

THE ESSENCE OF THE OCEAN OF ATTAINMENTS



*The Creation Stage of the
Guhyasamāja Tantra
according to*

Paṇchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen

Translated by Yael Bentor and Penpa Dorjee

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STUDIES IN INDIAN AND TIBETAN BUDDHISM

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Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen

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“Just to state two reasons why this work should be read by all those aspiring to pursue the yoga practices of tantric Buddhism: First, in her introduction Yael Bentor has provided one of the clearest and best explanations of the exclusive technique of Unexcelled Mantra by which wisdom and method are combined within a single cognition. This fundamental practice is the very essence of Unexcelled Mantra. Second, in these times of fascination for high tantric practices, especially those of the completion stage, it is refreshing, and indeed necessary, to see a highly competent translation of the prerequisite creation stage, delivered with the academic professionalism and the high-level scholarship of Professor Bentor.”

— **GAVIN KILTY**, translator, the *Library of Tibetan Classics* “This translation of the Panchen Rinpoche’s seventeenth-century condensed exposition of the creation stage in meditative practice, following the foundational *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, is a great gift to scholars of Tibetan Buddhist thought and practice. Lucidly translated and superbly annotated, it provides a detailed account of the stages in which a practitioner dissolves ordinary reality into emptiness, out of which an identification with divine beings can be achieved through disciplined visualization. This book should fascinate not only specialists but also philosophers of consciousness and the mind, since the medieval Tibetan schools offer by far the most far-reaching and daring experiments with mental processes in the history of human civilization.”

— **DAVID SHULMAN**, Professor Emeritus, Hebrew University “The *Guhyasamāja* is a fundamental tantra in Tibetan Buddhism. Yael Bentor’s translation of the commentary written by the first Panchen Lama, Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen, is a brilliant piece of scholarship, the fruit of intensive study of Tibetan tantric ritual and meditation. The translation is rendered with exemplary clarity and a readable style that does full justice to the intellectual sophistication both of the Tibetan author and his translator. *The Essence of the Ocean of Attainments* will therefore delight anyone who wishes to explore Tibetan interpretations of Indian Buddhist tantric practice.

— **PER KVÆRNE**, professor emeritus, University of Oslo

Contents

Acknowledgments

Introduction

1. Homage and Introduction [300]–[303]

PART 1. THE FIRST YOGA: PRELIMINARY STAGES

2. Preparatory Steps [304]–[329]
3. Establishing Favorable Conditions [329]–[342]
4. Averting Unfavorable Conditions [342]–[353]

PART 2. THE FIRST YOGA: THE ACTUAL MEDITATION

5. Visualization of the Celestial Mansion [353]–[372]
6. Meditation on the Specially Visualized Deities [372]–[386]
7. The Yoga of Taking Death as the *Dharmakāya* [386]–[392]
8. The Yoga of Taking the Intermediate State as the *Sambhogakāya* [392]–[400]
9. The Yoga of Taking Birth as the *Nirmāṇakāya* [400]–[421]
10. The Yoga with the Consort [421]–[428]

PART 3. CONCLUDING

11. The Supreme King of Mandalas [428]–[436]
12. The Supreme King of Deeds [436]–[443]
13. Epilogue [443]–[451]
- Colophon and Dedication [451]–[452]

Topic Outline

Abbreviations and Sigla

Bibliography

Canonical Tibetan Texts Cited by the Panchen Rinpoché, Sorted by English
Title

Kangyur

Tengyur

Canonical Tibetan Texts Cited by the Panchen Rinpoché, Sorted by Tōhoku
Number

Kangyur

Tengyur

Canonical Tibetan Texts

Kangyur

Vinayas

Sūtras

Tantras

Tengyur

Śāstras

Tantric Commentaries

Tibetan Works

Non-Tibetan Works

Index

About the Authors

Acknowledgments

I WOULD LIKE to thank my teacher Professor Thubten Jigmey Norbu, who first introduced me to the clear and lucid writings of the Panchen Rinpoché Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan). His *Essence of the Ocean of Attainments* is no exception, but since the subject matter is quite complex, I am exceedingly grateful to the people who assisted me in my work on this book. First of all, thanks are due to Professor Penpa Dorjee, the coauthor, for making our joint effort such a great pleasure and for his immense patience. I am thankful also to my husband, Dan Martin, for his numerous valuable suggestions. I thank the late E. Gene Smith for always keeping an eye out for the publications by the *pūrvapakṣins* mentioned in this book. I am grateful to Dr. Thubten Jinpa for clarifying plenty of obscure points and to Geshe Thubten Tendhar, who contributed from his rich experience in both Namgyal and Sera Je monasteries. I thank also Jado (Bya do) Rinpoché and Geshe Thubten Tashi for explaining details in visualizing the three-dimensional mandala. I am grateful to Betsy Rosenberg, who, evidently inspired by the Panchen Rinpoché himself, has made the English style of the book so clear and smooth.

The Tibetan text was translated into English jointly with Professor Penpa Dorjee. However, I am solely responsible for any mistakes that might be found in my editing of the translation, in the notes, and in the introduction.

Yael Bentor Jerusalem, March 2018

Introduction

THE ULTIMATE GOAL of Buddhism is liberation. Tantric Buddhism shares this goal, aiming at the release from bondage to saṃsāra and the attainment of enlightenment. The tantric path of the Unexcelled Mantra,¹ as most generally described, consists of two stages — creation and completion.² The first of these, the creation stage, is the subject of *The Essence of the Ocean of Attainments: Explanation of the Creation Stage of the Glorious Guhyasamāja, King of All Tantras*.³ Its author is the Panchen Rinpoché, Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, 1570–1662), an illustrious Tibetan lama who was the teacher of the Fifth Dalai Lama and an abbot of Tashi Lhünpo monastery (Bkra shis lhun po). Among his important contributions to the Geluk school were his summaries of longer works by its founding fathers. Whether the Panchen Rinpoché contributed his own understandings is a subject for further research.

The *Guhyasamāja* in the title of our English translation is in Tibetan the *Gsang ba 'dus pa*, an early tantra that came to be known as one of the unexcelled tantras in Tibet.⁴ The *Guhyasamāja Tantra* was highly esteemed in both India and Tibet. A copy of a Tibetan translation of this tantra was discovered at the turn of the last century in a Dunhuang cave that had been sealed for about a thousand years.⁵ It is included in the set of eighteen great tantras of the Nyingma (Rnying ma) school. Marpa the translator (Mar pa, 1012–97) and his contemporary Gö Khukpa Lhetsé ('Gos Khug pa lhas btsas, eleventh century) were important teachers of this tantra, as practiced by members of the Kagyü (Bka' brgyud) and Sakya (Sa skya) schools during the first centuries of the second millennium,⁶ though in later times it was widespread mainly among the Gelukpa (Dge lugs pa). It is a living tradition, and in our time the Fourteenth Dalai Lama confers its initiation almost every year.

One reason for the importance of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* in Tibet, especially for the Geluk tradition, is its remarkable hermeneutic system⁷ that was later applied to other tantras as well. Hence an understanding of the

Guhyasamāja Tantra has been regarded as a key to the tantric system as a whole. Already in India multiple *sādhana*s existed for the practice of the *Guhyasamāja*, and different schools of this tantra developed, two of the more famous among them being the Jñānapāda and Ārya schools.⁸ The book translated here belongs to the Ārya tradition of the *Guhyasamāja*, so termed because it is the tradition of Ārya Nāgārjuna.⁹ Yet disparities are found not only among the different schools of the *Guhyasamāja* but even within the Ārya school. Moreover, the two *sādhana*s composed by Ārya Nāgārjuna, the school “founder,” do not prescribe one and the same practice.¹⁰ Furthermore, *sādhana*s were written not only by Indian gurus but also by Tibetan lamas. It is not surprising, then, that the interpretive freedom provided by the hermeneutic tradition of the *Guhyasamāja* was extensively exercised in Tibet.

The period around the middle of the second millennium was important for the systematization of Buddhist thought and practice in Tibet, and especially for the crystallization of tantric traditions. A number of Tibetan polymaths, including Tsongkhapa and Ngorchén, strove to formulate coherent systems, but since a total harmonization of all available scriptures and exegeses is absolutely impossible, they were required to make their own choices and thus to distance themselves from the methods of several of their Indian and Tibetan predecessors. Moreover, by making different choices, they created comprehensive and harmonious systems in and of themselves that nevertheless were dissimilar to other such formulations created by their compatriots. The author of the present book, the Panchen Rinpoché Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen of the Geluk school, followed for the most part the systematized presentation offered by Tsongkhapa, the “founder” of his school, hence we will focus on this tradition here.

Tsongkhapa studied the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* and its practices with his Sakya, Kagyü, and Buluk¹¹ teachers. In his studies of various traditions, Tsongkhapa could not but notice disparities in the theory and practice of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* in his time in Tibet. He must have been aware of the divergence of the meditations prescribed by the manuals of diverse Tibetan traditions, as for example, the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* according to Butön and the *sādhana*s of the early masters in the Sakya school. Moreover, not only did Tsongkhapa study with numerous Tibetan teachers but he also pondered an impressive number of relevant Indian works in the Tibetan Kangyur and Tengyur.¹² As one might expect then, Tsongkhapa’s *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*¹³ differed from manuals written in Tibet before his day. We can learn much about the line of *Guhyasamāja* teachers in Tibet prior to Tsongkhapa from the *sādhana*

of the Gelukpa itself, which includes the names of a great many Tibetan teachers in the lineage prayers and offerings at its beginning and end.¹⁴

In the various works he dedicated to the practice of the *Guhyasamāja*,¹⁵ Tsongkhapa criticized the practices described by his predecessors in Indian and Tibetan manuals while supporting his own system on the basis of reason and scriptural authority. Tsongkhapa's disciple Kedrup Jé (Mkhas grub rje) compiled these explanations and refutations and arranged them according to the sequence of the creation stage in his *Ocean of Attainments*.¹⁶ Kedrup Jé, who was fully ordained by Rendawa,¹⁷ had belonged during his earlier years to the Sakya school, and was already thoroughly familiar with the Sakya method. Yet he appears to have been much impressed by the *sādhana* of his new teacher Tsongkhapa and set out to support it using his famously sharp tongue, in consequence of which *The Ocean of Attainments* is regarded as a work of polemic.¹⁸

The *Essence of the Ocean of Attainments* translated here is a *précis* of Kedrup Jé's work. Its subject matter is the creation stage of the *Guhyasamāja* according to the Ārya tradition. Writing a few centuries after the first teachers of the Geluk school, the Panchen Rinpoché's aim was not so much to debate with other traditions as to explain the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* and its workings, and this is so regardless of a certain detectable polemical tendency. In his treatise the Panchen Rinpoché elucidates each step of the meditation in the *sādhana* sequence, and at pertinent junctures provides general insights concerning the practice and its effectiveness. Before going further into the work of the Panchen Rinpoché, let us review the creation stage according to the early Geluk school.

The Creation Stage as Presented by Tsongkhapa and His Disciples

At the end of his *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, following his detailed review of the path of the Pāramitā Vehicle¹⁹ that fills most of the treatise, Tsongkhapa briefly argues the superiority of the path of the Vajra or Mantra Vehicle:

Having trained thus on the paths shared by Sūtra and Mantra, undoubtedly you must enter the Mantra path, which is far more precious than other practices, and leads swiftly to the gathering of the two accumulations in their entirety.²⁰

In his *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path of Mantra* dedicated to the Vajrayāna path,²¹ Tsongkhapa explains that in the Pāramitā Vehicle the yogi meditates on suchness²² of phenomena. Hence while in the Pāramitā Vehicle there is a path that accords with suchness or the *dharmakāya*, there is no path of meditation similar in aspect to the *rūpakāya*. However, the Mantra Vehicle does offer such a path and consequently provides yogis with a means of achieving the *rūpakāya* through which they may act for the sake of other sentient beings.

Hence the distinction between the Pāramitā and Mantra Vehicles, according to Tsongkhapa, is due to their differing methods. The superiority of the Mantra Vehicle stems from its special method of identification with the *rūpakāya*, in other words, deity yoga. Though the Pāramitā Vehicle offers the method of the five perfections, these “are not the unsurpassed or highest method, because they lack the meditation that accords in aspect with an actualized buddha body.”²³

In Tsongkhapa’s view, the method of the Mantra Vehicle is superior in that far from casting off the wisdom of realizing emptiness, it combines meditation on emptiness with a visualization of the circle of the mandala. Moreover, the two aspects, wisdom and method, are indivisibly united:

The *method* is that the yogi’s body appears to his own mind in the aspect of a tathāgata’s body, and at the same time his mind becomes the *wisdom* apprehending suchness — the non-inherent existence of all phenomena. These two are a simultaneous composite, undifferentiable in the entity of one consciousness. This should be understood as [the meaning of] undifferentiable method and wisdom [in the Mantrayāna]. Through cultivating the yoga of joining these two at the same time one attains the state in which nondualistic wisdom itself appears as *rūpakāyas* to trainees . . .

The wisdom cognizing non-inherent existence and appearing in the aspect of a deity is itself one entity with the mind of deity yoga . . .

Thus, a *rūpakāya* is achieved through the appearance of the wisdom apprehending [emptiness] as a celestial mandala circle, and a *dharmakāya* is achieved through the cognition of its nature — emptiness. One should know that joining such method and wisdom nondualistically is the chief meaning of the method and wisdom and of the yogas set forth in the Mantrayāna.²⁴

Wisdom and method are conjoined in a single cognition (*shes pa gcig*). The chapter on the creation stage in Tsongkhapa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path of Mantra* explains how this single mind can be absorbed in both the meditation on the absence of intrinsic²⁵ nature and the visualization of the wheel of the mandala. One aspect of the mind realizing emptiness arises as a special appearance of the celestial mansion and the deities therein:

Although in the creation stage²⁶ the meditation is primarily on the appearance aspect, the circle of deities, the yogi needs to develop a deep understanding of all phenomena as devoid of an intrinsic nature and practice in realizing their arising as illusion-like. While taking the deities as the focus of visualization, after meditating on the wheel of deities, the yogi's [indivisible] mind, in its mode of apprehension of the subjective awareness that understands the meaning of appearances devoid of an intrinsic nature, becomes absorbed in emptiness, while the objective aspect of this mind arises as the mandala with its celestial mansion and deities. This is the yoga of nondual profundity and manifestation.²⁷

The subjective aspect of the mind becomes absorbed in emptiness while its objective aspect arises as the deities dwelling in the celestial mansion of the mandala. Tsongkhapa calls this practice of uniting meditation on emptiness with the visualization of the mandala the “yoga of the nondual profundity and manifestation.”²⁸ Profound is the emptiness that the mind of the yogi realizes, and manifestation is the special appearance of the mandala the same mind visualizes.

Kedrup Jé summarizes Tsongkhapa's position in explaining why this “yoga of nondual profundity and manifestation” is a distinctive feature unique to the Mantra Vehicle.

The mind that establishes impure appearances as devoid of true existence, and then meditates on them as illusion-like, is wisdom alone in isolation. Conversely, the mind that visualizes the mandala circle and meditates on its appearance as devoid of intrinsic nature, arises in the nature of the two accumulations: (1) based on the visualization of the mandala circle, it arises in the

nature of the accumulation of merit, and (2) based on the dawning apprehension of an absence of an intrinsic nature, it arises in the nature of the accumulation of wisdom.

The accumulation of merit is attained here through the unique means of the Mantra Vehicle, and is thus far superior to the accumulation of merit in the Pāramitā Vehicle. The higher the accumulation of merit the higher the accumulation of wisdom. Therefore the mind that understands the absence of an intrinsic nature by taking the circle of deities as its focus is a hundredfold more powerful as an antidote to grasping at true existence than a mind that understands the absence of intrinsic nature by taking, for instance, a sprout as its focus. For this reason, the yogis should use their human opportunities in a beneficial way, by striving diligently along the path, whereby a single mind arises in the unique nature of the two accumulations, endowed with the formidable potency to cut the roots of saṃsāra.²⁹

In this way Tsongkhapa presents his comprehensive approach integrating the goals widely explained in the Pāramitā Vehicle together with those of the meditation of the Mantra Vehicle. In the work translated here the Panchen Rinpoché reiterates the position of Tsongkhapa:

Therefore, during the creation stage while immersing in clear light the animate and inanimate realms in their entirety, you should meditate on the emptiness of intrinsic nature with respect to phenomena and practice the yoga of illusion-like appearances and emptiness, whereby the objective aspect of the mind that realizes emptiness arises as the appearance of the mandala wheel.³⁰

During the creation stage, yogis do not meditate specifically on emptiness but on the special appearances of the mandala with its celestial mansion and deities. However, they do not simply replace ordinary reality with another concrete reified reality, since before visualizing themselves as deities and their environment as a mandala they must begin by meditating on emptiness. In the Pāramitā Vehicle when yogis are in a state of postmeditation having successfully meditated on the absence of intrinsic nature, all phenomena arise as illusion-

like.³¹ Similarly, during the creation stage, yogis first meditate on emptiness, and as long as the mental impact of their meditation on emptiness remains undiminished, the mandala with its celestial mansion and deities arise as illusion-like.³² For yogis who have previously apprehended emptiness and meditated on it, the entire appearance aspect (*snang phyogs*) of the mandala arises as illusory play (*sgyu ma'i rnam rol*).³³

Another characteristic of the Mantric Vehicle is the unique object to be eliminated on this path — the conception of ordinariness, which consists of two aspects: (1) the appearance of the yogi's environment, body, and resources as ordinary, and (2) the yogi's attitude toward them as ordinary. In his *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path of Mantra*, Tsongkhapa explains:

Since the Pāramitā Vehicle features no meditation through which the yogi creates a special appearance of the mandala with its celestial mansion and deities in order to avert an ordinary appearance and attitude, it is unique to the Mantra Vehicle. The Mantra Vehicle teaches the creation stage, in the course of which you meditate on the celestial mansion and the indwelling deity as antidotal to ordinary appearance and attitude.³⁴

In our text, the Panchen Rinpoché reiterates this: “The main objects to be purified by means of the creation stage are ordinary appearance and attitude.”³⁵

Anticipating the question, “How does visualizing the celestial mansion of the mandala where the deities dwell and the yogi as the indwelling deity eliminate the conception of ordinariness?” Tsongkhapa emphasizes the view that meditating on the creation stage cannot prevent the perception of ordinary appearances by the consciousness of the five senses, nor are such appearances the objects to be eliminated.³⁶ What the creation stage aims at eliminating are the ordinary appearances and attitudes perceived by mental consciousness,³⁷ making the yogi's own environment, body, and resources appear extraordinary.

There are two antidotes for averting the two aspects of the conception of ordinariness: developing the identity of a deity and accomplishing vivid appearances. The Panchen Rinpoché explains:

As an antidote to the ordinary attitude, you should maintain divine identity with the resolve, “I am actually such and such a deity,” and as an antidote to ordinary appearances, you should

practice meditation on the clear appearance of the celestial mansion and its indwelling deities.³⁸

In other words, those habituated since beginningless time to an ordinary identity with aggregates, sensory spheres, and sense bases now imagine themselves residing in pure buddha-fields³⁹ as actual deities endowed with bodies of the Buddha and minds that have abandoned all obscurations and know all knowable objects.

Tsongkhapa stresses that during the creation stage it is most important to develop the identity of a deity in the celestial mansion of the mandala — as an antidote to the yogi's ordinary identity. Subsidiary to this is the meditation on the special appearance of the celestial mansion of the mandala and the indwelling deities to avert ordinary appearances. According to Tsongkhapa, it is crucial to avert your previous mode of self-apprehension and to develop the identity of the deity.⁴⁰

By meditating on the creation stage, ordinary appearance and attitude are not completely destroyed but kept at bay. Yogis who are able to replace their ordinary identities with the identity of a deity in the mandala, and to avert ordinary appearances from arising in their minds by visualizing the very clear appearances of the mandala, are clearly not beginners. They have achieved familiarization with deity yoga by practicing it over a long period of time.

When such yogis meditate on the creation stage their identification with the deity becomes more than nominal. Though habituated at first to merely nominal and unreal identities and appearances, they gradually develop through practice a greater habituation to the deity and finally reach a genuine identity with it. When such yogis are absorbed in meditation on the creation stage, other appearances do not arise in their sense consciousnesses, because their mental consciousnesses are intensely engaged in deity yoga. Hence ordinary appearances cease for a while but cannot be entirely stopped by the creation stage. The meditation on emptiness prior to the visualization of the mandala with its celestial mansion and deities plays an important role here. It is through this meditation on emptiness that the visualization arises as indivisible-bliss-and-emptiness-wisdom. For more about this, see the discussion of the meditation on emptiness below.

Thus the goal of the creation stage is not to eliminate all appearances but only to achieve the power of stopping ordinary appearances in the yogi's mental consciousness for a short while by visualizing the special appearances of the celestial mansion and indwelling deities. Likewise, the goal of the creation stage

is to achieve a genuine identification with the deity rather than to become an actual deity.⁴¹

The Mantra path offers methods for attaining the two bodies of the Buddha: during the meditation on emptiness, yogis abide in the identity of the *dharmakāya*, and when they arise from this meditative absorption they develop the identity of the *rūpakāya*. By means of these two paths indivisibly united, the yogis maintain the identity of the two bodies of the Buddha already during the practice of the creation stage. In other words, while still treading the path, the yogis engage in its fruit. Thus by means of this practice they fulfill yet another essential aim of the mantric path — taking the fruit as the path.

A further vital facet of the Mantra path, according to Tsongkhapa, is its special ground of purification — the yogi's own future ordinary birth, death, and intermediate state. The key term here is “purification” (*sbyong ba*), which Tsongkhapa explains:

The essential meaning of purification is rendering pure your ordinary birth, death, and intermediate state by meditating on a path similar to these three phenomena at the ground.⁴²

The ground of purification (*sbyang gzhi*) consists of the yogi's ordinary birth, death, and intermediate state. Their purifier (*sbyong byed*) is the path of both creation and completion stages, and their fruits are the three bodies of the Buddha, respectively. According to Tsongkhapa, for purifying each of the three grounds of purification, there are three purifiers: profound, middling, and inferior realizations. These arise at the beginning, middle, and end of the yogi's practice, and are therefore similar to the rungs of a ladder.⁴³ While the three inferior purifiers pertain to the creation stage, both middling and profound realizations occur during the completion stage.

In several of his works on Vajrayāna practices, Tsongkhapa stresses the equal potential of men and women for reaching awakening.⁴⁴ The best type among disciples who engage in Vajrayāna practices is the “jewel-like disciple,” about whom Tsongkhapa asserts:

A jewel-like disciple, who attains the supreme attainment of awakening in this life, is not necessarily only a man; this disciple can be a woman too.⁴⁵

Likewise, there are no differences between men and women in the meditation itself:

Just as in relying on his consort, the male practitioner attains enlightenment by meditating on the generation of the wisdoms of the four empties, also in relying on the male practitioner, the consort as well meditates on the clear light arising from the generation of the four empties and is thereby awakened in this life.⁴⁶

The possibility of a female practitioner of Vajrayāna to attain complete awakening in her female body within a single lifetime is stated here unequivocally.⁴⁷

The Framework of the Sādhana

The general structure of the *Essence of the Ocean of Attainments* by the Panchen Rinpoché translated here is based on the three samādhis:⁴⁸ of the First Yoga,⁴⁹ of the Supreme King of Mandalas,⁵⁰ and of the Supreme King of Deeds.⁵¹ The First Yoga is so called because it precedes the two other samādhis. It serves to accomplish the aim of the yogis themselves — the attainment of awakening — while the other two samādhis correspond to the deeds of those who have already awakened and are acting for the benefit of others.⁵²

The First Yoga

The First Yoga includes the entire path of transformation into the three bodies of the Buddha on the level of the creation stage. About half of Panchen Rinpoché's work is dedicated to it. It is divided into four sections, the first three of which explain the three main yogas: the yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya*, the yoga of taking the intermediate state as the *saṃbhogakāya*, and the yoga of taking birth as the *nirmāṇakāya*. The fourth section explains union with the consort, which engenders the mandala and the deities that act for the benefit of other beings during the following samādhi of the Supreme King of Mandalas. Thus the union with the consort functions as a bridge to the subsequent samādhi, while the former three yogas are the core of this practice.

These three yogas are the basis of the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* and are key

factors in understanding why the practice of its path may lead to the fruit of awakening. According to Tsongkhapa, by meditating on a path bearing similarities to death, the intermediate state, and rebirth, eventually these three events — the very causes of saṃsāra — that occur to those deprived of skillful means transform into the three bodies that resemble them. In due course, rather than the death that occurs for an ordinary person, for the yogi the actualization of ultimate truth arises as the *dharmakāya*. Instead of the intermediate state of being that occurs for an ordinary person, for the yogi the *sambhogakāya* arises from the clear light, and instead of birth in saṃsāra, a *nirmāṇakāya* is born for the benefit of other beings. Tsongkhapa emphasizes that this is a supremely special quality of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.⁵³

Tsongkhapa goes on to explain the sense in which death, the intermediate state, and rebirth resemble the three bodies of the Buddha.⁵⁴ Death is similar to the *dharmakāya* because the aggregates, physical elements, and the six sense bases dissolve and all coarse mental proliferations subside. The intermediate being corresponds to the *sambhogakāya* because both are made of wind-and-mind alone and are thus endowed with extremely subtle bodies, like a rainbow body. When the intermediate being takes rebirth, it turns into an object of ordinary people's corporal eyes, with the ability to behave as they do. This corresponds to the *sambhogakāya* unseen by ordinary beings and thus displays an *nirmāṇakāya* that takes on coarse components in appearance and action for the sake of disciples.

But the correspondences do not end here, and similarities lie not only between the ground and the fruit but on the path as well. The path includes different stages of meditation corresponding to the three bodies of fruit, as well as to the three events on the ground. During the creation stage, these meditations comprise the three yogas of taking death, the intermediate state, and rebirth as the three bodies, respectively. Eventually the three meditations called “the three bodies of the yogi in the creation stage” ripen into the three bodies of the yogi of the completion stage. These include the body isolation and the clear light, the illusory body and the body of union arising from the clear light, and the *nirmāṇakāyas* of the path.⁵⁵ Tsongkhapa here stresses that in order to understand the key points of the entire path, including the completion stage as upheld by the Ārya tradition of the *Guhyasamāja*, a profound realization of the creation stage is necessary.⁵⁶

Another goal of the Mantra Vehicle is to transform not only the yogi's ordinary appearance and attitudes but also appearances and attitudes with respect

to the yogi's environment, and therefore certain steps in the creation stage correspond to the inanimate realm as well. Thus, as the three bodies arise in place of the yogi's birth, death, and intermediate state, the celestial mansion of the mandala arises in place of the ordinary surroundings of those living in *samsāra*.

Nevertheless, there is a significant difference between the way in which the *sādhana* relates to birth, death, and the intermediate stage and the way it relates to the environment. While the yogis' births, deaths, and intermediate states are the ground of purification for their practice, that is to say, they are eventually purified by means of the *sādhana*, the inanimate world, as a product of shared karma, must be excluded from the yogis' ground of purification. In other words, the yogis cannot purify their environment through meditation on the *sādhana* or bring about an actual transformation in the outer world, but only in themselves. By meditating on the celestial mansion of the mandala during the creation stage, the yogis can transform only the way they will partake in the impure world of the future.

Kedrup Jé emphasizes that the phrase

“purifying the impure world” does not imply that through their meditation on the celestial mansion, the yogis can transform this present impure world into a pure celestial mansion. Rather, they can purify their own ability to partake in the impure world of the future, and they do so through the meditation that ripens their continuum for the completion stage, as it is the latter that affects their ability to partake in the celestial mansion of wisdom.⁵⁷

For each step of the meditation during the *sādhana*, the Panchen Rinpoché explains the ground of purification, the meditations of the completion stage that can be ripened by it, and its fruit.

Preliminaries to the Yoga of Taking Death as the Dharmakāya

Prior to the actual yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya*, several preparatory meditative steps are necessary, bearing in mind that these are not core practices that serve to purify the grounds of purification. The first step is meditation on the ground of wisdom⁵⁸ in correspondence with the periodic empty eon that follows the destruction of the previous world, as described in the *Abhidharmas*.⁵⁹ The

world undergoes four phases, each lasting twenty intermediate eons. During the first phase the world is formed, in the second it remains, in the third it is destroyed, and in the fourth it is absent, at least to a certain degree.

With the onset of the actual meditation, the yogis must dissolve their ordinary reality. The first step in the process of averting ordinary appearances and attitudes during the *sādhana* is to meditate in correspondence with the emptying of the world at the end of the period of its existence. The correspondence lies between two absences: (1) the absence of the physical world at the level of understanding the emptiness of intrinsic nature, and (2) the absence of the physical world during the empty eon on the level of the ground.⁶⁰ The Panchen Rinpoché begins his explanation of the main part of the *sādhana* by describing this corresponding object of the meditation. First, the world is emptied of the sentient beings inhabiting it from the lowest realm of hell up to the first concentration⁶¹ in the form realm. Then the physical world is incinerated by seven blazing suns up to the first concentration.

Tsongkhapa makes it clear that the object to which this meditation corresponds is the destroyed world, not its destroyed beings. The dissolution of the inhabitants of the world is merely ancillary, since before the physical world can be emptied, it must be emptied of its sentient beings. Tsongkhapa makes this point because while some maintain that the meditation here corresponds to death, according to him, such a meditation occurs in a different context.⁶² The meditation that corresponds to this cosmological event — the empty space that remains after the world has been destroyed — is a meditation on emptiness. Tsongkhapa posits a comprehensive approach to the Buddhist path whereby there is no difference between the emptiness meditated upon according to the Middle Way within the Pāramitā Vehicle and the emptiness described here.

The Panchen Rinpoché opens his explanation concerning the meditation on emptiness at the beginning of the main part of the *sādhana* by refuting the position that it is not necessary to meditate on emptiness during the creation stage. As we have seen, according to Tsongkhapa, meditating on emptiness is also essential to the creation stage. He lists several reasons for this:⁶³ (1) Without first meditating on emptiness during the creation stage the mental continuum cannot be ripened for the completion stage. (2) One of the foundations of tantric practice is taking the fruit as the path from the very start, and thus while still treading the path, meditators simulate the goal until they actually achieve it. During the creation stage, yogis take the Buddha's three bodies as the path, therefore in taking the *dharmakāya* on the path, they must

meditate on emptiness. (3) One of the goals of the creation stage is to purify the yogis' ordinary births, deaths, and intermediate states. To purify ordinary death, the yogi must meditate on emptiness.⁶⁴ (4) Without prior meditation on emptiness, the meditation on the appearance aspect — the mandala with its celestial mansion and deities — will not arise as illusion-like. The yogi must therefore meditate on emptiness in order for this mandala to arise as an expression of the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness.⁶⁵ (5) Not meditating on emptiness is contrary to a great many scriptures that prescribe recitation of the *śūnyatā* mantra while meditating on its meaning. (6) By not meditating on emptiness, a yogi infringes the tantric vows.⁶⁶

The Panchen Rinpoché also argues against the position that the meditation on emptiness during the creation stage does not concur with the view of the Middle Way but is rather a meditation on a nihilistic emptiness of nothing whatsoever. Tsongkhapa, who referred to those who instruct yogis to meditate on nihilistic emptiness as “persons of poor intellect,”⁶⁷ was vehemently opposed to the position that rather than meditating on the emptiness of intrinsic nature here, it is sufficient to apply the mind merely to dissolving the appearances of the world and its inhabitants.⁶⁸ Did some Tibetans actually hold this position, we may ask, and if so, why should Tsongkhapa find this so troubling? The answer is that there were indeed Tibetans⁶⁹ who for good reasons of their own prescribed meditation at this point of the *sādhana* on nothing whatsoever (*cang med*) and on the absence of appearances (*snang med du bsgom pa*).⁷⁰

In the system of the *Guhyasamāja*, instead of a mantra,⁷¹ a verse from the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* is recited during the meditation on emptiness:⁷²

*dnegos po med pas sgom pa med / bsgom par bya ba bsgom pa min /
de ltar dnegos po dnegos med pas / sgom pa dmigs su med pa'o //*

Translated from Sanskrit:

*abhāve bhāvanābhāvo bhāvanā naiva bhāvanā |
iti bhāvo na bhāvaḥ syād bhāvanā nopalabhyate ||*

The Panchen Rinpoché explains the meaning of this verse according to Prāsaṅgika by referring to the interpretation of the famous commentary on the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* by Candrakīrti, the *Illuminating Lamp*.⁷³ However, when taken as a whole the *Illuminating Lamp* explains this verse as the fourfold

meditation typical of treatises of the Yogācāra school, which includes a meditation on Mind Only.⁷⁴ It seems that the process of translating the *Illuminating Lamp* into Tibetan also involved a shift toward a more standard Mādhyamika view. Tsongkhapa puts forward a brilliant system — one both coherent and comprehensive — in which the Ārya tradition of the *Guhyasamāja* accords perfectly with the view of the Prāsaṅgika school. In explaining this verse from the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* in his own commentary on the *Illuminating Lamp*, Tsongkhapa gives it a further Mādhyamika spin.⁷⁵

The actual meditation on the basis of this verse is similar to the meditation on emptiness with the help of a mantra. While reciting this verse, the yogis reflect in their minds on its meaning as explained by Tsongkhapa, the Panchen Rinpoché, and others. The Panchen Rinpoché says⁷⁶ that the yogis need to meditate on the entire animate and inanimate realms dissolving into clear light, while visualizing the subjective innate wisdom of great bliss and the objective emptiness as indivisible. Still, it is not assumed that all yogis have realized emptiness prior to their meditation on the *sādhana*. One of the purposes of the meditation here is that those who have not realized emptiness will newly realize it, while those who have realized it already will recollect their realization.⁷⁷

The meditation on emptiness here is also called “meditation on the ground of wisdom.”⁷⁸ The term *ground* corresponds to the empty space remaining after the previous world has been destroyed, which serves as the *ground* or the potential for the evolution of the subsequent world. During the *sādhana* when yogis are absorbed in meditative equipoise on the meaning of indivisible unity of the *wisdom* of great bliss and emptiness, this cessation of all appearances of the world and its inhabitants on the level of their minds is also a *ground*. That is so because the meditation on emptiness is the ground or potential for the arising of the extraordinary appearances of the celestial mansion and the deities of the mandala.⁷⁹ The *wisdom* of great bliss indivisible from emptiness serves as the *ground* for the evolution of the celestial mansion. In other words, the elimination in the mind of the yogi of all appearances of the world and its inhabitants is the ground for extraordinary appearances during the creation stage.

Visualizing the Celestial Mansion of the Mandala

The object corresponding to the visualization of the celestial mansion of the mandala is the periodic evolution of the world following the empty eon as described in the *Abhidharmas*.⁸⁰ This begins with a light wind flowing down

from the second concentration, gradually increasing in force, creating the physical world with the three mandalas of wind, water, and golden earth, and upon them Mt. Meru, the seven ranges of mountains, the seven lakes between them, the four continents, the eight subcontinents, and the outer ocean up to the Rim Mountain that surrounds the world.

While regarding their mental picture as an expression of the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness, the yogis visualize the “source of phenomena,”⁸¹ which as its name indicates is the source of all things. Its triangular shape is reminiscent of the womb of the mother of all giving birth to the path to enlightenment, signifying the wisdom born of great bliss, out of which everything emanates. The entire mandala, with its celestial mansion and deities, is contained within the source of phenomena. In mandala drawings the circle depicting the source of phenomena envelops the mandala, and in the three-dimensional visualization the mandala is visualized within it.

Within the source of phenomena the yogis visualize a variegated lotus with sixty-four petals, and in mandala drawings the lotus ring can be found (though often not clearly) between the rings of vajras and the source of phenomena. This lotus signifies that the mandala within it is untainted by saṃsāra.

Within the lotus the four disks of the physical elements are visualized in the colors of the elements — blue, red, white, and yellow — their true nature being the four mothers of the mandala: Locanā, Māmakī, Pāṇḍarā, and Tārā.⁸² They correspond to the disks of the elements on which the physical world rests, but the steps of visualization prior to this have no correspondences on the level of the ground. These four disks are not visible in the painting, given that in the subsequent step they merge together and transform into a crossed vajra that serves as the base of the celestial mansion. In paintings one can see this base as a square diagonally divided into four colors, with the three prongs at the ends of the crossed vajra in their corresponding colors in the four directions. The central prong at each side reaches the lotus ring, while the two other prongs are seen as if enveloping the portals.

On the navel of the crossed vajra appears a white *Bhrūṃ*, emanating light-rays of clouds of buddhas, and this transforms into the square celestial mansion with four portals. The yogis visualize the celestial mansion arising instantaneously and then develop the clarity of the visualization in stages. This meditation corresponds to the evolution of the physical world with Mt. Meru at its center, the continents, and so on. As we have seen, yogis have no effect on

the appearance of the physical world created through the shared karma of all sentient beings. Yet by means of this meditation they can purify their own capacity to partake in the impure world of the future. Eventually at the *fruit* they attain the buddha-field in which they will awaken.

Visualizing the Deities

Following the visualization of the celestial mansion, the indwelling deities are visualized, in correspondence with the periodic evolution of sentient beings that follows the formation of the physical world.⁸³ However, the exact nature of correspondence between the first deities generated in the mandala and the first people of the eon is a subject of much contention. In the tradition of the *Guhyasamāja*, prior to the visualization of the main deities, thirty-two deities called “specially visualized deities” (*lhag mos kyi lha*) are instantaneously envisioned and later on gathered into clear light, for reasons that will become apparent below. Their name derives from a play on the word *mos pa*, which in its derivative meaning can indicate both aspiring and visualizing, hence they are visualized by a mind endowed with special aspiration.⁸⁴ Though the deities appear instantaneously, the yogis must progressively develop the clarity of their visualization. The deities appear instantaneously because they share similarities with the miraculously born people of the first eon in Jambudvīpa.⁸⁵

The people of the first eon in Jambudvīpa were not the first beings to appear in the world. Before them, various gods like the gods born in the mansion of Brahmā had appeared, as well *asuras*. However, since all the buddhas in Jambudvīpa are awakened as humans, and since the disciples on the path of the highest tantra are mainly humans born in Jambudvīpa, the meditation here shares similarities only with the human beings of Jambudvīpa.⁸⁶

These similarities, however, do not imply that the evolution of human beings during the first eon is the ground of purification for meditation on the path now.⁸⁷ Tsongkhapa vehemently objects to this position because the first people of the eon who ceased to exist a long time ago cannot be purified.⁸⁸ According to Tsongkhapa, by acting now it is possible to affect the yogi’s future but not to undo what has already been done, and therefore blocking a fruit that has already appeared is out of the question. For Tsongkhapa, the attempt to purify human beings from the first eon by meditating in the present is like burning the firewood that was consumed last year with the fire of this year. Yogis can affect their *own* birth, death, and intermediate state in the *future* through the practice of

the *sādhana*, but they cannot effect any change with respect to what has already occurred in the *past*. Similarly, they can influence only their *own* future, not that of *others*.⁸⁹

For these reasons, Tsongkhapa draws a distinction between objects that share similarities and the grounds of purification.⁹⁰ The people of the first eon are not purified by the meditation on the first deities in the *sādhana*, they simply share similarities with them, since they were the first to appear on our continent. The creation of the specially visualized deities has no ground of purification, and only the meditations corresponding to death, birth, and the intermediate state can purify. The purifier of death is the meditation on the specially visualized deities dissolving into emptiness, and before they can be dissolved the specially visualized deities must be created.⁹¹

When the thirty-two specially visualized deities are set on their respective thrones in the celestial mansion, the yogis envision them performing enlightened deeds — leading all sentient beings to the stage of buddhahood according to the Mahāyāna path. Once again, while sitting in meditation the yogis cannot liberate other beings. Hence this meditative step is not a purifier but rather a reenactment of a past event (*sngon byung*) that occurred in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.⁹² Certain meditative steps in the *sādhana* are regarded as following (*rjes 'jug*) and reenacting deeds of buddhas and bodhisattvas in the *Root Tantra*.⁹³ Such meditations belong to the category of taking the deeds of the fruit as the path. Once yogis have become buddhas, they engage in enlightened deeds for the sake of all sentient beings, and in doing so, they follow the exemplary life of the Buddha as described in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.

By meditating on the deeds of the specially visualized deities, the yogis enact the episode in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra* of the Awakened One abiding in the samādhi called “the vajra overpowering of all tathāgatas,”⁹⁴ and blessing innumerable sentient beings who then attain the bliss and mental rapture of all tathāgatas. The *Illuminating Lamp* explains that in its shared level of interpretation (*spyi don*) this samādhi refers to the deeds of the specially visualized deities.⁹⁵

In a similar way, the following step, that of gathering the specially visualized deities into the body, is an enactment of a past event, in accordance with the exemplary life of the Teacher who taught the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.⁹⁶ This also prepares the ground for the next step, the entry of specially visualized deities into clear light. However, both here and in his section on the body mandala that

comes later on, the Panchen Rinpoché emphasizes that such a gathering of the deities into the body is not a meditation on the body mandala. Kedrup Jé⁹⁷ maintains that the meditation on the body mandala involves more than merely visualizing deities at various locations on the body. Rather, meditators turn respective parts of their bodies into bases for actualizing the deities, which are then transformed and generated as particular deities.

The Actual Yoga of Taking Death as the Dharmakāya

The steps of the First Yoga up to now were preliminary meditations leading to the actual yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya*. With the meditation on the entry of the specially visualized deities into clear light begins the yoga of taking as the path the three bodies of the Buddha that serve to purify the yogi's own death, birth, and intermediate state, respectively. The first of these three is the yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya*.

Tsongkhapa⁹⁸ explains that this meditation on the *path* is called “the yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya*” because it purifies the future death of the individual yogi in correspondence with the stage of death on the level of the *ground*, that is to say, the ordinary death of a human being. Moreover, on the *fruitful* level, at the stage of buddhahood, this meditation corresponds to the *dharmakāya*, and since the yogi meditates by taking the fruit as the path, this meditation becomes an especially skillful means for the swift attainment of such a fruit.⁹⁹

Thus from this point on, the meditation serves to purify its ground of purification. The ground of purification of the dissolution into clear light here is the future ordinary death of the meditator; the purifier is the meditation on the dissolution of the specially visualized deities into clear light according to the *sādhana*; and the ultimate fruit of this practice is the *dharmakāya*. In this meditation, the meditator becomes habituated to the dawning of the clear light of death while aspiring to ultimately transform the ordinary experience of death into the realization of the ultimate clear light.

When the creation stage is divided into four yogas — *yoga*, *anuyoga*, *atiyoga*, and *mahāyoga*¹⁰⁰ — the gathering of the specially visualized deities into clear light belongs to the first, the *yoga*. When the creation of the deity is classified into the five manifest awakenings,¹⁰¹ the gathering of the specially visualized deities into clear light also belongs to the first, the manifest awakening from suchness.¹⁰²

As this meditation serves to purify death, the way in which the specially visualized deities are gathered accords with the stages of the dissolution of the twenty-five coarse elements¹⁰³ when an ordinary human being dies. The Panchen Rinpoché provides a detailed explanation of these dissolutions during death as well as the stages of gathering the specially visualized deities during the meditation. Just as during death the twenty-five coarse elements dissolve into the clear light of death, also called the ground *dharmakāya* and the “all-empty,” during the *sādhana* the specially visualized deities enter suchness, or emptiness, also called “clear light” and the *dharmakāya* on the path.

The visualized deities, becoming indivisible from the yogi’s own bodily parts, instantly dissolve into light and are immersed in the clear light within the heart. Thereupon in an instant the yogi turns into a sphere of light and dissolves into the clear light in the heart — like the steam that evaporates on a mirror — and merges with the fruitional wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness. While reciting and meditating on the mantra *om śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako ’ham*, the yogi meditates on emptiness and maintains a strong identity with the *dharmakāya*. This *dharmakāya* of the meditator on the creation stage, the clear light into which the specially visualized deities have been immersed, is the source of all the deities, visualized later in the *sādhana* from the first lord to the Supreme King of Mandalas.

The Yoga of Taking the Intermediate State as the Saṃbhogakāya

This yoga serves to purify the yogi’s future intermediate state and eventually transform it into the *saṃbhogakāya* of the Buddha.¹⁰⁴ The purifier in the creation stage arises as the initial deity called the “first lord.”¹⁰⁵ It is unsuitable to take up the special body of the deity without discarding ordinary aggregates. But after the yogis have immersed their bodily components in clear light and pacified their ordinary appearances and attitudes through emptiness, they may begin meditating on the deity.

Since the ground of purification of the meditation on the first lord is the intermediate being, Tsongkhapa and his disciples begin by explaining the characteristics of the intermediate being. Then they explain how to visualize oneself as the first lord through the remaining four manifest awakenings according to the Ārya tradition: the manifest awakening from the moon, from the seed syllables *om āḥ hūṃ*, from the vajra emblem, and from the complete body.

When visualizing themselves as the first lord, the yogis must maintain a strong identification and a clear appearance as the actual *saṃbhogakāya* of the Buddha, that is, an extremely subtle wind-and-mind appearing as the body of wisdom. As the intermediate being, having abandoned the coarse body of the elements, becomes an extremely subtle body made of mere wind-and-mind, the first lord is likewise a subtle body arising from mere wind-and-mind.

The Yoga of Taking Birth as the Nirmāṇakāya

Because the intermediate being is compelled to take rebirth by the karma produced from latent habituations since beginningless time, its nature is to seek a womb. Once this karma is exhausted, the being will reach the end of the cycles of rebirths. The present yoga serves to purify the yogi's future rebirth and eventually transform it into the *nirmāṇakāya* of the Buddha. The purifier in the creation stage is the yoga of taking birth as the *nirmāṇakāya*.

Since the *saṃbhogakāya* cannot act for the benefit of ordinary people who are unable to see it, it displays emanations that enter wombs and take birth as *nirmāṇakāyas*. This process corresponds to the intermediate being, who is unable to serve as an object for the ordinary eye, and therefore takes birth in the womb. Similarly, the first lord, with only a very subtle body, must transform into the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva.¹⁰⁶ Still, the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva, far from being reified, is illusion-like, appearing like a rainbow in the sky or like the moon in water.

Prior to explaining this meditation, Tsongkhapa and his disciples describe how conception takes place and how the embryo develops in the womb, on the authority of amazing scriptures such as the *Sūtras on Entering the Womb*, the *Abhidharmakośa*, the *Yogācārabhūmi*, and the *Samvarodaya Tantra*. They also refute the position of Tibetan lamas¹⁰⁷ who do not maintain that the four following steps of the *sādhana* collectively serve for the purification of rebirth: (1) transforming the first lord into the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva; (2) setting the body mandala on oneself as the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva; (3) blessing the body, speech, and mind; and (4) meditating on the triple-layered *sattvas*.

1. Transforming the first lord into the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva

The yogis visualize the father-mother tathāgatas absorbed in union. Akṣobhyas produced from their bodhicittas pervade the entire space realm and bless all

sentient beings. Then all the Akṣobhyas merge inside the celestial mansion as a single Akṣobhya. The yogi visualized as the first lord enters into Akṣobhya, thereby becoming a blue Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva with three faces and six arms. Tsongkhapa emphasizes that it is the first lord who enters into Akṣobhya to give birth to the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva in correspondence with the intermediate state, since during conception, on the level of the ground of purification, the intermediate being penetrates the semen and blood, whereby rebirth takes place.

2. Setting the body mandala on oneself as the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva

The yogis must first meditate on their bodies as the celestial mansion of the mandala. Without dissolving the continuum of the former celestial mansion meditated upon earlier, they must visualize the subsequent continuums of the former celestial mansion arising from the transformation of the respective parts of their bodies.¹⁰⁸

In the following step the yogis meditate on the deities residing in this celestial mansion. However, they do not simply meditate on the deities at various locations on their bodies but rather transform their mental and physical components into the deities residing in the body mandala. The foundation of this practice is the special link between the ordinary impure psycho-physical elements of the body and their purified aspects in the forms of the thirty-two deities of the *Guhyasamāja* mandala. Thus the yogis visualize that each of the five aggregates, respectively, becomes the corresponding tathāgata, each of the four physical elements the equivalent mother, each of the six senses a bodhisattva, and so on.

On this point Kedrup Jé disagrees with Tsongkhapa, while the Panchen Rinpoché follows the method of Tsongkhapa. As appears in the translation below,¹⁰⁹ the Panchen Rinpoché instructs the yogis to visualize the thirty-two seed syllables set on the thirty-two areas of their bodies as becoming indivisible in nature from the thirty-two aspects of the body, and after that to generate them into the thirty-two deities, to maintain their divine identity and clear appearance.¹¹⁰

This meditation on the components of the body as the thirty-two deities corresponds to the evolution of the components of sentient beings in the womb on the ground of purification. It makes the channels, winds, and drops of the subtle body serviceable during the completion stage, so that when the winds

penetrate vital points in the body, the yogi will achieve the realization of the completion stage. As regards the fruit, this meditation is also an especially skillful means for the swift attainment of the thirty-two deities.

The chapter on the body mandala contains not a few points of controversy. In it the Panchen Rinpoché condenses the long chapter on the body mandala from the *Ocean of Attainments*, in which Kedrup Jé criticizes the positions of Rendawa and Ngorchen Kunga Zangpo, who attacked Tsongkhapa's position.¹¹¹

3. Blessing the body, speech, and mind

While *Guhyasamāja* is the short name of the *Tantra*, its longer name¹¹² means the *Union of Secrets*, i.e., *Guhyasamāja, of the Secret Body, Speech and Mind of All Tathāgatas*. Body, speech, and mind together comprise the being in its entirety. Indeed, during this phase of meditation, the yogi recites quite a few verses from the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* itself.

The purpose of blessing the three doors is to transform the yogi's ordinary body, speech, and mind into the body, speech, and mind of the buddhas. The Panchen Rinpoché¹¹³ explains that at the level of the ground of purification, this meditation corresponds to the completion of the development of the fetus's body, speech, and mind. As regards the fruit, by attaining mastery over the body, the yogis achieve the power to display a myriad of *nirmāṇakāyas* simultaneously. And attaining the mastery of speech, they have the ability to answer simultaneously with only one utterance all questions of all sentient beings in their respective languages. Mastery of the mind is the direct nonconceptual realization of all knowables. Mastery of the body, speech, and mind is attained when the deities, who dissolve into white, red, and blue-black rays of light, enter the yogi's head, throat, and heart.

4. Meditating on the triple-layered *sattvas*

In other *sādhana*s, such as that of Vajrabhairava, the *jñānasattva* is invited to dissolve into the *saṃayasattva*. This *sādhana* does not include such a meditation, but rather the yogi visualized as a blue Vajradhara is the *saṃayasattva*. The *jñānasattva* is visualized in the yogi's heart, and the *saṃādhisattva* — a blue syllable *hūṃ* — is in the heart of the *jñānasattva*.

The meditation on the *saṃayasattva* corresponds to the evolution of the temporal coarse body, the meditation on the *jñānasattva* corresponds to the innate subtle body made of the very subtle wind-and-mind, and the meditation

on the *samādhisattva* corresponds to the very subtle mind. Hence the meditation on the triple-layered *sattvas* is an exercise in increasing levels of subtlety that serves to activate the subtle levels and eventually the most subtle mind that can directly experience emptiness. Vajradhara formed by means of the creation stage embodies all three *sattvas*. The activation of the most subtle mind is regarded as one of the important qualities of the mantric path not found in the Pāramitā Vehicle. Still, the most subtle body and mind are not activated during the creation stage itself.

The final step here is sealing with the lord of the tathāgata family that corresponds to actual birth from the womb on the level of the ground. The yogi visualizes Vajradhara in union with Vajradhātṽśvarī¹¹⁴ upon the crown of the head and the stream of their bodhicitta nectar dripping down fully satiates their bodies. This meditation seals the creation of the principal deity of the mandala, and thus completes the purification of the grounds and the transformation of the yogi into the three bodies on the level of the creation stage.¹¹⁵ The following steps in the *sādhana* do not serve as purifiers of grounds of purification.

Absorbing in Union with the Consort

This stage of the meditation serves as a bridge between the First Yoga and the following part of the *sādhana*. From the union with the consort the thirty-two deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas are born in the next meditative step. Here the yogi enacts a “past event” found in the first chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* — the tathāgata abiding in the samādhi of great passion emanates the deities. When the yogi abiding in union experiences the bliss of supreme joy, the celestial mansion and all the deities arise as a display of the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness. This is said to be an antidote, superior to those of the lower Tantras and the Sūtra, for the apprehension of things as real. This practice whereby yogis take desire on the path serves as a ripener for great bliss during the completion stage.¹¹⁶

The Supreme King of Mandalas

This is the second of the three samādhis that comprise the creation stage. The First Yoga is practiced for the yogi’s own sake, while the meditation on the Supreme King of Mandalas and the Supreme King of Deeds are intended to benefit others.¹¹⁷ While the First Yoga serves to purify the yogi’s death, birth,

and the intermediate state, and to attain the three bodies of the Buddha for the yogi, the mandala emanated outwardly during the Supreme King of Mandalas is practiced for the benefit of others. During the Supreme King of Mandalas the deities engage in enlightened activities such as turning the wheel of the Dharma, purifying the mental components of the disciples, and setting them at the level of the tathāgata, activities for the sake of others. These meditations are not purifiers but correspond to the deeds of the tathāgata at the level of the fruit and serve to ripen the actual fruit of the meditators.

The meditation on the Supreme King of Mandalas begins when one part of the drop at the lotus of the mother transforms into the celestial mansion and the other part turns into the thirty-two deities. A large portion of the *sādhana* is devoted to the description of these deities, their attributes, the direction in which they dwell, their mantras, and so forth. These deities are emanated in keeping with past events in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*,¹¹⁸ where the tathāgata, abiding in various samādhis, emanated the deities of the mandala.

Motivated by great compassion toward all sentient beings, the deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas engage in their respective general and specific enlightened activities, such as teaching the Dharma and purifying the afflictive emotions that require purification. Then the deities draw back and merge with their respective *jñānasattvas*. They are initiated by the lords of their tathāgata family and appear once more on their individual thrones in the different directions of the mandala.

The Supreme King of Deeds

While the meditations on the union with the consort and the Supreme King of Mandalas are regarded as deeds of the body corresponding to the deeds of the body of the Buddha, the first two steps in the meditation on the Supreme King of Deeds are regarded as deeds of the mind and speech. Meditation on the subtle is a deed of the mind and the mantra recitation is a deed of speech in correspondence with the Buddha's deeds of speech, his teaching the Dharma.

1. Meditation on the Subtle

Whereas the meditation on the Supreme King of Mandalas is considered a coarse meditation, the first step of the Supreme King of Deeds is a meditation on the subtle. The purpose of this meditation is to develop a mind steadily focused on

its object with a clarity greater than actual vision and maintained all the way through the meditative session without diffusing. Such a concentration is said to have all the defining features of mental quiescence.¹¹⁹ And the following meditation on emanating and gathering the subtle to the point when the principal deity enters into ultimate truth is considered the fulfillment of the defining features of special insight.¹²⁰

Therefore, on successfully completing this meditation, the yogi attains the defining features of the concentration on the union of mental quiescence and special insight. For this reason, the creation stage is said to contain the major non-Vajrayāna meditations as well. The Vajrayāna yogis have no further need to meditate on anything else.

2. The Yoga of Recitation

During the recitation of the mantras of the deities dwelling in the mandala, the meditators visualize the deities reciting the mantras along with them. Moreover, they visualize the deities of the mandala emanating from the seed syllables in their hearts acting for the sake of all beings, before gathering them back into the seed syllables in their hearts; alternately they visualize the mantras circulating through them and their consorts.

3. The Dissolution of the Principal Deity

The principal father-mother deities of the mandala dissolve into clear light in correspondence with the Buddha displaying the deeds of passing into nirvāṇa when there are no longer disciples in his buddha-field.¹²¹ In this meditation, the yogi takes as the path the fruit of the *nirmāṇakāyas* that complete the deeds of body, speech, and mind in their buddha-fields. When all these deeds are fulfilled, there are no longer disciples who need practice in that buddha-field, so the *nirmāṇakāya* can display nirvāṇa. In this way, the early concept of nirvāṇa is elegantly merged with the Mahāyānic notion of buddha-fields.

4. Arising in Response to the Four Goddesses Invoking the Dissolved Deity with a Song

In his *sādhana*,¹²² Tsongkhapa describes how the four goddesses, whose essences are the four immeasurables,¹²³ are greatly anguished when they cannot see the principal deity, and wishing to look upon him, invoke him with their melodious songs. Thereby, through the power of prior aspiration and

compassion, the principal deity arises, in correspondence with the Buddha, who likewise displays the deeds of the *nirmāṇakāya* in other buddha-fields when the continuum of his mind is aroused by the four immeasurable mental states.¹²⁴ Here the yogi takes as the path the fruit of displaying the deed of reawakening in other buddha-fields with great compassion.

With respect to the completion stage on the path, meditating on the dissolution of the principal deity into clear light serves to ripen the roots of merit for the manifestation of innate wisdom, when the pure and impure illusory bodies dissolve into the actual and metaphoric clear light. Similarly, this arising serves to ripen the roots of merit for the pure and impure illusory bodies to arise from the metaphoric and actual clear light during the completion stage.

5. Offerings, Praises, and Tasting the Nectar

The arising of the principal deity is welcomed by all the deities of the mandala who praise him in unison and bring him offerings, in correspondence with the disciples of the *nirmāṇakāya* in the new buddha-field who praise him with the words “A buddha has arrived to this world” and bring him offerings.

6. Dissolving the Mandala

The celestial mansion and all the surrounding deities dissolve into the father-mother principal deities who send a light-ray to purify all sentient beings and transform them into Vajradhara. The meditator as the principal deity does not dissolve, and arising from the yoga, sees all beings as Vajrasattvas and acts as Vajrasattva.

In Concluding

The steps of the creation stage and the grounds do not correspond to the path and the fruit of the meditation in a merely arbitrary or playfully intellectual way. The meaning of the word *tantra* relates to the act of weaving, and here Tsongkhapa weaves together the various parts of the creation stage, the aspects of the ground, the path of the completion stage, and the fruit of the three bodies of the Buddha.

The basis for the integrated functioning of such a complex system is found in the literature of the *Guhyasamāja* cycle, particularly in Nāgabuddhi’s *Formulating the Sādhana*.¹²⁵ But Tsongkhapa brings this art of weaving to perfection with each and every contributing detail and all the minute particulars,

creating a great harmonic whole. Through the scope of his vision he presents a fully inclusive configuration. All parts of the puzzle fall into place, so the complex must perforce be genuine. The harmony of the particulars attests the authenticity of the system as a whole. In this case, even if a single nuance contradicts the explicit meaning of an authoritative *sādhana*, the system is still held to be valid.

The Panchen Rinpoché in the work translated here reveals the intricate pattern of the creation stage by explaining all stages of the practice in sequence, along with the reasons behind the meditation in accordance with the *sādhana* teachings, the significance of each step, and the way all stages intertwine with their grounds, enabling the *sādhana* as a whole to attain its goal leading to enlightenment.

Since the Panchen Rinpoché explains the *Long Sādhana of the Guhyasamāja* arranged by Tsongkhapa, it may be useful to read the work translated below together with Robert A. F. Thurman's partial translation of the *sādhana*.¹²⁶ Where the Panchen Rinpoché makes direct reference to this *sādhana*, I have added a note to the Tibetan text. I also highly recommend the translation of Tsongkhapa's *A Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages* by Gavin Kilty,¹²⁷ since the first two chapters provide explanations of the unexcelled tantras and in particular the *Guhyasamāja*. Also relevant are the chapters on the creation stage from Tsongkhapa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path Mantra* translated by Thomas F. Yarnall. Those who would like to read more on this subject are referred to translations of two later works on the paths and grounds of the *Guhyasamāja* written by Yangchen Gawai Lodoe (Dbyangs can dga' ba'i blo gros) and Chöjé Ngawang Palden (Chos rje Ngag dbang dpal ldan).¹²⁸

The Translation

The *Essence of the Ocean of Attainments* has been translated here from Tibetan, the language of the Panchen Rinpoché, Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen. Yet the work contains copious citations of scriptures translated into Tibetan from Sanskrit and other Indian languages, a great number of which are fortunately available to us in Sanskrit as well. A great effort has been made to provide references to the Sanskrit original scriptures. At times, however, the Tibetan translations in their forms quoted in our text differ from the Sanskrit available to us. Moreover, once in a while the differences between the meaning of the Sanskrit and Tibetan are crucial for the arguments presented in this work. The variant readings are listed

in the notes, but for the sake of reducing the number of notes all variants are listed in the first note to each quotation. Critical readers are therefore advised to read the notes carefully in order to appreciate the choices made in the translation. Nevertheless, the main goal in this book is to present Tibetan rather than Indian understanding of the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*. Furthermore, since the author of the *Essence of the Ocean of Attainments* belonged to the Geluk school, the present book reflects the position of this school of Tibetan Buddhism. For more about differences between schools of Tibetan Buddhism with regard to the practice of the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*, the reader is referred to my publications listed in the bibliography.¹²⁹

The curious reader may wonder why quotations do not appear in an indented format. The reason is that quoting canonical authorities is only one aspect of a complex process of presentation. According to numerous Tibetan works, a proper discourse should consist of both scriptural authorities and reasoning, and within the Geluk school reasoning is no less important than citations. Hence allowing quotations a central position on a page while keeping reasoning in a less prominent position does not do justice to the Tibetan Geluk author of this book.

Two types of second-person pronouns are used in the translation. The small case “you” addresses the recipients of the instructions on the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* the Panchen Rinpoché offers it to, in other words is meant for the audience of this work, while the small caps “YOU” addresses opponents who had raised positions not favored by the Panchen Rinpoché and his lineage. Small caps are used to denote references to unnamed opponents such as SOME, SOME PEOPLE, CERTAIN LAMAS, SOME TIBETAN LAMAS, EARLIER LAMAS, and LATER LAMAS.

The English translation of the *Essence of the Ocean of Attainments* by the Panchen Rinpoché is the fruit of a joint work with Penpa Dorjee. However, any mistakes that might be found in this introduction, in the notes, as well as in my editing of the English translation are solely my responsibility.

Yael Bentor

1. Tib. *sngags bla med kyi lam*.

2. The creation or generation stage, Tib. *bskyed rim*, Skt. *utpattikrama*; the completion stage, Tib. *rdzogs*

rim, Skt. *niṣpannakrama* or *utpannakrama*.

3. *Rgyud thams cad kyi rgyal po dpal Gsang ba 'dus pa'i bskyed rim gyi rnam bshad dngos grub kyi rgya mtsho'i snying po*, in *Collected Works (Gsung 'bum)* (New Delhi: Gurudeva, 1973), vol. 2, 77 folios, 299–452. (Hereafter cited as *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho'i snying po*.)

4. See Tanemura 2015.

5. See IOL Tib J 438 and 481, at <http://idp.bl.uk/>.

6. Including Gser sding pa Gzhon nu 'od (Serdingpa Shönu Ö, twelfth–thirteenth centuries), *Rim lnga stan gcig gi steng du sbyar te sgom pa'i man ngag 'khor lo can*, *Rim lnga don bzhi ma*, and *Rim lnga don lnga ma*; for the fifth among the early Sakya masters, Chos rgyal 'Phags pa (Chögyal Phakpa, 1235–80), works 107–10 in the *Collected Works of the Sa skya*, vols. 6 and 7; for Bu ston Rin chen grub (Butön Rinchen Drup, 1290–1364), Tōh. 5078 and 5169; for the founder of the Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (Sakya Ngorchen Kunga Sangpo, 1382–1456), *Gsang 'dus dkyil 'khor gyi sgrub thabs dngos grub rgya mtsho* and *Shin tu rnal 'byor gyi khyad par sgrub thabs kyi yan lag tu bris pa*; for Red mda' ba Gzhon nu blo gros (Rendawa Shönu Lodrö, 1348–1412), *Yid kyi mun sel* and *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal bas zhus pa'i lan*; through whom it was transmitted to Tsongkhapa (Blo bzang grags pa, 1357–1419), Tōh. 5282, 5284, 5285, 5286, 5288, 5290, 5320, 5303, 5305, 5308; and his disciple Mkhas grub rje Dge legs dpal bzang (Kedrup Jé, 1385–1438), *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*; as well as for Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen (Taktshang Lotsāwa Sherap Rinchen, 1405–?), *'Dus pa ye shes zhabs lugs kyi bskyed rim rnam bshad*; Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge (Gorampa Sönam Sengé, 1429–89), *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs kun tu bzang po'i nyi 'od kyi don 'grel lam bzang gsal ba'i snang ba*; and others.

7. For more about the fascinating hermeneutic tradition of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, see Matsunaga 1964; Steinkellner 1978; Thurman 1988; Arénes 1998 and 2002; and Campbell 2009.

8. See Tanemura 2015, 328. Already fifty years ago Matsunaga (1964, 25) suggested that the explanatory tantras of the *Guhyasamāja* were composed by members of the Ārya school in order to provide canonical authority to their own *sādhana*s.

9. Tib. 'Phags lugs. For a detailed review of the Ārya tradition, see Wedemeyer 2007.

10. See Bentor 2015c.

11. This term Buluk (Bu lugs) refers to the disciples of Bu ston Rin chen grub.

12. On the scholarly genius of Tsongkhapa, see Wedemeyer 2006.

13. For a partial translation of this *Sādhana*, see Thurman 1995.

14. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 1b–8a and 70a–71b, 18.1–31.3 and 155.6–158.2; Tsongkhapa's *Gsan yig*, Tōh. 5267, folio 5a, 241.1–2; and his *Mtha' gcod rin chen myu gu*, Tōh. 5284, folio 40b, 143.4. In the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa are found names such as 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas, Rngog Ye shes seng ge (twelfth century), and Gser sdings pa Gzhon nu 'od, as well as Bu ston Rin chen grub and Red mda' ba Gzhon nu blo gros.

15. Listed according to their Tōh. numbers, these are: *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, *Rnam gzahag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, and *Slob tshul*, Tōh. 5308.

16. *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho* = *Rgyud thams cad kyi rgyal po dpal Gsang ba 'dus pa'i bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, in *The Collected Works (Gsung 'bum) of the Lord Mkhas grub Rje Dge legs dpal bzang po*, vol. 7 [ja], 190 folios, 3–381.

17. See Roloff 2009, 296.

18. See Bentor 2017a and 2017b.

19. The Perfection Vehicle, Tib. *phar phyin theg pa*. Tibetan Vajrayāna literature often uses the term “Pāramitā Vehicle” for general Mahāyāna theories and practices. The Vajrayāna, the Vajra Vehicle, Tib.

rdo rje theg pa, is also called Mantra [Vehicle]. Alternatively, the terms “Sūtra” and “Tantra” are used for the two vehicles.

20. *Lam rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5392, 808. For an English translation, see Cutler 2002, 3: 363–64.

21. Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 21. English translation in Hopkins 1977, 115.

22. Tib. *de kho na nyid*.

23. Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, 26, translated by Hopkins with minor modifications (1977, 125).

24. Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, 27–28, translated by Hopkins with minor modifications (1977, 126–28).

25. In Hopkins’s translation, “inherent.”

26. Literally, the first stage.

27. Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 493. For an alternative English translation, see Yarnall 2013, 195. See also Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 34a and 36b, 69.2–3 and 74.2–5.

28. Tib. *zab gsal gnyis med kyi rnal ’byor*. See *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 493 and 494, and Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 34a and 36b, 69.2–3 and 74.2–5. Ngor chen Kun dga’ bzang po also uses a similar term, see his *Zla zer*, work 55, folio 75a, 210.4.5–6. In his *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 25, Tsongkhapa also cites the *Theg pa chen po mdo sde’i rgyan*, *Mahāyanasūtrālaṅkāra*, Tōh. 4020, on profundity and vastness (translated in Hopkins 1977, 123). The phrase “profundity and vastness” is found as well in Buddhajñāna, *Samantabhadrasādhana*, D. folio 35b, 70.6–7, a passage that is cited in our text below [357].

29. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 37a, 75.1–5. For another English translation, see Coghlan and Zarpani, 2011, 127–28.

30. *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho ’i snying po*, folio 30a, 357.4–5.

31. See Tsongkhapa’s *Lam rim chung ba*, Tōh. 5393, folios 180b3–185a1, 360.3–370.1, translated in Thurman 1982/1990, 135–42, and Hopkins 2008, 75–85.

32. See Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 42a, 85.3–6; and see also Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 500.

33. See Tsongkhapa, *’Dod pa ’jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 52b, 175.2–4.

34. Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 462. Translated also in Yarnall 2013, 142.

35. *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho ’i snying po*, folio 76a, 449.5.

36. See *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 462–64; and *Slob tshul*, Tōh. 5308, folio 12a, 23.3–5.

37. This is not different from the Pāramitā Vehicle.

38. *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho ’i snying po*, folio 76a, 449.6.

39. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 181b, 364.3–4.

40. Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 462–64.

41. See Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 464.

42. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhaq rim pa ’i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 50b, 379.4–5.

43. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhaq rim pa ’i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 51b, 381.4–6.

44. See Bentor 2008 and 2015d.

45. *Mtha’ gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folio 123a, 308.6.

46. Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 176b4, New Delhi, vol. 7, folio 299b, 91.2–3; see also his *Bung ba ’i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 23b–24a, 383.1–384.5, his *Mtha’ gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folios 123a–125b, 308.4–313.6, and his *Rnam gzhaq rim pa ’i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 34a–b, 316.1–317.3.

47. For important Indian authors on Vajrayāna who held very similar positions, see Bentor 2008 and 2015d.
48. Tib. *ting nge 'dzin*, Skt. *samādhi*. The scriptural authority for this is found in one of the commentarial tantras on the *Guhyasamāja*, the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, D. folio 272a, 543.1–2.
49. Tib. *dang po sbyor ba'i ting nge 'dzin*, Skt. *ādiyogasamādhi*.
50. Tib. *dkiyl 'khor rgyal po mchog gi ting nge 'dzin*, Skt. *maṇḍalarājāgrīsamādhi*.
51. Tib. *las kyi rgyal po mchog gi ting nge 'dzin*, Skt. *karmarājāgrīsamādhi*.
52. See Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 487–88.
53. Here I paraphrase Tsongkhapa's *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, folio 23a, 196.2–6.
54. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 46b, 371.2–4; Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 81a, 163.4–6.
55. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 51b, 381.4–6.
56. Tsongkhapa, *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, folio 23b, 197.5–6.
57. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 50a, 101.1–2.
58. Tib. *ye shes kyi sa*, Skt. *jñānabhūmi*.
59. Vasubandhu's *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, autocommentary, Tōh. 4090, on chap. 3, vv. 90–93, D. folios 155b–157b, 310.3–314.5. For the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 179–83, and for an English translation see Pruden 1988–90, 475–79. Asaṅga, *Chos mngon pa kun las btus pa*, *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Tōh. 4049, D. folios 73b–76a, 145.7–151.6. For the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1950, 36–39; translated into French by Walpola 1971, 57–64, and into English by Boin-Webb 2001, 81–88. See also Asaṅga, *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, part 1, *Sa'i dngos gzhi*, *Maulībhūmi*, in the second *bhūmi*, the *Sa las yid kyi*, *Manobhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 17b, 34.1–6; Sanskrit edition, V. Bhattacharya 1957, 35.5–18; English translation, Kajiyama 2000, 188–89.
60. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 11a, 358.4–6, and his *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, folio 14b, 179.4.
61. Tib. *bsam gtan*, Skt. *dhyāna*.
62. This is the meditation of taking death as the *dharmakāya* as found below. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 8b, 295.4–5.
63. Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 489–90.
64. Note that the meditation on emptiness for this purpose takes place later in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 38b–39a, 92.4–93.4; see also our text below [386–92].
65. See also our text below [360].
66. The ninth of the fourteen tantric root downfalls is the denial of the teaching on emptiness; the fourteenth is that having understood the view of emptiness, the yogi fails to reflect on it continuously. See also Tsongkhapa's explanation of this topic in his *Dngos grub snye ma*, Tōh. 5270, English translation by Sparham 2005, 104–9.
67. Tsongkhapa, *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 55b, 181.5–6.
68. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 8b–9a, 295.6–296.4.
69. See Bentor 2015b.
70. See Sa chen Kun dga' snying po, [*Mtsho skyes kyi*] *Mngon rtogs tshig gi bum pa*, work no. 54, folio 7b, 384.1.2–3; and Bsod nams rtse mo, *Dpal kyai rdo rje'i sgrub thabs mtsho skyes kyi ṭīkā*, work 9, folio 10a, 121.1.1–3.
71. The mantra usually recited is *oṃ śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ* or *oṃ svabhāva śuddhāḥ sarva dharmāḥ svabhāva śuddho 'haṃ*.

72. This verse is found in the second chapter, on the mind for enlightenment. See Fremantle 1971, 190; Matsunaga 1978, 9.

73. *Sgron gsal*, *Pradīpoddyotana*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 23b–24b, 46.7–48.4, P. 35.3.1–4.7. For the Sanskrit see Chakravarti 1984, 31–32. While the *Sgron gsal* explains this verse in the four levels of interpretation (*tshul bzhi*) — the literal, shared, hidden, and ultimate — Tsongkhapa explains that only the literal and shared levels of interpretation are relevant to the creation stage. See his *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 9a, 296.2.

74. See Bentor 2009b.

75. *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 56b3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 91b, 182.6; see also Bentor 2009b.

76. *Bskyes rim dngos grub rgya mtsho'i snying po*, folio 31b, 360.1. See also Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 497.

77. In his *'Dod 'jo*, Tōh. 5320, folio 52a, 174.4–5, Tsongkhapa explains that this was taught by Jo bo Rje. See Dīpaṅkaraśrījñāna, *Mngon par rtogs pa rnam par 'byed pa*, *Abhisamayavibhaṅga*, Tōh. 1490, D. folio 189b, 378.1–2. See also Tsongkhapa's *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 11b, 359.3–4.

78. Tib. *ye shes kyi sa*, Skt. *jñānabhūmi*.

79. Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 11a–b, 358.6–359.1; Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyes rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 43b, 88.3–5.

80. See *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, autocommentary Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, vv. 90c–d and 45–52, D. folios 156b–157a and 144a–145b, 312.4–313.1, and 287.5–290.6. For the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 179 and 157–61, and for an English translation see Pruden 1988–90, 477–78 and 451–54. See also the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, part 1, *Sa'i dngos gzhi*, *Maulībhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folios 18a–20b, 35.6–40.4. Sanskrit edition, V. Bhattacharya 1957, 36.19–41.16; English translation, Kajiyama 2000, 190–96.

81. Tib. *chos 'byung*, Skt. *dharmodaya*.

82. Tib. *Spyan ma*, *Māmakī*, *Gos dkar mo*, and *Sgrol ma*.

83. See the *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośa* autocommentary Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 98, D. folios 162a–163a, 323.5–325.3, Pradhan 1975, 187–88, Pruden 1988–90, 487–89; the *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, *Vinayavibhaṅga*, Tōh. 3, D. folios 48b–51b, 96.1–102.5; the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folios 20b–21a, 40.4–41.5, Sanskrit edition, V. Bhattacharya 1957, 41.17–42.18, English translation, Kajiyama 2000, 196–97; the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, *Samājasādhanaavyavastholi*, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 123a and 123b, 245.1–4 and 246.4–6, Tanaka 2016, 87–88 and 91–92. See also the *Aggañña Sutta* in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, translated in Walshe 1995, 407–14.

84. See the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3a, 5.7, L. 36ab, the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 12a, 23.3, the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 121b, 242.2, Tanaka 2016, 79. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyes rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 69a, 139.2–3.

85. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 14a and 33b, 306.6 and 345.2, and his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 15a, 366.2–3.

86. The canonical authority here is the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, *Samājasādhanaavyavastholi*, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 122b–123a, 244.6–245.1, Tanaka 2016, 87. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 14a, 306.4–5.

87. For such a position, see 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas (Gö Khukpa Lhetsé), *Gsang 'dus stong thun*, folios 7b and 9b–10a, 14.3–6, and 18.5–19.1.

88. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 45b–46a, 369.5–370.6.

89. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 48b–49a, 375.4–376.2.

90. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 46a, 370.4–6.

91. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 51b–52a, 381.6–382.1.
92. See Bentor 2009a.
93. These terms, “the past event” and the “practice that follows,” appear in the *Ye shes rdo rje kun las bsodus pa*, *Jñānavajrasamuccaya*, Tōh. 450, D. folio 23b, 46.1, one of the commentarial tantras of *Gsang ba 'dus pa* (not to be confused with the *Ye shes rdo rje kun las btus pa*, *Vajrajñānasamuccayatāntra*, Tōh. 447).
94. Tōh. 442, chap. 1, Zhol 3a5–b1, Fremantle 1971, 178, Matsunaga, 1978, 5, Tog 7.7 [the rest is missing], Dunh. 3a2–3.
95. *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 14b–15a, 28.5–29.6, P. 31.2.7–4.3, Chakravarti 1984, 20.
96. The samādhi called “the method of great passion of all tathāgatas” in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 2b1–2, Fremantle 1971, 176, Matsunaga, 1978, 4. Tog 6.3, Dunh. IOL Tib J 481 1b3.
97. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 126a, 253.1–2. On the diverse views of Dge lugs scholars on this point of the meditation, see Bentor 2015a.
98. Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 15b and 17b–18a, 367.2, 371.6–372.1. See also Paṇ chen Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho'i snying po*, folio 47b, 392.2–5.
99. In addition, during the completing stage on the *path*, this meditation corresponds to the metaphoric and actual clear light, and serves as a special ripener of the roots of merit for the arising of such clear light in the yogi's mental continuum.
100. Tib. *rnal 'byor, rjes su rnal 'byor, shin tu rnal 'byor, rnal 'byor chen po*.
101. Tib. *mngon byang lnga*, Skt. *pañcābhisambodhi*.
102. Tib. *de bzhin nyid las byang chub pa*.
103. The twenty-five coarse elements are: the five aggregates, the four physical elements, the six sensory spheres, the five sense objects, and the five wisdoms of the ground time.
104. Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 15b and 19b, 367.2, 375.3–4.
105. Tib. *dang po mgon po*, Skt. *ādinātha*.
106. Tib. *sprul sku rdor sems*.
107. See Bentor 2015c.
108. This is the method of our text. For disagreements, see Bentor 2017a, 248.
109. *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho'i snying po*, folios 56b–57a, 410.6–411.1.
110. On the method of Mkhas grub rje and the diverse views of Dge lugs scholars on this point, see Bentor 2015a.
111. For more on this crisis and the Sakya's claim that Mkhas grub rje was refuting the body mandala of the Sa skya Lam 'bras tradition, see Bentor 2017a and 2017b.
112. *Sarvatathāgatakāyāvākcittarahasyaguhyasamāja*, *De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi sku gsung thugs kyi gsang chen gsang ba 'dus pa*.
113. *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho'i snying po*, folio 58a–b, 413.3–4, 414.5–6.
114. Tib. *Rdo rje dbyings kyi dbang mo*, Eng. *She Who Rules the Vajra Realm*.
115. The *dharmakāya* of the creation stage, or emptiness into which the specially visualized deities have dissolved, the first lord, and the *Nirmāṇakāya*-*Vajrasattva*. These three will eventually turn into the three bodies of the Buddha, and purify the birth, death, and intermediate state of the yogi.
116. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 25b, 387.1–3.
117. The *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 14a, 37.3–4, P. 274.3.7–8.
118. The entire latter part of the first chapter of the Tantra. There are only thirteen deities in this chapter.
119. Tib. *zhi gnas*, Skt. *śamatha*.

120. Tib. *lhag mthong*, Skt. *vipaśyanā*.
121. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folio 25a, 317.4–5.
122. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 68b–69b, 152.2–154.1.
123. Tib. *tshad med*, Skt. *apramāṇa*.
124. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folios 25b–26a, 318.6–319.1.
125. *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, *Samājasādhana vyavastholi*, Tōh. 1809.
126. Thurman 1995.
127. Kilty 2013; translated also by Thurman 2010.
128. The first is the *Sngags kyi sa lam* by Dbyangs can dga' ba'i blo gros Ā kyā yongs 'dzin with commentary by Geshe Losang Tsephel and translated by Tenzin Dorjee and Jeremy Russell 1995, and with commentary by Chöden Rinpoché, translated by Coghlan and Zarpani n.d. The second is *Gsang chen rgyud sde bzhi'i sa lam gyi rnam gzhag rgyud gzhung gsal byed* by Chos rje Ngag dbang dpal ldan with commentary by Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoché, translated by Coghlan and Zarpani in Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoché 2011.
129. Bentor 2006, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d, 2016, 2017a, and 2017b.

1. Homage and Introduction

Homage to Guru Mañjuhoṣa.

I prostrate to the holy root lama and to the holy lineage.

BOWING AT the feet of the lama who is indistinguishable from the all-pervading Lord, Teacher of the Tantra, the chief of all wheels of victorious beings, true joy within, free of obscuration, I will explain the method of the first stage of the glorious *Guhyasamāja Tantra*,¹³⁰ a gem unique in the three worlds, most excellent of all the words of the sage.

This explanation of the creation stage of the glorious *Guhyasamāja Tantra* has six main topics: (1) characteristics of the yogis, (2) the reasons yogis should meditate on the creation stage before they meditate on the completion stage, (3) characteristics of the place of practice [301], (4) explanation of the practice, (5) the criteria for completing the creation stage by practicing in this way, and (6) how siddhis are attained upon the completion of the creation stage.

Characteristics of the Yogis

Vajrapaṇi asks in the *Vajra Garland Tantra*:¹³¹ “What qualities does a disciple who wishes to become a vessel for the yoga tantra need to have?” In reply to the question, “Which qualities are required of a person on the path of the Unexcelled Mantra?” the vajra teacher explains:¹³² “The most excellent and dedicated disciple is endowed with the attributes of faith, respect for the lama, the constant abiding in virtuous activities,¹³³ the shedding of bad thoughts, the study of numerous scriptural transmissions, the renunciation of killing and harmfulness, the aspiration to release sentient beings, and perpetual effort.”

To become suitable vessels, disciples must first purify their mental *continua* through the shared path,¹³⁴ and second, receive the four pure initiations, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches: [302] “When disciples are perfectly initiated by the wise from the start, they become vessels for the yoga of the completion

stage. If disciples have not been perfectly initiated, even when they understand the meaning of the tantra, master and disciple alike will go to the Great Unendurable Hell.”¹³⁵

*The Reasons Yogis Should Meditate on the Creation Stage before They Meditate on the Completion Stage*¹³⁶

Though you have received the initiation in this way, you must duly abide in the pledges and vows assumed in the course of the initiation, for if you retract a pledge or vow, no matter how hard you may try to meditate on the two stages, you will not be able to attain the supreme siddhi, as the *Samvarodaya Tantra* teaches:¹³⁷ “When yogis who persevere in the practice of the vows, as instructed during the initiation, and whose mental *continua* have become suitable vessels meditate on the mandala-wheel and so forth by means of the sublime and perfect transmitted teachings, they will attain¹³⁸ and not by other means.”

Those who observe the pure pledges in this way must gain a clear and well-founded understanding of the method of meditating on these two stages and their ancillaries by means of *study* and *reflection* before they begin their *meditation*,¹³⁹ for the *Pearl Rosary* teaches:¹⁴⁰ “Without understanding there is no learning, and without learning there is no reflection. Where both are lacking, there is no yoga, and where yoga is wanting, there is no attainment of siddhis.” [303]

When you have learned how to practice through study and reflection in this way, you must practice the two stages in a definite order, for the *Five Stages* teaches:¹⁴¹ “The perfect buddhas imparted this method like the rungs of a ladder to those who abide in the creation stage and aspire for the completion stage.” And the *Compendium of Practices* teaches:¹⁴² “Having been trained in the thought of the Buddha Vehicle, you practice the samādhi of single-mindedness on the New Vehicle.”¹⁴³

Characteristics of the Place of Practice

You should meditate in unfrequented areas, in pleasing sites, far from human distractions, abounding in flowers, fruit, and so forth, as the twelfth chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:¹⁴⁴ “In unfrequented areas, abounding in flowers, fruit and so forth, or in lonely mountains, all siddhis will be attained.” And the *Concise Sādhana*¹⁴⁵ also explains it in this way.

Explanation of the Practice

There are four parts here: (1) the First Yoga,¹⁴⁶ (2) the Supreme King of Mandalas,¹⁴⁷ (3) the Supreme King of Deeds,¹⁴⁸ and (4) how to meditate; how to engage the mind in visualization during the creation stage.

The First Yoga

There are two sections here: (1) explanation of the preliminary stages of the meditation, and (2) explanation of the actual meditation.

130. Tib. *Gsang ba 'dus pa'i rgyud*, Eng. *Union of Secrets*.

131. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātāntra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 1, D. folio 211b, 422.1, P. 204.4.2. D. and P. have *slob ma'i yon tan* for *slob ma yon tan* in our text. Cited also in Tsongkhapa's *Rim lnga gsal sgron*, Tōh. 5302, folio 34b, 68.6, Acip 31a–b, translated in Thurman 2010 and Kilty 2013.

132. Tōh. 445, chap. 65, D. folio 271b, 542.5–6. Our text has *lam* for *las*, skips the line *gnyis med sgyu yang med pa dang* in D., and has *gdon pa* for *'don pa* and *de la sogs pa'i yon tan ldan* for *de la sogs pa'i yang dag ldan* in D. Our text follows Tsongkhapa's *Rim lnga gsal sgron*, Tōh. 5302, folio 34b, 68.6, Acip 31a–b, translated in Thurman 2010 and Kilty 2013. The teacher here is Bcom ldan rdo rje.

133. According to our text that has *lam* for *las*, the constant abiding in virtuous path.

134. The path shared by both the Pāramitā and Mantra Vehicles.

135. Tōh. 445, chap. 2, D. folio 212a, 423.2–3, P. 204.5.4–5. D. has *slob mar mtshungs* and P. has *slob ma [space] tshungs* for *slob ma mtshungs* in our text.

136. This topic is discussed in the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 459–60; the first topics of this section appear also in 431–34.

137. Tib. *Sdom 'byung*, Tōh. 373, chap. 18, vv. 36cd–37, D. folio 288a, 575.2–3, Tsuda 1974, 128, 210, 299. Our text does not seem to be a direct citation from the tantra as in Tsuda 1974, but from a different translation of this passage, such as the citation in *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, chap. 11, 431–3. Likewise, the Sanskrit is somewhat different. Tsuda has: *phyi nas man ngag ji bzhin du / dam tshig spyod pa la brtson pas* for *ji ltar nye bar bstan pa bzhin / phyi nas dam tshig spyod par brtson*, *snod du* for *snod bu*, *rgyun gyis* for *rgyun las*, *bsgom pa'i rim* for *sgom rim gyi*, *phun tshogs pas* for *phun tshogs kyis*, and *dngos grub 'gyur gyi* for *'grub par 'gyur ro* in our text.

138. The word *siddhi* found in the Tengyur version does not appear in our text.

139. The proper sequence to engage in a practice is through study, reflection and meditation.

140. *Dpal dgyes pa'i rdo rje'i dka' 'grel mu tig 'phreng ba*, *Hevajrapañjikāmuktikāvalī*, by Ratnākaraśānti, v. 6a, Tōh. 1189, D. folio 221a, 441.5. Sanskrit edition and English translation, Isaacson 2000, 124, 128. Again, our text does not seem to be a direct citation from the commentary as we have it, but from a different translation of the passage. D. has *rtogs pa med na thos pa min / thos pa med na bsam du med / gnyis ka nyams pas rnal 'byor med / rnal 'byor med na 'grub mi 'gyur / for blos gros med la thos med ma thos pa la'ang bsam pa med / gnyis bral rnal 'byor med cing rnal 'byor bral la'ang dngos grub med*.

141. *Rim pa lnga pa, Pañcakrama*, Tōh. 1802, chap. 1, v. 2. D. folio 45a, 89.6–7. For the Sanskrit and Tibetan see Mimaki and Tomabeche 1994, 1; for an English translation, see Thurman 1995, 250; and for Sanskrit, Tibetan, and French, see Tomabeche 2006, 104. This line is cited by Tsongkhapa in a number of his works, including the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 459, the *Rim lnga gsal sgron*, Tōh. 5302, folio 39a, 77.5–6, Acip 35a, and the *Nā ro*, Tōh. 5317, folio 10a, 426.4, translated in Mullin 1996, 122.

142. *Spyod bsdus, Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, by Āryadeva, Tōh. 1803, chap. 1, D. folio 59b, 118.4, P. 295.1.4–5, Wedemeyer 2007, A: 5a, Pandey 2000, 5, 163. D. and P., Wedemeyer and Pandey have *sar la* for *gsar ba*, and *slob* for *bslab* in our text. Like the previous verse, this is cited in Tsongkhapa's *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 1995, 460.

143. The samādhi of single-mindedness is the first of two concentrations or yogas comprising the creation stage in terms of its levels of subtlety, referred to also as the coarse yoga of single-mindedness; the second is the subtle conceptual yoga, see [448] below.

144. *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 17a3–4, Tog 57.4–5, Dunh. 31b2–3, Fremantle 1971, v. 3, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 2. Zhol and Tog have *stsogs* for *sogs*, Tog has *sgrub* for *bsgrub*, and Dunh. has *sam* for *su* in the first line, and omits the *kyis*, in our text.

145. The *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2a, 3.1–2, P. 269.2.2, L. 6, T. 6, where it is translated into Tibetan slightly differently from its translation in the *Root Tantra*.

146. Tib. *dang po'i sbyor ba*, Skt. *ādiyoga*.

147. Tib. *dkyil 'khor rgyal mchog*, Skt. *maṇḍalarājāgrī*.

148. Tib. *las rgyal mchog*, Skt. *karmarājāgrī*.

PART 1.

THE FIRST YOGA: PRELIMINARY STAGES



Explanation of the Preliminary Stages of the Meditation

Again there are three parts here: (1) the preparatory steps, (2) offerings to the field for accumulating merit, maintaining vows, and so forth, in order to establish favorable conditions, and (3) meditating on the protection wheel to avert unfavorable conditions.

2. Preparatory Steps

The Preparatory Steps [304]

THERE ARE FIVE parts here: (1) blessing the vajra and bell, (2) blessing the inner offerings, (3) offering the preliminary tormas, (4) blessing the offering for self-generation, and (5) recitation and meditation on Vajrasattva.¹⁴⁹

*1. Blessing the Vajra and Bell*¹⁵⁰

After the visualization of yourself as Dveṣavajra¹⁵¹ comes the blessing of the vajra and bell, done so that you should understand the necessity to never separate from these three pledges throughout the meditation on the *sādhana*. When visualizing yourself as Dveṣavajra with his consort, you should bring to mind the pledge of the consort,¹⁵² and as you bless the vajra and bell, you should bring to mind the pledges of the vajra and bell.

There are two ways to bless the vajra and bell: (1) by cleansing, purifying, and visualizing them, and (2) by recollecting their significance. The first is the system of the *Kālacakra Tantra* among others, but here the blessing is in accordance with the second system. Thus the three terms explained here — the vajra and bell that are blessed, the outer vajra and bell, and the signifying vajra and bell — are all indicating the same objects.

SOME say that the five-pronged vajra and bell are the inner vajra and bell, while the nine-pronged are the outer vajra and bell, but this is incorrect. For both may serve as outer vajras and bells, and both may serve as signifying or metaphorical vajras and bells. Our tradition makes a nominal distinction between signifying vajra and bell and signified vajra and bell.

The vajra is classified according to types that include one-pronged, three-pronged, five-pronged, [305] and nine-pronged vajras, crossed vajras, and ornamented vajras. Vajras ranging from one up to nine prongs can be either fierce or peaceful. The fierce vajra has sharp, open prongs, while the peaceful

vajra has the opposite kind. The crossed vajra may have either three or five prongs. The ornamented vajra has three or more prongs and is embellished in the highest degree.

The bell is classified according to types¹⁵³ that include the bell of wisdom, which is also known as the bell of Vajrasattva, the bell of the hero, and the bell of the tathāgata. It is usually taught that the first kind of bell has nine prongs, but it may also have five prongs. Its characteristic emblem is a string of vajras encircling the cow's mouth between two strings of pearls.¹⁵⁴ The hero's bell is not adorned with a lattice of full loops and half loops. The bell of the tathāgata is of four types, the bell of Vairocana¹⁵⁵ and so forth up to the bell of Amoghasiddhi.¹⁵⁶ All of these are five-pronged and encircled respectively with a string of wheels, jewels, lotuses, and swords.

Likewise, the vajra and bell are classified in types as (1) vajra and bell of pledge, and (2) vajra and bell of wisdom. The first is five-pronged, while the second is nine-pronged. Or else vajra and bell are classified as one-pronged and so forth up to the thousand-pronged, for the *Ḍākārṇava Tantra* teaches:¹⁵⁷ “Having nine prongs, one prong, five prongs, and three prongs, thus and so forth, the great bell has as many as one thousand prongs.”

What Is Signified by the Vajra and Bell?¹⁵⁸ [306]

With regard to relative deities, the nave of the vajra, known as the egg of the three times,¹⁵⁹ signifies Vajrasattva,¹⁶⁰ the five upper prongs signify the five tathāgata families, namely, Vairocana and so forth,¹⁶¹ and the eight upper lotus petals signify the eight bodhisattvas, namely, Maitreya¹⁶² and so forth, who share in the nature of the eight paths of the noble ones, for the *Samputa Tantra* teaches:¹⁶³ “Set¹⁶⁴ Vairocana on the central prong, Akṣobhya on the eastern, and similarly Ratnasambhava¹⁶⁵ on the southern prong. Set Amitābha¹⁶⁶ on the western, and Amoghasiddhi on the northern prong. The five prongs are these very deities. Set the eight limbs of enlightenment on the lotus.” The text continues, closing with the words: “Dissolve the wisdom deities in the egg of the three times at the center.”

The five lower prongs signify the five classes of Sky Travelers,¹⁶⁷ while the eight lower lotus petals signify the four female gatekeepers and the four female deities, Cundā and so forth, eight altogether, for the *Samputa Tantra* teaches:¹⁶⁸ “Set the five Sky Travelers on the prongs.”

The three parts of the bell signify the three realms, and the hollow space

within signifies that the three realms are devoid of an intrinsic nature, for the *Vajraḍāka Tantra* teaches:¹⁶⁹ “The cavity at the center is a deep, all-pleasing abode of nectar.”

The bell’s handle signifies the *methods* for realizing that all phenomena are devoid of intrinsic nature and the *wisdom* of the great innate bliss during fruition. The vessel of nectar on the handle signifies the indivisibility of this wisdom from the void or emptiness.¹⁷⁰ The face of perfect wisdom above the vessel of nectar signifies the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness appearing as the Perfection of Wisdom.¹⁷¹ The eight syllables resting on the lotus signify the four mothers, the four wealth-bearing goddesses, Vasudhārā,¹⁷² and so forth. [307]

That being so, the vajra signifies the *method* — Vajrasattva — and the bell the *wisdom* — Vajradhātviśvarī.¹⁷³ Holding the vajra and bell in mutual embrace signifies the *sambhogakāya* endowed with the seven features of union.¹⁷⁴ The sound of the bell signifies the *sambhogakāya* continuously turning the wheel of the Dharma of the Vajrayāna.

Here is an explanation of how the vajra and bell signify the *wisdom* of indivisible bliss and emptiness, and the special *method* for drawing forth this wisdom: The vajra signifies the *method* — the yogi and his secret male vajra — and the bell signifies the *wisdom* that is the consort and her female *bhaga*. The nave of the vajra signifies the lower end of the central channel at the father’s vajra and its octagonal shape signifies the *cakra* with its eight petals at the center of the “jewel.” The tongue¹⁷⁵ signifies the lower end of the mother’s central channel — the “sky-traveler face”¹⁷⁶ — and its octagonal shape signifies the hidden inner channel, which has eight petals. Brandishing of the vajra in the eight directions and ringing the bell by moving its tongue in the eight directions signify that the vajra jewel of the yogi moves the eight hidden inner channels, thereby opening the lower end of the central channel of the consort. For the *Samputa Tantra* teaches:¹⁷⁷ “Move to the eight points,” and the *Cluster of Instructions* says in this context:¹⁷⁸ “Ring the bell by moving its tongue in the eight directions within it. Thus the tongue is octagonal — as is the nave of the vajra — signifying the movement in the eight inner channels. [308] The point from which the metal tongue is suspended signifies the sky-traveler face.”

The half vajra mounted on top of the bell signifies the father and mother absorbed in union. Holding the vajra and bell in their mutual embrace signifies the meeting of the lower ends of the central channels of the father and mother and the mingling of the two winds that induce the blazing and dripping within

the four *cakras*. The solar seats on the vajra and bell signify the fire of inner heat blazing at that moment, while the lunar seats signify the melting of the jasmine-like bodhicitta by the blazing inner heat. The lotuses on the vajra and bell signify the petals of the six *cakras*. The octagonal nave of the vajra and the octagonal tongue of the bell signify the four joys in both their usual and reversed order — eight in all, sustained by the four *cakras*. This is as the *Samputa Tantra* teaches:¹⁷⁹ “Everything emanates from the clapper¹⁸⁰ of inner wisdom and everything is absorbed back into it.”

The five prongs signify the five wisdoms formed with the conceptual differentiation of the great innate bliss. Their projection out of the mouths of the sea monsters¹⁸¹ signifies the compassion that does not abandon sentient beings. The strings of jewels above and below the lotus and the design of light-rays signify the far-reaching enlightened actions that fulfill the hopes of the disciples, for the *Vajradāka Tantra* teaches:¹⁸² “The cavity at the center is a deep, all-pleasing abode of nectar.”

Furthermore, the vajra signifies the mind or nondual wisdom; the bell marked by the face, the seed syllable, and so forth, signify the body; [309] while the sound of the bell proclaiming emptiness signifies speech. In brief, you should¹⁸³ be inspired to perceive these three as being endowed with the nature of ultimate bodhicitta,¹⁸⁴ and thus view the three vajras of body, speech, and mind as the indivisible essence, for the *Cluster of Instructions* teaches:¹⁸⁵ “The vajra is mind, the bell is body, and its sound is speech.”

That being so, in their definitive meaning, the vajra is the wisdom resulting from great bliss, and the bell is the perfect wisdom realizing emptiness. These three terms are synonymous: (1) the vajra and bell in their definitive meaning, (2) the inner vajra and bell, and (3) the vajra and bell in their signified meaning.¹⁸⁶ When the vajra and bell in their definitive meaning — the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness — are differentiated, five paths emerge, for the *Samputa Tantra* teaches:¹⁸⁷ “Through the practice of emanating the vajra, vajra beings are liberated from saṃsāra, and the yoga of vajra-summoning and the yoga of vajra-immobilizing are realized. Through the vajra of wisdom, afflictions are overcome instantaneously — just as darkness is — when the lamp-like clarity ensues. All those who attain the vajra and achieve the appearing aspect are known as having the nature of the vajra.”

The mantras and verses recited during the actual blessing are taught in the *Samputa*¹⁸⁸ and the *Vajrapañjara Tantras*.¹⁸⁹ Here is the meaning of the mantra

of holding the vajra:¹⁹⁰ the syllable *om* has three components — *a*, *u*, and *m* — signifying the three vajras — body, speech, and mind — respectively.¹⁹¹ By adding *u* to the *a* it becomes¹⁹² *o*, and by imparting that *o* with the letter *m* in the form of a dot, it turns into the single syllable *om*. Therefore *om* signifies the indivisibility of the three vajras of body, speech, and mind. [310]

Since you will attain immeasurable merit by reciting *om* just once while recollecting this meaning, it is called “the jewel-holding mantra,” for the *Vajraśekhara Tantra* teaches:¹⁹³ “What is *om*? It is described as the bestower of all excellence, riches, glory, prosperity, good fortune in its various aspects, commitment and auspiciousness, and hence it is called ‘the jewel-holding mantra.’”

Sarvatathāgata is all tathāgatas, *siddhi* is attainments, *vajra* is adamant, *saṃaya* is pledge, *tiṣṭha* is steadfastness in receiving,¹⁹⁴ *eṣa tvaṃ dhārayāmi* is “I, here, shall uphold you.” The five *hi-s* signify the five wisdoms, the three *hūms* signify the three vajras of the body, speech, and mind, indivisible, *phaṭ* makes the meaning manifest, and *svāhā* is restorative, as it can overcome misdeeds, increase virtue, and so forth. As the *Vajraśekhara Tantra* teaches:¹⁹⁵ “What is *svāhā*? It is the supreme mantra for tempering misdeeds, augmenting the accumulation of virtue, robbing things of their faults, and overcoming suffering.” The meaning, in brief, is this: “I shall firmly uphold this vajra pledge — the attainments of all tathāgatas. And of what does this consist? It is the nature of Vajrasattva, the essence of the five wisdoms, indivisible body, speech, and mind, and the wisdom of great bliss.”

The mantra recited as you hold the bell is *om vajraghaṇṭā hūṃ*; [311] *vajraghaṇṭā* means vajra bell, for the definitive meaning of the bell is the perfect wisdom that realizes the emptiness of true existence shared by all phenomena. You should be mindful of this signified meaning while ringing the bell and reflect on its resounding emptiness. *Hūṃ* signifies the five wisdoms together with their objects. By reciting it even once, in mindfulness of this meaning, you may eradicate suffering and its causes, for the *Vajraśekhara Tantra* teaches:¹⁹⁶ “What is *hūṃ*? It is explained that this mantra abolishes and overcomes suffering, kills malevolence, and cuts off the noose of *samsāric* existence.¹⁹⁷ You must recollect *hūṃ* as supreme.”

Following that, you should generate in your mental continuum the significance of the vajra and bell — the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness, while reciting and reflecting on the resolve: *May all the buddhas,*

Vajrasattva, and so forth be pleased, and chant *hūṃ*.¹⁹⁸ The verse that begins *free sentient beings of their delusion* appears in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* to explain the purpose of “brandishing the vajra.”¹⁹⁹ This signifies that the *vajra* in its definitive meaning is the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness. *Brandishing* the vajra, that is, generating this meaning in your mental continuum, is *graceful* — that means fine, because by *freeing sentient beings of their delusion*, that is, of their ignorance, you carry out the *action* that will *liberate* them from saṃsāra. The vajra is capable of so doing because of the wisdom that is the realization of the suchness of all phenomena. [312] Thus the nondual wisdom is the inner vajra, and it is appropriate to uphold the vajra that signifies this nondual wisdom *with delight*, for the reason just explained.

You then brandish the vajra in the eight directions, beginning with the north, and recite the three *hūṃs* and the three *hos*,²⁰⁰ for the *Samputa Tantra* teaches:²⁰¹ “The wise will brandish the vajra in the north and then drive it in firmly.” The three *hūṃs* signify the indivisibility of the three vajras. The three *hos* signify the freeing from saṃsāra of sentient beings with lesser, intermediate, and greater capacity.

The purpose and method of ringing the bell are taught with *om vajra dharma raṇita* and so forth. Here is an explanation of the mantra’s meaning: *om* is as above, *vajra* is adamant, signifying emptiness, for the *Vajrasekhara Tantra* teaches:²⁰² “It is called the ‘vajra that is emptiness’ because the vajra is solid and its core is not hollow, it cannot be burned nor severed nor destroyed, it is nondual.” *Dharma* is teachings, *raṇita* is resounding, *praraṇita* is resounding well, *saṃpraraṇita* is resounding afar, *sarvabuddha* is all buddhas, *kṣetra* is field, *pracali* is vibrate, *prajñāpāramitā* is the perfection of wisdom, *nāda* is sound, *svabhāva* is own-nature, *vajrasattva* is vajra being, *hṛdaya* is mind, *santoṣani* is pleasing, the three *hūṃs*, the three *hos*, and the *svāhā* are as above.

In summary, through resounding emptiness, resounding well, resounding afar, all buddha-fields reverberate. With what? [313] With the nature of the sound of the perfection of wisdom. For what purpose? To please the mind of Vajrasattva. This means that the lesser, intermediate, and greater sound of emptiness, the nature of the perfection of wisdom, will please the mind of Vajrasattva, who is the indivisible three vajras, and thereby liberate the three types of beings of lesser, intermediate, and greater capacity from the sufferings of saṃsāra.

Here is the purpose of blessing the vajra and bell at the beginning of the

sādhana, as described here: to understand that the meaning signified by the signifying vajra and bell — the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness — is the sublime life force of the path.

2. *Blessing the Inner Offerings*

The blessing of the inner offerings has five sections: (1) clearing, (2) purifying, (3) generating, (4) the blessing itself, and (5) the explanation of its purpose.

Clearing²⁰³

Here is the purpose of clearing the inner offerings at the onset of the practice: obliterating hindrances in the rice-beer and so forth — constituting the ground of transformation of inner offerings — which may impede the yogi. You clear them with the mantra of Vighnāntakṛt,²⁰⁴ who in the present case is the deity of action.

Here is the method of engaging the mind in visualization during the recitation of this mantra: you yourself visualized as Dveṣavajra²⁰⁵ should emanate a host of fierce Obliterators of Hindrances from the heart, [314] dispelling all the hindrances that abide in the ground of transformation of inner offerings there and so forth.

Purifying²⁰⁶

The purification mantra is *oṃ śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'ham*. Here is the method of purification: since the reality of the *śūnyatā* mantra is the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness, by immersing the ground of transformation of the inner offerings and so forth in the clear light of indivisible bliss and emptiness, you purify the ordinary appearance and your ordinary attitudes toward them.

Generating²⁰⁷

From the continuous state of indivisible bliss and emptiness you should visualize *Yaṃ* and *Raṃ*, and from them the disks of wind and fire, respectively. This is essential to the purification of the nectars, the transformation in their perception and setting them ablaze in profusion,²⁰⁸ for the *Later Tantra* teaches:²⁰⁹ “Blazing in profusion, flaming, and so forth.”²¹⁰

Here is the reason the *Yaṃ* and *Raṃ* are flanked by two *hūṃs* and the sides

of the two disks are adorned with two vajras: the two *hūms* and the two vajras signify the five wisdoms, and this is so that you will be inspired to perceive the two seed syllables and the two disks in the nature of the five wisdoms.

Here is the reason for generating the tripod of human heads from *om āḥ hūm* upon these disks: it is a means of purifying the ordinary appearance of these human heads and your ordinary attitude toward them and inspiring you to perceive them in the nature of wisdom of the three indivisible vajras.

Here is the reason for generating a skull that arises from *āḥ* upon this tripod: the *āḥ* signifies profound emptiness which inspires you to perceive the objective aspect of wisdom that realizes emptiness arising in the form of a skull. [315] From *āḥ* within the skull, you should generate a red lotus marked with *āḥ* on its stamen, for the *Later Tantra* teaches:²¹¹ “Beneath it meditate on a lotus arising from *āḥ*.”

Regarding the skull, the equivalent term for skull in Sanskrit, *kapāla*, means nourishing bliss; the white exterior of the skull signifies its natural purity, its red interior signifies great bliss, and the convergence of these two colors within one skull signifies the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness. The purpose of placing the substances inside the skull is to understand that these substances are contained within the essence of the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness.

This is the purpose of generating a lotus from *āḥ* within the skull: since *āḥ* signifies nonarising, and the lotus signifies the wisdom of great bliss, you will be inspired to perceive the lotus together with the *āḥ* in the nature of wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness. This is the purpose of generating an eight-petaled red lotus marked with *āḥ* at its stamen: transforming the perception of the substances into the nectar of wisdom as explained below.

Then you generate the five meats and the five nectars, as written in the *sādhana*, for the sixteenth chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:²¹² “The yogis should eat elephant²¹³ meat, horse meat, and great meat and then offer it to the deities.²¹⁴ By doing so they please the lords.” Thus, it is taught that the yogis themselves consume the five meats and the five nectars and offer them to the deities.

The method of purifying the meats and nectars, transforming their perception and setting them ablaze in profusion, as well as the method of eating, [316] are once more established by the *Later Tantra*:²¹⁵ To the questions the bodhisattvas Maitreya and others ask — “How are the five nectars consumed? And what are the five powerful ones?” — the tathāgatas replied:²¹⁶ “The five impurities

appear in the phenomena of ordinary bodies. When they are blessed by the five wisdoms, they are explained as the five nectars. Blazing in profusion, flaming, radiating, and appearing in a form,²¹⁷ the yogis should consume these five nectars by means of the practice of the mantra-body.”

The *Vajra Garland Tantra* also clearly identifies the five meats and the five nectars as in the *sādhana*.²¹⁸ There is no disagreement regarding the five meats and the first four of the five nectars, yet there are many differing positions regarding the identification of the fifth nectar. Nevertheless, in our tradition it is identified as the great meat, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:²¹⁹ “Likewise, Amoghasiddhi²²⁰ is meat.”

You should mark all five nectars with the syllable *om*,²²¹ for the *Later Tantra* teaches:²²² “At the center of the lotus, set the nectar marked with *om*.” The purpose of marking with *om* is so that the nectars will *blaze in profusion and increase* as explained below.²²³

Here is the method of setting out the five meats and the five nectars — generally there are three methods: (1) the ten substances are set at the center and in the four cardinal directions, (2) the five meats are set at the center and in the four cardinal directions, while the five nectars are set at the center and in the four intermediate directions, (3) the five nectars are set at the center and in the four cardinal directions, while the five meats are set at the center and²²⁴ in the four intermediate directions. In the present case, it is the first of these methods, because here the ten substances are generated in the nature of the five tathāgatas, respectively, [317] and when the five tathāgatas are set in the mandala, they are set at the center and in the four cardinal directions. It is improper to set the tathāgatas in the intermediate directions. The second method is that of Vajrabhairava²²⁵ and so forth, and the third method is that of Cakrasaṃvara²²⁶ and so forth.

Here is the purpose of generating the five meats and the five nectars from the seed syllables of the five tathāgatas and marking them with these syllables: understanding that the ten substances arise from the essence of the five wisdoms, and moreover, that they do not go beyond the essence of the five wisdoms.

Here is the reason for taking the five meats as ambrosial substances: because these five are purified and transformed in perception and have blazed in profusion, and the yogis themselves consume them and offer them to the deities, the five meats are called the “five hooks that swiftly draw in the siddhis and the five lamps that illuminate the siddhis.”

Likewise, here is the reason for taking the five nectars of urine and so forth as ambrosial substances: because these five are purified, transformed in perception, and have blazed in profusion and the yogis themselves consume them and offer them to the deities, they swiftly attain the siddhis of the immortal knowledge-holders. It is for this purpose that they are presented in such a way.

The Blessing²²⁷

There are three sections here: (1) purifying, (2) transforming in perception, and (3) setting ablaze in profusion.

PURIFYING

You visualize:²²⁸ “In the space above the five meats and the five nectars appears a solar disk, and upon it from the syllable *hūṃ* a five-pronged white vajra arises marked at its nave with *hūṃ*,” [318] for the *Later Tantra* teaches:²²⁹ “Visualize a vajra arising from *hūṃ*, abiding in space.” Here is the purpose of meditating in this way: to purify the flaws of color, smell, and taste and the effectiveness of these substances. The *hūṃ* can purify flaws in effectiveness because *hūṃ* is the seed syllable of Cittavajra and Cittavajra is the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness, and that wisdom is the supreme means for purifying impure appearances and attitudes.

Furthermore, you go on to visualize:²³⁰ “From the syllable *hūṃ* arises a five-pronged white vajra marked at its nave with a *hūṃ*. From it, light emanates, wind stirs, fire ignites, and the substances within the skull melt and boil. The vajra with its solar seat falls inside the skull, stirring the substances and blending them with the vajra itself until their taste is even and they are fully purified, becoming crystal-clear.” This is so because the *Later Tantra* teaches:²³¹ “Blazing in profusion, flaming, radiating, and” In its detailed explanation,²³² the *Later Tantra* explains:²³³ “Joining the vajra and lotus, the nectar flames and satisfies the yogi. It appears like a crystal.”

TRANSFORMING IN PERCEPTION

Here, then, is the method of transforming in perception:²³⁴ “When the lotus with its *āḥ* melts, the substance within the skull transforms in perception,” that is to say, transmutes “into the nature of wisdom-nectar whose light blazes like the sun.” This is because in its detailed explanation of *appearing in a form*²³⁵ the

Later Tantra teaches:²³⁶ “Nectar arising like a second sun of wisdom.”

Here is the reason the *āḥ* transforms in perception, that is to say, transmutes the substances into nectar: [319] *āḥ* is the seed syllable of Vāgvajra Amitābha,²³⁷ and Vāgvajra Amitābha is the deity who has attained the mastery of the nectar of immortality.

SETTING ABLAZE IN PROFUSION

Here, then, is the method of setting ablaze in profusion. You should visualize:²³⁸ “a hook-like light-ray emanating from the syllable *om*, drawing in the wisdom-nectar of all the tathāgatas of the ten directions into the skull, thereby augmenting it, setting it ablaze in profusion and increasing it.” This is so because in the detailed explanation of the lines,²³⁹ “As soon as the yogi meditates on the syllable *om* of all mantras, the nectar blazes in profusion,” the *Later Tantra* teaches:²⁴⁰ “You should draw the nectar from the world realms in the ten directions with the best of weapons, bring it down into the skull, and consume it as food yoga.”

Here is the reason why the syllable *om* sets the nectar ablaze in profusion and increases it: *om* is the seed syllable of Kāyavajra Vairocana,²⁴¹ and both Kāyavajra Vairocana and the wisdom-nectar are equal to the nature of the pure²⁴² form-aggregate. It is for this purpose that they are taken in such a way.

In summary, you purify the nectars, transform them in perception, and set them ablaze in profusion by generating them from the three syllables, while reciting these syllables either three or seven times, for the *Later Tantra* teaches:²⁴³ “You should generate them through the three seed syllables, for nothing else can bring about attainments.”²⁴⁴

In addition, here is the method for applying, in the definitive meaning, the blessing of the inner offerings to the profound completion stage. When the mantra *śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ* is divided²⁴⁵ into six segments or into three segments, this signifies the inner condition — the vajra recitation. [320] The line,²⁴⁶ “The vajra with its solar seat falls inside the skull, stirring the substances,” signifies the outer condition — the vajra that churns²⁴⁷ the lotus. The two disks of wind and fire signify both outer and inner conditions — the “downward clearing wind” that enters into the central channel and the blazing inner heat, respectively. The three syllables upon the fire disk signify “appearance,” “enhanced appearance,” and “approaching attainment” during the ultimate mind isolation.²⁴⁸ The tripod²⁴⁹ signifies the subtle illusory body

endowed with body, speech, and mind in the third stage of the completion stage. The skull signifies the clear light in the fourth stage. The five meats and the five nectars signify the pure illusory body and the actual clear light during the stage of union as appropriate. The latter three syllables also signify the three bodies during fruition.

Explaining the Purpose of the Blessing

Here are the purposes of blessing the inner offerings: (1) pleasing the lama and the deities, (2) the yogis themselves will keep the pledge of food, (3) this is essential for empowering the nectar pills, (4) the inner offerings will effectively clear away interferences by sprinkling²⁵⁰ during the blessing of the offerings and tormas, which occur below. This is because *Bhūvamati taught:²⁵¹ “Having been well-filled with *Bi Mu Mā Ra*,²⁵² clear away all interferences.” And Virūpa taught:²⁵³ “Then with the mantra of the three syllables, sprinkle mantrified pledge water on the offering substances.”

*3. Offering the Preliminary Tormas*²⁵⁴

Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples²⁵⁵ do not explicitly teach the preliminary tormas;²⁵⁶ [321] still it is appropriate to make them according to the method of early Tibetan lamas because Vibhūti, the Mahāsiddha Padma,²⁵⁷ and Lalita²⁵⁸ explained the practice of the preliminary tormas for Cakrasaṃvara, Hevajra, and Vajrabhairava,²⁵⁹ respectively; the *Ḍākārṇava Tantra*²⁶⁰ as well teaches the practice of the preliminary tormas made to the guardians of the field, so it is appropriate to apply these methods here.

The recipients of these offering are the directional guardians. There are two types of directional guardians: those who delight in evil and those who delight in good, and the recipients in this case are the latter. Here is the reason for naming Indra and the other directional guardians as Vajra Weapon and so forth:²⁶¹ these are the secret names conferred on them in the past during the initiation by the Teacher Vajradhara. The invitation of the directional guardians, the manner of setting them out in the cardinal and intermediate directions, their colors, emblems, and so on should be visualized according to the *sādhana* of the Venerable Lama Tsongkhapa because the *Cluster of Instructions*²⁶² explained it in this way.

There are two methods for generating the directional guardians: generating

them as deities of their own tathāgata family and generating them as your own personal deity. Here you should do the latter, because the *sādhana* instructs that they should arise²⁶³ “in the body of the *Guhyasamāja* with his consort.”

This is the purpose of immersing the directional guardians in the clear light of indivisible bliss and emptiness before generating them as Vajradhara.²⁶⁴ [322] in order to purify ordinary appearances and attitudes toward the directional guardians and in order to benefit them.

Furthermore, the four waters and the offerings, including the music offering, should be blessed as described below, whereas the tormas should be blessed like the inner offering. The offering of the four waters at the beginning accords with the Indian tradition of washing before a meal and maintaining cleanliness. This is the meaning of the mantra of offering the four waters:²⁶⁵ the *om āḥ hūm* at the beginning and end signify the seed syllables of the three vajras, *hrīḥ* signifies the perfection of wisdom, *pra* is most, *vara* is excellent, *satkāra* is respect, *argham* is water for welcoming, *prātīccha* is please accept, and *svāhā* is restorative.

There are three methods for the actual offering of the tormas: (1) offering while displaying the pledge gesture of each one, (2) offering by opening the vajra palms, and (3) brandishing the vajra and ringing the bell, bearing in mind the significance of nonarising as the true nature of things. In this case, you do the latter. You should offer with:²⁶⁶ “*om āḥ* all beings in the three times and the world realms in the ten directions” and so forth.

Furthermore, the lines:²⁶⁷ “All beings in the three times and the world realms in the ten directions,” up to “wholly subsumed within the space realm,” indicate that the animate and inanimate world realms that in their entirety are subsumed within the ten directions and the three times are ultimately contained within the nature of the dharma realm, empty of intrinsic nature, [323] though in a conventional sense they merely exist in mutual reliance and arise interdependently.

The lines²⁶⁸ from “All beings in the three times” up to “the Earth Goddess together with their circles” identify the guests for the torma. The lines from “Flowers” up to “enjoy”²⁶⁹ indicate the actual offering of the tormas. The lines from “Our wealth, gold, riches, crops, youth” up to “may you destroy them”²⁷⁰ indicate the method of entrusting the guardians with the task of preventing interference during the meditation on the main part of the *sādhana* as well as on other occasions.

The lines²⁷¹ from “May you bestow on us the best treasures, gold, wealth,

crops, youth” up to “may you protect us *hūṃ svāhā*” indicate the method of entrusting the guardians with the task of bringing about states conducive to meditation during the main part of the *sādhana* and thereafter throughout the practice toward awakening until the seat of supreme enlightenment has been attained.

Does this method contradict the explanation of making these offerings with the mantra of tormas in the *Mandala Vajra Garland*?²⁷² There is nothing wrong here, because for the sake of convenience, the mantra for the tormas has been translated into Tibetan. Thus the purpose of inserting the verses “the beings in the three times” between the three syllables²⁷³ is to²⁷⁴ make it clear that you are to be inspired to perceive the three spheres of offerings²⁷⁵ in the nature of indivisible bliss and emptiness — the essence of the three vajras. [324] The meaning of *svāhā* is as explained above.

This is the reason for offering the two waters and the paan after the offering of the tormas:²⁷⁶ it accords with the Indian tradition of washing and smearing paan after taking one’s meal. Then you should make the outer and inner offerings, recite the hundred-syllable mantra, request forbearance for mistakes, and invite the directional guardians to depart.²⁷⁷

While the rest is easy to understand, as regards the meaning of the offering mantra: *oṃ* has been explained already, *daśadig* are the ten directions, *lokapāla* are the directional guardians, *saparivāra* is together with their circle, *puṣpaṃ* is flower, and the rest has already been explained. In summary, the meaning is this: “May the guardians of the ten directions of the world together with their circle accept these flowers,” and likewise with the offerings of incense and so forth.

This is why the preliminary tormas are offered at the beginning of the practice in such a fashion: to entrust the directional guardians with the tasks of preventing interference and establishing perfect states conducive to meditation on the main part of the *sādhana*.

4. Blessing the Offering for Self-Generation²⁷⁸

There are four parts here: (1) clearing, (2) purifying, (3) generating, and (4) the blessing itself.

Clearing and Purifying

You clear away²⁷⁹ interferences in the various offerings, such as those that

“agitate like water,” residing in the water for welcoming, the “worldly flowers” that reside in the flowers,²⁸⁰ the “black ones” that reside in the incense, the “pointy ones” that reside in the light, the “scent-eaters”²⁸¹ and “tormas-eaters” that reside in the fragrance and the celestial food, and the “performers” that reside in the music.

This is because the *Inquiry of Subāhu Tantra* teaches:²⁸² “The interfering obstructers, called ‘agitation and shaking,’ take hold of people while they bathe,²⁸³ [325] making them exceedingly listless, sluggish, heavy, and very²⁸⁴ angry. While people make flower offerings, the obstructers take the opportunity to enter the bodies of those who arrange a bouquet, causing epidemics, influenza, and joint pains, and depriving them of friends. The obstructers ‘with a black body’ issue forth from the ground and enter those who offer incense, causing avarice, deceit, unruliness,²⁸⁵ powerful lust and passion, and the emission of semen. The light offerings have ‘spiky’ obstructions, causing shooting and stabbing pains²⁸⁶ in the heart. When people offer them, these sharp ‘spikes’ enter them, causing maladies with severe diarrhea and vomiting. Similarly, the obstructers called ‘scent-eaters’ enter the body while²⁸⁷ you offer fragrances, causing thoughts of country, king, relations and wealth, and longing for women.”

Therefore you should perform the clearing and purifying as before.²⁸⁸

Generating

“From *āḥ* you visualize large, open skulls.”²⁸⁹ Here is the purpose of generating the vessel holding the offering substances from *āḥ*: it is in order to understand the significance of generating the pure vessels from the extremely subtle “life sustaining wind” — the definitive meaning of *āḥ* — as its own fruit.²⁹⁰ There are three methods for generating the offering substances inside these skulls: (1) the *Māyājāla Tantra*²⁹¹ instructs us to generate them from *āḥ*. (2) The *Hevajra Tantra* teaches us to generate them from *hūṃ*:²⁹² “completed from various *hūṃs*.” [326] (3) Some tantras explain that they should be generated from the first syllables of their respective names, adorned with dots.²⁹³ The method here is the latter.

The purpose of generating the offering substances in this manner is to recognize that they exist merely as nominal imputations. You should meditate on these offerings — that exist merely as nominal imputations — as being endowed with three special qualities: (1) the special quality of their essence: their essence

is wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness, (2) the special quality of their appearance: they arise in individual forms of offering substances like flowers and so forth, (3) the special quality of their function: they generate untainted bliss in the experiential domain of each of the six senses of the guests.

The Actual Blessing

You bless with the name mantra of each of the offerings, inserted between the three seed syllables: for example, the mantra of the water for welcoming is *om argham āḥ hūm*, and so forth.²⁹⁴ Here is the purpose of interspersing the name mantra of each of the offering substances with the three seed syllables in this fashion: for blessing the offering substances in the essence of the three vajras, and this is so that you will be inspired to perceive the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness, the essence of the indivisible three vajras, and the definitive meaning of fruition arising in the form of the flowers and so forth.

Here is the purpose of blessing the offering substances at the outset:²⁹⁵ [327] to please the lamas and the deities residing in the mandala with offerings, and to enable the yogis themselves to take pleasure in the sensory objects while understanding their nature, thereby engaging them in the special practice of taking as the path the fruit of attaining the purest enjoyment of the stage of the fruitional buddha. This is as the *Concise Sādhana* of Lord Nāgārjuna teaches:²⁹⁶ “The mantrins should no longer be tormented by austerities whereby they surrender the five sense-objects, [rather] by following the yoga tantra they will easily attain enlightenment.”

*5. Recitation and Meditation on Vajrasattva*²⁹⁷

Here is the purpose of meditating on Vajrasattva and reciting his mantra: this is the best means for removing the internal adverse conditions and obstacles during meditation on the main part of the *sādhana*, to prevent the aggravation of wrongdoing and failure, and to purify broken and breached pledges, as the *Heart Ornament* teaches:²⁹⁸ “Clearly visualize Vajrasattva, the singular body of all the buddhas, abiding in the center of a white lotus and a lunar disk, embellished with a vajra and a bell, and recite the hundred-syllable mantra twenty-one times in accordance with the ritual method.²⁹⁹ Since the supreme adepts explained that the blessings prevent the amplification of failure and so forth, you should practice this mantra between meditation sessions. Reciting it a hundred thousand

times, you will become the essence of purity.” This method of meditation accords with the *sādhana*.³⁰⁰ [328]

Here is the meaning of the hundred-syllable mantra:³⁰¹ *om* is the seed syllable of Kāyavajra, and its significance is as explained before. *Vajrasattva* is vajra being,³⁰² *samaya* [read *samayam*] is pledge, *manupālaya* [read *anupālaya*] is guard, *vajrasattvatvenopa* [read *vajrasattvatveno*] is by this very Vajrasattva near [*sic*], *tiṣṭha* [read *upatiṣṭha*] is abide, *drdho*³⁰³ is unwavering, *me* is me, *bhava* is render into the nature of the thing,³⁰⁴ *sutoṣyo me bhava* is render me pleased,³⁰⁵ *supoṣyo me bhava* is render me nourished,³⁰⁶ *anurakto me bhava* is render me beloved, *sarva siddhi me prayaccha* is bestow all siddhis on me, *sarva karmasu ca me* is bestow all actions on me,³⁰⁷ *cittaṃ śrīyaṃ* [read *śreyah*] *kuru* is render (me) into the glory of the mind.³⁰⁸ Why is it glorious? Because *hūṃ* is the seed syllable of Cittavajra.

The four *has* and the *hoḥ* signify the five wisdoms, *bhagavān* is the Blessed One, *sarvatathāgata* is all tathāgatas, *vajra* is adamantine, *ma me* [read just *me*] is me, *muñca* [read *mā muñca*] is do not forsake, *vajrī bhava* is the nature of a vajra holder,³⁰⁹ *mahā samaya sattva* is a great pledge being, *āḥ* is the seed syllable of Vāgvajra, signifying the nonarising of all phenomena, *hūṃ* signifies the wisdom of great bliss, *phaṭ* illuminates the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness, and it destroys conditions that are adverse to this wisdom. *Phaṭ* is a term for destruction, as it destroys adversaries together with their allies. [329]

This is how the four powers that are antidotal to wrongdoing are made wholly perfect with the recitation of the mantra and the meditation on Vajrasattva: (1) The power of support — by taking refuge and generating the mind-bound-for-enlightenment. (2) The power of applying the antidote — by means of the actual meditation and recitation. (3) The *Abhidhānottara Tantra*³¹⁰ explicitly teaches the power of repentance: “Since I am ignorant and deluded,” and so forth. (4) It also implicitly teaches the power of refraining forever from wrongdoing.

149. Tib. Rdo rje sems dpa’.

150. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 8b–9a, 32.2–33.2; see also Mkhas grub rje, *Rnal ’byor rol pa’i dga’ ston*, Tōh. 5500, work no. 47, folios 201a–233a, 871.2–935.4, on the vajra and bell.

151. Tib. Zhe sdang rdo rje, Eng. Hatred Vajra.

152. Tib. *phyag rgya*, Skt. *mudrā*.
153. See also Helffer 1985a and 1985b.
154. This refers to the lower part of the bell, with the cow's mouth being the "lip" of the bell.
155. Tib. *Rnam par snang mdzad*.
156. Tib. *Don yod grub pa*.
157. Tib. *Mkha' 'gro rgya mtsho rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud*, Tōh. 372, *rab byed* 10, D. folio 252a4–5, 503.4–5.
158. See Mkhas grub rje, *Rnal 'byor rol pa'i dga' ston*, Tōh. 5500, work no. 47, folio 217b–233a, 904.4–935.4.
159. These are the past, present, and future.
160. Tib. *Rdo rje sems dpa'*.
161. These are Vairocana, Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi; Tib. *Rnam par snang mdzad*, *Mi bskyod pa*, *Rin chen 'byung ldan*, *'Od dpag med*, and *Don yod grub pa*.
162. These are Maitreya, Kṣitigarbha, Vajrapāṇi, Khagarbha, Lokeśa, Mañjughoṣa, Sarvāvaraṇaviṣkambhin, and Samantabhadra; Tib. *Byams pa*, *Sa yi snying po*, *Phyag na rdo rje*, *Mkha' snying po*, *'Jig rten dbang phyung*, *'Jam pa'i dbyangs*, *Sgrib pa thams cad rnam sel*, and *Kun tu bzang po*.
163. *Yang dag par sbyor ba'i rgyud chen po*, Tōh. 381, *brtag pa* 8, *rab byed* 1, D. folio 144a, 287.3–5. D. has *mgon* for *dgong*, *rwa lnga rnams kyi* for *rwa lnga rnams ni*, *padmar* for *padma*, and *ye shes lha ni thim par bya* for *ye shes lnga ni bstim par bya* in our text.
164. Reading *dgod* for *dgong* in our text.
165. Tib. *Rin chen 'byung ldan*, the Jewel-born.
166. Tib. *'Od dpag med*, Limitless Light.
167. Tib. *mkha' 'gro*, Skt. *ḍākinī*.
168. Tōh. 381, 287.6. Here the five *mkha' 'gro mas* are listed.
169. Tib. *Rdo rje mkha' 'gro*, Tōh. 370, D. folio 68b7, 136.7. D. has *dga'* for *dag* in our text.
170. Reading *de* for *da* in our text.
171. Tib. *Sher phyin ma*, Skt. *Prajñāpāramitā*.
172. Tib. *Nor rgyun ma*.
173. Tib. *Rdo rje dbyings kyi dbang phyug ma*, Eng. *She Who Rules the Vajra Realm*.
174. The "seven features of union" — referring to the stage of the result at the culmination of the path — are: *sambhogakāya*, union, great bliss, absence of intrinsic nature, great compassion, unbroken continuity, and ceaselessness.
175. The Tibetan word used here for the clapper of the bell literally means "tongue." This bears some significance when we see it used in association with words for "mouth" and "face."
176. Tib. *mkha' 'gro' gdong*.
177. Tōh. 381, *brtag pa* 8, *rab byed* 1, D. folio 145a, 289.2.
178. *Man ngag snye ma*, *Āmnāyamañjarī*, Tōh. 1198, D. folio 272a4–5, 543.4–5. D. has *nang gi rtse brgyad* for *na rtse brgyad* and *gdong* for *gdod* in our text.
179. Tōh. 381, *brtag pa* 8, *rab byed* 1, D. folio 145a2, 289.2. D. has *sdud cing 'byin par byed* for *spro zhing sdud pa'o* in our text.
180. Here the term *dbyug gu* is found.
181. Tib. *chu srin*, Skt. *makara*.
182. Tib. *Rdo rje mkha' 'gro*, Tōh. 370, D. folio 68b7, 136.7. D. has *dga'* for *dag* in our text. This line was

cited on [306] above.

183. Reading *dgos* for *gos* in our text.

184. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 8b, 32.2–3: “The vajra is method, the bell is wisdom, and both are in the nature of the ultimate mind for awakening.”

185. *Man ngag snye ma*, *Āmnāyamañjarī*, Tōh. 1198, D. folio 273a2, 545.2. D. has *skur* for *sku* in our text.

186. See [304] above.

187. Tib. *Kha sbyor*, Tōh. 381, D. folio 144b1–2, 288.1–2. D. has *'thob ba'o* for *thob ba yi*, *rdo rjes bsgrubs pa* for *rdo rje sgrubs pa* and *rdo rje'i bdag* for *rdo rje bdag* in our text. The meaning of these lines is doubtful.

188. Tōh. 381, D. folio 145a6, 289.6.

189. *Mkha' 'gro ma rdo rje gur gyi rgyud*, *Ḍākinīvajrapañjaratantra*, Tōh. 419, D. folio 38b.1, 76.1.

190. *Oṃ sarva tathāgata siddhi vajra samaye tiṣṭha eṣatvāṃ dhārayāmi vajrasattva hi hi hi hi hi hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ svāhā*.

191. See Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 60b3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 98b, 196.2.

192. Reading *song* for *sor* in our text.

193. *Rdo rje rtse mo*, Tōh. 480, D. folio 156a2–3, 311.2–3. D. has *bshad* for *brjod*, *g.yang* for *g.yal*, *dang ldan zhing* for *dang ldan dang* and *snying po yin* for *sngags su brjod* in our text.

194. In translating the entire mantra below [310], our text has *brtan pa* alone. A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Gsang bskyed*, 69.6, has *brtan pa'am nye bar mnos*.

195. *Rdo rje rtse mo*, Tōh. 480, D. folio 156a4–5, 311.4–5. D. has *zhes pa* for *zhes ni* and *nyes pa byas pa* for *nyes pa thams cad* in our text.

196. Tōh. 480, D. folio 156a, 311.3–4. D. has *srid* for *sring*, *sngags shing gsod byed pa'i* for *sngags kyis gsod byed cing*, and *gcod byed cing* for *gcod par byed* in our text; the sequence of the second and third lines is reversed.

197. Reading *srid* for *sring* in our text.

198. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 8b, 32.4.

199. “By gracefully brandishing the vajra that frees sentient beings of their delusion, I carry out the dharma activity of liberating them. I rejoice in holding the vajra!” See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 8b, 32.4–5.

200. This is the beginning of the mantra *Hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ ho ho ho oṃ vajra dharma raṇita praraṇita sampraraṇita sarva buddha kṣetra pracalīna prajñāpāramitā nāda svabhāve vajrasattva hr̥daya santoṣaṇi hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ ho ho ho svāhā*. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 8b–9a, 32.6–33.2, and the *Samputa Tantra*, Tōh. 381, *brtag pa* 8, *rab byed* 1, D. folio 145a, 289.5–6.

201. Tōh. 381, *brtag pa* 8, *rab byed* 1, D. folio 145a4, 289.4.

202. Tōh. 480, D. folio 149a–b, 297.7–298.1. D. has *gcad dang gzhiḡ par bya ba min / bsreg par bya min 'jig med pas* for *bsreg tu med cing gcad du med /gzhiḡ tu med cing gnyis med phyir*. This verse is cited in the *Yogaratanmālā*, commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra*, I.i.4. See Snellgrove 1959, 2:104. Toru Tomabechi, personal communication, February 3, 2017.

203. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 9a, 33.2, has here: *Oṃ āḥ vighnānatakṛt [vighnāntakṛt] hūṃ*.

204. Tib. Bgegs mthar byed.

205. Tib. Zhe sdang rdo rje.

206. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 9a, 33.2, has here: *Oṃ sūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'ham*, turn into emptiness.

207. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 9a–b, 33.2–34.5.
208. These are the three essential steps in the generation of the nectars. Tib. *sbyang rtogs sbar gsum*, Skt. according to Chakravarti 1984, 194, *śodhite*, *prabodhite* and *jvalati*; the *Pinḍīkṛtasādhana*, L. 222, has *śodhaya*, *bodhaya*, and *jvālaya*. In his commentary on the later, Muniśrībhadrā, Tōh. 1813, D. folio 168a, 335.2–3 has: Tib. *sbyong*, *rtogs* and *rab tu 'bar bar byed pa*, Skt. *śodhanam*, *bodhanam*, and *prajvālanam*.
209. *Rgyud phyi ma*, *Uttaratantra*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a1, D. folio 153b, 306.6, Tog 178.7, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 129a. Zhol and Tog have *bsreg pa* for *sog pa* in our text.
210. This is explained below.
211. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a1–2, D. folio 153b, 306.7, Tog 179.1, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 130cd.
212. Tōh. 442, Zhol 38a7, Tog 128.5, Dunh. 71a1, Fremantle 1971, v. 49, Matsunaga, 1978, vv. 37–38ab. Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. have *dag kyang* for *dag ni*, and *sngags rnams kun la* for *lha rnams la ni* in our text; Dunh. has *glang po* for *glang po 'i*, *rta 'i* for *rta yi*, and *bza bar bya* for *bza ' bya zhing*. The Sanskrit may be understood differently, as saying that the deities rather than the yogis consume the meats.
213. Tib *glang po*, Skt. *hasti*, elephant or bull.
214. *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 126a, 331.7, P. 101.1.4, Chakravarti 1984, 194, glosses “mantras” with “deities.”
215. Tōh. 443, Zhol 49b4, D. folio 149a, 297.5, Tog 166.5, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 19cd; see also Tsongkhapa, *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folios 136b–138a, 335.4–338.3.
216. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a1, D. folio 153b, 306.5–6, Tog 178.6–7, Matsunaga, 1978, vv. 128–29. Zhol and Tog have *snang ba ni* for *sbyang ba ni* in our text and *byin brlabs pas* for *byin rlabs pas*. In his *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folio 136b, 335.5, Tsongkhapa also has *snang ba ni* for *sbyang ba ni*; he then, in folio 137a, 336.3, glosses the first two lines with “the five taints that arise from the body.”
217. In his *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folio 137b, 337.3–4, Tsongkhapa explains how each of these qualifiers “blazing, flaming, radiating, and appearing in a form” are related to steps in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 9b–10b, 34.5–36.1.
218. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 9b, 34.2–5. The five meats are human, elephant, horse, cow, and dog meats; the five nectars are urine, excrement, blood, semen, and human flesh.
219. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba 'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 61, D. folio 266a5, 531.5.
220. Tib. Don yod grub pa.
221. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 9b, 34.5; and Tsongkhapa, *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folio 137b, 337.1–2.
222. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a2, D. folio 153b6, 306.6, Tog 179.1, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 130ef. Zhol, D. and Tog have *dbus su* for *'og tu* in our text [the Skt. is *madhye*].
223. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 10a–b, 35.5–36.1.
224. Reading *dang* for *nang* in our text.
225. Tib. Rdo rje 'jigs byed, the Terrifying One.
226. Tib. Bde mchog.
227. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 9b–10b, 34.5–36.1.
228. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 9b–10a, 34.5–35.2.
229. *Rgyud phyi ma*, *Uttaratantra*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a1, D. folio 153b, 306.6–7, Tog 178.7–179.1, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 130ab.
230. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 10a, 35.1–3.
231. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a1, D. folio 153b, 306.6, Tog 178.7, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 129ab, cited above. Zhol

and Tog have *bsreg pa* for *sreg pa* in our text.

232. Tōh. 443, while verse 129 describes the blessing of the inner offering in brief, in verses 130–33 a more detailed explanation is offered.

233. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a2, D. folio 153b, 306.7, Tog 179.1–2, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 131abc. Zhol and Tog have *sbyor ba* for *sbyor bas* in our text. The Sanskrit edition is somewhat different.

234. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 10a, 35.4, that has *'od kyi* for *'od kyis* in our text.

235. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a1, D. folio 153b, 306.6, Tog 179.1, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 129, see above.

236. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a2, D. folio 154a, 307.1, Tog 179.2, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 131d. Zhol has *gnyis par 'gyur* for *gnyis bar 'byung* in our text. The Sanskrit is somewhat different.

237. Tib. *'Od dpag med*.

238. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 10a–b, 35.4–36.1.

239. The *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, chap. 16, Zhol 38b1, Tog 128.6, Dunh. 71a2, Fremantle 1971, v. 50ef, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 39cd. Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. have *de* for *re*; Dunh. has *kyi* for *kun* with an interlinear note.

240. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a2–3, D. folio 154a, 307.1, Tog 179.2–3, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 132. Tog has *sbyor bar* for *sbyor bas* in our text.

241. Tib. *Rnam par snang mdzad*.

242. Reading *dag pa* for *dge pa*.

243. Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a3, D. folio 154a, 307.2, Tog 179.3–4, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 133cd.

244. Note that the purification of the ten substances is through the seed syllable *hūṃ*, the seed syllable of Cittavajra Akṣobhya; the transformation is through the seed syllable *āḥ*, the seed syllable of Vāgvajra Amitābha; and the magnification is through the seed syllable *om*, the seed syllable of Kāyavajra Vairocana.

245. Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 84a3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 138b, 276.5, has *bcad* for *bcud* in our text; see also his *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 87a–b, 452.2–453.4.

246. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 10a, 35.2–3, see above.

247. Reading *sruv pa* for *srung ba*.

248. Tib. *snang mched thob gsum*.

249. Reading *gyis* for *gyi* in our text.

250. Reading *bsang gtor* for *bsang gtong* in our text.

251. *Bhu ba blo ldan* in our text, *Dbus pa blo ldan* in D. See his *Bde mchog 'byung ba dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga*, *Cakrasamvarodayamaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 1538, D. folio 135b3, 270.3. D. has *bi mu mā ra bde legs* for *bi mu ma ra 'di legs* in our text.

252. *Bi Mu Ma Ra* are the first syllables of excrement (*viṭ*, *dri chen*), urine (*mūtra*, *dri chu*), great meat (*māṃsa*, *sha chen*), and blood (*rakta*); see *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 528.

253. Reading *Virūpa* for *Pir khra ba* in our text, see his *Dbu bcad ma'i sgrub thabs*, *Chinnamūḍasādhana*, Tōh. 1555, D. folio 206a4, 411.4. D. has *yig gsum sngags kyis ni* for *yi ge gsum sngags kyis*, *mngon par bsngags pa'i* for *mngon lnga bsngags pa'i*, and *dag* for *rnams* in our text.

254. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 10b–12b, 36.1–40.5.

255. Our text has *Ārya Father and Son*, *'phags pa yab sras*, which refers to the Nāgārjuna, Klu sgrub, and his disciples who belong to the Ārya, 'Phags pa tradition of the *Guhyasamāja*, *Gsang ba 'dus pa*.

256. This meditation does not appear in Klu sgrub's *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, nor in Zla ba grags pa's *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814.

257. Mtsho skye, *Dgyes pa rdo rje'i sgrub thabs*, *Hevajrasādhana*, Tōh. 1218, D. folio 1b, 2.4–5; for the

Sanskrit, see *Dhīh* 2003, 133. While the Sanskrit colophon attributes this work to Ācārya Saroruha, the Tibetan version has here Slob dpon Padma.

258. Lalitavajra, *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi sgrub thabs*, *Vajrabhairavasādhana*, Tōh. 1998, D. folio 197a1, 391.1.

259. Tib. Bde mchog, Kye rdo rje, and 'Jigs byed.

260. Tib. *Mkha' 'gro rgya mtsho rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud*, Tōh. 372.

261. These are the names of the directional guardians who are the recipients of the preliminary tormas in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 13a–b, 41.5–42.2; see below. These guardians are found also in the *De bzhiñ gshegs pa thams cad kyi de kho na nyid bsdus pa*, *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha*, Tōh. 479, D. folios 72b–73b, 144.6–146.2. For the Sanskrit see Horiuchi 1983, §746. Toru Tomabechi, personal communication, February 3, 2017.

262. Abhayākara Gupta's *Man ngag snye ma*, *Āmnāyamañjarī*, Tōh. 1198, his commentary on the *Dpal yang dag par sbyor ba'i rgyud*, *Samputatantra*.

263. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 12b, 40.3.

264. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 12b, 40.2–3.

265. *Om āḥ hrīḥ pravara satkāraṃ arghaṃ pratīccha hūṃ svāhā*.

266. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 12b–14a, 40.5–43.3, see below.

267. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 12b–13a, 40.5–41.3.

268. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 13a–b, 41.3–42.2.

269. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 13a–b, 41.3–42.2.

270. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 13b, 42.3–5.

271. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14a, 43.1–3.

272. *Vajrāvalī*, Tōh. 3140, D. folio 89b, p. 178.1–5, Mori 2009: 496–97.

273. These verses — being the mantra translation into Tibetan — are inserted between the syllables *om āḥ* at the beginning and *hūṃ svāhā* at the end; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 13a–14a, 40.5–43.3.

274. Reading *ched* for *tshad* in our text.

275. The offerer, the receivers, and the offerings.

276. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14a, p. 43.3–4.

277. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14a–b, pp. 43.4–44.2.

278. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14b, 44.2–5.

279. The clearing is done with the mantra *om āḥ vighnāntakṛt hūṃ*; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14b, 44.2.

280. Reading *me tog* for *ma tog* in our text.

281. Reading *za ba* for *zab* in our text.

282. *Dpung bzang gis zhus pa'i rgyud*, *Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Tōh. 805, chap. 4, D. folio 124a, 247.4–7. In D. the order of the sentences is different, and in addition D. has 'khru ba'i tshe na 'ang for 'khrung pa'i tshe na, bkres shing lus la for de ni lus kyang, bral for 'bral, gzugs can for lus can, g.yo sgyu byed cing mi srin la for g.yo sgyu che zhing me bsrin la, 'dod chen che la rab tu khu chu 'dzag for 'dod chags che zhing rab gtum khu ba 'dzag, snying ga tsha for snying gar che, gtsug 'phyang for gtsug 'chang, de ni dri 'bul ba na for da ni dri 'phul che na, and bud med la ni for bud med dag la in our text.

283. D. has 'khru for 'khrung.

284. Reading *mchog tu* for *mtshog tu* in our text.

285. D. has *mi srun* for *me bsrin* in our text.
286. D. has *snying ga tsha* for *snying gar che* in our text.
287. Reading *de* for *da* and *tshe* for *che*. D. has *de ni dri 'bul ba na* for *da ni dri 'phul che na* in our text.
288. For purification, the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14b, 44.2–3, instructs: “*Oṃ śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'ham*. Turn into emptiness.”
289. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14b, 44.3.
290. In other words, to understand that the pure vessels are the own fruit or the own effect of the extremely subtle life sustaining wind.
291. Tib. *Sgyu 'phrul dra ba*, Tōh. 466, D. folios 94a1–134a7, 187.1–267.7.
292. *Brtag gnyis*, Tōh. 418, D. folio 14a, 27.1, Snellgrove 1959, II.i.5. D. and Snellgrove have *hūṃ ni* for *hūṃ las* in our text.
293. This is the *anusvāra* written as a dot at the top of the syllable, making the vowel sound nasalized.
294. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 14b, 44.4–5.
295. Reading *sngon du* for *mngon du* in our text.
296. The *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 1a, 2.4–5, P. 269.1.6–2.1, L. 4, T. 4.
297. Tib. *Rdo rje sems dpa'*, Skt. *Vajrasattva*.
298. *Snying po rgyan*, *Sarvaguhyavidhigarbhāṅkāra*, Tōh. 2490, folio 238a, 475.5–7. D. has *gcig po* for *gcig pu*, *chog ga* for *chog*, and *byin gyis brlabs gyur pa* for *byin gyis brlabs 'gyur bas* in our text.
299. This line is unclear.
300. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 16a–18a, 47.1–51.5.
301. *Oṃ Vajrasattva samayam anupālaya vajrasattvatvenopatiṣṭha dṛdho me bhava sutoṣyo me bhava supoṣyo me bhava anurakto me bhava sarva siddhim me prayaccha sarva karmasu ca me cittam śreyah kuru hūṃ ha ha ha ha hoḥ bhagavan sarva tathāgata vajra mā me muñca vajrī bhāva mahā samaya sattva āḥ hūṃ phaṭ*; see Bhadanta Indra 1997, 52–53.
302. Tib. *Rdo rje sems dpa'*.
303. Reading *dri* for *dra* in our text.
304. Bhadanta Indra 1997, 53, has *mdzad du gsol* for *dngos po'i rang bzhin du mdzod*; in our text, “make me.”
305. Bhadanta Indra 1997, 53, has *dgyes par mdzod* for *dgyes pa'i rang bzhin du mdzod*; in our text “make me pleased.”
306. The order of this and the following line has been switched in our text.
307. Bhadanta Indra 1997, 53, has *las kun la yang* for *bdag la las thams cad stsal du gsol*; in our text “in all activities.”
308. Bhadanta Indra 1997, 53, has *bdag sems la dge legs su mdzod* for *sems kyi dpal du mdzod*; in our text “make my mind virtuous good.”
309. Bhadanta Indra 1997, 53, has *rdo rje can mdzod* for *rdo rje can gi rang bzhin*; in our text, “make me a vajra holder.”
310. Tib. *Mngon brjod rgyud bla ma*, Tōh. 369, D. folio 312a, 623.3. D. has *ste* for *yis* in our text.

3. Establishing Favorable Conditions

*Making Offerings to the Field for the Accumulation of Merit, Keeping Vows and So Forth, to Establish Conducive Conditions*³¹¹

ALTHOUGH THE Lord Nāgārjuna did not explicitly provide instruction on the accumulation of merit during the preliminaries,³¹² you should follow the explanation of glorious Candrakīrti in his *Vajrasattva Sādhana*.³¹³

This is why you should visualize yourself as Akṣobhyavajra³¹⁴ before you make the offerings:³¹⁵ to purify your own impure appearances and attitudes. Here is the purpose of this way of purification: in order to understand, as taught in the Pāramitā Vehicle, the necessity for being thoroughly absorbed in the realization that the three spheres of offerings to the victorious ones do not truly exist, and to understand further, as taught in the Mantra Vehicle, the necessity for being thoroughly absorbed in the realization that the three spheres of offerings are the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness.

Abhayākara³¹⁶ and Bhavyakīrti³¹⁷ prescribed meditating on a white syllable *hūṃ* on the variegated lotus and the sun, but here you should meditate on a blue syllable *hūṃ* for the following reason: [330] *hūṃ* is the seed syllable of Akṣobhya, and this accords with your meditation on yourself as blue Akṣobhya. Here is the explanation of the inviter:³¹⁸ a blue *hūṃ* abides in the heart on a variegated lotus and sun, and from this *hūṃ* a hook-like ray of light emanates — this is the light that invites. The lotus and sun signify the eight petals in the heart *cakra* as well as the white and red drops, and the *hūṃ* upon them signifies the very subtle wind-and-mind that abide as indivisible essence.

While offering here as well as later on, you should emanate light-rays and the deities of offerings from the syllable *hūṃ* in your heart, and then draw them back into it, for the *Root Tantra* teaches:³¹⁹ “Having recited, emanate the vajra, and after completion, draw it back.” Here is the purpose of drawing it back in this way: it produces a special ripening of the roots of merit for all the winds to enter, abide in, and dissolve into the indestructible drop in the heart during the

completion stage.

Now here is the purpose of inviting the lamas within the field for accumulating merit as the *Abhidhānottara Tantra*³²⁰ and the *Samvarodaya Tantra*³²¹ teach: in this [Vajra] Vehicle it is taught that the lama is the supreme field for accumulating merit. There are three methods for inviting the lama: (1) the *Crown Jewel Sādhana* by *Kambala³²² teaches us to invite the lama sitting on a lion throne at the cremation ground in the eastern direction, (2) the *sādhana*s of Vajrabhairava and Hevajra³²³ and so forth teach us to invite the lama as the lord of the tathāgata family of the principal deity, [331] and (3) to invite the lama as identical with the principal deity. The method here is the latter.

From whence do you invite the deities? From their natural abode. And here too there are alternative methods: to invite them from the great bliss *dharmakāya* in the appearance of the *rūpakāya*, or to invite them from the *saṃbhogakāya* in the appearance of the *rūpakāya*. This is so because the *Abhidhānottara Tantra* teaches:³²⁴ “Invoke those who are already in existence.” Invitations from the No-Higher Heaven³²⁵ and so forth are invitations from a specific place.³²⁶

The Sevenfold Worship

Following the invitation, you should prostrate, make offerings, and so forth. Although there are several different sequences in these stages,³²⁷ here the offerings come first, as shown in the commentaries on the *sādhana*.

Offerings³²⁸

Each offering, of flowers and so forth, must be endowed with the five special qualities of substance, mantra, hand gesture, meditation, and attainment. The mantra of offerings³²⁹ is as taught in the *Vajra Garland Tantra*.³³⁰ Regarding its meaning: *om* has been explained already, *sarvatathāgata* is all tathāgatas, *puṣpe* is flower, *pūja* is offerings, *megha* is cloud, *samudra* is ocean, *spharaṇa* is diffusing, *samaya* is pledge, *śrīye* is accept in accordance, *āḥ* and *hūṃ* are the seed syllables of speech and mind. In summary, here is the meaning: may you accept these diffusing clouds of myriad flower offerings to all the tathāgatas in accordance with the pledge. [332] The rest of the offering mantras should be understood in the same vein.

Here is the method for engaging the mind in visualization while reciting the mantra: with the recitation of the *om*, you should visualize that from your heart

innumerable goddesses emanate holding the respective offering substances, and as they make the offerings, an extraordinary untainted great bliss arises within the mental continuum of the field for accumulating merit. While reciting *hūṃ* and making the hand gesture of vajra gathering, you should visualize the goddesses being drawn into the *hūṃ* syllable in the heart.

Prostration³³¹

The first verse recited as you prostrate:³³² “Forms, feelings, perceptions, conditioning,” and so forth, is taught in the *Later Tantra*.³³³ Here is its meaning: to whom do you prostrate? To *all those who are equal to Bodhicittavajra*³³⁴ or Vajradhara, equal in perfecting their abandonment and realization. They are *immense* because, having discarded the two obscurations, they are the very wisdom of nondual profundity and manifestation that arises as the wheel of deities.

Who are they? They are the five tathāgata families who are the five purified aggregates: *form, feeling, perception, conditioning, and consciousness*.³³⁵ The five vajra ladies³³⁶ and Samantabhadra³³⁷ who are the six purified *sensory spheres*. The six purified *faculties* beginning with the eyes are the six bodhisattvas: Kṣitigarbha, Vajrapāṇi, Khagarbha, Lokeśvara, Sarvāvaraṇa-*viṣkambhin*, and Maitreya.³³⁸ [333] The four mothers³³⁹ together with Mañjuśrī who are the five purified physical elements: *earth, water, fire, wind, and space*.

Regarding the next line recited during the prostration,³⁴⁰ the purified *ignorance* is Yamāntakṛt,³⁴¹ belonging to the tathāgata family of Vairocana; likewise the purified *fault*, which is pride, is Prajñāntakṛt, belonging to the tathāgata family of the Jewel; the purified form of the *one endowed with the nature of desire* is Hayagrīva, belonging to the tathāgata family of Amitābha; and *vajra* is Vighnāntakṛt, belonging to the tathāgata family of Amoghasiddhi.

To explain the reason they are *equal* to Vajradhara, the *Later Tantra* teaches:³⁴² They are *born out of union with the consort, perpetually joined*. This means that the thirty-two deities dwelling in the mandala of the *Guhyasamāja* are *equal to Bodhicittavajra* or Vajradhara in their abandonment and realization, for they are *perpetually joined* with the innate bliss that arises out of *union* with the *consort*, that is, the mudrā. *Being intoxicated*³⁴³ through the experience of the *joy* of innate bliss and emptiness, *the entire variety of things* appears to them as a play, and therefore they are *equal to Bodhicittavajra*.

To explain prostrating to the other deities set in the mandala, the *Later*

Tantra teaches:³⁴⁴ *gathering* is Ṭakkirāja,³⁴⁵ *joy* is Nīladaṇḍa, *appearance* is Mahābāla, *unchanging* is Acala, *the cause* is Sumbha, and since the cause abides below the path, Sumbharāja who abides below the mandala resembles this. [334] *The fruit* is Uṣṇīṣacakravartin, since the fruit is the furthest limit, abiding at the summit, and Uṣṇīṣacakravartin who abides above the mandala resembles this *nature*. *Phenomena that pertains to the mind* indicates that the two fierce deities abiding above and below are the essence of purified consciousness.

Delusion, anger, desire, obscurations, and vajra are the tathāgata families of the six additional fierce deities. *Delusion* is Acala, who belongs to the tathāgata family of Vairocana; *anger* is the two fierce deities abiding above and below, who belong to the tathāgata family of Akṣobhya; *desire* is Nīladaṇḍa, who belongs to the tathāgata family of Amitābha; *obscurations* is Ṭakkirāja, who belongs to the tathāgata family of Ratnasambhava; and *vajra* is Mahābala, who belongs to the tathāgata family of Amoghasiddhi. I *prostrate* to all of them. This accords with the explanation of Nāropa in his commentary on the *Later Tantra*.³⁴⁶

Confession³⁴⁷

The confession is taught with one verse:³⁴⁸ “River of existence without beginning” and so forth. Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples³⁴⁹ did not teach this verse, but it appears in the *sādhana* of Mañjuvajra.³⁵⁰ Here is the method of confession: the time is *without beginning*, the place is *the river of existence*, the inducement for *accumulating* turbidity is *total conceptualization* through the three poisons, the essence of this accumulation is flaw or *turbid*. The addressees are described with: [335] *in the presence of* the lama and the assembly of the deities of the mandala who are *endowed with great compassion*. The characteristic trait [of the turbid] is not being very slight, so *all* of it is taken into consideration. The method of confession is *I confess according to the ritual method* taught by the victorious ones, complete with the four antidotal powers³⁵¹ and thoroughly absorbed in the realization that the three spheres [agent, object, and act] do not truly exist.

Rejoicing and Dedication

Rejoicing and dedication are taught in one verse:³⁵² “The fully awakened buddhas, the bodhisattvas,” and so forth. Here is its meaning: *I rejoice with true joy in all the virtuous deeds of the fully awakened buddhas and the bodhisattvas,*

sublime beings, sublime disciples and solitary buddhas, and all ordinary beings who are *other* than *sublime beings*, and *I dedicate* them, as well as my own virtuous deeds accumulated in the three times, *to* the attainment of supreme *enlightenment*. It is appropriate to dedicate the virtuous deeds of others together with your own. Doing so is the best means for multiplying the roots of your virtue and for not using them up.

Taking Refuge

Three verses were taught for taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha:³⁵³ “Achieved through the play of the pure moon-like mind,” and so forth. First, here is the method for seeking refuge in the Buddha: *I seek refuge* by *always* accepting the *Sugatas*³⁵⁴ as the guides on the path. With what special qualities are the Sugatas endowed? The Sugatas are endowed with the most excellent distinctions having thoroughly perfected their fruitional *wisdom* and *methods* during the path. [336] Their thoroughly perfected wisdom is the nondual insight that realizes emptiness, the *play of mind* or its expression, *pure* of dualistic appearances, *achieved* through³⁵⁵ a continual increase *like* the waxing *moon*. Their thoroughly perfected means are the *boundless means of sublime compassion* and the perfections of generosity and so forth. All these thoroughly perfected distinctions *dwelt* simultaneously and uninterruptedly in *their minds*.

Here is the method for taking refuge in the excellent Dharma:³⁵⁶ the Dharma is the truth of the path,³⁵⁷ the wisdom of meditative equipoise that certainly liberates from *all conceptualization* of dualistic appearances in the ground itself, the *foundation* of all *perfected* qualities of abandonment and realization of the *supreme beings*, that is, the sublime bodhisattvas. The Dharma is also the truth of cessation,³⁵⁸ understanding that within their natural state *all* diverse *phenomena* share a *single taste*, the *essence* of suchness. To this *excellent Dharma I always go for refuge* by accepting it as my object of attainment.

Here is the method for taking refuge in the Saṅgha:³⁵⁹ *I go for refuge* by accepting as companions on the path the *assembly* of bodhisattvas who are superior to ordinary³⁶⁰ bodhisattvas in their *mastery* of the *rigorous practice* of the Mahāyāna because they *abide on the bodhisattva levels of joy and higher still*, and are *endowed with the excellence* of mind-for-enlightenment *born of* the mother of *supreme compassion*, and *truly free* of *bondage* [337] at their respective levels.

Generating the Mind-for-Enlightenment and Pledging Reliance³⁶¹ on the Path

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* has two verses here beginning with³⁶² “Resolve and ripen.”³⁶³ Here is the meaning of the first: the way to *generate* the *mind* is to focus on *sublime enlightenment*, the object of attainment, *adorned with earnest aspiration* for the sake of others. You should generate the two minds for enlightenment: the aspirational mind-for-enlightenment, the *resolve* “I shall attain buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings,” and the engaging mind-for-enlightenment, the ability to *wholly eliminate the habitual tendencies of all obscurations* through the pure practice, the *ripened* fruit of the aspirational mind.

Here is the method of relying on the path. You pledge the following: *I shall henceforth truly abide on the singular path* traversed by the *Sugatas and their Spiritual Sons*, the main pillar of the path of the Mahāyāna, the practice of the six perfections, *generosity and so forth*, and in the ethical conduct of the wholesome activity of *the ten virtues*. This method is exalted over the Pāramitā Vehicle, because even while on the path, visualizing the entire practice of the six perfections as the *essence of all fully enlightened buddhas* is a practice of the mind that takes the fruit as the path. [338]

These explanations follow the commentaries on the *Sādhana of the Entirely Good*.³⁶⁴

Maintaining the Unshared Vows³⁶⁵

Here is the purpose of keeping mantric vows in this context:³⁶⁶ the purpose is not to take on new and previously unpledged mantric vows or to restore vows that have been broken. The purpose is rather to reinforce and enhance the vows you have already taken. Hence this will be an offering of attainment to satisfy the lama and the assembly of deities residing in the mandala, thereby enabling the swift completion of the two accumulations.³⁶⁷

First, to clarify the object of the mantric vows, the subject taking them, and their duration, there are five lines in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* beginning with:³⁶⁸ “All the buddhas and bodhisattvas.”³⁶⁹ Then, to clarify the method of generating the mind that serves as the basis for keeping mantric vows, the *sādhana* has one verse beginning with:³⁷⁰ “Just as the protectors of the three times.”³⁷¹ Next, to clarify the means of keeping the commitments and vows of each of the five tathāgata families, there are five parts.

The first, explaining how to keep the commitments and vows of the tathāgata

family of Vairocana — born of Buddha yoga — consists of two verses:³⁷² “Training in moral conduct” and so forth. *Keeping* means taking an oath and pledging to practice the following six commitments during the six sessions — three times a day and three times a night. Not to transgress the commitment to practice *the three ethical conducts*: (1) the shared and unshared ethical conduct of *avoiding wrongdoing*, (2) the shared and unshared ethical conduct of *accumulating virtues*, and (3) the shared and unshared ethical conduct of *acting for the sake of sentient beings*. [339] And also to avoid transgressing the commitment to take refuge in the shared and unshared *Three Jewels*: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha.³⁷³

The part explaining how to keep the commitments and vows of the tathāgata family of Vajra Akṣobhya consists of one verse:³⁷⁴ “The great supreme Vajra tathāgata family” and so forth. *Keeping* means taking an oath³⁷⁵ and pledging to practice the following four commitments during the six sessions — three times a day and three times a night.

The commitment of the vajra is to keep without transgression the properly measured vajra, in mindfulness of the secret vajra — the mind of the victorious one, the wisdom of great bliss. The commitment of the bell is to keep without transgression the properly measured bell, in mindfulness of the secret bell — the wisdom that realizes emptiness. The commitment of the consort is not to waver while meditating on yourself in the body of the deity, such as Vajrasattva with the great consort, uniting emptiness with the bliss that arises from embracing the wisdom consort. The unwavering commitment of the master is to perceive the body, speech, and mind of the vajra master — as signified during the initiation — in the essence of the body, speech, and mind of the sublime deity,³⁷⁶ and to hold him as the supreme sphere of reverence. [340]

The part explaining how to keep the commitments and vows of the tathāgata family of Ratnasambhava consists of four lines in the *sādhana*:³⁷⁷ “Supreme Jewel tathāgata family” and so forth. The means for keeping them is the taking of an oath and pledging to generate, three times a day and three times a night, the commitment of the tathāgata family of Ratnasambhava — to be unwavering in the generation³⁷⁸ of the following four commitments throughout the six sessions: (1) offering material gifts, (2) offering the gifts of Dharma teaching, (3) offering gifts of loving-kindness, such as meditating on loving-kindness beyond measure, and (4) offering gifts of protection from fear, such as meditating on equanimity beyond measure.

The part explaining how to keep the commitments and vows of the tathāgata family of Amitābha consists of four lines:³⁷⁹ “Arising from the great awakening” and so forth. The means for keeping them is the taking of an oath and pledging to maintain the commitment of the tathāgata family of Amitābha throughout the six sessions: upholding all the *dharma*s subsumed by *the outer, the secret, and the three vehicles* throughout the six sessions. *The outer* comprises action and practice tantras, *the secret* comprises the yoga and unexcelled tantras, and *the three vehicles* comprise the Vehicles of the Disciples and the Solitary Buddhas and the Pāramitā Vehicle. In short, the four classes of tantra and the three vehicles. [341]

The part explaining how to keep the commitments and vows of the tathāgata family of Amoghasiddhi consists of³⁸⁰ four lines:³⁸¹ “Excellent tathāgata family of action” and so forth. This answers the question, what is the practice that should follow the taking of the tantric vows? The means for keeping them is the taking of an oath and pledging to maintain the two vows and commitments of the tathāgata family of Amoghasiddhi three times a day and three times a night: to uphold during the six sessions the sixteen vows³⁸² already taken, from the vows of Vairocana to those of Amitābha, and to make outer *offerings*, inner offerings, secret offerings, and suchness offerings to the lama and the deities residing in the mandala.

To conclude, the part explaining how to keep the commitments and vows common to all five tathāgata families consists of four lines:³⁸³ “Unexcelled mind-for-enlightenment” and so forth. You *generate the mind-for-enlightenment* with the resolve, “I shall attain awakening *for the sake of all sentient beings*,” and to this end, you must take an oath and pledge to fulfill the resolve, “Until I have attained *unexcelled enlightenment*, I shall keep the general and specific vows and commitments of the five tathāgata families, three times a day and three times a night.” [342]

The answer to the question, “What is the practice that should follow the taking of the tantric vows?” consists of four lines:³⁸⁴ “Those not liberated” and so forth. You should *liberate those who are not liberated* from the obscurations of afflictive emotions, such as Brahmā. You should *free those not freed* from obscuration to omniscience, such as the disciples and the solitary buddha arhats. You should *relieve* the suffering of sentient beings residing in the three lower realms of existence who are *not relieved* of sufferings. In brief, you must *set all sentient beings* in nonabiding *nirvāṇa*.

There are three ways for concluding the offerings to the field for accumulating merit:³⁸⁵ (1) visualizing them away after purifying them into emptiness of intrinsic existence, (2) dissolving them into yourself for a blessing, and (3) entreating them to go to their abodes. In this case, you should do the latter. Visualize those invited in the form of *nirmāṇakāyas* departing for the principal abode of the *saṃbhogakāyas*.

The purpose of making offerings to the field for accumulating merit is to facilitate the accumulation of merit conducive to meditation on the main part of the *sādhana*.

311. In the outline on 303.6 above, our text has *mtshun rkyen bsgrub pa'i* for *mtshun rkyan bsten pa'i* here.

312. Klu sgrub, Nāgārjuna, gives no instruction about gathering the accumulations in his *Mdor byas*.

313. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 196b, 392.2–3, P. 20.1.6–7, Hong and Tomabechi 2009, 4.12–5.2, 37.2–7.

314. Tib. Mi bskyod rdo rje.

315. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 18a–b, 51.5–52.2.

316. Abhayākara Gupta's *Rim lnga dgongs 'grel*, *Pañcakramamatiṭkā*, Tōh. 1831, D. folio 183a4–5, 365.4–5. In the same context, Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 16b, 34.6, seems to refer to this work; however, Abhaya does not specify the color of the syllable *hūṃ*.

317. *Rim pa lnga'i dka' 'grel*, *Pañcakramapañjikā*, Tōh. 1838, D. folio 1b, 2.3.

318. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 18a–b, 51.5–52.2.

319. Tōh. 442, chap. 13, Zhol 20a6, Tog 68.1, Dunh. 37b3, Fremantle 1971, 15ab, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 13ab.

320. Tib. *Mngon brjod rgyud bla ma*, Tōh. 369.

321. Tib. *Sdom 'byung*, Tōh. 373.

322. *Bde mchog gi sgrub thabs gtsug nor*, *Cakrasaṃvarasādhana ratnacūḍāmaṇi*, Tōh. 1443, D. folio 244b2, 488.2.

323. Tib. 'Jigs byed and Kyai rdor.

324. Tib. *Mngon brjod rgyud bla ma*, Tōh. 369, D. folio 254a2, 507.2. D. has *sngon grub pa rnams bskul nas ni* for *sngon grub pa ni bskul nas su* in our text.

325. Tib. 'og min, Skt. *akaniṣṭha*.

326. See Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 18a, 37.4–6.

327. In the system of the *Bzang spyod smon lam*, prostration is first followed by the offerings.

328. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 18b, 52.2–4. For this and the following steps, see also Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 5a–8a, 346.2–352.3.

329. *Oṃ sarva tathāgata puṣpe pūja megha samudra spharaṇa samaya śrīye āḥ hūṃ*, and so on, *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 18b, 52.2–4.

330. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 54, D. folio 257b1, 514.1. See also Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 5a, 346.2–6.
331. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 18b–19a, 52.4–53.4.
332. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 18b, 52.4–5.
333. *Rgyud phyi ma*, *Uttaratantra*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 55b3–4, D. folio 157a, 313.3–4, Tog 188.3–4, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 205. The following lines of the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa appear in the *Rgyud phyi ma* as well.
334. Tib. Byang chub kyi sems rdo rje, Eng. Vajra Mind for Enlightenment, the main tathāgata in the first chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*.
335. These are Mi bskyod pa, Rnam par snang mdzad, Rin chen 'byung ldan, 'Od dpag med, and Don yod grub pa; Skt. Akṣobhya, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi.
336. Rdo rje mas, these are Gzugs rdo rje ma, Sgra rdo rje ma, Dri rdo rje ma, Ro rdo rje ma, and Reg bya rdo rje ma; Skt. Rūpavajrā, Śabdavajrā, Gandhavajrā, Rasavajrā, and Sparśavajrā.
337. Tib. Kun bzang or Kun tu bzang po.
338. Tib. Sa'i snying po, Phyag na rdo rje, Nam mkha'i snying po, 'Jig rten dbang phyug, Sgrib pa thams cad rnam sel, and Byams pa.
339. These are Spyana ma, Māmakī, Gos dkar mo, and Sgrol ma; Skt. Locanā, Māmakī, Pāṇḍarā, and Tārā.
340. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 19a, 53.1. This entire verse also appears in the *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 55b4–5, D. folio 157a, 313.4–5, Tog 188.4–5, Matsunaga, 1978, v. 206.
341. Here the four fierce deities set in the four directions of the mandala appear. They are found in the first chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*: Tib. Gshin rje gshed, Shes rab mthar byed, Rta mgrin, and Bgegs mthar byed, [but here Rta mgrin, Hayagrīva, replaces Padmāntakṛt found in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*].
342. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 19a, 53.1–2, and the *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 55b4–5, D. folio 157a, 313.4–5, Tog 188.4–5, Matsunaga 1978, v. 206.
343. While the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 19a, 53.2, has *dga' bas myos pa'i dngos gyur pa*, our text has *dga' ba nyams su myong ba'i dngos po*.
344. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 19a, 53.2–4, *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 55b5, D. folio 157a, 313.5–6, Tog 188.5–6, Matsunaga 1978, v. 207. Here the six remaining fierce deities of the mandala of Gsang ba 'dus pa appear: Tib., 'Dod pa'i rgyal po, Dbyug sngon can, Stobs po che, Mi g.yo ba, Gnod mdzes, and Gtsug tor 'khor lo sgyur ba.
345. Or Ṭarkavirāja.
346. The *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443. In his *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, folio 7b, 165.6, Tsongkhapa says that these verses of prostration are found in the *Rgyud phyi ma*, and that Nāropa explained that these are verses recited during the prostration to the thirty-two deities.
347. This and the following verses of the sevenfold worship appear also in the *Samantabhadrasādhana*, see notes below.
348. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 19a, 53.4–5.
349. Tib. 'phags pa yab sras.
350. *Kun tu bzang po'i sgrub pa'i thabs* [hereafter: *Kun bzang sgrub thabs*], *Samantabhadrasādhana*, Tōh. 1855, D. folio 29a, 57.6; Sanskrit, Tanaka 1996, 181. The following verses of the sevenfold worship are also found there.
351. For the four powers antidotal to wrong doing, see above [329].
352. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 19a–b, 53.5–54.2; and the *Kun bzang sgrub thabs*,

- Tōh. 1855, D. folio 29a, 57.6–7; Sanskrit, Tanaka 1996, 182.
353. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 19b–20a, 54.2–55.1; and the *Kun bzang sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1855, D. folio 29a–b, 57.7–58.2; Sanskrit, Tanaka 1996, 182–84.
354. Tib. Bde gshegs-s.
355. Reading *'phel bas* for *'phel bar* in our text.
356. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 19b, 54.3–4.
357. The fourth among the four truths of the noble ones.
358. The third among the four truths of the noble ones.
359. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 19b–20a, 54.4–55.1.
360. Reading *so skye* for *so skya* in our text.
361. Below on [337] there is *lam la brten* for *lam gyi rten* here.
362. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 20a, 55.1–4, and the *Kun bzang sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1855, D. folio 29b, 58.2–3; Sanskrit, Tanaka 1996, 184–86.
363. This verse alludes to the four types of mind-for-enlightenment (*sems bskyed bzhi*) that characterizes four levels on the path.
364. This is the *Kun bzang sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1855, by Buddhajñāna, where the verses recited during the stages from confession to relying on the path are found, D. folio 29a–b, 57.6–58.3. For commentaries on this work, see Śrī Phalavajra, *Kun bzang sgrub thabs 'grel pa, Samantabhadrasāadhanavṛtti*, Tōh. 1867, D. folios 144a–146a, 287.1–291.2; and Thagana, *Kun bzang sgrub thabs kyi 'grel pa, Samantabhadrasāadhanavṛtti*, Tōh. 1868, D. folios 192b7–195a5, 383.7–389.5.
365. See Tsongkhapa's *Dngos grub kyi snye ma*, Tōh. 5270, folios 11b–22a, 398.3–419.2, translated into English by Sparham 2005, 45–62.
366. See also Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 8a, 352.2–3.
367. This practice is still part of the sevenfold worship that belongs to the accumulation of merit. Vows are not taken here but are rather offered to the lama and the deities of the mandala.
368. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 20a, 55.4–5. This and the following verses are found in the *Rdo rje mkha' 'gro, Vajradāka Tantra*, Tōh. 370, D. folio 34b1–6, 68.1–6 [note that this tantra is different from the *Mkha' 'gro rgya mtsho rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud, Ḍākārṇava Tantra*, Tōh. 372]. For the following verses see also the *Rdo rje rtse mo, Vajrasekhara Tantra*, Tōh. 480, D. folio 184a, 367.1–6.
369. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 20a, 55.4–5, has: “All the buddhas and bodhisattvas! Turn your thoughts to me! I so and so, from this moment until I attain the supreme enlightenment.”
370. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 20b, 56.1.
371. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 20b, 56.1: “Just as the Protectors of the three times have firmly resolved upon their enlightenment, I shall generate the unexcelled sublime mind for enlightenment.”
372. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 20b, 56.2–4.
373. This commitment consists of three individual commitments, hence altogether there are six commitments of the tathāgata family of Vairocana.
374. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 20b, 56.4–5.
375. Reading *yi dam* for *yid ma* in our text.
376. This is the deity the yogi meditates on.
377. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 20b–21a, 56.5–57.1.
378. Reading *skyed pa* for *skyod pa* in our text.
379. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 21a, 57.1–2.

380. Reading *byung* for *khyud* in our text.

381. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 21a, 57.2–3.

382. These sixteen vows are the six vows of Rnam snang, the four of Mi bskyod pa, the four of Rin ’byung, and the two of ’Od dpag med. When the two vows of Don grub are added, there are eighteen vows. According to other accounts, ’Od dpag med has three vows, and there are altogether nineteen vows.

383. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 21a, 57.3–4.

384. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 21a, 57.4–5.

385. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 21a–b, 57.5–58.1, has here: “May those in the field of accumulating merit depart to their abodes.”

4. Averting Unfavorable Conditions

Meditating on the Protection Wheel to Avert Unfavorable Conditions

SOME MAINTAIN³⁸⁶ that it is not appropriate to meditate on emptiness before meditating on the protection wheel [343] because if you do so, you end up meditating twice on the ground of wisdom. But there is nothing wrong with this, since the meditation on emptiness that comes before the meditation on the protection wheel is not a meditation on the ground of wisdom. Meditating on the ground of wisdom is a meditation on emptiness that corresponds to the eon³⁸⁷ of emptying the previous world on the ground level,³⁸⁸ while meditating on emptiness prior to meditating on the protection wheel is intended to purify ordinary appearances and attitudes in order to allow the protection wheel to arise as the play of indivisible bliss and emptiness.

SOME³⁸⁹ maintain that it is not appropriate to meditate on the ten-spoked yellow wheel because neither the *Root Tantra* nor the works of Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples explicitly teach this. But there is nothing wrong with doing so, as the *Later Tantra* explains:³⁹⁰ “At the center, the yogis should visualize a wheel with ten spokes that is yellow all around.”

SOME³⁹¹ maintain that it is not appropriate for the wheel to spin quickly, because if it did so, the fierce deities would not be able to occupy their places for protecting the cardinal and intermediate directions. But there is nothing wrong with this, because the *Later Tantra* explains that the fierce deities do not move while the wheel spins:³⁹² “While the wheel is spinning, [the deities] do not seem to be in motion.”

As Abhayākara³⁹³ taught, before meditating on the protection wheel, you should meditate on emptiness. Here is the method for meditating on emptiness:³⁹⁴ by reciting the mantra *oṃ svabhāva śuddhāḥ sarva dharmāḥ svabhāva śuddho ’haṃ*, in mindfulness of its meaning, [344] you should meditate on the nature, cause, and fruit of phenomena immersed in emptiness, devoid of existence by way of their own characteristics.

Here is the meaning of this mantra: *oṃ* has been explained already, *svabhāva* repeated twice is nature twice, *śuddhāḥ* repeated twice is pure twice, *sarvadharmāḥ* is all phenomena, comprised of that which is grasped and that which grasps, *ātmako*³⁹⁵ is essence, and *aḥam* is I. In summary, it means that the essence of all phenomena, comprised of that which is grasped and that which grasps — pure³⁹⁶ in nature, that am I.³⁹⁷

From the continuing state of emptiness you should visualize³⁹⁸ a *Paṃ* appearing, then arising out of it a variegated lotus; from an *āḥ* at its center a solar disk emerges, and upon it a *Bhrūṃ*; from the *Bhrūṃ* a yellow wheel with ten spokes and a hub appears, spinning quickly clockwise; upon the spokes there are ten fierce deities, for the *Later Tantra* teaches:³⁹⁹ “At the center, the yogis should visualize a wheel with ten spokes that is yellow all around, with ten fierce deities issuing from ten essences of wisdom, one on each spoke. They envision the wheel as a blocking vajra, perfect and most splendid, that radiates a multitude of vajra flames. While the wheel is spinning, [the deities] do not seem to be in motion.”

You should visualize the shape of the hub [with its upper and lower spokes] as the convergence point of double-edged spikes, and from the place where they are joined, eight spokes issue in the cardinal and intermediate directions, in a formation resembling double-edged swords. Within the hollow space at the hub you should generate the principal deity, white Vajradhara, for the fifteenth chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁴⁰⁰ “Equal in light to Vairocana, Vajrasattva, the Great King.” [345]

CERTAIN LATER⁴⁰¹ LAMAS are said to have explained that white Vajradhara⁴⁰² has one face and two arms, but it is better to visualize⁴⁰³ him with three faces and six arms, as Abhayākara⁴⁰⁴ explains.⁴⁰⁵ This is so because the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture* explains:⁴⁰⁶ “When Akṣobhya enters” into the principal deity Vajradhara [who has three faces here]⁴⁰⁷ “in the manner taught by the samādhi of ‘vajra-lamp-of-wisdom,’⁴⁰⁸ he transforms into Dveṣavajra.”⁴⁰⁹

You generate the principal deity together with his consort, because the *Illuminating Lamp* teaches that the fierce deities are drawn out of her womb:⁴¹⁰ “*Induced to issue forth* means while absorbed in union, the blessed one brought [Akṣobhya] forth.” Muniśrībhadrā⁴¹¹ explains that the consort is Vajradhātviśvarī.⁴¹² Furthermore, you should visualize her body as white. When the white Vajradhara transforms into Dveṣavajra, his consort has to transform

into Vajra Lady of Tangibles,⁴¹³ for the *Illuminating Lamp* teaches:⁴¹⁴ “*Similar to the blazing light of the buddha*⁴¹⁵ means similar in color to the lord of the tathāgata family.”⁴¹⁶

The Vajradhara of the protection wheel is in the nature of the triple-layered *sattvas*, and the three syllables are set upon his three places, as taught by the *Later Tantra*:⁴¹⁷ “Meditate on the Vajra Holder, the personification⁴¹⁸ of the *vidyā*,⁴¹⁹ endowed with the four resources.” It was explained⁴²⁰ that *the Vajra Holder, the personification of the vidyā*, is Vajradhara, and *endowed with the four resources* means endowed with the three vajras of body, speech, and mind, as well as with the *jñānasattva*, all together four. [346]

Here is the purpose of meditating on Vajradhara, the principal deity of the protection wheel, as white *saṃbhogakāya*: the meditation on emptiness *above*, according to the meaning of the mantra *svabhāva*, takes the *dharmakāya* as the path; the meditation on yourself as white *saṃbhogakāya* *here* takes the *saṃbhogakāya* as the path; and the transformation into Dveṣavajra⁴²¹ through the entry of Akṣobhya *below* takes the *nirmāṇakāya* as the path. This is so because the goal of the entire yoga of the protection wheel is transformation into a state of endowment with the special⁴²² method of taking the three bodies as the path.

With regard to the method of generating the surrounding fierce deities, SOME⁴²³ say that it is not appropriate to draw forth the fierce deities from the consort’s womb because the works of Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples do not explain the meditation in this way. This position is not appropriate because the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁴²⁴ “The mantrin should emanate the ten fierce deities.” Regarding the meaning of *emanate*, it is explained⁴²⁵ that first you generate the fierce deities in the consort’s womb, then you draw them into your heart, and finally they emerge outside, that is to say, emanate. Merely generating the fierce deities on their own seats does not encompass the term *emanate*.⁴²⁶

SOME PEOPLE⁴²⁷ maintain that it is not appropriate to generate the fierce deities by means of the “three rituals”⁴²⁸ because the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁴²⁹ “The fierce deities are born from the abode of hatred,”⁴³⁰ and the *Concise Sādhana* instructs:⁴³¹ “Arising from *hūms* that rest upon solar disks, they stand with the left legs stretched forth.” Thus it is explained that the fierce deities are generated from *hūṃ* alone and sit on a solar disk with their left leg stretched forth.

Here is the purpose of generating Akṣobhya in the womb of the mother,

drawing him into your heart, and emanating him; then having performed general and specific actions, he enters into Vajradhara, and thereby you transform into Dveṣavajra:⁴³² [347] as Dveṣavajra you command the surrounding fierce deities and enable them to accomplish their fierce activities in the step that follows.

Here is the reason why the fierce deities do not perform general and specific actions as soon as they emanate, as in the Supreme King of Mandalas:⁴³³ this is because the deeds of the fierce deities are overcoming malevolent influences,⁴³⁴ Indra and so forth, and these are performed only after they are set in their places.

You should abide in the identity of the triple-layered Dveṣavajra looking at Sumbha⁴³⁵ below.⁴³⁶ Thereby he emanates a second Sumbha who arrives and sits before you, receiving the command.⁴³⁷ He is commanded with the mantra *om Sumbha* and so forth,⁴³⁸ as the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁴³⁹ “To destroy all hindrances, you should command Sumbha and drive in the stakes.⁴⁴⁰ *Om Sumbha Nisumbha hūṃ gr̥ṇa gr̥ṇa hūṃ gr̥ṇāpaya gr̥ṇāpaya hūṃ ānaya ho bhagavan vidyā rāja hūṃ phaṭ.*”

Here is the meaning of this mantra:⁴⁴¹ *om* has been explained already, *Sumbha* is the great conqueror, *Nisumbha* is the great conqueror of all, and with these names Sumbha is invoked; *hūṃ* makes him manifest; *gr̥ṇa gr̥ṇa* means catch, catch! that is, catch, catch the harmful ones wherever they flee;⁴⁴² *gr̥ṇāpaya gr̥ṇāpaya* is exhort him to catch, exhort him to catch. Exhort him to catch also those who accompany the harmful ones, wherever they are; [348] *hūṃ* urges; *ānaya ho bhagavan* is fetch, Oh Blessed One; *vidyārājā* is King of Knowledge — this is meant to motivate Sumbha; *hūṃ phaṭ* is again urging him to kill. In summary, call: “The great conqueror! The great conqueror of all!” Motivate Sumbha with “Oh Blessed One, King of Knowledge, catch, catch the harmful ones wherever they flee! Exhort them to catch, exhort them to catch also those who accompany the harmful ones!”

As you visualize ordering them in this way,⁴⁴³ the vajra, the emblem of Sumbha, turns into a vajra hook. With this hook Sumbha grips the hearts⁴⁴⁴ of the ten guardians of the directions, the main obstructers. Binding them with his lasso around their necks, he fetches them and turns them over to the ten fierce deities. This is as the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁴⁴⁵ “By means of the deity endowed with a fierce form, the wise summon the chief obstructers and then, following the ritual method, drive in the stakes.”⁴⁴⁶ You should visualize⁴⁴⁷ the obstructers who have been fetched encased in triangular pits⁴⁴⁸ beyond the ten fierce deities,⁴⁴⁹ as *Kṛṣṇasamayavajra explained it.⁴⁵⁰ As the *Guhyasamāja*

Sādhana describes,⁴⁵¹ the stakes are driven into the crowns of the heads of the summoned obstructers, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁴⁵² “The mantrin should meditate on the Great King Vajra-Deathless,⁴⁵³ as Vajra Stake,⁴⁵⁴ the color of the petals of a blue *utpala* lotus, emitting light abounding with garlands of flames.” [349]

Regarding the method of generating the stakes, SOME TIBETAN LAMAS⁴⁵⁵ maintain that the stakes are generated from *hūms* on the crowns of the heads of the directional guardians. But in our tradition you should visualize⁴⁵⁶ Amṛtakunḍalin⁴⁵⁷ who abides in the north emanating a second Amṛtakunḍalin, who transforms into ten stakes, each of which has the form of a fierce blue Amṛtakunḍalin in its upper part, and below the navel is a single-pointed spear. These pierce the heads of the directional guardians with their associates. This is so according to the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*,⁴⁵⁸ and also because the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁴⁵⁹ “Drive these blazing spark-like stakes into the circle of the obstructers in the ten directions.”

Then, you should meditate⁴⁶⁰ on the vajra hook, the emblem of Sumbha, turning into a vajra hammer ablaze with flames. With this hammer⁴⁶¹ he pounds the stakes into the crowns of the obstructers’ heads and commands the Vajra Stakes with *gha gha* and so forth.⁴⁶² This is as the *Vajrasattva Sādhana* teaches:⁴⁶³ “Then, you should visualize Sumbharāja arising and pounding his vajra hammer as he recites the mantra.”

Here is the meaning⁴⁶⁴ of the mantra:⁴⁶⁵ *om* has already been explained; *gha gha* is *ghātaka*,⁴⁶⁶ calling out, killer!; *ghātaya ghātaya sarvaduṣṭāṃ* means vanquish all the malevolent ones; *phaṭ phaṭ* means makes this manifest; *kīlaya* twice is drive the stakes and make them immobile!; *sarvāpāpāṃ* are all those who have evil intentions; *phaṭ* is splitting; [350] the three *hūms* invoke suchness of the body, speech, and mind; *vajrakīla[ya]* is the invocation of Vajra Stake; *vajradhara ājñāpayati*⁴⁶⁷ means obey⁴⁶⁸ the command of Vajradhara; *sarvaviḥnāna* are all the obstructers; *kāya vāk citta* is body, speech, and mind, immobilize the body, speech, and mind of all the obstructers; *vajrakīlaya hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ phaṭ* is the exhortation to kill once again.

In summary, you should call out: “Oh killers, Vajra Stakes! Obey the command of Vajradhara, drive the stakes into the body, speech, and mind of all the malevolent ones, the ones intending evil; immobilize them, vanquish them!” In this way, you should visualize that as⁴⁶⁹ “the stakes pierce the obstructers from the crowns of their heads to their soles and freeze their bodies, speeches,

and minds,” they are immersed in the clear light of indivisible bliss and emptiness. The purpose of such a visualization is to purify ordinary appearances and attitudes toward the obstructers and to benefit them.

As has been explained, mantras are classified into four types.⁴⁷⁰ Generally, a mantra that has *om* at the beginning and *svāhā* at the end is called “a snake”; a mantra with neither of these is called “abbreviated”; a mantra that has *om* at the beginning but no *svāhā* at the end is called “tail-less”; and a mantra of the opposite kind is called “headless.” Among these four types, the two mantras here are called “tail-less.”⁴⁷¹ You should be aware of this method in other cases as well.

You should visualize:⁴⁷² “Once again, blazing vajra fire and light emanate from the fierce deities and the stakes, spreading in the ten directions, [351] burning the surrounding malicious obstructers, who flee hither and thither.” This is as the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁴⁷³ “You should visualize the malicious ones in flames fleeing hither and thither.”

Then, you visualize a vajra fence, a vajra tent, a vajra ground, and so forth beyond the fierce deities, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁴⁷⁴ “Drive the stakes in the ten directions and bring the malicious ones that are at the zenith and the nadir as well under your power.”⁴⁷⁵ Here is the method for this meditation:⁴⁷⁶ recite *ṭakki hūṃ jaḥ* and visualize an iron vajra fence beyond the fierce deities. All the spaces between the larger blue iron vajras are filled with smaller and smaller vajras down to the tiniest ones, leaving no space in between.

Beyond this you should visualize a water wall⁴⁷⁷ that emits blazing droplets in the ten directions. Beyond it you should visualize a fire wall wherein the blazing fire of wisdom endowed with the five colors is swirling to the right; the obstructers dare not even look at it. Beyond it you should visualize a wind wall, which moves in the same pattern as the fire wall, swirling, blowing, and fiercely howling. This is how you should meditate, as explained in the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*.⁴⁷⁸

You should visualize:⁴⁷⁹ “Upon the iron fence a *stūpa*-like vajra tent. Under this tent, and upon the fence, you should visualize a vajra canopy. From *hūṃ* on the ground below rises a vajra ground. Beyond it, in all the cardinal and intermediate directions, rises a lattice of arrows” having the form of five-spoked vajras [352] and moving swiftly, intertwined like flashes of lightning, in the eight directions, zenith and nadir,⁴⁸⁰ “enveloped in the radiant blazing fire of wisdom.”

Whereas in the case of Cakrasaṃvara,⁴⁸¹ the shape of the enclosure was explained to be square, here it is round. With regard to the measure⁴⁸² of its height and width: Abhaya maintains that its height is from No-Higher Heaven⁴⁸³ above to the wind disk below, and *Kambala⁴⁸⁴ maintains that it is from the world of Brahmā above to the golden ground below. Kṛṣṇācārya⁴⁸⁵ maintains that its width is up to the ring of iron mountains. In our tradition the yogis meditate on it as expansively as they can.

The meditation on the vajra enclosure and so forth protects the environment, while setting the protective covering of the three syllables on the body, speech, and mind protects the meditator. Thus the yogis protect themselves by visualizing their own bodies, speeches, and minds as of an indivisible nature with the body, speech, and mind of the *jñānasattva*.⁴⁸⁶ This is as the *Vajrasattva Sādhana* teaches:⁴⁸⁷ “With the three syllables you put on the protective covering.”

The meditation on emptiness before the visualization of the protection wheel is the ultimate protection, while the main part of the meditation on the protection wheel is conventional protection. Here is the purpose of meditating on the protection wheel in this way before meditating on the main part of the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*; it is so that the meditation on the deity yoga will be brought to completion without obstructions, for the thirteenth chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁴⁸⁸ “Wherever you practice your resolve born of meditation, [353] as long as you abide by the yoga of meditation, you will be blessed by the buddhas.”⁴⁸⁹

386. See Red mda’ ba, *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal zhus lan*, Kathmandu, folio 49a–b, 277.5–278.2; and in *Gsung thor bu*, TBRC W1CZ1871, folio 304b.

387. Skt. *kalpa*.

388. Reading *gzhi la* for *gzhal* in our text.

389. See Red mda’ ba, *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal zhus lan*, Kathmandu, folio 49b, 278.2–3; and in *Gsung thor bu*, TBRC W1CZ1871, folio 304b. Ngor chen Kun dga’ bzang po, *Gsang ’dus dkyil ’khor gyi sgrub thabs dngos grub rgya mtsho*, folio 3b, 93.1.3–6, who teaches that one should visualize the ten fierce deities, but without the protection wheel. Bu ston, *Mdor byas ’grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 9a, 699.2–6, offers two methods of meditation on protection with and without the wheel.

390. *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 51b3, D. folio 151b, 302.7, Tog 173.7–174.1, Matsunaga 1978, v. 81ab. Zhol and Tog have *de* for *da* in our text, Tog has *sgom* for *bsgom*. The complete two verses are cited below, [344] where there is *de* for *da* as well.

391. See Red mda' ba, *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal zhus lan*, Kathmandu, folio 49b, 278.5–6; and in *Gsung thor bu*, TBRC W1CZ1871, folio 305a.
392. *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 51b4, D. folio 152a, 303.1, Tog 174.2, Matsunaga 1978, v. 82d.
393. Abhayākara Gupta instructs that the yogi should meditate on a yellow protection wheel with ten spokes after meditating on emptiness, both in his *Rim lnga dgongs 'grel*, *Pañcakramamatiṭikā*, Tōh. 1831, D. folio 183a, 365.6, and in his *Man ngag snye ma*, *Āmnāyamañjarī*, Tōh. 1198, D. folio 127b, 254.4–7.
394. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 21b, 58.1–2.
395. This word does not appear in this mantra. It appears in the other mantra recited while meditating on emptiness: *Om śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'ham*.
396. Reading *dag pa* for *dga' ba* in our text.
397. This is not a translation of the Sanskrit mantra, it is the gist of its meaning.
398. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 21b, 58.2–5.
399. Tōh. 443, Zhol 51b3–4, D. folios 151b–152a, 302.7–303.1, Tog 173.7–174.2, Matsunaga 1978, vv. 81–82. Zhol and Tog have *de* for *da*, *rdo rjes* for *rdo rje*, and *mdzes pa* for *mdzes pas* in our text; Zhol has *'phro bas* for *spros bas*, and Tog has *sgom* for *bsgom* in our text.
400. Tōh. 442, Zhol 31b4–5, Tog 105.2, Dunh. 57b1, Fremantle 1971, and Matsunaga 1978, v. 35bc, cited also in the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 11a, 21.7, P. 273.2.6.
401. See Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 9a–b, 699.6–700.4, citing Thub pa dpal, *Rnal 'byor pa'i yid 'phrog*, *Pañcakramaṭippaṇīyogimanoharaṭippaṇi*, Tōh. 1813, D. folio 152a, 303.4–5; for the Sanskrit see Jiang and Tomabechi 1996, 10.
402. Tib. Rdo rje 'chang.
403. Reading *byed pa* for *phyed pa* in our text.
404. *Rim lnga dgongs 'grel*, *Pañcakramamatiṭikā*, Tōh. 1831, D. folio 183a, 365.7.
405. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 21b–22a, 58.5–59.5.
406. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 11b, 21.1, P. 273.2.7. D. has *Mi bskyod pa bskyed pas*, and P. has *Mi bskyod pa bskyed pas rjes su zhugs pas* for *Mi bskyod pa bcug nas* in our text. Our text does not cite the *Mdo bsre* directly, but paraphrases it on the basis of Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 24a, 49.3–4.
407. In this episode in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 4a2–4, Tog 10.1–5, Dunh. 4a5–5b1, Fremantle 1971, 182, Matsunaga 1978, 6, Mi bskyod pa enters into Rdo rje 'chang, who was earlier seen by all tathāgatas as having three faces.
408. Tib. *ye shes sgron ma rdo rje*, Skt. *jñānapradīpavajra*, taught in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 4a2, Tog 10.2–3, Fremantle 1971, 182, Matsunaga 1978, 6, as the *Mdo bsre* points out.
409. Tib. Zhe sdang rdo rje, see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 22a–24a, 59.5–63.5.
410. *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 18a, 35.1–2, P. 32.5.2–3; for the Sanskrit see Chakravarti 1984, 23. D. and P. have *zhes pa ni* for *zhes bya ba ni*, *'jug pas* for *zhugs pas*, and *mdzad pa ste* for *mdzad pa'o*.
411. Thub pa dpal, *Rnal 'byor pa'i yid 'phrog*, *Pañcakramaṭippaṇīyogimanoharaṭippaṇi*, Tōh. 1813, D. folio 152a, 303.5; for the Sanskrit see Jiang and Tomabechi 1996, 10.
412. Tib. Rdo rje dbyings kyi dbang phyug ma, Eng. She Who Rules the Vajra Realm.
413. Tib. Reg bya rdo rje ma, Skt. Sparśavajrā.
414. *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, chap. 3, D. folio 27b, 53.1, P. 36.4.7, Chakravarti 1984, 35. Our text glosses the passage of the *Sgron gsal* together with the explanation of Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 25b, 52.1. The *Sgron gsal*, D. and P. have *rang gi bdag po'i sku mdog dang 'dra ba'o* for *bdag po'i 'od dang 'dra ba'o* in our text.

415. This the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, chap. 3, Zhol 6b7, Tog 20.5–6, Dunh. 9b2, Fremantle 1971, and Matsunaga 1978, v. 1.
416. The colors of the father and mother have to be the same. When white Rdo rje 'chang transforms into blue Zhe sdang rdo rje, white Rdo rje dbyings kyi dbang phyug ma transforms into blue Reg bya rdo rje ma.
417. *Rgyud phyi ma*, *Uttaratantra*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 51b3, D. folio 151b, 302.6–7, Tog 173.7, Matsunaga 1978, v. 80ab.
418. Tib. *skyes bu*, Skt. *puruṣa*.
419. Tib. *rig pa*.
420. *Gsang ba thams cad kyi sgron ma'i rgya cher 'grel pa*, *Sarvaguhyaṣṣādhikā*, by Snyan grags bzang po, *Yaśobhadra, Tōh. 1787, D. folio 219b, 438.2–3. See also Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 218a4–5, New Delhi, vol. 7, folio 370a, 232.4–6.
421. Tib. Zhe sdang rdo rje.
422. Reading *khyad par* for *byed par*.
423. This is the position of Red mda' ba, see his *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal zhus lan*, Kathmandu, folio 49b, 278.3–4; and in *Gsung thor bu*, TBRC W1CZ1871, folios 304b–305a. Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 10a, 701.5–6, rejects this system followed by Nag po dam tshig rdo rje, Tōh. 1841, D. folio 158b, 316.2, and by Tibetan lamas (*bod kyi bla ma dag*).
424. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2a, 3.3, P. 269.2–4, L. 8a, T. 8a.
425. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 22b–23a, 60.4–61.1.
426. According to Red mda' ba, the fierce deities are generated from long *hūms* resting on solar disks. See *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal zhus lan*, Kathmandu, folio 49b, 278.3; and in *Gsung thor bu*, TBRC W1CZ1871, folio 305a.
427. This position supports the system of the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, which does not instruct that the *hūms* turn into the emblems of each of the fierce deities, and these turn into the fierce deities, as Bu ston has it in his *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 10a, 701.6–7. In the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 23a, 61.1, the *hūms* transform immediately into the fierce deities.
428. Tib. *cho ga gsum*.
429. Tōh. 442, chap. 13, Zhol 20b5, Tog 69.4, Dunh. 38b1, Fremantle 1971, v. 29a, Matsunaga 1978, v. 27a, cited in the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 11b, 22.2, P. 273.2.8.
430. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 104a, 207.3, P. 72.2.1–2, Chakravarti 1984, 127, explains that “the abode of hatred” is the syllable *hūm*.
431. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2a, 3.3, P. 269.2.3–4, L. 8cd, T. 8cd. D. and P. have *brkyang pa* for *brkyangs pa* in our text.
432. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 22b–23a, 60.4–61.6.
433. For the Supreme King of Mandalas, see [430–431] below.
434. While the deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas perform the Deeds of the Buddha, the goal of the deeds of the fierce deities is protection.
435. Sumbha or Sumbharāja.
436. Reading 'og gi for 'og ga, as in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27a, 69.3.
437. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27a, 69.3–5.
438. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27a, 69.5–6. This mantra is found as well in chap. 14 of the *Root Tantra* following v. 25, and in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, following v. 9. Its meaning is explained also in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 128a, 255.4–6, P. 83.4.7–4.2; for the Sanskrit see Chakravarti 1984, 153.

439. These lines of the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba* are also found in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2a, 3.3–4, P. 269.2.4–5, L. 9cd, T. 9cd. Śāntipa has them in his commentary, *Rin chen 'phreng ba*, *Ratnāvalī*, Tōh. 1826, D. folio 22a, 43.5.
440. According to the wording here, it seems that it is the yogi as *Zhes sdang rdo rje* who drives in the stakes, but in the practice below it is *Gnod mdzed* who drives in the stakes.
441. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 128a, 255.4–6, P. 83.4.7–4.2; for the Sanskrit, see Chakravarti 1984, 153; see also Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 8b–9a, 353.5–354.2.
442. Reading *'bros pa* for *phros pa*, as below [348].
443. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27a–b, 69.5–70.2.
444. Reading *snying ga nas* for *snying gnas* in our text.
445. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2a, 3.4–5, P. 269.2.5–6, L. 10, T. 10. D. and P. have *dbang po nyid* for *bdag po nyid*, and *blo dang ldan pas* for *blo dang ldan pa'i*.
446. For verses 10–13 of the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, with Śāntipa's commentary *Rin chen 'phreng ba*, Tōh. 1826, see Mayer 2004, 157–59.
447. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27b, 70.2.
448. Reading *'brub khung* (as in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa) for *'grub khung* in our text.
449. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27b, 70.2.
450. Nag po dam tshig rdo rje, *Rim pa lnga'i dka' 'grel*, *Pañcakramapañjikā*, Tōh. 1841, D. folio 158b, 316.2.
451. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27b, 70.2–6.
452. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2a, 3.5, P. 269.2.6, L. 11, T. 11. D. and P. have *utpala sngon po* for *utpala sngon po'i*, and *'bar phreng* for *'bar 'phreng* in our text.
453. Tib. Rdo rje bdud rtsi, Skt. Vajrāmṛta.
454. Tib. Rdo rje phur bu, Skt. Vajrakīla.
455. According to Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 28b, 58.2–6, these lamas understand the verse of the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, just cited, to mean that the yogi should meditate on the ten guardians of the directions, each with a *hūṃ* on his head, and these *hūṃs* transform into Vajra Stakes.
456. As in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 27b, 70.2–6.
457. Tib. Bdud rtsi 'khyil ba.
458. Tōh. 1814, D. folio 197a, 393.5–6, P. 20.3.2–3, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 7.6–8, 39.13–16.
459. Tōh. 442, chap. 13, Zhol 22b2, Tog 75.4–5, Dunh. 41b4–5, Fremantle 1971, v. 75cd, Matsunaga 1978, v. 79cd. Dunh. has *mye* for *me*. The Sanskrit is somewhat different, see also Cantwell and Mayer 2008, 173.
460. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28a, 71.1–4.
461. Reading *tho ba*, as in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28a, 71.2, for *the ba* in our text.
462. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 27b–28a, 70.6–71.1. This mantra is found as well in chap. 14 of the *Root Tantra* following v. 58 (but without *sarvaviḥṇānām*), and in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, following v. 13 (with some small variations).
463. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 197a, 393.6, P. 20.3.3, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 7.8–9, 39.17–18. D., P., and Hong and Tomabeche have *rdo rje tho bas* for *phur bu the bas* in our text.
464. For explanations of this mantra, see the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 132b–133a, 264.5–265.2, P. 85.5.6–86.1.2; for the Sanskrit see Chakravarti 1984, 158. See also Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh.

5282, Zhol 217a6–b2, New Delhi, vol. 7, folios 368b–369a, 229.5–230.3, and his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 9a, 354.3–6.

465. *Oṃ gha gha ghātaya ghātaya sarva duṣṭāṃ phaṭ phaṭ kīlaya kīlaya sarva pāpāṃ phaṭ phaṭ hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ vajra kīla vajradhara ājñāpayati sarva vighnāna[āṃ] kāya vāk citta vajraṃ kīlaya hūṃ hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ phaṭ*.

466. Reading *ghātaka* for *ghataka*, as in Chakravarti 1984, 158.

467. Reading *ājñāpayati* for *ajñāpayati*.

468. The verb here is in the imperative, *bka' nyon*.

469. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28a, 71.3–4.

470. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, commentary on chap. 6, v. 3, D. folio 41a, 81.7, P. 43.3.2, Chakravarti 1984, 54; Tsongkhapa's *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 86b4–5, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 143a, 285.4–5; and Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 29b, 60.4–5.

471. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 128a and 132b, 255.3 and 264.6, P. 83.4.6 and 85.5.6–7, Chakravarti 1984, 153 and 158, respectively, where both the previous mantra of *Sumbha* and so forth, and the mantra *gha gha* and so forth, are called *mtha' med*.

472. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28a, 71.4–5.

473. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2b, 4.3, P. 269.3.2, L. 15cd, T. 14ef. D. and P. have *tshig pa* for *tshig nas*, *'bros par* for *bros par*, and D. has *gyur bar* for *gyur ba* in our text. Read *palāpitāṃś* for *pralāpitāṃś*.

474. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2b, 4.3, P. 269.3.2, L. 16ab, T. 15ab. D. has *phus bus* and P. has *phur bus* for *phur bu* in our text.

475. See Śāntipa's commentary *Rin chen 'phreng ba*, *Ratnāvalī*, Tōh. 1826, D. folio 25a, 49.1.

476. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28a–b, 71.5–72.2, see also Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 501, and his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 9a–b, 354.6–355.2.

477. Reading *ra ba* for *rab* in our text.

478. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 197b, 394.1–2, P. 20.3.5–6, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 8.6–7 and 40.9–10.

479. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28b, 72.1–2, and the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 197b, 394.1–2, P. 20.3.5–6, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 8.6–9 and 40.9–13.

480. See Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 31a, 63.1–2.

481. See, for example, *Bde mchog gi sgrub thabs gtsug nor*, Tōh. 1443, D. folio 246a, 491.4.

482. Reading *tshad* for *tshang* in our text.

483. Tib. 'Og min, Skt. Akaniṣṭha.

484. Tib. Lwa ba pa.

485. Spyod pa nag po pa, *Bcom ldan 'das dpal bde mchog 'khor lo'i dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga*, *Bhagavaccakrasamvaramaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 1446, D. folio 281b, 562.2.

486. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28b, 72.2–3.

487. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 197b, 394.2, P. 20.3.6, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 8.8–9 and 40.12–13. D., P., and Hong and Tomabechei have *gsum gyis* for *gsum gyi* in our text.

488. Tōh. 442, Zhol 22b2, Tog 75.3–4, Dunh. 41b4, Fremantle 1971, v. 74, Matsunaga 1978, v. 78. Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. have *gnas na* for *gnas nas*, and *byin gyis rlob* for *byin gyis brlab*; Tog has *bsams gnas* for the first occurrence of *bsam gtan* in our text; Dunh. has completely different text for the first two lines and *'di la ni* for *'di yis ni*. Cited in the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 197b, 394.3, P. 20.3.8, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 9.1–2 and 40.17–41.3; and in the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D folio 11b, 22.3–4, P. 273.3.2–3.

489. The Sanskrit is somewhat different, see the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 111a, 221.4–6, P. 75.4.2–4, Chakravarti 1984, 136; and Tsongkhapa's *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 187a1–4, New Delhi, vol. 7, folio 318a, 128.1–5.

PART 2.

THE FIRST YOGA: THE ACTUAL MEDITATION



There are four sections here: (1) the yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya*, (2) the yoga of taking the intermediate state as the *saṃbhogakāya*, (3) the yoga of taking birth as the *nirmāṇakāya*, and (4) gathering and absorbing in union with the consort to demonstrate that these three bodies are attained through the dharma of passion.

5. Visualization of the Celestial Mansion

THIS TOPIC consists of three parts: (1) visualization of the celestial mansion — the place where you will be awakened, (2) meditation on the specially visualized deities — the indwellers of the mandala who will be awakened there, and (3) the yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya*: immersing the specially visualized deities in the clear light — the method of awakening.

Visualization of the Celestial Mansion — The Place Where You Will Be Awakened

This topic consists of two further parts: (1) meditation on the ground of wisdom in correspondence with the empty eon that follows the dissolution of the previous world, and (2) visualization of the vajra ground and meditating on the celestial mansion in correspondence with the evolution of the subsequent world.

Meditation on the Ground of Wisdom in Correspondence with the Empty Eon That Follows the Dissolution of the Previous World

This topic again consists of the following: (1) explanation of the corresponding object, and (2) how to meditate in correspondence with this object.

Explanation of the Corresponding Object⁴⁹⁰

Before the physical world itself can be emptied, it must be emptied of the sentient beings who inhabit it. Here is how this comes about: When the world is emptied of the sentient beings who inhabit it, no new beings are born in the Hell of Ceaseless Torment.⁴⁹¹ Among beings who were already born there, those who have exhausted their life and karma are born in fortunate realms, and those who have exhausted their life but not their karma are born in the Hells of Ceaseless Torment that are found in other realms of the universe. In this way the Hell of Ceaseless Torment of this world is emptied of its beings. After that, the other

hells, the additional seven hot hells, the eight cold hells, and the designated⁴⁹² and peripheral hells⁴⁹³ are emptied in succession from nethermost to uppermost. Following this, [354] the hungry ghosts⁴⁹⁴ and animals that live in their principal habitats and in other regions are emptied from the nethermost upward.⁴⁹⁵

Then, through natural power,⁴⁹⁶ the actual absorption of the first concentration⁴⁹⁷ is born in the mental continuum of a person of Jambudvīpa.⁴⁹⁸ That person exclaims: “Joy and bliss born of isolation is peace.” As a result of hearing this, the actual absorption of the first concentration is born in the mental continuum of others as well. Thus by being born in the first concentration, the people of Jambudvīpa are emptied, as are those in the Eastern and Western Continents after them.⁴⁹⁹ Since the beings of the Northern Continent⁵⁰⁰ are possessed of major obstructions to fruition,⁵⁰¹ they are not newly born within the actual absorption of [the first] concentration, but rather amongst any of the six kinds of gods in the desire realm.⁵⁰² In this way, all four continents are emptied.

After that,⁵⁰³ through natural power, the actual absorption of the first concentration is also born in the mental continuum of one god among the Four Great Kings.⁵⁰⁴ He exclaims: “Joy and bliss born from isolation is peace.” As a result of hearing this, the actual absorption of the first concentration is born in the mental continuum of the others. In this way the gods of the Four Groups of Great Kings are emptied. After that the heavens of the gods of the Thirty-Three, the Free from Conflict, the Joyful, the Delighting in Emanations, and the Masters over Others’ Emanations are emptied one after another.⁵⁰⁵

After that, the actual absorption of the second concentration, attained through natural power, is born in the mental continuum of one god in the first concentration. [355] He exclaims: “Joy and bliss born from *samādhi* are peace.” As a result of hearing this, others as well are born in the actual absorption of the second concentration. Thus by being born in the second concentration, the first concentration is emptied. The duration of such emptying of sentient beings is nineteen medium eons.

Then,⁵⁰⁶ since the sentient beings inhabiting the world are emptied, the gods do not cause rain to fall. As a result, the present sun becomes extremely hot, drying up the plants, trees, and forests. Then a second, extremely hot sun rises and the streams, ponds, and small lakes dry up. Then a third extremely hot sun rises and all the rivers except the four great rivers dry up. Then a fourth extremely hot sun rises, drying up⁵⁰⁷ the four rivers⁵⁰⁸ and Lake Anavatapta.⁵⁰⁹ Then a fifth sun rises, drying up the great ocean as well. Then a sixth sun rises,

and from Mt. Meru smoke dawns as well. Then a seventh sun rises, turning the four continents together with Mt. Meru into a single flame. Because this flame burns upward, the celestial palaces from Free from Conflict up to the First Concentration are incinerated. Everything turns into a single void with a nature like that of space. The duration of such emptying of the physical world is one medium eon, and the destruction of the world and its inhabitants together lasts twenty eons.

How to Meditate in Correspondence with This [Destruction of the World]

There are three sections here: (1) refutation of the claim that it is not necessary to meditate on emptiness during the creation stage, (2) explanation of the method of meditating on emptiness, and (3) explanation of the purpose of meditation on emptiness at this point of the *sādhana*.

REFUTATION OF THE CLAIM THAT IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO MEDITATE ON EMPTINESS DURING THE CREATION STAGE⁵¹⁰

[356] SOME⁵¹¹ say that during the creation stage you meditate merely on the appearance aspect — the wheel of deities — and not on the emptiness aspect — suchness — because the meditation on the emptiness aspect takes place during the completion stage. THEY also say⁵¹² that the meditation on emptiness — the ground of wisdom taught here — is not a meditation on the view of the Middle Way, rather, only if the appearance of the impure animate and inanimate realms is blocked, the appearance of the pure celestial mansion and its deities will arise. This is why the yogi recites the mantra of emptiness⁵¹³ or the verse “in the absence of being, there is no meditation”⁵¹⁴ while meditating on the animate and inanimate realms as being nothing whatsoever.

Such a position is not acceptable because it has three faults: it (1) contradicts⁵¹⁵ reason, (2) contradicts YOUR own premises, and (3) contradicts scriptures.

(1) It contradicts reason because the view that the animate and inanimate realms established by a valid mind do not exist is a depreciation of that which exists as nonexistent, and it is a pernicious and nihilistic claim.

(2) It also contradicts YOUR⁵¹⁶ own premises in supposing that meditation on the animate and inanimate realms as nothing whatsoever is an antidote to

ordinary appearances and attitudes, when such a meditation is the most ordinary appearance and attitude of all.

(3) It also contradicts scriptures because many tantras as well as works of the *mahāsiddhas* teach that throughout the creation stage in general, and in this case in particular, yogis must apprehend⁵¹⁷ suchness and meditate on it. For example, the first chapter of the *Saṃpuṭa Tantra* teaches:⁵¹⁸ “You should first cleanse the stains of embodied beings by meditating on emptiness.” And the *Hevajra Tantra* teaches:⁵¹⁹ [357] “By means of the yoga of the creation stage, practitioners should meditate on the proliferation of mental constructs. When they have made proliferations dreamlike, they should use the same proliferation to deproliferate.”

The *Concise Sādhana* also teaches:⁵²⁰ “You should meditate on the three worlds [and being]⁵²¹ as devoid of being in ultimate truth. In the absence of being, there is no meditation and meditation cannot be meditated on. Therefore a state of nonbeing leaves no object for meditation. Uttering this verse, meditate on the nature of the animate and inanimate worlds as empty and bless them through this yoga as the ground of wisdom.” The teaching is that you should reflect on the meaning of this verse⁵²² and meditate on animate and inanimate realms in their entirety as ultimately devoid of being, not that you should meditate on animate and inanimate realms in their entirety as being nothing whatsoever.

Therefore, in this case, while immersing in clear light both the animate and inanimate realms in their entirety, you should meditate on the emptiness of intrinsic nature with respect to phenomena and practice the yoga of illusion-like appearances and emptiness, whereby the objective aspect of the mind that realizes emptiness arises as the appearance of the mandala wheel, for the *Sādhana of the Entirely Good* teaches:⁵²³ “There is no *samsāric* suffering whatsoever apart from what emerges from the stream of ordinary conceptual thought. The mind obstructing this [conceptualization] will attain direct realization. Conceptual thoughts will not appear to [the mind] endowed with a vast and profound nature.”

For these reasons, the claim that any meditation on emptiness must be included in the completion stage is well-refuted [358], as is the claim that the rainbow-like body of the deity — which, while appearing to the meditating mind, is devoid of intrinsic existence — is the illusory body.⁵²⁴

While meditating on emptiness you should recite the verse of the mind-for-enlightenment taught by Vajradhara in the *Root Tantra*⁵²⁶ and meditate on two of its levels of interpretation:⁵²⁷ the literal level, showing that the animate and inanimate realms are devoid of the four extremes, and the shared level, showing the emptiness of the three doors of liberation.⁵²⁸

The literal level of interpretation will be explained first:⁵²⁹ if, while using reason to examine *being* in the animate and inanimate realms, you fail to find anything, and take this to mean that *there are no* animate and inanimate realms, your meditation will be devoid of meditation on suchness. In other words, it will *not be a meditation*, for inasmuch as the meditator, the object of the meditation, and so forth are wholly nonexistent, there can be no meditation on suchness.

The yogi, observing⁵³⁰ that in the absence of intrinsic existence neither action nor actor are possible, and thus holding that there is some degree of intrinsic existence that can *be meditated on* — does *not meditate* on suchness.⁵³¹ This is so because it would be senseless for action and actor to have intrinsic existence, as the *Root of Wisdom* teaches:⁵³² “If the path had intrinsic existence, meditation would be impossible.”

*Therefore*⁵³³ the *object to be meditated on*, the meditation, and the meditator *do not exist* intrinsically⁵³⁴ as objects of observation, since everything in the animate and inanimate realms is empty of intrinsic existence, devoid of the four extremes. This is the literal level of interpretation [359] of the verse beginning with “in the absence of being,”⁵³⁵ as is explicitly stated.

Here is the shared level of interpreting this verse:⁵³⁶ when using reason to analyze ultimate truth, even though you understand that phenomena do not exist in reality, you nevertheless take emptiness — the *absence of* real existing *being* — as really existing; meditating in such a way is *not meditation* on the meaning of suchness either. This is so because one who meditates on this holds “an unremedied view,”⁵³⁷ as the *Root of Wisdom* teaches:⁵³⁸ “those who adhere to emptiness as a view remain unremedied.” Such is the instruction about meditating on *emptiness*, [the first] door of liberation.⁵³⁹

Meditating on the object to be *meditated on*⁵⁴⁰ with the view that cause and effect exist in reality, is likewise *not meditation* on suchness. This is so because the real existence of creation and creator is vitiated through the perfect reasoning that refutes arising from the four extremes. This teaches how to meditate on [the door of liberation of] *signlessness*.

A fruitional *state of being* that is wished-for *does not exist* as a real *being*⁵⁴¹

except as a mere mental imputation. This is so because when you seek, with perfect reasoning, the imputed object of the wished, wishing and wisher, it cannot be found. This teaches how to meditate on [the door of liberation of] *wishlessness*. This⁵⁴² *leaves no* intrinsically existing *object for meditation*, meditation, and meditator,⁵⁴³ since they are merely imputed through conceptual thought.

This explanation is called “the shared level of interpretation” because those who meditate on both sūtra and tantra and on both creation and completion stages of the Unexcelled Mantra share these practices. [360]

Furthermore, you should meditate on all animate and inanimate realms dissolving into clear light in the manner of “gradual dissolution,”⁵⁴⁴ while being inspired to perceive the subjective wisdom of the innate great bliss and the objective emptiness as indivisible.

Here is the reason for calling this meditation the “meditation on the ground of wisdom”: just as the totally empty space at the level of the ground,⁵⁴⁵ into which the previous world was emptied, serves as the supporting *ground* for the evolution of the subsequent world, so the *wisdom* on which you meditate here serves as the supporting *ground* for the mandala with its celestial mansion and the deities that will be formed later.

EXPLANATION OF THE PURPOSE OF MEDITATION ON EMPTINESS HERE

Here is the purpose of meditating on emptiness in this context. Atiśa⁵⁴⁶ explained that there are six purposes: (1) So that those who have not previously realized emptiness will now realize it. (2) So that those who have already realized emptiness will stabilize their realization. (3) To purify ordinary appearances and attitudes with regard to the body, speech, and mind. (4) To yoke the accumulation of merit previously amassed with the accumulation of wisdom amassed here. (5) So that the mandala of the celestial mansion and the deities, appearing below, will arise as an expression of nondual profundity and manifestation. (6) So that this mandala will arise as an expression of the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness.

Here are the further purposes for meditating on emptiness in this context: (1) To serve as an antidote to the root of saṃsāra — the grasping of self as really existent. (2) To serve as supreme protection in ultimate truth. (3) To be applied, on the level of the *ground*, in correspondence with the emptied eon that follows the destruction of the world. [361] (4) To ripen the mental continuum of

metaphoric and actual clear light during the completion stage on the *path*. (5) To engage the yogis in the special method of taking the *fruit* as the path, since it corresponds to the *dharmakāya* at the stage of fruitional buddhahood.

Visualization of the Vajra Ground and Meditating on the Celestial Mansion in Correspondence with the Evolution of the Subsequent World

There are two sections here: (1) the corresponding object — the evolution of the subsequent world, and (2) the actual meditation applied in correspondence.

The Corresponding Object — The Evolution of the Subsequent World⁵⁴⁷

The duration of totally empty space, also called the emptied eon — when the previous vessel world remains empty, is twenty medium eons. At the beginning of the evolution of the world, a light wind from the second concentration and above it flows downward,⁵⁴⁸ thereby forming in descending order the celestial mansions of the first concentration and so forth. Then a light wind coming from the first concentration and so forth flows down, thereby forming the celestial mansions of the higher gods of the desire realm in descending order.

Then the early sign of the evolving world appears — the wind in space whorls gradually faster. Thereupon a wind mandala endowed with the nature of various elements evolves — one million six hundred thousand *yojanas* in height, and untold myriads of *yojanas* in width, a [wind mandala] that even the vajra of the Great Mighty One⁵⁴⁹ cannot destroy. Then a constant rain with the essence of gold begins, through⁵⁵⁰ the shared karma of sentient beings, forming drops the size of chariot wheels that fall and accumulate over a long period of time. Then above the wind mandala, a water mandala one million one hundred and twenty thousand *yojanas* high evolves. [362]

Following that, a wind evolves through the shared karma of sentient beings and churns this water mandala, which then, like cream from boiling milk, forms a gold mandala three hundred twenty thousand *yojanas* in height, for the *Abhidharmakośa* teaches:⁵⁵¹ “Here is the world” and so forth up to “the rest becomes gold.” The diameter of [both] the water and the gold mandala is twelve hundred and three thousand four hundred and fifty [1,203,450] *yojanas*, and its circumference is three times that, for the *Abhidharmakośa* teaches:⁵⁵² “The mandalas of water and gold” and so forth up to “three times that in

circumference.”

On the level of the ground, with the exception of the system of the *Kālacakra Tantra*,⁵⁵³ there is no actual fire mandala, but because there are fire particles in latent form within the empty spaces⁵⁵⁴ of the remaining elements, there is nothing wrong in applying the correspondence.⁵⁵⁵

Thereupon, due to the shared karma of sentient beings, a cloud of various elements forms in space, and rain consisting of the various elements falls from it, accumulating over a long period of time; in this manner a vast ocean forms on the gold disk. The wind evolving through the shared karma of sentient beings churns this ocean, and consequently out of the finest elements Mt. Meru is formed, out of the medium elements the seven ranges of golden mountains, and out of the inferior elements the four continents, the eight subcontinents, and the Iron Rim Mountain.⁵⁵⁶ [363]

The eastern direction of Mt. Meru is made of silver, the southern of lapis, the western of ruby, and the northern of gold. The waters of the oceans between the seven golden mountains are endowed with the eight qualities.⁵⁵⁷ These are the inner seas, while the ocean extending outward from the Rim Holder Mountain⁵⁵⁸ is the outer Salty Ocean. The four continents and the eight subcontinents rest on that ocean for support, as explained in *Formulating the Sādhana*.⁵⁵⁹

The Actual Meditation Applied in Correspondence

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches: “Instantaneously a vajra ground” and so forth.⁵⁶⁰ In this regard, SOME TIBETAN LAMAS⁵⁶¹ say that because Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples did not explicitly explain that you should meditate on the vajra ground with its fence, tent, canopy, and fire, immense as a mountain,⁵⁶² it is improper to do so.⁵⁶³ This position is wrong, for the reason that in his *Mandala Vajra Garland*,⁵⁶⁴ Abhaya⁵⁶⁵ explains that you should meditate on them. Otherwise it would be inappropriate to portray the vajra enclosure with a fire immense as a mountain in mandala paintings. Furthermore, if this were inappropriate, it would be wrong, inasmuch as it contradicts Nāgabodhi’s explanation that the measuring cord of the *Guhyasamāja* mandala from its eastern to its western extremes runs to ninety-six small units.⁵⁶⁶

At the center of the protection wheel you should meditate on the “source of phenomena,”⁵⁶⁷ for both the introduction⁵⁶⁸ and the third chapter of the *Root Tantra* teach that the mandala of the Buddha⁵⁶⁹ “abides in the midst of the space realm,” and in its eleventh chapter this *Tantra* teaches:⁵⁷⁰ “You should visualize

a mandala in the midst of the vajra space.” The *Illuminating Lamp*⁵⁷¹ identifies the line that explains the reason for the meditation on the “source of phenomena” in the *Later Tantra*. In answer to the question,⁵⁷² “How should we meditate on the ‘source of phenomena’?” [364] the *Later Tantra* teaches:⁵⁷³ “You should meditate on a triangle because of the division into body, speech, and mind.” Within the “source of phenomena” you visualize a variegated lotus,⁵⁷⁴ as explained by Nāgabodhi.

The meditation on the vajra fence, tent, source of phenomena, and lotus cannot be applied in correspondence to the *ground* of purification. But during the completion stage on the *path*, this meditation corresponds to the actual emanation of the vajra fence, tent, source of phenomena, and lotus by the pure and impure illusory bodies; and the meditation here on the vajra fence and so forth becomes a special ripener of the roots of merit so that this may take place.

Hence the purpose of meditating on the source of phenomena is this:⁵⁷⁵ it signifies the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness — the essence of the path of the Unexcelled Mantra. Likewise, the white color of the source of phenomena signifies natural purity; its three corners signify the emptiness of the three doors of liberation; its shape, the shape of *bhaga*, signifies the wisdom of great bliss; and all of these joined in a single source of phenomena signify the indivisible union of bliss and emptiness.

Here is the purpose of meditating on the entire mandala, with its celestial mansion and deities, contained⁵⁷⁶ within the source of phenomena: this leads to the realization that all good qualities at the level of the Buddha — the fruit — are contained in the nature of great bliss at the time of fruition. Similarly, here is the purpose of meditating on the triangular pyramid of the white source of phenomena standing on a point with its wide side oriented upward: it signifies that although during the beginning stage the good qualities are minute, later when you are ascending through the stages of the path, to “practice through faith”⁵⁷⁷ and upward, [365] the good qualities increase progressively.

The *Revelation of the Intention*⁵⁷⁸ teaches that you should visualize the disks of the four elements on the variegated lotus.⁵⁷⁹ Here is the purpose of meditating in this way:⁵⁸⁰ on the level of the *ground* [the physical world] it corresponds to the successive evolutions of the disks of the four elements. During the completion stage on the *path*, this signifies the four consorts, Padminī and so forth,⁵⁸¹ the external contributing means of inducing great innate bliss in the mental continuum of the yogi. When applied to the inner winds,⁵⁸² the wind disk

signifies the evenly abiding wind,⁵⁸³ the fire disk signifies the ascending wind,⁵⁸⁴ the water disk signifies the life sustaining wind,⁵⁸⁵ and the earth disk signifies the downward clearing wind.⁵⁸⁶

The reason the four disks of the elements are visualized from the four syllables *Yaṃ Raṃ Vaṃ*⁵⁸⁷ *Laṃ* is that these four syllables are the seed syllables of the four disks. The two *hūms* are the seed syllables of Cittavajra, while the two vajras signify Cittavajra.⁵⁸⁸ Here is the reason for meditating on each of the four disks of the elements, in turn, in between the two vajras that arise from the two *hūms*: this enables the meditator to understand, “I need to visualize these four disks in the nature of the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness.”

You should generate the crossed vajra from the four disks of the physical elements that have merged together,⁵⁸⁹ for the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture*⁵⁹⁰ explains that this is taught in the eighth chapter of the *Root Tantra*:⁵⁹¹ “The Peaceful Vajra Holders should visualize them merging at their will.” [366] Here is the purpose of this meditation:⁵⁹² the visualization of the crossed vajra from the four disks of elements that have merged together corresponds to the meditation during the completion stage: to the absorption in union with the four consorts, Padminī and so forth⁵⁹³ — the external contributing cause — and to the metaphoric and actual clear lights that are born from vajra recitation practiced on the four main winds — the internal contributing cause. The meditation here will become a special means for ripening the roots of merit in order for these realizations to arise.

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁵⁹⁴ “Upon its navel appears a white *Bhrūṃ*, emanating light-rays of buddha clouds,” as the eleventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* also teaches:⁵⁹⁵ “There⁵⁹⁶ you should visualize the syllable *Bhrūṃ*, emanating clouds of vajras.” Here is the purpose of visualizing the celestial mansion from *Bhrūṃ*: this enables you to understand that, because on the level of the *ground, the impure world*, which is the *ground of purification* for the celestial mansion, is included within the form aggregate from among the five aggregates, you should likewise visualize its *purifier, the celestial mansion*, in the nature of Vairocana, the pure form aggregate. Here is the purpose of meditating on the celestial palace on the nave of the crossed vajra: this signifies the meditator, rising in the body of union⁵⁹⁷ from the actual clear light of the fourth stage.⁵⁹⁸

The Dimensions of the Celestial Mansion

When the dimensions are presented in terms of the deities, the fourth chapter of the *Root Tantra*⁵⁹⁹ teaches that the mind mandala is twelve cubits, and the sixteenth chapter teaches⁶⁰⁰ that the body mandala is sixteen cubits and⁶⁰¹ the speech mandala is twenty cubits. Likewise, the *Vajrapañjara Tantra* teaches:⁶⁰² “Three cubits for the Vajra Holder,⁶⁰³ four cubits for the mandala of the Buddha,⁶⁰⁴ five cubits for Vairocana, six cubits for the Lord of Dance,⁶⁰⁵ and [367] seven cubits for the King of Horses.”⁶⁰⁶

Thus, in terms of the individual tathāgata families, the dimensions are well defined, but where the disciples are concerned, they are uncertain,⁶⁰⁷ for the *Mandala Vajra Garland* teaches:⁶⁰⁸ “When the wise ones consider the minds of the beings they are guiding, there is no fault whatever in any dimensions they choose.” And similarly, Nāgabodhi teaches:⁶⁰⁹ “Adapting to the disciple’s capacity, the vajra teacher⁶¹⁰ should draw mandalas anywhere from a single cubit to a thousand cubits.”

Furthermore, to accommodate those who prefer definite numbers, the dimensions were taught in this way, but as far as the actual mode of abiding is concerned and for the purpose of meditation, the measurements and so forth are not clearly specified, for Dīpaṅkarabhadra taught:⁶¹¹ “In accordance with the mind of each being, measurements and so forth are specified; but what is the point of fixed measurements and so forth with respect to attainments born of wisdom and methods?” And the eighth chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁶¹² “You should visualize a wheel mandala extending a hundred *yojanas*,” and⁶¹³ “a very beautiful square *stūpa* extending ten million *yojanas*, made of the four kinds of jewels, clear and immaculate by nature.”

What Are the Characteristics, Shapes, and Other Aspects of the Celestial Mansion in Drawings and Meditations?⁶¹⁴

As the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁶¹⁵ “A square with four gates⁶¹⁶ adorned with four portals,⁶¹⁷ along four marking lines, [368] and embellished with eight columns.” When this is explained in detail:⁶¹⁸ From one outer end of the “garland of light”⁶¹⁹ diametrically to the other there are twenty-four “gate units.”⁶²⁰ Likewise, from one end of the vajra circle⁶²¹ to the other there are twenty-two gate units. From one end of the lotus circle⁶²² to the other there are twenty-one gate units. From one end of the navel of the lotus⁶²³ to the other, and from one tip of the prong⁶²⁴ of the crossed vajra to the other, there are twenty gate units.⁶²⁵ From one inner end of the wall of the palace to the other there are

eight gate units. From one inner end of the inner palace⁶²⁶ to the other there are four gate units.

The height of the celestial mansion is sixteen small units,⁶²⁷ and the height of the parapet⁶²⁸ on top of it is one small unit, altogether seventeen small units. This is also the height of the portals, and therefore these two are the same height, that is to say, both the parapets of the portals and the parapets of the outer verandah⁶²⁹ are equal in height.⁶³⁰ The roof of the inner palace⁶³¹ is higher than the roof of the outer verandah by a little more than one gate unit and the top of the upper roof⁶³² is a little more than one gate unit higher than the roof of the inner palace. This is so because the ground of the inner palace is a little more than one gate unit higher than the ground of the outer verandah, because Sumbha⁶³³ is set⁶³⁴ below the principal deity of the mandala.⁶³⁵

The outer ring of variegated fire, immense as a mountain, blazes like the fire at the end of time when the eon comes to its end.⁶³⁶ The yogis should visualize it as large as they possibly can, although in the drawing it is but one gate unit. The vajra circle within it is round⁶³⁷ in meditation, like the protection wheel, and in drawings it is two small units. [369] Visualized within the “source of phenomena”⁶³⁸ is the variegated lotus, which serves to support the crossed vajra.⁶³⁹ The width of the navel of the variegated lotus is sixteen gate units in the system of one gate unit for the portal, and twenty gate units in the system of three gate units.⁶⁴⁰ In both systems the petals are two small units, the anthers are yellow, the navel is green, and the petals are multicolored.

In both systems, that of one and that of three gate units for the portal, the width of the nave of the crossed vajra on top of the lotus is twelve gate units. The length of the vajra prongs is two gate units in the system of one gate unit for the portal, and four gate units in the system of three. The thickness at the middle of the central prong in both systems is one gate unit, and the thickness at the middle of the right and left prongs should be three small units each. The right and left prongs do not reach the tip of the middle prong but touch it two small units before the tip, because two units are needed for the curve.⁶⁴¹

The color of the nave of the crossed vajra is blue. When the colors of the directions are applied to the prongs,⁶⁴² the prong in the east is white, in the south it is yellow, in the west it is red, and in the north it is green. When the prongs are variegated,⁶⁴³ the middle prong displays the color of the tathāgata in that particular direction, the right and left prongs display the colors of the tathāgatas to your right and left, the lower prong displays the color of the tathāgata behind

your back, while the upper prong displays the color of the principal deity of the mandala. [370] The vajra prongs protrude a distance of four gate units inward, from the outer edges of the nave of the crossed vajra in the four directions in the system of the three gate units for the portal, and a distance of four-and-a-half gate units in the system of one gate unit. The purpose of meditating on the crossed vajra is to form the base of the celestial mansion.

Before each of the four gates there is a portal⁶⁴⁴ supported by columns atop the vases set on rectangular plinths.⁶⁴⁵ Four columns support each portal, two on each side, their width being one small unit and their height five small units. Upon them are the layers of the portal's façade⁶⁴⁶ stacked one on top of the other. The number of layers comprising the portal's façade is unquestionably eleven in both systems of measuring the portals.⁶⁴⁷ In the system of one gate unit for the portal, the supporting columns are five small units, and one great unit [a single gate unit] is divided into eleven layers, among which five are equal and the two sets of three are equal.⁶⁴⁸ Furthermore, the height of the portals is much lower than that of the celestial mansion.⁶⁴⁹

In drawings there are two systems for the space between the portals⁶⁵⁰ and the top portion of the gates, one that has a dark layer⁶⁵¹ between them and one that does not. But in meditation there is certainly one small unit between them, for a composition said to be by Buddhaguhya teaches:⁶⁵² "You should not merge the edge of the gate with the portal as one." According to the system of the three gate units for the portal, the supporting columns are *five* small units, and the eleven layers of the portal's façade are *twelve* small units, [371] among which two are equal and nine are equal.⁶⁵³ This total of *seventeen* small units is the height of the entire portal, which is equal in turn to the height of the celestial mansion.⁶⁵⁴

The width of the wall on the crossed vajra is one small unit and its height is thirteen small units. The architrave⁶⁵⁵ on that is one small unit, and the lattice of full loops and half loops⁶⁵⁶ is two small units. So the height of the celestial mansion from within is sixteen small units. The parapet on top of the celestial mansion that has the form of drainage conduits⁶⁵⁷ is one small unit. So the celestial mansion from the outside measures seventeen small units in height.

How is the roof set up?⁶⁵⁸ From the meeting point of the Brahmā lines⁶⁵⁹ and the base lines⁶⁶⁰ at each of the four gates, you should proceed one gate unit in, and from there five small units both right and left. At these points, eight columns are set up, two at each gate, one small unit wide and sixteen small units

high. On them are four beams in the four directions in a checkered pattern. The inner ends of the rafters lean on these beams,⁶⁶¹ while the outer ends of the rafters lean on the golden frieze,⁶⁶² and then the square outer verandah is set up.

At the center there is a round structure,⁶⁶³ like an upside down *maṇḍal*, that measures a little over one gate unit in height with a diameter of four gate units. It is encircled by a ring of three-pronged vajras, one small unit high.⁶⁶⁴ At the meeting points of the prongs, there are two columns on each side [372] supporting four beams in a checkered pattern. On these beams are small slanting pillars, two in each direction, with their tips bending inward, and the vajra beam of the roof leaning on them. A beam rests on the inner ends of the rafters and on the small columns with capitals, and on it rest the outer ends of the rafters. The top is ornamented with vajras, jewels, and precious gems,⁶⁶⁵ and surmounted by the peaked roof.⁶⁶⁶

Thus remaining mindful of the meaning signified by the ground, path, and fruit, you should visualize the celestial mansion — the support of the specially visualized deities⁶⁶⁷ — instantaneously and develop the clarity of the visualization step by step. You should meditate by viewing the celestial mansion as a manifestation of wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness.

Here is the purpose of this meditation: at the level of the *ground*, it will purify the yogi's own capacity to partake in the impure world in the future. During the completion stage of the *path*, it will enable meditators, on both the pure and the impure illusory body, to ripen the roots of merit for the celestial mansion — formed out of the natural appearance of wisdom — to emanate in actuality. And this is a special method for taking as the path the *fruit* of the swift attainment of the buddha-field in which you will be awakened at the stage of *fruition*al buddhahood.

490. The first part of the description here corresponds to the *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, chap. 3, v. 90a–b, D. folio 10a, 19.6–7, and its autocommentary, *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, D. folios 155b–156b, 310.3–312.4; for the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 178–79, and for an English translation (of the French translation by La Vallée Poussin), see Pruden 1988–90, 475–77. The second part of the description here follows the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, part 1, *Sa'i dngos gzhi*, *Maulībhūmi*, in the second *bhūmi*, the *Sa las yid kyis*, *Manobhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 17b, 34.1–6; Sanskrit edition V. Bhattacharya 1957, 35.5–18, English translation Kajiyama 2000, 188–89. A very similar description is found in the commentary on the *Abhidharmakośa* by Rgyal ba Dge 'dun grub, *Dam pa'i chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi rnam par bshad pa thar lam gsal byed*, Tōh. 5525, folios 114b–115b, 228.3–230.6,

translated into English by Patt 1993, 684–86. Our text partly follows Tsongkhapa's *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 7a–8a, 292.1–294.6; Mkhas grub rje does not describe this process. For Buddhist cosmology in general, see Kloetzli 1983; The International Translation Committee 1995; and Sadakata 1997.

491. Tib. *mnar med*, Skt. *avīci*.

492. Tib. *nyi tshe*, Skt. *prādeśika*. These specifically designated hells are created by the individual karma of one, two, or many beings, and therefore vary greatly and have no fixed location. See *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośa* autocommentary, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, vv. 58–59, D. folio 148a, 295.3–4, Pradhan 1975, 165, Pruden 1988–90, 459–60.

493. Tib. *nye 'khor ba*, Skt. *utsada*.

494. Tib. *yi dwags*, Skt. *preta*.

495. According to the *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, the main habitats of the five or six classes of beings in the *samsāric* world are vertically set according to their karma. The main habitat of the hungry ghosts is located five hundred *yojanas* below 'Dzam bu gling, but some of them are found elsewhere. The main habitat of the animals is the Great Ocean, but some live elsewhere in air, water, and land. See *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośa* autocommentary, Tōh. 4090, on v. 59c–d, D. folio 148a, 295.4–5, Pradhan 1975, 165, Pruden 1988–90, 460.

496. That is to say, without a teacher; see the *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, on chap. 3, v. 90ab, D. folio 156a, 311.1. For the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 178, and for an English translation (of the French translation by La Vallée Poussin), see Pruden 1988–90, 476. See also *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, on chap. 8, v. 38cd.

497. For the preparations and actual absorptions of the four concentrations, see Lati Rinbochay and Denma Lochö Rinbochay 1983/97 and references there.

498. Tib. 'Dzam bu gling, Skt. Jambudvīpa; Jambu-tree Continent or Jambu Island in the South.

499. Lus 'phags po, Videha, or Pūrvavideha in the east, and Ba glang spyod, Godānīya, in the north.

500. Tib. Sgra mi snyan, Skt. Uttarakuru.

501. Tib. *rnam smin gyi sgrib pa*, Skt. *vipākāvaraṇa*; see *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, 4.96.

502. Tib. 'Dod lha, Skt. Kāmadeva.

503. Reading *de* for *der* in our text.

504. Tib. Rgyal chen (rigs) bzhi, Skt. Cāturmahārājakāyika.

505. The heaven of the gods of the Thirty-Three, Tib. Sum cu rtsa gsum, Skt. Trāyastriṃśa. The Free from Conflict, Tib. 'Thab bral, Skt. Yāma. The Joyful, Tib. Dga' ldan, Skt. Tuṣita. The Delighting in Emanations, Tib. 'Phrul dga', Skt. Nirmāṇarati. The Masters over Others' Emanations, Tib. Gzhan 'phrul dbang byed, Skt. Paranirmitavaśavartin.

506. As Tsongkhapa says in his *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 8a, 294.2, this description is found neither in the *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, nor in its *Bhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090. The *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa* explains simply that through the exhaustion of the collective karma, seven suns successively appear. See *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 90ab, D. folio 156b, 312.1–2. For the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 179, and for an English translation (of the French translation by La Vallée Poussin) see Pruden 1988–90, 477. A version of our description of the destruction by means of the seven suns is found in the *Sa'i dngos gzhi*, *Maulībhūmi*, part 1 of the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 17b, 34.1–6; Sanskrit edition V. Bhattacharya 1957, 35.5–18, English translation Kajiyama 2000, 188–89. Again, our text is similar to that of the commentary on the *Abhidharmakośa* by Rgyal ba Dge 'dun grub, Tōh. 5525.

507. Reading *skems* for *skoms* in our text.

508. When the heavenly Ganges River falls on Mt. Meru it divides into these four rivers.

509. Tib. Mtsho ma dros pa.

510. See Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, especially 443–44, 489–94.

511. This point is raised as a qualm in Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 489–90, 443.

512. See Sa chen Kun dga' snying po, *Mngon rtogs tshig gi bum pa*, work no. 54, folio 7b, 384.1.2–3; and Bsod nams rtse mo, *Dpal kyai rdo rje'i sgrub thabs mtsho skyes kyi tīkā*, work 6, folio 10a, 121.1.1–3. See also Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge, *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs kun tu bzang po'i nyi 'od kyi don 'grel lam bzang gsal ba'i snang ba*, work 78, folios 18b–19b, 9.4.2–10.2.4; and A myes zhabs, *Gsang 'dus rnam bshad*, folios 69b–70a, 330.5–331.2. This issue is discussed in Bentor 2015b.

513. *Oṃ śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.

514. These recitations accompany the meditation on emptiness; see below [357] and the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28b, 72.4.

515. Reading 'gal for 'ga' in our text.

516. The opponents also maintain that the meditation on emptiness here is an accumulation of wisdom. Both Sa chen Kun dga' snying po and Bsod nams rtse mo say: “To gather the accumulation of wisdom, you must meditate forcefully (*btsan thabs*) on emptiness.” See Kun dga' snying po, *Mngon rtogs tshig gi bum pa*, folio 7b, 384.1.2–3; and Bsod nams rtse mo, *Dpal kyai rdo rje'i sgrub thabs mtsho skyes kyi tīkā*, folio 10a, 121.1.1.

517. Reading *phab* for *bab* in our text.

518. Tōh. 381, D. folio 74a, 147.3. For the Sanskrit see Elder 1978, 44, and Skorupski 1996, 217; for Tibetan editions see Elder 1978, 122, and Skorupski 1996, 217; and for an English translation see Elder 1978, 163. D. and the two Tibetan editions have *dang por* for *dang po*, *bsams pas ni* for *rnam bsams nas*, and *bkru* for *bgru* in our text. In his *Rnam gzhang rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 9b, 297.1–2, Tsongkhapa also has *bsam pas* for *bsams nas* here.

519. *Brtag gnyis*, Tōh. 418, D. folio 15a, 29.7, Snellgrove 1959, II.ii.29. D., Tog, and Snellgrove have *spros pa nyid ni spros med byed* for *spros pa nyid kyang spros med bya* in our text, while the analogous section in the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 493, has *spros pa nyid kyi spros med bya*, which corresponds to the Sanskrit *prapañcāir niḥprapañcayet* [*niṣprapañcayet*] in Snellgrove. This reading was followed here.

520. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2b, 4.3–5, P. 269.3.2–4, L. 16cd–18, T. 15cd–17. D. and P. have *dngos po med la bsgom pa'i dngos* for *dngos po med pas sgom pa med*, *bsgom pa min* for *sgom pa min*, *bsgom pa dmigs su* for *sgom pa dmigs su*, *rgyu mi rgyu'i* for *rgyu ma'i rgyu'i*, *bdag nyid can rnams* for *bdag nyid che rnams*. P. has *cho ga'i sbyor ba 'di yi* for *cho ga'i sbyor ba 'di yis*, and *sa bzhir* for *sa gzhir*. The four lines of L. 17 and T. 16 are found in the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, chap. 2, v. 3, Zhol 6a2, Tog 17.5–6, Dunh. 8b4, Fremantle 1971, 190, Matsunaga 1978, 9, and also in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28b, 72.4. Both the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, and the Dunh. ms. of the *Root Tantra* have at the end of the first line *bsgom pa'i dngos* for *sgom pa med* in the Zhol. The Sanskrit is somewhat different. The editions of the *Root Tantra*, Fremantle, Matsunaga, as well as the *Mdor byas*, T., have *abhāve bhāvanābhāvo* for *abhāvabhāvanā bhāvo* in L. My translation of these lines is only one suggestion among several possible ones. For a detailed discussion of this verse, see Bentor 2009b. For the interpretation of this verse in the literal and shared level of interpretations in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 24a, 47.2–6, P. 35.3.3–4.1, Chakravarti 1984: 31, see the next section. The Sanskrit verse is in fact a mantra that puns on the meanings derived from the root $\sqrt{bhū}$. Among these meanings are “being,” “existing,” “a thing,” “a state of existence,” as well as “causing to be,” “creating,” and “meditating.” The Sanskrit word for “meditation,” *bhāvanā*, is related to the word meaning “to bring into existence,” since by meditating, practitioners create their world. This pun is lost when the Sanskrit verse is translated into other languages. The corresponding

word in Tibetan, *sgom pa*, is related to habituation, and therefore the Tibetan translation here conveys a somewhat different notion. For some other translations of this verse, see Benoytosh Bhattacharyya 1931, 11; Bagchi 1965; Tucci 1934–35, 353–53; Snellgrove 1959, 1:77; Fremantle 1971, 34; Filippani-Ronconi 1972, 190; and Gäng 1988, 123.

521. This phrase is not found in the Sanskrit editions.

522. The four lines of the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2b, 4.4, L. 17, T. 16 that are found in the *Root Tantra*, chap. 2, v. 3.

523. *Kun bzang sgrub thabs Samantabhadranāmasādhana*, Tōh. 1855, D. folio 35b, 70.6–7, P. 19.1.4–5. D. and P. have *rnam par 'gal bar* for *rnam pa 'gal bar*, *mngon sum du ni* for *mngon sum nyid du*, and *gang yin* for *gar yin* in our text. Cited also in the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 490.

524. This issue is dealt with more extensively in Tsongkhapa's *Rim lnga gsal sgron*, Tōh. 5302, folios 236a–237b, 471.4–474.2, Acip 211b–212b, where he comments on a question raised and answered in the *Spyod bsdus*, Tōh. 1803, chap. 6, D. folios 84b–85a, 168.4–169.1, P. 306.3.8–4.6, Wedemeyer 2007, B: 40b–41a, Pandey 2000, 55–56 and 266–267. On the basis of the *Spyod bsdus*, Tsongkhapa stresses that the illusion-like experiences of meditators on Sūtras and on the creation stage differ from the illusory body of the completing stage; see also Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 37b–38b, 76.2–78.3.

525. See Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 55b–57b6, New Delhi, vol. 6, folios 90b–93b, 180.2–186.6, and his *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 8b–9b, 295.6–297.1.

526. This is the four-line verse, which begins with “In the absence of being, there is no meditation,” found in the second chapter of the *Root Tantra*.

527. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 24a–b, 47.2–48.4, P. 35.3.3–4.7, Chakravarti 1984, 31–32, interprets this verse in the four levels of interpretation (*tshul bzhi*): the literal, shared, hidden, and ultimate. See Steinkellner 1978; Broido 1983 and 1988; Thurman 1988; and Arénes 1998 and 2002.

528. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 28b, 72.4–6, explains this verse in similar fashion.

529. This paragraph explains the first line of the verse: *dngos po med pas sgom pa med*, “in the absence of being, there is no meditation.” Our text follows Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 39a–b, 79.3–80.2, who to some extent follows Tsongkhapa's *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 55b6–56a5, New Delhi, vol. 6, folios 90b–91a, 180.2–181.4, which comments on the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 24a, 47.2–3, P. 35.3.3–5, Chakravarti 1984, 31; and Tsongkhapa's *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 8b–9b, 295.6–297.1. See also Bentor 2009b.

530. This is an explanation of the second line: *bsgom par bya ba bsgom pa min*.

531. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 39a, 79.5, has *de nyid* for *de kho na nyid* of our text, while Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 56a1, and New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 90b, 180.5, has here: *de kho na nyid sgom par 'dod pa'i*, and not *de kho na nyid bsgom par bya bar 'dod na*, as in our text.

532. Nāgārjuna, *Rtsa she, Dbu ma rtsa ba, Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, Tōh. 3824, chap. 24, v. 24ab, D. folio 15b, 30.2. See Siderits and Katsura 2013, 280–81. These lines are also cited by Tsongkhapa in his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 56a2, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 90b, 180.5–6.

533. This is an explanation of the last line: *sgom pa dmigs su med pa'o*.

534. In his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 56a4, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 91a, 181.3, Tsongkhapa has: *gsum rang bzhin gyis grub pa dmigs su med pa ste* for *gsum rang bzhin gyis dmigs su med pa yin te* in our text.

535. Reading *zhes* for *zhas* in our text.

536. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 24a, 47.3–6, P. 35.6.3–4.1, Chakravarti 1984, 31; and Tsongkhapa's *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 56a5–56b4, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 91a–b, 181.4–182.6.

537. Tib. *gsor mi rung gi lta ba*, or *gsor mi rung ba'i lta ba*.

538. Nāgārjuna, *Rtsa she*, *Dbu ma rtsa ba*, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, Tōh. 3824, chap. 13, v. 8, D. folio 8a, 15.6–7. For the Sanskrit see de Jong 1977, 18; for an English translation from the Tibetan see Garfield 1995, 212.

539. As the Pañchen Rinpoché mentioned, the *Sgron gsal* explains the shared level of interpretation of the verse “in the absence of being” in relation to the three doors of liberation: emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness; see [358] above. Here the Pañchen Rinpoché refers to emptiness and below to signlessness and wishlessness.

540. This is an explanation of the second line: *bsgom par bya ba bsgom pa min*, here in the shared level of interpretation. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 39b, 80.6, has *gang yang sgom par bya ba rgyud dang 'bras bu* for *sgom par bya ba dang rgyud dang 'bras bu* in our text.

541. This is an explanation of the third line: *de ltar dngos po dngos med pas*.

542. This is an explanation of the fourth line: *sgom pa dmigs su med pa'o*.

543. Reading *sgom pa po* for *sgom pa pa* here.

544. The meditation here is a gradual dissolution (*rjes gzhi*), as distinct from instantaneous dissolution (*ril 'dzin*); for definitions of these terms, see the *Rim pa lnga pa*, Tōh. 1802, chap. 4, vv. 26–27, D. folio 55a, 109.1–2. For the Sanskrit and Tibetan see Mimaki and Tomabechi 1994, 45–46.

545. Here “ground” in the “ground of wisdom” is related to the cosmological ground of the subsequent world and to the ground of the mandala visualization.

546. Jo bo Rje. Dīpaṅkaraśrījñāna, *Mngon par rtogs pa rnam par 'byed pa*, *Abhisamayavibhaṅga*, Tōh. 1490, D. folio 189b, 378.1–2. See also Tsongkhapa's commentary on the *sādhana* of Lūyīpā[da], (Lu'i pa), Tōh. 1427, in his *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 52a–b, 174.2–175.6; see also Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 489–90, and *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 11b, 359.3–4.

547. This description is based on the *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, chap. 3, vv. 90c–d and 45–52, D. folio 10a, 19.6–7, and its *Mngon 'grel*, *Bhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, D. folios 156b–157a and 144a–145b, 312.4–313.1 and 287.5–290.6; for the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 179 and 157–61, and for an English translation (of the French translation by La Vallée Poussin) see Pruden 1988–90, 477–78 and 451–54. See also the commentary on the *Abhidharmakośa* by Rgyal ba Dge 'dun grub, *Dam pa'i chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi rnam par bshad pa thar lam gsal byed*, Tōh. 5525; this section is found in folios 115b–116a and 100b–102b, 230.6–231.5 and 200.6–204.2, translated into English by Patt 1993, 687 and 642–46. The description here is based also on the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, part 1, *Sa'i dngos gzhi*, *Maulībhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folios 18a–20b, 35.6–40.4; Sanskrit edition V. Bhattacharya 1957, 36.19–41.16, English translation Kajiyama 2000, 190–96. Our text to some extent follows Tsongkhapa's *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 10a–11a, 298.1–300.2. See also Kong sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, vol. 1, 202–4, translated in The International Translation Committee 1995, 132–34.

548. Reading *rlung cung zad 'og tu babs pas* for *rlung 'og tu cung zad babs pas*, as immediately below in our text.

549. Tib. Tshan po che, Skt. Mahānagna, see *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 45, D. folio 144a, 287.6, Pradhan 1975, 158, Pruden 1988–90, 451. Pradhan 1975 has *mahālagna* here.

550. Reading *grub pa'i* for *gub pa'i* in our text.

551. *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, vv. 45–46, D. folio 144a–b, 287.5–288.3, Pradhan 1975, 158, Pruden 1988–90, 451–52. Here the *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa* describes the three mandalas of wind, water, and gold.

552. *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, chap. 3, vv. 47a–48a, D. folio 8b, 16.5, Pradhan 1975, 158, Pruden 1988–90, 452. The *Kośa* has here: “The disks of water and gold have a diameter of twelve hundred and three thousand four hundred and fifty *yojanas* [1,203,450], three times that in circumference.”

553. Tib. *Dus 'khor*. In this system, our world rests on the four disks of wind, fire, water, and earth. See, for example, Newman 1987, 477; Kilty 2004, 79; and Kong sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, vol. 1, 215; translated by the International Translation Committee 1995, 148.

554. The word *gos* in our text is often written *go sa*.

555. While the mandala rests on the four disks of wind, fire, water, and earth, according to the system of the *Abhidharmakośa* followed here, the physical world rests on circles of wind, water, and gold alone, and therefore the physical world — the ground — has no equivalent for the fire mandala. The present statement is meant to account for this. This question is discussed in the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 121b–122a, 242.7–242.1, P. 7.5.1–2, Tanaka 2016, 82; Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 10b, 299.4–6; Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 49a, 99.3–6.

556. Tib. *Lcags ri mu khyud*, *Lcags ri khor yug*, Skt. *Cakravāḍa*, the mountain range made of iron that defines the outer limit of the world.

557. These are cool, tasty, light, soft, clear, odorless, harmless to the throat if swallowed and harmless to the stomach; see the *Kośa* chap. 3, vv. 51c–52, autocommentary.

558. Tib. *Mu khyud 'dzin*, Skt. *Nimindhara*.

559. *Rnam gzhag rim pa* by Nāgabuddhi, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 121b–122a, 242.5–243.3, P. 7.4.6–5.4, Tanaka 2016, 82–83. Tsongkhapa comments on this in *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 9b–11a, 297.5–300.2.

560. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 28b–29a, 72.6–73.1, has here: “Instantaneously a complete vajra ground appears with fence, tent, canopy, and fire-mountain.”

561. See Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po, *Gsang 'dus dkyil 'khor gyi sgrub thabs dngos grub rgya mtsho*, work no. 106, folios 4b–5a, 93.3.4–4.2.

562. This is the circle of the multicolored ring of fire. See Doboom Tulku 1996, 60.

563. Indeed, neither the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 2b, 4.5, P. 269.3.4, L. 19, T. 18, nor the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i bsgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 197b, 394.5, P. 20.4.2, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 9, 41, teach that the yogi should meditate here on the vajra ground with its fence, tent, canopy, and so forth. Accordingly, Tibetan lamas, including Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 15a, 711.1–3, and Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po, *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i dkyil 'khor gyi sgrub pa'i thabs dngos grub rgya mtsho*, work no. 106, folio 4b, 93.3.4, do not mention such a meditation. However, Tsongkhapa does not agree, and in the *Sādhana* arranged by him, folios 28b–29a, 72.6–73.1, he includes the visualization of “a complete vajra ground with fence, tent, canopy, and fire big as a mountain.” See also his *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 502–3, and his *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, folio 19a, 182.3. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 43b–44a, 88.5–89.6, and our text follows this.

564. *Dkyil chog rdo rje 'phreng ba*, *Vajrāvalīmaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 3140.

565. Abhayākara Gupta, 'Jigs med 'byung gnas sbas pa; see his *Man ngag snye ma*, *Āmnāyamañjarī*, Tōh. 1198, D. folio 127b, 254.6. For drawing the outlines of the mandala, see his *Dkyil chog rdo rje 'phreng ba*, *Vajrāvalīmaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 3140, D. folios 19a–28b, 37.6–56.5, and Mori 2009, 140–85.

566. See *Dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga nyi shu pa*, *Maṇḍalavimśatividhi*, Tōh. 1810, chap. 8, v. 2, D. folio 136b, 272.3, Tanaka 2001, 212.

567. Tib. *chos 'byung*, Skt. *dharmodaya*.

568. This is the introduction or the first part, *gleng gzhi*, *nidāna*, of the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 6b, 12.4, P. 27.2.8–3.1, Chakravarti 1984, 9.

569. Tōh. 442, Zhol 6b6 and 7a6, Tog 20.5 and 22.4, Dunh. 9b2 and 10b3, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, v. 1, and v. 15. Dunh. 9b2 has *mthas klas par* for *dbus gnas par*.

570. Tōh. 442, Zhol 15a2–3, Tog 50.3, Dunh. 27b5, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, v. 3ab. The Zhol and Tog have *dbus gnas par* for *dbus su bsam* and Dunh. has *rdo rje* for *rdo rje'i* in our text. The eleventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* is considered to be an explanation of the third chapter.
571. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, chap. 3, D. folio 26b, 52.6, P. 36.4.5–6, Chakravarti 1984, 35. In his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 60b6, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 98b, 196.6, Tsongkhapa adds here: the triangular “source of phenomena.”
572. *Rgyud phyi ma*, *Uttaratantra*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 49b2, D. folio 149a, 298.3, Tog 166.2, Matsunaga 1978, 113, v. 15c. Tog has *sgom* for *bsgom*.
573. *Rgyud phyi ma*, *Uttaratantra*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 51b3, D. folio 151b, 302.7, Tog 173.7, Matsunaga 1978, v. 80cd. Zhol and Tog have *gru gsum* for *gu gsum* in our text.
574. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 29a, 73.1–2, has here: “At its center appears a triangular white ‘source of phenomena,’ standing on a point with its wide side on top. Within it appears a variegated lotus.”
575. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 12b–13a, 361.4–362.1.
576. Reading *chud* for *chung* in our text.
577. Tib. *mos spyod*, Skt. *adhimukticyā*, the first two of the five paths, which are the paths of accumulation and preparation.
578. This is one of the explanatory tantras of the *Gsang ba 'dus pa*; see *Dgongs pa lung bstan [ston] pa*, *Sandhyāvyaākaraṇa*, Tōh. 444, D. folios 181b–182a, 362.7–363.7, and Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 115b6, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 193b, 386.1.
579. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 29a–b, 73.2–74.1.
580. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 13a, 362.1–4.
581. Tib. Padma can, Dung can ma, Glang po can ma, and Ri dwags can ma, Skt. Padminī, Śaṅkhinī, Hastinī, and Hariṇī.
582. For these winds, see Lati Rinbochay and Hopkins 1979, 14, 65–66.
583. Tib. *mnyam gnas*, Skt. *samāna*.
584. Tib. *gyen rgyu*, Skt. *udāna*, reading *gyen rgyu* for *gyon rgyu* in our text.
585. Tib. *srog 'dzin*, Skt. *prāṇa*.
586. Tib. *thur sel*, Skt. *apāna*.
587. Our text has *Baṃ* here.
588. According to the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 29a–b, 73.2–74.1, each of the four disks is adorned with two vajras on its sides, and these are visualized from the two *hūms* that flank the seed syllable of each disk.
589. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 29b, 74.1–2, has here: “The four disks merge together and transform into a crossed vajra.”
590. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 11b, 21.7, P. 273.3.6–7. The *Mdo bsre* does not mention here the eighth chapter of the *Root Tantra*, however the second line it cites, “should practice also the mergings,” is found in the eighth chapter, while the first line is from the eleventh chapter, as the *Mdo bsre* indicates.
591. Tōh. 442, Zhol 12a1, Tog 39.1–2, Dunh. 21a2, Fremantle 1971, 11ab, and Matsunaga 1978, 11cd. My translation is based on the commentary for this verse in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 60a, 119.4–5, P. 52.2.3–4, Chakravarti 1984, 76, and on Tsongkhapa’s *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 115a3–5, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 192a, 383.3–5. As it appears in our text, this line may be understood as: “Should you desire the Peaceful Vajra Holder, Vajradhṛk, you should visualize the mergings.”
592. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 13a, 362.4–5.

593. Tib. Padma can, Dung can ma, Glang po can ma, and Ri dwags can ma, Skt. Padminī, Śaṅkhinī, Hastinī, and Hariṇī.
594. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 29b, 74.2.
595. Tōh. 442, Zhol 15a3, Tog 50.1, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, v. 3cd. The first part of this verse was cited above [363].
596. The word “there” refers to the mandala at the center of the space vajra.
597. Tib. *zung 'jug gi sku*, Skt. *yuganaddhakāya*.
598. This is the fourth of the five stages of the completion stage, *rim lnga, pañcakrama*.
599. Tōh. 442, Zhol 7b6, Tog 24.1, Dunh. 11b3, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, v. 9ab.
600. For the body mandala, see Tōh. 442, Zhol 36b3, Tog 122.3, Dunh. 67a3–4, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, v. 2.
601. For the speech mandala, see Tōh. 442, Zhol 36b6, Tog 123.2, Dunh. 67b3, Fremantle 1971, v. 8, Matsunaga 1978, v. 9.
602. Tōh. 419, D. folio 31b, 62.6. D. has *snang byed la ni khru lnga nyid* for *khru lnga ba ni snang byed pa 'o*, *padma gar dbang drug pa ste* for *gar dbang phyug gi khru drug dang*, and *lcags kyi rgyal po de bzhin bdun* for *rta yi rgyal po 'i khru bdun pa* in our text.
603. Akṣobhya, Mi bskyod pa.
604. Ratnasambhava, Rin chen 'byung ldan.
605. Amitābha, 'Od dpag med.
606. Amoghasiddhi, Don yod grub pa.
607. Reading *nges pa* for *nga pa* in our text.
608. *Dkyil chog rdo rje 'phreng ba, Vajrāvalīmaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 3140, D. folio 35a, 69.4; see also Mori 2009, 222.
609. *Dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga nyi shu pa, Maṇḍalaviṃśatavidhi*, Tōh. 1810, chap. 4, v. 19, D. folio 134a, 267.4–5, Tanaka 2004, 31, v. 19. D. has *bstun nas* for *bstan nas* in our text.
610. Tib. *sngags pa*. The Sanskrit equivalent of *sngags pa* here is *vajrin*.
611. Mar me mdzad bzang po, *Gsang 'dus dkyil chog, Guhyasamājamāṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 1865, D. folio 78b, 156.5–6. D. has *mdzad* for *bshad*, *byung* for *'byung*, *tshad sogs* for *tshang sogs*, and *nges pas* for *nges pa* in our text. For the Sanskrit see *Dhīḥ* 42, 2006, 135, vv. 239cd–240ab, and Klein-Schwind 2008, v. 239cdef.
612. Tōh. 442, Zhol 12a2, Tog 39.4, Dunh. 21a4, Fremantle 1971, v. 15ab, Matsunaga 1978, v. 16. Zhol and Dunh. have *bsgom byas* for *bsgoms byas* and Dunh. has *brgya 'i* for *brgya yi* in our text.
613. Tōh. 442, Zhol 12a3, Tog 39.4, Dunh. 21a4, Fremantle 1971, v. 16abcd, Matsunaga 1978, v. 18. Dunh. has *brgya 'i* for *dbye ba 'i* in our text.
614. See Doboom Tulku 1996.
615. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folios 2b–3a, 4.7–5.1, P. 269.3.7–8, L. 24, T. 23. D. and P. have *yang dag mdzes* for *nye bar mdzes* in our text. These lines are cited with some variations also in the *Rdo rje sems dpa 'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 198a, 395.1, P. 20.4.6, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 10.7–8 and 42.10–14. For an English translation of these lines see Wayman 1971, 560.
616. Tib. *sgo*, Skt. *dvāra*.
617. Tib. *rta babs*, Skt. *toraṇa*, the four monumental entrances to the celestial mansion with eleven ornate layers that are shown projecting outward in two-dimensional representations of the mandala.
618. The following are measurements of the diameters of the respective rings encompassing the ground of the celestial mansion.

619. Tib. 'Od 'phreng, Skt. *raśmimālā*, this being the outermost circle or sphere of the mandala made of multicolored lights or fires. See *Dhīḥ* 2006 and Klein-Schwind 2008, v. 104.
620. Tib. *sgo tshad*, the width of the gateway or portal.
621. Tib. *rdo rje'i ra*, Skt. *vajrāvalī*, the second circle or sphere made of vajras that serves for protection. See *Dhīḥ* 2006 and Klein-Schwind 2008, v. 233.
622. Tib. *pad rwa*, this is the third circle of lotus petals.
623. Reading *pad ma* for *pang ma* in our text.
624. Reading *rwa* for *ra* in our text.
625. At the basis of the celestial mansion on the lotus petals there is a crossed vajra. Both of these — the crossed vajra and the circle of lotuses that encompasses the celestial mansion — have the same diameter of twenty gate units. In two-dimensional representations of the mandala, the crossed vajra at the basis of the celestial mansion is almost entirely hidden by the palace and its ornamented portals. Still, it is possible to see the tips of the middle prongs and the ends of the right and left prongs in each of the four directions.
626. Reading *pho brang* for *phro brang* in our text.
627. Tib. *cha phran*.
628. Tib. *mda' yab*, Skt. *kramaśīrṣa*, the guarding wall at the edge of the roof; see Mori 2009, 640, and Tanaka 2004, vv. 14–15.
629. Tib. *phyi khyams*.
630. The height of the celestial mansion together with the parapet on its roof and the height of the portals of the celestial mansion with their own parapets on top are equal; both are seventeen small units high.
631. This is the palace of the principal deity of the mandala.
632. Tib. *rgya phibs*.
633. Tib. Gnod mdzes.
634. Reading 'god for 'gong in our text.
635. Sumbharāja, the fierce deity at the nadir, is set below the principal deity; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 36b, 88.6.
636. Here begins a description of the width of the respective circles or rings that encompass the ground of the celestial mansion, beginning with the outermost circle of fire (*me ri*), called also the “garland of light” ('od 'phreng).
637. Or rather, in three dimensional meditation it is spherical.
638. Tib. *chos 'byung*, Skt. *dharmodaya*. In drawings the “source of phenomena” is represented as two rings; the outer is white and the inner red. As we saw, the three dimensional “source of phenomena” is visualized as an upside down triangular pyramid, white on the outside and red inside.
639. The crossed vajra rests on the lotus, supported by it.
640. There are two systems for measuring the mandala — sixty-four and ninety-six small units. In the first, the height of the portal is one gate unit, and in the second it is three gate units. See Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 47a, 95.1–4.
641. The five prongs of the vajra are of equal length, but since the outer prongs curve, they do not reach the tip of the central prong, which is straight.
642. This is the system of Lwa ba pa in his *Bde mchog gi sgrub thabs gtsug nor*, *Cakrasaṃvarasādhana*, Tōh. 1443; see Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 52a, 105.1.
643. According to Blo bzang lhun grub, 138.3–4, this is the system of Abhaya; see also the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 291–92.

644. Tib. *rta babs*, Skt. *toraṇa*, the monumental entrances to the mandala.
645. Tib. *stegs bu*, Skt. *vedī*. See Mori 2009, 640.
646. Tib. *snam bu*, Skt. *paṭṭikā*. See Dhīh 2006 and Klein-Schwind 2008, vv. 234–35.
647. For the eleven layers of the portal’s façades and for the relative heights of these layers, see Mori 2009, 640–41.
648. See Mori 2009, 640–41.
649. Because in this system the height of the portal is only one gate unit. In the system of three gate units for the portal, the portal is as high as the celestial mansion. See [368] above, and immediately below here.
650. Reading *rta babs* for *ta babs* in our text.
651. Tib. *mun snam*, Skt. *andhakāra* or *andharī*.
652. Sangs rgyas gsang ba, but see Byang chub mchog, *’Jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa’i sgrub pa’i thabs*, *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgītisādhana*, Tōh. 2579, D. folio 62b, 124.2. D. has *mtshams* for *byams*, and *twa ra na* for *twa ra ṇa* in our text. *Smṛtijñānakīrti*, commentary on this work, Tōh. 2584, D. folio 114b, 228.2, has *rgyan* for *byams*, and *twa ra na* for *twa ra ṇa* in our text.
653. See Mori 2009, 640–41.
654. The meaning of *zhen la* [width] here is not clear.
655. Tib. *pha gu*, Skt. *khura*. See Tanaka 2004, v. 14.
656. Tib. *dra ba dra phyed*, Skt. *hārādhahāra*. See the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3a, 5.1, P. 269.3.8, L. 25, T. 24, and Mori 2009, 640.
657. Tib. *pu shu*.
658. I am grateful to Bya do Rinpoché and Geshe Thubten Tashi for clarifying this description of the roof.
659. Tib. *tshangs thig*, Skt. *brahmasūtra*. See Tanaka 2004, vv. 2–3.
660. Tib. *rtsa thig*, Skt. *mūlasūtra*. See Mori 2009, 642, and Tanaka 2004, v. 4.
661. Tib. *lcam*.
662. Tib. *ska rags*.
663. Tib. *gar bu*.
664. This ring with its vajras can clearly be seen in two-dimensional mandalas.
665. See the *De kho na nyid bsdus pa’i rgya cher bshad pa ko sa la’i rgyan*, *Kosalālaṅkāratattvasaṅgraha* by Śākyamitra, Tōh. 2503, D. folio 25a, 49.1–2.
666. Tib. *rgya phibs*.
667. Tib. *lhag mos* or *lhag mos kyi lha*.

6. Meditation on the Specially Visualized Deities

Meditation on the Specially Visualized Deities — The Indwellers of the Mandala Who Will Be Awakened There

THERE ARE THREE topics here: (1) setting the specially visualized deities,⁶⁶⁸ (2) displaying the deeds of the specially visualized deities, and (3) amassing the specially visualized deities on your body.

Setting the Specially Visualized Deities

In this section there are again three parts: (1) the beings in correspondence with whom the deities are visualized, (2) the reason for visualizing the deities in correspondence with these beings, and (3) explaining the meaning of purifying the ground of purification by means of the creation stage. [373]

The Beings in Correspondence with Whom the Deities Are Visualized

The visualization of the deities here corresponds to the evolution of sentient beings dwelling in the world after the evolution of the world itself. Here is how this happens:⁶⁶⁹ when a god passes away in the second concentration⁶⁷⁰ and is born in the first concentration, the beings of the first concentration evolve. Similarly, the six classes of the gods of the desire realm,⁶⁷¹ the people of the four continents, the hungry ghosts⁶⁷² who dwell in their main habitat,⁶⁷³ the animals that live in various regions,⁶⁷⁴ the eight cold hells, the eight hot hells, [and] the designated⁶⁷⁵ and peripheral hells⁶⁷⁶ evolve successively from the higher to the lower level.

These three events occur simultaneously: the birth of one sentient being in the Hell of Ceaseless Torment,⁶⁷⁷ the eon of evolution is completed, and the period of abiding begins.⁶⁷⁸ The evolution of the world takes twenty medium eons, its destruction twenty, its abiding twenty, and the empty period lasts twenty eons. These eighty medium eons together constitute one great eon.⁶⁷⁹

[The first people in Jambudvīpa]

All people of the first eon residing in Jambudvīpa are endowed with the following seven characteristics:⁶⁸⁰ (1) their birth is miraculous, (2) their lifespan is boundless, (3) their faculties are unimpaired, (4) their bodies glow all over with an inner light, (5) their bodies are adorned with features that are similar to the major and minor marks of a buddha, (6) their sustenance is the food of delight, and (7) their miraculous powers enable them to travel through space.

At that time the entire surface of the earth is swathed in a splendid nutritive essence with a taste like unrefined honey and a color like fresh butter. A being whose imprints of craving for physical food [374] are stirred takes some on its⁶⁸¹ fingertip and tastes it. Upon seeing this, the other beings also take some and eat it. Thereupon their light and miraculous powers vanish and darkness appears. Then everyone gathers and laments, and consequently the sun and moon appear. From then on the system of day and night, temporal junctures, and so on⁶⁸² is established.

Then those who eat more of the earth's nutritive essence become ugly and those who eat less of it become beautiful. Thus the latter say to the former: "I am beautiful and you are ugly." Owing to their spite, the nutritive essence of the earth disappears. Then once again the surface of the earth is swathed in a splendid cream with a taste like unrefined honey and a color like the yellow *dong kha* flower. Again beings eat it and again the same events⁶⁸³ occur until it disappears. Yet again the surface of the earth is swathed in a splendid undergrowth of sprouts, tasting as before, similar in color to the orange *ka dam pu ka* flower. And again beings eat it and so forth, as before.⁶⁸⁴

Afterward, although no field has been plowed or planted anywhere, *salu* rice⁶⁸⁵ appears on the surface of the earth, devoid of husks and chaff, with roots about four fingers long. The rice they reap in the morning grows back in the morning, and the rice they reap in the evening grows back in the evening, with no sign that it has ever been reaped. Everyone eats this, and since it is coarse food, its waste products turn into feces and urine, and the doors of their evacuation protrude as the male and female organs.

Then two beings, who bear previous imprints for sexual intercourse, see each other, and so begin to engage in sexual activity. Others [375] throw dirt on them and so forth,⁶⁸⁶ saying: "Your behavior is improper." In order to conceal themselves, the two beings build a house and so forth, and this is the origin of houses.

At this time they gather the *salu* rice every morning and every evening. Then one lazy being starts gathering food for the day and the night at the same time. As a result, others, too, gather food for up to a month or year at a time. Since they accumulate and store it, the rice that used to appear in the unplowed fields stops growing and must be cultivated and sown from seeds.

Then certain people, dissatisfied with their own *salu* rice, snatch and steal the *salu* rice of others. As a result, they go on to commit the ten nonvirtuous actions that include clashing, arguing, blaming one another, and so forth.⁶⁸⁷ Then they appoint as their leader someone among them who is impartial and virtuous by nature, and he lays down the law and metes out appropriate punishments, and one-sixth of the harvest is offered to him. Thereby he becomes their king, called the King Esteemed by Many.⁶⁸⁸ The lineage of the Śākyas is also descended from him.⁶⁸⁹

[Visualizing the deities in correspondence with the first beings]

About visualizing the specially visualized deities in correspondence with the miraculous birth of people in the first eon, as just described, the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁶⁹⁰ “Merely through an instantaneous special visualization”⁶⁹¹ and so forth. Hence the specially visualized deities are generated instantaneously without prior meditation on their seed syllables, emblems, and so forth. This is so because the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁶⁹² “Thus meditate on the specially visualized [deities] in the mandala, according to the ritual method.” [376] Furthermore, the explanation on the samādhi of “vajra overpowering”⁶⁹³ at the shared level of interpretation⁶⁹⁴ instructs you in this way.

The respective directions of the deities’ abodes have to accord with the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*,⁶⁹⁵ for the *Concise Sādhana* clearly teaches:⁶⁹⁶ “You should meditate on yourself with a consort at the center of the mandala, having three faces and six arms and an appearance equal in splendor to the blue *indranīla* gem. You should visualize Vairocana, Ratnasambhava,” and so forth, up to “and likewise meditate on Uṣṇīṣacakravartin⁶⁹⁷ above.”

Whereas during the meditation on the Supreme King of Mandalas,⁶⁹⁸ the principal deity of the mandala may belong to various tathāgata families, you should meditate on the principal deity of the specially visualized deities solely as Vajradhara⁶⁹⁹ who belongs to the sixth tathāgata family. This is because in the *Concise Sādhana*⁷⁰⁰ you meditate on the principal deity of the specially visualized deities as Vajrasattva, and in both the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture*⁷⁰¹ and the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*⁷⁰² you meditate on the principal deity

as Vajradhara and none else.

The meditation on the specially visualized deities appearing as males and females is applied in correspondence to the people of the first eon who, by resorting to coarse food, gradually took the form of men and women. Nevertheless, the correspondences in this case are mere similarities between the mode of birth of the people of the first eon and so forth and the method of meditation on the specially visualized deities. These two processes cannot be taken as a ground of purification and its purifier, since by no means are they correlates.⁷⁰³

The Reason for Visualizing the Deities in Correspondence with the People of the First Eon⁷⁰⁴

Here is the purpose of applying correspondences between the generation of the specially visualized deities and the people of the first eon.⁷⁰⁵ the dissolution of the specially visualized deities into clear light below is a meditation applied in correspondence to the death of a person of Jambudvīpa who is endowed with the six constituents. To meditate in this way [377] there must be a prior support that bears a resemblance to the dying person. For this reason you should meditate on the support of the specially visualized deities who are akin to the people of the first eon.⁷⁰⁶

[Qualm:] Since it is appropriate to apply this meditation to any dying person whatsoever, what is the reason for applying it only to the people of the first eon?

[Reply:] Here is the purpose of applying the correspondence solely to a person of the first eon: the visualization of the celestial mansion corresponds to the evolution⁷⁰⁷ of the world, and accordingly it is reasonable to meditate on the generation of the deities within this celestial mansion in a way similar to the evolution of the first people inhabiting the world. Moreover, as the first people to evolve in Jambudvīpa are the people of the first eon, so the first deities to be visualized in the celestial mansion are the specially visualized deities. Thus their correspondence is reasonable.

[Qualm:] This meditation on the specially visualized deities is not suitable for purifying your future death because you must also meditate on the stages of death in correspondence with the stages of death of the people of the first eon.

[Reply:] There is nothing wrong here because the *Monastic Guidelines*⁷⁰⁸ teaches that in resorting to coarse food, the people of the first eon gradually became ordinary people. Hence the death of a person of the first eon and the

death of a person endowed with the six constituents who is living now are similar — both share the stages of gradual dissolution of the twenty-five coarse elements. Therefore the meditation on the specially visualized deities corresponds to the stages of death both of persons of the first eon and those living now.

[Qualm:] Why is every correspondence to birth, death, and the intermediate state during the creation stage made solely in relation to the people of Jambudvīpa?

[Reply:] There are two parts here: (1) refuting the positions of others, and (2) establishing our own position.

REFUTING THE POSITIONS OF OTHERS

SOME TIBETAN LAMAS⁷⁰⁹ say that the Blessed One [378] taught four ritual methods of generating deities for the purification of the four modes of birth:

(1) To purify birth from an egg, you should generate the deity from a white and red moon,⁷¹⁰ or from a small⁷¹¹ seed in the midst of the embracing sun and moon, for the *Abhidhānottara Tantra* teaches:⁷¹² “[The yogi should meditate] on the egg-born one without song yoga, soundlessly yet not soundlessly.”

(2) To purify birth from a womb, you should generate the deity from a seed in the womb of the father-mother deities, for [the *Abhidhānottara Tantra*] teaches that you should generate the deity by arousing “the one that has dissolved” with a song:⁷¹³ “Meditators should visualize the womb-born one with the yoga of song.”

(3) To purify birth from heat and moisture, you should generate the deity from a seed, for the *Lotus Commentary*⁷¹⁴ on the *Samvarodaya Tantra* teaches:⁷¹⁵ “Arising from just a lunar disk and a seed is [for] birth from heat and moisture.”⁷¹⁶

(4) To purify a miraculous birth, you should generate the deity instantly,⁷¹⁷ for Vajraghaṇṭa taught:⁷¹⁸ “You should meditate⁷¹⁹ without a seed, as a being of miraculous birth.” Therefore, [these TIBETAN LAMAS] say, in the present context you should generate the specially visualized deities instantaneously, to purify the miraculous birth mode of the people of the first eon.

[Refutation]

This position is inappropriate because:⁷²⁰

(1) In explaining⁷²¹ the ground of purification of the creation stage, the second chapter of *Samvarodaya Tantra* teaches:⁷²² “People who do not apprehend the samādhi on the illusion-like” and so forth up to “abiding in the form of a drop in the midst of the semen and blood.” This passage teaches the stages of birth from wombs of human beings. And in the thirteenth chapter of the *Samvarodaya Tantra*,⁷²³ which explains the creation stage that purifies this mode of birth, there is no mention of the arousing of “the one that has dissolved” with a song. Therefore the teachings on the ritual method of generation — which according to you, serve to purify birth from an egg — are irrelevant. [379]

(2) Your position, that it is necessary to arouse “the one that has dissolved” with a song to purify birth from a womb, contradicts not only the scriptures but also YOUR own standpoint, for *Formulating the Sādhana*⁷²⁴ teaches that the generation of the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva later on is intended to purify birth from a womb, and YOU accept this as well.

(3) The position that the instantaneous generation of the specially visualized deities⁷²⁵ is intended to purify the miraculous birth of the first people of the eon is inappropriate because the birth of the first people of the eon ended a long time ago, so it cannot be purified, and moreover there is no reason to purify it.

What, then, is the meaning of the passages cited above? We explain that in the first two scriptures,⁷²⁶ the correspondences between the two rituals of generating the deities and the two modes of birth are intended as mere similarities; and the lines by Vajraghaṇṭa⁷²⁷ teach how the meditator on the completion stage arises from the clear light in the illusory body and is not meant to be applied to an instantaneous generation during the creation stage.

ESTABLISHING OUR OWN POSITION⁷²⁸

Here is the reason for applying the generation rituals of the Unexcelled Mantra only to human beings born in Jambudvīpa from a womb and endowed with the six constituents. *Formulating the Sādhana* teaches:⁷²⁹ “All the buddhas who appear in the past, present, and future enter existence in the nature of human beings and, as such, attain the siddhis of the omniscient stage. This is why the stages of birth into human existence are taught here.” [380] Hence it is taught that all the buddhas of the three times, being disciples devoted exclusively to the Unexcelled Mantra who will be awakened in a short lifespan during the period of decline, must be awakened as humans in Jambudvīpa.

Thus: (1) A person who is ascertained to be awakened in a short lifetime

during the period of decline, by training from the very beginning in the path of the Unexcelled Mantra, must be a human being in Jambudvīpa. For only such a person is able to take as the path, the great bliss that arises from the joining of the two organs and to experience later in life the ripening of karma that has been accumulated in the earlier part of human life. (2) Only human beings in Jambudvīpa and none else are capable of this.

The first statement⁷³⁰ is valid because the ultimate aspect of the swift path of the Unexcelled Mantra is the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness; and the bliss here is the great innate bliss induced when the winds enter, abide, and dissolve into the central channel of the subtle body. This bliss induces the ultimate clear light of mind isolation,⁷³¹ endowed with its full range of characteristics. Of the two contributing causes of this bliss, external and internal, the yogi should rely on the external contributing cause — a consort.

Furthermore as the *Compendium of Vajra Wisdom Tantra* teaches:⁷³² “Unless the mantrin and his consort unite and their vajra and lotus are joined, they will be unable to identify the three kinds of subtle awareness.” This shows that the three appearances⁷³³ of mind isolation will not arise in this lifetime unless the yogi unites with a consort. This *Tantra* teaches as well:⁷³⁴ “Those unable to join perfectly their *bhagas* and *liṅgas* will not attain the samādhi of great bliss.” [381] Thus it is taught that unless the yogis join the two organs, they will not attain the illusory body in their present lives by means of the great bliss that arises when objects of desire are taken as the path.

The second statement — other than the people of Jambudvīpa there are no beings able to attain enlightenment by training in the path of great bliss — is also valid because (1) neither in a body of the gods of the desire realm, (2) nor in a body of the higher realms, (3) nor in a body of the other three continents, (4) nor in a body of one of the three lower rebirths can one attain enlightenment in this life by way of the path of the Unexcelled Mantra.

The first point — the gods of the desire realm are unable to achieve that — is valid because they are incapable of uniting the white and red constituents upon joining their two organs.

The second point — beings of the higher realms are unable to achieve that — is valid because they do not have male and female organs.

The third point — beings of the other three continents are unable to achieve that — is valid because even though their white and red constituents do blend, they lack the sharp faculties that would enable them to take great bliss as the

path, and because the karma they have accumulated in the earlier part of their lives cannot ripen in the later part of the same lives, and also because they are not on the ground of karma but on the ground of resources, for the *Samvarodaya Tantra* teaches:⁷³⁵ “The people of the three continents — Pūrvavideha in the east, Aparagodānīya in the west, and Uttarakuru in the north⁷³⁶ — are sustained by great resources. Lacking discursive and inquiring minds, and their intellects being weak, they are ignorant and wanting in discrimination.” While:⁷³⁷ “Those who are fortunate to have been born in Jambudvīpa are renowned as ‘those on the ground of karma.’ This is so because, owing to their good and bad actions, they are either superior, middling, or inferior, for the ripening of karma accumulated in former lives is seen there in everyone.”

The fourth point — beings in the three lower realms are unable to achieve that — is valid because they are not suitable to serve as receptacles for meditation on the path. [382]

Therefore, given that the foremost disciples of the Unexcelled Mantra are human beings in Jambudvīpa, the commentary on the *Vajradāka Tantra*⁷³⁸ teaches that the heroes and the yoginīs of the twenty-four sites reside only in Jambudvīpa, where they bless the mental *continua* of the meditators and assist in their practice of the path.

Explaining the Meaning of Purifying the Ground of Purification by Means of the Creation Stage⁷³⁹

SOME say⁷⁴⁰ that the grounds of purification of the two stages are different, as birth is the ground of purification of the creation stage, while death is the ground of purification of the completion stage, for the *Compendium of Practices* teaches:⁷⁴¹ “The so-called birth is conventional truth, and that which is named ‘death’ is ultimate truth. A yogi who finds these two stages through the grace of the lama becomes a buddha.” So THEY say.

However, it would follow that the creation stage by itself can fully purify⁷⁴² birth, and the completion stage by itself can fully purify death. This is so because the grounds of purification of the creation and completion stages are different — birth is the ground of purification of the creation stage and death is the ground of purification of the completion stage. If such is YOUR position, it follows that each of these stages by itself would enable the yogis to attain the supreme accomplishment of enlightenment.

According to our system, the creation and completion stages share the same

ground of purification because the future birth, death, and intermediate state of the yogis themselves are the grounds of purification in both stages and because through the purification of the three bodies of the ground by means of the three bodies of the path, the three bodies of the fruit will be swiftly attained.

What is the meaning, then, of the verse from the *Compendium of Practices* cited above? It teaches that when meditators on mind isolation, unable to engage in the *caryā* practice⁷⁴³ in this lifetime, [383] pass away, instead of dying the death of ordinary people, their *deaths* will dawn as a final metaphoric clear light, that is, *ultimate truth*; and instead of entering the intermediate state that would ordinarily ensue, they arise in *birth* as the illusory body, that is, *conventional truth*. Hence the two stages in the phrase *these two stages* in the *Compendium of Practices* are the stages of death and of birth in the intermediate state [and not the creation and completions stages], which in turn are the stages of clear light and transforming into the illusory body [and not ordinary death and rebirth that neither require the grace of a lama nor lead to buddhahood].⁷⁴⁴

The remaining steps in the *sādhana* — the protection wheel, the field for accumulating merit, union with the consort, the Supreme King of Mandalas, and so forth — are not applied in correspondence to the ground of purification.⁷⁴⁵ This is because the import of applying correspondences to the ground of purification is not merely to collate similar phenomena. Rather, the special feature taught here about the meditation is that it is a path that accords with the ground of purification. Therefore no other ground of purification is taught here other than those included within the grounds of purification of steps in the *sādhana*, beginning with the meditation on the ground of wisdom and up to the sealing with the lord of the tathāgata family. This is so because the main ground of purification on the unexcelled path is clearly the impure world and its beings.

Here are the grounds of purification: the ground of purification of the world is subsumed within the steps of the *sādhana* beginning with the meditation on the ground of wisdom up to the visualization of the celestial mansion of the specially visualized deities; and the ground of purification of beings dwelling in the world is subsumed within the steps starting with the meditation on the specially visualized deities up to the sealing with the lord of the tathāgata family.

The main ground of purification of the beings is⁷⁴⁶ their birth, death, and intermediate state. The ground of purification of death is subsumed within the specially visualized deities dissolving into clear light, [384] the ground of purification of the intermediate state is subsumed within the visualization of the

first lord through the five stages of manifest awakening,⁷⁴⁷ and the ground of purification of birth is subsumed within the steps from the first lord transforming into the *nirmāṇakāya* up to the sealing with the lord of the family. For this reason Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples did not teach a method for applying the remaining steps of the *sādhana* to a ground of purification.

Here is the reason for sealing the surrounding specially visualized deities with the lord of the tathāgata family, while not sealing the principal deity: the completion of the ritual of visualizing the principal deity Vajradhara depends on the completion of the ritual of visualizing the three bodies; hence so long as this visualization ritual of the principal deity has not been completed, he is not sealed, but the completion of the ritual of visualizing the surrounding deities does not depend on that.

DISPLAYING THE DEEDS OF THE SPECIALLY VISUALIZED DEITIES

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁷⁴⁸ “From the *hūṃ* on my heart a light-ray emanates” and so on.⁷⁴⁹ Since the three *sādhana*s⁷⁵⁰ and *Formulating the Sādhana*⁷⁵¹ do not explicitly teach the deeds of the specially visualized deities, some Indians and Tibetans⁷⁵² do not write about them. But you should indeed meditate on the deeds of the specially visualized deities, for the *Illuminating Lamp*⁷⁵³ clearly explains this meditation at the shared level of interpretation of the samādhi of “vajra overpowering” in the *Root Tantra*.

Here is the method of displaying the deeds. You should visualize:⁷⁵⁴ “A light-ray, emanating from the *hūṃ* on my heart, draws all sentient beings who enter the mandala in the mode of entry of Vajrasattva — from the four directions without hindrance. A light-ray from the bodhicitta⁷⁵⁵ of the father-mother absorbed in union initiates them, and they attain thereby the physical⁷⁵⁶ bliss and mental rapture of all tathāgatas. [385] Becoming Vajrasattva, they proceed to their own buddha-field.”

Generally, there are four entryways into a mandala: Entrance through the gate is the entryway for disciples. Entrance from above is the entryway for *jñānasattvas*. Entrance from below is the entryway of Vajra Might.⁷⁵⁷ Entrance through the four directions without hindrance is the entryway of Vajrasattva.

The initiation conferred here on all beings is not applied in correspondence with a ground of purification,⁷⁵⁸ since its purpose is rather to practice according to the exemplary life of the Teacher in the “past event.”⁷⁵⁹ Here are the purposes of displaying the deeds of the specially visualized deities: (1) it is a special

method of taking the fruit of the Buddha's deeds as the path, (2) motivated by great compassion, you will benefit all sentient beings, (3) all sentient beings will become your future disciples, and (4) you will be perfectly trained in the Mahāyāna.

DISPLAYING THE AMASSING OF THE SPECIALLY VISUALIZED DEITIES ON YOUR BODY

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁷⁶⁰ “A hook-like light-ray emanates from the blue *hūṃ* in my heart” and so on. Here the deities of the outer mandala are placed on your own body, for the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁷⁶¹ “Then the tathāgata Akṣobhya”⁷⁶² and so forth up to⁷⁶³ “the tathāgata Vairocana entered⁷⁶⁴ the heart of the tathāgata Bodhicittavajra.”⁷⁶⁵ And the *Concise Sādhana* teaches as well:⁷⁶⁶ [386] “Furthermore, by means of the yoga of union, visualize these buddhas entering your body one by one, abiding on the body-wheels.” The phrase “body-wheel” and so forth does not indicate that amassing the specially visualized deities on your body here is the body mandala, but rather that you should merely place the deities on the body.

Here is the method of amassing the deities. As the *Illuminating Lamp* teaches,⁷⁶⁷ visualize:⁷⁶⁸ “A hook-like light-ray emanates from the blue *hūṃ* in my heart, invites the deities from Vairocana to Sumbharāja,⁷⁶⁹ setting them along the points of my body, beginning with the crown of my head. They become indivisible in nature from my form aggregate and so forth.”⁷⁷⁰ Here the meaning of the term “the yoga of union” [in the *Concise Sādhana* cited above] is established: the amassed deities and your aggregates and so forth are fused into indivisible nature.

⁶⁶⁸. Tib. *lhag mos kyi lha*. Reading *lhag mos* for *lhag mes* here.

⁶⁶⁹. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 20a–21b, 318.6–321.2, and his *Buṅ ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 13a–14b, 362.6–365.6, as well as Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyes rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 70b–72b, 142.6–146.1, which in turn follow the *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, on chap. 3, vv. 90 and 98, D. folios 155b–157a and 162a–163a, 310.3–313.4 and 323.5–325.3, as well as the *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, *Vinayavibhaṅga*, Tōh. 3, D. folios 48b–51b, 96.1–102.5. See also the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folios 20b–21a, 40.4–41.5; Sanskrit edition V. Bhattacharya 1957, 41.17–42.18, English translation Kajiyama 2000, 196–97. See also the commentary of Rgyal ba Dge 'dun grub on the *Mdzod*, *Abhidharmakośa*, *Dam pa'i chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi rnam par bshad pa thar lam gsal byed*, Tōh. 5525, folios 115b–116a and 118a–119b, 230.6–231.5 and 235.6–238.1, translated into English by Patt 1993, 687 and 694–97. See also the *Aggañña*

Sutta in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, 27, translated in Walshe 1995, 407–14, and Kong sprul, *Shes bya kun khyab*, 1:202–4, translated in The International Translation Committee 1995, 132–34; and Wayman 1962.

670. Tib. *bsam gtan*, Skt. *dhyāna*.

671. Tib. *'dod lha*, Skt. *kāmadeva*.

672. Tib. *yi dwags*, Skt. *preta*.

673. As noted above, the main habitat of the hungry ghosts is located five hundred *yojanas* below Jambudvīpa; see the *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 59c–d, D. folio 148a, 295.4–5, Pradhan 1975, 165, Pruden 1988–90, 460.

674. The *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 59c–d, D. folio 148a, 295.4–5, explains that animals live in three places — land, water, and air — but their main habitat is the Great Ocean.

675. Tib. *nyi tshe*, Skt. *prādeśika*.

676. Tib. *nye 'khor ba*, Skt. *utsada*.

677. Tib. *mnar med*, Skt. *avīci*.

678. See *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 90c–d, D. folios 156b–157a, 312.4–313.1. For the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 179, and for an English translation (of the French translation by La Vallée Poussin) see Pruden 1988–90, 477–78.

679. See *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, vv. 89d–93c, D. folios 155b–157b, 310.3–314.5. For the Sanskrit see Pradhan 1975, 179–83, and for an English translation (of the French translation by La Vallée Poussin) see Pruden 1988–90, 475–79.

680. This is based on the *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 123a, 245.1–2, P. 8.2.2–3, Tanaka 2016, 87–88, Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 20b–21a, 319.3–320.3, the *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 98, D. folios 162a–163a, 323.5–325.3, Pradhan 1975, 187–88, Pruden 1988–90, 487–89, and the *Lung rnam 'byed* = *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, *Vinayavibhaṅga*, Tōh. 3, D. folios 48b–51b, 96.1–102.5; see also the *Aggañña Sutta* in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, translated in Walshe 1995, 407–14.

681. No gender exists yet.

682. The *Lung rnam 'byed* = *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, *Vinayavibhaṅga*, Tōh. 3, D. folio 49b, 98.1–3, here enumerates additional temporal units.

683. The *Lung rnam 'byed* = *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, Tōh. 3, D. folios 49b–50a, 98.6–99.6, retells these events once more.

684. The *Lung rnam 'byed* = *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, Tōh. 3, D. folio 50a–b, 99.6–100.5, retells these events once more.

685. Skt. *śāli*.

686. The *Lung rnam 'byed* = *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, Tōh. 3, D. folio 51a, 101.2, here enumerates the other objects they threw at them.

687. See *Lung rnam 'byed* = *'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa*, Tōh. 3, D. folio 51b, 102.3–4.

688. Tib. *mang pos bkur ba'i rgyal po*, Skt. *rājamahāsaṃmata*.

689. This is the lineage of Buddha Śākyamuni.

690. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 31b, 77.4.

691. The term translated as special visualization is *lhag par mos pa tsam gyis*, and this is the source of their name, Skt. *adhimuktī*; see below.

692. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3a, 5.7, P. 269.4.7, L. 36ab, T. 35ab. D. and P. have *dkyil 'khor pa* for *dkyil 'khor la*, and P. has *bsam nas* for *bsams nas* in our text. Taking into account that the Sanskrit

equivalent of *lhag par mos* is *adhimuktyā*, in the instrumental case, and the reading *dkyil 'khor pa*, this verse could be translated as: “Thus meditate on the residents of the mandala, with special visualization [or intense aspiration], according to the ritual method.”

693. Tib. *zil gnon [rdo rje]*, Skt. *abhibhavanavajra*, see the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 3a6–b1, Tog 7.6–7, Fremantle 1971, 178, Matsunaga 1978, 5.

694. This refers to the method of interpretation of the *Sgron gsal*, which explains the *Root Tantra* in the four levels of interpretation of tantric teachings (*tshul bzhi*): the literal, the shared, the hidden, and the ultimate level.

695. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 31a–37b, 77.5–90.3.

696. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3a, 5.2–6, P. 269.4.1–7, L. 27–35, T. 26–34. D. and P. have *nam pa can* for *lta bu la*, D. has *gtsug tor 'khor los sgyur rgyal yang* and P. has *gtsug tor 'khor lo sgyur rgyal yang* for *gtsug tor 'khor los bsgyur ba yang* in our text. Here described are the thirty-two deities of the Guhyasamāja mandala; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 31a–37b, 77.5–90.3, translated in Thurman 1995, 223–26, Tenzin Dorjee and Russell 1995, 26–27, Wayman 1977, 122–32, and so forth.

697. Tib. *Gtsug tor 'khor los bsgyur ba*.

698. Tib. *dkyil 'khor rgyal mchog*, Skt. *maṇḍalarājāgrī*. This is the second of the three samādhis that constitute the actual creation stage. See below [428–36].

699. Tib. *Rdo rje 'chang*.

700. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3a, 5.4, P. 269.4.4, L. 30d, T. 29d.

701. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 12a, 23.3, P. 273.4.3.

702. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 198a, 395.4, P. 20.5.1, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 11.6 and 43.13.

703. That is to say, the meditation on the specially visualized deities cannot serve to purify the people of the first eon who died long ago. The meditation now affects only the future, and not the past, and can affect only the yogis themselves, not other beings. See [382–84] below.

704. Our text takes it for granted that the generation of the specially visualized deities cannot purify the people of the first eon, who passed away eons ago and who are of a different mental continuum. On the other hand, 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas, *Gsang 'dus stong thun*, folios 7b–10b, 14.3–20.1, explains that the evolution of the world and its beings during the first eon can be the ground of purification for meditation on the path now.

705. See the *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 15a, 366.2–5.

706. The meditators visualize themselves as this support. The generation of the specially visualized deities cannot serve to purify the people of the first eon, but the visualization of these deities dissolving into clear light in the next step of the practice is what serves to purify the future deaths of the meditators. Therefore the meditation on the dissolution of these deities must correspond to the death of a person. In the present step of the *Sādhana*, the meditators prepare a support capable of displaying the death of a person. They do so by meditating on themselves as the specially visualized deities that are similar to the people of the first eon, but this similarity is not the same as an actual correspondence. An actual correspondence implies that the meditation can serve to purify its corresponding object. But as we have just seen, a meditation in the present can purify neither the past nor others, therefore the relation between the specially visualized deities and the people of the first eon is mere similarity and not an actual correspondence. This will be explained in more detail below.

707. Reading *'chags* for *tshogs* in our text.

708. *Lung nam 'byed* = *'Dul ba nam par 'byed pa*, Tōh. 3, D. folios 48b–51b, 96.1–102.5.

709. See Ratnarākṣita's commentary on the *Sdom 'byung*, *Sdom 'byung dka' 'grel padma can*, *Padminī*,

Tōh. 1420, chap. 2, D. folio 11a, 21.2; Gser sdings pa, *Rim lnga don bzhi ma*, 164; Grags pa rgyal mtshan, *Rgyud kyi mngon rtogs*, work 1, folio 69a, 35.1.3–5; 'Ba' ra ba, *Bskyed rim zab don 'gal du skyon med*, folio 29b, 298.4–5; Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folios 24b–25a, 730.3–731.1; Rong ston Shes bya kun rig, *Gsang 'dus rnam bshad*, folios 8b–9a, 16.4–17.1, and his *Gsang sngags kyi spyi don slob dpon grags 'od kyi zhus lan*, 320. Tsongkhapa objects to this position in his *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 19b, 317.3–5, and in his *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folios 63b–66b, 197.2–203.2. This topic is discussed in Bentor 2006.

710. Reading *zla ba dkar dmar* for *zla bar kar dmar* in our text.

711. While Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 24b, 730.4, has *chud pa*, “a seed enclosed,” our text has *sa bon chung ba*, “a small seed.”

712. Tib. *Mngon brjod rgyud bla ma*, Tōh. 369, chap. 9, D. folio 270b, 540.3. D. has *sgra nyams* for *sgra min* in our text. Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 24b, 730.4, as well has *sgra min*. These may be two different translations of the Sanskrit *śabdāśabda*. For the Sanskrit see Kalff 1979, 291, and for his English translation see 175–76.

713. *Mngon brjod rgyud bla ma*, Tōh. 369, chap. 9, D. folio 270b, 540.2–3.

714. Reading *'grel bar* for *'grol bar* in our text.

715. The *Sdom 'byung dka' 'grel padma can*, *Padminī*, by Ratnarakṣita, Tōh. 1420, D. folio 11a, 21.4. D., as well as Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 24b, 730.5, have *zla ba dang sa bon tsam las skyes pa ni skye gnas drod gsher las skyes pa'o* for *zla ba dang sa bon las skyes pa'i skye gnas drod gshed las skyes pa'o* in our text. For the Sanskrit see Jampa Samten, 247.

716. Reading *gsher* for *gshed* in our text.

717. Reading *dkrong skyed* for *dkrod spyod* in our text.

718. Rdo rje dril bu ba, *Bde mchog lhan cig skyes pa'i sgrub thabs*, *Sahajasamvarasādhana*, Tōh. 1436, D. folio 233a, 465.6, D. has *sems can rdzus te skyes pa bzhin / gang zhig skad cig sbyor ba yis / sa bon med par rnam par bsgom / rang nyid rdo rje mkha' 'gror gyur / for rdzus te skyes pa'i sems can bzhin / sa bon med par rnam snang bsgom /* in our text.

719. Reading *rnam par bsgom* (meditate) for *rnam snang bsgom* (meditate on Vairocana) here in following D. and P. as well as Tsongkhapa, *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 65b, 201.3, Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 25a, 731.1, and Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 74a, 149.5.

720. See Tsongkhapa, *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folios 63b–66b, 197.2–203.2.

721. Reading *sbyang gzhi 'chad pa* for *sbyang gzhi'i chad pa* in our text.

722. Tōh. 373, chap. 2, vv. 11ab–17ab, D. folio 266a, 531.4–7, Tsuda 1974, 74–75, 168, 240–41. Our text has *ting 'dzin ni* for *ting nge 'dzin* and *dgag* for *gnas* in Tsuda. This passage describes, in brief, human death, the intermediate state, and rebirth. A similar description is found in the *Rnam gzhas rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 123a and 123b–124a, 245.2–3 and 246.7–247.1, P. 8.2.5–7 and 8.4.5–7, Tanaka 2016, 88 and 92–93.

723. Tōh. 373, chap. 13, vv. 13–14, D. folio 281a, 561.1–2, Tsuda, 1974, 115, 199, 283.

724. *Rnam gzhas rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 123b, 246.2–3, P. 8.3.6–4.1, Tanaka 2016, 90.

725. Reading *lhag mos* for *lhag mas* in our text.

726. The *Abhidhānottara Tantra* and the commentary on the *Samvarodaya Tantra*, cited in support of the ritual methods of generating deities for purifying births from an egg and from heat and moisture.

727. Dril bu zhabs or Rdo rje dril bu.

728. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhas rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 13a–20a, 304.6–318.4, and his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 23a–b and 24a–b, 382.1–383.1 and 384.4–385.5.

729. *Rnam gzhang rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 122b–123a, 244.7–245.1, P. 8.2.2–4, Tanaka 2016, 87. D., P. and Tanaka have *thams cad mkhyen pa'i dngos grub kyi go 'phang* for *thams cad mkhyen pa'i go 'phang gi dngos grub* in our text.

730. This refers to the first point in the previous paragraph: that a person who will be awakened through practice in the Unexcelled Mantra in our period of decline when lifespan is short must be a human being in Jambudvīpa, since such a person is able to take as the path the great bliss resulting from joining the two organs.

731. Tib. *sems dben*, Skt. *cittaviveka*.

732. This is one of the explanatory tantras of the *Gsang ba 'dus pa*, the *Ye shes rdo rje kun las btus pa rgyud*, *Vajrajñānasamuccayatantra*, Tōh. 447, D. folio 283b, 566.1–2. D. has *phyag rgya mngon par 'dus byas* for *phyag rgyas mngon par 'du byas*, cited also in Tsongkhapa's commentary on this tantra, Tōh. 5286, folio 34a–b, 516.6–517.1.

733. The three appearances are the white appearance, the red enhanced appearance, and the black appearance of approaching attainment.

734. Tōh. 447, D. folio 283b, 566.2. D. has *gang gis bha ga* for *bha ga* and *sbyor bar mi nus pa* for *sbyor mi nus pa*, cited also in Tsongkhapa's commentary on this tantra, Tōh. 5286, folios 34b–35a, 517.6–518.1.

735. Tōh. 373, chap. 2, vv. 5cd–6, D. folio 266a, 531.1, Tsuda 1974, Skt. 73, Tib. 167, Eng. 240. Tsuda has *blun rmongs bye brag mi phyed cing / rtog med rnam par spyod med pa'o* for *rnam rtog med cing rnam spyod med / blun rmongs bye brag mi byed pa'o* in our text.

736. Tib. Lus 'phags, Ba glang spyod, and Sgra mi snyan.

737. Tōh. 373, chap. 2, v. 7. Tsuda 1974 has *'dzam bu gling du* for *dzam bu ling rnams*, *skyes pa* for *skyes pa'i*, *legs byas nyes par byas pa'i las* for *legs byas dang ni nyes byas las*, *tha ma rnams* for *tha ma yi*, *sngon gyi* for *snga ma'i*, *skye bo rnams la snang bar 'gyur* for *skye bo kun la mthong bar 'gyur* in our text. For the Sanskrit text see Tsuda 1974, 74.

738. Both Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhang rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 15a–b, 308.5–309.2, and Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 78b, 158.5–6, cite Bhavabhadra's commentary on chapter 14 of this tantra, *Rdo rje mkha' 'gro rnam bshad*, *Vajradākatantravivṛti*, Tōh. 1415, D. folio 88a, 175.2–4.

739. Reading *bskyed rim gyis* for *bskyed rim pa'i* as in [372] above.

740. See 'Gos, *Gsang 'dus stong thun*, folios 14b–15b, 28.6–30.5; Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 1b, 684.4; Sa skya pa Grags pa rgyal mtshan's *Rgyud kyi mngon rtogs*, work 1, folio 68a, 34.3.2–4; Red mda' ba, *Yid kyi mun sel*, Lhasa, vol. 9, 232–33, Kathmandu, folio 6b, 12.4–5; and Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po, *Zla zer*, work 55, folio 18b, 182.3.3–6. A similar argument is made as well in Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 454; see also Mkhas grub rje, *Rgyud sde spyi'i rnam gzhang*, Tōh. 5489; and Lessing and Wayman 1968, 330–33.

741. *Spyod bsdus*, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, by Āryadeva, Tōh. 1803, chap. 11, D. folio 106b, 212.3, P. 316.4.5, Wedemeyer 2007, 331 and 656, Pandey 2000, 103 and 364. D., P., Wedemeyer, and Pandey have *gang zhig skye ba kun rdzob bden zhes bya* for *skye ba zhes bya kun rdzob bden pa ste*, and *rim gnyis de dag* for *rim gnyis 'di dag*.

742. Reading *sbyong* for *spyod* in our text.

743. Tib. *spyod pa*.

744. See Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 454–55.

745. This position is different from that of Btsun mo can, who according to 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas's *Gsang 'dus stong thun*, folio 7a, 13.1–2, maintains that the meditation on the protection wheel is applied in correspondence with the outer Iron Mountains [surrounding Mt. Meru and the four continents]. This position is also different from that of 'Gos himself, *Gsang 'dus stong thun*, folio 14a, 27.1–2, who

maintains that the meditation on absorbing in union with the consort purifies the absorbing in union of the worldly male and female.

746. Reading *yin* for *min* in our text.

747. This term is explained in [395–397] below.

748. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 37b, 90.3.

749. The complete passage is cited below.

750. These are the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, and the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814; see Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 88a, 177.4.

751. *Rnam gzhaq rim pa*, *Samājasādhana*vyavastholi, Tōh. 1809.

752. Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 27a, 735.6–7, says that the *Rab tu sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1793, and Nag po dam tshig rdo rje, in the *Rim pa lnga'i dka' 'grel*, Tōh. 1841, do not instruct the yogi to meditate on the deeds of the specially visualized deities, but Bu ston himself does not agree, since this, he says, goes against the *Root Tantra* and its commentary.

753. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 14b–15a, 28.5–29.2, P. 31.2.7–3.3; for the Sanskrit see Chakravarti 1984, 20.

754. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 37b, 90.3–6. The *Sādhana* has *thogs pa med par 'jug pa'i* for *thogs pa med par 'jug pa* and skips the word *lus*.

755. Tib. *byang chub kyi sems*.

756. This word is not found in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa.

757. Tib. *rdo rje zhugs*, Skt. *vajrāvega*. See also Abhayākara Gupta's *Dkyil chog rdo rje 'phreng ba*, *Vajrāvalīmaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 3140, D. folio 37a–b, 73.7–74.1, and Mori 2009, 233.

758. According to 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas, *Gsang 'dus stong thun*, folio 9b, 18.3–4, the ground of purification of the deeds of the specially visualized deities for the sake of sentient beings are the people of the first eon who, after becoming ordinary beings, performed actions and deeds for their own sake and the sake of others.

759. Tib. *sngon byung*, see below [421–22] and [426–27].

760. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 37b–38b, 90.6–91.1. This sentence is cited below in a more complete form.

761. Tōh. 442, Zhol 3a3–5, Tog 7.4–6, Dunh. IOL 481 1b5, Fremantle 1971, 178, Matsunaga 1978, 5.

762. Tib. *Mi bskyod pa*.

763. Here mentioned are also the tathāgatas Rin chen dpal, Tshe dpag tu med pa, and Gnod mi za bar grub pa; Skt. Ratnaketu, Amitāyus, and Amoghasiddhi.

764. The Sanskrit has “abided in.”

765. Tib. *Byang chub kyi sems rdo rje*.

766. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3a, 5.7, P. 269.4.7–8, L. 36cd–37ab, T. 35cd–36ab. D. and P. have '*khor lo* for '*khor lor* in our text. The first half of the first verse here appeared in [375] above.

767. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 13a, 25.4, P. 30.3.8, Chakravarti 1984, 18.

768. This citation is from the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 37b–38a, 90.6–91.2, which has '*khod nas* for *bkod nas* in our text.

769. Tib. *Gnod mdzes*.

770. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 38a–b, 91.2–92.3, continues here by describing the locations on the body where each of the thirty-one specially visualized deities from *Rnam snang* to *Gnod mdzes* are set.

7. The Yoga of Taking Death as the *Dharmakāya*

Immersing the Specially Visualized Deities in Clear Light — The Method of Awakening

THE *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* explains:⁷⁷¹ “The deities on my own body, Vairocana and so forth, dissolve successively into clear light,” for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁷⁷² “The yogis should bring the deities into suchness by way of the wheel⁷⁷³ of ultimate truth. When they slay the assembly of tathāgatas, they will achieve the supreme attainment.”

The *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture*⁷⁷⁴ applies this meditation to the following lines of the *Root Tantra*:⁷⁷⁵ “Those who desire the fruit should drink⁷⁷⁶ the semen issued⁷⁷⁷ from union,⁷⁷⁸ according to the ritual method. When they slay the assembly of tathāgatas, they will achieve the supreme siddhi.” Is there a contradiction between the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture*⁷⁷⁹ here and the *Illuminating Lamp*⁷⁸⁰ that applies these lines to awakening in the intermediate state? [387] There is no error here because, as the *Revelation of the Intention Tantra* teaches:⁷⁸¹ “Even a single word has various meanings.”

The way of immersing in clear light is neither by visualizing the deities — set on your body — instantaneously dissolving into clear light nor by visualizing their dissolution according to the five individual tathāgata families. Rather, as appears in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*,⁷⁸² the meditation here proceeds according to the explanation of the *Vajra Garland Tantra*,⁷⁸³ in correspondence with the stages of the dissolution of the twenty-five coarse elements, during the death of a person born from a womb and endowed with the six constituents, on the level of the ground of purification. The twenty-five coarse elements are: the five aggregates, the four physical elements, the six sensory spheres, the five sense bases, and the five wisdoms of the ground time.⁷⁸⁴ This is as the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁷⁸⁵ “These are arranged as the *Vajra Garland Tantra*⁷⁸⁶ makes clear.”

When ordinary persons die, their elements dissolve successively:⁷⁸⁷

(1) At first, the aggregate of form, the mirror-like wisdom of the ground time, the earth element, the eye faculty, and the forms within their continuums dissolve. Here are the external signs of these dissolutions: When the form aggregate dissolves, the body becomes weak and thin. When the mirror-like wisdom of the ground time dissolves, the sight becomes blurred and cloudy. When the earth element dissolves, the body becomes very thin and the dying persons feel as if they are sinking under the earth. When the eye faculty dissolves the dying persons are no longer able to open and close their eyes. When the form within one's continuum dissolves, the complexion of the body fades and its strength diminishes. As an inner sign, [388] a mirage-like appearance arises. In accordance with that, you should visualize the deities on your body from Vairocana up to the two fierce deities⁷⁸⁸ dissolving into clear light, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁷⁸⁹ “Included⁷⁹⁰ in the form aggregate are the mirror-like wisdom, the earth elements, the eye faculty, and the form as the fifth aspect, together with the two fierce deities.”

(2) Following this, the aggregate of feeling, the wisdom of equanimity, the ear faculty, the water element, and the sound within one's continuum dissolve.⁷⁹¹ Here are the external signs of these dissolutions: As a sign of the dissolution of the aggregate of feeling, the dying person is no longer mindful of the feelings of happiness and sorrow that accompany sensory consciousness. As a sign of the dissolution of the wisdom of equanimity of the ground time, the dying person is no longer mindful of the feelings of happiness and sorrow that accompany mental consciousness. As a sign of the dissolution of the water element, the saliva, pus, and blood dry up. As a sign of the dissolution of the ear faculty, the ear no longer hears sounds. As a sign of the dissolution of the sound within one's continuum, the humming sound inside the ear no longer arises. As an inner sign of these, a smoke-like appearance arises. In accordance with that, you should visualize the deities, from Ratnasambhava up to the two fierce deities,⁷⁹² dissolving into clear light, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁷⁹³ “the aggregate of feeling, the wisdom of equanimity, the water element, the ear faculty, and the sound as the fifth aspect, together with the two fierce deities.”

(3) Then the aggregate of perception, the wisdom of discernment, the fire element, the nose faculty and the scents within one's continuum dissolve.⁷⁹⁴ Here are the external signs: As a sign of the dissolution of the aggregate of perception, the dying person can no longer recognize their relatives and so on. As a sign of the dissolution of the wisdom of discernment, [389] the dying

person no longer remembers the names of their relatives and so forth. The sign of the dissolution of the fire element is that bodily heat fades and the dying person no longer digests food and drink. The sign of the dissolution of the nose faculty is that the dying person's exhalation through the nose is forceful, while inhalation is difficult. The sign of the dissolution of scent within one's continuum is that the nose is no longer able to sense smells. The inner sign of these dissolutions is the arising of an appearance resembling fire flies. In accordance with this, you should visualize the deities from Amitābha up to the two fierce deities⁷⁹⁵ dissolving into clear light, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁷⁹⁶ “the aggregate of perceptions, the wisdom of discernment, the elements of fire, the nose faculty, and the scent as the fifth aspect, together with the two fierce deities.”

(4) Next the aggregate of conditioning, the wisdom of purposive acts, the air-wind element, the tongue faculty, and the taste within one's continuum dissolve.⁷⁹⁷ The external signs of these are: The sign of the dissolution of the aggregate of conditioning is that the body is no longer able to move. The sign of the dissolution of the wisdom of purposive acts of the ground time is that the dying person is no longer mindful of external and internal activities and purposes. The sign of the dissolution of the air-wind element is that the ten winds shift from their respective places. The sign of the dissolution of the tongue faculty is that the tongue becomes swollen and short, and its root turns blue. The sign of the dissolution of the taste within one's continuum is that the tongue no longer experiences tastes. The inner sign is the arising of an appearance like a blazing butter lamp. In accordance with this, you should visualize the deities from Amoghasiddhi up to the two fierce deities⁷⁹⁸ dissolving into clear light, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁷⁹⁹ “the aggregate of conditioning, the wisdom of purposive acts, the air-wind element, the tongue faculty, and the taste as the fifth aspect, together with the two fierce deities.” [390]

(5) Following this, during the “appearance” itself, after the air-wind dissolves into “appearance,” a radiant white appearance arises, like a clear autumn sky suffused with moonlight. Then, once the “appearance” has dissolved into the “enhanced appearance,” during the “enhanced appearance” itself, an empty radiant red appearance arises, like a clear autumn sky suffused with sunlight. During the “approaching attainment” itself — when “enhanced appearance” dissolves into “approaching attainment” — an empty radiant black appearance arises, like the clear autumn sky suffused with the dense darkness of the beginning of night. When “approaching attainment” dissolves into clear

light, there arises an appearance resembling the sky's own color at dawn devoid of the three tainting conditions, and the clear light of death arises. In accordance with this, you should visualize the two fierce deities above and below the celestial mansion⁸⁰⁰ together with Mañjuḥoṣa dissolving into clear light, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁸⁰¹ “the natural appearance together with the fierce deities above and below enter the aggregate of consciousness, and consciousness too enters into clear light.” The clear light of death is also called the ground *dharmakāya*, nirvāṇa, total emptiness, and all-emptiness, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁸⁰² “This was explained as ‘accompanied by nirvāṇa,’ all-empty and *dharmakāya*.”

Accordingly, it is appropriate to apply the term “the *dharmakāya* of the meditator on the creation stage” to the yoga of the dissolution of the specially visualized deities of the meditator on the creation stage into clear light. Furthermore, since the meditators visualize the thirty-two locations on their bodies and the thirty-two deities as indivisible in nature, [391] this is the yoga of abiding in the calming of mental proliferation of dualistic appearances, and hence this yoga is also called “the abiding in quiescence⁸⁰³ of the meditator on the creation stage,” for the *Revelation of the Intention Tantra* teaches:⁸⁰⁴ “Joining [the thirty-two deities of the mandala], Akṣobhya and so forth [with the body] according to the numerical order is abiding in quiescence.”⁸⁰⁵

Following the dissolution into clear light in this way, you should recite the mantra of emptiness.⁸⁰⁶ Meditate on the meaning of the mantra by maintaining a stable divine identity with the resolve: “The indivisible objective emptiness and subjective wisdom of innate great bliss, which is the mind of the Victorious One, the essence of the *dharmakāya*, that am I,” for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁰⁷ “In order to stabilize, you should recite the mantra *oṃ śūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.”

Of the two meanings of this mantra, the interpretable⁸⁰⁸ and definitive meanings,⁸⁰⁹ the meditation here, as clearly explained before, is in accordance with the interpretable meaning. [The *Concise Sādhana*] speaks of “ultimate truth” because your subjective mind meditating in this way visualizes merging into a single taste with the ultimate truth, free of mental proliferations and empty of intrinsic nature.⁸¹⁰ From the clear light that is explained here, the first lord, the *saṃbhogakāya* of the meditator on the creation stage, will actually arise, and eventually the fruitional *saṃbhogakāya* will be born of it. Hence this meditation on emptiness is also called the source of the tathāgata, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸¹¹ “This is the ultimate mandala, without appearance, without marks,

called the ultimate truth, the abode of all tathāgatas.” [392]

The method of dissolving into clear light is likewise adorned with the personal advice of holy lamas, who explain that after you have visualized the deities set on the body as indivisible from your aggregates and so forth, you should visualize them dissolving instantaneously into light from the upper and lower parts of the body and absorbing into the clear light at the heart. Finally, you should likewise dissolve yourself — abiding in the identity of the principal deity — into your heart, through the process of dissolution “held in entirety”⁸¹² and merge into the nature of indivisible bliss and emptiness of the fruitional time. In this way you should meditate, mindful of the meaning of the mantra of emptiness.

This meditation is called the yoga of taking death as the *dharmakāya* because on the level of the *ground* it corresponds to the stage of death⁸¹³ and purifies⁸¹⁴ the future death of the meditators themselves. During the completion stage on the *path* it corresponds to the metaphoric and actual clear light, and it serves as a special ripener of the roots of merit for the arising of these clear lights in your mental continuum. Regarding the fruit, it corresponds to the *dharmakāya*, the mind of the Victorious One, at the stage of the *fruitional* buddha. Since from now on you should meditate by taking the fruit as the path, this will become an especially skillful means for swiftly attaining such fruit.

These billowing garland-waves of manifold explanation,
according to the tantras, siddhas and instructions transmitted by the lama,
these eloquent elucidations, brimming with the wish-fulfillment jewels of
deepest meaning,
are vast as the ocean.

771. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 38b, 92.4.

772. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3a–b, 5.7–6.1, P. 269.4.8–5.1, L. 37cd–38ab, T. 36cd–37ab. D. and P. have *rdo rje* for *'khor lo*, *bya bas* for *byas bas*, and *thob par* for *'grub par* in our text. T. has *siddhim* for *vidhim* in L. Note that in his Corrections, de La Vallée Poussin 1896, xv, “corrects” *Mārayet tv āgataṃ* to *Sārayet tathāgataṃ*. T. reproduces the text of de La Vallée Poussin, but in a note has also *tathāgataṃ* and *tāgataṃ* for *tvāgataṃ*.

773. The Tengyur has vajra in place of wheel here, but the Skt. is *cakra*.

774. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 12a, 23.5–6, P. 273.4.5–6. D. and P. have *bsad nas* for *bsad na* [but the

Root Tantra has *bsad na* as our text] and *thob par* for '*grub par* in our text [the *Root Tantra* also has '*thob par* here]. Reading *khu phyung* for *khu phyud*, and *btung* for *btud* in our text.

775. Tōh. 442, chap. 7, Zhol 11a6, Tog 36.6–7, Dunh. 19b2, v. 33, Fremantle 1971, 219, Matsunaga 1978, 23; see also Fremantle 1990. Dunh. has *khu ba phyung ste* for *dam tshig khu phyung* and '*khos spros na* for *tshogs bsad na*.

776. Reading *btung* for *btud* here, as in the *Root Tantra*.

777. Reading *phyung* for *phyud* here, as in the *Root Tantra*. While the Tibetan has *phyung*, the Sanskrit here is *kṣaret*.

778. Tib. *dam tshig*, Skt. *samaya*. The different meanings of this term are discussed below [418]. According to the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 54b, 108.5–6, Chakravarti 1984, 69, here this is the union of wisdom and method in the context of rebirth.

779. The *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797.

780. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 54b, 108.5–6, P. 49.5.5–8, Chakravarti 1984, 69; see also Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 107b5, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 179a–b, 357.6–358.1.

781. *Dgongs pa lung bstan [ston] pa'i rgyud*, *Sandhyāvyaṅkaraṇatantra*, one of the explanatory tantras of the *Gsang ba 'dus pa*, Tōh. 444, D. folio 187a, 373.5.

782. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 38b–39a, 92.4–93.4.

783. The explanatory tantra *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, D. folio 275a–b, 549.6–550.6, P. 230.4.6–5.5, chap. 68, cited in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.1–4, P. 269.5.1–5, L. 39–44ab, T. 38–43ab, and in the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 129b–130a, 258.6–259.2, P. 11.3.1–5, Tanaka 2016, 129–30.

784. See Lati Rinbochay and Hopkins 1979, 16–19.

785. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.1, P. 269.5.1, L. 38cd, T. 37cd. D. and P. have '*di don* for '*di ni* in our text, the Sanskrit equivalent here is *asyārtha*.

786. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba*, *Vajramālā*, Tōh. 445.

787. The following description is based on the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 130a, 259.2–4, P. 11.3.5–4.2, Tanaka 2016, 131, and Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 82b, 443.1–6; see also his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 15b–17a, 367.3–370.2.

788. The deities that dissolve here are: Vairocana, Locanā, Kṣitigarbha, Rūpavajrā, Maitreya, Yamāntaka, and Acala; Tib. *Rnam snang*, *Spyan ma*, *Sa'i snying po*, *Gzugs rdo rje ma*, *Byams pa*, *Gshin rje gshed*, and *Mi g.yo ba*; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 38b, 92.4–6.

789. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, but this in fact is cited from the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.1–2, P. 269.5.1–2, L. 39, T. 38. D. has *rtog* and P. has *gtogs* for *rtogs* in our text. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 90b, 91a and 91b, 182.5, 183.4, and 184.3, have *gtogs* here; the Sanskrit equivalent is *gata*. For the lines in the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba*, which are quite different, see Tōh. 445, chap. 68, D. folio 275a–b, 549.7–550.1, P. 230.4.6–8.

790. Reading *gtogs* for *rtogs* in our text, see note above.

791. See the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folios 130a–130b, 259.4–260.1, P. 11.4.2–5, Tanaka 2016, 132–33.

792. The deities that dissolve here are: Ratnasambhava, Māmakī, Vajrapāṇi, Śabdavajrā, Aparājita, and Ṭakkirāja [Ṭarkavirāja]; Tib. *Rin 'byung*, *Māmakī*, *Phyag rdor*, *Sgra rdo rje ma*, *Gzhan gyis mi thub pa*, and '*Dod pa'i rgyal po*; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 38b, 92.5–6.

793. This is again cited from the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.2, P. 269.5.2, L. 40, T. 39. D. and P. have *tshor ba'i phung po mnyam nyid dang* for *tshor phung mnyam nyid ye shes dang* in our text. For the lines in the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, which are quite different, see Tōh. 445, chap. 68, D. folio 275b,

550.1–2, P. 230.4.8–5.1.

794. See the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 130b, 260.1–3, P. 11.4.5–8, Tanaka 2016, 133–34.

795. The deities that dissolve here are: Amitābha, Pāṇḍaravāsīnī, Khagarbha, Gandhavajrā, Hayagrīva, and Nīladaṇḍa; Tib. 'Od dpag med, Gos dkar ma, Nam mkha'i snying po, Dri rdo rje ma, Rta mgrin, and Dbyug sngon can; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 38b–39a, 92.6–93.1.

796. This is again cited from the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.2–3, P. 269.5.2–3, L. 41, T. 40. For the lines in the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, which are quite different, see Tōh. 445, D. folio 275b, 550.2–3, P. 230.5.1–2.

797. See the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 130b, 260.3–4, P. 11.4.8–5.2, Tanaka 2016, 134.

798. The deities that dissolve here are: Amoghasiddhi, Tārā, Lokeśvara, Rasavajrā, Sarvāvaraṇaviṣkambhin, Sparśavajrā, Samantabhadra, Vighnāntakṛt, and Mahābala; Tib. Don grub, Sgrol ma, 'Jig rten dbang phyug, Ro rdo rje ma, Sgrib sel, Reg bya rdo rje ma, Kun bzang, Bgegs mthar byed, and Stobs po che; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39a, 93.1–2.

799. This again is cited from the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.3, P. 269.5.3, L. 42, T. 41. For the lines in the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, which are quite different, see Tōh. 445, chap. 68, D. folio 275b, 550.3–5, P. 230.5.2–4.

800. These are: Uṣṇīṣacakravartin and Sumbharāja; Tib. Gtsug tor 'khor los bsgyur ba and Gnod mdzes rgyal po; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39a, 93.2–3.

801. This is again cited from the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.3–4, P. 269.5.3–4, L. 43, T. 42. D. and P. have *khro bo* for *khro bor* and *gsal ba'o* for *gsal bar* in our text. For the lines in the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, which are quite different, see Tōh. 445, chap. 68, D. folio 275b, 550.5–6, P. 230.5.4–5.

802. This is found in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.4, P. 269.5.4, L. 44ab, T. 43ab. D. and P. have *yang bshad pa yin* for *ni bshad pa yin* in our text.

803. Tib. *zhi gnas*, Skt. *śamatha*.

804. *Dgongs pa lung bstan [ston]*, *Sandhyāvyākaraṇa*, Tōh. 444, D. folio 171a, 341.5. D. has *ji bzhin* for *bzhin du*, and *rtog pa* for *btags pa* in our text.

805. But note the different readings in the Derge.

806. *Oṃ sūnyatā jñāna vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*, see below and the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39a, 93.4.

807. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.4, P. 269.5.4–5, L. 44cd, T. 43cd.

808. Reading *drang* for *grangs* in our text.

809. This refers to the method of interpretation of the *Sgron gsal*, which explains the *Root Tantra* in the definitive (*nges pa'i don*, *nītārtha*) and interpretable (*drang ba'i don*, *neyārtha*) meanings.

810. The point here is that in the citation below the *Mdor byas* use the term “ultimate truth” in this sense and not with regard to realization during the completion stage. See Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyes rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 96a–b, 193.1–194.1, who criticizes some Tibetan lamas for such a position. Apparently, this criticism is aimed at Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folios 31a–32a, 743.4–745.7, who explain the mantra of emptiness in its interpretable meaning in terms of the completion stage.

811. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.4–5, P. 269.5.5, L. 45, T. 44.

812. Tib. *ril 'dzin*, Skt. *piṇḍagrāha*. This meditation together with its counterpart, *rjes gzhiḡ, anubheda*, are explained in the *Rim pa lnga pa*, Tōh. 1802, chap. 4, vv. 26–27, D. folio 55a, 109.1–2, Mimaki and Tomabeche 1994, 45–46; the *Spyod bsdus*, Tōh. 1803, chap. 7, D. folio 88b, 176.5–6, Wedemeyer 2007, B: 47a, Pandey 2000, 64 and 283; and the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 130b, 260.5, P. 11.5.4, Tanaka 2016, 135. In his *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 85b, 449.5, Tsongkhapa defines *ril 'dzin* or *ril por 'dzin pa* as an instantaneous dissolution into clear light.

813. The ordinary death of a person.

814. Reading *sbyong* for *spyod* in our text.

8. The Yoga of Taking the Intermediate State as the *Sam̐bhogakāya*

THERE ARE TWO parts here: (1) presenting the intermediate being, the ground of purification [393], and (2) how to visualize the first lord⁸¹⁵ in correspondence with the intermediate being.

*Presenting the Intermediate Being, the Ground of Purification*⁸¹⁶

The intermediate being who will be born as a human in Jambudvīpa is actually formed by way of its separation⁸¹⁷ from the old body and has a body of wind with a face and limbs. It is conditional upon (1) a wind serving as the mount of the clear light of death as its substantial cause, and (2) a mind as its cooperative condition. As it forms, at the same time the signs from “approaching attainment” up to “mirage” arise in reverse order. The cessation of the clear light of death, the formation of the intermediate state, and the arising of “approaching attainment” in reverse order all occur simultaneously.

The intermediate being is endowed with the following features: all its faculties are complete, its major and minor limbs are instantly perfected, it can travel without hindrance through Mt. Meru and elsewhere, and even the Buddha cannot block its karmic miracles. As the *Abhidharmakośa* teaches:⁸¹⁸ “All its faculties are complete, it moves without hindrance, and it is endowed with the power of karmic miracles.” Its equivalent names are⁸¹⁹ scent eater, intermediate being, mind-engendered, birth seeker, and “verging on existence.”⁸²⁰

The intermediate being destined to be born as a human in Jambudvīpa is the size of a five-or six-year-old child, as taught in the autocommentary of the *Abhidharmakośa*.⁸²¹ The *Primary Ground*⁸²² teaches that the appearance of an intermediate being who will be born in the lower realms resembles the night suffused with darkness, and that of an intermediate being who will be born in the fortunate realms resembles the night suffused with moonlight or a white woolen cloth unfurled. [394]

Further, the *Longer Sūtra on Entering the Womb*⁸²³ describes the colors of the intermediate beings as follows: the color of an intermediate being destined to be born in hell resembles a burnt log, that of an intermediate being of the hungry ghosts resembles water, that of an intermediate being of the animals resembles smoke, that of an intermediate being of the gods of the desire realm and of human beings resembles gold, and the color of the intermediate being who will be born in the form realm is white. Intermediate beings destined to be born in the formless realm do not arise,⁸²⁴ but beings of the formless realm, when later born in another realm, first take the intermediate state. The *Primary Ground*⁸²⁵ teaches that intermediate beings who will be born in the lower realms move upside down, intermediate beings who will be born as humans move straight ahead, and intermediate beings who will be born as gods move upward.

Their lifespans⁸²⁶ are seven days at a time.⁸²⁷ If within this period they are able to find a birthplace, they are reborn, and if they are unable to do so, every seventh day they die, each time acquiring a body, thus up to seven weeks, after which period they must be reborn. Since the intermediate beings are reborn within a week, we accept the fact that they also pass away⁸²⁸ during the intermediate state. Still, no matter how many small deaths the body of the intermediate being undergoes, they are all included within the intermediate state itself.⁸²⁹

There are four states of existence: (1) intermediate existence — the state that occurs between death and rebirth, (2) the preceding existence — from birth up to the moment of facing death, (3) death existence — the time of experiencing the clear light of death, and (4) birth existence — from conception up to the moment of birthing by the mother. The *Abhidharmakośa* teaches⁸³⁰ that a bad body attained in an intermediate state cannot change into a good body. But we maintain, as the *Compendium of Abhidharma* teaches,⁸³¹ that “it can still be changed.”

The *Primary Ground* teaches⁸³² that even though an intermediate being sees its old body, it does not enter it [395] because the effect of karma severed its connection with it, and therefore the wish to enter it does not arise. Further, the *Abhidharmakośa* teaches⁸³³ that the intermediate being is seen by other beings of similar type and by those with a divine eye.

*How to Visualize the First Lord in Correspondence with the Intermediate Being*⁸³⁴

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁸³⁵ “From the *hūṃ* on the central seat a solar disk arises” and so forth. The purpose of meditating in this way is explained through the “interpretable meaning”⁸³⁶ of the samādhi of “vajra origination from *samaya*”⁸³⁷ found in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*.⁸³⁸ This is also taught in the eleventh chapter of the same *Tantra*:⁸³⁹ “The Wisdom Vajra should meditate on the great seal for attaining [through]⁸⁴⁰ all awakenings, with the supreme mantra, the syllables of the three vajras.” Both the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture*⁸⁴¹ and the *Vajrasattva Sādhana* teach this.⁸⁴²

Further, you should visualize the first lord, the *sambhogakāya* of the meditator in the creation stage, by means of the five manifest awakenings,⁸⁴³ for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁴⁴

After entering into clear light, the mantrins display the arising too. They visualize the form of the deity, by means of the yoga of the mantra-body. They meditate on a solar disk, abiding in the midst of the space realm with a lunar disk upon it. There the great mantrins⁸⁴⁵ visualize an eight-petaled red lotus, and upon it they meditate on the three syllables. As the mantra, the lotus, and the solar disk enter into the lunar disk, they visualize⁸⁴⁶ the completely perfect moon orb⁸⁴⁷ [396] as bodhicitta, and in it the totality of the moving and immovable worlds. For the sake of firm concentration, they recite the mantra *oṃ dharma dhātu svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.

The *manifest awakening from suchness*⁸⁴⁸ is the dissolution of the specially visualized deities into clear light, as has been explicitly taught already. To explain the visualization by means of all four manifest awakenings that follow, the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁴⁹ “After entering into clear light” and so forth up to “visualize the form of the deity.” Then to explain the *manifest awakening from the moon* specifically, the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁵⁰ “The mantrins meditate on a solar disk, abiding in the midst of the space realm” and so forth up to “*ātmako 'haṃ*.” Regarding the meaning of the mantra, *dhātu* is realm or sphere, and its primary meaning is reaching the limit. The remaining words of this mantra are easily understood.

Here is the way to meditate on the meaning of the mantra that stabilizes the essential point of manifest awakening from a moon, “the focusing on just wisdom”:⁸⁵¹ you should maintain divine identity with the resolve,⁸⁵² “The root

of all phenomena, animate and inanimate, appearing as moon, mere wind-and-mind, that am I.” The extremely subtle wind-and-mind abiding as indivisible nature is the root of the animate and inanimate realms in their entirety, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁸⁵³ “The stages of birth, abiding, being destroyed and the intermediate state — however much the people of the world impute them — are emanations of the wind of mind.”

It is taught⁸⁵⁴ that the first two manifest awakenings are “yoga,”⁸⁵⁵ and the remaining three are “subsequent yoga.”⁸⁵⁶ Now, the *manifest awakening from the seed syllable* is the meditation on the three syllables that arise from the moon, like bubbles forming on water, at the center of the moon,⁸⁵⁷ for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁵⁸ “After meditating on the ‘yoga’ in this way, [397] yogis should undertake the ‘subsequent yoga.’ They should visualize the three syllables once more at the center of the moon.”

Then:⁸⁵⁹ “A light-ray emanating from these [syllables] invites from the ten directions the five tathāgata families and their numerous surrounding deities, who in turn dissolve into these syllables. These syllables transform into a white five-pronged vajra, marked at its center with *oṃ āḥ hūṃ*.” This meditation is the *manifest awakening from the emblem*, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁶⁰ “Thereupon, that which resembles a white jasmine moon arises from the three syllables.” Moreover,⁸⁶¹ the commentary *Jewel Rosary*⁸⁶² explains that you should maintain also the divine identity of the emblem that is vajra, as the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* instructs, for the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture* teaches:⁸⁶³ “Yourself as Vajradhara arises from that [the three syllables] in the divine identity of the vajra.”

Then:⁸⁶⁴ “The vajra with its syllables transform into myself, the first lord.” This meditation is the *manifest awakening from the complete body*, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁶⁵ “Visualize the first lord.”

Therefore, when visualizing the first lord, you should cultivate a strong divine identity and clear appearance while meditating with the resolve, “This actual Vajradhara, the *sambhogakāya* — extremely subtle mere wind-and-mind arising in the body of wisdom — that am I.” Such a meditation is called the yoga of taking the intermediate state as the *sambhogakāya*. This is because:

(1) With respect to the *ground* of purification, this meditation corresponds to the intermediate being who will be born in Jambudvīpa, and serves to purify⁸⁶⁶ the future intermediate beings of the meditators themselves.

(2) During the completion stage on the *path*, it corresponds to both pure and

impure illusory bodies, [398] and will serve as a special ripener of the roots of merit for the swift attainment of these two illusory bodies.

(3) With regard to the *fruit*, it corresponds to the fruitional *saṃbhogakāya*, and since from now on you meditate by taking the fruit as the path, this becomes an especially skillful means of swiftly attaining the *saṃbhogakāya*.

The first argument — correspondence to the intermediate being, the *ground* of the meditation — is valid because the meditation on the lunar disk, the solar disk, and the lotus, which appear within the continuum of emptiness, corresponds to the three appearances that arise in reverse order from the clear light of death. The two sets of three syllables — (i) the three syllables from which the lunar disk, the solar disk, and lotus are visualized, and (ii) the three syllables that are set on them after they have been visualized — correspond to the two sets of the three winds that serve as the mounts of the three consciousnesses arising in reversed order, (i) the three engendering winds and (ii) the three coexisting winds.

“The mingling of all these into one”⁸⁶⁷ corresponds to the very subtle wind-and-mind at the ground, abiding as indivisible nature. Then you visualize:⁸⁶⁸ “They transform into a complete moon orb, perfect in all its parts. A light-ray emanating from it gathers the animate and inanimate in their entirety and dissolves them into the moon.” This signifies that that very subtle wind-mind abiding as indivisible nature is the root of the animate and inanimate realms in their entirety.

The meditation on the three syllables on the moon,⁸⁶⁹ the emanation from them and their dissolution,⁸⁷⁰ the meditation on the vajra that arises from that,⁸⁷¹ and the meditation on the first lord that arises in turn from that⁸⁷² correspond to the formation of the speech, deeds, mind, and body of the intermediate being, respectively, and are their supreme purifiers.

The second argument — correspondence to the pure and impure illusory bodies of the *path* — is valid because the lunar disk, the solar disk, and the lotus [399] correspond to the three appearances that arise in reverse order from the metaphoric and actual clear lights. The two sets of three syllables correspond to the winds that are the mounts of the three wisdoms, the three engendering winds and the three coexisting winds. The moon orb corresponds to the very subtle wind-and-mind of the continuum of the meditators on the pure and impure illusory body abiding as indivisible nature. The meditation on the three syllables that arise from the moon on the moon and so on corresponds, respectively, to the

attainment of the speech, deeds, mind, and body of the meditators on the two illusory bodies and serves as a special ripener of roots of merit for their swift attainment.

The third argument — the correspondence to the *saṃbhogakāya* of the fruit — is valid because even though on the stage of buddhahood there is nothing but clear light, all-emptiness, and there is no “appearance,” “enhanced appearance,” and “approaching attainment,” the lunar disk, the solar disk, and the lotus together with the syllables correspond to the three appearances together with the winds, their mounts, which are the causes of that innate clear light. The mingling of these three and the arising from it in the appearance of the moon orb correspond to the fruitional clear light, which is indivisible in nature from its wind. The meditation on the three syllables on the moon orb and so forth corresponds to the body, speech, and mind, as well as the deeds of the Victorious One. The five-pronged vajra signifies the fruitional wisdom,⁸⁷³ which, when divided, becomes the five wisdoms, while the vajra marked with the three syllables signifies the indivisibility of the three vajras.⁸⁷⁴ [400] Since from now on you meditate on them by taking the fruit as the path, this becomes a special skillful means for the swift attainment of the *saṃbhogakāya*.

Breaking the continuity of the impure wheel of existence,
the appearance, the attitude, and so forth
toward ordinary birth, death, and the intermediate state,
this supremely skillful means for entering the delightful palace, the
celestial mansion of the three bodies,
is supremely wondrous!

815. Tib. *dang po mgon po*, Skt. *ādinātha*.

816. See *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, vv. 10–15 and 40c–41a, D. folios 116a–121b and 140b–141a, 231.5–242.7 and 280.1–281.1, Pradhan 1975, 120–27 and 130, and Pruden 1988–90, 383–97 and 441–42. See also the commentary of Rgyal ba Dge 'dun grub, *Dam pa'i chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi rnam par bshad pa thar lam gsal byed*, Tōh. 5525; this section is found in folios 88a–91b and 99b, 175.3–182.4 and 198.3–5, translated into English by Patt 1993, 600–611 and 638; Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 22a–24b, 323.4–326.4, and his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 18a–b, 372.3–373.6. See also Dbyangs can dga' ba'i blo gros Ā kyā yongs 'dzin, *Gzhi sku gsum gyi rnam gzhag*, folios 6b–10b, translated in Lati Rinbochay and Hopkins 1979, 49–57. For more about the intermediate being, see Wayman 1974 /83; Cuevas 1996 and 2003; and Blezer 1997.

817. Reading *go sa* for *gos* in our text.

818. *Mdzod, Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, chap. 3, v. 14b–c, D. folio 7b, 14.1, Pradhan 1975, 125, Pruden 1988–90, 392.

819. See *Mdzod, Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, chap. 3, vv. 40c–41a, D. folio 8b, 16.1, Pradhan 1975, 130, Pruden 1988–90, 441–42; and *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa, Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 10b, 20.2–4, Skt. V. Bhattacharya 1957, 20.9–13.

820. While our text has once more *dri za'i sems can*, “scent-eater sentient being,” the *Mngon 'grel, Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, D. folios 140b–141a, 280.1–281.1, and the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 10b, 20.2, have '*grub pa* and *mngon par 'grub pa* respectively, and so do Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 96b, 194.4–5, and the *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 23b, 325.1.

821. *Mngon 'grel, Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 13a–b, D. folio 119a, 237.3, Pradhan 1975, 124, Pruden 1988–90, 390.

822. The *Sa'i dngos gzhi, Maulībhūmi*, the first part of the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 10a, 19.3–4, Skt. V. Bhattacharya 1957, 19.3–5; see also the *Chos mngon pa kun las btus pa, Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Tōh. 4049, D. folio 78a, 155.3–4, Pradhan 1950, 44, Walpole 1971, 68, Boin-Webb 2001, 93.

823. The *Mngal 'jug, Nandagarbhāvakraṇtīnirdeśa*, Tōh. 57, D. folio 211a, 423.6; see also '*Dul ba phran tshogs kyi gzhi, Vinayakṣudrakavastu*, Tōh. 6, D. vol. 10, folio 125a, 249.5–6. For the different versions of the *Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, see Kritzer 2014.

824. See also the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa, Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 10b, 20.4, Skt. V. Bhattacharya 1957, 20.14; and the *Mngon 'grel, Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 13cd, D. folio 119b, 238.5, Pradhan 1975, 124, Pruden 1988–90, 391.

825. The *Sa'i dngos gzhi, Maulībhūmi*, the first part of the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa, Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 10a, 19.7, Skt. V. Bhattacharya 1957, 20.2–3.

826. Reading *tshe* for *che* in our text.

827. See the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa, Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 10a–b, 19.7–20.1, Skt. V. Bhattacharya 1957, 20.4–6; and the *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 33a, 324.1–3, English translation Wayman 1974/83, 261.

828. Reading '*da' ba* for '*dang ba* in our text.

829. See the discussion in the *Mngon 'grel, Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, chap. 3, v. 14d, D. folio 120a, 239.5–6, Pradhan 1975, 125, Pruden 1988–90, 393.

830. *Mdzod, Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, chap. 3, v. 14d, D. folio 7b, 14.1, Pradhan 1975, 125, Pruden 1988–90, 392.

831. Asaṅga, *Chos mngon pa kun las btus pa, Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Tōh. 4049, D. folio 78a, 155.5, Pradhan 1971, 43, Rahula 1971, 68, Boin-Webb 2001, 93.

832. The *Sa'i dngos gzhi, Maulībhūmi*, the first part of the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa, Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. folio 10a, 19.4–5, Skt. V. Bhattacharya 1957, 20.4–6.

833. *Mdzod, Abhidharmakośa*, Tōh. 4089, chap. 3, v. 14a, D. folio 7b, 14.1, Pradhan 1975, 125, Pruden 1988–90, 392.

834. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 25b–30b, 329.3–339.4.

835. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39a–b, 93.4–94.2.

836. This refers to the method of interpretation of the *Sgron gsal*, which explains the *Root Tantra* also in the definitive and interpretable meanings, as noted above.

837. Tib. *dam tshig 'byung ba rdo rje*, Sanskrit *saṃyodbhavavajra*. The interpretable explanation of the

samādhi of “vajra origination from *samaya*” is found in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 15a–b, 29.7–30.6, P. 31.4.3–5.2, Chakravarti 1984, 20–21. Tsongkhapa in his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 40a4, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 64b, 128.1, explains that the samādhi of “vajra origination from *samaya*” refers to the generation of the deity through the five manifest awakenings.

838. See Tōh. 442, Zhol 3b1–3, Fremantle 1971, 178, Matsunaga 1978, 5–6, Tog missing, Dunh. 3a4–5.

839. Tōh. 442, Zhol 15a1, Tog 49.7–50.1, Dunh. 27b3, Fremantle 1971, 242, Matsunaga 1978, v. 1. Zhol and Dunh. have *bsgom* for *sgom*, Dunh. has *rdo rje mchog yi ge'i sngags* for *rdo rje gsum yig sngags kyi mchog* and *thob pa'i phyir* for *thob bya'i phyir* in our text. See also the interpretation of the *Sgron gsal* of this verse, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 77a, 153.2–4, P. 59.4.6–7, Chakravarti 1984, 96.

840. This addition is not part of the literary meaning of this line, but is based on the interpretation of this verse below.

841. The *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 12b, 24.3, P. 273.5.4–5. D. and P. have *rdo rje mchog gsum yi ge sngags* for *rdo rje gsum yig sngags kyi mchog*, and *phyag rgya chen por* for *phyag rgya chen po* in our text.

842. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 199b, 398.1, P. 21.2.8–3.1, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 16.5–6 and 48.15–49.2. D., P., and Hong and Tomabechei have *rdo rje gsum yig sngags mchog gis* for *rdo rje gsum yig sngags kyi mchog*, *bsgom pa ni* for *rnam bsgom pa*, *bya ba ste* for *thob bya'i phyir*, *mnyam bskyed pa'i* for *dag gis bya*, and the order of the last two lines is reversed.

843. Tib. *mngon byang*, Skt. *abhisambodhi*. These five are further explained below.

844. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b, 6.5–7, P. 269.5.5–270.1.1, L. 46–50, T. 45–49. D. and P. have *bstan par* for *brtag par*, *dmigs par 'gyur* for *dmigs par bya*, *de yi steng du yang* for *kyang ni de steng du*, *der ni* for *de yang*, *ni de nas bsam* for *yang bsgom par bya*, *rdzogs 'gyur* for *rdzogs pa*. P. has *nam mkha'* for *nam mkha'i* and *rdzogs gyur* for *rdzogs 'gyur*.

845. While D. and P. have *sngags chen po*, and T. has *mahāmantram*, L. has here *mahāmantrī*, indicating that the great mantrins visualize the three syllables.

846. Tib. *rnam par brtag*, Skt. *vibhāvayet*.

847. While lunar disks both here and above are translated into Tibetan as *zla ba'i dkyil 'khor*, the Sanskrit of the *Mdor byas* has *candrabimba* for the first kind of lunar disk, in its first occurrence only, and *candramaṇḍala* for the second kind of lunar disk. Since these two terms have different usages here, I translate the first as “lunar disk” and the second as “moon orb.”

848. This is the first among the five manifest awakenings.

849. These are the two first lines in the citation from the *Mdor byas* above. Our text explains that these two lines refer to the second to fifth manifest awakening in general, while the lines that follow refer to each of the awakenings separately.

850. This is the rest of the citation from the *Mdor byas* above.

851. Tib. *ye shes tsam*, Skt. *jñānamātra*. This is the fifteenth essential point (*de nyid*) among the forty-nine essential points of this *Sādhana* listed in Tsongkhapa's *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folio 14a, 295.1. The term “just wisdom” appears in the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 199a, 397.6–7, P. 21.2.6, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 15.12 and 48.4. It also appears in the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 12b, 24.3, P. 273.5.3.

852. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.2.

853. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 59, D. folio 265b, 530.1–2. D. has *brtags pa* for *btags pa* in our text.

854. See the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folios 3b–4a, 6.7–7.1, P. 270.1.1, L. 51ab, T. 50ab.

855. Tib. *sbyor ba*.

856. Tib. *rjes su rnal 'byor*, Skt. *anuyoga*. The manifest awakening from suchness and from the moon are

included within the *yoga*. The manifest awakening from seed syllable, emblem, and complete body are included within the subsequent *yoga*.

857. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.2–3: “From the moon, like bubbles forming on water, a white *om*, red *āḥ*, and blue *hūṃ* appear on the moon.”

858. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 3b–4a, 6.7–7.1, P. 270.1.1, L. 51, T. 50. D. and P. have *dmigs nas su* for *dmigs nas ni*.

859. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.3–5.

860. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4a, 7.1, P. 270.1.1–2, L. 52ab, T. 51ab.

861. Even though the *Mdor byas* itself does not instruct the yogi to meditate on the emblem of the vajra and to settle in divine identity in this vajra, because this practice is found in the *Mdo bsre*, the commentary on the *Mdor byas* adds it here.

862. *Rin chen 'phreng ba*, *Ratnāvalī*, Śāntipa's commentary on the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1826, D. folios 37b–38a, 74.4–75.1.

863. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 12b, 24.3, P. 273.5.5. D. and P. have *byung ba* for *byung* in our text. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.5, has here: “*vajra ātmako 'haṃ*.”

864. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.5.

865. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4a1, 7.1, P. 270.1.2, L. 52c, T. 51c.

866. Reading *sbyong bar* for *spyod bar* in our text.

867. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39a, 93.6.

868. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39a–b, 93.6–94.1.

869. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.2–3, which has here: “From the moon, like bubbles forming on water, a white *om*, red *āḥ*, and blue *hūṃ* appear on the moon.”

870. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.3–4, has here: “A light-ray emanates from these syllables and invites the five tathāgata families from the ten directions, together with their numerous surrounding deities, who then dissolve into these [syllables].”

871. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.4–5, has here: “That completely transforms into a white five-pronged vajra marked at the center with *om āḥ hūṃ*.”

872. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 94.5, has here: “The vajra with its syllables completely transform into myself, the first lord.”

873. Our text has here: excluding all those that are not the fruitional wisdom, and this is the fruitional wisdom.

874. The vajra body, vajra speech, and vajra mind.

9. The Yoga of Taking Birth as the *Nirmāṇakāya*

THERE ARE FOUR sections here: (1) explaining the ground of purification — taking birth in a womb, (2) explaining the purifier — how to practice in correspondence with the ground of purification,⁸⁷⁵ (3) explaining separately how to meditate on the body mandala, and (4) explanation of blessing of the body, speech, and mind, and the meditation on the triple-layered *sattvas*.

*Explaining the Ground of Purification — Taking Birth in a Womb*⁸⁷⁶

One subdivision⁸⁷⁷ in the hidden level of interpretation of the “vajra overpowering” explains the ground of purification as taught here.⁸⁷⁸ Furthermore, the *Longer Sūtra on Entering the Womb*⁸⁷⁹ teaches that when an intermediate being takes birth in a womb, three features need to be complete and three faults should be absent. The three features that need to be complete are: (1) a healthy and still menstruating female, (2) the scent-eater [intermediate being] hovering nearby, and (3) the male and female desiring each other and joining together. The three faults that should be absent are: (1) semen and blood descending one before the other or in a decayed state, (2) the womb of the mother like an ant’s⁸⁸⁰ waist, or a camel’s mouth, or a grain of barley, and (3) the scent-eater has not accumulated karma that would result in the male and female becoming its parents, or their accumulated karma cannot result in the scent-eater becoming their child.

When an intermediate being,⁸⁸¹ free of obstructing conditions and endowed with all the favorable conditions, [401] takes birth, then as the male and female are absorbed in union, the wind-and-mind of the dying intermediate being enters through the mouth or the crown of the head of the father.⁸⁸² This is as *Formulating the Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁸³ “It enters through the gate of Vairocana like the *jñānasattva*.” And the *Samvarodaya Tantra* teaches:⁸⁸⁴ “First seeing the father and mother in union, the intermediate being enters through the path of the mouth, by the power of very intense joy.” The *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁸⁸⁵

“The consciousness riding on the wind of previous karma, if it travels at all, moves toward the father’s mouth.”

Having entered in this way, it joins with the bodhicitta⁸⁸⁶ that descends through the seventy-two thousand channels. If it is to be born as a male, it is attracted to the mother and hates the father, and if it is to reborn as a female, it feels the opposite desire and hatred. In this way the wind-and-mind of the dying intermediate being enters into the womb of the mother, and at this time, the signs from mirage to clear light appear. The cessation of the clear light, the taking birth of the wind-mind intermediate being in the womb, and the arising of the “approaching attainment” in reverse order are all happening at this same time. After that, the signs from “enhanced appearance” to mirage arise.

The phases of development of the white constituent in the womb are: “the liquid-cream-like,” “the viscous,” “the globular,” “the solidified,” and “with the limbs slightly protruding.”⁸⁸⁷ The first is like cream outside and highly liquified inside, the second is thick⁸⁸⁸ like yogurt both inside and outside, the third is fleshy, [402] but cannot withstand pressure, the fourth is fleshy and can withstand pressure, while the fifth bulges with the protrusions of the five limbs.

When these phases are applied to the five tathāgata families, they relate, respectively, to Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, and Vairocana. The phases of development of the red constituent are also five: the fluid, the red, the glob, the solidified, and the commingled. These, too, are applied, respectively, to Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, and Vairocana, for *Formulating the Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁸⁹ “Here the liquid-cream-like [is blessed by Akṣobhya]” and so forth.

By being applied to the five tathāgata families, these phases of development in the womb do not turn into the grounds of purification for the five tathāgata families. Rather the aim here is to elucidate that, as there are five phases of development of the white and red constituents in the womb, the deities of the body mandala that purify them are included within the lineage of the five tathāgata families; and to elucidate as well that, as the beginning of the evolution of one’s body after taking birth in a womb is included within the two processes of development of the white and red constituents, so the deities of the body mandala are included within the two aspects of male and female. And this, specifically, is the purpose of applying the first stage of development, the liquid-cream-like embryo, to Akṣobhya: it is because the transformation of the first lord into the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva is applied in correspondence to the entry of

the first lord into Akṣobhya.⁸⁹⁰

If the sentient being in the womb is to be born as a male, it will dwell in the womb facing the back of the mother and leaning to the right side of her womb; and if it is to be born as a female, it dwells in the womb in the opposite manner.⁸⁹¹ Up until the thirty-fifth week⁸⁹² [403] the aggregates, the sensory spheres, the sense bases, and the major and minor limbs are completed. Likewise the body, including hair and nails, the basis of speech, including the tongue and palate, and the awareness of mental consciousness that engages with objects are completed. In the thirty-sixth week a wish to leave the womb arises. In the thirty-seventh, the embryo has the notion that the womb is filthy and malodorous. In the thirty-eighth, the wind of karma turns the embryo around, and it emerges outside⁸⁹³ the womb, turning into an object for the eye-consciousness. Then the stages of childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age take place.⁸⁹⁴

*Explaining the Purifier — How to Practice in Correspondence with the Ground of Purification*⁸⁹⁵

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁸⁹⁶ “From their natural abode” and so on. The *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture* does not mention how the first lord transforms into the *nirmāṇakāya*. The *Concise Sādhana* teaches only:⁸⁹⁷ “Transform through the entry of/into⁸⁹⁸ Akṣobhya.” The *Intense Illuminating Lamp*,⁸⁹⁹ the commentary *Jewel Rosary*,⁹⁰⁰ and *Samayavajra*⁹⁰¹ maintain that Akṣobhya emanates from the heart, acts for the sake of sentient beings, draws back and dissolves into yourself, and you are thereby transformed into Akṣobhya.

MANY EARLY AND LATER TIBETANS also maintain this,⁹⁰² but it is inappropriate, since the intermediate being enters in the midst of the semen and blood and it is not the blood and semen that enter into the intermediate being, and because the intermediate being enters into the semen and blood of the parents and does not enter into the semen and blood produced from itself.

The following explanation is supplemented by the literal interpretation of the samādhi of “vajra overpowering.”⁹⁰³ The transformation of the first lord into the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva is called the yoga of taking birth as the *nirmāṇakāya*. [404] This is so because on the level of the *ground*, this yoga corresponds to the intermediate being taking birth in a womb in Jambudvīpa as a being endowed

with the six constituents, and it purifies the future birth of the meditators themselves. During the completion stage on the *path*, it corresponds to the meditators on both the pure and impure illusory body who acquire the subtle and coarse *nirmāṇakāyas* of the *path*, and it is a special ripener of the roots of merit to this effect. With regard to the *fruit*, it corresponds to the *fruitional saṃbhogakāya* at the stage of buddhahood, which takes on the subtle and coarse *nirmāṇakāya* in domains such as the desire realm.⁹⁰⁴ Since from now on you meditate by taking the fruit as the path, this is a special skillful means for the swift attainment of such a *fruit*.

The first argument regarding the correspondences to the *ground* is valid because the visualization⁹⁰⁵ “From their natural abode the father-mother tathāgatas are absorbed in union for the sake of guiding sentient beings” corresponds to the father and mother who are absorbed in union. The visualization “Akṣobhyas formed from their bodhicitta pervade the entire space realm” corresponds to the white and red bodhicitta that melt and fill the seventy-two-thousand channels of the father and mother. The visualization “These [Akṣobhyas] bless all sentient beings, who thereby attain pure bliss and mental rapture” corresponds to the psychophysical constituents — the basis of imputation of sentient beings — of the father and mother overwhelmed with bliss. The visualization “All the Akṣobhyas merging together inside the celestial mansion” corresponds to the semen and blood merging in the womb. [405] The first lord who enters there⁹⁰⁶ corresponds to the intermediate being who, after its death enters the womb.

The meditation on the body as the celestial mansion cannot be taken to correspond to the *ground* and corresponds only to the *path* and *fruit*, whereas the meditation on the *deities* of the body mandala does correspond to the ground, as follows: The meditation on the five aggregates as the five tathāgata families corresponds to the evolution of the five aggregates of the sentient being in the womb; the meditation on the four physical elements as the four mothers corresponds to the evolution of the embryo’s four physical elements; the meditation on the faculties, beginning with the eyes, as bodhisattvas⁹⁰⁷ corresponds to the evolution of its five faculties, the eye and so on; the meditation on the five sense objects as the five vajra ladies⁹⁰⁸ corresponds to the evolution of its sense bases beginning with form; the meditation on the limbs as the fierce deities corresponds to the completion of the embryo’s major and minor limbs.

Blessing the body corresponds to the completion of the development of the

embryo's body, including its hair and nails; blessing the speech corresponds to the evolution of its basis of speech — tongue and palate; blessing the mind corresponds to the completion of its awareness of mental consciousness engaged in objects. The meditation on the triple-layered *sattvas* corresponds to the evolution of its temporal coarse body and its innate subtle body; sealing with the lord of the tathāgata family corresponds to its actual birth from the womb.

In this context, SOME EARLY MASTERS, followers of the system of the 'Gos,⁹⁰⁹ apply the triple-layered *sattvas* to the actual birth from the womb, and those who follow the system of Bu ston⁹¹⁰ apply the blessing of the body, speech, and mind to emerging outside the womb. However, neither is appropriate, [406] since the tathāgata was perceived as having three faces in the samādhi of “vajra origination from *samaya*”⁹¹¹ in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*, [only] after “[the tathāgata Bodhicittavajra⁹¹²] gave the blessing with the blessing of the mantra.”⁹¹³ The commentary⁹¹⁴ explains this in the interpretable meaning, and *Formulating the Sādhana*⁹¹⁵ explains that “perceived as having three faces” corresponds to the moment of emerging outside the womb. You should know how to apply the same pattern to the second and third root arguments.⁹¹⁶ Even though there is no distinction of subtle and coarse with respect to the first lord and the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva meditated on in the creation stage, you should meditate on the latter as coarser than the former.

By removing all stains that lead to rebirth —
the gateway to many kinds of suffering, like old age and death —
the supreme yogis who dance as various emanations attuned to their
disciples
are most fortunate indeed.⁹¹⁷

*Explaining the Body Mandala Separately*⁹¹⁸

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁹¹⁹ “The front, back, right, and left sides of my body become the four corners of the mandala” and so forth. In this context SOME⁹²⁰ say that, because the master Vajraghaṇṭa taught that “sentient beings are naturally present nondual mandalas,”⁹²¹ then, while the bodies of all beings have existed from the very beginning as mandalas, they themselves do not recognize that they exist in this way, and when they recognize that,⁹²² they meditate by visualizing something already in existence. So THEY say.

If that is so, the question may arise: “Are the bodies of sentient beings⁹²³ — that from the very beginning have existed as mandalas of Vajradhara — not produced by karma and afflictive emotions according to the truth of suffering?” [407] Furthermore, since their bodies have necessarily existed from the very beginning as mandalas of Vajradhara, do not sentient beings also necessarily exist from the very beginning as Vajradhara?

In response, THEY say:⁹²⁴ Because there is no distinction between the suchness of the bodies of sentient beings and the suchness of the mandala, we maintain that the bodies of sentient beings are mandalas, but we do not maintain that they are actual mandalas of buddhas, and therefore there is nothing wrong here. So THEY say. But then, since there is also no distinction between the suchness of the two painted mandalas⁹²⁵ and the suchness of deities, is there not even the slightest distinction of constructed versus unconstructed, profound versus nonprofound, between the body mandala and the two painted mandalas?

According to our system,⁹²⁶ the meaning of the lines by Vajraghaṇṭa is that the bases for the generation of the deities and celestial mansion of an external mandala — the emblems, seed syllables, and so forth — are newly constructed by the painter. Therefore the mandala achieved from them is also termed “constructed.” On the other hand, the bases for the generation of the body mandala are the individual parts of one’s body, which have all existed since birth itself and are not newly constructed. Therefore the mandalas formed from them too are termed “unconstructed.”

This is because the great master Vajraghaṇṭa taught:⁹²⁷ “[The mandala] is explained as prepared in stages and depicted in paintings, or drawn by way of strings and colored powders, while sentient beings are naturally present, nondual mandalas.⁹²⁸ The nature of the two constructed ones is intended to accord with the disciple. These [mandalas] should not⁹²⁹ be generated for the skillful, since they will be liberated by seeing the true meaning.” [408] Thus as a basis for generation, it is appropriate for the skillful to consider the body mandala superior to the outer two constructed mandalas, because it has been taught that through meditation on penetrating the vital points in their bodies, [the skillful meditators] are liberated, having seen the true meanings.⁹³⁰

Furthermore, SOME maintain that when the meditators on the creation stage visualize themselves as deities, they become actual deities, because if this were not so,⁹³¹ their cognitions would be false and would therefore be an unsuitable cause for buddhahood. The reasoning of such a statement is coarse. For if that

were so, when you meditate on the deeds of the specially visualized deities, empowering all sentient beings, who thereby attain the bliss and mental rapture of all tathāgatas and become Vajrasattva⁹³² — would all the sentient beings actually become Vajrasattva or not? If YOU maintain that they would, YOUR position is refuted⁹³³ by “not observing what ought to be seen.”⁹³⁴ Moreover, it would follow that through the meditation of a single yogi on the path, all sentient beings would be liberated without any effort on their part. If YOU maintain that during meditation on the deeds of the specially visualized deities all sentient beings are not actually Vajrasattva, it follows that since the meditator’s cognition is false, the mind that meditates in this way⁹³⁵ would be unsuitable as a cause for buddhahood.⁹³⁶ YOUR reasoning is contradictory.⁹³⁷

SOME⁹³⁸ maintain that you visualize the individual parts of the body as the individual parts of the celestial mansion, or that you visualize them merely as suitable equivalents. But this is not appropriate,⁹³⁹ because the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:⁹⁴⁰ “The body turns into the celestial mansion, the perfect support of all buddhas.” Thus it was taught to meditate on your body as an actual celestial mansion.⁹⁴¹

SOME⁹⁴² maintain that after setting the seed syllables of the thirty-two deities on the respective places of the body, you should merely visualize them in the nature of the deities, for Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples did not instruct you to meditate on them as actual deities. So they say. [409] Such a position is not appropriate, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁹⁴³ “Having set *Thlīm* on the eyes, meditate on Kṣitigarbha.”⁹⁴⁴ And because the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture* likewise shows⁹⁴⁵ that the body mandala is taught in the eighth chapter of the *Root Tantra*:⁹⁴⁶ “Those who know the ritual method⁹⁴⁷ should set the five tathāgata families and the descendants of the victorious ones on the parts of the body up to the midpoint between the two breasts, to the border of the crown of the head, as well as to the legs, the navel, the waist, and the secret place.”

SOME EARLY LAMAS⁹⁴⁸ maintain that you should meditate on the celestial mansion of the body mandala after dissolving the appearance of the outer mandala. SOME maintain that you should meditate on the body mandala in front of the former outer mandala. And SOME maintain that you should meditate on the two mandalas as placing one measuring vessel inside another and so forth. But these positions are incorrect.

According to our own system,⁹⁴⁹ without dissolving the appearance of the former celestial mansion, you should visualize each of the subsequent *continua*

of the celestial mansion coming in contact with the respective parts of your body one by one, thereby forming the body mandala. Just as, for example, the lac-dye meets a woolen cloth, so when “the front, back, right, and left sides of the body become the four corners of the mandala,”⁹⁵⁰ the four ordinary sides of the outer mandala meet the four parts of the body and mingle with them. This is how you must visualize the four corners of the celestial mansion of the body mandala.

The method of meditating on the body as the supporting celestial mansion is taught in the eighth chapter of the *Root Tantra*:⁹⁵¹ “*Stūpa* made of the four precious substances” and so forth. The meditation on individual parts of the body [410] as individual parts of the celestial mansion is clearly taught in the *Vajra Garland Tantra*:⁹⁵² “The four-cornered mandala [is described] through the division of the body into the four sides, front, back, right, and left,” and so forth, up to “The five aggregates are the five perfect pure ones,⁹⁵³ divided by means of the five colors. Meditate on all of them as the celestial mansion.” And this is as it appears in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*.⁹⁵⁴

[Qualm:] When instructing how to meditate on the body as the celestial mansion, it is inappropriate⁹⁵⁵ to explain that you should meditate⁹⁵⁶ on sense consciousnesses and on mind consciousness as discrete elements of the celestial mansion.⁹⁵⁷ Reply: There is nothing wrong with this because the etymological meaning of the word used for body is collection, and this can also be said of consciousness because consciousnesses are also composites of a multitude of moments.

The part of your body through which you meditate on each deity of the body mandala is established, as the seventeenth chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁹⁵⁸ “The five aggregates in brief are proclaimed the five buddhas,” and “the earth is called *Locanā*,”⁹⁵⁹ and so forth. And likewise the seventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:⁹⁶⁰ “The mantrin always meditates on forms, sounds, scents, and so forth as the deities themselves.” The *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches on which areas of the body to meditate:⁹⁶¹ “On this body of the vajra master the bodies of the victorious ones abide successively,” and so forth. The *Concise Sādhana* also teaches:⁹⁶² “Then those who know the divisions of the aggregates and so forth” up to “visualize *Sumbharāja*⁹⁶³ set on the feet.”

You should visualize the thirty-two seed syllables beginning with *om* set on the thirty-two areas of your body from the crown of the head downward, [411] as becoming indivisible in nature from the thirty-two aspects of the body beginning with the aggregate of form.⁹⁶⁴ After that, you should generate them

into the thirty-two deities⁹⁶⁵ and meditate on divine identity and clear appearance.

Here is the purpose of meditating in this way: On the level of the *ground*, this blesses the aggregates, sensory spheres, and sense bases. On the level of the *path*, this ripens the mental continuum in which a special realization of the completion stage arises — when the channels, winds, and drops in these areas of the body become serviceable, and as a result the wind and the bodhicitta dissolve into the heart. On the level of the *fruit*, this becomes a special skillful means for the swift attainment of the thirty-two deities of fruition.

Here in particular there is a transitional purpose for meditating on the five sensory objects as the five vajra ladies⁹⁶⁶ and on the limbs of the body as the fierce deities: in this way, the five extraordinary perceptions of the senses, of the eye and so forth, are attained, appearances radiate as a display of great bliss, and no obstructive interferences arise.

Transforming all impure aggregates, sensory spheres, and sense bases
into a display of the thirty-two deities,
like a supreme elixir transforming into gold,
this profound path is a jewel unique in all the worlds.

Explanation of the Blessings of the Body, Speech, and Mind, and the Meditation on the Triple-Layered Sattvas

Blessing the Three Doors

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:⁹⁶⁷ “From the *om* on the crown of my head a fully perfect lunar disk appears” and so forth. You should meditate on blessing the three doors according to the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* of the venerable lama [Je Tsongkhapa].⁹⁶⁸ [412] Bless each of the three doors as Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples taught. Invite, as the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture* teaches,⁹⁶⁹ citing the eleventh chapter of the *Root Tantra*:⁹⁷⁰ “Visualize *hūṃ* abiding at the center of the vajra mandala” and so forth. With the two verses for each blessing taught in the twelfth chapter you should make a request.⁹⁷¹ Then you should stabilize with the verses taught in the seventh chapter, one verse for each blessing,⁹⁷² and maintain divine identity with the mantras taught in the sixth chapter.⁹⁷³

The blessing of the three doors in this way proceeds in four sections: (1) blessing the body, (2) blessing speech, (3) blessing the mind, and (4) blessing the body, speech, and mind.

Blessing the Body

The method for inviting those whose blessings of the body you request is taught in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*:⁹⁷⁴ “From the *om* on the crown of my head” and so forth up to “I abide before Vairocana uniting with Locanā.” This inasmuch as the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁹⁷⁵ “A fully perfect lunar disk” and so forth up to “and I also abide before him.” Although the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* does not specify that the goddesses emanate and invite [the assembly of gods], this is found in the instruction that has been transmitted down from Lord Nāgārjuna.

Then the request is made with the following two verses:⁹⁷⁶ “May the holder of the buddha body, endowed with glory,” and so forth. The first verse is a request to the principal deity Vairocana, and the second to the buddhas surrounding him. Here is the meaning of these verses:⁹⁷⁷ *endowed with glory* means endowed with Locanā who bestows great bliss as his consort. *Holder of the body* means he who takes hold of the body of all *buddhas* as his own nature.⁹⁷⁸ With these words you invoke Vairocana. [413] Then, *me* is the yogi who meditates on *the indivisible-three-vajras* Vajradhara,⁹⁷⁹ requesting him to bless *now*, that is, at this moment. The request is: *I request* that you *make* my body into the nature of *Kāyavajra* Vairocana. After this you call on *the buddhas who reside in the ten directions*, and the rest is as before.

The method of meditation on the blessing granted by this request is clearly taught in the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*:⁹⁸⁰ “With these words you request” and so forth up to “attain mastery over the body.” This is so because the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁹⁸¹ “Visualize Vairocana united with Locanā, blessing you by entering into you.” Here is the method for visualizing the attainment of mastery over the body: you should meditate on being able to display millions and billions of *nirmāṇakāyas* simultaneously.

Then you should stabilize with the verse taught in the seventh chapter:⁹⁸² “The body of all buddhas” and so forth.⁹⁸³ Here is the meaning:⁹⁸⁴ *All buddhas* are all the buddhas abiding in the ten directions, *the five aggregates* pertain to Vairocana, *that body* emanates *complete with the five aggregates*, and *my body* is the body of the yogi who wishes to be *likewise endowed with the nature of the body of Buddha* Vairocana. The reading *complete with the five aggregates* as it

appears in the translation of 'Gos is fine.⁹⁸⁵

The mantra for maintaining divine identity is: *oṃ sarva tathāgata kāya vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.⁹⁸⁶ Here is its meaning: *oṃ* has already been explained, *sarva* is all, *tathāgata* is thus-come-thus-gone, *kāya* is body,⁹⁸⁷ [414] *vajra* is adamant, *svabhāva* is nature, *ātmaka* is essence, and *aham* is I. Thus: “the essence of the vajra nature of the body of all tathāgatas, that am I.”

Blessing Speech

The method for inviting those whose blessings of speech you request is taught in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* with:⁹⁸⁸ “From the *āḥ* at the center of my tongue” and so forth up to “I abide before them.” Here is the meaning of the request: *endowed with glory* means endowed with Pāṇḍarā as a consort. *Dharma* is Amitābha, who is the *path*⁹⁸⁹ *of speech* since he is the essence of the speech of all the buddhas. The rest is as before except that Kāyavajra is replaced by Vāgvajra.

You should meditate on the blessing as explained in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* of the Venerable Lama [Tsongkhapa],⁹⁹⁰ according to the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*,⁹⁹¹ for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:⁹⁹² “Partake in the blessing of speech by visualizing Pāṇḍarā united with her principal deity entering you through your tongue.” The mastery of speech is the ability to answer simultaneously through a single utterance all questions of all sentient beings in their respective languages.

Then you should stabilize the blessing with the verse beginning:⁹⁹³ “The speech of Vajra Dharma.”⁹⁹⁴ Here is the meaning:⁹⁹⁵ *The speech of Vajra Dharma* is the speech of Amitābha; it is perfect, since it is the fruit of attaining the four specific perfect types of understanding signified by *lingual understanding*.⁹⁹⁶ [415] *May mine too be like that speech, like that of Amitābha the Dharma Holder*. Then you should maintain divine identity with the mantra: *oṃ sarva tathāgata vāk vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*,⁹⁹⁷ *vāk*, meaning speech,⁹⁹⁸ and the rest as above.

Blessing the Mind

The method for inviting those whose blessings of the mind you request is taught in the *Concise Sādhana* with:⁹⁹⁹ “From the *hūṃ* in my heart there appears” and so forth up to “I abide.” Here is the meaning of the request: *Endowed with glory* means endowed with the consort Māmakī. *Holder of Cittavajra* means that he

holds as his own essence a mind whose nature is nonabiding nirvāṇa that cannot be destroyed by mental proliferations of signs. The rest is as before except that you must substitute with Cittavajra.

Then you should meditate on the blessing as taught by the venerable Lama [Tsongkhapa]¹⁰⁰⁰ according to the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*,¹⁰⁰¹ for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰⁰² “Partake in the blessing of mind by visualizing the entire assembly of Māmakīs together with Cittavajra [Akṣobhya] entering you through your heart.” The mastery of mind means remaining free of any conceptualization with the dawning of a direct and instantaneous realization of all knowables.

After this you should stabilize with the verse beginning:¹⁰⁰³ “The mind of Samantabhadra.”¹⁰⁰⁴ Here is the meaning:¹⁰⁰⁵ *The Lord of Secret* is the Lord of the Secret Ones, and foremost among those who realize Thatness. [416] *Understanding* is Vajra Lady of Tangibles,¹⁰⁰⁶ and *endowed with understanding* is endowed with her as his consort. As for Samantabhadra,¹⁰⁰⁷ *all* is in every respect, and *good* is immaculate. *That mind* is the mind of Akṣobhya. *May my mind too be like his*. Then maintain divine identity with *oṃ sarva tathāgata citta vajra svabhāva ātmako ’haṃ*.¹⁰⁰⁸ Here is the meaning of the mantra: *citta* is mind,¹⁰⁰⁹ and the rest is as before.

In summary, you visualize the countless goddesses of the three tathāgata families¹⁰¹⁰ radiating outward from the three places to invite hosts of deities of the three vajras¹⁰¹¹ pervading space. Then you make a request to the main deities and their circles abiding in space to bless the three doors. Thereby the goddesses that are emanated and the host of the deities of the three vajras¹⁰¹² invited by the goddesses are absorbed in union, and their nectar dissolves into the appearances of three rays — white, red, and blue — that enter into the three places.¹⁰¹³ Thereby your three doors, separately and together, become a single taste — an indivisible essence of bliss and emptiness — with the three vajras of all buddhas separately and with all three together. You should hold firmly to divine identity in this.

This meditation is also an alternative to the invitation of the *jñānasattva* and its entry into the *śamayasattva*, as meditated on in other traditions.

Blessing the Body, Speech, and Mind

You should hold firmly to divine identity while reciting, as in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*:¹⁰¹⁴ “I turn into the nature of great Vajradhara, the indivisible triple vajra of body, speech, and mind of all tathāgatas.” [417] The *Vajrasattva*

*Sādhana*¹⁰¹⁵ teaches that this is shown in the second chapter of the *Root Tantra*:¹⁰¹⁶ “You should generate the mind as body, the body as mind, and the mind as articulated speech.” And the *Concise Sādhana* teaches as well:¹⁰¹⁷ “After blessing [the body, speech, and mind] separately by dividing into the three tathāgata families, the wise yogi should bless once more all three together with this mantra: *oṃ sarva tathāgata kāya vāk citta vajra svabhāva ātmako ’haṃ*.” *All three together* means maintain divine identity as Vajradhara, the essence of all three vajras indivisibly.¹⁰¹⁸

Here is the purpose of blessing the three doors in this way: to purify the ordinary appearances and attitudes of your three doors on the level of the *ground*, and to achieve higher abilities through a descent of the *jñānasattva* into yourself as *samayasattva*, thereby swiftly attaining the triple vajra of the *fruit* in accordance with the completion stage on the *path*.¹⁰¹⁹

How to Meditate on the Triple-Layered Sattvas

Meditate as the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* instructs:¹⁰²⁰ “Myself visualized as the *samayasattva*, blue Vajradhara,” and so forth, as the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture*¹⁰²¹ and the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*¹⁰²² explain by citing the twelfth chapter of the *Root Tantra*:¹⁰²³ “[Visualize] the Vajra Holder of body, speech, and mind, endowed with all the supreme forms, at his heart is the wisdom *samaya*,” and so forth. And also as the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰²⁴ “Having blessed yourself in this way, you should meditate on yourself as the *samayasattva*, abiding at the center of a lunar disk, endowed with the six signs.” [418] The six signs are the six hand emblems.

The *samayasattva* corresponds to the coarse temporal body; the *jñānasattva* corresponds to the subtle innate body, which is a wind with five rays of light, indivisible in nature with the very subtle wind-and-mind; and the *samādhisattva* corresponds to the very subtle mind.

Here is the reason for calling the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva in this case *samayasattva* (*dam tshig sems dpa’*).¹⁰²⁵ The Sanskrit equivalent of *dam tshig* is *samaya*, and when the etymology of *samaya* is explained, *sameti*¹⁰²⁶ means coming together or joining,¹⁰²⁷ and *milati*¹⁰²⁸ means uniting, therefore the *jñānasattvas* come to the *samayasattvas* and unite with them. It is called *sattva*¹⁰²⁹ because its mind is intent on benefiting all sentient beings (*sattvas*), or else because it is a designation of pure sentient beings. This is so, as the *Cluster of Instructions* teaches:¹⁰³⁰ “It is called *samaya* because that is the locus where

the *jñānasattva* joins the *samayasattva* and unites with it,”¹⁰³¹ and it is called *sattva* “because it acts for the benefit of sentient beings and because it is a referent of the term ‘pure sentient beings.’” Specifically in this context, the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva is called *samayasattva*, because the *Vajrasattva Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰³² “It is called *samayasattva*, since it is generated in the manner of the samādhi of ‘vajra origination from *samaya*.’”¹⁰³³ [419]

In the heart of the *samayasattva*, you should meditate on the *jñānasattva*, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰³⁴ “Meditate on the *jñānasattva* dwelling at the center of the [*samayasattva*’s] heart, and on its heart¹⁰³⁵ set the syllable *hūṃ*, which is called the *samādhisattva*.”

SOME say¹⁰³⁶ that it is not appropriate for the *jñānasattva* to be red, since all the tantras teach that you should meditate on a *jñānasattva* similar to yourself.¹⁰³⁷ Such a position is inappropriate because YOU have not established that any of the tantras do in fact teach this, or that the *Root Tantra of the Guhyasamāja* and its *Explanatory Tantras* in particular teach this.

Some other tantras teach that the phrase “a *jñānasattva* similar to yourself” means that the *samayasattva* and the *jñānasattva* are similar in the sense that they share the same lord of the tathāgata family, such as Akṣobhya and so forth, and it is in this sense that the *jñānasattva* is “similar to yourself.” Were this not so, if “similar to yourself” required an exact similarity in the body’s color, in emblems and so forth, then would YOU need, at this point in the meditation, to set the thirty-two deities on the body of the *jñānasattva* as well? This is so because you must set them on the *samayasattva*, the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva, and these two should be exactly the same. YOUR reasoning is contradictory.¹⁰³⁸

Moreover, it would follow that many authoritative explanations are likewise inappropriate, since the *jñānasattva* of Yamāntaka is yellow Mañjuśrī, and the *jñānasattva* of red Raktayamāri is white Daṇḍin marked with a yellow human head, and in certain cases of the meditation on Cakrasaṃvara [420] the *samayasattva* is blue and the *jñānasattva* white.

Therefore this is how you should meditate in our system:¹⁰³⁹ “Myself is visualized as the *samayasattva*, blue Vajradhara; upon a seat of the variegated lotus and a lunar disk on my heart is the *jñānasattva*, red in color, with one face and two arms holding a vajra and a bell, and embracing a similar-looking consort. Through their embrace, their bodies expand.” Bhavyakīrti¹⁰⁴⁰ and Abhayākara¹⁰⁴¹ taught this in their commentaries on the *Concise Sādhana*. The *Vajrasattva Sādhana* by Candrakīrti also teaches:¹⁰⁴² “At the heart of the

samayasattva, visualize a red *jñānasattva* with two arms; in the yoga of union, their entire bodies are satiated.”

The reason for calling it a “*jñānasattva*” is that it is a *sattva* whose nature is wisdom. The *Root Tantra* teaches:¹⁰⁴³ “Visualize subtle *mandalins*¹⁰⁴⁴ at the center of your heart,” and the *Illuminating Lamp* explains this:¹⁰⁴⁵ “You should meditate on the *subtle jñānasattva*; since their nature is wisdom, they are *subtle*.”

At the heart of the *jñānasattva*, you should meditate on the *samādhisattva*, the syllable *hūṃ*, as it appears in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*,¹⁰⁴⁶ for the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*¹⁰⁴⁷ and the tenth chapter of the *Root Tantra* clearly teach this:¹⁰⁴⁸ “[At the center of that visualize] a syllable made of supreme letters.” Here is the reason for calling it *samādhisattva*: [421] since you meditate by focusing one-pointedly on this spot, the supreme *samādhi* — the innate wisdom — is born, and this is how you engage in the yoga leading to supreme liberation.

Here is the purpose of meditating on the triple-layered *sattvas* in this way: it *purifies* the stains of the triple-layered *sattvas* on the *ground*, *transforming* them into the triple-layered *sattvas* of the *path* for the swift *attainment* of the triple-layered *sattvas* of the *fruit*.

Even though there is no instruction in the *Concise Sādhana* about how to meditate on the lord of the tathāgata family after that, you should meditate as our venerable lama [Tsongkhapa] taught.¹⁰⁴⁹ This is so because the twelfth chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:¹⁰⁵⁰ “On its head ornament visualize the supreme Vajra Holder,” and the *Illuminating Lamp* explains this by saying:¹⁰⁵¹ “Visualize *the Vajra Holder*, Great Vajradhara, abiding upon the *head ornament*, that is the top of the head. The dripping nectar, resembling a stream of lunar rays, *pleases*, that is, delights, those known as the *samaya*-, *jñāna*-, and *samādhisattvas* of *all buddhas*.” Karuṇaśrī¹⁰⁵² explains that Vajradhara is white with one face and two arms.

The yoga of the triple-layered *sattvas* of the *path* purifies
the stained attributes of the triple-layered *sattvas* of the *ground*.

Thus are attained the triple-layered *sattvas* of the *fruit*.

The profound explanation proclaims this.

875. Below [403] our text has *mtshun sbyor* for *mtshun spyod* here.

876. Dbyangs can dga' ba'i blo gros Ā kyā yongs 'dzin, *Gzhi sku gsum gyi rnam gzbag*, folios 10b–14b (translated in Lati Rinbochay and Hopkins 1979, 58–68) follows this description, which appears more elaborately in Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzbag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 33b–41b, 345.6–361.4, and his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 20a–21a, 376.1–378.6; see also Garrett 2008.

877. Tsongkhapa distinguishes two hidden levels of interpretation here, one applied to the path and the other to the ground. Paṇ chen Blo bzang chos rgyan refers here to the latter; see Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 39b2–3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 62b, 124.2–4, and his *Rnam gzbag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 36a, 350.4–6.

878. This refers to the *Sgron gsal*, which interprets the samādhi of “vajra overpowering” found in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra* according to the four levels of interpreting the Tantric teachings (*tshul bzhi*): the literal, the shared, the hidden, and the ultimate levels of interpretation.

879. The *Mngal 'jug*, *Nandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa*, Tōh. 57, D. folios 211a and 211b–212a, 423.3–4 and 424.5–425.6, and the *Shorter Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, *Mngal 'jug*, *Āyusmannandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa*, Tōh. 58, D. folio 237a–b, 475.6–476.2; see also 'Dul ba phran tshegs kyi gzhi, *Vinayaksudrakavastu*, Tōh. 6, D. vol. 10, folios 125a and 125b–126b, 249.3–4 and 250.6–252.7. For an English translation of these scriptures see Kritzer 2014, 39–108. In this book Kritzer also discusses the different versions of the *Sūtra on Entering the Womb*.

880. Reading *rked pa* for *rkid pa* in our text.

881. Our text has *gnyis*, both, here.

882. Reading *pha* for *pa*.

883. *Rnam gzbag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 124a, 247.1, P. 8.4.7, Tanaka 2016, 93. D. and P. have *sgo nas zhugs* for *sgor zhugs*, the Sanskrit being *dvāreṇa praviśya*.

884. Tōh. 373, chap. 2, Sanskrit v. 14, Tib. vv. 14ab and 15cd, D. folio 266a, 531.6–7, Tsuda 1974, 74–75, 168, 240. Reading *pha* for *pa*, as in Tsuda 1974, 168. The text of the Kangyur is somewhat different from the citation in our text. The word “first” is not found there.

885. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātānta*, Tōh. 445, chap. 17, D. folio 230a, 459.2, P. 212.1.6. D. and P. have *sngon la* for *sngon las*, D. has *brgya lam gang tshe 'khrul gyur na*, and P. has *rgya lam gang tshe 'khrul gyur na* for *brgya la gang tshe 'gro 'gyur na*, and D. and P. have *pha yi mkha' la mtshungs par gnas* for *pha yi kha la mtshungs par ldan*. Considering these various different readings, the translation offered here is very tentative.

886. Tib. *byang chub kyi sems*.

887. Tib. *mer mer po*, *ltar ltar po*, *gor gor po*, *mkhrang gyur*, and *'rkang lag 'gyus pa*; see also *Mngon 'grel*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, following verse 199c; the *Longer Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, Tōh. 57, D. folio 225a, 451.7; the *Shorter Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, Tōh. 58, D. folios 239b–240a, 480.5–481.7; the 'Dul ba phran tshegs kyi gzhi, *Vinayaksudrakavastu*, Tōh. 6, D. vol. 10, folios 142b and 146a, 284.6–7 and 291.3–4; and the *Sa'i dngos gzhi*, *Maulībhūmi*, part 1 of the *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, folio 53b, 106.1–2. Variations will be found among these sources in their lists of these stages.

888. Reading *bska ba* for *bskab* in our text.

889. *Rnam gzbag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 124a–b, 247.6–248.1, P. 8.5.4–7, Tanaka 2016, 95.

890. See *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 40a, 95.4, and the discussion in the next section.

891. It will incline toward the mother's left side, facing forward.

892. For weeks thirty-five through thirty-eight in the womb, see the *Longer Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, Tōh. 57, D. folio 219b, 440.1–5, the *Shorter Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, Tōh. 58, D. folio 244a–b, 489.4–

490.3, and the 'Dul ba phran tshegs kyi gzhi, *Vinayaṣṣudrakavastu*, Tōh. 6, D. vol. 10, folio 136b, 272.1–4. For English translation of these scriptures see Kritzer 2014, 39–108.

893. Reading *btsas* for *bcas* in our text.

894. See Tsongkhapa's *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 21a, 378.5–6.

895. As noted above, [400] our text had *methun spyod* for *methun sbyor* here. The title as appears here can be translated as: "Explaining how to apply the correspondences to the purifier." Reading *sbyong byed*, as in [400] above, for *sbyang byed* here. For the following section see Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 42b–44b, 363.5–367.3.

896. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 39b, 95.1–6.

897. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4a, 7.2, P. 270.1.2, L. 53a, T. 52a.

898. This is the point of controversy here. Is it Mi bskyod pa who enters into the first lord or is it the first lord who enters Mi bskyod pa? D. 4a2 has *mi bskyod pa ni rjes su zhugs pas* and P. 270.1.2 has *mi bskyod pas ni rjes su zhugs pas* for *mi bskyod pa rjes su zhugs pas bsgyur* in our text. L. 53a and T. 52a have *akṣobhyānupraveśena*.

899. Bhavyakīrti, *Rab tu sgron gsal*, *Pradīpodyotanābhisaṃdhi*, Tōh. 1793, D. folio 9a–b, 17.6–18.1.

900. Śāntipa's commentary on the *Mdor byas*, *Rin chen 'phreng ba*, *Ratnāvalī*, Tōh. 1826, D. folio 38a, 75.6–7.

901. [*Kṛṣṇa]samayavajra, [Nag po] dam tshig rdo rje, see his *Pañcakramapañjikā*, *Rim pa lnga'i dka' 'grel*, Tōh. 1841, D. folio 160b, 320.4–6.

902. Paṇ chen Bsod nams grags pa identifies them as the followers of the tradition of 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas; see his *Gsang 'dus bskyed rim rnam gzhag*, folio 52b, 116.1–2. Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po as well maintains so; see his *Gsang 'dus dkyil 'khor gyi sgrub thabs dngos grub rgya mtsho*, work no. 106, folio 10a, 96.2.1–3.

903. In his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 39a3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 62b, 124.2–4, Tsongkhapa adds the literal interpretation to the other three levels of interpretation by which the *Sgron gsal* explains this samādhi found in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*.

904. Reading *'dod pa'i khams* for *'dod pa khams* in our text.

905. This and the following citations are from the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 40a, 95.1–4. For the following correspondences, see Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 21b, 379.1–3, and his *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 43a, 364.2–3.

906. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 40a, 95.4 has here "and I enter [there]."

907. Reading *sems dpar* for *sems dbar* in our text.

908. The Rdo rje mas, the vajra goddesses of the sense objects.

909. See 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas, *Gsang 'dus stong thun*, folio 13b, 26.3–4. 'Gos, born in Rta nag (eleventh century), played a role in the translation and revision of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* (for details see the colophon at the end of the seventeenth chapter of the *Tantra*). His *Gsang 'dus stong thun* is one of the earliest Tibetan treatises on the central practices of the *Guhyasamāja* system. For a sketch of his life, see 'Gos Lo tsā ba, the *Blue Annals*, 359–61.

910. Bu ston indeed relates the blessing of the body, speech, and mind to the stage of life that follows birth from the womb, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 45a–b, 771.6–772.3.

911. Tib. *dam tshig 'byung ba rdo rje*, Skt. *samayodbhavavajra*, see [395] above.

912. Tib. Byang chub kyi sems rdo rje.

913. According to the *Root Tantra*, the tathāgata Byang chub kyi sems rdo rje, Bodhicittavajra, was absorbed in the samādhi called "vajra origination from *samaya*" of the vajra body, vajra speech, and vajra

mind of all tathāgatas, and made blessing with the blessing of the mantra of all tathāgatas. As soon as he made the blessing, all tathāgatas saw him as having three faces. See Tōh. 442, Zhol 3b1–3, Fremantle 1971, 178, Matsunaga 1978, 5–6, Tog missing, Dunh. 3b1.

914. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 15a–b, 29.7–30.6, P. 31.4.3–5.2, Chakravarti 1984, 20–21.

915. *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 124b, 248.4–5, P. 9.1.3–5, Tanaka 2016, 97.

916. The correspondences to the illusory bodies of the *path* and to the *saṃbhogakāya* of the *fruit*.

917. Reading *nying mtshams* for *nyid mtshams* in our text.

918. The topic of the body mandala, especially in the context of Mother Tantras such as Hevajra and Cakrasaṃvara, has become the ground for major controversies between Mkhas grub rje and Sa skya scholars, primarily Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po. In his *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, especially folios 116b–119a and 124b–125b, 234.1–239.2 and 250.5–252.6, Mkhas grub rje ridicules criticism raised by Ngorchen against Tsongkhapa and disapproves of certain correlations between the body and the mandala in Sa skya treatises. This dispute snowballed into the claim that Mkhas grub rje questioned the validity of the *Hevajra Tantra* or *Lam 'bras* tradition of the Sa skya pas. It still has to be shown that Mkhas grub rje indeed did so. In his *Dge bshes kon ting gu[g] sri ba la phul ba*, folio 153a, 775.4–5, Mkhas grub rje stated that he did not refute the *Lam 'bras* teachings. He replied to Ngor chen's arguments in his *Gnam lcags 'khor lo*. See also van der Kuijp 1985, 88; Heimbel 2014; Bentor 2017b and references there.

919. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 40a–41a, 95.6–97.2.

920. In his *Bde dril bskyed rim*, Tōh. 5479, folio 8b, 780.6, Mkhas grub rje indicates that such a position is maintained by Bsod nams rtse mo in his commentary on the *Sādhana* by Dril bu pa; see Bsod nams rtse mo, *'Khor lo bde mchog dril bu pa'i dbang gi bya ba mdor bsdus*, work 24, folio 7a, 407.4.1–3. The following deliberation follows Tsongkhapa's *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 303–5. In his commentary on this work by Dril bu pa, the *Dril dbang*, Tōh. 5327, folios 1b–4a, 57.4–62.1, Tsongkhapa too discusses this issue.

921. Rdo rje dril bu, *'Khor lo sdom pa'i dbang gi bya ba mdor bsdus pa*, *Cakrasaṃvaraṣekaprakriyopadeśa*, Tōh. 1431, D. folio 219b, 438.5–6.

922. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 116b, 234.2, has *shes par bya ba'i phyir du* for *ngo shes par byas te* in our text, and this could be translated as “for understanding this they meditate by visualizing something already in existence.” Tsongkhapa's *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 305, has *ngo ma shes pa shes par byed pa*.

923. Reading *chos can* for *mos can* in our text.

924. See Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, 304, and the response in Mus srād pa Byams pa rdo rje rgyal mtshan, *Dbang chu'i rtsod spong*, folios 48a–50b, 731.6–736.5.

925. The mandala painted on cloth and the mandala made with powdered colors.

926. See Tsongkhapa's *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 303–5, and his commentary on Dril bu pa's *Dril dbang*, Tōh. 5327, mentioned in a previous note.

927. Rdo rje dril bu, *'Khor lo sdom pa'i dbang gi bya ba mdor bsdus pa*, *Cakrasaṃvaraṣekaprakriyopadeśa*, Tōh. 1431, D. folio 219b, 438.5–6. D. has *ri mo* for *ri mor*, *rim pas* for *rim pa*, *'gro ba 'di nyid* for *'gro ba 'di dag*, *bcos ma nyid* for *bcos ma gnyis*, *dbang las 'dod* for *dbang las yin*, and *de min te* for *de yin te*. Our text mostly follows the reading of the text in Tsongkhapa's commentary on this work by Dril bu pa, *Dril dbang*, Tōh. 5327, folio 2a, 58.3–5.

928. This is the line that appeared above, but here the citation continues.

929. Both D. and Tsongkhapa's commentary on this work, *Dril dbang*, Tōh. 5327, folio 2a, 58.4, have *min* for *yin* in our text.

930. See Tsongkhapa's *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 307, and his commentary on Dril bu pa, *Dril dbang*, Tōh. 5327, D. folio 3b, 61.2–4.

931. That is, if they are not deities but still meditate as if they were.
932. See *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 37b, 90.4–6 and [384–385] above.
933. Reading *khegs* for *legs*.
934. Tib. *snang rung ma dmigs pa*, Skt. *dr̥śyānupalabdhi*, you should observe what is there; for example, if there is a pot on the table, you should see it. See Tillemans 1995.
935. Reading *chos can* for *mos can* in our text.
936. See Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 117b–118a, 236.3–237.2.
937. Tib. *'khor gsum*. YOU are totally defeated, since YOU have committed the three serious errors in logic. For explanations of this debating term see, for example, Perdue 1992, 58; Onoda 1992, 47–48; Dreyfus 2003, 217 and n46.
938. In his *Bde dril bskyed rim*, Tōh. 5479, folio 8b, 780.4, Mkhas grub rje points out that this is the tradition of the Zhwa lu pa. Tsongkhapa as well objects to such a position. See his *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 303–5, *Slob tshul*, Tōh. 5308, folio 16b, 32.1–3, and *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, folio 28a–b, 206.6–207.1, as well as the *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 121b, 313.1–2, in the context of Mother Tantras.
939. Reading *'thad de* for *'thad do* in our text.
940. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 68, D. folio 275a, 549.2, P. 230.3.8. D. and P. have *'gyur* for *gyur*, and *brten* for *bsten*. D. has *kun gyis* for *kun gyi*.
941. See Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 305, *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 121b, 313.2–3.
942. See Red mda' ba, *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal zhus lan*, Kathmandu, folios 49b–50a, 278.6–279.3; and *Gsung thor bu*, TBRC W1CZ1871, folio 305a. In his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 114b4–5, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 191b, 382.1, Tsongkhapa likewise objects to the opinion that during the body mandala the yogi meditates on the seed syllables in the nature of the deities without generating the deities themselves.
943. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4a, 7.6, P. 270.1.8, L. 62ab, T. 61ab; see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 42b, 100.4–5.
944. Tib. Sa yi snying po.
945. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 12b, 24.5–6, P. 273.5.6–7. D. of the *Mdo bsre* has *nu ma'i bar nas klad pa'i rgya bar du* for *nu ma'i dbus bar spyi gtsug mtha' yi bar*, and P. has *rgyas bar du* at the end of this line in our text. D. and P. have *cho ga shes pas rkang mthil bar du dgod* for *cho ga shes pas yang na rkang pa'i bar*.
946. Tōh. 442, Zhol 11b7, Tog 38.7, Dunh. 20b5–21a1, Fremantle 1971, and Matsunaga 1978, v. 9. Dunh. has *nu ma'i bar nas glad pa'i rgyas kyi bar* for *nu ma'i dbus bar spyi gtsug mtha' yi bar* in our text.
947. Reading *chog ga* for *chog* in our text.
948. See also Tsongkhapa, *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 121a, 312.3.
949. See Tsongkhapa, *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 122b, 315.5–6.
950. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 40a, 95.6; see also [406] above.
951. Tōh. 442, Zhol 12a1, Tog 39.2, Dunh. 21a2, Fremantle 1971, v. 11cd, Matsunaga 1978, v. 12ab.
952. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 68, D. folio 275a, 549.2–6, P. 230.4.1–5, D. and P. have *rnam dag lnga* for *yang dag par*, *rnam dag* for *rnam gzhaq*, and *ni dbye* for *gis byed* in our text.
953. Following the reading of the Tengyur.
954. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 40b–41a, 96.5–97.2.

955. Reading *'thad do* for *'thad da* in our text.
956. Reading *re rer bsgom par* for *re re rab sgom par* in our text.
957. Mental constituents such as the sense consciousnesses (*mig gi rnam shes*, and so on), the sense faculties (*mig gi dbang po*, and so on), and the mind faculty (*vid kyi dbang po*) also become parts of the mandala. See *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 40a–41a, 95.6–97.2.
958. Tōh. 442, Zhol 44a6, Tog 148.4–5, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, vv. 50–51.
959. Tib. Spyan ma.
960. Tōh. 442, Zhol 10b3, Tog 34.3, Dunh. 18a1, v. 14ab, Fremantle 1971, 216, Matsunaga 1978, 21. Dunh. has *las stsogs pa kun* for *sogs sngags pa yis* and *rtag par* for *rtag tu* in our text. The Sanskrit is somewhat different. For an English translation see Fremantle 1990, 107.
961. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 64, D. folio 270a, 539.2, P. 228.3.8–4.1 D. and P. have *sku la ni* for *lus 'di la* in our text.
962. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4a–4b, 7.3–8.2, P. 270.1.3–2.4, L. 55–68, T. 54–67. Here the *Mdor byas* describes on which parts of the body the deities of the mandala are set. See also the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 23b–25a, 62.6–65.4.
963. Tib. Gnod mdzes rgyal po.
964. On the diverse views of Dge lugs scholars on this point of the meditation, see Bentor 2015a.
965. Reading *lha so gnyis su* for *lha mo gnyis su* in our text.
966. The *Rdo rje mas*, the vajra goddesses of the sense objects.
967. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 47a–49b, 109.2–114.2.
968. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folios 16a–18a, 299.5–303.5. See also his *Slob tshul*, Tōh. 5308, folios 17b–19b, 34.1–38.3, and *Bskyed rim zin bris*, Tōh. 5288, folio 31a–b, 212.3–213.6.
969. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 13a, 25.3, P. 271.1.5.
970. Tōh. 442, Zhol 15a3, Tog 50.4, Fremantle 1971, and Matsunaga 1978, v. 4a. Tog has *sgom* for *bsgom*. Matsunaga has the seed syllables as *om*, *āḥ*, *hūṃ*, respectively. In his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 106a3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 176b, 352.2, Tsongkhapa points to the scriptural authorities of the eleventh and twelfth chapters about inviting the deities and requesting their blessings.
971. Tōh. 442, Zhol 19b3–5, Tog 65.4–66.3, Dunh. 36a4–b3, Fremantle 1971, vv. 71–76, Matsunaga 1978, vv. 70–75. The text of the Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. for each of the blessings of body, speech, and mind below is somewhat different from the text of the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa. For an English translation see Wayman 1977, 35, vv. 70–75.
972. Tōh. 442, Zhol 11a3–5, Tog 36.1–3, Dunh. 19a1–4, vv. 28–30, Fremantle 1971, 218, Matsunaga 1978, 22. For an English translation see Fremantle 1990, 108.
973. Tōh. 442, Zhol 9a3–5, Tog 28.5–29.1, Dunh. 14b1–3, Fremantle 1971, 208, Matsunaga 1978, 17. The mantras are found at the beginning of chapter 6 of the *Root Tantra*. For an English translation see Wayman 1977, 25.
974. *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 47a, 109.2–4.
975. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4b, 8.3–5, P. 270.2.4–6, L. 70–73ab, T. 69–72ab.
976. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 47a, 109.4–6. These verses are found in a somewhat different form in the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, chap. 12, Zhol 19b3, Tog 65.4–6, Dunh. 36a4–5, Fremantle 1971, vv. 71–72, Matsunaga 1978, vv. 70–71, and in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4b, 8.5–6, P. 270.2.6–8, L. 73cd–75, T. 72cd–74; for an English translation see Wayman 1977, 35, vv. 70–71.
977. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 99b, 198.1–3, P. 70.1.1–4, Chakravarti 1984, 121.
978. Reading *sku rang gi bdag* for *skur ngag bdag*.

979. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 132b, 266.2, has *rdo rje gsum dbyer mi phyed pa'i rdo rje 'chang* for *rdo rje gsum dbyer mi phyed pa rdo rje 'chang* in our text.
980. The following lines are from the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 47b, 110.3–4. The parallel part in the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, is found in D. folio 200b, 400.2, P. 21.5.2–3, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 19.6 and 52.2.
981. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4b, 8.6, P. 270.2.8, L. 76abc, T. 75abc.
982. The *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 11a3, Tog 36.1, Dunh. 19a1–2, v. 28, Fremantle 1971, 218, Matsunaga 1978, 22. See also the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 4b, 8.7, P. 270.3.1, L. 77, T. 76, and the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 47b, 110.4–5. For an English translation see Fremantle 1990, 108.
983. “That body of all buddhas, complete with the five aggregates, may my body too be endowed with the nature of the Buddha’s body.”
984. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 53b, 106.3–4, P. 49.3.1–2, Chakravarti 1984, 68, and Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 106a2–4, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 176b, 352.2–4.
985. As just noted, the *Root Tantra*, the *Mdor byas*, and the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa have three different readings, and the Sanskrit in both the *Root Tantra* and the *Piṇḍīkṛta* is *prapūritam*.
986. This mantra is found at the beginning of the sixth chapter of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 9a3, Tog 28.6, Dunh. 14b2, Fremantle 1971, 208, Matsunaga 1978, 17. Tog has *yā* for *kāya*, and Dunh. has *kaya* for *kāya*. This mantra is found also in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, following v. 77 in L. and v. 76 in T. See also Wayman 1977, 25.
987. The Tibetan text has *sku 'am lus*, that is, body, honorific or nonhonorific.
988. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 47b–48a, 110.5–111.4.
989. Reading *gsung lam* for *gsung la ma* in our text.
990. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 48a–b, 111.4–112.1.
991. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folios 200b–201a, 400.7–401.1, P. 21.5.8–22.1.1, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 20. 8–10 and 53.9–12.
992. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5a, 9.3, P. 270.3.4–5, L. 82, T. 81. D. and P. have *lhan cig nyid* for *lhan cig tu*, *bsams te* for *bsams nas*, and *brtsam* for *tsam* in our text.
993. This verse is found in the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, chap. 7, Zhol 11a3–4, Tog 36.2, Dunh. 19a2–3, v. 29, Fremantle 1971, 218, Matsunaga 1978, 22, and also in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5a, 9.3–4, P. 270.3. 5, L. 83, T. 82, as well as in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 48b, 112.1–2; for an English translation see Fremantle 1990, 108.
994. “As the speech of Vajra Dharma is perfect lingual understanding, may my speech too be like that of the Dharma Holder.”
995. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 53b, 106.4–7, P. 49.3.2–6, Chakravarti 1984, 68, and Tsongkhapa’s *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 106a4–7, New Delhi, vol. 6, folios 176b–177a, 352.4–353.2.
996. “Lingual understanding” (*nges tshig*, *nirukti*) is one of the four specific perfect types of understanding (*so so yang dag par rig pa*, *pratisamvid*): understanding of phenomena, understanding of meanings, lingual understanding, and astuteness or eloquence. See Mvy. 196–200. Here “lingual understanding” of languages and etymologies stands for the entire set of the four specific perfect understandings.
997. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 48b, 112.2–3. This mantra is also found at the beginning of chapter 6 of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 9a4, Tog 29.1, Dunh. 14b3, Fremantle 1971, 208, Matsunaga 1978, 17, and the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, following v. 83 in L. and v. 82 in T. See also Wayman 1977, 25.
998. Our text has *gsung ngam ngag*, that is speech, honorific or nonhonorific.

999. This is actually found not in the *Mdor byas* but in the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 48b, 112.3–5.
1000. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49a, 113.2–5.
1001. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 201a, 401.4–5, P. 22.1.6–7, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 21.10–11 and 54.15–18.
1002. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5a, 9.6, P. 270.3.8–4.1, L. 88, T. 87. D. and P. have *brtsam* for *tsam*.
1003. The *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, chap. 7, Zhol 11a4, Tog 36.3, Dunh. 19a3–4, v. 30, Fremantle 1971, 218, Matsunaga 1978, 22. See also the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5a, 9.6–7, P. 270.4.1–2, L. 89, T. 88, and the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49a, 113.5–6. For an English translation see Fremantle 1990, 108.
1004. “As the mind of Samantabhadra, the Lord of Secret, is endowed with understanding, may my mind too be like that of the Vajra Holder.”
1005. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 54a, 107.1–2, P. 49.3.7–4.1, Chakravarti 1984, 68–69, and Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 106a7–b3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 177a, 353.2–6.
1006. Tib. Reg bya Rdo rje ma, Skt. Sparśavajrā.
1007. The meaning of his name is All Good, Tib. Kun tu bzang po.
1008. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49b, 113.6–114.1. This mantra is found also at the beginning of chapter 6 of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 9a3, Tog 28.5, Dunh. 14b1, Fremantle 1971, 208, Matsunaga 1978, 17, and the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, following v. 89 in L. and v. 88 in T. See also Wayman 1977, 25.
1009. Reading *sam* for *ka ma* in our text, thus *sems sam thugs* meaning mind, honorific or nonhonorific.
1010. Tib. Spyan ma, Gos dkar mo, and Māmakī; Skt. Locanā, Pāṇḍarā, and Māmakī.
1011. These are the vajra body, vajra speech, and vajra mind.
1012. Vairocana, Amitābha, and Akṣobhya.
1013. The head, throat, and heart.
1014. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49b, 114.1–2.
1015. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 201a, 401.7, P. 22.2.1–2, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 22.5–6 and 55.10–11.
1016. Tōh. 442, Zhol 5b7, Tog 17.1–2, Dunh. 8a5–8b1, Fremantle 1971, 190, Matsunaga 1978, 9.
1017. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5a–b, 9.7–10.1, P. 270.4.2–3, L. 90, T. 89.
1018. Reading *gsum po* for *gsum pa* in our text.
1019. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 22b, 381.1.
1020. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49b, 114.2–3.
1021. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 13a, 25.7, P. 274.2.1–2. D. and P. have *rnam pa mchog* for *rnam pa'i mchog* and *kun ldan pa'i* for *kun ldan pa*. The *Mdo bsre* skips the second line, as does Dunh. 34b1.
1022. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 201b, 402.2, P. 22.2.4–5, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 22.11–23.2 and 55.18–56.8. D. and P. have *rnam pa kun gyi mchog ldan pa'i / bdag nyid sku gsung thugs rdo rje'i / dam tshig thugs kar ye shes dang /* for *rnam pa'i mchog rnam kun ldan pa / sku gsung thugs kyi rdo rje can / snying gar ye shes dam tshig dang /* in our text.
1023. Tōh. 442, Zhol 18b4, Tog 62.5, Fremantle 1971, v. 47abc, Matsunaga 1978, v. 45abc. Zhol and Tog have *sku gsung thugs ni* for *sku gsung thugs kyi* here.
1024. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5b, 10.1, P. 270.4.3–4, L. 91, T. 90. D. and P. have *byin gyis brlabs* for *byin brlabs nas*. This verse is also translated in Wayman 1977, 249–50.

1025. See the *Slob tshul*, Tōh. 5308, folio 20a, 39.1–4, and the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 516, where Tsongkhapa follows the explanation given by Abhaya in his *Man ngag snye ma*; see below.
1026. Reading *sameti* for *samati* in our text.
1027. The Sanskrit could be translated as “come together.”
1028. Reading *milati*, from \sqrt{mil} , for *māḷiti* in our text.
1029. Tib. *sems dpa'*.
1030. The *Man ngag snye ma*, *Āmnāyamañjarī*, Tōh. 1198, a commentary on the *Saṃpuṭa Tantra*, by *Abhayākara Gupta*, D. folio 122a, 243.5.
1031. D. adds 'dir here.
1032. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 201b, 402.1, P. 22.2.2–3, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 22.7–8 and 55.12–14. D. has *tshul gyis* while P. has *tshul* for *tshul las* in our text, and D. and P. add *las* after *dam tshig*.
1033. This refers to the *dam tshig 'byung ba rdo rje ting nge 'dzin, samayodbhavavajrasamādhi*, in the first chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*. See [395] above and note there.
1034. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5b, 10.1–2, P. 270.4.4, L. 92, T. 91. D. and P. have *snying ga'i dbus su phra mo* for *snying kha'i dbus na gnas pa yi*. Hence the Tengyur reads: “Meditate on the subtle *jñānasattva* at the center of its heart.” The Sanskrit is *saṃsthitam sūkṣmam*.
1035. The Sanskrit has here *taddhṛdi*.
1036. See Red mda' ba, *Bla ma bsgrub pa dpal zhus lan*, Kathmandu, folio 51a, 281.2–4, and in *Gsung thor bu*, TBRC W1CZ1871, folio 306a–b.
1037. The color of the *samayasattva* here is blue.
1038. Tib. 'khor gsum. As above, YOU are totally defeated, since YOU have committed the three serious errors in logic. For explanations of this term see, for example, Perdue 1992, 58; Onoda 1992, 47–48; Dreyfus 2003, 217 and n46.
1039. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49b, 114.2–4.
1040. *Rim pa lnga'i dka' 'grel, Pañcakramapañjikā*, Tōh. 1838, D. folio 2b, 4.7.
1041. I could not locate this in his *Rim lnga dgongs 'grel, Pañcakramamatiṭkā*, Tōh. 1831.
1042. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 201b, 402.1–2, P. 22.2.3–4, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 22.9–10 and 55.16–17. D. has *tshim par* for *tshim par byed par*, while P. has *kha sbyor bas* for *kha sbyor gyi sbyor bas* in our text.
1043. This line is found in the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, chap. 10, v. 10ab, Zhol 14b1, Tog 47.7, Dunh. 26b1, Fremantle 1971, 238, Matsunaga 1978, 30.
1044. These are the mandala-dwellers.
1045. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 74a, 147.3–4, P. 58.2.8, Chakravarti 1984, 92.
1046. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49b, 114.4–4.
1047. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 201b, 402.4, P. 22.2.6–7, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 23.3–5 and 56.10–12.
1048. Tōh. 442, chap. 10, Zhol 14b1, Tog 47.7, Dunh. 26b2, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, v. 10cd.
1049. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 49b–50a, 114.6–115.2.
1050. Tōh. 442, Zhol 18b4, Tog 62.5, Dunh. 34b1, Fremantle 1971, v. 47d, Matsunaga 1978, v. 45d, translated in Wayman 1977, 32. Dunh. has 'dzin pa'i mchog for *mchog'dzin pa* in our text.
1051. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 92a, 183.6–7, P. 66.4.4–6, Chakravarti 1984, 112.
1052. *Sgron gsal dka' 'grel, Pradīpoddhyotanoddyotapañjikā*, Tōh. 1790, D. folio 124a5, 247.5; see

Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 158a4, New Delhi, vol. 7, folio 267b, 27.1.

10. The Yoga with the Consort

Gathering and Absorbing in Union with the Consort to Demonstrate That These Three Bodies Are Attained through the Dharma of Passion

THE *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰⁵³ “From my heart a consort belonging to my own tathāgata family emanates” and so forth. [422] After attaining the stage of the three bodies, our Teacher [the Buddha] performed deeds for displaying three types of practice [*caryā*]: practice without passion for disciples interested in the lower path, practice in the grounds and perfections for those who are interested in the great extensive path, and practice with passion for those who are strongly interested in the profound path.¹⁰⁵⁴ The meditation here corresponds to the third kind of deed. In particular, this meditation corresponds exclusively to the past event¹⁰⁵⁵ at the onset of teaching the *Guhyasamāja Tantra* when the Teacher [of this *Tantra*] emanated the *dhāraṇī* mandala,¹⁰⁵⁶ assumed the form that induces great passion, emanated the deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas, and performed the general and specific deeds.

Similarly, you meditate on union with the consort to demonstrate that the stage of the three bodies is also attained through the method of passion, for the *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture* teaches:¹⁰⁵⁷ “As in the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*, the Blessed One was absorbed in the samādhi called ‘the method of great passion’ to demonstrate that the stage of enlightenment arises through passion.¹⁰⁵⁸ Likewise, during the creation stage meditators should practice the First Yoga,¹⁰⁵⁹ displaying liberation by means of passion for sentient beings engaging in passion.”

To explain this in brief:¹⁰⁶⁰ The steps in the meditation from the union with the consort onward correspond to the fruitional deeds of the Buddha because the meditations on union with the consort, on the generation of the deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas, on their emanation, and on their performance of general and specific deeds¹⁰⁶¹ correspond to the deeds of the buddha body. [423]

The meditation on the subtle¹⁰⁶² corresponds to the deeds of the mind — abiding in perfect inner absorption.¹⁰⁶³ Then the mantra recitation¹⁰⁶⁴ corresponds to the deeds of speech — teaching the Dharma. The entry of the principal deity of the mandala into clear light¹⁰⁶⁵ corresponds to the display of nirvāṇa, after the direct disciples of that buddha body in that buddha-field have been dissipated. The arousing of the principal deity “who has dissolved”¹⁰⁶⁶ by the four goddesses — in the nature of the four immeasurables — who sing to him, and his rising in response,¹⁰⁶⁷ correspond to a buddha, who when the continuum of his mind is aroused again by the four immeasurables,¹⁰⁶⁸ displays the deeds of the *nirmāṇakāya* in other buddha-fields. The praises¹⁰⁶⁹ correspond to the recitation of the paean: “A buddha has arrived in this world. . . .” The offerings¹⁰⁷⁰ correspond to those made to that buddha by his disciples in that buddha-field and to their acceptance by him. For these reasons, you should meditate on union with the consort.

Here is the reason for calling the consort with whom the yogi unites a mudrā:¹⁰⁷¹ because the vajra of *method* puts a mudrā on such a *wisdom* consort, and because the *Hevajra Tantra* teaches:¹⁰⁷² “Since she is sealed with this vajra, she is called a mudrā.” In terms of nomenclature, there are two types of mudrās: an action mudrā¹⁰⁷³ and a wisdom mudrā.¹⁰⁷⁴ The first is called an action mudrā because she possesses hair¹⁰⁷⁵ and breasts produced by karma (action).

When the mudrās are classified according to their mode of action or according to the tathāgata family, Akṣobhya and so forth, that an individual yogi mainly practices, [424] there are five types of mudrās: daughters of a low-caste person, a washer-man [or dyer], garland maker, dancer, and craftsman.¹⁰⁷⁶ On the basis of the shape of the lower end of their central channel, there are four types, lotus and so forth.¹⁰⁷⁷ When the mudrās are classified according to the level of the path, there are three: those born of mantra, those born of buddha-field, and those spontaneously born as messengers.

These mudrās should be suitable vessels for both shared and unshared paths. They must cultivate a very strong deity yoga and be able to embrace the bodhicitta without emitting it, by the power of the syllable *phaṭ*, and they must also understand the suchness of all phenomena and know the sixty-four arts of love, being adept at uniting bliss and emptiness.

This is as the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰⁷⁸ “The yogi procures a girl of a low caste,¹⁰⁷⁹ endowed with a noble nature, her color that of the blue *utpala* lotus, her eyes wide and perfect; having been absorbed in samādhi, she is well

trained and very devoted to the yogi.” The commentary on the *Vajradāka Tantra* teaches the sixty-four arts of love:¹⁰⁸⁰ “Embracing, kissing, clawing, biting, moving to and fro, making hissing sounds, [the woman] playing the role of a man and being on top. Altogether these are eight, and when divided by discursive thought,¹⁰⁸¹ eight¹⁰⁸² times eight becomes sixty-four.”¹⁰⁸³

Not only the consort but the yogi too should be endowed with the characteristics just enumerated, otherwise it would be a great fault, for the *Rising of Heruka* teaches:¹⁰⁸⁴ “Those who are devoid of the yoga but engage in the yogic practice and unite with the mudrā, [425] and those who are devoid of wisdom but pretend to possess it, will surely go to hell.”

Therefore yogis who lack the essential characteristics required for both the male practitioner and his consort must rely on the wisdom mudrā, for the *Vajrasattva Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰⁸⁵ “Or, emanate a wisdom mudrā from your heart”¹⁰⁸⁶ and so forth. And also the *Entirely Secret Tantra* teaches:¹⁰⁸⁷ “The great goddess dwelling in the heart, engendering the yoga of the yogis, the mother of the buddhas, is known as Vajradhātuvīśvarī.”¹⁰⁸⁸

The practitioners of Akṣobhya should first draw out of their hearts¹⁰⁸⁹ the appearance of a daughter of a low caste or an untouchable, for *Formulating the Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰⁹⁰ “Mentally emanate a daughter of your own tathāgata family, or take an external daughter.”

Whether she is an action or a wisdom mudrā, you set the twenty-nine deities on her body, as taught in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*,¹⁰⁹¹ for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹⁰⁹² “You should visualize *om* on the crown of her head” and so forth, up to “set the Earth Holding Goddess¹⁰⁹³ on her soles.” Here is the reason for not setting the three deities, beginning with Mañjuśrī, on the body of the mother:¹⁰⁹⁴ nowhere do the *Root and Explanatory Tantras* explicitly teach these three with reference to the mother.

Following that, you must bless the secret space as the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* instructs,¹⁰⁹⁵ for the method of blessing is clearly taught in both the *Concise Sādhana*¹⁰⁹⁶ and [426] the *Vajrasattva Sādhana*,¹⁰⁹⁷ and the seventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* and its commentary teach:¹⁰⁹⁸ “By joining the two organs, you will attain the siddhi of buddhahood. Visualizing the syllables *hūṃ*, *om*, *āḥ*, and *phaṭ*, you should meditate on the lotus and vajra pervaded by the five light-rays.”

Then, as in the past event,¹⁰⁹⁹ during the experience of passion you should maintain the divine identity of Ratnasambhava, as the *Vajrasattva Sādhana* teaches.¹¹⁰⁰ And the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹¹⁰¹ “Following that, you should

engage in practice. *Oṃ sarva tathāgata anurāgaṇa vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*. While maintaining the divine identity of Vajradhara, you should move with the song of *hūṃ*. When the bodhicitta is drawn forth, you should recite the mantra *phaṭ*.” Thus it is taught that after maintaining the divine identity of passion, you should be absorbed in union with the consort, singing the song of *hūṃ*, in the divine identity of Vajradhara.¹¹⁰² As for the meaning of the mantra, *anurāgaṇa* is passion, and the rest is as before.

Then you transform into the divine identity of Amoghasiddhi and maintain the identity of the offerings,¹¹⁰³ for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹¹⁰⁴ “After drawing forth, the yogi should once again make offerings with the bodhicitta to the buddhas dwelling in the ten directions and recite the following mantra: *oṃ sarva tathāgata pūjā vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.”

You need to maintain the divine identity of the offerings as Amoghasiddhi because in the past event the pronouncer of this mantra was Amoghasiddhi.¹¹⁰⁵ [427] Here is the meaning of the first mantra:¹¹⁰⁶ *pūjā* means offerings and the rest is as before, thus “the essence of the vajra nature of the passion of all tathāgatas, that am I,” and the meaning of the second mantra is¹¹⁰⁷ “the essence of the vajra nature of the offerings to all tathāgatas, that am I.”

In summary, here is the method of meditation: You bless the secret space and maintain the divine identity of Ratnasambhava while engaging in the play of any of the sixty-four arts of love, such as the mutual embrace and so forth, then recite the mantra while maintaining the divine identity of passion. Then with the divine identity of Vajradhara you should absorb in union while singing the song of *hūṃ*. The bodhicitta descending from the crown of the head to the tip of the jewel — not emitted outside but blocked with the syllable *phaṭ* — induces a great bliss. Through this you understand emptiness and meditate single-pointedly, and, visualizing great bliss satiating and satisfying the deities that are set on the bodies both of yourself and of your consort together with all the buddhas of the ten directions, you should recite the mantra *phaṭ* and maintain the divine identity of the offerings.

Here is the purpose of meditating in this way:¹¹⁰⁸ so that the entire celestial mansion and all the deities dwelling therein will arise as a display of the wisdom of indivisible bliss and emptiness. This is the supreme antidote for the root of saṃsāra — grasping at things as real, a remedy that surpasses those of the lower paths up to the three lower tantras. It is the main practice of the creation stage for taking afflictive emotions [428] and objects of desire as the path. And this is an

unsurpassed ripener for inducing great bliss in the meditator on the completion stage. Hence¹⁰⁹ this is “the essence of the path” for the meditator on the creation stage.

Here is the reason for calling this method the First Yoga:¹¹⁰ it is a *yoga* for purifying the birth, death, and intermediate state of the meditator and the *first* union with the three bodies.

Like pernicious poison granting life and sustenance,
like a blazing fire cooling as the moon,
through that which leads to agonizing lower rebirths,
this path, bestowing the most highly desirable three bodies,
is indeed wondrous!

1053. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 49a, 115.2–3.

1054. See the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folios 201b–202a, 402.6–403.2, P. 22.3.1–3, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 23.11–24.3 and 57.5–14, which is somewhat different; the *Spyod bsdus*, Tōh. 1803, chap. 9, D. folios 94b–95a, 188.4–189.3, Wedemeyer 2007, B: 54b–55a, Pandey 2000, 78 and 310–311; Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 6, translated in Hopkins 1977, 91; Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 55a–b, 388.5–389.1, and his *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folios 23b–24a, 383.1–384.4.

1055. This refers to the samādhi of great passion in the first chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*; see below.

1056. Tib. *gzungs dkyil*, this is the mandala emanated at the beginning of the first chapter of the *Root Tantra*. See also the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 13b, 26.4 (which has *gzugs* for *gzungs*), P. 30.5.2, Chakravarti 1984, 19; and Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 36a3, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 57b, 114.1.

1057. *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 13b, 26.2–4, P. 274.2.5–6. D. and P. have 'di ltar for ji ltar, le'u dang po las for le'u dang por, tshul rdo rje for tshul, de bzhin du for bzhin du, bskyed for skye, dang po'i sbyor ba for dang po sbyor ba, and rab tu bstan pa'i phyir for rab tu bsten par bya ba'i phyir in our text. D. repeats *rab tu* twice.

1058. Tōh. 442, Zhol 2b2, Tog 6.3, Dunh. IOL 481, 1a3, Fremantle 1971, 176, Matsunaga 1978, 4. The full name of this samādhi is “the method of great passion of all tathāgatas,” *de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi 'dod chag chen po'i tshul zhes bya ba'i ting nge 'dzin, sarvatathāgatamahārāgavajram[nayam]nāmasamādhi*. D. and P., as well as some of the Sanskrit mss., have “the vajra of great passion of all tathāgatas.” See also the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folios 201b–202a, 402.6–403.1, P. 22.3.1–3, Hong and Tomabeche 2009, 23.11–24.6 and 57.5–18.

1059. Tib. *dang po sbyor ba*, Skt. *ādiyoga*, this is the first among the three samādhis that comprise the creation stage.

1060. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 55b, 389.1–5.

1061. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 50a–67b, 115.2–150.3.
1062. See [436–438] below.
1063. Tib. *nang du yang dag 'jog pa*, Skt. *pratisaṃlayana*.
1064. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 67b–68a, 150.1–151.6.
1065. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 68a–b, 151.6–152.2.
1066. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 68b–69a, 152.2–153.5.
1067. See *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 69a–b, 153.6–154.1.
1068. Reading *tshad* for *chad* in our text.
1069. See *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 69b, 154.1–6.
1070. See *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 69b–74a, 154.6–163.2.
1071. Tib. *phyag rgya*, Eng. seal.
1072. Tōh. 417, D. folio 6a, 11.3, Snellgrove 1959, I.v.4cd. Snellgrove and D. have *rdo rje 'dis ni gdab pa nyid* for *rdo rje 'dis ni gdab pa yis* in our text.
1073. Tib. *las rgya*, Skt. *karmamudrā*.
1074. Tib. *ye rgya*, Skt. *jñānamudrā*,
1075. Reading *skra* for *sgra* in our text.
1076. Some of these types of mudrās are mentioned, for example, in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, chap. 15, in Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, and in the *Spyod bsdus*, Tōh. 1803, chap. 10.
1077. These four are lotus, picture, large conch, and elephant. See Gedün Chöpel 1992, 173–75.
1078. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5b, 10.3, P. 270.4.5–6, L. 94bcd–95ab, T. 93bcd–94ab. D. and P. have *bslab* for *bslabs*.
1079. I use the term “low-caste person” for *sme sha can* or *rme sha can* found in the Tibetan translations of this and the following passages, although the Sanskrit term varies.
1080. Tōh. 370, D. chap. 49, folio 109a4–6, 217.4–6, and Bhavabhadra’s commentary on it, Tōh. 1415, D. chap. 49, folios 195a4–5 and 197b4–5, 390.4–5 and 394.4–5, which has *srid* for *sed* and *brgyad po* for *brgyud* in our text. This passage appears also in Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 304b4, New Delhi, vol. 7, folio 508b, 509.2–3, which has *srid kyi* for *sed kyi*, *rnam par rtog pa* for *rnam par mi rtog pa*, and *brgyad* for *brgyud* in our text. The list here is very similar to that of the *Kāma Sūtra*; see Doniger and Kakar 2003, 28–74, and Gedün Chöpel 1992, 65–66.
1081. Reading *rnam par rtog pa* for *rnam par mi rtog pa*, as just noted.
1082. Reading *brgyad* for *brgyud* in our text.
1083. Doniger and Kakar 2003, 40: “The followers of Babhravya say: ‘Sixty-four is eight eights, the eight theoretical varieties of each of the eight parts: embracing, kissing, scratching, biting, sexual positions, moaning, the woman playing the man’s part, and oral sex.’ But Vatsyayana says: Since the division into eight theoretical varieties is too few for some categories and too many for others, and since sex involves other categories, too, such as slapping, screaming, a man’s sexual strokes, and unusual sexual acts, this is merely a manner of speaking, just as we speak of the ‘seven-leaf’ devil tree or the ‘five-colour’ offering of rice.”
1084. *Khrag 'thung mngon 'byung*, *Herukābhyudaya*, Tōh. 374, D. chap. 7, folio 6b2–3, 12.2–3. D. has *'chos* for *chos* in our text.
1085. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 202a, 403.5, P. 22.3.6, Hong and Tomabechi 2009, 24.9 and 58.4. D. and P. have *snying gar* for *snying gnas*.
1086. Reading *snying ga nas* for *snying gnas*. The Sanskrit here is *hṛdayāt*.

1087. *Thams cad gsang ba'i rgyud*, *Sarvarahasyatantra*, Tōh. 481 (edited and translated in Wayman 1984, v. 45), which has *rnal 'byor pa yi rnal 'byor bskyed* for *rnal 'byor rnal 'byor 'bebs byed ma*, *sangs rgyas thams cad skyed mdzad yum* for *sangs rgyas rnams kyi sbyor skyed ma*, and *bshad* for *grags* in our text that follows the citation of these lines in the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 202a, 403.6, P. 22.3.7, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 24.11–25.2 and 58.7–11.
1088. Tib. *Rdo rje dbyings kyi dbang mo*, Eng. *She Who Rules the Vajra Realm*.
1089. Once again, reading *snying ga nas* for *snying gnas*.
1090. *Rnam gzhang rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 126a, 251.6, P. 9.5.1, Tanaka 2016, 105. D. and Tanaka have *sems las* and P. has *sems can* for *bsam pas* in our text, and P. has *spros pa* for *spro ba* in our text. See also Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhang rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 60b–61a, 399.6–400.1.
1091. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 50b–51b, 116.1–118.5.
1092. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 5b, 10.3–6, P. 270.4.6–5.2, L. 95c–101, T. 94c–100. D. and P. have *rkang pa gnyis la sa yi ni* for *rkang pa gnyis las yi ni* in our text.
1093. *Sa yi sa 'dzin lha mo*, *Dharaṇīmdharadevatā*; reading *gnyis la sa yi* for *gnyis las yi* in our text.
1094. Only twenty-nine deities, and not thirty-two, are set on the body of the consort. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 50b–51b, 116.1–118.5, instructs the yogi to set only five and not eight bodhisattvas on her body. The three bodhisattvas that are not set on the body of the consort are Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, and Maitreya; in Tib. 'Jam dpal, Kun tu bzang po, and Byams pa.
1095. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 51b–52a, 118.5–119.2.
1096. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folios 5b–6a, 10.6–11.1, P. 270.5.2–5, L. 102–104ab, T. 101–2.
1097. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 202b, 404.5–7, P. 22.4.7–5.1, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 26.9–14 and 60.4–12.
1098. Tōh. 442, Zhol 10b5–6, Tog 34.6–7, Dunh. 18a3–4, vv. 18cd–19, Fremantle 1971, 216, Matsunaga 1978, 21. Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. have 'od zer rnam lngas for 'od zer sna lngas and Dunh. has *phaṭ kyang rab du brtag par bya* for *āḥ dang phaṭ kyang rab brtag bya* in our text. Matsunaga also omits the syllable *āḥ*. For an English translation see Fremantle 1990, 108. See also the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 51b–52a, 102.7–103.7, P. 48.4.1–5.3, Chakravarti 1984, 67.
1099. This refers to the sixth chapter of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 9a5, Tog 29.2–3, Dunh. 14b4–5, Fremantle 1971, 208, Matsunaga 1978, 17, in which the tathāgata Ratnaketu, Dkon mchog dpal, entered into the samādhi of *ye shes sgron ma rdo rje, jñāna-pradīpa-vajram*, and pronounced the mantra *oṃ sarva tathāgata anurāgaṇa vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.
1100. *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folios 202b–203a, 404.7–405.1, P. 22.5.1–2, Hong and Tomabechei 2009, 27.2–5 and 60.14–61.1.
1101. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folios 5b–6a, 10.7–11.1, P. 270.5.3–4, L. 104bcd–105, T. 103. D. and P. have *bskyod bya zhing* for *bskyod par bya*, and P. has *de 'od* for *de 'og* and *phaṭ kyis* for *phaṭ kyi* in our text.
1102. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 52a, 119.3–4.
1103. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 52a, 119.4.
1104. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 6a, 11.1–2, P. 270.5.4–5, L. 106, T. 104.
1105. This refers to the sixth chapter of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 9a5–6, Tog 29.3–5, Dunh. 14b5–15a2, Fremantle 1971, 208, Matsunaga 1978, 17, in which the tathāgata Amoghasiddhivajra, Grub pa rdo rje gdon mi za ba, entered into the samādhi of *rdo rje gdon mi za ba, amogha vajram*, and pronounced the mantra *oṃ sarva tathāgata pūjā vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.
1106. *Oṃ sarva tathāgata anurāgaṇa vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.
1107. *Oṃ sarva tathāgata pūjā vajra svabhāva ātmako 'haṃ*.

1108. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 25b, 387.1–3.
1109. The *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 25b, 387.2, has *yin pas* here.
1110. Tib. *dang po sbyor ba*, Skt. *ādiyoga*.

PART 3.
CONCLUDING



11. The Supreme King of Mandalas

*Explaining the Samādhi of the Supreme King of Mandalas*¹¹¹¹

THERE ARE two parts here: (1) the actual explanation, and (2) removing uncertainties.

The Actual Explanation

The *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:¹¹¹² “This very drop that descends into the lotus of the mother” and so forth. The *Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture*¹¹¹³ explains that the meditation up to the essential point¹¹¹⁴ of the offerings is the First Yoga, and that the Supreme King of Mandalas begins with the emanation of Akṣobhya.¹¹¹⁵ However, the first chapter of the *Illuminating Lamp*¹¹¹⁶ teaches that the transformation into Dveṣavajra¹¹¹⁷ after the entry of Akṣobhya¹¹¹⁸ is still within the First Yoga. Do these two scriptures conflict?

There is nothing wrong here, for even though the meditation on the surrounding deities in the First Yoga and the Supreme King of Mandalas are incompatible, the meditations on the principal deity of these two mandalas do not conflict. This is so, since the principal deity of the First Yoga is the deity transformed into Dveṣavajra with the entry of Akṣobhya, and he is also the principal deity of the Supreme King of Mandalas.

The first point regarding the principal deity of the First Yoga is established because the principal deity is the emanator of the other thirty-one deities beginning with Vajra Lady of Tangibles.¹¹¹⁹ [429] This is so because Vajra Lady of Tangibles and the other thirty deities have to emerge when Dveṣavajra and his consort abide in the samādhi of union. Furthermore, the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹¹²⁰ “Abiding in the samādhi of Dveṣavajra you should emanate the entire mandala.” The second point, that he is also the principal deity of the Supreme King of Mandalas, is established because this principal deity is Akṣobhya who abides at the center of the celestial mansion when the generation ritual is completed through the “seven means.”¹¹²¹

The deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas are generated through the seven means. (1) Here is the first means, called the “means of generation”: One part of the drop in the lotus of the mother becomes *Bhrūṃ*, which transforms into the celestial mansion and its thrones. The other part of the drop becomes thirty-two drops, each set upon a throne.¹¹²² As the *Request of the Four Goddesses* teaches:¹¹²³ “The second part is explained by the ninth itself” and so forth,¹¹²⁴ the thirty-two drops transform into the thirty-two mantras for generating the respective deities; each of these thirty-two mantras is set between the three syllables *oṃ āḥ hūṃ*.¹¹²⁵ Then the mantras transform into the thirty-two emblems¹¹²⁶ that in turn are generated into the thirty-two deities.¹¹²⁷ This is the means of generation.¹¹²⁸

The mantra of the generation is either the seed syllable or the name mantra of each particular deity set between the three seed syllables. Either one is appropriate, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches the first possibility:¹¹²⁹ “The yogi meditates on Maitreya and Kṣitigarbha arising from the seed syllables *Maim* and *Thlīm* in the eastern direction” and so forth, [430] while the *Illuminating Lamp* teaches the second, the name mantra:¹¹³⁰ “The vajra holders arising from their own mantras *Vajradhṛk* and so forth.” Still, the intentions of these two scriptures are not contradictory.

(2) The second is the “means of emanation”:¹¹³¹ you should draw the deities generated in the lotus of the mother into your own heart through the vajra path, and then emanate them with their respective name mantras. This is illustrated in the *Concise Sādhana*:¹¹³² “Emanated with the mantra *Prajñāntakṛt*” and so forth.

You should visualize Akṣobhya, who has emanated,¹¹³³ “appearing again, standing before you, and entering into your heart,” transforming you into Dveṣavajra, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹¹³⁴ “The mantrins visualize [Akṣobhya] returning once more before the Vajra Lord and entering his heart, whereby the mantrin’s previous form [as Vajradhara] is completely transformed, and he now abides at the state of Dveṣavajra.”

Here the motivation for emanating the deities is also established: being motivated by great compassion extended to all sentient beings, they purify the respective afflictive emotions of sentient beings that need purification, such as hatred and delusion. This is so because you visualize them with the resolve: “I shall emanate Akṣobhya, Vairocana, and so forth,”¹¹³⁵ for the *Root Tantra* and its commentary teach this, as for example in the first chapter of the *Root*

Tantra:¹¹³⁶ “This supreme mantra of the tathāgata family of hatred, this innermost quintessence emerges,” and so forth.

(3) The third is the “means of performing the deeds”:¹¹³⁷ the deeds are general deeds, like the turning of the wheel of Dharma by the emanated tathāgatas, [431] and special deeds like purifying the hatred of sentient beings afflicted by hatred.

Here are the four remaining means: (4) The “means of gathering”: visualizing the emanations filling the sky gathered as one. (5) The “means of merging”: visualizing their merging indivisibly with their own *jñānasattvas*. (6) The “means of conferring initiation”: the bodhicitta of the lord of the tathāgata family of the individual deity abiding in union with his consort confers the initiation.¹¹³⁸ (7) The “means of setting in place”: after the deities reappear, setting them on their individual seats.

Removing Uncertainties

There are three parts here: (1) removing uncertainties concerning (a) the ritual method of generating the deity and (b) the mode of interchanging the principal deity, (2) removing uncertainties concerning the faces and arms, and (3) removing uncertainties concerning the number of deities.

Removing Uncertainties Concerning the Ritual Method of Generating the Deity¹¹³⁹

The *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹¹⁴⁰ “Sealing with the four seals¹¹⁴¹ is the samādhi called the supreme mandala.”¹¹⁴² Thus all the deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas are completed by sealing with the four seals: (1) the dharma seal — speech, is the awakening from the seed syllable; (2) the *samaya* seal — mind, is the awakening from the emblem; (3) the great seal — body, is the awakening from the complete body; (4) the seal of enlightened activity — deed [karma], is the emanating and collecting of light-rays.

SOME PEOPLE¹¹⁴³ raise doubts about this, saying that it is inappropriate to seal with the four seals here because there is no explanation in the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*¹¹⁴⁴ about sealing with hand seals. [432] They say so because the *Compendium of Truth*¹¹⁴⁵ and other tantras explain with regard to the three seals — the *samaya* seal, the karma seal, and the great seal — that you must seal with hand seals,¹¹⁴⁶ as *Formulating the Sādhana* teaches:¹¹⁴⁷ “The questioner asks: if

there are no hand seals in this *Tantra*, how is the body of the deity — sealed with the four seals — generated?”

In answer to this, *Formulating the Sādhana* teaches:¹¹⁴⁸ “The body of the deity — the support adorned with every buddha quality — is the great seal. The queen is the *samaya* seal. The syllables of the mantra are the dharma seal. Acting for the benefit of all sentient beings by means of various forms is the karma seal.” Thus there is no error here because the body is the great seal: the queen is the *samaya* seal; speech, the seed syllables, is the dharma seal; and performing the general and specific deeds by emanating various *rūpakāyas* of deities is the karma seal. Furthermore, sealing with these four seals does not require any special hand seals.¹¹⁴⁹

Why is the queen regarded as the *samaya* seal?¹¹⁵⁰ It is fitting to indicate the wisdom¹¹⁵¹ of indivisible bliss and emptiness with the term “queen”; furthermore, the emblem signifying the mind of the Victorious One — the essence of this wisdom — is also indicated by the term “queen.”

Removing Uncertainties Concerning the Mode of Interchanging the Principal Deity¹¹⁵²

Generally speaking, there are five principal deities in the tradition of the glorious *Guhyasamāja* according to Ārya Nāgārjuna: [433] (1) the principal deity of the specially visualized deities, (2) the principal deity generated through the five manifest awakenings, (3) the principal deity of the body mandala, (4) the principal deity of the Supreme King of Mandalas, and (5) the principal deity of the Supreme King of Deeds.

Two of these, the principal deity of the specially visualized deities and the principal deity of the body mandala, do not change. In the first case the principal deity is Vajradhara, and in the second Akṣobhya. Vajradhara alone remains unchanged during the three samādhis, whereas the principal deity does shift during the following stages: the five manifest awakenings, just before the sealing with the lord of the tathāgata family, and during both the Supreme King of Mandalas and the Supreme King of Deeds.

Furthermore, during the meditation on familiarization,¹¹⁵³ while generating through the five manifest awakenings and meditating on the Supreme King of Mandalas, the change of the principal deity is definite. But while meditating on attainment¹¹⁵⁴ during the same stages, the changing of the principal deity is provisional.

In this tradition, when the principal deity changes during the Supreme King of Mandalas, any deity can become the principal deity, but the number of deities that is set on the Supreme King of Mandalas is definitely thirty-two. For example, when Vairocana is the principal deity, Vairocana with his consort are set at the center, and then Akṣobhya and Vajra Lady of Tangibles are set in the place of Vairocana and Locanā and so on, for the *Flower Offering* teaches:¹¹⁵⁵ “When another Victorious One is at the center, Akṣobhya takes his place. When one of the surrounding deities becomes the principal buddha, the withdrawn deity dissolves.” [434]

Removing Uncertainties Concerning the Faces and Arms¹¹⁵⁶

SOME¹¹⁵⁷ say that here in the case of the *Guhyasamāja*, it is inappropriate that deities set in the mandala¹¹⁵⁸ have but three faces and six arms, given that in many [yoga tantras] such as the *Root Tantra Compendium of Truth*¹¹⁵⁹ and the *Explanatory Tantra Vajraśekhara*,¹¹⁶⁰ as well as in ubhaya tantras¹¹⁶¹ such as the *Perfect Awakening of Vairocana*,¹¹⁶² the majority of deities have one face and two arms. THEY ask: If it is not so, is there any valid reason that can account for this here? For *Formulating the Sādhana* asks:¹¹⁶³ “Since the *Compendium of Truth*¹¹⁶⁴ and so forth and the ubhaya tantras proclaim that the deities have one face, why do they appear to have three faces here?”

In answer to this, *Formulating the Sādhana* teaches:¹¹⁶⁵ “The Blessed One indeed elucidated this in the explanatory tantra *The Revelation of the Intention*.”¹¹⁶⁶ Then *Formulating the Sādhana* cites the lines [of the *Revelation of the Intention*] that offer the definitive interpretation of the “vajra joining of the palms.”¹¹⁶⁷ The point is that the “vajra joining of the palms” is interpreted definitively in terms of both clear light and union, union being more central here.¹¹⁶⁸ Accordingly, the special reason why the deities of the *Guhyasamāja* display three faces is this: the deities of both the “vajra joining of the palms” and the *Guhyasamāja* that appear with three faces are similar in their definitive and indicative meanings; furthermore, both have a special indicative meaning.

This latter point is so because the right arm and the right face [435] signify method, conventional truth, and the pure illusory body, while the left arm and left face signify wisdom, ultimate truth, and the actual clear light. The two arms that join their palms and fingers and the main face that joins the right and left faces signify the indivisible union of the two truths. This is also the case because the *Revelation of the Intention* teaches:¹¹⁶⁹ “Since Vajrasattva joins the one with

the other, he is the supreme stage of wisdom and method. Merely by joining the palms, all the buddhas are invoked. This [is the union] of the three refuges, of the triple thatness, of the three bodies, of the three liberations, of the three faces, and of the three colors.”

Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples did not explicitly clarify the significance of the six arms. SOME TIBETAN LAMAS say that they signify the two sets of the three appearances¹¹⁷⁰ in direct and reverse orders. And SOME say¹¹⁷¹ they signify the six constituents on the ground of purification: the flesh, blood, and skin received from the mother, and the marrow, bones, and semen received from the father.

Removing Uncertainties Concerning the Number of Deities¹¹⁷²

In *Formulating the Sādhana*:¹¹⁷³ “The questioner asks: With such a variety of explanations from different masters about the setting of the deities in the mandala of the *Guhyasamāja* in widely circulating works, how is the disciple not to have doubts?” The point is that, on the whole, the different masters have a range of positions with regard to the number of deities in the mandala of the *Guhyasamāja*.¹¹⁷⁴ Hence it makes good sense to present a valid reason for setting the number of deities in the mandala at thirty-two, in the tradition of Ārya Nāgārjuna. [436] In response to this question, *Formulating the Sādhana* says:¹¹⁷⁵ “Wonderful, wonderful, O Great Being! I shall explain this using both scriptural authorities and reason,” and so forth.

The scriptural authorities and reasons given here are as follows: The premise is that in the tradition of Ārya Nāgārjuna, thirty-two deities should be set in the celestial mansion of the Supreme King of Mandalas of the *Guhyasamāja*, with Akṣobhya as the principal deity. The reason for this is that the celestial mansion is¹¹⁷⁶ the basis for setting all the deities in the mandala of the *Guhyasamāja*, with Akṣobhya [as the principal deity].¹¹⁷⁷ An example of this is the celestial mansion of the body mandala in the Ārya tradition of the *Guhyasamāja*.¹¹⁷⁸ Thus the premise is established through perfect reasoning as well as through scriptural authority, as in the concordant example where the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:¹¹⁷⁹ “On this body (*lus*) of the vajra master the bodies (*sku*) of the victorious ones abide successively.”

Here is the reason for calling this the Supreme King of Mandalas: emanating the *mandala* of the celestial mansion with its deities is a *supreme* method for acting for the sake of others.

1111. Tib. *dkyil 'khor rgyal mchog gi ting nge 'dzin* or *dkyil 'khor rgyal po mchog gi ting nge 'dzin*, Skt. *maṇḍalarājāgrīsamādhī*. In his *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 487–88, Tsongkhapa explains that this meditation is so termed because the mandala here emanates from the bodhicitta of the principal father-mother and all the deities are set in their respective places within the celestial mansion.

1112. While the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 52a, 119.5, has *zhu ba'i thig le yum gyi padmar phabs ba de nyid*, our text has *yum gyi padmar babs pa'i thig le de nyid*.

1113. This is not a direct citation but a paraphrasing of the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 14a, 27.3–6, P. 274.3.7–4.3, which may be based on the paraphrasing found in Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 60b, 399.1–2. See also his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 45b6–46a2, New Delhi, vol. 6, folios 73b–74a, 146.3–147.2.

1114. For the forty-nine essential points (*de nyid*) see [446–448] below.

1115. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 59b, 134.3, and below.

1116. Tōh. 1785, D. folio 18a, 35.5, P. 32.5.7, Chakravarti 1984, 23.

1117. Tib. *Zhe sdang rdo rje*, Skt. *Dveṣavajra*.

1118. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 59b, 134.6, and below, and also the *Mdor byas* cited below.

1119. Tib. *Reg bya rdo rje ma*, Skt. *Sparśavajrā*, see the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 60a, 135.3–4.

1120. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 6a, 11.6, P. 271.1.3, L. 115cd, T. 113cd. D. and P. have *Zhe sdang rdo rje* for *Zhe sdang rdo rje'i*, and *spro bar mdzad* for *spro bar bya* in our text.

1121. Tib. *sgo bdun*. For the “seven means,” see below and Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 26a, 388.1–5.

1122. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 52a–b, 119.5–120.2.

1123. An explanatory tantra of the *Gsang ba 'dus pa*, the *Lha mo bzhis yongs su zhus pa*, *Caturdevīparipṛcchā*, Tōh. 446, D. folio 279b, 558.5–6, has *cha shas gnyis pa dang ldan pa / de bzhin dgu pa yang yin no*. The lines here were taken from the citation of this explanatory tantra in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 10a, 19.6–7, P. 29.1.8–2.1, Chakravarti 1984, 14. In his *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 57a, 795.1, Bu ston also cites this line from the *Sgron gsal*. Tsongkhapa interprets it in his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 25a7–b4, New Delhi, vol. 6, folio 39a–b, 77.5–78.5, and provides a similar explanation in his commentary on the *Lha mo bzhis yongs su zhus pa*, the *Bzhis zhus*, Tōh. 5285, folio 37a, 422.3–6.

1124. The issue here concerns the seed syllables from which the deities are generated.

1125. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 52b, 120.1–4.

1126. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 52b–53a, 120.5–121.2.

1127. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 53a, 121.2–3.

1128. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 53a–59b, 121.3–134.3.

1129. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 7b, 13.6–7, P. 271.4.5, L. 154, T. 152. D. and P. have *rim pa gsum pa shar gyi ni / snam bur brtul zhugs can gyis dbyung / Maim Thlīm sa bon las byung ba / byams pa sa yi snying po gnyis* / for *Maim Thlīm sa bon las byung ba / byams pa sa yi snying po nyid / brtul zhugs can gyis shar du bsgom* / [P. does not have the complete syllables *Maim* and *Thlīm*].

1130. Tōh. 1785, D. folio 95a, 189.3–4, P. 68.1.2, Chakravarti 1984, 115. See also the *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 162a3–4, New Delhi, vol. 7, folio 274a, 40.6, where Tsongkhapa explains that there are two generations in the womb: generating each deity from its own seed syllables, *om* and so forth, and

generating each deity from its name mantra, *Vajradhr̥k* and so forth. He says that either generation is fine. However, he says that in the *Mdor byas* the seed syllables are the mantras for generation and the name mantras are the mantras for issuing forth.

1131. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 59b–67b, 134.3–150.1.

1132. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 6b, 12.6, P. 271.2.3, L. 127a, T. 125a. D. has *dbyung ba* for *dbyung*. For the mantra of emanating Mi bskyod pa, *Vajradhr̥k*, see the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 6a, 11.3, P. 270.5.6, L. 108a, T. 106a.

1133. Akṣobhya was drawn from the consort's lotus into the yogi's heart, emanated in the ten directions, performed his buddha deeds, now he returns before the yogi. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 59b–60a, 134.3–135.1. This *Sādhana* has *bzhugs* for *zhugs* in our text.

1134. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 6a, 11.5–6, P. 271.1.1–2, L. 112cd–113, T. 110cd–111. D. and P. have *slar byon* for *slar yang*, *rjes zhugs* for *rjes kugs*, and *zhe sdang rdo rje gnas su zhugs* for *zhe sdang rdo rje'i gnas la bzhugs*; the Sanskrit here is *sthitaḥ*. D. has 'gyur for *gyur*.

1135. Mi bskyod pa is emanated for purifying hatred, *Rnam snang* for purifying ignorance, *Reg bya rdo rje ma* for purifying clinging to touchables, and so forth. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 59b–60b, 134.4, 135.6, 136.4.

1136. Tōh. 442, Zhol 4a3, Tog 10.3, Dunh. 4b1–2, Fremantle 1971, 182, Matsunaga 1978, 6. Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. have *snying po 'di nyid kyi sku dang gsung dang thugs rdo rje las phyung ngo* for *snying po 'di byung ngo* in our text. The mantra here is *Vajradhr̥k*.

1137. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 59b–67b, 134.3–150.1.

1138. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 59b, 134.5–6.

1139. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 65b–67a, 409.5–412.2.

1140. The following citation is not from the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, but from the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 14a, 27.6, P. 274.4.2–3; see also Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 63b, 405.4–6. D. and P. have *btab pa* for *dgab pa* and *gn̄yis pa'o* for *te*.

1141. Tib. *phyag rgya*, Skt. *mudrā*.

1142. The *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, lists other meditations undertaken prior to the sealing with the four seals, which are included as well in the *saṃādhi* of the Supreme Kings.

1143. This refers to the questioner in the *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 127b, 254.2–3, P. 10.2.7–8, Tanaka 2016, 113, see below.

1144. Reading *bshad* for *bshar* here.

1145. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 153b, 308.3, has *De kho na nyid bsdus pa* for *De nyid bsdus pa* here. The *De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi de kho na nyid bsdus pa*, *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, Tōh. 479, is one of the main scriptural authorities for the four seals. For a translation from Chinese see Giebel 2001, 84–97.

1146. In his *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 65b–66a, 409.5–410.1, Tsongkhapa explains the qualm in the *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa* cited below by saying that the question here is whether there is a contradiction between the instruction to seal the deities of the Supreme King of Mandalas with the seals and the fact that in the *Gsang ba 'dus pa* there are no hand seals. See also Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 77a, 835.2–3.

1147. *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 127b, 254.2–3, P. 10.2.7–8, Tanaka 2016, 113. D., P., and Tanaka have 'di ltar for *ji ltar na*, and D. and Tanaka have *bskyed par* for *skyed par* in our text.

1148. The *Rnam gzhaḡ rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 127b, 254.3–4, P. 10.2.8–3.1, Tanaka 2016, 114.

1149. Reading *nges* for *des*, as in Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 153b, 308.1.

1150. It is easy to understand that the body, speech, and enlightened activities, respectively, are the great seal, the dharma seal, and the karma seal, but who is the queen and why is the queen the *samaya* seal? The answer is that the queen is wisdom indivisible from emptiness, the mind, and the emblem that signifies that; see Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 66a–b, 410.5–411.3.

1151. Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 66b, 411.2–3, has *shes rab* for *ye shes* in our text.

1152. While the other points of uncertainty in this section are based on exchanges found in the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, the present point is related to some of the discussions of commentaries on verses 4–6 in the third chapter of the *Root Tantra*; see for example Tsongkhapa's *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folios 75b–78a, 213.2–218.4.

1153. Tib. *bsnyen pa*, Skt. *sevā*.

1154. Tib. *sgrub pa*, Skt. *sādhana*.

1155. Reading *Snyim tog* for *Snyem tog*. See Śāntipa's commentary on the *Gsang ba 'dus pa'i rgyud*, the *Snyim pa'i me tog*, *Kusumāñjali*, Tōh. 1851, D. folios 228b–229a, 456.7–457.1. D. has *sangs rgyas 'gyur* for *sangs rgyas gyur*, *phyung ba* for *byung ba*, and *de ni* for *der ni* in our text. In his *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folio 76a–b, 214.5–215.3, Tsongkhapa cites and explains this verse.

1156. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 67a–71b, 412.2–421.1.

1157. Once more, this refers to the questioner in the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 127b, 254.2–4, P. 10.2.7–3.1, Tanaka 2016, 114. This question is cited below.

1158. Reading *dgod bya* for *dpyod bya* in our text.

1159. Once more the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 127b, 245.4, Tanaka 2016, 114, has *De kho na nyid bsdus pa* for *De nyid bsdus pa* here, which again is Tōh. 479, *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha*.

1160. Tib. *Rdo rje rtse mo*, Tōh. 480.

1161. Tib. *Gnyis ka'i rgyud*. This refers to the *spyod pa'i rgyud*, *Caryā Tantra*, that combines elements from both *kriyā* and *yoga* tantras.

1162. The *Rnam par snang mdzad chen po mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa*, *Vairocanābhisambodhi*, Tōh. 494. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 67a, 412.2.

1163. *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 127b, 254.4, P. 10.3.1–2, Tanaka 2016, 114. D. and Tanaka have *gnyi ga'i* for *gnyis ka'i*.

1164. *De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi de kho na nyid bsdus pa*, *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha*, Tōh. 479.

1165. *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 127b, 254.5, P. 10.3.2–3, Tanaka 2016, 115. D., P., and Tanaka have *don bshad pa'i rgyud* for *bshad pa*.

1166. The *Dgong pa lung bstan [ston] pa'i rgyud*, *Sandhyāvvyākaraṇatantra*, Tōh. 444, D. folios 197b–198a, 394.5–395.1. The citation in the *Rnam gzhag rim pa* is quite different from its corresponding passage in this tantra. No doubt these are two different translations, but this alone cannot explain all the differences.

1167. Tib. *rdo rje thal mo*, Skt. *vajrāñjali*.

1168. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 67b–69a, 413.2–416.1.

1169. The *Dgong pa lung bstan [ston] pa'i rgyud*, *Sandhyāvvyākaraṇatantra*, Tōh. 444, D. folios 197b–198a, 394.7–395.1. D. has *bcings pa'i rdo rje nyid* for *sbyor bas rdo rje sems*, *gnas mthong yin* for *go 'phang mchog*, *bcings pa* for *sbyar ba*, *ni* for *kyang*, *nyid thob 'gyur* for *yang dag 'gugs*, *dang ni de nyid gsum* for *de nyid gsum yin te*, *rdo rje gsum* for *sku gsum*, *rnam par thar gsum kyi* for *dang rnam thar gsum*, and *zhal gsum mdog gsum spyan gsum dang* for *zhal gsum yin te mdog gsum yin* in our text. According to the *Dgong pa lung bstan [ston] pa'i rgyud*, it is the vajra rather than *Rdo rje sems dpa'*, *Vajrasattva*, who ties the one with the other, and by joining the palms all buddhas may be attained rather than invoked. Our text also differs somewhat from the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 128a, 255.1–2, P. 10.3.6–7,

Tanaka 2016, 116, on which it seems to rely. D. and P. have *sbyor ba* for *sbyar ba*, and *yang* for *yin* at the end of the passage in our text. P. also has *rnam par thar gsum kyis* for *rnam par thar gsum kyi* in our text. Tsongkhapa commented on these line in his *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 68b–69b, 415.3–417.3.

1170. The white appearance, red enhancement, and near attainment.

1171. See Bu ston *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 39a, 759.1–2.

1172. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folios 71b–75a, 421.1–428.5.

1173. *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 128a, 255.4–5, P. 10.4.2–3, Tanaka 2016, 118. D., P., and Tanaka have *dgod pa* for *'god pa*, *'jug par* for *'jug pas*, and *de ji ltar* for *ji ltar*.

1174. For example, in the first chapter of the *Gsang ba 'dus pa* there are thirteen deities. According to the *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, Tōh. 1814, D. folio 196a, 391.3–4, P. 19.5.7–8, Hong and Tomabechi 2009, 3.10–11 and 35.16–17, some say there are thirteen deities, some say nineteen, and some say twenty-five.

1175. *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 128a, 255.5, P. 10.4.3, Tanaka 2016, 119. D., P., and Tanaka have *rigs pas* for *rig pa*.

1176. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 158a, 317.5, has *yin* for *min* in our text.

1177. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 158a, 317.4–5, has *'dus pa'i mi bskyod pa'i dkyil 'khor gyi lha yongs su rdzogs pa* for *'dus pa mi bskyod pa'i lha rdzogs par* in our text.

1178. See the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 128a, 255.5, P. 10.4.3–4, Tanaka 2016, 119–20. In his *Rnam gzhag rim pa'i rnam bshad*, Tōh. 5290, folio 72b, 423.1–2, Tsongkhapa points out that according to the *Sgron gsal*, both the Supreme King of Mandalas and the body mandala have thirty-two deities.

1179. The *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 64, D. folio 270a, 539.2, P. 228.3.8–4.1, cited in the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, Tōh. 1809, D. folio 128a, 255.7, P. 10.4.6, Tanaka 2016, 120. The *Tengyur* has *sku* for *lus* in the *Rnam gzhag rim pa*, and the Skt. has *kāya* twice, in Tanaka 2016, 120. This line was cited above [410].

12. The Supreme King of Deeds

*Explaining the Samādhi of the Supreme King of Deeds*¹¹⁸⁰

THERE ARE two sections here: (1) the yoga pertaining to the actual meditative session, and (2) the yoga pertaining to the periods between meditative sessions.

The Yoga Pertaining to the Actual Meditative Session

There are five sections here: (1) the yoga of the subtle drop, (2) the yoga of recitation, (3) dissolving into clear light and arising in response to the invocation with a song, (4) offerings, praises, and tasting the nectar, and (5) the ritual method of dissolving the visualization.

The Yoga of the Subtle Drop¹¹⁸¹

There are two instances of subtle meditation: [437] (1) during practice in the coarse creation stage up to the Supreme King of Mandalas, and (2) after completing the coarse meditation. The purpose of the first meditation is twofold: to eliminate sinking through the meditation on the subtle emblem at the upper gate, and also to eliminate agitation through the meditation on the subtle drop at the lower gate.

The purpose of the subtle meditation after completing the coarse meditation is to achieve stability while concentrating on a very subtle object of visualization. The instruction that you should practice a subtle conceptual yoga after achieving the ability to eliminate ordinary appearances and attitudes by means of the coarse deity yoga is intended with regard to the subtle meditation whereby the complete mandala can be visualized within a drop. But at this juncture it is necessary to meditate from the very beginning only on a subtle object.

Here is the method for meditating on this: Yourself as Akṣobhya, at the tip of

the nose on your main face, you should visualize a five-pronged blue vajra, small as a white mustard seed on a solar seat the size of a split pea, and see it in the nature of Akṣobhya. Similarly, at the opening of your vajra, you should visualize a blue drop small as a white mustard seed on a solar seat, and perceive it in the nature of Akṣobhya. You should meditate in this way until stable signs of touching and seeing them are obtained.¹¹⁸²

Here is how to meditate after attaining such a stability: Emanating from the five-pronged blue vajra, you should visualize a second vajra, and then a third, and so forth [438] until they fill the sky. Then you should gather these vajras back without changing their order. After stability in this meditation has been attained, you should transform the emblems into the bodies of the deities and emanate and gather them as before. Finally, while resting the mind, you should draw the original object of visualization¹¹⁸³ in through the nostrils and dissolve it into the *samādhisattva* in your heart.

Similarly, when your mind is stable, at the drop at the tip of the nose of the secret place, you should unite your vajra with the lotus of the consort and draw the drop into her lotus. Within the drop you should visualize the complete mandala of the celestial mansion and its deities and develop a stable mind; this is called emanating the mandala as a son-visualization. Within this mandala, you should meditate again on Akṣobhya absorbed in union with his consort and on the drop originating from their union. Within this drop [you should visualize the complete mandala] as before; this is called emanating the mandala as a grandson-visualization.¹¹⁸⁴

This is so because the third chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:¹¹⁸⁵ “By means of yoga, continuously and earnestly visualize a five-colored precious jewel, small as a white mustard seed, at the tip of your nose. When the jewel is stable, emanate it, but not until then.” Finally, while resting the mind you should dissolve the visualization into your heart.

The Yoga of Recitation¹¹⁸⁶

There are two parts here: (1) mental recitation, vajra recitation, and (2) voiced recitation.

MENTAL RECITATION, VAJRA RECITATION

Mental recitation, without moving the tongue and lips and without sound, is the

vajra recitation of the meditator on the creation stage, for Śrī Phalavajra teaches:¹¹⁸⁷ “You should recite vajra words; vajra words are soundless.” And the seventh chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:¹¹⁸⁸ “Do not recite while eating food given as alms,” which [the *Illuminating Lamp*] explains through the provisional level of interpretation.¹¹⁸⁹

VOICED RECITATION¹¹⁹⁰

There are five sections here: (1) *samaya* recitation, (2) *doli* recitation or palanquin recitation, (3) enraged recitation, (4) fierce recitation, and (5) heap recitation.

Samaya Recitation [439]

As appears in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*:¹¹⁹¹ “Surrounded by the mantras to be recited” and so forth, you should recite the heart and quintessence mantras¹¹⁹² while visualizing [the deities] as they emanate and are gathered back.¹¹⁹³

Doli Recitation or Palanquin Recitation

While maintaining the divine identity of the complete sameness of all phenomena, you should visualize the root mantra circling, entering your mouth, passing through your body, and issuing from the vajra path into the lotus of the consort, then passing through the central channel of the consort, emerging from her mouth, and entering into your own mouth. The syllables should be recited tranquilly and calmly, in this way you should recite the garland mantra.¹¹⁹⁴

Enraged Recitation

You should meditate on the mantra circling as before, but begin with the mantra emerging from your mouth and then entering into the mouth of the consort. You should meditate on the syllables as coarse and intense, thus here too you should recite the garland mantra.

Fierce Recitation

The fierce recitation is a recitation with an audible sound. In this manner you should recite the heart, the quintessence, and the root mantras.

Heap Recitation

You should recite the mantras while visualizing the syllables drawing a circle

around the seed syllable in your heart with their heads pointing upward and radiating light.

While reciting in any of these ways, you should visualize the principal deity and the circle of deities surrounding him, everyone, reciting the mantras, for many of the *mahāsiddhas* including Vajraghaṇṭa¹¹⁹⁵ and *Kambala¹¹⁹⁶ explain that by doing so, your recitations multiply.¹¹⁹⁷

Ārya Nāgārjuna and his disciples did not teach explicitly the mantras to be recited,¹¹⁹⁸ whereas it is taught that the *Jewel Rosary*¹¹⁹⁹ and certain Tibetan methods of explanation¹²⁰⁰ are unreliable. [440] Yet the Master Abhayākara Gupta¹²⁰¹ maintains that the heart mantra¹²⁰² is the name mantra with the seed syllable set between the three syllables *oṃ āḥ hūṃ*. This method is most appropriate.¹²⁰³ The quintessence mantra¹²⁰⁴ is the name mantra alone, as the first chapter of the *Root Tantra* teaches:¹²⁰⁵ “*Vajradhṛk* is taught as the supreme innermost quintessence” and *oṃ āḥ hūṃ* is taught as the essence of suchness of all deities. As for the root mantra¹²⁰⁶ [or garland mantra],¹²⁰⁷ the *Root Tantra* teaches the garland mantras of the four mothers and nine fierce deities, and the garland mantras of the remaining deities are taught in other tantras.¹²⁰⁸

As for the number of recitations,¹²⁰⁹ it is taught that you should recite the mantra of the principal deity a hundred thousand times, the garland mantra of the surrounding deities and of Vighnāntaka¹²¹⁰ ten thousand times each, and the mantra of the descent of wisdom a hundred thousand times. The fifteenth chapter of the *Illuminating Lamp* teaches¹²¹¹ that you should affix *hūṃ haḥ āḥ jaiḥ* at the end of the heart mantra.

Here are the purposes of reciting in this way: To extinguish the karmic obscurations of speech that have accumulated since beginningless time. To make your speech more effective. To swiftly attain to enormous ordinary and extraordinary activities. In particular to ripen the mental continuum of vajra recitation. And to engage the yogis in the special method of taking as the path the fruit that corresponds to the deed of the speech of the *nirmāṇakāya* teaching the Dharma.

Dissolving into Clear Light and Arising in Response to the Invocation with a Song¹²¹²

As the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana* teaches:¹²¹³ “The father-mother absorb in union,

thereby,” and so forth, you should visualize the principal father-mother entering into clear light, [441] for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹²¹⁴ “Once again the mantrins should cause themselves to enter into suchness.” Here are the purposes of this meditation: To ripen the roots of merit for the impure illusory body to enter into clear light during the completion stage on the *path*. And to take as the path the fruit that corresponds to the *nirmāṇakāya* dissolving its appearances on account of [the absence]¹²¹⁵ of disciples during the *fruit*.

Following this, the yogi should visualize the principal deity arising when invoked with a song by the four goddesses — the essence of the four immeasurables. Here are the purposes of this meditation: to ripen the roots of merit for the pure and impure illusory body to arise from the metaphoric and actual clear light during the completion stage on the *path* and to engage the yogis in the special method of taking as the path the fruit of displaying again the deed of awakening in other buddha-fields out of great compassion, during the *fruit*. The meaning of the four verses of invocation can be found in the commentary on the *Root Tantra*.¹²¹⁶

Offerings, Praises, and Tasting the Nectar¹²¹⁷

Here is the purpose of the offering, the praises, and the tasting of the nectar: When the *nirmāṇakāya* displays the deeds of the Buddha in other buddha-fields, everyone intently pronounces the paean, “Though there has been no such before, a buddha has arrived to this world,” and then they worship him with manifold excellent offerings. In accepting these offerings, [442] the Buddha becomes the recipient of offerings from the entire world and you take as the path the fruit that corresponds to these deeds.

Here is the method of uttering praise: All the deities of the mandala utter resounding praises proclaiming that you have been endowed with all qualities of the five families. This is as taught in the *Concise Sādhana* in the five verses that begin with the words,¹²¹⁸ “Akṣobhya Vajra, endowed with excellent wisdom,” cited from the seventeenth chapter of the *Root Tantra*.¹²¹⁹ Their meaning can be found in the commentary.¹²²⁰

Then, as appears in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*,¹²²¹ outer, inner, secret, and suchness offerings, related to the four initiations, are made to you visualized as Vajradhara. The outer, secret, and suchness offerings are easy to understand. As for the inner offerings, while they are being made, you should visualize the thumb of your left hand as Mt. Meru arising from *sum*, and the fourth finger as

an ocean resting on the earth arising from the *kṣum*.¹²²² You should visualize yourself taking the nectar from the center of the ocean and offering it, as taught in the *Four Chapters Tantra*.¹²²³

Here is the reason: While making the offerings you should meditate on how the nectar appeared when the primordial gods churned the ocean by using Mt. Meru as their churning stick, for the *Root Tantra of Cakrasaṃvara* likewise teaches:¹²²⁴ “The skillful yogi always tastes by joining the tips of the thumb and the ring finger.”

The sequence of the offerings should be as in the manual, for *Kambala taught:¹²²⁵ “The wise should taste the ritually prepared nectar, first offering it to the lama and then to Heruka.” The meaning of the mantra *om amṛta svadana vajra svabhāva ātmako ’haṃ* is:¹²²⁶ [443] the essence of the vajra nature of pleasing with the nectar of deathlessness, that am I.

The Ritual Method of Dissolving the Visualization

You should meditate on the dissolution as taught in the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*,¹²²⁷ for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹²²⁸ “The wheel enters into your own wheel, and only the lord¹²²⁹ who is in a state of great bliss remains.” The first line teaches that the celestial mansion and the circle of deities dissolve into you, and the second that only the principal father-mother does not dissolve.

Then you should visualize¹²³⁰ a ray of bodhicitta light emanating from the point of union between yourself and the consort absorbed in union. It empowers all sentient beings, purifies their obscurations, and transforms them into the syllables *hūṃs*, filling the space realm, and then they are transformed into Vajradharas that are drawn¹²³¹ by your light-ray and dissolve into yourself. You should meditate in this way, for the *Concise Sādhana* teaches:¹²³² “The yogis who have practiced the four yogas in this way visualize the world in the essence of *hūṃ* and imagine all beings arising through this *hūṃ* as Vajrasattvas. When they arise from their yoga, they perceive living beings and act¹²³³ accordingly.”

The Yoga Pertaining to the Periods between Meditative Sessions

There are four sections here: (1) the yoga of body enhancement, (2) food yoga, (3) the yogas of sleeping and arising, and (4) offering tormas.

The Yoga of Body Enhancement

It is easy to understand the yoga of body enhancement as was taught in the *Concise Sādhana*.¹²³⁴ “[During the practice] when their bodies become emaciated, mantrins should meditate on this yoga, which will satiate body, speech, and mind. They should visualize a lunar disk just a handspan above their heads, and an *om* syllable there pouring out the five nectars. By means of this vajra practice they will become instantly radiant [444] and recover the well-being of body, speech, and mind; of this there is no doubt.”¹²³⁵

Food Yoga

You should bless the food as you bless the tormas. Purify your throat by visualizing yourself as Akṣobhya, and your throat as a red conch. Inside this is *Hṛīḥ*, indivisible from the root of your tongue, emanating an eight-petaled red lotus. At its center visualize your tongue appearing from a *hūṃ* as a five-pronged blue vajra, whose middle prong is hollow, its tip marked with a white *om*. A light-ray emanating from it draws your food and drink. You should visualize your hands as the ladle and funnel of the fire offerings. Then purify your heart by visualizing on the lotus and solar disk in the heart a blue syllable *hūṃ*, the essence comprising all the deities and lamas, blazing with a triple-pointed tongue of fire. You should offer to it your food and drink as a fire offering.

Then, from their respective seed syllables,¹²³⁶ you should visualize a wind mandala in your secret place, a fire¹²³⁷ mandala in the navel, an earth mandala in your heart, and a water mandala in the throat. As the wind blows, the fire ignites, the earth burns, and the water in your throat boils. When [your food and drink] enter through the lotus [of your throat] and arrive in your heart, [they become] refined, dissolve, and satiate the deities. You should visualize the fire [in the navel] burning away the impure wastes and the ashes emerging through your lower gate. When a small portion of the food has dissolved, you should hold the “vase breathing.”

By doing so, you obtain inconceivably good qualities, both temporary and ultimate, for the *Four Chapters Tantra* teaches:¹²³⁸ “Whatever you eat and drink, however small the amount, should be dedicated, and only then consumed. The yogi who practices in this way will not be indebted.” [445]

The Yogas of Sleeping and Arising

The yoga of sleeping is like the specially visualized deities dissolving into clear

light, and arising is like the arising of the principal deity when the four goddesses invoke “the one that has dissolved” with a song.

Offering Tormas

At the end of all four sessions of practice, or if it is not possible to do so, then at the end of the last session, you must definitely offer tormas to both worldly and unworldly deities. Many tantras teach that it is important to offer tormas at all times to pacify the interfering of obstructers and as a means of attaining siddhis. The *Samvarodaya Tantra* also teaches:¹²³⁹ “Without torma and wine, activities will not be swiftly attained. Therefore the former Buddha taught that the torma is to be praised.” Here is the meaning of the mantra appended at the end of the mantra of the torma:¹²⁴⁰ *sarvaduṣṭa* means all malevolent ones, *samayamudrā* is pledge seal, *prabhañjaka* is destroying, *māma* is me, *śāntiṃ* is tranquility, *rakṣāṃ ca* is protection, and *kuru* is do.

1180. Tib. *las kyi rgyal po mchog gi ting nge 'dzin* or *las rgyal mchog gi ting nge 'dzin*, Skt. *karmarājāgrīsamādhi*. In his *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 488, Tsongkhapa explains that this meditation is so termed because here the deities perform their enlightened deeds.

1181. See the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 473–81, and Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 159a–162a, 319.1–325.5.

1182. Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 159b, 320.5–6, explains these signs of seeing and touching: Stable signs of seeing are attained when a clear appearance, much clearer than even actually seeing through the eyes, arises in the mind, and that appearance itself remains in the mind until the end of the meditative session without diffusing for even an instant and without changing into another form. Signs of palpability are attained when you sense as though touching with the hands.

1183. The first emblem visualized at the tip of the nose.

1184. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 29a–b, 57.7–58.1, P. 37.5.4–5, Chakravarti 1984, 38.

1185. Tōh. 442, Zhol 7a5–6, vv. 12–13a, Tog 22.1–2, Dunh. 10b1–2, Fremantle 1971, 198, Matsunaga 1978, 12. Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. have *yong* for *yongs*, Tog has *sgom* for *bsgom*, Dunh. has *kha dog rnam lnga pa* for *chen po kha dog lnga*, *tshod* for *tshad*, *sna'i* for *sna yi*, *rnal 'byor pa yis* for *rnal 'byor gyis ni*, and twice *red* for *gyur* in our text. This verse is also cited in the *Rim pa lnga pa*, *Pañcakrama*, Tōh. 1802, chap. 1, v. 11, D. folio 45b, 90.4–5, Mimaki and Tomabeche 1994, 2; and in the *Spyod bsdus*, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*, Tōh. 1803, chap. 3, D. folio 67b, 134.2, Wedemeyer 2007, A: 16a, Pandey 2000, 21, 195.

1186. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folios 23b–25a, 314.4–317.2.

1187. 'Bras rdo rje, *Kun bzang sgrub thabs 'grel pa*, *Samantabhadrasādhanaṅvṛtti*, Tōh. 1867, D. folio 179a, 357.4–5. D. has *bzla bya* for *bzlas byas* in our text. Cited also in *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 521–22.

1188. Tōh. 442, Zhol 10a6, Tog 33.2–3, Dunh. 17a3, v. 4a, Fremantle 1971, 214, Matsunaga 1978, 20. Zhol, Tog, and Dunh. have *slongs* for *slong*, Dunh. has *bzlas te* for *bzla ste* in our text. This verse is cited in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 9b, 18.5, P. 272.3.6, L. 202, T. 198, and the *Mdo bsre*, Tōh. 1797, D. folio 14a, 27.7, P. 274.4.4.
1189. Tōh. 1785, D. folio 48a, 95.3–6, P. 46.4.1–6, Chakravarti 1984, 62.
1190. See Abhayākara Gupta's *Man ngag snye ma*, Tōh. 1198, D. folios 138b–139a, 276.7–277.4, Tsongkhapa's *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 522–23, and his *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folios 23b–25a, 314.6–317.2.
1191. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 67b, 150.3.
1192. Tib. *snying pa* and *nye snying* mantras; these terms are explained below.
1193. Reading *no* for *na* in our text.
1194. Or the root mantra.
1195. Tib. Rdo rje dril bu.
1196. Tib. Lwa ba pa.
1197. See also the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 523.
1198. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folios 24b–25a, 316.2–317.2.
1199. The *Rin chen 'phreng ba*, *Ratnāvalī*, Tōh. 1826, by Śāntipa, a commentary on the *Mdor byas*, D. folio 71a–b, 141.4–142.4.
1200. See Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 84b, 850.5–7, who refers to some Tibetan lamas.
1201. See Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folio 84b, 850.6.
1202. Tib. *snying po*.
1203. For example, the heart mantra of Mi bskyod pa at the center of the Supreme King of Mandalas is *Vajradhrk hūṃ*. *Vajradhrk* is his name mantra and *hūṃ* is his seed syllable.
1204. Tib. *nye snying*.
1205. Tōh. 442, Zhol 4a3, Fremantle 1971, 182, Matsunaga 1978, 6, see [430] above.
1206. Tib. *rtsa sngags*.
1207. Tib. *'phreng sngags*.
1208. This paragraph is also based on Bu ston, *Mdor byas 'grel chen*, Tōh. 5078, folios 84b–85a, 850.7–851.4.
1209. See Tsongkhapa, *Bung ba'i re skong*, Tōh. 5305, folio 27b, 391.2–3.
1210. Tib. Bgegs mthar byed.
1211. Tōh. 1785, D. folio 146a, 291.3–6, P. 91.6.6–92.1.2, Chakravarti 1984, 172, commenting on the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, vv. 68–70, Zhol 32b5–7, Fremantle 1971, 330, Matsunaga 1978, 76–77.
1212. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folio 25a–b, 317.2–318.6, and his *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 508.
1213. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 68a–b, 151.6–152.3.
1214. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 9b, 18.6, P. 272.3.7–8, L. 204cd, T. 200cd.
1215. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folio 25a, 317.4–5; and Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 164b, 330.6.
1216. These verses of the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 68b–69a, 152.3–153.5, are found in chapter 17 of the *Root Tantra*, Tōh. 442, Zhol 47a7–b5, Fremantle 1971, 402–4, Matsunaga 1978, 110, and in the *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folios 9ba–10a, 18.7–19.4, P. 272.4.1–6, L. 206–9, T. 202–5, and are explained in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 195a–196b, 389.6–392.4, P. 114.3.6–115.2.1, Chakravarti

1984, 224–25. See also Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 302b3–304a7, New Delhi, vol. 7, folios 505a–508a, 502.4–508.1.

1217. See Tsongkhapa, *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, folio 26a–b, 319.1–320.3; and Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folios 166a–172b, 333.1–346.3.

1218. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 10a, 19.4–7, P. 272.4.6–5.2 L. 211–15, T. 207–11, with some differences. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 69b, 154.1–6.

1219. Tōh. 442, Zhol 40b5–7, Fremantle 1971 and Matsunaga 1978, vv. 1–5.

1220. The *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 175a–b, 349.1–350.3, Chakravarti 1984, 203; see also Tsongkhapa, *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 275a6–276a4, New Delhi, vol. 7, folios 462a–463a, 416.4–418.6.

1221. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 69b–73a, 154.6–161.1.

1222. In the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 70a, 155.2–3, Mt. Meru emanates from the *sum* on the fourth finger, while the ground emanates from the *kṣum* on the thumb. This is the system of Paṇ chen Bsod nams grags pa in his *Gsang 'dus bskyed rim rnam gzhas*, folio 72b, 154.1–4, but our text follows the system of Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 171b, 344.5.

1223. Tib. *Gdan bzhi*, Skt. *Catuḥpīṭhatantra*, Tōh. 428, D. folio 198b, 396.1–2.

1224. The tantra cited here is the *Mngon brjod rgyud bla ma*, *Abhidhānottaratantra*, Tōh. 369, D. folio 337a–b, 673.7–674.1. D. has *rim pas* for *rigs pas* in our text.

1225. Lwa ba pa, *Dka' 'grel sgrub pa'i thabs kyi gleng gzhi*, *Sādhananidānacakrasaṃvarapañjikā*, Tōh. 1401, D. folio 6a, 11.2. D. has *bsgrubs pa'i* for *grub pa'i* in our text.

1226. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 72a, 159.6.

1227. The *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folios 73a–74a, 161.1–163.2.

1228. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 10a, 19.7, P. 272.5.2–3, L. 216cd, T. 212cd. D. and P. have *mgon po* for the third *'khor lo* (Skt. *nātha*) and *gcig po* for *gcig pu* (Skt. *ekah*).

1229. Following the reading in the Tengyur.

1230. The following lines closely follows the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, folio 73b, 162.4–6.

1231. Reading *drangs* for *brangs* in our text.

1232. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 10b, 20.1, P. 272.5.3–4, L. 217, T. 215. D. and P. have *rnal 'byor pa* for *rnal 'byor pas*, *snying pos* for *snying po*. D. has *spyad par bya* and P. has *sbyang par bya* for *sbyar*.

1233. Following the reading in the Tengyur.

1234. *Mdor byas*, Tōh. 1796, D. folio 10b, 20.1–3, P. 272.5.4–6, L. 218bcd–220, T. 214bcd–216. D. and P. have *bskams* for *skams*, *byed pa'i* for *'gyur pa'i*, *spyi bor* for *zla ba'i*, *bsgom par* for *brtag par*, *'bebs pa'i* for *'bab pa'i*, *bsam par* for *bsgom par*, *rdo rje* for *rdo rje'i*, *gzi can* for *gzi chen*, *dag* for *ni*, and P. has *spags* for *dpags* in our text.

1235. See also the *Root Tantra*, chap. 17, vv. 65–66.

1236. *Yaṃ*, *Raṃ*, *Laṃ* and *Vaṃ* [or *Baṃ*].

1237. Reading *me* for *mo* in our text.

1238. Tib. *Gdan bzhi*, Tōh. 428, D. folio 224b, 448.2–3. D. has *cung zad bza' dang btung la sogs* for *gang gis cung zad bza' btung rnams*, and *rung bar* for *bsngo ba* in our text. Our text follows these lines as they are cited in the *'Dod pa 'jo ba*, Tōh. 5320, folio 179a, 428.2–3. For a summary of Bhavabhṭṭa's explanation of these lines, see Szántó 2012, 453.

1239. Tōh. 373, chap. 32, D. folio 308b, 614.6–7, not in Tsuda 1974. No doubt our text is from a different translation. D. has *chang dang gtor ma med par ni* for *gtor ma myos byed med pa las*, *las rnams myur du 'grub mi 'gyur* for *myur du 'grub par mi 'gyur ro*, with the sequence of the last two lines reversed, and D.

has *sngon gyi sangs rgyas rnams kyis gsungs* for *des na sngon gyi sangs rgyas kyis*, and *des na gtor ma rab bsngags te* for *gtor ma rab tu bsngags par gsungs* in our text. Once more our text closely follows the version in Tsongkhapa, 'Dod pa 'jo ba, Tōh. 5320, folio 173b, 417.2, the only difference being *myos byed gtor ma* for *gtor ma myos byed* in our text.

1240. The mantra of the *gtor ma* is: *sarvaduṣṭa samayamudrā prabhañjaka mama śāntiṃ rakṣāṃ ca kuru*. See the *Sādhana* arranged by Tsongkhapa, *Gtor*, folio 7b, 194.1, which has small variations, reading *rakṣāṃ* for *rakṣāḥ* in our text.

13. Epilogue

*The Framework of the Sādhana*¹²⁴¹

NOW, IN ADDITION, I shall explain a little about the framework of the *Guhyasamāja Sādhana*. There are five ways of dividing the *Sādhana*: (a) the four stages of familiarization and attainment, (b) the four yogas, (c) the three samādhis, (d) the forty-nine essential points, and (e) the four vajras.

(a) The four limbs of familiarization and attainment: (1) the limb of “familiarization”¹²⁴² is from the meditation on the ground of wisdom until the gathering of the specially visualized deities into clear light, (2) the limb of “approaching attainment”¹²⁴³ is from the arising from clear light as a solar disk until the meditation on the body mandala, (3) the limb of “attainment”¹²⁴⁴ is from the blessing of the three doors until the sealing with the lord of the tathāgata family, [446] (4) the limb of “great attainment”¹²⁴⁵ is from the Supreme King of Mandalas and onward, for the *Later Tantra* teaches:¹²⁴⁶ “The first is the practice of familiarization, the second approaching attainment, the third, attainment, and the fourth, great attainment.” Likewise, the twelfth chapter of the *Root Tantra*¹²⁴⁷ and its commentary¹²⁴⁸ teach this extensively.

(b) The four yogas are: (1) the “yoga”¹²⁴⁹ consists of the meditation on the ground of wisdom until the awakening from the moon, (2) the “subsequent yoga”¹²⁵⁰ consists of the three additional manifest awakenings, (3) the “higher yoga”¹²⁵¹ consists of the meditation on the body mandala, (4) the “great yoga”¹²⁵² consists of the blessing of the three doors until the union with the consort.

This is the framework in terms of the First Yoga, but in taking into account also the two Supreme Kings,¹²⁵³ there are six yogas, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:¹²⁵⁴ “The yoga, subsequent yoga, higher yoga, and great yoga are included in the First Yoga. Following them are the Supreme King of Mandalas and the Supreme Yoga of the King of Deeds.”¹²⁵⁵

(c) The three samādhis can be learned from the earlier explanations.¹²⁵⁶

(d) The forty-nine essential points¹²⁵⁷ are:¹²⁵⁸ The first six essential points are the preliminaries: (1) the place of meditation, (2) concentrating on great compassion, (3) generating the principal deity of the protection wheel, (4) generating the surrounding fierce deities, (5) driving the stakes, (6) meditating on the fence and tent. The *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:¹²⁵⁹ “The six divisions of essential points.”

Then there are nine essential points: (7) meditating on the ground of wisdom, (8) generating the vajra ground, (9) generating the celestial mansion of the specially visualized deities, (10) generating the wheel of deities of the specially visualized deities, [447] (11) gathering the specially visualized deities into the body, (12) awakening from suchness, (13) arising by visualizing the sun and so forth, (14) awakening from the moon, (15) abiding in absorption in just wisdom. These nine essential points together with the previous six points, making altogether fifteen, comprise the limb of “yoga,” for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:¹²⁶⁰ “The fifteen divisions of essential points.”

Next there are seventeen essential points: the three points of manifest awakening from the seed syllable, from the emblem, and from the complete body combined as one, (16) the essential point of generating great Vajradhara, and up to here is the “subsequent yoga,” (17) transforming the first lord into the Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva, (18) meditating on the body as the celestial mansion, (19) meditating on the five aggregates as the five tathāgatas, (20) meditating on the four physical elements as the four mothers, (21) meditating on the five sensory spheres as the five vajra ladies, (22) meditating on [the sense bases], the eye and so forth, as Kṣitigarbha and so forth, (23) meditating on the limbs as the fierce deities, (24) blessing the body, (25) the speech and (26) the mind, (27–29) the three essential points of meditating on the triple-layered *sattvas*, (30) gathering the consort, (31) passion, (32) offerings. Altogether these make seventeen essential points, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:¹²⁶¹ “The ‘subsequent yoga’ and so forth are seventeen.”

In the Supreme King of Mandalas there are five essential points: (33) emanating the male tathāgatas, (34) the female tathāgatas, (35) the male bodhisattvas, (36) the female bodhisattvas, (37) the fierce deities, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:¹²⁶² “Then, the Supreme King of Mandalas has five divisions of essential points.”

In the Supreme King of Deeds there are twelve essential points: (38) meditating on the subtle emblem at the upper gate, (39) meditating on the subtle

drop at the lower gate, [448] (40) mental recitation, (41) voiced recitation, (42) the principal deity entering into clear light, (43) invoking “the one that has dissolved” with a song, (44) offerings, praises, and tasting the nectar, and (45) the final dissolution of the visualization, (46) body enhancement, (47) food yoga, (48) attaining lesser siddhis, (49) attaining middling siddhis, for the *Vajra Garland Tantra* teaches:¹²⁶³ “Then the Supreme King of Deeds has twelve divisions of essential points.”

(e) The four vajras are as follows:¹²⁶⁴ (1) The first vajra, “the vajra of awakening from emptiness,” begins with the first essential point of the place of meditation when you meditate according to the extensive *sādhana*, but when you meditate according to the abridged *sādhana* the first vajra begins with the meditation on the ground of wisdom; in both cases it continues up to the awakening from suchness. (2) “The vajra of the gathered seed syllables”¹²⁶⁵ is arising through a visualization of the solar disk and so forth, and awakening from the emblem. (3) “The vajra of completing the form” is from the generation of the first lord until the completion of the body mandala. (4) “The vajra of setting the syllables” begins with the blessing of the body and continues up to the essential point of offering when you meditate according to the abridged *sādhana*; and when you meditate according to the extensive *sādhana* it continues up to the essential point of attaining middling siddhis, for the *Later Tantra* teaches:¹²⁶⁶ “The first is awakening from emptiness, the second is the gathered seed syllables, the third is completing the form, and the fourth is setting the syllables.”

Classifications

When the yoga of the first stage is classified in terms of its essence,¹²⁶⁷ there are two yogas — the coarse yoga of single-mindedness and the subtle¹²⁶⁸ conceptual yoga.¹²⁶⁹ The coarse yoga of single-mindedness is synonymous with the coarse yoga of the creation stage and the yoga of applying yourself to the Mantra Vehicle. [449] Here is the reason for calling the coarse yoga of the creation stage “the coarse yoga of single-mindedness”: in this yoga the object of concentration is *coarser* than in the subtle yoga, and you are *mindful* of yourself and the deity as *a single entity*, or you are *singly mindful* of the deity.¹²⁷⁰

The second, the subtle conceptual yoga, is synonymous with the subtle yoga of the creation stage and the yoga of applying yourself inwardly. Here is the reason for calling the subtle yoga of the creation stage “subtle conceptual yoga”:

in this *yoga* the object of concentration is *subtler* than in the coarse creation stage, and your meditation on this object is *conceptual*.

Here is the reason for calling this yoga of the first stage “*creation stage*”: this is a special *stage* of meditating by *creating* the three bodies through deity yoga in correspondence with the ground of purification — birth, death, and intermediate state.

How to Meditate: How to Engage the Mind in Visualization during the Creation Stage

As ascertained, there are two kinds of *sādhana*s in this tradition, extensive and abridged, and you should meditate on the yoga in four daily sessions in any suitable way, such as with the first and last session extensive and the middle two abridged and so forth.¹²⁷¹

Furthermore, since the main objects to be purified by means of the creation stage are ordinary appearance and attitude,¹²⁷² as an antidote to ordinary attitude you should maintain divine identity with the resolve: “I am actually such and such a deity,” and as an antidote to ordinary appearances, you should practice meditation on the clear appearance of the celestial mansion and its indwelling deities.

This is how you should practice: taking as a basis of designation the very conjoining of profundity and vastness, you should meditate with the resolve: “That which consists of the mandala wheel of the fruition time, that am I.” Profundity means that in terms of the subjective aspect of mind, the wisdom of great bliss concentrates single-pointedly on emptiness; [450] and vastness means that in terms of the appearance aspect of the mind, the celestial mansion and its deities appear clearly like a rainbow.

When meditating in this way, all unintentional bodily movements and verbal utterances gather immeasurable merit as if you were making mudrās and reciting mantras, for the *Activities of the Yoginīs* teaches:¹²⁷³ “While abiding at the stage of Śrī Heruka, the multitude of subsidiary actions and words will be equal in number to your mudrās and mantras.”

*The Criteria for Completing the Creation Stage by Practicing in This Way*¹²⁷⁴

Here is the criteria for completing the creation stage through this practice:¹²⁷⁵ If when you visualize both the coarse mandala of the celestial mansion with its deities and the mandala of the celestial mansion with its deities within the subtle¹²⁷⁶ drop the size of a mere mustard seed, all the respective subtle and coarse aspects appear instantaneously and lucidly, unmixed and maintained without sinking and agitating for a sixth of a day, then you attain stability in the coarse and subtle creation stage, respectively. And when you are able to remain so for as long as desired, a month, a year, or more, then you have completed the coarse and subtle creation stage, respectively.

*How Siddhis Are Attained upon the Completion of the Creation Stage*¹²⁷⁷

Generally there are three siddhis possible for meditators on the creation stage, as the *Illuminating Lamp* teaches:¹²⁷⁸ “The ritual activities of pacification and so on,¹²⁷⁹ the eight siddhis,¹²⁸⁰ and the supreme siddhi of buddhahood.” [451]

The unexcelled teacher of the world and gods —
king of the sages, sun among the masters —
out of compassion imparted bountiful lucid expositions.
Most eminent and sublime advices of them all
are the so-called unexcelled yoga tantra.

The quintessence surpassing all tantras —
the lamp of the three worlds, unique jewel in the universe —
an abundant downpour of the two attainments
is this glorious king of tantras, the *Guhyasamāja*.

By holding but a single verse of this *Tantra* —
merely seeing, hearing, recollecting, or touching it —
you will be similar in power to all-pervasive glorious Vajradhara,
the best object of reverence, for this the Victorious One has said.

Even those who heard just the name of this *Tantra*
amassed vast merit that granted them material goods,
but those who engage diligently and wholeheartedly

in listening, contemplating, and meditating in this *Tantra*
are fortunate in the extreme.

Therefore I endeavored to write this supreme *essence*
of the vast ocean of the two attainments,
the great treasury of lucid expositions on the *first stage*
of the glorious Guhyasamāja, King of Tantras.

By this virtue, through every birth
may I never part from the four mandalas of the Mahāyāna;
may I enter with ease into the stage of seeing,
the delightful jewel mansion of union.

Colophon and Dedication

This *Essence of the Ocean of Attainments, Explanation of the First Stage of the Glorious Guhyasamāja, King of All Tantras* was composed in order to open the lotus of the intellect of my disciples, the numerous spiritual companions who teach infinite sūtras and tantras, [452] by Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan), a teacher of Dharma, while taking with my head the dust from the feet of the holy lamas who are the Lord Vajradhara, at Gyaltsen Thompo¹²⁸¹ in the Residence of the Great Dharma College of Tashi Lhunpo.¹²⁸² May it prove capable of maintaining the teachings of the Buddha for a long time to come.

Maṅgalaṃ

Oṃ Svasti

The patron colophon:¹²⁸³

So that the teaching of the victorious ones, source of benefit and
happiness,
the wish fulfilling tree, may flourish,
and so that all beings will participate in the perfect fruit of supreme
liberation,
I have brought forth this inexhaustible slow-flowing stream of Dharma

gift
in the Great Tashi Lhunpo Dharma College.

Sarvajagatam

1241. See the *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 481–89, partly translated in Beyer 1973, 114–19. See also Wayman 1977, 155–60.

1242. Tib. *bsnyen pa*, Skt. *sevā*.

1243. Tib. *nye sgrub*, Skt. *upasādhana*.

1244. Tib. *sgrub pa*, Skt. *sādhana*.

1245. Tib. *sgrub chen*, Skt. *mahāsādhana*.

1246. *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a4, D. folio 154a, 307.3, Tog 179.5–6, Matsunaga 1978, v. 136. Zhol and Tog have *cho ga* for *tshig* and *gsum pa yin* for *gsum pa ste* in our text.

1247. Tōh. 442, Zhol 19a5–7, Fremantle 1971, vv. 61–64, Matsunaga 1978, vv. 60–63; see also Wayman 1977, 34–43, 156–57.

1248. See the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folios 94a–95a, 187.5–189.7, P. 67.4.1–68.1.5, Chakravarti 1984, 114–15.

1249. Tib. *rnal 'byor*.

1250. Tib. *rjes su rnal 'byor*, Skt. *anuyoga*.

1251. Tib. *shin tu rnal 'byor*, Skt. *atiyoga*,

1252. Tib. *rnal 'byor chen po*, Skt. *mahāyoga*.

1253. The Supreme King of Mandalas and the Supreme King of Deeds.

1254. The *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, chap. 35, D. folio 272a, 543.1–2. D. has *de bzhin* for *de nas* in our text.

1255. Tib. *las kyi rgyal po rnal 'byor mchog*.

1256. This is the way this work by Paṇ chen Blo bzang chos rgyan is actually arranged.

1257. Tib. *de nyid*.

1258. Tsongkhapa's *Rnal 'byor dag rim*, Tōh. 5303, is arranged on the basis of these forty-nine essential points.

1259. The *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, D. chap. 15, has some of the following citations in this section, not including the present one, although the phrase *sbyor pa drug* is found in it, at folio 245a, 489.5.

1260. Tōh. 445, chap. 35, folio 245a, 489.6, has *de yi dbye ba bcwa brgyad kyis*, but not *de nyid dbye ba bco lnga ste* as in our text.

1261. Tōh. 445, folio 245a, 489.6.

1262. Tōh. 445, folio 245a, 489.6.

1263. Tōh. 445, folio 245a, 489.7.

1264. For this term and the listing of the four vajras, see the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 98b, 196.1–2,

P. 69.3.7, Chakravarti 1984, 120. Our text follows some of Tsongkhapa's explanation in his *Sgron gsal mchan*, Tōh. 5282, Zhol 168a7–b3, New Delhi, vol. 7, folio 285a–b, 62.5–63.4.

1265. This term refers to the mingling of the seed syllable, the lotus, and the lunar and solar disks during the manifest awakening from the moon.

1266. *Rgyud phyi ma*, Tōh. 443, Zhol 53a5, D. folio 154a, 307.4–5, Tog 179.7, Matsunaga 1978, v. 138. Zhol and Tog have *bsdus pa yin* for *bsdus pa 'o* and *gzugs ni* for *gzugs nyid*, Zhol has *dgad pa* and Tog has *dgod pa* for 'god pa in our text. This line is cited also in the *Sgron gsal*, Tōh. 1785, D. folio 98b, 196.1–2, P. 69.3.7, Chakravarti 1984, 120.

1267. The following passage is cited in the *Sngags kyi sa lam* by Dbyangs can dga' ba'i blo gros Ā kyā yongs 'dzin, folio 2a–b, 457.1–458.2.

1268. Reading *phra ba* for *dra ba* in our text.

1269. For the terms *dran pa gcig pa'i ting nge 'dzin* and *rtog pa'i rnal 'byor*, see the *Spyod bsdus*, Tōh. 1803, chap. 1, D. folio 59b, 118.4–5, P. 295.1.4–5, Wedemeyer 2007, A: 5a, Pandey 2000, 5, 163.

1270. For this explanation, see the *Mtha' gcod*, Tōh. 5284, folios 50b–51a, 163.6–164.1, and the *Rim lnga gsal sgron*, Tōh. 5302, folio 43a–b, 85.6–86.1, Acip 38b.

1271. Or, for example, with the first session extensive and the last three abridged, see Mkhas grub rje, *Bskyed rim dngos grub rgya mtsho*, Tōh. 5481, folio 181a, 363.2–4.

1272. See also Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 462–64.

1273. *Kun spyod*, *Yoginīsañcāra*, Tōh. 375, D. folio 42b, 84.1–2. For a Tibetan edition see Pandey 1998, 339, and for a Sanskrit edition see 137. D. and Pandey have *he ru ka dpal gzhir gnas pa'i* for *shrī he ru ka'i go 'phang gnas, yan lag bskyod pa ji snyed dang* for *yan lag gi ni spyod pa dang*, and *tshig tu brjod pa* for *tshig gi rab 'byams* in our text.

1274. For this outline heading see [301].

1275. For these criteria, see Tsongkhapa, *Sngags rim chen mo*, Tōh. 5281, 464–81; and Dbyangs can dga' ba'i blo gros Ā kyā yongs 'dzin, *Sngags kyi sa lam*, folio 4a–b, 461.2–462.2.

1276. Reading *phra ba* for *phrag* in our text.

1277. For this outline heading see [301].

1278. Tōh. 1785, chap. 1, D. folio 2b, 4.2, P. 25.3.1, Chakravarti 1984, 2.

1279. That is, pacification, increasing, subjugating, and destroying.

1280. The eight mundane attainments or powers.

1281. Rgyal mtshan mthon po. This is the court of the Pañchen Rinpoché in Tashilhunpo. See Wylie 1962, 135n179.

1282. Bkra shis lhun po.

1283. This verse was added by the patron or donor of the printing or scribing of the text.

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Topic Outline (sa bcad)

A. Characteristics of the yogis	301.2–302.2
B. The reasons yogis should meditate on the creation stage before they meditate on the completion stage	302.2–303.3
C. Characteristics of the place of practice	303.3–303.4
D. The stages of practice; how realization is achieved	303.4–450.3
1. The First Yoga	303.6–428.3
1.1. Preliminary stages of the <i>sādhana</i>	304.1–353.1
1.1.1. The preparatory steps	304.1–329.3
1.1.1.1. Blessing the vajra and bell	304.2–313.3
1.1.1.2. Blessing the inner offerings	313.4–320.6
1.1.1.2.1. Clearing	313.4–314.1
1.1.1.2.2. Purifying	314.1–314.2
1.1.1.2.3. Generating	314.2–317.6
1.1.1.2.4. Blessing	317.6–320.3
1.1.1.2.4.1. Purifying	317.6–318.5
1.1.1.2.4.2. Transforming in perception	318.5–319.1
1.1.1.2.4.3. Setting ablaze in profusion	319.1–320.3
1.1.1.2.5. Explaining the purpose of the blessing	320.3–320.6
1.1.1.3. Offering the preliminary tormas	320.6–324.5
1.1.1.4. Blessing the offering for self-generation	324.5–327.3
1.1.1.5. Recitation and meditation on Vajrasattva	327.3–329.3
	329.3–342.5

1.1.2. Offerings to the field for accumulating merit, maintaining vows and so forth, in order to establish favorable conditions (the sevenfold worship)	
1.1.3. Meditating on the protection wheel to avert unfavorable conditions	342.6–353.1
1.2. Explanation of the actual <i>sādhana</i>	353.1–428.3
1.2.1. Explanation of the yoga of taking death as the <i>dharmakāya</i>	353.2–392.6
1.2.1.1. Visualization of the celestial mansion — the place of awakening	353.3–372.5
1.2.1.1.1. Meditation on the ground of wisdom in correspondence with the empty eon that follows the dissolution of the previous world	353.4–361.1
1.2.1.1.1.1. Explanation of the corresponding object	353.4–355.6
1.2.1.1.1.2. How to meditate in correspondence with this object	355.6–361.1
1.2.1.1.1.2.1. Refuting the claim that it is not necessary to meditate on emptiness during the creation stage	356.1–358.1
1.2.1.1.1.2.2. Explanation of the method of meditating on emptiness	358.1–360.3
1.2.1.1.1.2.3. Explanation of the purpose of meditation on emptiness here	360.3–361.1
1.2.1.1.2. Visualization of the vajra ground and meditating on the celestial mansion in correspondence with the evolution of the subsequent world	361.1–372.5
1.2.1.1.2.1. The corresponding object	361.2–363.2
1.2.1.1.2.2. How to meditate in correspondence with this object	363.2–372.5

1.2.1.1.2.2. The actual meditation applied in correspondence	303.2–312.3
1.2.1.2. Meditation on the specially visualized deities — the indwellers of the mandala who will be awakened there	372.5–386.4
1.2.1.2.1. Setting the specially visualized deities	372.6–384.3
1.2.1.2.1.1. The beings in correspondence with whom the deities are visualized	373.1–376.5
1.2.1.2.1.2. The reason for visualizing the deities in correspondence with these beings	376.5–382.2
1.2.1.2.1.2.1. Refuting the positions of others	377.6–379.5
1.2.1.2.1.2.2. Establishing our own position	379.5–382.2
1.2.1.2.1.3. Explaining the meaning of purifying the ground of purification by means of the creation stage	382.2–384.3
1.2.1.2.2. Displaying the deeds of the specially visualized deities	384.3–385.5
1.2.1.2.3. Amassing the specially visualized deities on your body	385.5–386.4
1.2.1.3. Immersing the specially visualized deities in the clear light — the method of awakening	386.4–392.6
1.2.2. Explanation of the yoga of taking the intermediate state as the <i>Sam̐bhogakāya</i>	392.6–400.2
1.2.2.1. Presenting the intermediate state, the ground of purification	393.1–395.1
1.2.2.2. How to visualize the first lord in correspondence with the intermediate state	395.1–400.2

1.2.3. Explanation of the yoga of taking birth as the <i>nirmāṇakāya</i>	400.2–421.0
1.2.3.1. Explaining the ground of purification — taking birth in a womb	400.3–403.3
1.2.3.2. Explaining the purifier — how to practice in correspondence with the ground of purification	403.3–406.4
1.2.3.3. Explaining the body mandala separately	406.4–411.5
1.2.3.4. Explanation of the blessing of the body, speech, and mind, and the meditation on the triple-layered <i>sattvas</i>	411.5–421.6
1.2.3.4.1. Blessing the three doors	411.6–417.4
1.2.3.4.1.1. Blessing the body	412.3–414.1
1.2.3.4.1.2. Blessing the speech	414.1–415.2
1.2.3.4.1.3. Blessing the mind	415.2–416.6
1.2.3.4.1.4. Blessing the body, speech, and mind	416.6–417.4
1.2.3.4.2. How to meditate on the triple-layered <i>sattvas</i>	417.4–421.6
1.2.4. Gathering and absorbing in union with the consort to demonstrate that these three bodies are attained through the dharma of passion	421.6–428.3
2. Explaining the samādhi of the Supreme King of Mandalas	428.3–436.5
2.1. The actual explanation	428.3–431.3
2.2. Removing uncertainties	431.3–436.5
2.2.1. Removing uncertainties concerning (a) the ritual method of generating the deity, and (b) the mode of interchanging the principal deity	431.4–434.1
2.2.2. Removing uncertainties concerning the faces and arms	434.1–435.5

faces and arms	
2.2.3. Removing uncertainties concerning the number of deities	435.5–436.5
3. The Supreme King of Deeds	436.5–449.4
3.1. The yoga pertaining to the actual meditative session	436.5–443.5
3.1.1. The yoga of the subtle drop	436.6–438.4
3.1.2. The yoga of recitation	438.5–440.6
3.1.2.1. Mental recitation, vajra recitation	438.5–438.6
3.1.2.2. Voiced recitation	438.6–440.6
3.1.2.2.1. <i>Samaya</i> recitation	439.1–439.2
3.1.2.2.2. <i>Doli</i> recitation or palanquin recitation	439.2–439.3
3.1.2.2.3. Enraged recitation	439.3–439.4
3.1.2.2.4. Fierce recitation	439.4–439.4
3.1.2.2.5. Heap recitation	439.4–440.6
3.1.3. Dissolving into clear light and arising in response to the invocation with a song	440.6–441.5
3.1.4. Offerings, praises, and tasting the nectar	441.5–443.1
3.1.5. The ritual method of dissolving the visualization	443.1–443.5
3.2. The yoga pertaining to the periods between meditative sessions	443.5–445.5
3.2.1. The yoga of body enhancement	443.5–444.1
3.2.2. Food yoga	444.1–445.1
3.2.3. The yogas of sleeping and arising	445.1–445.1
3.2.4. Offering tormas	445.1–445.5
(i) The framework of the <i>sādhana</i>	445.5–448.5
(a) The four stages of familiarization and attainment	445.5–446.2
(b) The four yogas	446.2–446.4

(c) The three samādhis	446.4–446.5
(d) The forty-nine essential points	446.5–448.2
(e) The four vajras	448.2–448.5
(ii) Classifications	448.5–449.4
4. How to meditate; how to engage the mind in visualization during the creation stage	449.4–450.3
E. The criteria for completing the creation stage by practicing in this way	450.3–450.5
F. How siddhis are attained upon the completion of the creation stage	450.6–452.3

Abbreviations and Sigla

- Dunh. Dunhuang, IOL (India Office Library), Tib. J 481 and IOL Tib. J 438.
Mvy. Mahāvyutpatti; see Sakaki, Ryōzaburō.
Tog Stog Palace edition of the Tibetan Kangyur.
Zhol *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa rgyud 'grel ba bzhi sbrags dang bcas pa.*
Lhasa Zhol, n.d., made from blockprints carved in 1890.

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TŌH.	ENGLISH TITLE
3	<i>Monastic Guidelines</i>
57	<i>Longer Sūtra on Entering the Womb</i>
362	<i>Kālacakra Tantra</i>
369	<i>Abhidhānottara Tantra</i>
370	<i>Vajradāka Tantra</i>
372	<i>Ḍākārṇava Tantra</i>
373	<i>Saṃvarodaya Tantra</i>
374	<i>Rising of Heruka</i>
375	<i>Activities of the Yoginīs Tantra</i>
381	<i>Samputa Tantra</i>
417	<i>Hevajra Tantra I</i>
418	<i>Hevajra Tantra II</i>
419	<i>Vajrapañjara Tantra</i>
428	<i>Four Chapters Tantra</i>
442	<i>Guhyasamāja Tantra</i>

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443	<i>Later Tantra</i>
444	<i>Revelation of the Intention Tantra</i>
445	<i>Vajra Garland Tantra</i>
446	<i>Request of the Four Goddesses</i>
447	<i>Compendium of Vajra Wisdom Tantra</i>
466	<i>Māyājāla Tantra</i>
479	<i>Compendium of Truth</i>
480	<i>Vajraśekhara Tantra</i>
481	<i>Entirely Secret Tantra</i>
494	<i>Perfect Awakening of Vairocana</i>
805	<i>Inquiry of Subāhu Tantra</i>

TENGYUR

1189	<i>Pearl Rosary</i>
1198	<i>Cluster of Instructions</i>
1401	<i>Commentary on the Cakrasaṃvara Sādhana</i>
1415	<i>Commentary on the Vajraḍāka Tantra</i>
1420	<i>Lotus Commentary on the Saṃvarodaya Tantra</i>
1431	<i>Initiation of Cakrasaṃvara</i>
1436	<i>Innate Saṃvara Sādhana</i>
1443	<i>Crown Jewel Sādhana</i>
1446	<i>Cakrasaṃvara Mandala Ritual</i>
1538	<i>Mandala Rituals of the Rising of Cakrasaṃvara</i>
1555	<i>Sādhana of the Headless Deity</i>
1785	<i>Illuminating Lamp</i>
1790	<i>Commentary on the Illuminating Lamp</i>
1793	<i>Intensely Illuminating Lamp</i>
1796	<i>Concise Sādhana</i>
1797	<i>Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture</i>
1802	<i>Five Stages</i>
1803	<i>Compendium of Practices</i>
1809	<i>Formulating the Sādhana</i>
1810	<i>Twenty Mandala Rituals</i>
1813	<i>Elucidation of the Five Stages</i>

1014	<i>Vajrasattva Sādhana</i>
1826	<i>Jewel Rosary</i>
1838	<i>Commentary on Difficult Points in the Five Stages</i>
1841	<i>Commentary on the Five Stages</i>
1851	<i>Flower Offering</i>
1855	<i>Sādhana of the Entirely Good</i>
1865	<i>Mandala Rituals of the Guhyasamāja</i>
1867	<i>Commentary on the Entirely Good Sādhana</i>
2490	<i>Heart Ornament</i>
3140	<i>Mandala Vajra Garland</i>
3824	<i>Root of Wisdom</i>
4035	<i>Primary Ground</i>
4049	<i>Compendium of Abhidharma</i>
4089–90	<i>Abhidharmakośa Verses and Commentary</i>

CANONICAL TIBETAN TEXTS

KANGYUR [arranged according to its sections]

Vinayas [arranged according to their Tōh. numbers]

Lung rnam 'byed = 'Dul ba rnam par 'byed pa, *Vinayavibhaṅga*, Tōh. 3, D. 'dul ba, vol. ca, folios 21a1–292a7, continued in vols. cha, ja, and nya.

'Dul ba phran tshogs kyi gzhi, *Vinayakṣudrakavastu*, Tōh. 6, D. 'dul ba, vol. tha, folios 1b1–310a7; vol. da, folios 1b1–333a7.

Sūtras [arranged according to their Tōh. numbers]

Mngal 'jug = *Dga' bo la mngal na gnas pa bstan pa theg pa chen po'i mdo*, *Nandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa*, *The Longer Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, Tōh. 57, D. dkon brtsegs, vol. ga, folios 205b1–236b7.

Mngal 'jug = *Tshe dang ldan pa dga' bo la mngal du 'jug pa bstan pa theg pa chen po'i mdo*, *Āyushmanandagarbhāvākṛāntinirdeśa*, *The Shorter Sūtra on Entering the Womb*, Tōh. 58, D. dkon brtsegs, vol. ga, folios 237a1–248a7.

Tantras

The Root Tantra

Guhyasamāja Tantra = *Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittarahasyaguhyasamāja*, *Gsang ba 'dus pa* = *De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi sku gsung thugs kyi gsang chen gsang ba 'dus pa*, Tōh. 442, D. rgyud, vol. ca, 90a1–148a6, Peking Bka' 'gyur, Ōtani 81, vol. ca, folios 95b5–167b1, Dunh. Tib. J 481 and J 438, Tog, vol. ca, folios 1b1–82a5, in *The Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* (Thimbu: Dingo Khyentse Rimpoche, 1973), vol. 17, folios 1b1–314a4, and as *Gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags dang bcas pa* (Lhasa: Zhol Printing House, made from blockprints carved in 1890). My notes refer to the

translation found in the Zhol, Tog, and Dunh, and not to D. and P. Sanskrit editions, Benoytosh Bhattacharyya 1931, Bagchi 1965, Fremantle 1971, and Matsunaga 1978. English translation, Fremantle 1971; German translation, Gäng 1988.

Explanatory Tantras of the Gsang ba 'dus pa
[arranged according to their Tōh. numbers]

Rgyud phyi ma, *Uttaratantra*, Tōh. 443, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ca*, folios 148a6–157b7, Tog, vol. *ca*, folios 82a5–95b5.

Dgongs pa lung ston or *Lung ston* = *Dgongs pa lung bstan [ston] pa'i rgyud*, *Sandhyāvyākaraṇatantra*, Tōh. 444, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ca*, folios 158a1–207b7.

Rdor 'phreng = *Rdo rje 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, *Vajramālātantra*, Tōh. 445, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ca*, folios 208a1–277b3. English translation, Kittay 2011.

Lha mo bzhis zhus = *Lha mo bzhis yongs su zhus pa*, *Caturdevīparipṛcchā*, Tōh. 446, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ca*, folios 277b3–281b7.

Ye shes rdo rje kun las btus pa'i rgyud, *Vajrajñānasamuccayatantra*, Tōh. 447, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ca*, folios 282a1–286a6.

Ye shes rdo rje kun las bsdus pa, *Jñānavajrasamuccaya*, Tōh. 450, D. *rgyud*, vol. *cha*, folios 1b1–35b7.

Other Tantras [arranged alphabetically]

Abhidhānottara Tantra. See *Mngon brjod*.

Brtag gnyis = *Kye'i rdo rje rgyud*, *Hevajratantra I*, Tōh. 417, D. *rgyud*, vol. *nga*, folios 1b1–13b5. *Brtag gnyis* = *Kye'i rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma dra ba'i sdom pa'i rgyud*, *Hevajratantra II*, Tōh. 418, D. *rgyud*, vol. *nga*, folios 13b5–30a3. Sanskrit and Tibetan editions and English translation, Snellgrove 1959.

Ḍākārṇava Tantra. See *Mkha' 'gro rgya mtsho rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud*.

De nyid bsdus pa or *De kho na nyid bsdus pa* = *De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi de kho na nyid bsdus pa*, *Sarvathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, Tōh. 479, D. *rgyud*, vol. *nya*, folios 1b1–142a7. Sanskrit edition, Yamada 1981. English translation from Chinese, Giebel 2001.

Dpung bzang gis zhus pa'i rgyud, *Subāhuparipṛcchātantra*, Tōh. 805, D. *rgyud*, vol. *wa*, folios 118a1–140b7.

Dus 'khor = *Dus kyi 'khor lo*, *Kālacakratantra*. Tōh. 362, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ka*, folios 22b1–128b7.

Gdan bzhi = *Rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud gdan bzhi pa*, *Catuḥpīṭhayoginītantra*, Tōh. 428, D. *rgyud*, vol. *nga*, folios 181a1–231b5. Selected chapters, Szántó 2012.

Gur = *Mkha' 'gro ma rdo rje gur gyi rgyud*, *Ḍākinīvajrapañjaratantra*, Tōh. 419, D. *rgyud*, vol. *nga*, folios 30a4–65b7; Tog 380, vol. 94, 297.1–403.4.

Heruka mngon 'byung = *Khrag 'thung mngon 'byung*, *Herukābhyudaya*, Tōh. 374, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ga*, folios 1b1–33b7.

Hevajra Tantra. See *Brtag gnyis*.

Kālacakra Tantra. See *Dus 'khor*.

Kha sbyor = *Yang dag par sbyor ba'i rgyud*, *Saṃputatantra*, Tōh. 381, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ga*, folios 73b1–158b7. Partial Sanskrit editions, Elder 1978 and Skorupski 1996. Partial Tibetan edition and English translation, Elder 1978.

Kun spyod = *Rnal 'byor ma'i kun tu spyod pa*, *Yoginīsañcāra*, Tōh. 375, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ga*, folios 34a1–44b5. Sanskrit and Tibetan editions, Pandey 1998.

Māyājāla Tantra. See *Sgyu 'phrul dra ba*.

Mkha' 'gro rgya mtsho rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud, *Ḍākārṇavayoginītantra*, Tōh. 372, D. *rgyud*, vol. *kha*, folios 137a1–264b7.

Mngon brjod = *Mngon brjod rgyud bla ma*, *Abhidhānottaratantra*, Tōh. 369, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ka*, folios 247a1–370a7. Partial Sanskrit edition and English translation, Kalff 1979.

Rdo rje mkha' 'gro, *Vajradākatantra*, Tōh. 370, D. *rgyud*, vol. *kha*, folios 1b1–125a7.

Rnam snang mngon byang = *Rnam par snang mdzad mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa*, *Vairocanābhisambodhi*, Tōh. 494, D. *rgyud*, vol. *tha*, folios 151b2–260a7. English translation, Hodge 2003.

Rtse mo or *Rdo rje rtse mo* = *Gsang ba rnal 'byor chen po'i rgyud rdo rje rtse mo*, *Vajrasekharaguhayogatantra*, Tōh. 480, D. *rgyud*, vol. *nya*, folios 142b1–274a5.

Samputa Tantra. See *Kha sbyor*.

Samvarodaya Tantra. See *Sdom 'byung*.

Sdom 'byung = *Bde mchog 'byung ba'i rgyud*, *Samvarodayatantra*, Tōh. 373, D. *rgyud*, vol. *kha*, folios 265a1–311a6. Partial Sanskrit and Tibetan editions and English translation, Tsuda 1974.

Sgyu 'phrul dra ba, *Māyājālatantra*, Tōh. 466, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ja*, folios 94a1–134a7.

Thams cad gsang ba'i rgyud, *Sarvarahasyatantra*, Tōh. 481, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ta*, folios 1b1–10a1. Tibetan edition and English translation, Wayman 1984.

Vajradāka Tantra. See *Rdo rje mkha' 'gro*.

Vajrapañjara Tantra = *Ḍākinīvajrapañjaratantra*. See *Gur*.

Vajrasekhara Tantra. See *Rtse mo*.

TENGYUR [arranged alphabetically according to author Sanskrit names]

Śāstras

Asaṅga (Thogs med). *Chos mngon pa kun las btus pa*, *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Tōh. 4049, D. *sems tsam*, vol. *ri*, folios 44b1–120a7, Otani 5550. Sanskrit edition, Pradhan 1950. French translation, Walpola 1971. English translation from the French, Boin-Webb 2001.

———. *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, part 1, *Sa'i dngos gzhi*, *Maulībhūmi*, Tōh. 4035, D. *sems tsam*, vol. *tshi*, folios 1b1–283a7. Sanskrit edition, V. Bhattacharya 1957.

Nāgārjuna (Klu sgrub). *Rtsa she* = *Dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab*, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, Tōh. 3824, D. *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, folios 1b1–19a6. Sanskrit edition, Jong 1977. English translation from the Tibetan, Garfield 1995.

Vasubandhu (Dbyig gnyen). *Mdzod* = *Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi tshig le'ur byas pa*, *Abhidharmakośakārikā*, Tōh. 4089, D. *mngon pa*, vol. *ku*, folios 1b1–25a7. Sanskrit, Pradhan 1975. French translation, La Vallée Poussin 1926/71. English translation from the French, Pruden 1988–90.

———. *Mngon 'grel* = *Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi bshad pa*, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Tōh. 4090, D. *mngon pa*, vol. *ku*, folios 26b1–258a7, continued in vol. *khu*, folios 1b1–95a7. Sanskrit and French and English translations in previous entry.

Tantric Commentaries

Abhaya = Abhayākaragupta ('Jigs med 'byung gnas sbas pa). *Man snye* = *Man ngag gi snye ma*, *Āmnāyamañjarī*, Tōh. 1198, D. *rgyud*, vol. *cha*, folios 1b1–316a7.

———. *Rdo rje 'phreng ba* = *Dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga rdo rje 'phreng ba*, *Vajrāvalimaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 3140, D. *rgyud*, vol. *phu*, folios 1b1–94b4. Sanskrit and Tibetan editions, Mori 2009.

———. *Rim lnga dgongs 'grel* = *Rim pa lnga pa'i dgongs 'grel zla ba'i 'od zer*, *Pañcakramamatiṭkācandraprabhā*, Tōh. 1831, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ci*, folios 180b3–203a4.

Āryadeva ('Phags pa lha). *Spyod bsdus* = *Spyod pa bsdus pa'i sgron ma*, *Caryāmēlāpakapradīpa*, Tōh. 1803, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ngi*, folios 57a2–106b7. Sanskrit and Tibetan editions, Pandey 2000 and Wedemeyer 2007. English translation, Wedemeyer 2007.

Bhavabhadra. *Rdo rje mkha' 'gro'i rnam par bshad pa*, *Vajradākatantravivṛti*, Tōh. 1415, D. *rgyud*, vol. *tsha*, folios 1b1–208b7.

Bhavyakīrti (Skal ldan grags pa). *Rab tu sgron gsal* = *Sgron ma gsal bar byed pa'i dgongs pa rab gsal bshad pa'i ṭī kā*, *Pradīpodyotanābhisamdhīprakāśikāvyākhyāṭīkā*, Tōh. 1793, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ki*, folios

- 1b1–292a7, continued in vol. *khi*, folios 1b1–155a5.
- . *Rim pa lnga'i dka' 'grel*, *Pañcakramapañjikā*, Tōh. 1838, D. *rgyud*, vol. *chi*, folios 1b1–7b7.
- Bhūva (Bhu ba blo ldan). *Bde mchog 'byung ba dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga = 'Khor lo bde mchog 'byung ba'i dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga*, *Cakrasamvarodayamaṇḍalavidhi*, Tōh. 1538, D. *rgyud*, vol. *za*, folios 117b2–150a5.
- *Bodhivara (Byang chub mchog). *'Jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i sgrub pa'i thabs*, *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgītisādhana*, Tōh. 2579, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ngu*, folios 59a4–70b2.
- Buddhajñāna (Sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs). *Kun tu bzang po sgrub pa'i thabs*, *Samantabhadrasādhana*, Tōh. 1855, D. *rgyud*, vol. *di*, folios 28b6–36a5.
- Candrakīrti (Zla ba grags pa). *Sgron gsal = Sgron ma gsal bar byed pa'i rgya cher bshad pa*, *Pradīpoddyotanāṭikā*, Tōh. 1785, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ha*, folios 1b1–201b2, Ōtani 2650, Peking, vol. 60, 23.1.1–117.3.7, The Golden Tengyur, vol. 30, 1–151. Sanskrit edition, Chakravarti 1984.
- . *Rdo rje sems dpa'i sgrub thabs*, *Vajrasattva Sādhana*. Tōh. 1814, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ngi*, folios 195b6–204b6, Ōtani 2678, P. vol. *gi*, folios 168b2–178a2. Sanskrit and Tibetan editions, Luo Hong and Tomabeche 2009.
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- *Kambala (Lwa ba pa). *Bde mchog gi sgrub thabs gtsug nor = Bcom ldan 'das 'khor lo bde mchog gi sgrub thabs rin po che gtsug gi nor bu*, *Cakrasamvarasādhanaratnacūḍāmaṇi*, Tōh. 1443, D. *rgyud*, vol. *wa*, folios 243b6–251a7.
- . *Dka' 'grel sgrub pa'i thabs kyi gleng gzhi = 'Khor lo sdom pa'i dka' 'grel sgrub pa'i thabs kyi gleng gzhi*, *Sādhananidānacakrasamvarapañjikā*, Tōh. 1401, D. *rgyud*, vol. *ba*, folios 1b1–78a7.
- Karuṇāśrī (Thugs rje dpal). *Sgron gsal dka' 'grel = Sgron ma gsal bar byed pa'i gsal byed dka' 'grel*, *Pradīpoddyotanoddyotapañjikā*, Tōh. 1790, D. *rgyud*, vol. *'a*, folios 10b1–170a7.
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- . *Rim pa Inga pa, Pañcakrama*, Tōh. 1802, D. rgyud, vol. ngi, folios 45a5–57a1. Sanskrit and Tibetan editions, Katsumi Mimaki and Toru Tomabechei 1994, and Ramshankar Tripathi 2001. French translation, Toru Tomabechei 2006.
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- . *Dgyes pa'i rdo rje'i dka' 'grel mu tig phreng ba, Hevajrapañjikāmuktikāvalī*, Tōh. 1189, D. rgyud, vol. ga, folios 221a1–297a7. Sanskrit edition, Tripathi and Negi 2001; for the first six verses, Isaacson 2000.
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Index

A

Abhayākaragupta/Abhayākara/Abhaya, [69](#), [82](#), [83](#), [91](#), [108](#), [179](#), [209](#)

Abhidhānottara Tantra, [68](#), [70](#), [128](#), [212n1224](#)

Abhidharmakośa, [106–7](#), [148](#), [149–50](#)

Activities of the Yoginīs, [221–22](#)

aggregates, [10](#), [13](#), [25](#), [59](#), [137](#), [160](#), [169–70](#)

dissolution during death, [140–43](#), [145](#)

five, [27](#), [72](#), [112](#), [162](#), [168–69](#), [173](#), [219](#)

āḥ, [54–55](#), [58](#), [65](#), [67](#), [71](#), [82](#), [173](#), [188](#)

air-wind element, [142–43](#)

Akṣobhya, [26](#)

in amassing specially visualized deities on the body, [136](#)

in establishing favorable conditions, [70](#), [73](#), [78](#)

in food yoga, [215](#)

in praises, [211](#)

in preparatory steps, [47](#)

in protection wheel, [83–86](#)

in Supreme King of Deeds, [206](#), [213](#)

in Supreme King of Mandalas, [193–96](#), [199–200](#), [202](#)

in yoga of taking birth as the *nirmāṇakāya*, [26](#), [159](#), [160](#), [161](#), [162](#), [175](#), [179](#)

in yoga of the subtle drop, [205–6](#)

in yoga with the consort, [187](#)

Akṣobhyavajra, [69](#)

ambrosial substances, [57](#)

Amitābha, [47](#), [58](#), [79](#), [142](#), [159](#), [173](#), [174](#)

Amoghasiddhi, [47](#), [56](#), [79](#), [159](#), [188–89](#)

Amṛtakunḍalin, [88](#)

animate realm, [8](#), [18](#), [62](#), [99](#), [101](#), [102](#), [103](#), [104](#), [152](#), [154](#)

antidote, power of applying, [68](#)

“appearance,” [143](#)

appearance, of offerings, 65
appearance aspect, 99
appearances. *See* ordinary appearances and attitudes; vivid appearances
“approaching attainment,” 143, 217
arising, yoga of, 214
arms, six, 200, 201–2
arts of love, 186, 186n1083
Ārya Nāgārjuna. *See* Nāgārjuna, Ārya
Ārya tradition, 2, 4, 14, 18, 25, 203
Atiśa, 105
attainment, familiarization and, 217
authorities, scriptural, 34–35
awakening, 12, 24, 139. *See also* attainment, familiarization and; manifest awakenings

B

Babhravya, 186n1083
bells, 45–53, 78
 clapper of, 48n175, 49
 handle of, 47–48
 hero’s, 46
 of pledge, 46
 resounding of, 52
 ringing of, 48, 52
 of the tathāgata, 46
 tongue of, 48
Bhavyakīrti, 69, 179
bhrūṃ, 20, 82, 112, 194
Bhūvamati, 60
birth
 creation versus completion stages, 132–33
 modes of, 127–30
 taking as the *nirmāṇakāya*, 13, 26–29, 134, 157–81
blazing in profusion, 54, 55, 57, 58–60
blessing
 of body, speech, and mind, 28, 170–77
 of food, 213

- of inner offerings, 53–60
- of offering for self-generation, 64–66
- of vajra and bell, 45–53

bliss

- indivisible from emptiness, 18, 19, 29, 54–55
- of union with the consort, 29, 73, 131, 189
- untainted, 65
- and vajra, 49

bodhicitta

- in channels, 158, 162, 170
- drawing forth, 188–89
- embracing without emitting, 186, 189
- as nectar, 29
- visualizing, 26, 29, 135, 196, 212–13
- without emitting, 186

Bodhicittavajra, 72, 73, 136, 163n913

bodhisattvas, 47, 72, 76, 162, 187n1094

body

- blessing, 171–73
- dying, 140–43
- as great seal, 197, 198
- of wind, 147–48
- See also* body, speech, and mind; coarse body; subtle body

body, speech, and mind, 28, 30, 49, 50, 170–77

- deeds of Buddha, 184–85

body enhancement, yoga of, 213

body mandala

- deities of, 23, 27, 159, 162
- dimensions, 112
- explained separately, 164–70
- meditation on, 23, 26–28

body-wheels, 136–37

breathing, at death, 142

Bu ston, 163

Buddha

- deeds of, 184–85
- taking refuge in, 75

three bodies of, 11, 13
buddha-fields, 31–32
Buddha Vehicle, 41
buddhas, deeds of. *See* deeds: of the Buddha

C

cakras, 48, 49
Cakrasaṃvara, 56, 61, 91, 179, 212
Candrakīrti, 18, 69, 179
celestial mansion
 body as, 27, 167–69
 corresponding object, 105–6, 162
 dimensions, 112–18
 eliminating ordinariness, 8–10, 14–15
 ground for extraordinary appearances, 19
 and mind realizing emptiness, 6–8, 189
 seed syllable, 112
 stability, achieving, 222
 Supreme King of Mandalas, 202–3
 visualizing, 19–20, 95–119, 127, 167–69, 222
Chöjé Ngawang Palden, 34
circle of deities, 6, 7. *See also* mandala wheel; wheel of deities Cittavajra, 57, 111, 174–75
clear light
 actual and metaphoric, 32, 133
 all-emptiness, 155
 of death, 24, 133
 dissolving into, 18, 210, 214
 fruition, 155
 immersing specially visualized deities in, 139–46
 of mind isolation, 131
 and nirvāṇa, 184
 ultimate, 24, 25, 133, 155
clearing
 inner offerings, 53
 offerings for self-generation, 64–65
Cluster of Instructions, 48, 49, 61, 178

coarse body, 28, 163
coarse food, 123–24, 126, 127
coarse mandala, 222
coarse yoga, 220
columns, of celestial mansion, 116, 117
commitments, 77–80
compassion, 30, 32, 49, 74, 75, 76, 136, 196, 211
Compendium of Abhidharma, 149
Compendium of Practices, 41, 133
Compendium of Truth, 197
Compendium of Vajra Wisdom Tantra, 131
complete body, manifest awakening from, 152n856, 153
completion stage, 14–15, 32, 33
 bliss in, 190
 and creation stage, 40–41
 and death, 133, 145
 and illusory bodies, 153, 161
 and inner offerings, 59
conception, 26–27. *See also* womb: birth from
conceptual thought, 101, 175
Concise Sādhana
 celestial mansion visualization, 100–101, 114
 offerings for self-generation, 66
 protection wheel, 85–86, 87, 88, 90
 specially visualized deities, 124–25, 136–37
 Supreme King of Deeds, 210, 211, 212, 213
 Supreme King of Mandalas, 194, 195–96, 197
 taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 167, 169, 171, 172–74, 176–78
 taking death as *dharmakāya*, 139, 140, 144–45
 taking intermediate state as *sambhogakāya*, 151–53
 yoga with the consort, 186, 187, 188, 189
conditioning, aggregate of, 143
conditions
 favorable, 69–80
 unfavorable, 81–92
confession, 74
consciousness

aggregate of, 143–44

See also mental consciousness; sense consciousness

consorts

ability to attain enlightenment, 12

commitment of, 78

and fierce deities, 83–84

four, 110

as mudrās, 185–87

pledge of, 45

relying on, 12

signified by bell, 48

See also union with the consort

continents

destruction of, 98

evolution of, 107

people of, 131–32

conventional truth, 133

creation stage, 4–12, 13–14, 33

completing, 222

and completion stage, 40–41, 132–33

meditation on emptiness, 16

visualizing self and others as deities, 166

yogas of, 24, 220–21

Crown Jewel Sādhana, 70

D

Ḍākārṇava Tantra, 46, 61

Daṇḍin, 179

day and night, 123

death

of person of Jambudvīpa, 126, 127

and purification, 11, 14

taking as the *dharmakāya*, 13, 15–19, 23–25, 139–46

and ultimate truth, 133

dedication, 74–75

deeds

of the Buddha, 184–85

- displaying, [135–36](#)
- enlightened, [22–23](#), [30–31](#)
- as karma seal, [197](#), [198](#)
- means of performing, [196](#)
- deities
 - on body of consort, [187](#), [187n1094](#)
 - in Supreme King of Deeds, [31–33](#), [206](#), [209–10](#), [212–14](#)
 - in Supreme King of Mandalas, [29](#), [30](#), [193–203](#)
 - visualizing, [20–23](#), [27](#), [208](#), [209](#)

See also circle of deities; fierce deities; specially visualized deities
- deity yoga, [5](#). *See also* *rūpakāya*
- desire, [29](#), [73](#), [189](#)
- desire realm, [131](#)
- development. *See* womb: development in *dhāraṇī* mandala, [183](#)
- Dharma, taking refuge in, [75](#)
- dharmas, [198](#), [199](#)
- dharmakāya*
 - as the path, [84–85](#)
 - and *rūpakāya*, [5](#), [6](#), [11](#)
 - taking death as, [13](#), [15–19](#), [23–25](#), [139–46](#)

See also suchness
- dharmas, [79](#)
- Dīpaṅkarabhadra, [113](#)
- directional guardians, [61](#), [62–63](#), [87](#)
- discernment, wisdom of, [142](#)
- disciples
 - jewel-like, [11–12](#)
 - qualities of, [39–40](#)
- disks. *See* earth disk; elements: disks of; fire disk; water disk; wind disk
- divine identity, maintaining, [173](#), [174](#), [175](#), [176](#), [188–89](#)
- doors, three. *See* body; body, speech, and mind; mind; speech
- drops
 - subtle, [205–7](#), [222](#)
 - thirty-two, [194](#)
- Dveṣavajra, [45](#), [53](#), [83–86](#), [193–94](#), [196](#)

E

earth disk, 111

earth element, 140–41

earth mandala, 214

egg, birth from, 128, 129

egg of the three times, 46, 47

elements

disks of, 20, 110–12. *See also* earth disk; fire disk; water disk dissolving

during death, 140–43

physical, of embryo, 162

purified physical, 72

twenty-five coarse, 24

See also mandalas: elemental

emanation

of fierce deities, 85–86

means of, 195–96

son-visualization, 206

emblem, manifest awakening from, 152n856, 153

embryo, development of, 159–60, 162–63

emptiness

and bell, 49, 52

disagreements about, 16–17, 81, 99–101

mantra, 144–45. *See also* *śūnyatā* mantra

method of meditation on, 15–16, 18, 82, 102–4

purpose of meditation on, 92, 105

Tsongkhapa's view, 5–8, 16–18

empty eons, 15, 95–98, 105, 122

“enhanced appearance,” 143

enlightened activity, seal of, 197. *See also* karma seal enlightened deeds. *See*
deeds: enlightened

enlightenment. *See* awakening; mind-for-enlightenment

Entirely Secret Tantra, 187

eons, 122. *See also* empty eons

equanimity, wisdom of, 141

Essence of the Ocean of Attainments, 4, 34–35

essential points, 218–19

ethical conduct, 78

evolution

of world, 105–8, 121–22, 127

See also human beings: evolution of
Explanatory Tantra Vajraśekhara, 50–52, 77, 200

F

faces, three, 163, 200–201

faculties, 72, 140–43, 162

ear, 141

eye, 141

nose, 142

tongue, 142–43

familiarization, 217

favorable conditions. *See* conditions: favorable

feeling, aggregate of, 141

females, 158–59, 160. *See also* women fetus, development of, 28

fierce deities, 73, 82, 83–90, 162, 170

fire disk, 59–60, 110–11

fire element, 142

fire mandala, 107, 214

fire offerings, 214

fire ring, 115

fire wall, 90

first lord, 25, 26, 150–55, 160–61, 162, 164

First Yoga, 12, 13–15, 190, 193–94

actual meditation, 93–190

preliminary stages, 45–92

Five Stages, 41

Flower Offering, 199–200

food

in Jambudvīpa, 123–24, 126, 127

yoga of, 59, 213–14

form aggregate, 140–41

form realm, 16

Formulating the Sādhana

celestial mansion visualization, 108

faces of deities, 163, 200–201

- an integrated system, 33
- number of deities, 202
- specially visualized deities, 130, 135
- taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 129, 158, 159, 163
- types of seals, 198
- yoga with the consort, 187
- Four Chapters Tantra*, 212, 214
- fruit
 - ripening, 30
 - taking as the path, 11, 16, 24, 31–32, 119, 136

G

- gate units, 114–18
- Geluk school, 2, 3, 4, 34
- generating
 - inner offerings, 54–57
 - offering for self-generation, 65
- generation, means of, 194–95
- goddesses, 32, 71, 171, 176, 184–85, 210
- gods, 21, 97, 121–22, 131
- gold mandala, 106–7
- 'Gos, 163, 163n909
- great seal, 197, 198
- Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path of Mantra*, 5, 6, 9, 33–34
- Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, 4–5
- ground, 104, 110
- ground of karma, 132
- ground of resources, 132
- ground of wisdom, 15, 19, 81, 95–105
- grounds of purification, 11, 14–15, 21–22
 - birth, 26–27, 132–33, 134, 157–64
 - death, 24–25, 132–33, 134
 - intermediate being/state, 25, 133, 134, 147–50, 153
- guardians, directional, 61, 62–63, 87
- Guhyasamāja Sādhana*, 3–4, 13
 - blessing body, speech, and mind, 170, 171, 173, 176
 - brandishing the vajra, 51

- celestial mansion visualization, 108, 112
- framework of, 217–20
- mantric vows, 77
- meditating on the triple-layered sattvas, 177, 180
- protection wheel, 87–88, 92
- specially visualized deities, 124, 125, 135, 136
- Supreme King of Deeds, 210, 211–12
- Supreme King of Mandalas, 193
- taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 160, 168
- taking death as *dharmakāya*, 139, 140
- taking intermediate state as *sambhogakāya*, 150, 153
- yoga with the consort, 183, 187, 188

Guhyasamāja Tantra

- creation stage, 39
- generating mind-for-enlightenment, 76
- importance, 1–2, 13
- longer name, 28
- “past event” in, 22, 23, 29, 183
- related works, 33–34
- and sealing, 197
- translations, 1, 4, 17–18
- and Tsongkhapa, 3–4, 13

H

- hand seals, 197–98
- hatred, 196
- Heart Ornament*, 66–67
- heat and moisture, birth from, 128
- Hell of Ceaseless Torment, 96
- hell realms, 16, 96
- hermeneutics, 2
- Heruka, 212, 222
- Hevajra, 61
- Hevajra Tantra*, 65, 100, 185
- higher realms, 131
- hindrances, 53, 86. *See also* conditions: unfavorable hooks, five, 57
- hūṃ*, 51, 57, 65, 69–70, 86, 111
- human beings

human beings
 awakening of, 130
 evolution of, 20–22, 121–24, 127
hungry ghosts, 96n495

I

ignorance, 72
Illuminating Lamp
 attainments, 222
 celestial mansion visualization, 109
 meditation on emptiness, 18
 protection wheel, 84
 specially visualized deities, 23, 135, 137
 Supreme King of Deeds, 210
 Supreme King of Mandalas, 193, 195
 taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 180
 taking death as *dharmakāya*, 140
illusory bodies
 attaining, 131, 133
 pure and impure, 154–55, 161, 210
 subtle, 60
 two, 153
immeasurables, four, 184–85
impure world, 14–15
impurities, five, 55
inanimate realm, 101, 102, 104
initiations, 2, 40, 136, 196, 211
inner condition, 59
inner offerings, 53–60, 211–12
inner palace, 114–15
inner winds, 110–11
Inquiry of Subāhu Tantra, 64
Intense Illuminating Lamp, 161
intermediate state/beings
 lifespans, 149
 and purification, 11, 14, 134
 and rebirth, 26–27, 157–59, 161

taking as the *saṃbhogakāya*, 13, 25, 147–55
intrinsic existence, 102–3
inviting the deities/lamas, 70–71, 171, 173, 174

J

Jambudvīpa

people of, 21, 97, 122–24, 126–27, 130–31
taking birth in, 147–48, 161

Jewel Rosary, 153, 161, 209

jñānasattvas, 28–29, 91, 158, 176, 177, 178–80

K

Kālacakra Tantra, 45, 107

Kambala, 70, 91, 212

kapāla, 54

karma, 26, 132

karma seal, 197, 198

Kāyavajra Vairocana, 59, 172. *See also* Vairocana Kedrup Jé (Mkhas grub rje),
4, 7–8, 14–15, 23, 27, 28

Kilty, Gavin, 33

King Esteemed by Many, 124

King of Knowledge, 87

Kṛṣṇācārya, 91

L

Lalita, 61

Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages, A, 33

lamps, five, 57

Later Tantra

inner offerings, 54, 55, 57–58, 59

prostration, 72, 73–74

protection wheel, 81–83, 84

source of phenomena, 109

liberation, three doors of

emptiness, 102–3, 110

signlessness, 104

wishlessness, 104

light that invites, 70, 137, 153
lingual understanding, 174, 174n996
literal level of interpretation, 102–3
Locanā, 20, 169, 172
Long Sādhana of the Guhyasamāja, 33
Longer Sūtra on Entering the Womb, 148, 157–58
Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (Panchen Rinpoché), 1, 3, 4, 9, 15–18, 23, 24, 27–28, 33
lotus, 20, 54–55, 114, 115–16
lotus circle, 114
Lotus Commentary on the Saṃvarodaya Tantra, 128
love, arts of, 186, 186n1083
lower realms, 132

M

Mādhyamika school, 18
Mahāsiddha Padma, 61
Mahāyāna, 32, 76
Maitreya, 187n1094
males, 11–12, 126, 158, 159–60
Māmakī, 20, 174, 175
Mandala Vajra Garland, 63, 108, 113
mandala wheel, 6, 8. *See also* circle of deities; wheel of deities mandalas, 6–9, 19–20
 in celestial mansion visualization, 105, 109, 110, 112
 constructed versus unconstructed, 165–66
 dissolving, 32–33
 elemental, 106–7. *See also* earth mandala; fire mandala emanating, 206
 entryways into, 135–36
 measuring, 116n640. *See also* celestial mansion: dimensions ultimate, 145
 See also body mandala; Supreme King of Mandalas
mandalins, 179–80
manifest awakenings, 151–53
manifestation and profundity, 6–7, 72
Mañjuśrī, 179, 187, 187n1094
Mañjuvajra, 74
Mantra Vehicle (path), 5–9, 11, 29, 69. *See also* Vajra Vehicle (path); Vajrayāna

mantras

abbreviated, 90

for brandishing vajra, ringing bell, 52, 52n200

for clearing, 53, 53n203

of emptiness, 144–45

for firm concentration, 151–52

garland, 208, 209

headless, 90

heart, 208, 209

for holding bell, 51

for holding vajra, 50, 50n190

hundred-syllable, 63, 66, 67n301, 68. *See also* Vajrasattva (hundred-syllable)

mantra jewel-holding, 50

for maintaining divine identity, 173, 174, 175, 176

name, 66, 195, 195n1130, 209

of offerings, 62, 71, 71n329, 212

for purification, 53, 53n206

quintessence, 208, 209

recitation of, 30–31, 207–10

root, 208

snake, 89–90

śūnyatā, 17, 25, 53, 53n206, 59

tail-less, 90

of torma, 215, 215n1240

types of, 89–90

for water offering, 62, 62n265

See also Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path of Mantra; seed syllables:

as mantras for generation; Sumbha/Sumbharāja; Unexcelled Mantra;

Vajrasattva (hundred-syllable) mantra Mantrayāna. *See* Mantra Vehicle

(path)

mantric vows, 77–80

master, commitment of, 78

mastery of body, speech, and mind, 28, 172, 174, 175

Māyājāla Tantra, 65

means, seven, 194–96

meats, five, 55–57

meditation

in creation stage, 221–22
periods between, 213–15
on the subtle, 30, 31
on Vajrasattva, 66–68
yoga pertaining to, 205–15
See also emptiness: method of meditation on
mental consciousness, 9, 141
merit, accumulation of, 7, 69–70, 80, 105
Meru, Mt., 107, 211–12
method and wisdom, 5–6, 48, 75
mind
 blessing, 174–76
 mastery of, 28, 175
 See also body, speech, and mind
mind-for-enlightenment, 76, 79–80
mind isolation, 131, 133
mind mandala, 112
Mind Only, meditation on, 18
miraculous birth, 124, 128–29
mirror-like wisdom, 140–41
Monastic Guidelines, 127
moon, manifest awakening from, 151–52
moon-like mind, 75
mothers of the mandala, 20
mudrā
 action, 185–86, 187
 consort as, 185–87
 wisdom, 186–87
Muniśrībhadrā, 84

N

Nāgabodhi, 109, 113
Nāgabuddhi, 33
Nāgārjuna, Ārya, 2, 60, 66, 108, 171, 199, 201, 202
Nectars, 54, 55–60, 211–12, 213
night and day, 123
nihilistic emptiness, 17, 99

nirmāṇakāya

taking as path, 31–32, 85, 210

taking birth as, 13, 26–29, 157–81

Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva, 26–27, 129, 160, 161, 164, 177–78, 179

nirvāṇa, 31–32, 80, 144, 175, 184

nonarising, 55, 62, 67

nondual profundity and manifestation, 6–7, 72. *See also* profundity nonvirtuous actions, ten, 124

O

obstructors, 64–65, 87–88, 89

Ocean of Attainments, The, 4, 28

oceans, 107–8

offerings, 32

essence of, 65

flower, 64

function of, 65

fragrance, 65

of gifts, 79

incense, 64

light, 64–65

paan, 63

for self-generation, 64–66

in sevenfold worship, 71

three spheres of, 69

water, 62, 63, 64

See also inner offerings; tormas

om̐, 50, 58–59

om̐ āḥ hūṃ, 59n244, 209. *See also* āḥ; hūṃ; om̐

opponents, 35

ordinariness, 8–10

ordinary appearances and attitudes, 9–10, 14, 15–17, 54, 61, 177, 221

outer condition, 59

P

Panchen Rinpoché (Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen). *See* Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (Panchen Rinpoché) Pāṇḍarā, 20, 173

Pāramitā Vehicle (path), 4–5, 7, 8, 9, 29, 69, 76
 passion, 29, 183–84, 188
 path, 14, 76. *See also* fruit: taking as the path *Pearl Rosary*, 41
 people. *See* human beings
 perception, aggregate of, 142
 Perfection Vehicle 4n19. *See also* Pāramitā Vehicle (path) Phalavajra, Śrī, 207
phaṭ, 67–68, 189
 phenomena, source of, 19–20, 109–10
 place of practice, 42
 pledges, 40–41, 45, 76
 portals, of celestial mansion, 115–17
 powers, four, 68
 praises, 32, 211
 Prāsaṅgika school, 18
 pride, 72
Primary Ground, 148, 149
 profundity, 6–7, 72, 221
 proliferations, 100
 prongs, of vajras and bells, 45, 46, 47, 49, 116
 prostration, 72–74
 protection wheel, 81–92
 purification
 of birth, 26, 127–29
 of death, 16, 24–25
 of impure appearances, attitudes, 69
 of inner offerings, 53, 57
 of intermediate state, 25
 of offerings for self-generation, 64–65
 See also grounds of purification
 purposive acts, wisdom of, 142, 143

Q

queen, as *samaya* seal, 198, 198n1150
 quiescence, 31, 144
 abiding in, 144
 mental, 31
 quotations, 34–35

R

Raktayamāri, 179

Ratnasambhava, 78–79, 159, 188

realizations, 11, 18, 105, 170, 175. *See also* attainment, familiarization and reasoning, 34–35

rebirth, 13–14, 26–27. *See also* birth recitation, 30–31, 207–10

doli, 208

enraged, 208

fierce, 208

heap, 208

mental, 207

palanquin, 208

samaya, 208

vajra, 207

voiced, 207–10

reflection, 41

refraining, power of, 68

refuge, taking, 75–76, 78

rejoicing, 74–75

reliance on the path, pledging, 76

Rendawa, 4, 28

repentance, power of, 68

request for blessings, 171–72, 173, 174

Request of the Four Goddesses, 194–95

resolve, 76

resources, ground of, 132

Revelation of the Intention, The, 110, 200–201

Revelation of the Intention Tantra, 140, 144

rice, 123–24

Rising of Heruka, 186

roof, of celestial mansion, 118

Root of Wisdom, 103

Root Tantra

celestial mansion visualization, 102, 109, 111, 112, 113

deeds of buddhas and bodhisattvas, 22, 23

establishing favorable conditions, 70

inner offerings, 55

place of practice, 42
protection wheel, 83, 85, 88, 92
specially visualized deities, 135, 136
Supreme King of Deeds, 206–7, 209, 211
Supreme King of Mandalas, 196
taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 163, 167, 169, 169, 171, 176, 179–80
taking death as *dharmakāya*, 139
taking intermediate state as *saṃbhogakāya*, 150
yoga with the consort, 184, 188
Root Tantra of Cakrasaṃvara, 212
rūpakāya, 5, 6, 11, 70

S

Sādhana Incorporating the Scripture
celestial mansion visualization, 111
protection wheel, 83
specially visualized deities, 125
Supreme King of Mandalas, 193
taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 160–61, 167, 170–71, 177
taking death as *dharmakāya*, 139–40
taking intermediate state as *saṃbhogakāya*, 150
yoga with the consort, 184
Sādhana of the Entirely Good, 76, 101
Śākya lineage, 124
Sakya school, 4
salu rice, 123–24
samādhis, 12–13, 41n143
of the method of great passion, 29, 184
three, 12, 30, 217–18
of the vajra lamp of wisdom, 83
of vajra origination from samaya, 150, 163, 178
of the vajra overpowering of all tathāgatas, 23, 125, 135, 157, 161
samādhisattva, 28–29, 177, 178, 180
Samantabhadra, 175, 187
samaya, 60, 67, 71, 150, 163, 177–78, 197–98, 207–8
samaya seal, 197, 198
samayasattva, 28, 176, 177–79

Samayavajra, 161

saṃbhogakāya

emanations of, 26

fruition, 145

intermediate state as, 13, 25, 153–54, 155

and *rūpakāya*, 70

signified by vajra and bell, 48

Samputa Tantra, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 100

saṃsāra, 13

Samvarodaya Tantra, 40–41, 70, 129, 132, 158, 215

Saṅgha, taking refuge in, 75, 76

Sanskrit, 3, 4

sattvas, triple-layered, 28–29, 163, 177–81

scent-eaters, 65. *See also* intermediate state/beings sealing, 29, 134, 197–98

seed syllables

of elemental disks, 111

manifest awakening from, 152

as mantras for generation, 195, 195n1130

thirty-two, 27, 31, 167, 169

three, 59, 59n244

See also *hūṃ*; *oṃ*

self-generation, offering for, 64–66

semen and blood, 161, 162

sense consciousness, 9, 140–43

sensory spheres, 72

sentient beings, pure, 178

sessions, meditation, 221

setting ablaze in profusion. *See* blazing in profusion

sexual acts, 124, 186n1083

shared level of interpretation, 23, 103–4, 125, 135

siddhis, 222

sight, 141

single-mindedness, 41, 41n143, 220

skulls, 54, 57, 58, 65

Sky Travelers, 47, 48

sleeping, yoga of, 214

smell, sense of, 142

son-and grandson-visualizations, 206
 song, invoking with, 32, 210–11, 214
 source of phenomena, 19–20, 109–10
 special insight, 31
 specially visualized deities, 21, 22, 121–37, 139–46
 speech, 173–74, 210. *See also* body, speech, and mind; mastery of body, speech, and mind
 speech mandala, 112
 spokes of protection wheel, 82–83
 stability, in meditation, 205–7, 222
 stable signs, 206, 206n1182
 stakes, 87–88, 90
 study, reflection, and meditation, 41
 subsequent yoga, 152
 substances, ten, 56–57
 subtle, meditation on, 30, 31
 subtle awareness, 131
 subtle body, 25, 26, 27, 29, 163
 subtle conceptual yoga, 220–21
 subtle drop, 205–7, 222
 subtle mind, 29
 suchness, 75
 of bodies versus mandalas, 165
 manifest awakening from, 24, 151, 152n856
 meditation on, 99–100, 102
 in Pāramitā versus Mantra Vehicles, 5–6
 See also dharmakāya; emptiness
 Sugatas, 75
 Sumbha/Sumbharāja, 86–87, 89
 suns, seven, 98
 śūnyatā mantra, 17, 25, 53, 53n206, 59
 support
 power of, 68
 visualizing oneself as, 126n706
 Supreme King of Deeds, 12, 30–31, 205–15
 Supreme King of Mandalas, 12, 29, 30, 125, 183, 193–203
 Sutra Vehicle (path), 4–5n19. *See also* Pāramitā Vehicle (path) *svāhā*, 51

T

tantra, meaning, 33

Tantra Vehicle (path), 4–5n19, 16. *See also* Mantra Vehicle (path) tantric vows, 17, 40–41, 79–80, 79n382

Tārā, 20

taste, sense of, 142, 143

tathāgatas, in mandala, 56

throat, purifying, 213–14

Thurman, Robert A. F., 33

Tibetan Buddhism, 34

Tibetan language, 34

tormas, offering, 214–15

 preliminary, 60–63

translation, 1, 34–35

truth, conventional and ultimate, 133, 144–45

Tsongkhapa, 3–14, 16–18, 21–24, 26–28, 32–34

U

ultimate truth, 133, 144–45

uncertainties, removing, 197–203

Unexcelled Mantra, 1, 130–31

unfavorable conditions, 81–92

Union of Secrets: of the Secret Body, Speech and Mind of All Tathāgatas. *See* *Guhyasamāja Tantra* union with the consort, 13, 29, 183–90

 bliss arising from, 73

 in celestial mansion visualization, 111

 in meditation on specially visualized deities, 131

 signified by vajra and bell, 48–49

 in Supreme King of Deeds, 206

 in Supreme King of Mandalas, 194

 and yoga of taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 162

Uṣṇīṣacakravartin, 73, 125

V

Vairocana, 59, 77–78, 158, 159, 172, 173

Vajra Dharma, speech of, 174

Vajra Garland Tantra

characteristics of yogis, 39–40
offerings, 55–56, 71
on Sumbha, 86
taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 158, 167, 168, 169
taking death as *dharmakāya*, 140, 141–42, 143–44
taking intermediate state as *saṃbhogakāya*, 152
Vajra Holder, 84, 177, 180
vajra joining of the palms, 200–201
vajra ladies, five, 162, 170
Vajra Lady of Tangibles, 84, 175
Vajra Stakes, 89
Vajra Vehicle (path), 5, 70. *See also* Mantra Vehicle (path); Vajrayāna Vajra
 Weapon, 61
Vajrabhairava, 61
Vajradāka Tantra, 47, 49, 132, 186
Vajradhara
 dissolving visualizations, 32, 213
 mandalas of, 165
 meditation on triple-layered sattvas, 28–29
 as principal deity, 125, 134–35, 199
 prostration to those equal to, 72, 73
 on protection wheel, 83–84, 86
 as *saṃbhogakāya*, 153
 teacher, 61, 102
 in yoga of taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 172, 176, 177, 179, 180
 in yoga with consort, 188
Vajradhātviśvarī, 29, 48, 84, 187
Vajradhṛk, 209
Vajraghaṇṭa, 128–29, 130, 164, 165–66
Vajrapañjara Tantra, 50, 112–13
vajras
 blessing, 45–53
 brandishing of, 48, 51–52
 in celestial mansion visualization, 111, 114, 115–16, 117, 118
 circle, 114, 115
 commitment of, 78
 crossed, 46

enclosure, 91
in establishing favorable conditions, 70
fierce, 46
four, 219–20
ground, 108
hammer, 88–89
hook, 87, 88
in inner offering visualizations, 54, 57–58, 59
nave of, 46, 48, 116
ornamented, 46
peaceful, 46
in protection wheel visualization, 83, 90, 91
in Supreme King of Deeds, 206
three, 176

Vajrasattva

all sentient beings as, 33, 166, 213
on dissolving the mandala, 33
mode of entry, 135
as principal deity, 125
signified by vajra and bell, 46, 48, 51, 52
as wisdom and method, 201

See also Nirmāṇakāya-Vajrasattva

Vajrasattva (hundred-syllable) mantra, 63, 66–68, 67n301

Vajrasattva Sādhana

establishing favorable conditions, 69
protection wheel, 88–89, 91
specially visualized deities, 125
taking birth as *nirmāṇakāya*, 172, 173, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180
taking intermediate state as *saṃbhogakāya*, 150
yoga with the consort, 187, 188

Vajraśekhara Tantra, 50, 51, 52

Vajrayāna, 31, 48. *See also* Mantra Vehicle (path); Vajra Vehicle (path) vase
breathing, 214

vastness, 221

Vatsyayana, 186n1083

vessels

generating, 65

suitable, 39–40
Vibhūti, 61
Vighnāntaka, 210
Vighnāntakṛt, 53, 53n206
Virūpa, 60
visualization
 dissolving, 212–13
 See also celestial mansion: visualizing; deities: visualizing; specially
 visualized deities vivid appearances, 9
vows, 17, 40–41, 77–80

W

water disk, 111
water element, 141–42
water mandala, 106–7, 214
water wall, 90
wheel of deities, 99. *See also* circle of deities; mandala wheel; protection wheel
 wind disk, 59, 110
wind mandala, 106, 214
wind wall, 90–91
wind-and-mind, 152, 154, 155. *See also* subtle body winds, inner, 110–11
wisdom(s), 5–6, 7, 19, 49–50, 78
 alone, 7
 bell of, 46, 78
 of Buddha and Dharma, 75
 of discernment, 142
 of equanimity, 141
 five, 49, 56
 and method, 5–6, 48, 75
 mirror-like, 140–41
 nondual, 49, 52
 of purposive acts, 142–43
 of realizing emptiness, 5–6, 78
 vajra of, 49–50
 wisdom-nectar, 58, 59
 See also ground of wisdom
wishlessness, 104
worth

WOMAN

birth from, [128](#), [129](#), [130](#), [157–63](#)

development in, [26–27](#), [28](#), [159–60](#), [162–63](#)

women, [11–12](#), [126](#). *See also* females world, physical, [15–16](#). *See also*

evolution: of world worship, sevenfold, [71–80](#)

Y

Yamāntaka, [179](#)

Yangchen Gawai Lodoe, [34](#)

Yarnall, Thomas F., [34](#)

yoga with the consort, [183–90](#)

Yogācāra school, [18](#)

yogas, [24](#), [152](#), [218](#), [220–21](#). *See also* First Yoga; food: yoga of; meditation:

yoga pertaining to; union with the consort yogis, characteristics of, [39–40](#)

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Names: Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, Panchen Lama I, 1570–1662. | Bentor, Yael, 1951– translator. | Penpa Dorjee, translator.

Title: The essence of the ocean of attainments: the creation stage of the Guhyasamajatantra tantra according to Panchen Lobsang Chokyi Gyaltsen / Yael Bentor and Penpa Dorjee.

Other titles: Dngos grub kyi rgya mtsho'i snying po. English.

Description: Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2019. | Series: Studies in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism | Includes bibliographical references and index. |

Identifiers: LCCN 2018015285 (print) | LCCN 2018046984 (ebook) | ISBN 9781614295068 (e-book) | ISBN 9781614294825 (pbk.: alk. paper) Subjects: LCSH: Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, Panchen Lama I, 1570–1662. Dngos grub kyi rgya mtsho'i snying po. | Tripiṭaka. Sūtrapīṭaka. Tantra. Guhyasamājatantra — Commentaries. | Tantric Buddhism.

Classification: LCC BQ2152.E5 (ebook) | LCC BQ2152.E5 B46 2019 (print) | DDC 294.3/85 — dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018015285>

ISBN 978-1-61429482-5 ebook ISBN 978-1-61429506-8

22 21 20 19 18 5 4 3 2 1

Cover design by Tim Holtz. Cover image: Lobzang Chokyi Gyaltsen: the First Panchen Lama. Courtesy of the Rubin Museum of Art. Interior design by Gopa & Ted2, Inc.