard Barron, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 544-549.
- [75.](#) *sGrub-thabs Kun-btus*. This collection was also originally compiled by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, and a detailed table of contents may be found in the same source on pages 532-543.
- [76.](#) *Lam-'bras sLob-bshad*.

- [77.](#) *Tibetan Mandalas: The Ngor Collection*, Kodansha, 1983.
- [78.](#) Funds for the writing and publishing of this book are provided solely from the present translator's limited retirement funds and no other source.
- [79.](#) Columbia University Press, 2002.
- [80.](#) Columbia University Press, 2005.
- [81.](#) Monograph Series of Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies published in Association with the School of Chinese Classics at Renmin University of China and the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Association in North America, 2008.
- [82.](#) Sonam Tsemo's father, Kunga Nyimpö.
- [83.](#) This is a reference to the commentaries on the *Hevajra*, *Vajra Panjara*, and *Samputa Tantras*, which will follow in volume 3 through volume 5 of *Classics of the Early Sakya*.
- [84.](#) Sonam Tsemo was unable to complete part 4 before he passed away. It was completed by his younger brother Drakpa Gyaltzen and will appear as volume 2 in this series.
- [85.](#) Circumstantial results include the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth levels; the definitive result is the thirteenth level. All are discussed in more detail in this and subsequent chapters.
- [86.](#) In contrast to the main body of the book, the summary verses introducing each chapter are in italics, with inserted book title references in nonitalics.
- [87.](#) Uppercase "Buddha" is a proper noun referring to a specific individual Buddha, particularly the historic Shakyamuni; lowercase "buddha" as used here is the classic form of the more common buddhahood. The "hood" is deleted as it is superfluous and awkward.
- [88.](#) For a full explanation of how Tibetans understand the parts of speech and significance of the word *sang-rgyas* (buddha), see *Matrix of Mystery: Scientific and Humanistic Aspects of rDzogs-chen Thought* by Herbert V. Guenther, Shambala, 1984, pages 214-215, note 18, and pages 242-243, note 60.
- [89.](#) These three Guhyamantra characteristics of buddha have a Paramita parallel; see *Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Richard Barron, Snow Lion, 2011, page 288. The Paramita supreme bodhi-mind of compassion is replaced with the supreme experience of ecstasy, a hallmark of the Guhyamantra; for the Paramita explanation, see *Ornament of Clear Realization: A Commentary on the Prajnaparamita of Maitreya* by Khenchen Thrangu, translated by Cornelia Weishaar-Gunter, Namö Buddha Publications and Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Publications, 2004, pages 206-208.
- [90.](#) For the context of these quotations, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 61-62, 92; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 55-56, 166.
- [91.](#) For explanation of buddha as Vairochana and Vajrasattva, see chapter 7.
- [92.](#) In the simplest terms, kaya is the name for buddha body, and gnosis is the name for buddha mind.
- [93.](#) Gnosis is the translation of the Tibetan *ye-shes*, more commonly translated as primordial wisdom or other similar terms. However, Sakya Pandita pointed out that there is no part of the Sanskrit word *jnana* that means primordial (*The Dharma's Gatekeeper: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York, 2008, page 30). Therefore, gnosis is used as a simpler

translation term that will be exhaustively explained in *Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra*, volume 2.

[94](#) Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158), father and teacher of Sonam Tsemo.

[95](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 159, lines 2-3.

[96](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 331, line 3, and page 332, lines 2-3.

[97](#) The three kinds of bodhi-mind are those of the shravaka (listener) arhat, pratyekabuddha (self-buddha), and bodhisattva (bodhi hero) with corresponding vehicles. Alternatively, there are the Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle), Mahayana (Greater Vehicle), and Guhyamantrayana (Secret Mantra Vehicle) as assumed by Dezhung Chopel below. For further discussion on this question, see chapters 2-5 below.

[98](#) For especially lucid introductions to Madyamaka, see *Madyamaka Schools in India* by Peter Della Santina, Motilal Banarsidass, 1986; *Causality and Emptiness: The Wisdom of Nagarjuna*, translations and commentary by Peter Della Santina, Buddhist Research Society, Singapore, 2002, <http://www.ecst.csuchico.edu/~dsantina/>; *Teaching's on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 97-117. Other books on Sakya Madyamaka include *Resurrecting Candrakirti: Disputes in the Tibetan Creation of Prasangika* by Kevin A. Vose, Wisdom Publications, 2009; *Three Texts on Madyamaka* by Sakya Chokden, translated by Komarovski Iaroslav, Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, 2000; *Freedom from Extremes: Gorampa's "Distinguishing the Views" and the Polemics of Emptiness*, by Jose Ignacio Cabezon and Geshe Lobsang Dargyay, Wisdom Publications, 2007; *The Two Truths Debate: Tsongkhapa and Gorampa on the Middle Way*, by Sonam Thakchoe, Wisdom Publications, 2007.

[99](#) For a detailed presentation of buddha characteristics, see *Teaching's on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 145-166 and *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices*, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cuttillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 101-115. See also *Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Richard Barron, Snow Lion, 2011; *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* by Gampopa, translated by Khenpo Konchog Gyaltsen, Snow Lion, 1998, pages 281-293; translated by Herbert V. Guenther, Shambala, (1959) 1971, pages 257-270. Whereas in the Paramita approach, the topic of the ultimate result is reserved for the final chapters; here in the Guhyamantra approach, it is the topic of the first chapter. This reflects the result orientation of Guhyamantra, as opposed to the source orientation of Paramita.

[100](#) This is most likely Kunkhyen Gorampa Sonam Sengge (1429-1489), although the specific source for this quotation has not yet been identified.

[101](#) In this context, the three yantras are most likely the shravakayana, pratyekabuddhayana, and bodhisattvayana.

[102](#) See *The Litany of Names of Manjusri: Text and Translation of the Manjusrinamasamgiti*, edited and translated by Ronald M. Davidson in *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*, edited by Michel Strickmann, *Melanges chinois et bouddhiques* 20:1-69, 1981. This verse and many others are not included in a recent translation, *Concert of Names of Manjusri*, translated by Alexander Berzin, in *As Long As Space Endures: Essays on the Kalacakra Tantra in Honor of H. H. The Dalai Lama*, edited by Edward A. Arnold, Snow Lion, 2009.

[103](#) The paths of training consist of the first four of the standard five paths: accumulation, application,

vision, and (advanced) meditation. The eleventh and twelfth levels refer to the path of (advanced) meditation.

[104](#) The fifth of the standard five paths.

[105](#) Commonly, a quotation from an unspecified source is from the same source as the preceding quotation, but these two lines of verse are not found in the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti*.

[106](#) For a detailed description of the three kayas, see *Teaching's on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 145-147, *Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Richard Barron, Snow Lion, 2011, and *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* by Gampopa, translated by Khenpo Konchog Gyaltzen, Snow Lion, 1998, pages 287-292, and translated by Herbert V. Guenther, Shambala, (1959) 1971, pages 262-267.

[107](#) Vaibhashika and Madhyamaka refer to two of the four classic schools of Buddhist philosophy, with Sautrantika and Yogachara the middle two to complete the four. See *Maps of the Profound: Jamyangshay-ba's Great Exposition of Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Views on the Nature of Reality*, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2003.

[108](#) For a detailed description of the ten powers, see *Teaching's on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 151-152.

[109](#) For a detailed description of the ten levels, see *Teaching's on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 137-143.

[110](#) There is another set of thirteen levels, where the paths of accumulation and application are each considered to be separate levels, preceding the standard first level on the path of vision. This is not what is meant here.

[111](#) Further justification of multiple paths yet one result is given in chapter 2 below. However, see chapter 3, where two (circumstantial) results are justified by logic and tradition. Additional detailed discussions of the result are found in chapters 8 and 9 below.

[112](#) Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 35, line 1 to page 38, line 5 and Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 45, line 5 to page 53, line 1 introduce four sets of non-Buddhist/Buddhist divisions in the path based on (1) individuals, (2) ultimate results, (3) teachers, and (4) the actual path. The division based on individuals includes the ordinary and extraordinary paths. Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 609, line 4 to page 610, line 6 also distinguishes non-Buddhists from Buddhists on the basis of (1) teacher, (2) perspective, and (3) behavior.

[113](#) Marginalists is a literal rendering of the Tibetan term *mu-stegs*, which carries the connotation that there is not a sharp dividing line between Buddhists and non-Buddhists, but rather only between those with conviction and determination in the middle way and those dwelling on the periphery or margin.

[114](#) An example of a nihilistic view is that death puts an end to all consciousness and suffering.

[115](#) Inferior existences traditionally include denizens of hell, hungry ghosts, and animals.

[116](#) Higher marginalists typically hold eternalistic views, such as the existence of an absolute self in an eternal heaven.

[117](#) The Nudist Ascetics (Nirgranthas) are the Jains. See primarily *Maps of the Profound* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 176-190. Brief accounts are in *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems* by Thuken Losang Chokyi Nyima, translated by Geshe Lhundub Sopa, Wisdom Publications and Institute of Tibetan Classics, 2009, pages 43-44; *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by

Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, page 63.

[118](#) Superior existences typically include humans, demigods, and gods.

[119](#) If this is intended as a direct quote from the *Uttaratantra*, the present translator has not located it. The prose does not even match the verse of the *Uttaratantra*.

[120](#) None of the study guides offer any explanation of this verse, but Sazang Mati Panchen's commentary adds insight: "Liberation from the extreme of attachment occurs by realizing emptiness through wisdom. Liberation from the extreme of peace occurs by not being afraid of suffering through compassion. Thus, non-abiding nirvana is attained. Having attained the two holy bodies (dharmakaya and rupakaya) as a base, holy activities continue uninterrupted until the end of samsara. This is the result of meditating on profound emptiness and benefiting sentient beings" (*A Commentary on Shantideva's Engaging in the Conduct of Bodhisattvas* by Sazang Mati Panchen, translated by Venerable Lama Kalsang Gyaltzen and Ani Kunga Chodron, Tsechen Kunchab Ling, 2006, page 374). See also *Wisdom: Two Buddhist Commentaries* by Khenchen Kunzang Pelden and Minyak Kunzang Sonam, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Editions Padmakara, 1999, pages 10, 71-72 and 186-187; *The Center of the Sunlit Sky: Madhyamaka in the Kagyu Tradition* by Pawo Tsugla Trengwa, translated by Karl Brunnholz, Snow Lion Publications, 2004, pages 689-692.

[121](#) This quotation certainly raises the question as to the extent to which it is meant. While Sonam Tsemo includes at least the study of non-Buddhist thought, Sazang Mati Panchen explicitly refers to "infinite branches of knowledge" and "all activities," stating that "there is no branch of knowledge that bodhisattvas would not learn" (*A Commentary on Shantideva's Engaging in the Conduct of Bodhisattvas* by Sazang Mati Panchen, translated by Venerable Lama Kalsang Gyaltzen and Ani Kunga Chodron, Tsechen Kunchab Ling, 2006, pages 181-182). Kunzang Pelden says the same, "There is no field of knowledge or science with which the offspring of the Conquerors should not familiarize themselves... there no action that is without merit" (*The Nectar of Manjusri's Speech: A Detailed Commentary on Shantideva's Way of the Bodhisattva* by Kunzang Pelden, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Shambala, 2007, page 194). Geshe Yeshe Tobden concurs that "there is nothing a bodhisattva learns that he does not put into practice. As his intention is to benefit all beings, he must know the different methods appropriate to each of them, and having learned them, he does not neglect any of them" (*The Way of Awakening: A Commentary on Shantideva's Bodhicharyavatara* by Geshe Yeshe Tobden, translated from the Italian by Manu Bazzano and Sarita Doveton, Wisdom Publications, 2005, page 130). Geshe Kelsang Gyatso alone takes a more restricted view, taking this verse as referring only to "precepts taught by the Buddha," an interpretation not supported by the original verse (*Meaningful to Behold: The Bodhisattva's Way of Life* by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, fourth edition, 1994, page 163).

[122](#) See Jeffrey Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 95-103 for a detailed description of the views of the Nihilists (Lokayatas). See also *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems* by Thukten Losang Chokyi Nyima, translated by Geshe Lhundub Sopa, Wisdom Publications and Institute of Tibetan Classics, 2009, pages 38-39; *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 64-65.

[123](#) The Vatsiputriyas appear in the charts of subschools of the Great Exposition School (Vaibhashika) in Jeffrey Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 211-215. The etymology of the name is given on page 216. A discussion of their beliefs is on pages 220-222. See also *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 68-69.

[124.](#) The complete list of the Twelve Divisions of the Canon may be found in *Matrix of Mystery: Scientific and Humanistic Aspects of rDzogs-chen Thought* by Herbert V. Guenther, Shambala, 1984, pages 210-211, note 3, where each of the Twelve Divisions is distinguished according to whether it belongs to Hinayana or Mahayana and Vinaya, Sutra, or Abhidharma. See also *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 134-135, and *Overview of Buddhist Tantra*, by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, pages 10 and 100, note 38.

[125.](#) For the Seven Abhidharma Treatises, see *Overview of Buddhist Tantra*, by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, pages 12, 101, notes 51 and 147 where all seven are listed by title and author. See also *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 202-203, *The Treasury of Knowledge: Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elizabeth M. Callahan, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2007, pages 132-133. For another version of the list, see *Opening the Clear Vision of Vaibhashika and Sautrantika Schools*, by Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, Dharma Samudra, 2007, pages 67-68. Sonam Dragpa states that only one of the Seven Treatises has ever even been partially translated into Tibetan; however, Vasubhandu's *Abhidharma Treasury and Commentary* are believed to be a summary of all seven. See also the *Great Ocean of Specific Explanation* collection by anonymous (Sonam Dragpa, page 131) that has only been translated into Chinese in 60- and 200-volume editions.

[126.](#) The Vaipulya is the ninth of the Twelve Divisions of the Canon, the collection of the most extensive and profound Buddhist teachings, including the *Prajna-Paramita Sutras* in 8,000 lines (of verse), 10,000 lines, 18,000 lines, 25,000 lines, and 100,000 lines. Translations include *The Perfection of Wisdom in 8,000 Lines and Its Verse Summary*, translated by Edward Conze, Four Seasons Foundation, 1973; *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom* (sections of the 18,000 lines, 25,000 lines, and 100,000 lines versions), translated by Edward Conze, University of California Press, 1975. These and other books by Edward Conze are available online: <http://dharma.org.ru/board/topic1221.html>. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* has been translated by Thomas Cleary as *The Flower Ornament Scripture*, Shambala, 1993.

[127.](#) In chapter 5, Sonam Tsemo states that the Guhyamantra canon should be included in the Vaipulya Collection. Panchen Sonam Dragpa also places Vidyadhara-Pitaka in the Sutra category (*Overview of Buddhist Tantra*, by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, page 18). This placement is more than just convenient; as demonstrated below in chapter 7, there is a very close connection between the *Hevajra Tantra* and the *Avatamsaka Sutra*.

[128.](#) See *The Lankavatara Sutra: A Mahayana Text*, translated by D. T. Suzuki, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2007, pages 193-198; the quotation appears on page 198.

[129.](#) For an overview of the writings of Nagarjuna and Asanga, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 206-214.

[130.](#) For more detailed explanations of these eighteen Mahayana topics, see *Luminous Heart: The Third*

Karmapa on Consciousness, Wisdom, and Buddha Nature, translated by Karl Brunnholzl, Snow Lion Publications, 2009: five dharmas, page 172; three natures, pages 35-53; eight consciousnesses, pages 27-34, 109-113.

[131](#) For an explanation of the ten powers and four fearlessnesses, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 151-153 and *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices*, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cutillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 107-109.

[132](#) See Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, page 310; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, page 485. Both books translate the same commentary, but the latter attributes it to Asanga. A comparison with the commentary shows that Buton followed it exactly in his interpretation.

For a more detailed explanation of the seven superiorities, in a different order, see *Opening the Clear Vision of the Mind Only School* by Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, Dharma Samudra, 2007, pages 15-18.

[133](#) For determination of buddha intent as a method for interpreting canonical literature, see chapter 9.

[134](#) For additional perspectives on the distinction between Hinayana and Mahayana attributed to Mikyo Dorje (1507-1554), see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elizabeth M. Callahan, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2007, pages 162-165; *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 79-82. Both include the seven superiorities from the *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara*. See also Jeffrey Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 194-206. In *Opening the Clear Vision of Vaibhashika and Sautrantika Schools*, by Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, Dharma Samudra, 2007, pages 23-38, see Longchenpa's seven common tenets of the Hinayana followed by the corresponding seven refutations of arguments against the Mahayana.

[135](#) See the *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* III, 2 in Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, pages 23-24; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, page 34. In the same source, XI, 53-55, a single vehicle and result are also described, see pages 138-140 and pages 199-201 in the same two referenced translations, respectively.

[136](#) The two classical systems of shravaka philosophy are Vaibhashika and Sautrantika.

[137](#) The two classical systems of Mahayana philosophy are Chittamatra or Yogachara and Madhyamaka, with the latter specifically the system of Chandrakirti.

[138](#) See the quotation from the *Madhyamakavatara* I, 8 below.

[139](#) See *The Lotus Sutra: A Contemporary Translation of a Buddhist Classic*, translated by Gene Reeves, Wisdom, 2008, pages 215-217. Other translations include *The Lotus Sutra*, by Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2007; *The Lotus Sutra*, translated by Burton Watson, Columbia University Press, 1993; *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma: The Lotus Sutra*, translated by Leon Hurvitz, Columbia University Press, 1976; *Threefold Lotus Sutra*, translated by

Bunno Kato, Charles E. Tuttle, 1989.

[140.](#) See *The Lankavatara Sutra: A Mahayana Text*, translated by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, (first published 1932) 2007, pages 116-117.

[141.](#) The desire, form, and formless realms.

[142.](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, page 296, line 4. See an explanation of this quotation below in chapter 3. The sixth perfection is the prajna or wisdom perfection, which is here understood as referring to the female mudra who serves as the partner in the mandala-chakra or sexual yoga practice. Hence, the generation of passion is the conceptualization that is used to realize buddha for the benefit of sentient beings.

[143.](#) Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup makes these points clear when he states in the summarizing verses at the beginning of this chapter that with respect to the four divisions, “the first two were (expressed as provisional) buddha intent, the latter two are of definitive meaning.”

[144.](#) For the *Yukti-Sastika (Reasoning in Sixty Stanzas)* by Nagarjuna together with Candrakirti’s commentary, see *Causality and Emptiness: The Wisdom of Nagarjuna*, translations and commentary by Peter Della Santina, Buddhist Research Society, Singapore, 2002, pages 65-130, <http://www.ecst.csuchico.edu/~dsantina/>, and *Nagarjuna’s Reason Sixty (Yuktisastika) with Candrakirti’s Commentary (Yuktisastikavrrti)*, translated by Joseph Loizzo, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007.

[145.](#) See chapter 4, verses 346-400, pages 140-148, as well as the Analysis, pages 84-91 in *Nagarjuna’s Precious Garland: Buddhist Advice for Living and Liberation*, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2007.

[146.](#) See below note 150.

[147.](#) See chapter 1, verse 4 in *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya’s Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pages 52-53. Other translations include *The Vairocanabhisambodhisutra*, translated by Rolf W. Giebel, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2006, and the *Mahavairocana-Sutra*, translated by Chikyo Yamamoto, International Academy of Indian Culture, 2001.

[148.](#) See *The Lotus Sutra: A Contemporary Translation of a Buddhist Classic*, translated by Gene Reeves, Wisdom, 2008, page 197.

[149.](#) See *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti’s Madhyamakavatara with Commentary by Jamgon Mipham*, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Shambala, 2002, pages 79, 250-251; *The Karmapa’s Middle Way: Feast for the Fortunate* by the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, translated by Tyler Dewar, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 278-282; *Ocean of Nectar: Wisdom and Compassion in Mahayana Buddhism*, commentary by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1995, pages 259-260; *The Moon of Wisdom: Chapter Six of Chandrakirti’s Entering the Middle Way with Commentary from the Eighth Karmapa Mikyo Dorje’s Chariot of the Dagpo Kagyu Siddhas*, translated by Ari Goldfield, Jules Levinson, Jim Scott, and Birgit Scott, Snow Lion Publications, 2005, pages 235-237.

[150.](#) See *Buddha Nature: The Mahayana Uttaratantra Shastra* by Maitreya, with the commentary by Jamgon Kongtrul and explanations by Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso, translated by Rosemarie Fuchs, Snow Lion, 2000, pages 30, 143-144, 357-358; *The Uttaratantra: A Treatise on Buddha-Essence* by Maitreya,

with commentary by Khenchen Thrangu, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes, Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Charitable Trust Publications, 2003, pages 45, 245-246; *The Buddha Within: Tathagatagarbha Doctrine According to the Shentong Interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga* by S. K. Hookham, State University of New York Press, 1991, page 219; *A Direct Path to the Buddha Within: Go Lotsawa's Mahamudra Interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga* by Klaus-Dieter Mathes, Wisdom Publications, 2008.

[151](#) See *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary* by Jamgon Mipham, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Shambala, 2002, pages 60, 150; *The Karmapa's Middle Way: Feast for the Fortunate* by the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, translated by Tyler Dewar, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 105-112; *Ocean of Nectar: Wisdom and Compassion in Mahayana Buddhism*, commentary by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1995, pages 47-60.

[152](#) The exact same lines of verse occur in the *Ratnavali* 385, see *Nagarjuna's Precious Garland: Buddhist Advice for Living and Liberation*, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2007, page 142.

[153](#) This parable, here nuanced slightly differently by the present translator for both history and the modern reader, comes from the *Saddharma-Pundarika (True Dharma White Lotus) Sutra*. See *The Lotus Sutra: A Contemporary Translation of a Buddhist Classic*, translated by Gene Reeves, Wisdom, 2008, pages 198-199.

[154](#) See *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary* by Jamgon Mipham, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Shambala, 2002, pages 111, 345-346; *The Karmapa's Middle Way: Feast for the Fortunate* by the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, translated by Tyler Dewar, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 544-549; *Ocean of Nectar: Wisdom and Compassion in Mahayana Buddhism*, commentary by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1995, pages 434-437.

[155](#) This is a reference to the short work by the author's father, *General Classification of the Tantras*.

[156](#) As will be explained in chapter 4 below, Sonam Tsemo uses the term "Guhyamantra" for what is more commonly known as the Vajrayana, or the practice of Tantra.

[157](#) Here, as in many places in this book, Sonam Tsemo abbreviates Guhyamantra as Mantra. In this edition, in order to avoid confusion and inconsistency, Guhyamantra will be used throughout.

[158](#) Here, Sonam Tsemo is generally making reference to and anticipating the argument that Guhyamantra is not really Buddhism (just as much an issue in the twelfth century as in the twentieth and even twenty-first), which he addresses below in chapters 3, 4, and especially 5. The same bias can equally exist, and be equally false, in the reverse direction: the belief of some Guhyamantras that Hinayana and even common Mahayana are unnecessary and can be dispensed with.

More specifically, by demonstrating here that while multiple provisional results of Hinayana and Mahayana may seem distinct, there is one and only one definitive result for all Buddhist vehicles, Sonam Tsemo is anticipating the next chapter where he demonstrates that while the one ultimate result described in chapter 1 appears to be multiple results of Mahayana and Guhyamantra practice, they are nevertheless provisional and sequential, leading to the one definitive result.

[159](#) The eleventh or buddha level.

[160](#) See chapter 5.

- [161](#). This quotation does not occur in the *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara*.
- [162](#). See chapter 2.
- [163](#). This quotation has not yet been located.
- [164](#). See *The Maha Vairocana Abhisambodhi Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, Routledge Curzon, 2003, page 447.
- [165](#). See *Aryadeva's Lamp that Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition*, translated by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 281-282. Sonam Tsemo's quotation is an abbreviation or summarization of the actual passage.
- [166](#). Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 55, line 6 identifies this as a habitual tendency that transmigrates from one life to the next.
- [167](#). This paragraph refers to an advanced topic, referenced here to prove the point that the Guhyamantra result surpasses the Paramita result. This subject will be explained in detail in subsequent volumes of *Classics of the Early Sakya*. For now, the interested reader may refer to *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdre Tradition*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006, pages 114-121.
- [168](#). This quotation was not found in the given source.
- [169](#). Sugata is related to tathagata; the former is one who has transcended to ecstasy, the latter is one who has transcended to the absolute just-as-is. Another definition could be that a sugata sees everything as ecstasy and gnosis, and a tathagata sees everything as emptiness and gnosis.
- [170](#). See chapter 7.
- [171](#). This quotation was not found in the given source.
- [172](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 179, line 5.
- [173](#). This quotation was not found in the given source.
- [174](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 179, line 4.
- [175](#). This *Commentary on the Mahamudra Tilaka Tantra* is the *Shri Guyartha Prakasa Mahabhuta (Most Excellent Clarification of the Profound Meaning)* by Chandravajra, Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 8, pages 221-308.
- [176](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 8, page 306, line 7.
- [177](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 367, line 1.
- [178](#). This is a reference to the sequential practice of the generation and completion processes.
- [179](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 367, line 3. With these two passages, the *Samputa Tantra* and its *Continuation* come to an end.
- [180](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 35, page 90, line 1. To see these two lines within the context of the preceding and subsequent verses, see *Aryadeva's Lamp that Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition*, translated by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, page 51. For a lengthy discourse on the significance of the two lines, see *Brilliant Illumination of the Lamp of the Five Stages: Practical*

Instruction in the King of Tantras, The Glorious Esoteric Community by Tsong Khapa Losang Drakpa, translated by Robert A. F. Thurman, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2010, pages 171-175.

[181](#) There appears to be at least eight commentaries on the Pancakrama; see *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition*, translated by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 51-52, footnotes 105-106.

[182](#) See references on these topics in chapter 1. At this point, Dezhung Chopel repeats the section above by Lowo Khenchen on the three special properties.

[183](#) See *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary* by Jamgon Mipham, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Shambala, 2002, pages 59, and 144-145; *The Karmapa's Middle Way: Feast for the Fortunate* by the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, translated by Tyler Dewar, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 93-95; *Ocean of Nectar: Wisdom and Compassion in Mahayana Buddhism*, commentary by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1995, pages 12-22. All three of the above commentaries agree on the interpretation of this verse, and the given translation reflects that interpretation. There is no mention of Vajradhara as the highest level buddha.

[184](#) The seven unions by which Vajradhara is superior are (1) having the sambhogakaya form with thirty-two marks and eighty characteristics, (2) union of male and female sambhogakaya forms, (3) mind remaining in a state of simultaneous ecstasy, (4) union of simultaneous ecstasy and emptiness, (5) continuous compassion for all sentient beings, (6) continuous presence as an indestructible vajra body, and (7) ceaseless activity by universal nirmanakaya forms. See *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism* by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Wisdom Publications, 1982, pages 222-223; *Brilliant Illumination of the Lamp of the Five Stages: Practical Instruction in the King of Tantras, The Glorious Esoteric Community* by Tsong Khapa Losang Drakpa, translated by Robert A. F. Thurman, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2010, pages 5-14; *Light Rays from the Jewel of the Excellent Teaching* by Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, in *Mahamudra and Related Instructions: Core Teachings of the Kagyu Schools*, translated by Peter Alan Roberts, Wisdom Publications, 2011, pages 609-611.

[185](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 42, pages 173-278.

[186](#) The complete verse is the primary source for chapter 1..

[187](#) Dezhung Chopel annotates this line of verse that the path of suffering refers to giving away one's head (and other body parts in the bodhisattva practice of generosity), and the length of time of the three eons is incalculable.

[188](#) Dezhung Chopel annotates that Vajradhara is superior to that.

[189](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 42, page 33, line 2.

[190](#) A closely related verse does occur in *Pancakrama II*, Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 35, page 101, line 5.

[191](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume, 35, page 112, line 2.

[192](#) See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 230 and 290, where Shridhara is associated with Buddhajnanapada and the *Yamantaka Tantra* cycle.

- [193](#). See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 221, 295, and 344, where Dharikapa is particularly associated with the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* cycle.
- [194](#). See footnote 167 above.
- [195](#). See *Wisdom of Buddha: The Samdhinirmocana Mahayana Sutra*, translated by John Powers, Dharma Publishing, 1995, page 233.
- [196](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 42, page 14, line 4. For more information on Buddhajnanapada and this text, see *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2002, pages 309-316, and *Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 229-230.
- [197](#). The Tibetan title is *rKang-pa Tha-ma*; this title has not yet been located.
- [198](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, page 296, line 4.
- [199](#). The intent of this passage seems to be that whereas in Paramitayana the sixth perfection refers to the more general use of analytical wisdom to realize the selflessness of both individuals and phenomena, in Guhyamantrayana the sixth perfection refers specifically to the female consort (divine or human) who enables complete realization of emptiness. On the use of Paramita terminology in Guhyamantra, see part 3, chapter 9. See Buton Rinchen Drup's use of this same quotation in chapter 2.
- [200](#). These five determinants are different from those given by Sonam Tsemo and were first mentioned by Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 41, line 6.
- [201](#). The six objects of mind are the five sense objects plus thoughts. The twelve objects of mind are the six sense objects plus the six sense organs including the brain.
- [202](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 140, page 3, line 2. For the context and additional commentary on these two verses, see *Abhidharmakosabhasyam of Vasubhandhu*, translated by Leo M. Pruden, Asian Humanities Press, 1991, volume 1, pages 61-63.
- [203](#). See Nagarjuna's *The Heart of Interdependent Origination in Causality and Emptiness: The Wisdom of Nagarjuna*, translations and commentary by Peter Della Santina, Buddhist Research Society, Singapore, 2002, <http://www.ecst.csuchico.edu/~dsantina/>, pages 45-64. See also *Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra and Dzog-chen* by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, translated by the International Translation Committee of Kunkhyab Choling founded by the V. V. Kalu Rinpoche, Snow Lion, 1995, pages 195-199.
- [204](#). See *The Lalitavistara Sutra: The Voice of the Buddha, The Beauty of Compassion*, translated by Gwendolyn Bays, Dharma Publishing, 1983, volume 1, third verse on page 259.
- [205](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 96, page 34, line 4. See *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* by Nagarjuna, translation and commentary by Jay L. Garfield, Oxford University Press, 1995, pages 78, 340-341; *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nagarjuna's Mulamadhyamakakarika* by rJe Tsong Khapa, translated by Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield, Oxford University Press, 2006, page 541; *Ornament of Reason: The Great Commentary to Nagarjuna's Root of the Middle Way* by Mabja Jangchub Tsondu, translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee, Snow Lion Publications, 2011, pages 77, 501-502.
- [206](#). Making botanical identifications is often difficult, as is the case here. The *Bod rGya Tshig mDzod*

Chen-mo, volume 3, page 2996, says the sle-tres flower is a type of herbal medicine from a tree, and goes on to list its beneficial effects, as well as alternative names. In the *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, page 1300, Sarat Chandra Das cites it is a creeping or climbing plant and quotes the *Kahgyur Tantra* section, volume Ca (or 5), page 47, that it is a universal medicine, followed by a further list of synonyms.

[207.](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 117; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 277. Here, this truth is called the profoundest or supreme secret, and the same principle is repeated throughout the *Hevajra Tantra*.

[208.](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 173, pages 92-105; quote is on page 100, line 4.

[209.](#) The four mindfulnesses are body, feelings, mind, and phenomena. See *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma*, by Herbert Guenther, page 217-218. See also the discussion below in chapter 5.

[210.](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 173, pages 92-105; quote is on page 100, line 3.

[211.](#) For detailed explanations of the six perfections, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 33-117; *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices* by Sakya Pandita, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cutillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 24-75.

[212.](#) See *Middle beyond Extremes: Maitreya's Madhyantavibhaga with Commentaries* by Khenpo Shenga and Ju Mipham, Dharmachakra Translation Committee, Snow Lion, 2006, page 127.

[213.](#) See Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, pages 311 and 333; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, pages 485-486 and 520. In context, the four steps in XX, 41 refer to the attainment of the ten bodhisattva levels.

[214.](#) The above list of topics forms the basis for *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008. See also an earlier translation of the same source text in *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices* by Sakya Pandita, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cutillo, Lotsawa, 1988. Sakya Pandita's chapters do not follow Sonam Tsemo's interpretation of this verse exactly. Steps 6-9 in the *Mahayana Sutra Lankara* are combined into two chapters in *Teachings* and *Illuminations*, one on the five paths and the other on the ten levels.

The one and only time Hiroshi taught a public course in America, the class was based on Sakya Pandita's *Clear Intent*.

[215.](#) For the distribution of the paths and levels among the eons, see *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 52 and 178 (chart 2).

[216.](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 92, line 3. The second line of verse does not occur in the same chapter.

[217.](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 199, line 4.

[218.](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 93; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 173. The poison and fire

analogies are given in the *Hevajra Tantra* II, ii, 46 and 49, respectively.

[219](#) For a comprehensive general explanation of the generation process, see *The Elements of Tantric Practice: A General Exposition of the Process of Meditation in the Indestructible Way of Secret Mantra, The Treasury of Knowledge Book Eight, Part 3* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 59-121.

[220](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 199, line 1.

[221](#) For a detailed explanation of this practice, which is called body isolation, see *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition* by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 151-174. The quotation in the Kahgyur does not exactly match Sonam Tsemo's, but the meaning is the same; Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 284, line 5.

[222](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 79-80; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 115-116. The female deities here represented are in the Nairatmya Mandala retinue, the first four in the outer circle, the latter two at the nadir and zenith positions.

[223](#) For the great variety of practices that constitute the completion process, see *The Elements of Tantric Practice: A General Exposition of the Process of Meditation in the Indestructible Way of Secret Mantra, The Treasury of Knowledge Book Eight, Part 3* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 123-216.

[224](#) Hiroshi explained that “transforms objects into colors” means transforms form into nonform as emptiness and gnosis.

[225](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 301, line 5.

[226](#) For detailed descriptions of these two completion processes of the *Hevajra Tantra* and the Sakya Path and Result, see *The Triple Tantra* by Panchen Ngawang Choedak, translated by Lama Choedak T. Yuthok, Gorum Publications, 1997, pages 286-344; *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdre Tradition*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006, pages 30-40, 545-566.

[227](#) For context, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 79; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 113-114.

[228](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 158, line 7.

[229](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 171, line 5.

[230](#) The practice of continuous yoga is the postmeditation specific and universal perception of divinity and is explained in great detail in the “long” Hevajra sadhana written by Sonam Tsemo.

[231](#) See Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam's explanation below.

[232](#) The vows of vajra body, speech, and mind are the vows of the five buddha families. See *Buddhist*

Ethics by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, International Translation Committee, Snow Lion Publications, 1998, pages 226-227, 242-243, and 249-253.

[233](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 302, line 1.

[234](#). The Tibetan title is *sGra'i Khams*.

[235](#). On the significance of Samantabhadra, see chapter 7.

[236](#). For another interpretation of the word “mantra” pertinent to Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, see *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, page 48.

[237](#). The Tibetan title is *dBang Yon-tan Rim-pa*.

[238](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, pages 284-546.

[239](#). This quotation was not found in Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 96, pages 281-334.

[240](#). This “quotation” seems to be a paraphrase of the actual quotation on the previous page.

[241](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 299, line 1; this quotation is not exact. See chapter 8 below.

[242](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 86, page 296, line 5.

[243](#). For alternative interpretations of the name Vajrayana, see *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 107-108.

[244](#). For an explanation of the path and result of buddha body, speech, and mind by Buton, see chapter 5 below and *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2008, pages 210-212 and 217-220.

[245](#). This quotation was not found in the given source.

[246](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 233, line 6.

[247](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 209, line 3.

[248](#). This title has not yet been identified in the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur.

[249](#). For a detailed explanation of the five manifest enlightenments, see chapter 7 below and *Yoga Tantra: Paths to Magical Feats* by Dzong-ka-ba, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 36-37, 123-127, and 154-157.

[250](#). For the definition of Palayana as having the four thorough purities, see *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, page 106.

[251](#). For a further statement of Ratnakarashanti's view of this topic, see *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 240 and 248.

[252](#). For detailed explanations of the ten nonvirtuous actions, see *The Beautiful Ornament of the Three Visions* by Ngorchen Konchog Lhundrub, translated by Lobsang Dakpa and Jay Goldberg, Snow Lion Publications, 1991, pages 87-111; *The Three Levels of Spiritual Perception* by Deshung Rinpoche, translated by Jared Rhoton, Wisdom Publications, 1995, pages 200-231.

[253](#). The four immeasurables are love, compassion, joy, and equanimity.

[254](#). For detailed explanations of the four actual means for gathering followers, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 119-121; *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices* by Sakya Pandita, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cuttillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 76-80; *The Beautiful Ornament of the Three Visions* by Ngorchen Konchog Lhundrub, translated by Lobsang Dakpa and Jay Goldberg, Snow Lion Publications, 1991, pages 154-1156; *The Three Levels of Spiritual Perception* by Deshung Rinpoche, translated by Jared Rhoton, Wisdom Publications, 1995, pages 330-336.

[255](#). For detailed explanations of the six perfections, see footnote 65 on page 41.

[256](#). The sense here seems to be that Guhyamantra shows source continuity specialization by making the result into the path, as opposed to just making the source into the path as in Paramitayana.

[257](#). For a reference for these correlations, see chapter 4, section on Individual Retinue Deities.

[258](#). His identity is uncertain.

[259](#). For biographical and other information on Drokmi, see *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet* by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, pages 83-123; *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdre Tradition*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006, pages 168-213; *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, pages 161-209.

[260](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 78, pages 12-52; the quotation is on page 32, line 3.

[261](#). Capital letters are here introduced to identify four major topics discussed in this chapter. The same capital letters are used in subsequent sections of this chapter to identify subject matter pertinent to each of these four topics, for the ease of the reader.

[262](#). Buton's commentary on Tripitakamala's quotation which follows closely resembles another lengthy commentary quoted and translated in *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by

Tsongka-pa, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 145-149, with the two commentaries being complementary to one another. Although the latter is not explicitly attributed to Buton, another even more similar version recently translated is attributed to Buton's *Extensive Classification of the Tantras*, and is found in *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 208-214.

[263.](#) It must be mentioned here that the practice of the six perfections as described by Buton is not unique to Guhyamantra, but can characterize Paramitayana as well.

[264.](#) Each of the five buddha families is associated with a predominant emotion. That emotion is indicated when the mandala initiate tosses a flower onto the mandala that lands on one of the five buddha family representations. Likewise, a mudra (consort) may be identified as having characteristics associated with one of the five buddha families. The activities referred to are pacifying, increasing, controlling, and (figuratively) killing, where a preference for one or another is also indicative of a predominant emotion.

[265.](#) Vairochana is the fifth Buddha, corresponding to nescience or ignorance, who is not mentioned here.

[266.](#) The Krotha are the ten protector deities that surround the central mandala.

[267.](#) The preceding letters are vowels and consonants of the Sanskrit language.

[268.](#) For more explanation of the practices of buddha or vajra body, speech, and mind, see chapter 4 ("Delineation of the Vajrayana" section) above and *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 210-211 and 217-219.

[269.](#) For more explanation of the four classes of Tantras, see chapter 6.

[270.](#) The source of this contention is the *Hevajra Tantra* II, ii, 50. Here, Buton's figurative "hellish experiences" is *mi-bzad-pa-yi-las*, unbearable or unforgivable acts. See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 93 (evil conduct); *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 173 (wicked deeds). This verse is also quoted in *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, page 212, where the term is rendered awful action. The subsequent verse in the *Hevajra Tantra* states that this practice is unknown to Marginalist Buddhists. These two verses are quoted below by Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam.

[271.](#) For Buton's explanation of the meaning of the four mudras, see *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 146-148 and *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 213-214, where the four mudras are explained as formless consorts, imagined consorts, actual qualified consorts, and actual unqualified consorts, respectively. Using Buton's reasoning (see subsequent footnote), we would have to conclude that a practitioner's choice of consort is a matter of personal preference, which is then given a value ranking in order of highest to lowest. Tsongkhapa, the first Panchen Lama, and the present Dalai Lama all disagree with Buton's value ranking and believe that use of an actual consort is best (*Tantra in Tibet*, pages 73-74, 150; *Tantric Techniques*, pages 282-284, 370-371). The *Kalachakra Tantra* tradition was the primary tantric tradition studied and practiced by Buton, and his four mudra terminology is consistent with that tradition; but the attributed meaning is not, specifically in reference to the samayamudra, which is there the consort of "ultimate attainment" (see *Ornament of Stainless Light: An Exposition of the Kalacakra Tantra* by Khedrup Norsang Gyatso, translated by Gavin Kilty, Wisdom Publications, 2004, pages 543-550). Here it will be seen that Buton's value gradation of consorts comes from the *Kalachakra Tantra* tradition (pages 527-543). In the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* tradition, the term "jnanamudra" is replaced by dharmamudra, with however a different meaning (*Essence of Vajrayana: The Highest Yoga Tantra*

Practice of Heruka Body Mandala by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1997, pages 206-208; *The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Sri Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* by David B. Gray, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 171-173).

Yoga Tantra has the same terminology of four mudras as in the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* tradition of Unsurpassed Tantra, but the meaning is quite different (*Yoga Tantra: Paths to Magical Feats* by H. H. the Dalai Lama, Dzong-ka-ba and Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2005, pages 30-33, 38-41, 73-75, 128-140, and 145-147).

[272](#) The line of reasoning by which Buton arrives at this conclusion is included in *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 212-214. The conclusion is that since whether or not a specific activity is difficult is dependent on the viewpoint of the practitioner, nondifficulty refers to whether or not a given practice is in accord with the desires of the practitioner, which is more readily the case in Guhyamantra.

[273](#) Buton's acknowledgement here, that his interpretation of Tripitakamala differs from that of Sonam Tsemo, is the only place in his quotation study guide where a difference in interpretation is acknowledged or is significantly apparent.

[274](#) For a description of this and related techniques, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, chapter 9, and *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, chapter 1.

[275](#) It is not clear as to what Amezhap is referring to as the system for the descent of gnosis in the three lower classes of Tantra. For a comprehensive explanation of the practices of the three lower classes of Tantra, see *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongka-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, and *Yoga Tantra: Paths to Magical Feats* by Dzong-ka-ba, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2005.

[276](#) For a lengthy discussion on the meaning of this term, see *The Dharma's Gatekeeper: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet*, by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York Press, 2008, pages 47-59.

[277](#) In the Gelugpa tradition, the terms "subjective clear light," "extremely subtle fundamental innate mind of clear light," "completion stage ultimate clear light" correspond to the Sakya indicator example gnosis. In Gelugpa, the metaphoric ultimate truth is the subject cognizing emptiness. The realization of emptiness through the methods of Paramitayana is referred to as the objective clear light. See *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 56-57. Realizing the objective clear light through meditation on emptiness (by analogies and reasoning) is said to be a necessary prerequisite for visualization of the deity, page 63. The topic of indicator example gnosis and indicated true gnosis will be covered extensively in *Comprehensive Introduction to Tantra, Volume 2*.

[278](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 78, page 32, line 5.

[279](#) For descriptions of the chandali yoga practice, see *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdre Tradition*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006, pages 545-559, and *The Triple Tantra* by Panchen Ngawang Choedak, translated by Lama Choedak Yuthok, Gorum Publications, 1997, pages 286-327.

[280](#) For descriptions of the mandala chakra practice, see *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of*

the Sakya Lamdre Tradition, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006, pages 559-566, and *The Triple Tantra* by Panchen Ngawang Choedak, translated by Lama Choedak Yuthok, Gorum Publications, 1997, pages 328-344.

[281](#) For an example of a Manjushri sadhana, see *Pearl Rosary: The Path of Purification* by Konchog Gyaltshen, Vajra Publications, 2007, pages 42-74 and 273-296.

[282](#) See *Buddhist Goddesses of India* by Miranda Shaw, Princeton University Press, 2006, pages 247-264.

[283](#) For the application of the four mudras in Yoga Tantra, see *Yoga Tantra: Paths to Magical Feats* by Dzong-ka-ba, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2005.

[284](#) In Conduct and Ritual Tantra, mudras are symbolic hand gestures; for examples, see the reference in the next footnote.

[285](#) For detailed descriptions of these practices in Ritual and Conduct Tantra, see *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra - 2 and 3* by Tsongka-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981.

[286](#) These eleven methods will be explained in great detail in *Comprehensive Introduction to Tantra, Volume 2*.

[287](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 78, page 34, line 6.

[288](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 78, page 43, line 1.

[289](#) See footnote 270.

[290](#) Here the source for this quotation is not specified; it is quite similar to but does not exactly match quotations from the *Hevajra Tantra* and *Samputa Tantra*, which are cited below in chapter 6.

[291](#) See chapter 4.

[292](#) Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltsen, page 5, line 2 to page 10, line 5, gives primacy to Jnanashri's list of eleven specializations and copies Buton's explanation of them. For a translation of this section, see *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 215-239, including additional explanation by Buton. This is followed by a brief explanation of seven additional sets of Guhyamantra specializations compiled by seven other scholars, pages 240-242. Longchenpa explains a further set of fifteen specializations as revealed in the *Guhyachintya Tantra (Tantra of the Inconceivable Rali)*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 391-397, with the quotation on page 396, line 6. For a translation, see *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 248-254 and the *Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing 2007, pages 242-248.

[293](#) A variation on the spelling of "Tripitakamala."

[294](#) The meaning of this sentence is unclear.

[295](#) This quotation was not found in the given source.

[296](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 35, pages 75-89.

[297](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 78, page 32, line 4. This is the same last line of the quotation on page 94 above, except that instead of "Guhyamantrayana," "Guhyamantra treatises" is written in conformity with the Karmapa Derge Tengyur version.

- [298](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 51, pages 224-225. On the importance of Maitripa, see *Resurrecting Candrakirti: Disputes in the Tibetan Creation of Prasangika* by Kevin A. Vose, Wisdom Publications, 2009, page 28.
- [299](#). For a discussion on this author and book, see the translator's introduction.
- [300](#). This commentary has not been identified in the Karmapa Derge Tengyur.
- [301](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 95, pages 2-474.
- [302](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 96, pages 335-444. For a translation, see *Two Esoteric Sutras: The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra and The Susiddhikara Sutra*, translated by Rolf W. Giebel, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2001.
- [303](#). See *Buddha Nature: The Mahayana Uttaratantra Shastra* by Maitreya, with the commentary by Jamgon Kongtrul and explanations by Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso, translated by Rosemarie Fuchs, Snow Lion, 2000, pages 40, 173-174; *The Uttaratantra: A Treatise on Buddha-Essence* by Maitreya, with commentary by Khenchen Thrangu, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes, Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Charitable Trust Publications, 2003, pages 65, 271-272; Maitreya on Buddha Nature, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes with commentary by Khenchen Thrangu and Khenpo Tsultim Gyamtso, Altea Publishing, 1999, pages 177-178; *The Buddha Within: Tathagatagarbha Doctrine According to the Shentong Interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga* by S. K. Hookham, State University of New York Press, 1991, pages 229-233; *A Direct Path to the Buddha Within: Go Lotsawa's Mahamudra Interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga* by Klaus-Dieter Mathes, Wisdom Publications, 2008.
- [304](#). This is in reference to chapter 1, see Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, pages 7-15; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, pages 6-20 (starting with verse 7).
- [305](#). This is the *Raktayamari (Red Yamari) Tantra*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 428-488. Chapter 22 starts on page 487, line 6.
- [306](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 28-32.
- [307](#). Another variation in the spelling of "Tripitakamala" (or mistake by the block-carver).
- [308](#). See the *Tattvavatara* by Jnanakirti, Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 78, pages 77-151.
- [309](#). A variation on the spelling of Maitripa.
- [310](#). The Indian author Vajrapani is distinct from the Buddha Vajrapani; for a reference to the author's commentary on the *Nayatraya-Pradipa* see *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 214-215.
- [311](#). See *The Litany of Names of Manjusri: Text and Translation of the Manjusrinamasamgiti*, edited and translated by Ronald M. Davidson in *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*, edited by Michel Strickmann, *Melanges chinois et bouddhiques* 20:1-69, 1981; *Concert of Names of Manjusri*, translated by Alexander Berzin, in *As Long As Space Endures: Essays on the Kalacakra Tantra in Honor of H. H. The Dalai Lama*, edited by Edward A. Arnold, Snow Lion, 2009.
- [312](#). Since the list of "ten" knowledges actually contains eleven, one has to be included with another in order to make ten.

- [313](#). Six commentaries on the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti* are found in the Karmapa Derge Tengyur volume 15, but it is uncertain as to whether one of them is the *Great Commentary*.
- [314](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 108, line 7.
- [315](#). The four mindfulnesses are body, feelings, mind, and phenomena. These are the first four of the thirty-seven branches of bodhi and belong to the path of accumulation, the first of the five paths. This quotation has not been found in the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*.
- [316](#). Sonam Tsemo quotes only the second and fourth lines of this verse, and the second line is slightly misquoted (and corrected in the translation). The context of this quotation is a refutation of the *Lankavatara Sutra* as having definitive meaning. See especially *The Karmapa's Middle Way: Feast for the Fortunate* by the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, translated by Tyler Dewar, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 301-306. See also *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary by Jamgon Mipham*, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Shambala, 2002, pages 81 and 260; *Ocean of Nectar: Wisdom and Compassion in Mahayana Buddhism*, commentary by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1995, pages 273-274; *The Moon of Wisdom: Chapter Six of Chandrakirti's Entering the Middle Way with Commentary from the Eighth Karmapa Mikyo Dorje's Chariot of the Dagpo Kagyu Siddhas*, translated by Art Goldfield, Jules Levinson, Jim Scott & Birgit Scott, Snow Lion Publications, 2005, page 275.
- [317](#). See *The Vimalakirti Nirdeśa Sutra*, translated by Charles Luk, Shambala, 1972; *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti*, translated by Robert Thurman, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976; *The Vimalakirti Sutra*, translated by Burton Watson, Columbia University Press, 1996; *The Sutra of Queen Srimala of the Lion's Roar and the Vimalakirti Sutra*, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2005.
- [318](#). The four enigmatic expressions are the four enigmatic intentions: (1) introductory enigmatic intention (teaching the existence of form, etc., to shravakas); (2) characteristic enigmatic intention (statements that make use of the characteristics of the three natures, explained in chapter 2, in order to prove the insubstantiality of all phenomena); (3) antidotal enigmatic intention (statements intended to counteract the eight obstructions to spiritual advancement); and (4) transformative enigmatic intention (seemingly contradictory statements that transform the unintended into the intended). The four articulations are a subset of the antidotal enigmatic intention: (1) equilibrating articulation (statements that equilibrate the Buddha with others of the highest regard as an antidote to disparagement of the Buddha), (2) articulation of other meanings (statements that are indicative of meaning other than the literal, as an antidote to disparagement of the Dharma), (3) articulation of other times (statements of future benefits that may be accrued as an antidote to laziness), and (4) articulation of individual dispositions (statements that praise a specific practice, such as the perfection of generosity, to some who especially need it, but denigrate it to others who have placed too great an emphasis on it to the exclusion of other important practices, as an antidote to complacency). The source for these is Maitreya's *Mahayana Sutra Lankara* XII, 16-18, as identified by Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 38, line 1, who appends the annotation that it is necessary to provide commentary on statements regarding self-characteristics of evident phenomena, as (for example) teachings on existence of the self are for the purpose of steadfastly introducing Paramita. See Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana Sutra Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, pages 160-161; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, pages 237-242. See also the treatment of this topic in Michael Broido, "Abhipraya and Implication in Tibetan Linguistics," in *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 12 (1984) 1-33.

Sakya Pandita adds a third category of Sutra explanation, that of straightforward expressions; see *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions Among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems* by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen, translated by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, page 150.

[319](#). The generality aspects include term generality (*sgra-spyi*) and object generality (*don-spyi*). See *The Dharma's Gatekeepers: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York Press, 2008.

[320](#). The assumption here is that the difficulty in practicing the Paramita path is the necessity for celibacy, which is not a part of the Guhyamantra path. The Paramita contention here is that celibacy is not essential, although the examples given prove that noncelibacy is the exception.

[321](#). The third step on the path of application; see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 126-128 and *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices* by Sakya Pandita, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cuttillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 83-84.

[322](#). See *A Manual of Ritual Fire Offerings* translated and compiled by Sharpa Tulku and Michael Perrott, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1987.

[323](#). See *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 142-143.

[324](#). See chart 2 in *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, page 178.

[325](#). For a lengthy discussion of this topic by Buton Rinchen Drup in objection/reply format with many quotations, see *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 221-239.

[326](#). For a description of the third path, the path of vision, and the first of the ten levels, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 129-131 and 139; *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices* by Sakya Pandita, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cuttillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 85-89 and 97-100.

[327](#). It must be understood here that Sonam Tsemo is not advocating suicide but is merely demonstrating the absurdity of the Paramita argument that experience of a representation of true gnosis rather than true gnosis itself has no value. The example used is that the experience of living in a physical body is a representation of the true nature of mind, not a hindrance to gaining realization of the true nature of mind, analogous to the experience of gnosis in the third empowerment. See *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems* by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen, translated by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, pages 121-122 and 187-188, note 41. Sakya Pandita uses the same line of reasoning and also addresses a further contention regarding a supposed distinction between adorned and unadorned attributes (or capacities). For a real life example of this motive for suicide, see *The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living* by His Holiness The Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler, Riverhead Books, 1998, page 161.

[328](#). Although identical terms in Tibetan (*bzod*), the acceptance mentioned here is not the same as the patience that is the third of the six perfections. Here, acceptance is the third of four progressions through the second of the five paths, the path of application, and its accomplishment indicates a close approach to

the third path, the path of true vision. See *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 126-129; *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices* by Sakya Pandita, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cutillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 83-85 and 136-140.

[329](#) Again, Sonam Tsemo is not arguing for the virtues of suicide, but rather is pointing out the absurdity of the Paramitas claim to have realized the irreversible path of vision through the practice of conceptually and analytically realizing the nature of emptiness, which is itself only a representation or approximation.

[330](#) For a detailed list of this and other buddha capacities, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, page 138.

[331](#) Since here, neither the Paramita nor the Guhyamantra practitioner can demonstrate buddha capacities to perform miraculous deeds, then the claim of either to have realized the true gnosis of the path of vision is false.

[332](#) Seeing the moon's reflection on water is not the same as seeing the moon directly, yet it is a true reflection of the moon and a nonambiguous indication that there truly is a moon that can eventually be directly experienced through further practice.

[333](#) On the impossibility of accomplishing buddha on the realization of emptiness alone, see *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems* by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen, translated by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, pages 141-145 and page 192, note 74.

[334](#) For a detailed presentation of the perspective of the Samkhyas together with the Kapilas, see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 104-125, and particularly pages 120-123.

[335](#) The *Ratnauta Collection* of Sutras constitute volumes 39-44 of the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur.

[336](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 86; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 141.

[337](#) If the conscientious reader is disturbed by this statement, ask yourself this question. If you had been alive at the time and had both the means and opportunity to have assassinated Adolf Hitler, would you also have had the pure motive?

[338](#) Hiroshi commented that the implication here is that it is better to receive an empowerment even if the associated vows cannot be maintained, then to not receive any empowerment at all.

[339](#) These two lines are quite similar to but not exact with those just above.

[340](#) This is the verse version of the prose quotation cited just above.

[341](#) The line of reasoning here seems to be that since even the gluttonous cannot eat continuously and even the lustful cannot have sex continuously, there is equally a discontinuity in the practices of both Paramita and Guhyamantra Buddhists who use these practices as offerings to the Three Jewels.

[342](#) Guhyamantra practitioners can visualize having sex continuously with dakas and dakinis even when not actually having sex with human dakas and dakinis, thereby making the practice a continuous offering to the Three Jewels without the mind wavering to profane activities. Such a perspective is however truly scandalous to the Paramita.

[343](#) This is the same reasoning as given by the present Dalai Lama in *Tantra in Tibet: The Great*

Exposition of Secret Mantra by Tsongka-pa, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 58-59. The significant difference here is whether or not enjoyment of sensual pleasures is viewed negatively as afflictions or defilements, or viewed positively as undefiled pure enjoyment.

[344](#) This expression specifically refers to the concentration meditation of Paramita and the internal and external body yogas that are practiced in the completion process of Guhyamantra, respectively.

[345](#) For an explanation of this type of ecstasy, see the discussion on the bliss of physical and mental pliancy resulting from the practice of shamata meditation in *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 130-132.

[346](#) In this context, the white and red elements refer to male and female sexual fluids, respectively.

[347](#) For a detailed description of a Chakravartin, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Myriad Worlds* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 1995, pages 134-138. In particular, note the line on page 136: “Wheel-monarchs exhibit the characteristic marks and signs [of great beings] similar to those of a buddha, but not as obvious and complete.” Several references in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism’s Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, explain how Shakyamuni Buddha was a wheel-monarch in previous lifetimes.

[348](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 62, line 1.

[349](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 85, page 4, line 2. The quotation does not exactly match the source.

[350](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, pages 2-283.

[351](#) See *The Maha Vairocana Abhisambodhi Tantra: With Buddhaguhya’s Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

[352](#) This is in reference to the controversy over whether the practice of Ritual Tantra and Conduct Tantra includes the visualization of oneself as the deity or not. See *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra - 2 and 3* by Tsongka-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981 pages 47-62.

[353](#) See *Aryadeva’s Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition* by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 281-305.

[354](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 108, line 6.

[355](#) This same line of reasoning is given by the present Dalai Lama in *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongka-pa, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, page 63.

[356](#) The meaning of this sentence is not completely clear.

[357](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 78, pages 52-77.

[358](#) Rendawa (1349-1412) is Sakya teacher of Tsongkhapa, whose primacy of the Prasangika Madhyamika strongly influenced Tsongkhapa’s views.

[359](#) Hiroshi explained that barley is considered an inferior grain that takes only three months to grow in Tibet, while salu rice is a superior grain that takes six months to grow.

[360](#) The first level is coincident with the true gnosis of the third path of vision.

[361](#) For a detailed presentation on the eighth level, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita’s Clarifying the Sage’s Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 142-143; *The Jewel Ornament of*

Liberation by Gampopa, translated by Khenpo Konchog Gyaltzen, Snow Lion, 1998, pages 273-274; translated by Herbert V. Guenther, Shambala, (1959) 1971, pages 248-249.

[362](#). dPal dbYangs-kyi bZhed.

[363](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 78, pages 1-249.

[364](#). For the significance of Vajrasattva in this context, see chapter 3.

[365](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 211, line 2.

[366](#). For a lengthy discussion of this topic by Buton Rinchen Drup in objection/reply format with many quotations, see *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 221-239.

[367](#). See chapter 6.

[368](#). In accordance with the explanation of “without ambiguity” given above by Sonam Tsemo and Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, the empowerments for Ritual and Conduct Tantras do not include the special techniques for inducing a direct experience of gnosis during the third of the four empowerments for Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.

[369](#). In accordance with the elucidation of this specialization above by Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, the presumption of the objection would seem to be that a relationship between meditator and deity characterized by gazing and smiling would not be sufficient to constitute “ease without difficulty.” It seems that it is taken for granted that Ritual and Conduct Tantras do demonstrate specialization with respect to Sutras through “multiple methods” and “sharp faculties.” Hiroshi explained that deity yogas constituted the specialization of “multiple methods” and transference of divinity was also indicative of “sharp faculties.”

[370](#). See chapter 2.

[371](#). See chapter 2.

[372](#). This would seem to indicate that Ritual and Conduct Tantras should be considered Tantras under development, so to speak.

[373](#). This is a translation of *byin-gyis brlabs*, sometimes commonly and inadequately translated as blessing.

[374](#). The presumption here would seem to be that transference of divinity through deity yoga in Ritual and Conduct Tantras also includes transference of gnosis without necessarily having the benefit of the third empowerment of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.

[375](#). This statement clearly does not accept the presumption of the objection above.

[376](#). This topic is explained in detail in chapter 6 below.

[377](#). See the previous mention of this topic in chapter 2.

[378](#). This quotation has not been found in the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti* which is sometimes called the *Manjushri Mayajala*.

[379](#). See *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

[380](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 88, pages 175-667.

[381](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 96, page 236, line 2. The second line of the quotation has not yet been located.

[382](#). For biographical information on Abhayakaragupta, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's*

Journey to Tibet by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 231.

[383](#). The three trainings are discipline, meditation, and analytical wisdom.

[384](#). For a detailed accounting of the above Vinaya topics, see *Buddhist Ethics* by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye, translated and edited by The International Translation Committee, Snow Lion Publications, 1998, pages 79-160; *Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining the Three Vows* by Ngari Panchen Pema Wangyi Gyalpo, translated by Khenpo Gyurme Samdrub and Sangye Khandro, Wisdom Publications, 1996, pages 14-63.

[385](#). See Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, pages 113-115; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, pages 161-163. Sonam Tsemo reverses the order of the verses.

[386](#). Later chapters in this book, especially 7 and 9, will show how the Tantras meet the criteria established by Asanga for inclusion within the Sutra Collection.

[387](#). See *The Fulfillment of All Hopes: Guru Devotion in Tibetan Buddhism* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Gareth Sparham, Wisdom Publications, 1999, page 41.

[388](#). For details on the qualifications of the vajra master and other spiritual guides, see *Buddhist Ethics* by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye, translated and edited by the International Translation Committee, Snow Lion Publications, 1998, pages 42-52. Specifically, the twenty-one groups of five qualifications for the monastic preceptors are mentioned on page 45 and listed in detail on pages 336-338, note 27.

[389](#). The three common bodhisattva disciplines are (1) discipline of protecting against negative actions, (2) discipline of assembling virtuous dharmas, and (3) discipline of working for the benefit of sentient beings. These constitute the second of the six bodhisattva perfections, the perfection of discipline or ethics. See *Teaching's on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's Intent* by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 51-56 and *Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism* by Geshe Acharya Thubten Loden, Tushita Publications, 1993, pages 684-694.

[390](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 84, lines 4-5.

[391](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 1-66.

[392](#). This quotation was not found in the given source.

[393](#). Sonam Tsemo's text is here modified: subtopic (3) is renumbered as (4) and another subtopic (3) added to better conform to the subject headings that actually occur below.

[394](#). The corresponding Sanskrit terms are Kriya, Charya, Yoga, and Anuttarayoga Tantra.

[395](#). This is the same as the meaning of the names of the four classes of Tantra.

[396](#). These latter three methods for assigning the Tantras into four classes are descriptive of the four classes only and do not establish a basis for the division, as was recognized by Sonam Tsemo in treating the topics of the two sets of three methods separately.

[397](#). Gnyan-phul-byung-ba gtsug-tor rgyal-po; the identity of this person is uncertain.

[398](#). This basis for the division into four classes has some similarity with the basis for converting the four Marginalists.

[399](#). The division based on the four (sets and degrees of) emotional defilements may also be seen as similar to that of converting the four Marginalists.

[400](#). This quotation occurs in Reply to the Questions of Dokorwa the Kadampa in *A Clear Differentiation of*

the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions Among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen, translated by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, page 262.

[401](#). The three schools of Marginalists correspond to the Shaivas, Vaishnavas, and Brahmanas, as detailed in Jeffrey Hopkins's *Maps of the Profound*, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 151-156, 135-137, and 127-128, or the Shaivas, Vaisnavas, and Brahmavadins in *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems: A Tibetan Study of Asian Religious Thought* by Thuken Losang Chokyi Nyima, translated by Geshe Lhundub Sopa, Wisdom, 2009, pages 41-43. The Shaivite and Vaishnavite systems (with the latter including followers of Brahma) are explained in *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 60-63.

[402](#). Hiroshi explained that the alchemical transformation referred to is external, in contrast to the internal alchemical transformation that results from the completion process extracting the essence practice.

[403](#). This quotation describing a Shaiva practice may also be found in Jeffrey Hopkins's *Maps of the Profound*, Snow Lion, 2003, page 142, where it is interpreted somewhat differently and is ascribed to the Mimamsakas rather than the Shaivas.

[404](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 199, line 4.

[405](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 250, line 1. The subsequent line has not been located in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*.

[406](#). The first two lines are given by Dezhung Chopel, page 40, line 6. As explained below, altogether there are three Tantras that are known as the *Samvara (Supreme Ecstasy)*. In this case, the quotation is from the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 302-385, with the quotation occurring on page 302, line 3.

[407](#). For references on the Indian caste system, see the section on Four Castes below.

[408](#). Both the Derge Kahgyur and Panchen Sonam Dragpa classify this Tantra as a Ritual Tantra; see *Overview of Buddhist Tantra*, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, page 26. Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 623, line 1, cites the *Manjushri Guhya Tantra* as the primary Tantra teaching only violence. This is the same as the *Krodha Vijaya Kalpa Guhya Tantra*.

[409](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 90, page 535, line 4.

[410](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 90, page 558, line 3.

[411](#). This quotation was not found in the given source.

[412](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 90, page 552, line 1.

[413](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 334-346. However, in the Derge Kahgyur, this Tantra is classified as an Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, not a Conduct Tantra. None of the quotations below have been found in this Tantra. For a translation of this and related Tantras in the Vajrabhairava cycle, see *The Vajrabhairava Tantras* by Bulcsu Siklos, Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1996.

[414](#). On the issues pertaining to Buddhism and violence, see *The Taming of the Demons: Violence and Liberation in Tibetan Buddhism* by Jacob P. Dalton, Yale University Press, 2011 and *Buddhist Warfare* edited by Michael K. Jerryson and Mark Juergensmeyer, Oxford University Press, 2010.

[415](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 96, pages 335-444. The quotations below have not been found in this Tantra. For a translation, see *Two Esoteric Sutras: The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra and the Susiddhikara Sutra*, translated from the Chinese by Rolf W. Geibel, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2001.

[416](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 96, pages 235-280. The quotations below have not been found in this Tantra.

[417](#). *The Mahayana Sutra Called the Definitive Compilation of All Tathagatas (Sarva Tathagata Tattvasamgraha Nama Mahayana Sutra)*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, pages 2-283, has been translated as *The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra* in *Two Esoteric Sutras: The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra and The Susiddhikara Sutra*, translated from the Chinese by Rolf W. Geibel, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2001.

[418](#). Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 623, line 5 states that part 3 has the purpose of training the greedy and part 4 has the purpose of training the nescient.

[419](#). Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 52, line 5 added Jnanapada to the list of siddhas expounding this correlation. Anandagarbha is a prolific author on tantric subjects and is cited frequently as an authority, especially on Yoga Tantra, for which he is one of three renowned experts. Attributed to him are several commentaries on Yoga Tantras, including the *Tattvasamgraha*, as well as commentaries on the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*. Subhutipalita is a more obscure figure. Taranatha identifies him as a master to Anandagarbha; and only one work, a fire-offering ritual, is known to be attributed to him. (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 386, note, 4; page 388, note 22.)

[420](#). Longchenpa (1308-1363) presents a similar correspondence, except that he identifies Yoga Tantra as for the proud who follow Indra. He uses some of the same quotations as Sonam Tsemo, but offers no judgement as to the validity of this explanation for the four classes of Tantra (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 274-275).

Jamgon Kongtrul (1813-1899) presents the same correspondence as Sonam Tsemo, also without passing judgment on the validity. He attributes the source of this correspondence to Nagarjuna as well as Subhutipalita and Anandagarbha (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 94).

Tsongkhapa (1357-1419) refers to Sonam Tsemo's presentation without mentioning his name and takes exception to its validity. First, he fails to note that Sonam Tsemo also does not give credibility to this correspondence, but is merely reporting it. Tsongkhapa argues that it is unreasonable that Buddhist practitioners would first "have to assume a wrong view before engaging in Mantra." Indeed so, but Tsongkhapa fails to recognize the historical significance of the stated correspondence in Anandagarbha's time and place in the Indian milieu. Next, Tsongkhapa quotes from Anandagarbha's *Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra* referring to the passionate are followers of Vishnu, implying that the passionate are not followers of Shiva and that the correspondence breaks down. While there appears to be some inconsistency between Anandagarbha's correspondence and that reported by Sonam Tsemo, the source used by the former (*Guhyasamaja Tantra*) is not the same source as used by the latter (*Tattvasamgraha Tantra*), and this line of reasoning seems to reflect a poor or confused understanding of Vedic systems (as supported by the *Pradipodyotana* quote below) rather than disprove the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra* as the

source of the correspondence as given by Sonam Tsemo. See *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 153-154. See also Kunga Zangpo's line of reasoning below. With respect to non-Buddhist systems, Richard Barron comments that "the Tibetan understanding... was based on Tibetan translations of Indian Buddhist commentaries, which tended to quote non-Buddhist authorities out of context and to present their tenets in a cursory and less than flattering light" (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, page xv).

Nevertheless, a close connection between the Shaiva-Kapalikas and the Yogini class of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras has been well documented. This connection is most extensively researched and explained in *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*, by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2002. See also *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors*, by David Snellgrove, Shambala, (1987) 2002, and *The Cakrasamvara Tantra*, translated by David B. Gray, the American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 7-10. Gray refers to the research of others, particularly Alexis Sanderson. For a brief discussion of the connection between the Vedic tradition and Caryā Tantra, see *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi Tantra with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pages 39-40. See also *The Symbiosis of Buddhism with Brahmanism/Hinduism in South Asia and of Buddhism with "Local Cults" in Tibet and the Himalayan Region* by David Seyfort Rugg, Verlag der Osterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2008, and *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century* by Geoffrey Samuel, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

[421](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, pages 1-402.

[422](#) It is clear that Sonam Tsemo did not support the correlation with the four marginalist traditions and was only reporting it as an assertion made by others. Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltsen, page 17, line 4 accepts the distinction of the four marginalist traditions as the definitive basis, along with the four schools of Buddhist philosophy detailed in the next section, for establishment of the four classes of Buddhist Tantra. Shakya Chokden, page 471, line 6 accepts only the four marginalist traditions as definitive for the four classes of Tantra, except that he switches the violent followers of Vishnu to correlation with Ritual Tantra, and the nescient followers of Brahma to correlation with Conduct Tantra. As seen here, later Sakyapas did not accept this viewpoint, and were in agreement with Sonam Tsemo.

[423](#) The someone referred to who expressed this viewpoint is Tsongkhapa. See *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 153-154. This book also has the full quotation by Anandagarbha that is referred to.

[424](#) This is a reference to *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, volumes 1-3, by Tsongkha-pa, Snow Lion, 2000-2002.

[425](#) See *Atisha's Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* with commentary by Geshe Sonam Rinchen, translated by Ruth Sonam, Snow Lion 1997. This is the source of the stages of the path instruction for three gradations of individuals.

[426](#) As indicated by the quote from the *Pradipodyotana* above.

[427](#) It is clear by this line of reasoning that Ngorchon Kunga Zangpo, and subsequently Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, does not accept the traditions of marginalists as the definitive basis for the four classes of Tantra, although he uses somewhat different reasoning than Tsongkhapa.

[428](#) For an expanded version of this Sutra quotation and analysis of this belief, see *Maps of the Profound*

by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 219-222.

[429](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 569, line 7. See the full quotation below by Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo.

[430](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 84, line 1 clarifies that oneself is generated as the commitment deity, into which the gnosis deity is not absorbed. Siddhis are accomplished through the give and take of companions, as cited in Sakya Pandita's *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes*, III, verse 263.

[431](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 624, line 1 attributes this assertion to the true aspectarian Chittamatra (Mind-Only) school. For the distinction between true aspectarian and false aspectarian divisions of Chittamatra, see *Maps of the Profound* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 310-312. Longchenpa makes the same distinction, between Chittamatrins who consider consciousness to entail sense data and those who consider consciousness to be devoid of sense data (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 87-98). Likewise, Jamgon Kongtrul distinguishes Chittamatra proponents of real images and proponents of false images (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy*, translated by Elizabeth M. Callahan, Snow Lion, 2007, pages 186-191).

[432](#) See *The Ornament of Clear Realization: A Commentary on the Prajnaparamita of Maitreya* by Khenchen Thrangu, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes and Cornelia Weishaar-Gunter, Namu Buddha and Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Publications, 2004, pages 63 and 237-239. The expression "resembles a rhinoceros" is a reference to a type of Pratyekabuddha.

[433](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 84, line 4 again cites Sakya Pandita's *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes*, III, verses 264-265.

[434](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 624, line 2 attributes this assertion to the false aspectarian Chittamatra school as well as to Madhyamaka.

[435](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 85, line 4 again cites Sakya Pandita's *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes*, III, verse 266.

[436](#) Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 53, line 5 adds Shantipa to the list of siddhas expounding this correlation. He further states, "This explanation also exists in the *Accomplishment of Wisdom: A Commentary on the Entrance into All Buddhist Scripture*, by Chilupa, which in turn is derived from an older book on systemization by Minyak Prajnajala."

[437](#) For the full quotation, see below, where five classes of Tantra are identified, not four.

Longchenpa does not mention this basis for the fourfold division of Tantra.

Jamgon Kongtrul includes this basis for the fourfold division, but extends it further to include a fourfold distinction in view, meditation, and conduct, where view is the four philosophical systems, meditation is the four different methods for generating the deity, and conduct is the four relative degrees of physical, verbal, and mental activity in the practice of the four Tantras (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 95-96). In note 27 on page 389, the translators make a thorough presentation of Sonam Tsemo's discussion of this topic.

Tsongkhapa objects to this fourfold correspondence on two grounds: (1) the quotation from the *Jnana Vajra Samuccaya* is misinterpreted and (2) self-buddhas do not represent a separate philosophical system. Once

again, he fails to note that Sonam Tsemo also does not give credibility to this correspondence (*Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 154-155 and 203-206; *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, pages 9-14 and 47-62).

[438](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 108, line 6.

[439](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 6, page 180, line 7. This interpretation of the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* verse differs from the interpretation given on page 118 below.

[440](#). Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 624, line 2 attributes the statement to Buton, “I have not seen anything that would suggest Sonam Tsemo’s correlation [of deity meditation] with the Buddhist philosophical systems.” Further, in volume 20, page 532, line 4, he says that “Buton very strongly disagreed with this position as it was asserted by Sonam Tsemo and other scholars since it was necessary to find the canonical source, and no clear source existed.”

[441](#). The someone referred to who expressed this viewpoint is Tsongkhapa. See *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 154-155.

[442](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, page 246, line 3.

[443](#). This is a reference to the Vaibhasikas and Sauntrantikas.

[444](#). This is a reference to the preceding section on “Division into Four in Order to Convert Outsider Marginalists.”

[445](#). Longchenpa shares this viewpoint, citing the same quotation from the *Abhisamayalamkara* 83 as above (page 118) and stating that the pratyekabuddha “approach resembles the Chittamatra system” (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, page 79).

Jamgon Kongtrul also cites the same *Abhisamayalamkara* verse and cites other references that pratyekabuddhas “have their own collections of scriptures” and “distinction between their tenet systems” (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy*, translated by Elizabeth M. Callahan, Snow Lion, 2007, pages 151-158).

[446](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 268-302.

[447](#). Authored by Devakulamahamati and quoted above.

[448](#). So-’brangs.

[449](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 92, pages 1-631.

[450](#). See Hopkins’s translation of this same passage, *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, page 59.

[451](#). The four branches are (1) generating oneself as a deity, (2) generating a deity in front of oneself, (3) imagining a moon at the heart of the deity in front, and (4) imagining the letters of the mantra revolving around the edge of that moon. See *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, pages 10, 27-28, and 189-195.

[452](#). Shas-che-ba; it is unclear as to what this refers to.

[453](#). This statement occurs in *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkha-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, page 56.

[454](#). Tsonkhapa quotes Buddhaguya in his *Commentary on the Dhyana Uttara* that the first ground is the tathagata body, but that the second ground is oneself in the form of the deity (*The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkha-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, page 55). Buddhaguhya argues that the assumption has to be made that even though the *Dhyana Uttara* does not explicitly state this interpretation, it has to be assumed to be the same as the *Vajroshnisha Tantra* of which it is a continuation (even though the *Vajroshnisha* was never known to have existed in Tibet), and to be the same as in the *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi*, as there can be no distinction between them.

[455](#). This quotation is found in *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkha-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, pages 60-61.

[456](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 86, pages 304-521. The quotation occurs on page 362, line 1. See *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, page 164; *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra - 2 and 3* by Tsongkha-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, pages 56 and 192. A commentary by Buddhaguhya is not available for these verses, but is available for the further explanation of the bases in *Maha Vairochana Abhisambodhi VI, 23 (The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pages 175-176). Here, Buddhaguhya's *Commentary* makes abundantly clear that the second base is not a gnosis deity in front and is not oneself as the gnosis deity, but is the gnosis deity residing in the heart of the meditator as the commitment deity. See the description of this practice in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 119-121).

[457](#). Tsonkhapa makes the assumption that the perfect buddha of the second base is the gnosis deity set in front of the meditator as the commitment deity (*The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkha-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, page 192).

[458](#). This again refers to Tsonkhapa (*The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra—2 and 3* by Tsongkha-pa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, pages 58-62), who says that “this is similar in Action Tantra because, when generation of oneself as a deity occurs, one must apply the pride that is the thought that one is the actual deity being generated, whether it is Vairochana or any other. Therefore, to view one's body as a deity, one's speech as mantra, and one's mind as absorbed in suchness is not a distinguishing feature of Highest (Unsurpassed) Yoga. It is definitely required also in the lower tantra sets.”

[459](#). This is a reference to the previous quote in this section.

[460](#). Dam-tshig-gsum bkod-pa.

[461](#). Nor-rgyun-ma.

[462](#). 'Od-zer-can-ma.

[463](#). 'Byung-po 'dul-byed.

[464](#). gZungs-grwa-lnga.

[465](#). The sense of this paragraph seems to be that sadhanas of Trisamayavyuha, Vasudhara, and others that are conventionally considered Ritual Tantra deities also occur in Unsurpassed Yoga Tantras, where they are practiced in accord with the deity yoga methods of the generation process and not in accord with the deity Yoga methods of Ritual Tantra; so therefore these sadhanas are actually unrelated to Ritual Tantra sadhanas of the same deities as found in the listed compilations of sadhanas.

[466](#). These practices constitute conventional front-generation in Ritual Tantra.

[467](#). These complete four branches of deity yoga are different from the standard four branches of Ritual Tantra deity yoga: (1) other base or front-generation, (2) self-base or self-generation, (3) mind as a moon disk, and (4) sound as mantra letters. Tsongkhapa explains deity yoga in Ritual Tantra as including the complete four branches of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, without recognizing the special circumstance of Ritual Tantra practiced according to Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra. See the explanation of Ritual (Action) Tantra deity yoga generally in *Tantric Techniques* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, and especially look at pages 110-111, and *Deity Yoga in Action and Performance Tantra*, by the Dalia Lama, Tsongka-pa, and Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 1981, pages 113-114.

[468](#). For details on the practice of Yoga Tantra, see *Yoga Tantra: Paths to Magical Feats* by the Dalai Lama, Dzong-ka-ba, and Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion Publications, 2005.

[469](#). Khrus-kyi Cho-ga.

[470](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 569, line 7. See the section on Five Classes below.

[471](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 99; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 200. In *Hevajra Tantra* II, iii, 11 the four passions are equated with the four empowerments, pages 95-96 and 183 in the translated sources, respectively. See below footnote 280.

[472](#). Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 11, line 3 equates the four types of passion with the four stages of ecstasy or pleasure as experienced in the mandala-chakra practice of the completion process. The corresponding four stages of ecstasy are pleasure, supreme pleasure, special pleasure, and simultaneous pleasure. In chapter 5 above, Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam explained the four kinds of passion as the four stages of relationship between the meditator and the buddha deity. In the present sections below, Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam correlates the four passions and the four pleasures as the progressive relationship between mandala deities, which can also include the meditator as the commitment deity and the buddha deity as the gnosis deity, with their full union occurring through the practice of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.

[473](#). See also the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* III in *The Chakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Sri Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* by David B. Gray, the American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, page 176.

[474](#). For a detailed description of the deities of the Desire Realm, see *Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalachakra, and Dzog-chen* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by the International Translation Committee, Snow Lion, 1995, pages 115-121.

[475](#). This Tantra does not occur in the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur. See *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 137, where it is implied that the *Vajra Usnisa Tantra* is one of the very large Tantras that is not known to exist in the human realm.

[476](#). See *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

[477](#). See *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: With Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pages 107-108 and 114-115.

[478](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 97; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 191 (verse 27).

[479](#). Within the context of the *Abhidharmakosha*, these two lines refer to the manner in which gods of the Desire Realm have sex. Vasubhandu's commentary makes clear that the lines are to be understood as specifying five ways and not four. The commentary goes on to explain that all the Desire Realm gods engage in intercourse and that the distinction refers to "the duration of the act. The more ardent the desire by reason of the more pleasurable object, so much shorter is the duration of the union." See *Abhidharmakosabhasyam of Vasubandhu*, translated by Leo M. Pruden, Asian Humanities Press, 1991, volume 2, page 465. Since in chapter 5 above, Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam made clear that the adopting of these five, combined as four kinds of passion, as an explanation for the four classes of Tantra, refers to the relationship between the meditator and the buddha deity, it can now be seen that the intent is to show a progressive and growing intimacy between the meditator and buddha deity, not of separate and distinct manners of relationship. Hence in the practice of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra, the buddha deity is the most "pleasurable object," and the time that it takes to achieve union between the meditator and the buddha deity is the shortest. This fourfold correlation is further enhanced by the first two lines of subsequent verse 71 (on page 466), where the commentary explains that the first (using the methods of joining two organs, embracing, and holding hands) "enjoy objects of desire which are presented to them," the second (using the method of smiling) "enjoy objects of desire that they create at their will," and the third (using the method of looking) "enjoy objects of desire that they create or have others create at their will." In reverse order, these suggest the progression of visualization in tantric practice.

[480](#). Refer to the quotation above.

[481](#). "Others" especially includes Virupa as cited above.

[482](#). Longchenpa describes the same correspondence with minor variations and some of the same quotations, without passing judgment (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 271-274). Jamgon Kongtrul briefly mentions the same correspondence, also without passing judgment (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 95). Tsongkhapa presents the same correspondence in great detail with many new sources. He states that this correspondence accords with his own view (*Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 156-162 and 201-202).

[483](#). On the division into five classes, see below. The *Abhidharmakosha* quotation above makes clear why Sonam Tsemo would say that this is the best tradition for elucidating five classes.

[484](#). For the correspondence with the four emotions, see above in the section on Division into Four in Order to Convert Outsider Marginalists.

[485](#). For more information on the Indian caste system, see *India: A History* by John Keay, Grove Press, 2000, pages 52-55; *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300* by Romila Thapar, University of California Press, 2002, pages 62-68, 122-126, 389-392 and 462-466; *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra*:

Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century by Geoffrey Samuel, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pages 83-89. In addition to the four castes, there are also the untouchable outcastes.

[486](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 96. The first and second verses start on page 275, line 3; the third verse starts on page 275, line 6; the fourth verse starts on page 276, line 1.

[487](#) See *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pages 213-214.

[488](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 302-385; the quotation is on page 364, line 5.

[489](#) Longchenpa also refers to the four castes of Indian society as a basis for the four classes of Tantra, without any judgement as to its validity, although he does cite canonical sources that make the correspondence explicit (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 269-270).

Jamgon Kongtrul also includes the four castes without judgement, citing apparently the same canonical source as Longchenpa's second citation. Kongtrul adds that the four classes of Buddhist Tantra are for those members of the four castes with superior faculties (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 94). He also offers an explanation of the origin of the four classes (*The Treasury of Knowledge, Book One: Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra and Dzog-chen* by Jamgon Kongtrul, Snow Lion, 1995, page 134).

Tsongkhapa includes the four castes, which he then refutes (*Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 155-156). Tsongkhapa also cites Alamkavalasha as the source for this correspondence, explaining it only slightly differently, but does not mention the two Tantra sources cited here. He then argues that since not all practitioners of specific Buddhist Tantras belong exclusively to one of the four Indian castes, that this correspondence is invalid. Jeffrey Hopkins expands on this topic on pages 202-203, further quoting the first Panchen Lama's refutation due to the illogical reasoning of exclusivity. He then observes that this correspondence was likely only for demonstrative purposes. In this regard, see Ron Davidson.

[490](#) Jamgon Kongtrul only briefly mentions this correspondence, which differs from the four passions by substituting massaging breasts for intercourse (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 96). The translators cite the same canonical source and attribute its first mention to Buton (page 390, note 30).

[491](#) Longchenpa also refers to the four ages as a basis for the four classes of Tantra, again without any judgement as to its validity, although he does cite canonical sources that make the correspondence explicit (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 270-271).

Jamgon Kongtrul briefly mentions the correspondence with the four ages without judgement (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 96). On page 390, note 30, the translators cite Buton for the Krishnacharya quote and reference additional explanations of the four ages by Kongtrul (*The Treasury of Knowledge, Book One: Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra and Dzog-chen* by Jamgon Kongtrul, Snow Lion, 1995, pages 134 and 162-165).

Tsongkhapa does not mention this correspondence.

[492](#) Longchenpa describes the progression of the ages as a gradual decline of human beings from godlike to our present form. Specifically, he marks the Conflict Age by the full development of male and female genitalia, necessitating the teaching of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra. This description implies that in the Perfection Age, humans were actually gods of the Masters over Other's Creations Derire Realm, etc. See also *The Treasury of Knowledge, Book One: Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra and Dzog-chen* by Jamgon Kongtrul, Snow Lion, 1995, pages 133-134).

[493](#) lTa-ba Thams-cad Yang-dag-par 'Dus-pa'i rGyud.

[494](#) Here Ngawang Kunga Sonam reverses the sequence of correspondence above by equating the Two(-Quarter) Age with Conduct Tantra, and the Three(-Quarter) Age with Yoga Tantra. He does the same in volume 20, page 92, line 5, as does Dezhung Chopel. Although Longchenpa apparently quotes from the same source (allowing for a misspelling of lta and lha), he retains the former sequence of correspondence.

[495](#) The fourth habitual tendency is orgasm.

[496](#) Kongtrul briefly mentions this correspondence with the four habitual tendencies of the daily cycle of states of mind, as derived from the *Kalachakra Tantra*. The translators added a footnote citing Buton as the source (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 96 and 390, note 29), which Sonam Gyaltzen evidently copies verbatim, but none of the three note the problem in interpretation pointed out by Kunga Zangpo and Ngawang Kunga Sonam below. Longchenpa and Tsongkhapa do not mention this correspondence.

[497](#) The various correspondences and significances of the four faces of Kalachakra are much more complex than is indicated here. See the detailed presentation in *The Inner Kalachakra: A Buddhist Tantric View of the Individual* by Vesna A. Wallace, Oxford University Press, 2001, pages 129-130 and the chart on page 132. However, the interpretation given by Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam is not mentioned by Wallace.

[498](#) All of the above correspondences for the four classes of Tantra constitute what we may call external correspondences, that is, searching external to Buddhist Tantra for an explanation as to the origin of the classes (if not Buddhist Tantra itself). Internal correspondences on the other hand are correspondences that are self-contained and internally consistent through the four classes of Buddhist Tantra. Two examples of this type of correspondence follow in these next two headings. Longchenpa, Jamgon Kongtrul, and Tsongkhapa (see pages 265-269, page 96 and following, and pages 151 and 162-164, respectively in the three references) all end up taking internal correspondence as primary, as does Sonam Tsemo, so that in the end, there is no fundamental disagreement between them.

[499](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 108, line 6.

[500](#) Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 621, line 4 also cites the root and *Sambhuti Tantras* in

support of the four class assertion.

[501](#).brdungs-ma.

[502](#).Longchenpa includes the four degrees of ability among his justifications for the four classes of Tantra without giving it any primacy over the others (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, page 270).

Jamgon Kongtrul also briefly mentions the four degrees of ability (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 95).

Tsongkhapa accepts these four degrees as definitive, but then specifies that they refer to the four degrees of ability in using the four kinds of desire in the path (*Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 151-152 and 156).

[503](#).This is most likely the *Commentary* by Buddhaguhya.

[504](#).Shakya Chokden, page 471, line 3 also identifies difficult or ascetic practices as indicative.

[505](#).Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 69, pages 2-129, translated in *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pages 445-537.

[506](#).brtul-zhugs.

[507](#). See *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: With Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, page 43, next to last paragraph, where the text differs slightly from the quotation given here.

[508](#).Longchenpa gives a similar derivation for the names of the Tantras (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 266-269).

Jamgon Kongtrul explains the derivation of the names based on the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra* in introductory sections to individual chapters on the four classes (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 100-101, 115-116, 128-129, and 141-142).

Tsongkhapa's explanation cites various sources (*Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* by Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1977, pages 162-164).

[509](#).For the passage from the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra* and its explanation, see the section on the resolution of the contradiction of five classes of Tantra below.

[510](#).The second Ritual Tantra empowerment is usually known as the crown or diadem empowerment. See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 102-104,

[511](#). See *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems* by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen, translated by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, page 133.

[512](#).For more information of the five Yoga Tantra empowerments, see *The Treasury of Knowledge:*

Systems of Buddhist Tantra, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 129-131.

[513](#) See *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions Among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems* by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen, translated by Jared Douglas Rhoton, State University of New York Press, 2002, pages 131 and 126.

[514](#) The four highest empowerments are the master, secret, wisdom (mudra) gnosis, and fourth.

[515](#) These refer to three different methods of practicing the generation process deity yoga.

[516](#) For the context of this quotation, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 47-48; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 8-9.

[517](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 82, page 102, line 4. Only an approximation of the first of the two lines appears.

[518](#) All nine are identified just below.

[519](#) Six of the seventeen are identified just below.

[520](#) For a detailed listing, see below.

[521](#) For the classification of further subdivisions in Ritual Tantra and specific examples of canonical [Tantras] for each, see *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 101-139.

[522](#) This commentary is most likely the one by Buddhaguhya; see *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 139.

[523](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 86, pages 304-521. This Tantra has been translated as *The Mahavairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. Other translations include *The Vairocanabhisambodhisutra*, translated by Rolf W. Giebel, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation & Research, 2006, and the *Mahavairocana-Sutra*, translated by Chikyo Yamamoto, International Academy of Indian Culture, 2001.

[524](#) *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 206-207 cites a reference that the *Continuation Tantra* is chapter 7 of the main Tantra.

[525](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 88, pages 175-667. The Gelugpa classify this as a Ritual Tantra. See *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 111.

[526](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 89, pages 1-25. The Gelugpa classify this as a Ritual Tantra. See *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 111-113.

[527](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 90, pages 314-369. The Gelugpa classify this as a Ritual Tantra, yet note that it also contains language representative of Unsurpassed Tantras. See *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton,

1968, page 113.

[528](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 86, pages 524-645.

[529](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 90, pages 535-571 and volume 91, pages 1-70. The Gelugpa classify this as a Ritual Tantra. See *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 119.

[530](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 87, pages 2-312.

[531](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 95, pages 475-525. The Gelugpa classify this as a Ritual Tantra. See *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 129.

[532](#). *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 207 states that no Conduct Tantras of the Padma type have been translated into Tibetan.

[533](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, pages 1-283. This has been translated as *The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra* in *Two Esoteric Sutras*, translated by Rolf W. Geibel, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2001.

[534](#). This Tantra has not yet been identified.

[535](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 187-267. In the Derge Kahgyur, this Tantra is classified as a Male Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra of the Vajrabhairava-Yamantaka cycle.

[536](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, pages 284-547.

[537](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 85, pages 300-345.

[538](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 85, pages 116-191 and 192-291. This has been translated as the *Sarvadurgatiparisodhana Tantra: Elimination of All Evil Destinies*, translated by Tadeusz Skorupski, Motilal Banarsidass, 1983.

[539](#). See the section on Three Subdivisions of Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra below.

[540](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 82, page 102, line 3. Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 55, line 5 and Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 94, line 3 identify the source of this quotation as the *Uncommon Secret*.

[541](#). The source and therefore exact contextual meaning of this quotation is uncertain.

[542](#). Shakya Chokden, page 470, line 4 cites the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* and commentaries on Yoga Tantras as among the sources for the assertion of three classes. Shakya Chokden, page 470, line 4 and Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 621, line 2 also identify some great yogis such as Master Anandagarbha as proponents of three classes; Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 533, line 1 also identifies Shakyamitra as a proponent.

[543](#). Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 621, line 1 identifies this as the Guhyasamaja Arya tradition.

[544](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 569, line 3.

[545](#). See part 3 below.

[546](#). In this context, Dual Tantra is equivalent to Yoga Tantra. For the ten principles, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid

McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 128-129, and *Yoga Tantra: Paths to Magical Feats* by the Dalai Lama and Tsongkhapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 24-25.

[547](#) The enlightened activities are the miscellaneous acts including pacifying, increasing, controlling or attracting, and harming.

[548](#) See the sections on siddhis or feats in *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra - 2 and 3* by Tsongkapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, pages 173-179, 202, and 208-210, and *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 100 and 390, note 2.

[549](#) Jamgon Kongtrul cited these passages to introduce each detailed section on the Four Tantras, in order of Ritual/Kalpa to Great Yoga Tantra (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 100-101, 116, 128, and 142).

Tsongkhapa cites the passage on Ritual Tantra (*The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra —2 and 3* by Tsongkapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, page 47).

[550](#) The canonical source above has “thorough discernment” which is probably the correct reading.

[551](#) The four-branch repetition is the practice of concentration with repetition in Ritual Tantra and yoga with signs in Conduct Tantra. For a very detailed explanation, see *The Yoga of Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra - 2 and 3* by Tsongkapa, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, George Allen & Unwin, 1981, pages 19-28, 38-40, 79-154, 189-195, 214-217, and 219-223.

[552](#) See above in the section on Division into Four in Accord with the Four Degrees of Passion.

[553](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 95, line 6 equates these five with the five implied in the *Hevajra Tantra* quotation.

[554](#) Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 38, line 2 attributes the six class assertion to Lavapa and the *Chakrasamvara* Secret End Yoga tradition.

[555](#) See *The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Sri Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* by David B. Gray, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, page 382, and the translator’s comments in footnote 28.

[556](#) For information on the twenty-four pilgrimage places in the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*, see *The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Sri Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* by David B. Gray, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 65-71 and 374-375; *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 68-70; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 75-78; *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2002, pages 206-211; *The Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal*, translated by Richard Barron, Snow Lion, 2011, pages 138-139 and 182; *Sacred Ground: Jamgon Kongtrul on “Pilgrimage and Sacred Geography”* by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2001.

[557](#). These words were written just a little over a century prior to the advent of the first officially recognized tulku in Tibetan Buddhism, the third Karmapa Rangjung Dorje (1284-1339), who was recognized as the rebirth of the second Karmapa in 1288. See *Enthronement: The Recognition of the Reincarnate Masters of Tibet and the Himalayas* by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 1997, pages 16-17. Since the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* is one of the major Tantras studied and practiced by the Kagyu lineage, we could possibly have here a source and motivation for the forthcoming tulku recognition traditions. In addition, the twenty-four special places came to be recognized in Tibet as well as India; see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal*, translated by Richard Barron, Snow Lion, 2011, page 182; *Sacred Ground: Jamgon Kongtrul on "Pilgrimage and Sacred Geography"* by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2001.

[558](#). See also the discussion of alternative numbers of Tantra classes in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 89-93. Kongtrul discusses divisions into two and seven classes, along with three, five, and six classes. For the second set of five classes, Kongtrul cites the *Ocean of Dakinis Yogini Tantra* as the source; for the set of six classes, he cites the *Vajra Canopy Tantra* as the source.

[559](#). Here can be clearly seen the parallel with the Nyingma system of six classes of Tantra, with only the sixth class changed from Secret End to Ati Yoga or rDzogs-chen. See *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007. Given how seemingly all-inclusive Sonam Tsemo and later Sakya commentators are in mentioning all Tantra classification systems, it is curious that the Nyingma six-class system does not get a mention.

[560](#). See *The Complete Works of Atisa*, translated by Richard Sherburne, Aditya Prakashan, 2000, pages 283-287, where the seven classes are listed without explanation, but are followed by a detailed listing of which Tantras fall into each of the seven classes.

[561](#). The *rTog-pa'i Kun-btus* has not yet been identified in the Kahgyur.

[562](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 187-267.

[563](#). The *Padma Gar dBang Tantra* has not yet been identified in the Kahgyur.

[564](#). The four types of sentient beings are those with the four degrees of ability according to the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*. See above page 120, and Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, page 44, line 4.

[565](#). The four types of imperfection are physical, verbal, mental, and all three combined.

[566](#). The respective four sets of empowerments as given above (pages 139-140) are (1) water and silk hanging (or crown) empowerments for Ritual Tantra; (2) vajra, bell, and name empowerments for Conduct Tantra; (3) all empowerments up to the vajra master empowerment, including the five knowledge empowerments, for Yoga Tantra; and (4) master (vase), secret, wisdom (mudra) gnosis, and fourth empowerments for Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.

[567](#). The four methods of practicing the path refer to the four methods of deity yoga as exemplified by the application of the four kinds of passion.

[568](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 108, line 5.

[569](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 82, page 102, line 3. The first of the two lines as quoted by Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo, "Male Yoga and Female Yoga," are not found.

[570](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 494-605.

- [571](#). This is the lineage of Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, and Chandrakirti.
- [572](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 179-295.
- [573](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 295-314.
- [574](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 563-571 and volume 82, pages 1-70.
- [575](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 315-414.
- [576](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 415-553.
- [577](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 554-562.
- [578](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 268-302.
- [579](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 349-370.
- [580](#). *gZhon-nu gDong-drug*; not yet identified.
- [581](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 334-346.
- [582](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 187-267.
- [583](#). *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992.
- [584](#). *The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Sri Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* by David B. Gray, the American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007.
- [585](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 285-333.
- [586](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 333-341.
- [587](#). See the section on Continuation Five Tilaka Tantras and Three Arali Tantras below.
- [588](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 44-256. So far, two chapters have been translated; see the bibliography.
- [589](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 361-462, 462-519, and 519-607.
- [590](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 28-32.
- [591](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 32-53.
- [592](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 53-58.
- [593](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 58-84.
- [594](#). *mGon-po mNgon-'byung*; not yet identified.
- [595](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 84-86.
- [596](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 172-178. This Tantra is distinct from the *Khasama Tantra*, volume 79, pages 397-403 and the *Samvara Khasama Tantra*, volume 79, pages 522-525.
- [597](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 302-385.
- [598](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 494-605.
- [599](#). Longchenpa lists many of the same Male and Female Tantras, but does not use the same subdivisions (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron,

Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 278-279).

The same goes for Jamgon Kongtrul (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 274-276).

Khaydrupje only briefly identifies some Method/Wisdom and Male/Female Maha Yoga Tantras without distinguishing subdivisions (*mKhas Grub rJe's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 265-267). Sonam Drakpa briefly mentions the same threefold subdivision of Male Tantras, but not the sixfold subdivision of Female Tantras (*Overview of Buddhist Tantra: General Presentation of the Classes of Tantra, Captivating the Minds of the Fortunate Ones* by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, pages 47-58).

[600.](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 21, pages 697-710. The first three lines are found on page 710, line 2, and a close similitude of the three lines are found on page 708, line 5.

[601.](#) For the forty syllables (which Buton does not here explain) that introduce the *Hevajra* (and *Guhyasamaja*) Tantras, see *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 3 and the explanation by Krishnacharya, pages 3-5. For the two lines of verse that are included in the introductions of the *Chakrasamvara* (and *Vajra Panjara*) Tantras, see *The Cakrasamvara Tantra*, translated by David B. Gray, the American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 155-156, and the explanation by Jayabhadra, page 156, note 3.

[602.](#) Altogether, Longchenpa recognizes seven distinctions between Male and Female Tantras, but none of them are a distinction in verbal expression (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 283-288).

Jamgon Kongtrul briefly mentions distinctions between Male and Female Tantras, but does not mention verbal expression (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 215-216).

Khaydrupje argues against the validity of the distinction in verbal expression by using the same reasoning to draw the conclusion that the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* would also have to be a Nondual Tantra, or else the *Hevajra Tantra* would have to be a Male Tantra. He also argues that Krishnacharya was quoted out of context (*mKhas Grub rJe's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 253 and 259). Sonam Drakpa repeats the same argument used by Khaydrupje as applied to the *Chakrasamvara Tantra* (*Overview of Buddhist Tantra: General Presentation of the Classes of Tantra, Captivating the Minds of the Fortunate Ones* by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, page 44).

[603.](#) The *Hevajra Tantra* is also nondual because it contains two major mandalas, one in which a male deity (*Hevajra*) is primary, and one in which a female deity (*Nairatmya*) is primary.

[604.](#) The second through fifth of Longchenpa's seven distinctions are pertinent to the generation process; his second point describes in detail Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo's third point concerning the relative stability and variability of the central male and female deities, although he has the designation the reverse of Ngorchen's (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 283-286).

Jamgon Kongtrul briefly mentions a distinction between Tantras with an equal proportion of male and female deities and those with primarily female deities (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 215).

Khaydrupje again argues that the quotation from the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* is taken out of context. He further argues against the interpretation of the *Kalachakra Tantra* with respect to equal or unequal numbers of faces and hands, but then accepts both the *Kalachakra* distinction between mobile and immobile central male and female deities, as well as equal and unequal numbers of faces and hands (*mKhas Grub rJe's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 255 and 259-261). Sonam Drakpa briefly mentions only the distinction of having primarily male or female deities or both (*Overview of Buddhist Tantra: General Presentation of the Classes of Tantra, Captivating the Minds of the Fortunate Ones* by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, page 44).

[605](#) Buton reads “Yogi” in line six of the quotation where Dezhung Chopel reads “Yogini.” The latter reading is in accordance with the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur edition, so is retained here. Sonam Tsemo actually only quotes 4 of the 8 lines of these two verses, with the omitted four lines here inserted with brackets. The full quotation shows that Sonam Tsemo’s and Buton’s reading of the passage as justifying the distinction between Yogini and Yogi Tantras is not substantiated. Yet the next two verses in sequence, given below, give distinct lists of Yogi and Yogini Tantras.

[606](#) The sixth of Longchenpa’s seven distinctions is pertinent to the completion process (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 286-287).

In his brief discussion, Jamgon Kongtrul does not mention a distinction pertinent to the completion process. Khaydrupje at first criticizes Sonam Tsemo’s explanation, then cites the same quotations as Ngorchon Kunga Zangpo and comes to a similar conclusion (*mKhas Grub rJe's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 255-257 and 261-267). Sonam Drakpa follows the same course (*Overview of Buddhist Tantra: General Presentation of the Classes of Tantra, Captivating the Minds of the Fortunate Ones* by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, pages 45-47).

[607](#) These five female deities are the central deity and four member inner circle of the fifteen-deity Nairatmya mandala. See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 79; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 114-115.

[608](#) The names of the thirty-two conductors are revealed in the Buddha Nature chapter, the first chapter of the *Hevajra Tantra* I, i, 13-18 (14-19). Fourteen of the fifteen female deities in the Nairatmya mandala are associated with two each of twenty-eight of the thirty-two conductors. The *Hevajra Tantra* goes on to explain the dispensation of the remaining four, II, iv, 25-26 (27-29). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 48-49 and 104; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 12-13 and 212-213.

[609](#) These are the same five central and inner circle female deities of the Nairatmya mandala. See *The*

Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 99; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 199-200.

[610](#). These six female deities are the four in the four compass directions of the outer circle and the two in the zenith and nadir directions of the fifteen-deity Nairatmya mandala. See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 79-80; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 115-116.

[611](#). The seventh of Longchenpa's seven distinctions is that of postmeditation activity (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 287-288).

Jamgon Kongtrul quotes Shraddhakaravarman on this distinction (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 216).

Khaydrupje argues against this distinction (*mKhas Grub rJe's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 257). Sonam Drakpa does likewise (*Overview of Buddhist Tantra: General Presentation of the Classes of Tantra, Captivating the Minds of the Fortunate Ones* by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, page 44).

[612](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 108, line 5.

[613](#). The fifth of Longchenpa's seven distinctions is also indicative of a sexual preference (*The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 286).

Jamgon Kongtrul also quotes Shraddhakaravarman on this distinction (*The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 215-216).

Khaydrupje also argues against this distinction (*mKhas Grub rJe's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, page 257). Sonam Drakpa again does likewise (*Overview of Buddhist Tantra: General Presentation of the Classes of Tantra, Captivating the Minds of the Fortunate Ones* by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, pages 44-45).

[614](#). For detailed explanations of the three preliminary isolations, see *Highest Yoga Tantra: An Introduction to the Esoteric Buddhism of Tibet* by Daniel Cozort, Snow Lion Publications, 1986, pages 68-93; *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition* by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 70-72, 84-100, and 151-229; *Brilliant Illumination of the Lamp of the Five Stages: Practical Instruction in the King of Tantras, The Glorious Esoteric Community* by Tsong Khapa Losang Drakpa, translated by Robert A. F. Thurman, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2010, pages 179-394; *Tantric Grounds and Paths: How to Begin, Progress On, and Complete the Vajrayana Path*

by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1994, pages 108-173; *Principles of Buddhist Tantra: A Commentary on Choje Ngawang Palden's Illumination of the Tantric Tradition: The Principles of the Grounds and Paths of the Four Great Secret Classes of Tantra* by Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoche, translated by Ian Coghlan and Voula Zarpani, Wisdom Publications, 2011, pages 151-219. The extensive content of the practices of the three preliminary isolations as presented in these references casts doubt on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo's statement that they are not included in the completion process of Female Tantras.

[615](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, page 280, line 4.

[616](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, page 287, line 7.

[617](#) For the full translation and references for the colophon, see below.

[618](#) For context, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 59; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 47.

[619](#) This is the *Chakrasamvara Tantra*.

[620](#) This is the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga Dakinijala Samvara Tantra*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 302-385.

[621](#) For identification of these Tantras, see below.

[622](#) This commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra* was written by Durjayachandra; Karmapa Derge Tengyur volume 4, pages 2-116.

[623](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 2, pages 2-251.

[624](#) This is the *Five Hundred Thousand Verse Hevajra Tantra*; see below.

[625](#) Compare *Sat-Sahasrika-Hevajratika: A Critical Edition*, edited and translated by Malati J. Shendge, Pratibha Prakashan, 2004, page 170, verses 32, 33, and last half of 30, first half of 31, in that order. The Tibetan edition translated by Shendge, on pages 84-85, differs considerably from that of Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo.

[626](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 116; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 273-274.

[627](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 78; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 107-108.

[628](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, page 300, line 5.

[629](#) brtul-bzhugs.

[630](#) For detailed descriptions of these practices, see *Ornament of Stainless Light: An Exposition of the Kalachakra Tantra* by Khedrup Norsang Gyatso, translated by Gavin Kilty, Wisdom Publications, 2004.

[631](#) See chapter 7.

[632](#) For the context of this quotation, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 82-83; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra*

with the Commentary *Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 131. In this case, neither translation comes close to recognizing the meaning as given here.

[633](#). Here the five mudras are the five ornaments: a circlet, earrings, necklace, bracelets, and girdle. See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 74; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 90.

[634](#). See especially *Hevajra Tantra* I, viii, 35-56 in the *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 76-78; or verses 33-54 in the *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 98-109.

[635](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 126, line 7 to page 127, line 3.

[636](#). See especially *Hevajra Tantra* I, x, 8-20 and 32-34 in the *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 81-83; or verses 7-18 and 30-32 in the *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 121-129 and 132-133.

[637](#). Hiroshi explained that this is based on individual meditation experience.

[638](#). Hiroshi explained that this means without benefit of empowerment. See below for the specific correlation with the presentation in the *Hevajra, Samputa, and Vajra Panjara Tantras*.

[639](#). Sonam Tsemo explicitly quotes only a few lines of this passage, and those are out of order; the entire passage is here translated for context and completeness. These complete verses are quoted in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 536, line 5.

[640](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 69, line 5 to page 70, line 4.

[641](#). See *Sat-Sahasrika-Hevajratika: A Critical Edition*, edited and translated by Malati J. Shendge, Pratibha Prakashan, 2004.

[642](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 254, line 1. For the rest of this quotation and the explanation of the eight kayas, see below.

[643](#). The apparent contradiction here is that if the root Tantra in the *Hevajra* cycle is the basis for explanation in an explanatory Tantra, then it cannot be the master root Tantra that does not require explanation.

[644](#). The longest buddhist scripture presently in existence is the *One Hundred Thousand Verse Prajnaparamita Sutra*. This Sutra comprises twelve volumes of the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur (Volumes 14-25). Proportionately, if the *Five Hundred Thousand Verse Hevajra Tantra* was part of the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, it would fill 60 volumes, equivalent to 58 percent of the length of the present Kahgyur (103 volumes). The *Seven Hundred Thousand Verse Hevajra Tantra* would comprise 84 volumes or 82 percent of the present Kahgyur. When it is implied below that there is no one in this present Age of Conflict who has sufficient memory to write down the extensive versions down after hearing them (in a nonphysical spiritual realm), that reason can be readily accepted.

[645](#). See *Sat-Sahasrika-Hevajratika: A Critical Edition*, edited and translated by Malati J. Shendge, Pratibha Prakashan, 2004, page 158 and page 292, footnote 9.

[646](#). See chapter 7.

[647](#) For the Tibetan text of the colophon, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, part 2, page 101; however, the colophon was not included in the English translation, part 1, page 119. The Sanskrit version on part 2, page 100 does not have this full colophon; likewise, the full colophon does not appear in *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 295.

[648](#) Another name for Naropa.

[649](#) See *Sat-Sahasrika-Hevajratika: A Critical Edition*, edited and translated by Malati J. Shendge, Pratibha Prakashan, 2004, page 153, verse 4.

[650](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 628, line 1 also attributes this viewpoint to Mal Lotsawa.

[651](#) Notes on Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo by Pelgyi Gyaltzen in Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 21, page 72, line 1 also identifies the Ngog-pa tradition as holding to this assertion.

[652](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 87 and 88; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 142-143 and 148. Snellgrove refers to one commentary, that of Bhadrpada, who understands the preceding Tantra to refer to the *Tattvasamgraha*. When the Twelfth Part is understood as the twelve-part edition, as in the Krishnacarya commentary translated in Farrow and Menon, this accounts in part for the assertion of Panting above.

[653](#) Sonam Tsemo's reasoning here is that if part 1 of the *Hevajra Tantra* were extracted from part 1 of the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*, then it could not refer to the subsequent part 12 as having been previously explained. Similar reasoning applies to the next quotation.

[654](#) The argument that is being made here is that the reference to part 12 in chapter 11 of the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra* is not to part 12 in the extensive *Hevajra Tantra*, but to chapter 2 in the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra* itself. This is justified by some creative chapter numbering. This argument is being advanced as another way to support the contention that the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra* is a separate Tantra. Although the proponent of this position is not identified, it is likely to be Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo's contemporary, Tsongkhapa, or one of his students.

[655](#) The counter reasoning here is that since the reference to part 12 in the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra* is explicitly to a part and not a chapter, then it must be in reference to the extensive *Hevajra Tantra*, for there is no part 12 in the abbreviated *Hevajra Tantra*.

[656](#) Here, Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo introduces another line of reasoning to support the position that the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra* cannot be the same as parts 1 and 2 of the *Thirty-Two Part Hevajra Tantra*. The reasoning is that an explanatory Tantra, such as the *Samputa*, cannot explain an extensive introduction to a root Tantra that does not have that same extensive introduction. Since the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra* only has a short introduction, it cannot be the same as part 1 of the *Thirty-Two Part Hevajra Tantra*. Since no one in Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo's time could claim to have seen parts 1 and 2 of the *Thirty-Two Part Hevajra Tantra*, the controversy can only be resolved through inference, or by reference to an authoritative commentary such as Vajragarbha's, whom it is assumed did see parts 1 and 2 of the *Thirty-Two Part Hevajra Tantra*.

[657](#). See below, where Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Zangpo concludes that the final twenty-seven verses were never translated into the Tibetan edition. However, the missing twenty-seven verses are also absent from the presently existing Sanskrit edition as well.

[658](#). The contention here is that since part 1 of the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra* begins with an introduction, then it cannot be a distillation of parts 31 and 32 of the *Thirty-Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*, but can only be a distillation of parts 1 and 2 of the latter.

[659](#). Sonam Tsemo responds to the above contention by stating that the present introduction to the *Two-Part Tantra* was added by its compiler, Vajragarbha, in conformity with the one and only special occasion when it was revealed, and therefore does not reflect the content of parts 31 and 32.

[660](#). *dKa’-’grel-la rDo-rJe’i Tshig bTu-ba*. This is most likely the *Vajrapada Addaraja Panjika* by Kamadhenu, Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 6, pages 2-22.

[661](#). For the E (containing the A_H vowel) at the beginning, and the A_H at the end, see I, i, 1 and II, xii, 6 (or 8) in *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, part 2: Sanskrit and Tibetan Texts, pages 2 and 100; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 3 and 295. The A_H in the middle is uncertain.

[662](#). The first letter of the Sanskrit edition of the *Manjushri Nama Samgiti* is A_H, and the last letter prior to the five epilogue verses is A_H. The middle A_H is uncertain. See *The Litany of Names of Manjusri: Text and Translation of the Manjusrinamasamgiti*, edited and translated by Ronald M. Davidson in *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*, edited by Michel Strickmann, Melanges chinois et bouddhiques 20:1-69, 1981; *Concert of Names of Manjusri*, translated by Alexander Berzin, in *As Long As Space Endures: Essays on the Kalacakra Tantra in Honor of H. H. The Dalai Lama*, edited by Edward A. Arnold, Snow Lion, 2009, page 24.

[663](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 59, line 4.

[664](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 124, line 2. For example, the gazes are taught in *Hevajra Tantra* I, xi, 1-2; the rainmaking ritual is in I, ii, 20. The *Hevajra Tantra* itself has a summary of its contents, I, i, 8-10.

[665](#). See *Sat-Sahasrika-Hevajratika: A Critical Edition*, edited and translated by Malati J. Shendge, Pratibha Prakashan, 2004, page 161 and pages 292-293, note 12.

[666](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 59-130.

[667](#). Devakulamahamati is the author of a commentary on the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* (Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 6, pages 107-188).

[668](#). Sonam Tsemo seems to contradict himself when he argues in the previous section that the *Vajra Panjara Tantra* is not an abbreviated Tantra, and in this section that it is. Hiroshi expressed a preference for Pamting’s assertion that the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra* (and by implication the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*) should be seen as separate from the *Thirty-Two Part Tantra*, the reason being that as abbreviated Tantras they are too short to be consistent with the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* edition.

[669](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 146-316.

[670](#). The other four are listed by Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal on the next page.

- [671](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 179-295.
- [672](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 415-553.
- [673](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 554-562.
- [674](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 334-346.
- [675](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 349-370.
- [676](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 59-130.
- [677](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 131-179.
- [678](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 426-492.
- [679](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 493-739.
- [680](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 78, pages 2-249.
- [681](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 2-66.
- [682](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 67-88.
- [683](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 187-267.
- [684](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 361-462.
- [685](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, pages 284-546.
- [686](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, pages 2-283.
- [687](#). See the verse introduction to this chapter.
- [688](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 302-385.
- [689](#). This Tantra has not yet been identified.
- [690](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 315-414.
- [691](#). See above.
- [692](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 84-86.
- [693](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 563-571 and volume 82, pages 1-70.
- [694](#). Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup and Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal are in agreement on fourteen out of seventeen Tantras. The three Konchok Lhundrup and Dezhung Chopel include that are not on Sonam Lhundrup's list are *Buddha Samayoga*, *Mantra Omsa*, and *Jnana Vajra Samuccaya*. The three not included by Konchok Lhundrup and Dezhung Chopel from Sonam Lhundrup's list are *Vajrabhairava Kalpa*, *Yamari Krishna*, and *Mahamudra Tilaka*.
- [695](#). These are revealed in the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*; see chapter 7 below.
- [696](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 95, pages 475-525. Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup identifies this as a Conduct Tantra (see above).
- [697](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 90, pages 314-369. Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup identifies this as a Conduct Tantra (see above).
- [698](#). See the rest of this quotation below.
- [699](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 192-272.
- [700](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 180-192.

- [701](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 131-179.
- [702](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 272-284.
- [703](#). *sGrub-pa Nges-bstan*.
- [704](#). Not yet located and existence not confirmed.
- [705](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 518-522.
- [706](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 351-360.
- [707](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 341-351.
- [708](#). *Hevajra, Vajra Panjara and Samputa Tantras*.
- [709](#). The title was known and translated into Tibetan even if the content was not.
- [710](#). The identity of this Sakya geshe prior to Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo is unknown, unless Ngorchen is responding to a mischaracterization of his own position on the continuation Tantras.
- [711](#). This quotation as cited in Pelgyi Gyaltzen's notes does not specify which edition of the *Hevajra Tantra* is meant here. The context would seem to support the *Seven Hundred Thousand Verses*, but the version of this quotation in the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur specifically states the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses*.
- [712](#). These six are identified in the following quotation from the *Jnana Tilaka Tantra*.
- [713](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 131, line 2.
- [714](#). The eight kayas would seem to be the seven Tantras listed here, plus the abbreviated *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*.
- [715](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 254, line 1.
- [716](#). For the definition of these continuities, see chapter 8.
- [717](#). See *The Ornament of Clear Realization: A Commentary on the Prajnaparamita of Maitreya* by Khenchen Thrangu, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes and Dr. Cornelia Weishaar-Gunter, Namo Buddha Publications and Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Charitable Trust Publications, 2004; *Gone Beyond: The Prajnaparamita Sutras, The Ornament of Clear Realization, and Its Commentaries in the Tibetan Kagyu Tradition, Volumes One and Two*, translated by Karl Brunnholz, Snow Lion Publications, 2010 and 2011.
- [718](#). See above for the complete list of the forty syllables, which are indicative of the male component of the nondual *Samputa Tantra*. The forty Sanskrit syllables translate into thirty-seven Tibetan syllables, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 146, lines 1-2.
- [719](#). See chapter 9 below.
- [720](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 146, line 2 through page 147, line 2.
- [721](#). For the identification of the three letters A_H at the beginning, middle, and end of the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra*, see above.
- [722](#). See the previous discussion of this topic.
- [723](#). See the previous discussion on the 27 concluding verses.
- [724](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 568, line 7. For the following lines that explains the five

classes, see the previous section on the five classes.

[725](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 78, page 581, line 3. Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 25, line 2 states that a similar enumeration is found in the *Buddha Kapala Tantra*.

[726](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 92, pages 1-631.

[727](#). Jamgon Kongtrul makes this same point; see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 276.

[728](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 302-385.

[729](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 108, line 4. These two verses occur in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 276; but the translators have misunderstood the number and significance of the two lists and have not attempted to identify the Tantras. In *The Cakrasamvara Tantra: A Study and Annotated Translation*, translated by David B. Gray, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 5-6, the verses before and after 3-4 are translated, but verse 3 is omitted. The six Yogini Tantras are identified.

[730](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 85, pages 300-345.

[731](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, page 463, line 5. See *The Cakrasamvara Tantra: A Study and Annotated Translation*, translated by David B. Gray, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, page 279. In the present translation of this verse, the identification of the Tantras follows Gray. It is possible that Sonam Tsemo omitted the line with the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga* because he believed its inclusion was in error.

[732](#). The *Vajra Panjara Ornament* is the *Commentary on the Vajra Panjara Tantra* by Drakpa Gyaltzen, see *The Collected Works of the Early Sakya*, volume 7, page 107, line 5. Drakpa Gyaltzen comments that some assert that only thirteen Tantras are cited, but that is not correct, as the names of fourteen actually appear. He identifies *Ghasmari* as the *Samputa Tantra*. He also states that some mistakenly think that the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* is included in this list.

[733](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 302-385.

- [734](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 78, pages 273-528.
- [735](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 397-403.
- [736](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 361-453.
- [737](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 494-605.
- [738](#). The title *Shin-tu dGes-rol* has not yet been identified.
- [739](#). The title *gSang-ba Yid-'phrog* has not yet been identified.
- [740](#). This is also the mandala of the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*.
- [741](#). The title *gSang-mDzod* has not yet been identified.
- [742](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 32-53.
- [743](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 426-492.
- [744](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, pages 59-130.
- [745](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 2-66.
- [746](#). Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 25, line 4 says that 84,000 dharmas is just an approximate number and gives the origin as the number of strips of birch bark or palm leaves, on which the dharma has been written with the tip of a boar bristle, that can be loaded on one buffalo. One load equals one dharma. Therefore, the shravaka corpus consists of 84,000 loads, the Mahayana 90,000 loads, and the Guhyamantrayana 100,000 loads. His source for this is the *Pradipodyotana (Brilliant Lamp Commentary on the Guhyasamaja Tantra)*, Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, pages 2-402. In this context, the abbreviated Mahayana tradition would be Paramita without Guhyamantra.
- [747](#). For an extensive overview of this subject matter, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010; *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 7-10; *Overview of Buddhist Tantra*, by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, translated by Martin J. Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1996, pages 2-3; *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 17-25.
- [748](#). For the perspective of Shakyamitra, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 67-68.
- [749](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 157, line 2.
- [750](#). Akanishta/Ghanavyuha (Below None/Richly Adorned), Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers/Flower-Filled World), and Saha (Endurance) constitute a threefold nested hierarchy of Mahayana cosmology, from encompassing to encompassed. For a detailed description of the universe-encompassing realm of Vairochana, Akanishta/Ghanavyuha, see *Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra and Dzog-chen* by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, translated by the International Translation Committee of Kunkhyab Choling founded by the V. V. Kalu Rinpoche, Snow Lion, 1995, pages 98-101. Kongtrul references the different views on the nature of Akanishta on page 264, note 8. For a detailed description of Kusumatala-Garbha-Lamkara-Ksetra (Ground and Center Ornamented with Flowers/Flower-Filled World), see Kongtrul 1995, pages 101-103. For a detailed description of Saha (Endurance), see Kongtrul 1995, pages 103-105. For other related

perspectives on Akanishta, etc., see *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 4-6 and 8-11. Longchenpa's unsurpassable approach corresponds to Sonam Tsemo's viewpoint.

[751](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, page 3, lines 2-3. For a translation in context, see *Two Esoteric Sutras* translated by Rolf W. Giebel, Numata Center for Translation and Research, 2001, page 19, starting on line 14.

[752](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 57, pages 2-703 and volume 58, pages 2-633. See the discussion pertaining to Akanishta starting in volume 57 on page 58.

[753](#) Since Ghanavyuha is not perishable, then it is also a continuum, a tantra.

[754](#) Hence Tathagata Vairochana is known as Glacial Lake Vairochana.

[755](#) This number is one billion.

[756](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 87, pages 2-312, a Conduct Tantra.

[757](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 1-23, an Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra.

[758](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, page 4, line 1, a Yoga Tantra. For a translation in context, see *Two Esoteric Sutras* translated by Rolf W. Giebel, Numata Center for Translation and Research, 2001, page 20, starting on the first line under supplementary introduction.

[759](#) This may be a source for the Nyingma identification of Maha Vairochana as Samantabhadra.

[760](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 35, page 312, line 4. This passage occurs at the beginning of chapter 11 in the Tibetan edition and appears to not be included in the Chinese edition. It would come between chapters 6 and 7 in *A Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra* by Thomas Cleary, Shambala, 1993.

[761](#) The title 'Dus-pa Rin-po-che has not yet been identified.

[762](#) The passage as rendered by Sonam Tsemo is a paraphrase and expansion on the actual language of the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84 starting on page 6, line 2. The quotation is picked up verbatim by Dezhung Chopel below, starting on page 6, line 7 through page 9, line 3. For another translation of this passage, see *Two Esoteric Sutras* translated by Rolf W. Giebel, Numata Center for Translation and Research, 2001, pages 23-25.

[763](#) Additional explanations of the five bodhi-mind manifestations or five manifest enlightenments may be found in *Yoga Tantra: Paths to Magical Feats* by Dzong-ka-ba, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 36-37, 123-127, and 154-157. See also *Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 414-415, footnotes 45 and 46.

[764](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 127, line 4. The first line also occurs in XIV, page 110, line 2.

[765](#) Hiroshi commented that the energy of objects refers to outer or external energies.

[766](#) See the "inner" awakenings of highest yoga tantra as given in *Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Snow Lion, 2005, page 415, footnote 45.

[767](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, page 11, line 5. See *Two Esoteric Sutras* translated by Rolf W.

Giebel, Numata Center for Translation and Research, 2001, page 27. Where Sonam Tsemo understands *bstan* (teaching), the Geibel Chinese edition understands *brtan* (firmness), as is the reading in the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur. Sonam Tsemo's reading has been retained, as it is central to the present context.

[768](#) Buton also reads *brtan*, which is here translated as steadfastness. Each reading has separately been translated accordingly, so the comparison can be made. Within the present context, only teaching is meaningful, even though the clear prevalence is steadfastness.

[769](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 83, pages 494-605. This quotation has not yet been located.

[770](#) Naydruk apparently refers to Sakya Daknyi Chenpo Dharmapala Rakshita (1268-1287), the nephew and student of Pakpa Lodro Gyaltsen (1235-1280), who became the Sakya hierarchy in 1280 following the death of Pakpa and was designated the Third Tishri of the Mongols. No known literary works are attributed to him. See TBRC P1868.

[771](#) Buton Rinchen Drup (1290-1364), the most famous scholar of the Zhalu lineage, wrote an extensive commentary on the *Samputa Tantra*, in his Collected Works, volume 8, pages 289-1064.

[772](#) The *Amnaya Manjari* by Abhayakaragupta is the most extensive Indian commentary on the *Samputa Tantra*, Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 7, pages 2-631.

[773](#) Redawa (1349-1412, TBRC 60) was a Sakya scholar and teacher of Tsongkhapa. He is most famous for his teachings on Madhyamaka, but wrote a commentary on the *Guhyasamaja Tantra*, called the *Illuminating Lamp* (TBRC W00KG02739).

[774](#) Sonam Tsemo himself also wrote an extensive commentary on the *Samputa Tantra*, Sakya Kabum, volume 4, pages 1-477.

[775](#) The understanding seems to be that a supreme nirmanakaya is the functional equivalent of a sambhogakaya.

[776](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 87, pages 361-493.

[777](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 67-88. This quotation has not yet been located.

[778](#) This is an incomplete commentary on selected chapters. Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 6, pages 2-23.

[779](#) In this context, it must be remembered that the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra* constitutes the final two parts of the thirty-two part *Five Hundred Thousand Verses Hevajra Tantra*, and therefore was first revealed in Akanishta.

[780](#) This analogy comes from the *Tattvasamgraha Tantra*; see *Two Esoteric Sutras* translated by Rolf W. Giebel, Numata Center for Translation and Research, 2001, page 23.

[781](#) Sonam Tsemo reads *nyan-thos* (shravaka) where Buton reads *nyer-thob* (near attainment). Since shravaka makes no sense in this context, it has been replaced by near attainment.

[782](#) Hiroshi explained the analogy thus: just as dancers who change costumes make the audience think that they are different characters in the performance, so awareness may be beguiled by a multiplicity of appearances yet is always gnosis, and so buddhas as dharmakaya assume various guises as sambhogakayas, but are still in truth the same.

[783](#) For comparison, see Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, pages 95-98; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri

Satguru Publications, 1992, pages 135-137. The last three lines as quoted by Sonam Tsemo do not actually occur in the root text, but are understood from the commentary.

[784](#) For the full quotation, see the section on Continuous Duration of Completely Perfect Buddha above.

[785](#) Traditionally, the profound dharma is said to be that revealed by Nagarjuna, and the vast dharma is said to be that revealed by Asanga.

[786](#) Or according to level of attainment, see Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundup, page 72, line 4.

[787](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 85, pages 19-115.

[788](#) See *The Maha-Vairocana-Abhisambodhi-Tantra: with Buddhaguhya's Commentary*, translated by Stephen Hodge, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pages 47-49.

[789](#) See *The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Sri Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* by David B. Gray, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 155-156.

[790](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 315-414; Unsurpassed Yoga Tantra of the *Guhyasamaja* cycle.

[791](#) See *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary* by Jamgon Mipham, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group, Shambala, 2002, pages 111 and 346-347; *The Karmapa's Middle Way: Feast for the Fortunate* by the Ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, translated by Tyler Dewar, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, pages 549-551; *Ocean of Nectar: Wisdom and Compassion in Mahayana Buddhism*, commentary by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, Tharpa Publications, 1995, pages 437-440.

[792](#) This account is attributed to the Vinaya in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 51-53, where a similar account from the *Abhidharmakosha* is also given. For another account of the progression of Buddha Ages, see pages 44-45.

[793](#) Buton here omits mention of the most important deed (tenth), becoming a fully enlightened buddha, likely just because it has been described elsewhere in this book.

[794](#) Buton also omits description of the twelfth deed, demonstration of the transcendence of suffering. For a fuller description of the twelve deeds, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 75-88. This section actually more properly belongs below in the discussion of nirmanakaya deeds starting on page 242.

[795](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 269, line 1.

[796](#) Hiroshi identified this verse as written by the author rather than a quotation.

[797](#) These two quotations also appear in *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems: A Treatise Elucidating the Meaning of the Entire Range of Spiritual Approaches* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 10-11.

[798](#) For more on Shakyamitra's perspective, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 67-68.

[799](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 98, line 6.

[800](#) This set of twelve deeds was described just above.

[801](#) There is only one known existing copy of Dezhung Chopel's book.

[802](#). See above.

[803](#). The quotation is from the *Uncommon Secret*; see the longer quotation below.

[804](#). The quotation is here translated in its entirety, as it appears in *Wisdom of Buddha: The Samdhinirmocana Mahayana Sutra*, translated by John Powers, Dharma Publishing, 1995, pages 139-141.

[805](#). For discussions of the three turnings of the wheel, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 153-156.

[806](#). The Five Venerable Companions were the first to be ordained and attain the status of an arhat at the time of the turning of the first cycle by Buddha Shakyamuni. Their names were Ajnatakaundinya, Ashvajit, Vaspa, Mahanama, and Bhadrīka. See *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*, translated by Gyurme Dorje and Tudeng Nima, The Nationalities Publishing House and The School of Oriental and African Studies, 2001, volume I, page 407.

[807](#). *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 164-165.

[808](#). Heroes and heroines are dakas and dakinis, perhaps best described as male and female high-level bodhisattvas who practice Tantra in buddha realms.

[809](#). For another version of this story by Ngawang Kunga Zangpo, see *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition*, translated by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 26-29; an abbreviated version is found in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 161.

[810](#). Here and in the quotation below, Hiroshi corrected rgyu to rgyud.

[811](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 268, line 3.

[812](#). This is the *Vajra Panjara (Vajra Canopy) Tantra*.

[813](#). This account of the origin of the *Hevajra Tantra* is also repeated in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 162.

[814](#). It is unclear as to why Lowo Khenchen would be referring to the *Five Hundred Thousand Verses* as revealed as a repetition by Shakyamuni Buddha, instead of the *Vajra Panjara Tantra*.

[815](#). In this quotation, Sonam Tsemo paraphrases Aryadeva. The full passage occurs at the beginning of the *Charya-Melapaka-Pradipa* and may be read in its entirety in *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition*, translated by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 137-138.

[816](#). This is Pakpa Sonam Gyaltzen (1235-1280), the fifth of the five Sakya Founders.

[817](#). For additional information on the First, Second, and Third Councils that compiled the Hinayana scriptures, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 167-171 and 177-181; *The Precious Treasury*

of *Philosophical Systems: A Treatise Elucidating the Meaning of the Entire Range of Spiritual Approaches* by Longchen Rabjam, translated by Richard Barron, Padma Publishing, 2007, pages 24-27; *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 59-69; *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors*, by David Snellgrove, Shambala, 2002 (1987), pages 45-46.

[818](#). The ten improper bases of conduct are detailed in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 177-178.

[819](#). The eighteen different sects are detailed in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 179-181. For a more detailed listing, see *Maps of the Profound*, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 208-218.

[820](#). See *Mkhas Grub Rje's Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras*, translated by Ferdinand D. Lessing and Alex Wayman, Mouton, 1968, pages 69-71, where the same conclusion is reached citing the introductory statement in the *Guhyasamaja Tantra* as justification. However, Jamgon Kongtrul does accept the account of this gathering as authentic in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 171-175.

[821](#). The *Samvarodaya Tantra* is in the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 78, pages 529-621, but a *Continuation* has not yet been identified.

[822](#). A somewhat similar version of this story is in the chapter on the Nyingma tradition for the origin of the Tantras in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 193-194, which also includes the first verse from the *Samvarodayottara Tantra* quotation above. Another Nyingma version of this story is found in *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History* by Dudjom Rinpoche, Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje, translated by Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein, Wisdom Publications, 1991, volume 1, pages 458-462. In these references, Kukuri is identified as Kukkuraja, and the chapter called *Vajrasattva's Vision* is identified as contained in the *Vajrasattva Mayajala (Magical Net of Vajrasattva) Tantra*. The complete set of eighteen tantras are the *Eighteen Great Tantrapitaka*; see *The Nyingma School*, volume 1, pages 283 and 533-534, and volume 2, page 222. See also *The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet* by Eva M. Dargyay, Motilal Banarsidass, 1977, pages 28-29 and 38-43, where the legend of King Dsa or Indrabhuti is associated with Anu Yoga Tantras rather than Maha Yoga Tantras.

Another source for this story is the *Commentary on the Perfection of Wisdom in One-Hundred-Fifty Lines by Jnanamitra* referenced in *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*, by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2002, pages 242-245.

[823](#). Orgyan is conventionally said to be located in the northwest direction with respect to India. However as indicated below, Orgyan is a visionary world comparable to Shambala, and therefore despite the directionality of its descriptions, does not have a physical geographic location.

[824](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 268, line 3. See above the full quotation in the section "In Actuality How the Cycle Was Turned."

[825](#). This Tantra has not yet been identified.

[826](#). See the section "In Actuality How the Cycle Was Turned" above.

[827](#) Kongtrul identifies the Willow Grove as the location for the revealment and compilation of some Ritual, Conduct, and Yoga Tantras, although the location is described differently; see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 159 and 175.

[828](#) This source has not yet been identified.

[829](#) This Tantra is also quoted by Kongtrul, but has not yet been identified in the Karmapa Derge Kahgyur; see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 176.

[830](#) Kongtrul arrives at the same conclusion, that Vajrapani is the sole compiler of the Tantras, either as himself, or as another manifestation, *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 175-177. Kongtrul does however make a very significant correlation that Sonam Tsemo does not mention, that the Tantras were compiled as part of the First Compilation, same as the First Council of the Hinayana, and the common Mahayana (pages 167-177).

[831](#) Nearly the same version of this legend may be found in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 219.

[832](#) Kongtrul repeats this legend about Visukalpa, *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, page 218. It is evident from this and other stories that Orgyan is a mythic or visionary land, or at least that discoverers of the Tantras did not travel there by ordinary physical means.

[833](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 137, line 4 makes the same statement.

[834](#) Davidson dates the appearance of the *Hevajra Tantra* in the human world as “probably written during the late ninth to early tenth century” (*Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005, page 41). Others have dated its appearance toward the end of the eighth century (*The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 14, or approximately the eighth century *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page viii. Although none of these three authors explicitly follow Sonam Tsemo and Sonam Lhundrup in identifying Dombi Heruka, in collaboration with Virupa, as the human writer of the *Hevajra Tantra* (and possibly some others in the *Hevajra* cycle), that does seem probable. Dombi Heruka is the founder of one of six lineages of *Hevajra Tantra* explanation and practice (see Resolution of Objections section in chapter 9), and the most extensive with twenty-one separate pertinent titles identified as belonging to his lineage (*Hevajra and Lam 'bras Literature of India and Tibet as Seen Through the Eyes of A-mes-zhabs*, by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2008, page 25, note 33, and pages 30-35). Davidson notes that there are three attributes of Dombi Heruka's lineage, the second being “the teaching of the *Hevajra Tantra*, *Vajrapanjara*, and *Samputa*, . . . are said to be an outgrowth of the lineage begun by Dombi Heruka but learned from Virupa” (pages 55-56; see also *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001, page 89). Taranatha states that Dombi Heruka brought out the *Kurukulle Kalpa* and (three?) *Arali Tantras*, but curiously does not include bringing out the *Hevajra Tantra* and others in the cycle (*Masters of Mahamudra: Songs and Histories of the Eighty-Four Buddhist Siddhas*, by Keith Dowman, State University of New York Press, 1985, page 59), although no

other mahasiddha is identified as bringing them out. Kongtrul repeats Taranatha's assertion, but adds that Dombhi Heruka sought to "ascertain the meaning of the Tantras with clairvoyance, he consulted with wisdom dakinis, then drew forth the essence' of the *Hevajra Tantra*. However, Kongtrul also identifies Saroruha and Kambala as bringing out the *Hevajra Tantra*, while Krishnacharya is identified as bringing out the *Samputa Tantra*. See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010, pages 223-225.

It is interesting to note that while Virupa was an academic, Dombi Heruka was not; according to Sakya sources, he was a boatman (*Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*, by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2002, page 252) or ferryman (*Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdre Tradition*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006, pages 144-145, and 148) being one of his occupations. Yet in other sources, Dombi Heruka was at one time the King of Magadha, who was also secretly a Hevajra initiate and tantric yogi. Once it was discovered by his subjects that he had paid a large amount of gold to purchase an especially beautiful twelve-year-old girl from wandering minstrels, with whom to practice the Hevajra karmamudra (sexual yoga), he was forced to abdicate because of violating the caste laws by consorting with an outcaste (Dowman, pages 53-58).

For painted depictions of Dombi Heruka, see *Buddhist Masters of Enchantment: The Lives and Legends of the Mahasiddhas*, translated by Keith Dowman, illustrated by Robert Beer, 1988, page 40.

[835](#). Lowo Khenchen Sonam Lhundrup, page 81, line 2 attributes this statement to some Ngokpa followers.

[836](#). Kongtrul gives extensive accounts in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Buddhism's Journey to Tibet* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ngawang Zangpo, Snow Lion, 2010.

[837](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 299, line 1.

[838](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 107; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 228-229, where the verse is 70. Both of these translations, which were made from the Sanskrit, add "of this there is no doubt," a fourth line to the verse that is missing from the Tibetan translation.

[839](#). The topic of the four authenticities is also found in the special instructions of the Path and Result. See *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdre Tradition*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006, pages 47-48, 294-298, and 300-308; *Lamdre: Dawn of Enlightenment* by Lama Choedak Yuthok, Gorum Publications, 1997, pages 9-16. As a non-Sakyapa, Buton does not acknowledge or follow the Path and Result interpretation.

[840](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 78; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 108-109.

[841](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 123, pages 2-77. The quotation occurs on page 22, line 4 (the Tibetan translation identifies the verse as in chapter 10, instead of chapter 9, according to Thurman.) See Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, page 97-98; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, page 138.

[842](#). For a detailed description of the ten powers, see *Teachings on Sakya Pandita's Clarifying the Sage's*

Intent by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche, Vajra Publications, 2008, pages 151-152; *Illuminations: A Guide to Essential Buddhist Practices* by Sakya Pandita, translated by Geshe Wangyal and Brian Cutillo, Lotsawa, 1988, pages 112-113; *Treasury of Knowledge: Journey and Goal* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Richard Barron, Snow Lion, 2011, pages 313-314.

[843](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 36, pages 474-560. As to questions regarding the authenticity of this work, see *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition* by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 61-63.

[844](#) Hence for these reasons, titles of Tantras in this book are given in both Sanskrit and English translation.

[845](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 47-48; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 8-9.

[846](#) The two venerable brothers are most likely Sonam Tsemo and Drakpa Gyaltsen.

[847](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 299, line 1.

[848](#) For the context of this quotation, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 104; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 215-216.

[849](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 170, line 7.

[850](#) The five certainties are location, teacher, retinue, duration, and dharma; see chapter 7 above.

[851](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 157, line 5.

[852](#) For a discussion of the significance of the term “Kalpa” as a name for a Tantra, see *Mediating the Power of Buddhas: Ritual in the Manjusrimulakalpa*, by Glenn Wallis, State University of New York Press, 2002, pages 12 and 61-65.

[853](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, page 296, line 2.

[854](#) The text is not translated here as it is a repetition of what was written above by Sonam Tsemo.

[855](#) The *Man-ngag Don-gsal* is a commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra* that is included in the Collected Works of Kunga Nyingpo, *Sakya Kabum*, volume 1, pages 263-313. The authorship of the text is however attributed to sGyi-chu-ba.

[856](#) Kunga Nyingpo.

[857](#) See *The Dharma's Gatekeeper: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York, 2008, page 43.

[858](#) For a list of variant translations of this term (rnam-rig), see *Maps of the Profound* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 309-310.

[859](#) See *Abhidharmakoshaḥasyam of Vasubhandhu*, English translation by Leo M. Pruden, Asian Humanities Press, 1991, volume 1, page 86.

[860](#) See *Maps of the Profound* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 235 and 267-269, where the

Great Exposition School (Vaibhashika) is identified as believing that Buddha speech is sound generalities (letters, stems, and words/phrases) included in the nonassociated (with either minds or mental factors) compositional factors (which are impermanent, pages 239-240, numbers 12-14), and the Sutra School (Sautrantika) is identified as believing that Buddha speech is included in form. For a discussion of the significance of this quotation and other references, see *The Dharma's Gatekeeper: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York, 2008, page 44.

[861](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 90, pages 311-369 (three titles).

[862](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 84, page 296, line 7.

[863](#). Hiroshi identified these as the common and supreme siddhis.

[864](#). On the topic of the four purposes and interrelationships, see "A Note on Dgos-'Brel" by Michael M. Broido, *Journal of the Tibet Society* 3 (1983), pages 5-19. Broido paraphrases the above section and provides a comparison with other examples of the application of the four purposes and interrelationships (which Broido terms "consequences") by other authors, many of which pertain to the *Hevajra Tantra*. With respect to Sonam Tsemo's application of interrelationships, Broido references the *Madhyamakavatara* VI, 80. For other specific examples of the application of the four purposes and interrelationships, see *A Commentary on Shantideva's Engaging in the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas* by Sazang Mati Panchen, translated by Lama Kalsang Gyaltsen and Ani Kunga Chodron, Tsechen Kunchab Ling, 2006, pages 37-39; *Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra and Dzogchen* by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, translated by the International Translation Committee of Kunkhyab Choling founded by the V. V. Kalu Rinpoche, Snow Lion, 1995, page 89.

[865](#). Since the *Thirty-Two Part, Five Hundred Thousand Verses* version is not presently available, the *Two-Part* version of the *Hevajra Tantra* suffices to remove doubts about its authenticity and completeness.

[866](#). The *Man-ngag Don-gsal* is a commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra* that is included in the *Collected Works of Kunga Nyingpo, Sakya Kabum*, volume 1, pages 263-313. The authorship of the text is however attributed to sGyi-chu-ba.

[867](#). This preceding lengthy set of verses is very difficult to translate as there is introduction of much new linguistic terminology and concepts by Ngorchen Kongchok Lhundrup that has not been discussed or explained by Sonam Tsemo, nor any other commentators. This material derives from Sakya Pandita's *Gateway to Learning*, for an erudite explanation of which see *The Dharma's Gatekeepers: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* by Jonathan C. Gold, State University of New York Press, 2008.

[868](#). The text here reads *rgyud don*, where *drang don* is clearly indicated.

[869](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 400, line 7. This is a Female Tantra belonging to the *Chakrasamvara* class. Only the first three lines quoted appear in the Tantra, the fourth line does not. See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 292, where a very brief explanation of the six instructions is given. On page 497, note 24, the translators include an abbreviated paraphrase of Sonam Tsemo's presentation of the six instructions.

[870](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 8, pages 416-542. The author's name has variant spellings; the one given is from the Tengyur colophon.

[871](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 146-316.

[872](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, pages 406-416.

[873](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 3.

[874](#). The three samadhis are one of eleven separate systems for the practice of the generation process, as delineated in *The Treasury of Knowledge: The Elements of Tantric Practice* by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Snow Lion, 2008, pages 67-84. The three samadhi system is found on pages 68-69.

[875](#). In this context, bodhicitta refers not to bodhi-mind directly, but to the sexual fluids that contain the essence of bodhi-mind.

[876](#). The self-infusion method precedes the mandala-chakra method as practiced.

[877](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 104; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 214-215.

[878](#). Self-arisen gnosis is developed through the self-infusion method, and simultaneous gnosis is developed through the mandala-chakra method.

[879](#). For the *Samputa Tantra Continuation*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 334, line 7.

[880](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 3.

[881](#). See chapters 1 and 3 above.

[882](#). This is the name of the first of the ten bodhisattva levels.

[883](#). This quotation has not been located in the *Manjushri Namasamgiti*.

[884](#). The names of the eleventh and thirteenth levels come from Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam Volume 20, page 542, line 6 and page 543, line 1.

[885](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 89, pages 302-545. Although titled a Sutra, this book is included in the Ritual Tantras.

[886](#). See *Wisdom of Buddha: The Samdhinirmocana Mahayana Sutra*, translated by John Powers, Dharma Publishing, 1995, chapter 10, pages 275-277 and 301-305. The discussion is of the dharmakaya and nirmanakaya only, there is no mention of the sambhogakaya within this Sutra.

[887](#). John Powers identifies four canonical commentaries on the *Samdhinirmocana Sutra* on page 374, but none of them can be identified as the *Tshad-Idan*.

[888](#). *Mahayana Sutra Lamkara IX*, 59-66 defines the three kayas; however, the dharmakaya is named the svabhavikakaya. See Robert Thurman, editor-in-chief, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature* (Maitreya's *Mahayana-Sutra-Lankara* with commentary by Vasubandhu), American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004, pages 95-98; *Mahayanasutralamkara* by Asanga, translated by Surekha Vijay Limaye, Sri Satguru Publications, 1992, pages 134-138.

[889](#). *Abhisamayalamkara VIII*, 233-272 explains four kayas: svabhavikakaya, jnanadharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya. A supreme nirmanakaya is also distinguished. See *The Ornament of Clear Realization: A Commentary on the Prajnaparamita of Maitreya* by Khenchen Thrangu, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes and Cornelia Weishaar-Gunter, Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Charitable Trust Publications, 2004, pages 133-149 and 345-363.

[890](#). This is the famous Sakya scholar also known as Rongton Sheja Kunrik (1367-1449). His *Commentary on the Prajnaparamita (Abhisamayalamkara)* is titled *Shes-rab-kyi Pha-rol-tu Phyin-pa'i Man-ngag-gi*

bsTan-bcos mNgon-par rTogs-pa'i rGyan Ces-bya-ba'i rNam-bshad Tshig-don Rab-tu gSal-ba.

[891](#) Most likely, Dezhung Chopel is referring to the *Abhisamyalamkara* commentaries by Kunkhyen Gorampa Sonam Senge (1429-1489) and Shakya Chokden (1428-1507).

[892](#) A large number of Tibetan books are given the abbreviated title of *Don-gsal*, but most likely this is referring to the above commentary by Rongton Sheja Kunrik.

[893](#) Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 35, line 6 identifies the basis for buddha characteristics as nonlocalized nirvana.

[894](#) *tha-snyad*.

[895](#) *Dri-ma med-pa zhes-bya-ba'i rgya-cher 'grel-pa* by Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltzen, Sakya Kabum, volume 12, pages 339-394.

[896](#) See *The Ornament of Clear Realization: A Commentary on the Prajnaparamita of Maitreya* by Khenchen Thrangu, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes and Cornelia Weishaar-Gunter, Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Charitable Trust Publications, 2004, page 57.

[897](#) Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 36, line 2 says that the tenth level can be interpreted as the buddha level and designated an ultimate since it is close to (or an approximation of) the unsurpassable result.

[898](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 4.

[899](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 2. Lama Dampa's version of this verse differs somewhat from the Tengyur version.

[900](#) For more explanation of this example, see below.

[901](#) Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 37, line 6 gives these terms as *ghrahaka* and *ghrahacha*.

[902](#) *Hevajra Tantra* I, i, 1

[903](#) The word for "eye" in Tibetan is *mig*.

[904](#) *Hevajra Tantra* II, iii, 56.

[905](#) *Hevajra Tantra* II, iii, 58.

[906](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 1.

[907](#) This list occurs in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya (Complete Compendium of All Vajra Gnosis) Tantra*, page 568, line 5, exemplifying nonliteral (figurative) expression.

[908](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 56; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 37-38.

[909](#) Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 39, line 1 has *prani*.

[910](#) *Sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are known as the three *gunas*.

[911](#) The three natures are standard terminology for the Yogacara school of Sutra. According to Hiroshi, the three natures are themselves indicative of visualization of the mandala residence, samayasattva (visualized buddha deity), and jnanasattva (invited buddha deity), respectively. Therefore, for Paramita general purpose expressed meaning, the three visualizations are also specially designated contextual usage for the three natures. However, for generation process general purpose expressed meaning, the three natures and the three *gunas* are specially designated contextual usage for the three visualizations.

[912](#). Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 39, line 3 identifies the sixteen hands as signifying the sixteen kinds of emptiness.

[913](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 57; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 40. Both translations confuse the two visualized syllable H_{UMS} as one.

[914](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 86; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 141. Snellgrove refers to the *Vajragarbha Commentary*, whereas Farrow and Menon offer an interpretive translation without specific reference to a commentary. A complete explanation for this and other disconcerting quotations from the *Hevajra Tantra* will be given in subsequent volumes of the *Classics of the Early Sakya*.

[915](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 58; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 41-42. Even though both translations say that the dakini is holding the moon, that is interpretive as the Tibetan text reads “holding the deer sign.” Farrow and Menon have Cauri as the dakini holding the moon, and Snellgrove has Gauri holding the moon.

[916](#). For this and the subsequent two quotations, see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 49; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 15-16.

[917](#). The equation of the symbolic implicit four syllables with the four female buddhas is an intermediate specially designated contextual usage on the way to the characteristically explicit means of expression, the four chakras.

[918](#). Since here the expressed meaning is hidden purpose, not ultimate intent, then the two sets of three code words are specially designated contextual usage for what is characteristic explicit, meditation on the three conductors. If the expressed meaning was ultimate intent, then these same code words would instead be characteristic explicit means of expression.

[919](#). See above chapters 5 and 6.

[920](#). To place this quotation in context of other Buddha intentional language (or what Farrow and Melon call Tantric Code Language), see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 100; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 201.

[921](#). This is the second line of the *Hevajra Tantra*; see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 47; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, page 6.

[922](#). This is the opening line of the *Hevajra Tantra*; see *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, page 47; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra*

Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 3-5. The linguistic analysis shows that what is meant is that the Bhagavan Hevajra is present in the nirmanakaya form to reveal the *Hevajra Tantra*.

[923](#). See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 61-62; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 55-56. Based on their reference commentary by Krishnacharya, Farrow and Menon do not mention the correlation with the five kinds of gnosis; but based on the Saroruha commentary as cited in footnote 5 on page 62, Snellgrove does identify the correlation.

[924](#). For more information on the beliefs of the Samkhyas and Nirgranthas, respectively, see *Maps of the Profound* by Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion, 2003, pages 104-125 and 176-190.

[925](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 563-571. This is a Male Tantra in the *Guhyasamaja* class. For the importance of this Tantra to the *Guhyasamaja*, see *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition* by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 47-48, and concerning the two versions, page 208, note 8.

The method of interpretation of the six determinations is introduced on page 567, line 6. This is followed by a set of examples exemplifying each of the six, page 567, line 6 through page 568, line 6.

Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 545, line 4 also identifies a *sKar rGyal Zla-ba (Moon King Constellation) Tantra* as the source for the six determinations method of interpretation and the related four method system described below. This Tantra has not yet been identified.

[926](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 4, line 5.

[927](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 4, line 6.

[928](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 4, line 6.

[929](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 4, line 6.

[930](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 4, line 7.

[931](#). In the Tengyur, this line reads “interpretation with extensive meanings.”

[932](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 4, line 7.

[933](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 1. This quotation was absent from Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen's book, so has been added by the present translator. This verse was quoted above as exemplifying specially designated contextual usage.

[934](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 4. See below for Buton Rinchen Drup's explanation of the second and third verses.

[935](#). The four method system is explained in the *Jnana Vajra Samucchaya Tantra II*, Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 82, pages 2-70, starting on page 14, line 7 through page 15, line 7.

[936](#). Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 1.

[937](#). Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, page 299, line 1. See the explication of this verse by Dezhung Chopel Jamyang Kunga Namgyal, above in chapter 8.

[938](#) *rig-pa'i brtul-zhugs*

- [939](#) Karmapa Derge Kagyur, volume 79, pages 397, line 7 to page 403, line 1. The first line only is found on page 401, at the end of line 7.
- [940](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 80, page 336, line 6. Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 19, page 636, line 4 also cites the *Vajradaka Tantra* as a source for the three principles. See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 293-294, where he repeats Sonam Tsemo's explanation.
- [941](#) This method of interpretation forms the structure for the Sakya Lamdre or Path and Result teachings.
- [942](#) Karmapa Derge Kagyur, volume 79, page 397, line 7 to page 403, line 1. This verse does not appear in the *Khasama Tantra*. For other problems in locating verses in this Tantra, see *Aryadeva's Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition* by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, page 170, note 79.
- [943](#) Lama Dampa Sonam Gyaltzen, page 45, line 3 correctly identifies the source of this quotation as the *Surya Chakra (Sun Cycle) Tantra* of the *Samvara Arali Tantras*. Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 456, line 6. The *Khasama Tantra* is also part of the *Samvara Arali Tantra* series, and Sonam Tsemo may have considered it a name for the whole series. In *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 295-296, the four emplacements are explained as the four dwellings; but otherwise, Kongtrul follows Sonam Tsemo's interpretation exactly, except for adding still another level of interpretation by distinguishing the four emplacements with respect to each empowerment, with the water empowerment given as an example. In his accounting of the methods of interpretation, Kongtrul includes the four seats or thrones from the *Chatupita Tantra* which have a similar set of interpretations, see pages 294-295.
- [944](#) The text here reads smon-lam meaning prayer, which must be a misprint for grol-lam.
- [945](#) The correspondences are not given for the fourth practice, the vajra-wave, but may be considered as parallel to the mandala-chakra practice.
- [946](#) See *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, translated by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford University Press, 1959, pages 78-79; *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala*, translated by G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, Motilal Barnarsidass, 1992, pages 111-112. See also *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 292-293, where Kongtrul follows Sonam Tsemo's interpretation.
- [947](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 79, page 332, line 7. See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 295.
- [948](#) Amezhap Ngawang Kunga Sonam, volume 20, page 155, line 1 identifies the tradition of Jnanapada as the source for this interpretation of the Tantras according to the structure of the sadhana, the four or five branches of approximation accomplishment.
- [949](#) See *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, page 292.

[950.](#) The above six methods for interpreting the Tantras are also presented in *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 291-298. The four seats from the *Chatuhpita Tantra*, pages 294-295, and the four essential principles from the *Kulalokanatha Tantra*, pages 296-297 and 498, note 35, were not specifically included by Sonam Tsemo.

Kongtrul includes the methods for interpreting the three lower Tantras, pages 279-283, the *Kalachakra Tantra*, page 297, and the three classes of Nyingma Tantras, pages 351-357, all of which were not discussed by Sonam Tsemo.

The significance of the six methods for interpreting Tantras is demonstrated by how these methods are actually applied. All five of the methods other than the Six Instructions are variations of the Three Continuities which form the basis for and are employed in the delineation of the gaining of the direct knowledge of tantra, the subject of *Classics of the Early Sakya*, volume 2. The Six Instructions are employed in the detailed explanation of the *Hevajra Tantra* itself, the subject of *Classics of the Early Sakya*, volume 3.

[951.](#) The five branches of direct knowledge may be variously identified, as just above on the previous page; but in this context and analogy, the five branches would seem to equate with the correspondents of the five military components: (1) generation process, (2) auxiliary rituals, (3) completion process, (4) union practice with yoginis, and (5) entrance of energies and vital fluids into the central conductor.

[952.](#) The reference to Gu-dig is unclear.

[953.](#) Four kinds of military divisions are cavalry, elephant corps, chariot corps, and infantry.

[954.](#) Karmapa Derge Tengyur, volume 30, page 5, line 5.

[955.](#) The remorse here referred to is the [invalid] feeling that entering Tantra is contradictory to the Buddhist path as laid out in Sutra. General purpose interpretation makes clear that all components of Sutra practice are included in the Tantras.

[956.](#) See Aryadeva's *Lamp That Integrates the Practices: The Gradual Path of Vajrayana Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition* by Christian K. Wedemeyer, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, page 106.

[957.](#) Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 81, pages 563-571. The explanation of the seven ornaments starts on page 570, line 2 through line 7. Also Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 82, pages 2-70.

[958.](#) *Classics of the Early Sakya*, volume 2, forthcoming.

[959.](#) The other three types of common siddhis are prosperity, control, and termination.

[960.](#) *lung-sgo-bstun*

[961.](#) For a discussion of the seven ornaments, see *The Treasury of Knowledge: Systems of Buddhist Tantra*, by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Elio Guarisco and Ingrid McLeod, Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group, Snow Lion, 2005, pages 283-291; Michael Broido, "Bshad Thabs: Some Tibetan Methods of Explaining the Tantras" in Ernst Steinkellner and Helmut Tauscher, eds., *Contributions on Tibetan and Buddhist Religion and Philosophy: Proceedings of the 1981 Csoma de Koros Symposium* (Vienna: Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie u. Buddhismuskunde, 1983); Robert A. F. Thurman, "Vajra Hermeneutics" in *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr., University of Hawaii Press, 1988, pages 119-148; *Yoga of the Guhyasamaja Tantra: The Arcane Lore of Forty Verses* by Alex Wayman, Motilal Banarsidass, 1977, pages 113-119.

[962](#). This analogy recalls the one in chapter 1.

[963](#). For detailed histories of the Sakya lineages, see *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2001; *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdre Tradition*, translated by Cyrus Stearns, Wisdom Publications, 2006; *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2002; *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* by Ronald M. Davidson, Columbia University Press, 2005.

[964](#). This is the Tantra of which the *Kalachakra Tantra* is a derivative, as indicated in the full title of the latter. See Karmapa Derge Kahgyur, volume 77, pages 44-256.

[965](#). See *Sat-Sahasrika-Hevajratika: A Critical Edition*, edited and translated by Malati J. Shendge, Pratibha Prakashan, 2004, page 160, chapter 1, verse 86.

[966](#). This Tantra is most likely the *Sarva Buddha Samayoga (Equality of All Buddhas) Tantra*.

[967](#). This Tantra is the extensive root Tantra, the *Mahasamvara Tantra* mentioned in Vajragarbha's quotation, that is the source for the abbreviated *Chakrasamvara Tantra* even though it does not exist in the human world at the present time. See *The Chakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Shri Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* by David B. Gray, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007, pages 30-31.

[968](#). It seems that here Yeshe Gyaltsen feels that Buton misread the quotation from the *Vajragarbha Commentary*, or else there is just a difference of opinion.

[969](#). Our author Sonam Tsemo takes the position that what he has tried to accomplish in *The Yogini's Eye* is to apply the special insights he has learned from his two combined lineages to understanding Guhyamantra as a whole, not to just the practice of the *Hevajra Tantra* alone. He justifies this approach by substantiating these insights with related quotations from the Tantras, even though relying on the Tantras alone to explain one another is in itself inadequate.

[970](#). Kungs Nyingpo, the author's father.

[971](#). A holder of pure awareness gained through the practice of the Tantras.

[972](#). The paradise of the Buddha Amitabha.

[973](#). Buton Rinchen Drup's expansion and explanation of many of the quotations, written after Sakya Pandita's passing, were intended to address this very problem.

[974](#). Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen's other uncle, who was still very much alive and carrying on his late brother's work by writing *The Precious Tree: Comprehensive Introduction to Buddhist Tantra, Volume II: Direct Knowledge through Practice*.

[975](#). Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen was born the year of Sonam Tsemo's death.

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