

Effortless Spontaneity

THE DZOGCHEN COMMENTARIES BY NUBCHEN SANGYE YESHE



BRILL'S TIBETAN STUDIES LIBRARY

DYLAN ESLER

BRILL

Effortless Spontaneity

Brill's Tibetan Studies Library

Edited by

Henk Blezer (*Leiden University*)

Alex McKay (*University of London*)

Charles Ramble (*École pratique des hautes études (EPHE, Sorbonne), Paris*)

VOLUME 54

The titles published in this series are listed at brill.com/btsl

Effortless Spontaneity

The Dzogchen Commentaries
by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe

By

Dylan Esler



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON



This is an open access title distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license, which permits any non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided no alterations are made and the original author(s) and source are credited. Further information and the complete license text can be found at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

The terms of the CC license apply only to the original material. The use of material from other sources (indicated by a reference) such as diagrams, illustrations, photos and text samples may require further permission from the respective copyright holder.

Funding: sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), 2019–2022 (ref. 01UL1912X)

SPONSORED BY THE



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

Cover illustration: Tibetan landscape. By lee_wu. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/13523064@N03/6776832664/>. CC BY-ND 2.0

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Esler, Dylan, author.

Title: Effortless spontaneity : the Dzogchen commentaries by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe / Dylan Esler.

Description: Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2023. | Series: Brill's Tibetan studies library, 1568–6183 ; vol. 54 | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022059780 (print) | LCCN 2022059781 (ebook) | ISBN 9789004534223 (hardback) | ISBN 9789004536371 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Rnying-ma-pa (Sect)–Doctrines. | Rdzogs-chen. | Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes, Gnubs-chen.

Classification: LCC BQ7662.4 .E85 2023 (print) | LCC BQ7662.4 (ebook) | DDC 294.3/420423–dc23/eng/20230119

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022059780>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022059781>

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: “Brill”. See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1568-6183

ISBN 978-90-04-53422-3 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-53637-1 (e-book)

Copyright 2023 by Dylan Esler. Published by Koninklijke Brill nv, Leiden, The Netherlands. Koninklijke Brill nv incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Hotei, Brill Schöningh, Brill Fink, Brill mentis, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Böhlau, V&R unipress and Wageningen Academic. Koninklijke Brill nv reserves the right to protect this publication against unauthorized use.

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

To my wife Passang Dolma



Contents

Acknowledgements IX

Conventions Used XI

Sigla XII

Introduction 1

PART 1

An Essay in Approaching Effortlessness

1 Evoking Effortlessness 11

2 Effortlessness as a Trope of Demarcation 17

3 Looking Back: A Precedent in Nyak Jñānakumāra 24

4 An Internal Contradiction? 26

5 Coalescence of the Transcendence-Immanence Relational
Polarity 28

6 Effortlessness as Path 35

7 Inwardness and Spaciousness 38

8 The Question of Method 41

9 Effortlessness and Conduct 48

10 Encounter and Transmission 51

Conclusion 58

PART 2

The Texts

- Introductory Remarks** 63
- 1 A Note on the Editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma* 63
 - 2 Overview of the Root Texts in Their Various Versions 67
 - 3 Categories of Variants 70
-
- 1 *rJe btsan dam pa'i 'grel pa* / **Commentary on the Holy Revered One (JDG)** 74
 - 2 *Byang chub sems bde ba 'phra bkod kyi don 'grel* / **Meaning Commentary on the Inlaid Jewel of Bliss, the Enlightened Mind (DPG)** 86
 - 3 *rDo rje gzong phugs kyi 'grel pa* / **Commentary on the Adamantine Piercing Awl (DZG)** 118
 - 4 *rTse mo byung rgyal 'grel pa* / **Commentary on the Victorious Peak (TBG)** 150
-
- Bibliography** 233
- Index of Sources** 243
- Index of Names and Subjects** 244

Acknowledgements

The research for and writing of this book were made possible thanks to the project “An Enquiry into the Development of the Dzogchen Tradition in the Commentaries of the Tibetan Scholar Nubchen Sangye Yeshe (10th Century),” sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF, Germany) from 2019 to 2022 (ref. 01UL1912X) and based at the Center for Religious Studies (CERES), Ruhr-Universität Bochum. The open access publication of this book was sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

I am especially grateful to Prof. Carmen Meinert for her interest in and enthusiastic support of this project from its inception all the way to its completion and to Prof. Volkhard Krech for creating such a stimulating interdisciplinary research environment in Bochum. My profound gratitude goes to the late Yangthang Rinpoche and to Togden Rinpoche, who bestowed on me the transmissions of the texts that are the object of this study, and to the late Chhimed Rigdzin Rinpoche (aka C.R. Lama) for being a true embodiment of effortless spontaneity. I would like to thank Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin Rinpoche, who acted as consultant to the project, for his kindness in indefatigably helping me to understand and re-examine the more obtruse passages in the Tibetan texts. I am also very grateful to Vivien Staps, who worked as research assistant to the project and prepared the initial draft of the Tibetan used in the editions of the commentaries.

Some of the theoretical reflections developed in Part 1 began their life as conference papers. One of these has recently appeared in print, whereas the other is currently being polished for publication.¹ Their arguments, however, have been thoroughly refined, expanded on and reworked in the context of the present study.

The ideas presented in this book have been fine-tuned thanks to discussions with colleagues, who generously offered their suggestions, insight and feedback. I am particularly grateful to Dr Cathy Cantwell, Dr Robert Mayer, Dr Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Dr Knut Martin Stünkel, Prof. Lewis Doney, Dr Henrik H. Sørensen and Dr Yukiyo Kasai. The study as a whole has benefitted from the prior work of Dr Karen Liljenberg on the root texts and of Dr Jim Valby on one of the commentaries.²

¹ See Esler 2021b and Esler forthcoming.

² See Liljenberg 2012b and Valby 2014.

The Tibetan texts were input with David Chapman's WylieWord program, using Chris Fynn's DDC Uchen font.

At Brill, I would like to thank Albert Hoffstädt for his interest in the idea of this book and Patricia Radder for her expertise in seeing the manuscript through publication. Special thanks are also due to Dr Dawn Collins, who carefully proofread the entire manuscript.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my wife Passang for her unflagging support and devotion.

Conventions Used

In the notes to Part 1, I refer to the commentaries by their individual abbreviations (JDG, DPG, DZG and TBG).

In Part 2, however, I refer to the editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma* instead (NKJ and NKG, as well as occasionally NKM), in order to highlight the differences among their readings.

Tibetan Texts

The editions of the Tibetan commentaries follow NKJ as base text. Throughout the editions, the page numbers given in bold in square brackets thus refer to NKJ.

I have standardized the placement of the initial *shad* in quotations from the root texts, as NKJ is often inconsistent in this regard.

The following abbreviations are used in the notes to the editions of the Tibetan commentaries:

em. emended. This indicates that the reading adopted in the main text has been emended. That which follows 'em.' is the NKJ variant that has been emended. This is followed by the type of variant this represents¹ and, where applicable, by the source for the emendation.

For example, if the main reading is *mdzad spyod*, the corresponding note will be as follows: em. *mdzod spyod* (tense); see NKG 172.1. This would mean: emended NKJ's *mdzod spyod* (a variant concerning tense); NKJ 172.1 is the source for this emendation.

iso. in the sense of. This is occasionally used to indicate the sense of a rare, usually archaic, Tibetan word.

Translation

The page numbers given in square brackets throughout the translations are those of NKJ, followed by those of NKG. (NKM has the same pagination as NKJ.)

¹ See below, Part 2, Introductory Remarks, § 3, pp. 70–72.

Sigla

Sigla of Collections Containing Root Texts

- BGB *Bai ro rgyud 'bum* (8 Volumes), Leh: Tashigangpa, 1971. BDR C W21519.
NGB *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*

Individual Editions

- D sDe dge (26 Volumes), sDe dge par khang chen mo, n.d. BDR C W21939.

Bhutan NGB Group

- G-a sGang steng A (46 Volumes), Gangtey Monastery, ca. 1640–1650. EAP039/1/3/1.
G-b sGang steng B (46 Volumes), Gangtey Monastery, ca. 1728–1735.¹ EAP039/1/3/2.
M mTshams brag (46 Volumes), Thimphu: Royal National Library, 1982. BDR C W21521.
GR dGra med rtse (46 Volumes), Drametse Monastery, n.d. EAP105/1/1.
S Sangs rgyas gling (46 Volumes), Sangyeling Monastery, ca. early 18th century. Oxford University Research Archive (ORA): ‘The Ancient Tantra Collection from Sangyeling’.

South Central NGB Group

- T gTing skyes edition (36 Volumes), Thimphu: Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, 1973–1975. BDR C W21518.
R Rig 'dzin tshe dbang nor bu (33 Volumes), held at the British Library, London, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, ca. late 18th century.²

Editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*

- NKD *rNying ma bka' ma rgyas pa* (58 Volumes), edited by bDud 'joms Rinpoche. Kalimpong: Dupjung Lama, 1982–1987. BDR C W19229.
NKG *sNga' gyur bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (133 Volumes), edited by Tshe ring rGya mtsho. Chengdu: Si khron dpe skrun tshogs pa / Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2009. BDR C W1PD100944.

¹ See Cantwell et al. 2006.

² See Cantwell, Mayer and Fischer 2002.

- NKJ *sNga 'gyur bka' ma* (120 Volumes), edited by Kaḥ thog mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs. Chengdu: Kaḥ-thog, 1999. BDR C W25983.
- NKM *bKa' ma shin tu rgyas pa* (110 Volumes), edited by mKhan po Mun sel. Chengdu: Kaḥ thog, n.d. BDR C W21508.
- NKT *sNga' 'gyur bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, dPal yul edition (137 Volumes), edited by sPrul sku Thub bstan dpal bzang. dPal yul rdzong: dPal yul dgon, 2013. BDR C W1PD159541.

Abbreviations for Individual Texts

- DPG gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *Byang chub sems bde ba 'phra bkod kyi don 'grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 303–326. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 303–326. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 259–277. NKJ version reproduced in NKT, vol. 115/se: 301–324.
- DZG gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *rDo rje gzong phugs kyi 'grel pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 381–398. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 381–398. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 329–343. NKJ version reproduced in NKT, vol. 115/se: 379–396.
- JDG gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *rje btsan dam pa'i 'grel pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 292–301. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 292–301. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 250–257. NKJ version reproduced in NKT, vol. 115/se: 290–299.
- NRN gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *rDo rje sems dpa' Nam mkha' che'i 'grel pa/rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 51–112. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 51–112. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 45–99. NKJ version reproduced in NKT, vol. 115/se: 49–110.
- PSG gNyags Jñānakumāra, *sPyi gsang sngags lung gi 'grel pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 439–483.
- SM gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *rNal 'byor mig gi bsam gtan or bSam gtan mig sgron: A Treatise on Bhāvanā and Dhyāna and the Relationships between the Various Approaches to Buddhist Contemplative Practice*, Reproduced from a manuscript made presumably from an Eastern Tibetan print by 'Khor-gdong gter-sprul 'Chi-med rig-'dzin, Smarntsis shesrig spendzod, vol. 74, Leh: Tashi-gangpa, 1974. BDR C W00EGS1016286.
- TBG gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *rTse mo byung rgyal 'grel pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 179–230. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 179–230. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 159–200. NKJ version reproduced in NKT, vol. 115/se: 177–228.

Introduction

This book is about a set of hitherto unstudied Tibetan commentaries on Dzogchen (*rdzogs chen*, a term meaning ‘Great Completeness’ or ‘Great Perfection’), a Tibetan Buddhist contemplative tradition that emphasizes effortlessness as a key feature of its doctrinal architecture and meditative programme. While a comprehensive history of the Dzogchen tradition, which is found in both the Nyingma (*nying ma*) and Bon schools of Tibetan religion (albeit in slightly different forms), has yet to be written, much progress has been made in recent years.¹ As far as the tradition’s early history is concerned, Dzogchen seems to have arisen in Tibet as a movement to contemplatively contextualize the complex rituals of Mahāyoga tantric practice. The term *rdzogs chen* itself goes back to the **Guhya garbha-tantra* (mid-8th century CE), which is considered the root scripture of Mahāyoga.² There it is associated with the culmination of the completion phase (*rdzogs rim*) of tantric praxis and signifies a charged moment of heightened enlightened awareness. Nonetheless, there is no indication of a stand-alone technique-free meditative approach,³ which is why the occurrence of the mere term should not be confused with the fully fledged current of Dzogchen doctrine and practice.⁴ One of the earliest exemplars of Dzogchen exegesis is the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* [*Buddhagupta’s Small Birdseed*] by Buddhagupta (late 8th century),⁵ which is one of two Dzogchen texts found among the Dunhuang manuscripts,⁶ the other being the *Rig pa'i khu byug* [*The Cuckoo of Awareness*].⁷ Other instances of what we might call ‘proto-Dzogchen’ can be found in the works of Nyen Pelyang (gNyan dPal dbyangs, early 9th century), who similarly seeks to expand upon tantric philosophical ideas without dwelling upon the ritual intricacies of the practices that underlie them.⁸ It is likely that this trend of pith instructions, passed on from master to disciple and serving to highlight the contemplative elements of tantric ritual, may have

1 See especially Karmay 2007; Germano 1994; Achard 1999; van Schaik 2004.

2 Karmay 2007: 10–11, 63, 138–139; Germano 1994: 214–215.

3 van Schaik 2004: 167–168.

4 Karmay 2007: 214.

5 Of course, we must distinguish between the authorship of the text and the age of the manuscript; most of the Tibetan tantric manuscripts recovered at Dunhuang can be dated to the late 10th century. See Dalton and van Schaik 2006: xxi.

6 It is found in IOL Tib J 594. See Norbu 1984: 97–111; Karmay 2007: 59–76.

7 It is found in IOL Tib J 647 and consists of a root text followed by a commentary. See Karmay 2007: 41–59.

8 See Takahashi 2010; 2015; 2018.

formed the core of what eventually developed into the scriptural corpus of early Dzogchen.⁹

It has been suggested that this initial phase of ‘pristine Dzogchen’, characterized by seemingly technique-free poetic evocations of the nature of mind, was eventually followed, from the 11th century onwards, by more ritually and technically complex forms of contemplative practice, typical of the seminal heart (*snying thig*) genre.¹⁰ Yet it has also been pointed out that even early on this pristine Dzogchen had to coexist with more ritualistic forms.¹¹ Additionally, the internal coherence of the seminal heart genre in its earliest texts renders questionable the hypothesis of it being the result of the borrowing of tantric techniques from heterogenous sources of the ‘new translations’ (*gsar ma*).¹² Without wanting to enter the complex discussions concerning Dzogchen’s historical development, I mention this brief sketch only to better situate the commentaries that are the object of this study as representatives of the strand of pristine Dzogchen, with its characteristic distancing from tantric ritual procedures and techniques and its correlative insistence on effortlessness and non-practice, a strand which would later be classified as the mind section.¹³

Our commentaries, which were written by the Tibetan scholar and meditation master Nubchen Sangye Yeshe (gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, ca. 844–mid 10th century), are in fact to be counted among the earliest systematic expositions of Dzogchen thought and practice. Their author, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, was born and was active in Central Tibet. While he is usually thought to be a direct disciple of Padmasambhava,¹⁴ the fact that he was persecuted in his sixties during the revolts that occurred in the wake of the assassination of King Darma (Dar ma Khri ’U’i dum brtan, remembered as Glang dar ma, r. 841–842)¹⁵ renders such an association historically problematic.¹⁶ It is thus more likely that he studied in Padmasambhava’s lineage, particularly with Nyak Jñānakumāra

9 Germano 1994: 215, 235; van Schaik 2004: 194–195.

10 Germano 1994: 205, 246, 257; 2005: 2–3, 12.

11 van Schaik 2004: 203.

12 Achard 2012: 234–237.

13 On the distinction between the term ‘mind section’ (*sems sde*), which only makes sense in relation to the co-evolving categories of the expanse (*klong sde*) and pith instruction sections (*man ngag sde*) following the development of the seminal heart texts, and the slightly earlier and more inclusive rubric ‘mind orientation’ (*sems phyogs*), see Ostensen 2018: 35–36, 40–46.

14 See, for instance, Dudjom 1991: vol. 1, 607.

15 For a historical analysis of the circumstances surrounding King Darma’s assassination, see Yamaguchi 1996: 251–252, 254. On this king’s relationship to Buddhism, see also Karmay 2009: 97; Scherrer-Schaub 1999–2000: 239; Halkias 2004: 77.

16 On the problem of Nubchen’s dates, see Vitali 1996: 545–547; Esler 2014: 19–21.

(gNyags Jñānakumāra, fl. 9th century) and his disciples. He also studied with other masters, notably the Nepali Vasudhara, as well as Prakāśālaṃkāra (gSal ba'i rgyan) and the Gilgit translator Chetsenkye (Che btsan skyes), among others.¹⁷ Nubchen is remembered for having played a key role in preserving and transmitting tantric teachings during the so-called 'era of fragmentation' (*sil bu'i dus*), when centralized political power collapsed both in Central Tibet and across the wider region.¹⁸

The specific commentaries we will be dealing with in this book are the *rJe btsan dam pa'i 'grel pa* [*Commentary on the Holy Revered One*; henceforth JDG]; the *Byang chub sems bde ba 'phra bkod kyi don 'grel* [*Meaning Commentary on the Inlaid Jewel of Bliss, the Enlightened Mind*; henceforth DPG]; the *rDo rje gzong phugs kyi 'grel pa* [*Commentary on the Adamantine Piercing Awl*; henceforth DZG]; and the *rTse mo byung rgyal 'grel pa* [*Commentary on the Victorious Peak*; henceforth TBG]. To the best of my knowledge, only the latter among these, the *Victorious Peak Commentary*, has to date been translated into English by Jim Valby.¹⁹ In the colophons to each of the commentaries, the author's name is given as Yang Wangter (Yang dbang gter), which was Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's secret name.²⁰ One of the texts, the *Piercing Awl Commentary*, in addition presents itself as being a reworking of a commentary (*tig 'grel*) by Ācārya Salwagyal (gSal ba rgyal),²¹ who was one of Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's teachers.²²

These works are devoted to four of the eighteen texts of the mind section, namely the *rJe btsan dam pa* [*The Holy Revered One*]; the *Byang chub sems bde ba 'phra bkod* [*The Inlaid Jewel of Bliss, the Enlightened Mind*]; the *Nam mkha'i rgyal po* [*The King of Space*]; and the *rTse mo byung rgyal* [*The Victorious Peak*], respectively.²³ It must be noted that, despite an almost identical title, the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss* that has come down to us is a different text from that quoted in the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary*. The group of eighteen texts as a whole is said to have been transmitted secretly from Śrīsiṃha to Vairocana during the 8th century.²⁴ The root texts, which are not the focus of

17 Esler 2014: 10–11.

18 The East Uyghur Kaganate collapsed in 840 and the Tang Dynasty, which had been weakened by the An Lushan Rebellion of 755–757, only survived until 907 CE. For more on these events, see Beckwith 2009: 158–160.

19 See the privately published translation by Valby 2014.

20 Esler 2014: 7.

21 DZG 398.2.

22 Esler 2014: 10.

23 For details of the various versions of the root texts, see below, Part 2, Introductory Remarks, §2, pp. 67–70.

24 Karmay 2007: 23–24.

this book, have been critically edited and translated in Karen Liljenberg's excellent study.²⁵ Among the subdivisions of these eighteen (or sometimes twenty) texts of the mind section—admittedly a rather fluid list that constitutes what we might call an ideal canon²⁶—the four above-mentioned root texts belong to the thirteen later translations (*phyi 'gyur bcu gsum*), which are attributed to Vimalamitra and his colleagues, notably Yudra Nyingpo (g.Yu sgra snying po) and Nyak Jñānakumāra. These are contrasted with the five earlier translations (*snga 'gyur lnga*) attributed to Vairocana.²⁷ One of the texts of the latter rubric, the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud* [*The Tantra of the Great Space of Vajrasattva*],²⁸ is the subject of another commentary by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, the *rNal 'byor rig pa'i nyi ma* [*The Sun of Yogic Awareness*; henceforth NRN]. This commentary, however, will not be dealt with in this book, as I hope to treat it in a separate publication in the future. All of Nubchen's commentaries that are the focus of this book are found in the edition of the *rNying ma bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa* [*Veritably Extensive Collection of Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*; henceforth NKJ], published by Katok Khenpo Jamyang Gyaltzen (Kaḥ thog mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan; 1929–1999) in Chengdu in 1999.²⁹

The commentaries can be understood to be part of Nubchen's wider project of codifying Dzogchen as a separate vehicle, distinct from the tantric approach of Mahāyoga.³⁰ While this position may not be articulated quite as clearly or systematically as in Nubchen's doxographical masterpiece, the *bSam gtan mig sgron* [*Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*; henceforth SM], our commentaries can nonetheless be seen to share the same intellectual aim of doxographical demarcation. Indeed, philologically speaking, we find, alongside the quotations from the root texts, a few short sections of the commentaries reproduced in the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*,³¹ which would indicate that they were stepping stones towards Nubchen's most mature piece of exegetical writing. In terms of their structure, typically there is no clearly defined sequence of arguments, in contradistinction to the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*. The commentaries are instead loosely structured on the root texts that they seek to explicate, repeating in various ways the basic principles of Dzogchen.

25 See Liljenberg 2012b.

26 Lopez 2018: 57, 84, 87.

27 Liljenberg 2012b: 25, 86.

28 It has been translated, along with the *lCags 'grel* commentary attributed to Vairocana, by Clemente 2017.

29 They are all found in Volume 103. For details, see p. XIII.

30 van Schaik 2004: 195–196, 199, 201.

31 See the notes to the translations in Part 2.

Stylistically speaking, the commentaries are written in prose, although in some cases we have verses of homage and dedication at the beginning and end. The root texts they explicate, on the other hand, are written in verse. Typically, the commentary quotes one or several verses from the root text (a lemma), which Nubchen then proceeds to elucidate. The *Piercing Awl Commentary* stands somewhat apart, however, since here the commentary itself is versified and fails to clearly distinguish between the lemmata of the root text and the explanatory material. This may perhaps be due to the loss of highlighting in a previous manuscript copy,³² since we know from some of the Dunhuang manuscripts that highlighting by means of a semi-transparent wash was sometimes used to differentiate the root text from its surrounding commentary.³³ Whereas the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One* and the *Victorious Peak Commentary* closely follow the order of the lines as found in their respective root texts, this is not the case with the *Piercing Awl Commentary*, so much so that one might surmise that the text Nubchen had before him was arranged in quite a different order. Moreover, the root text as quoted in the latter commentary tends to be closer to the sDe dge version (= D) of the root text than to its mTshams brag (= M) counterpart. As far as the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* is concerned, it is striking for the fact that the root text it explicates, despite being called the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss, the Enlightened Mind*, clearly does not correspond to the *bDe ba phra bkod* [*The Inlaid Jewel of Bliss*] as found in the currently available editions of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* [*Ancient Tantra Collection*; henceforth NGB].³⁴ Likewise, the citations from the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss* found in the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* correspond to the lemmata of the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* but not to the root text as found in the *Ancient Tantra Collection*.³⁵ All of this shows that Nubchen was basing himself on another redaction of the text—or even on an entirely different text with the same name.

This study is divided into three parts: the first part, made up of ten chapters, looks at the theme of effortlessness from a variety of angles. As mentioned above, this theme is central both to the overall self-understanding of Dzogchen and to Nubchen's commentarial project in particular. The first chapter examines the ways in which effortlessness is emphasized in the commentaries, including some of the specific terminology that is used. The second chapter

32 Liljenberg 2012b: 69.

33 See, with regard to IOL Tib J 321, Cantwell and Mayer 2012: 36–37.

34 Liljenberg 2012b: 67, n. 283.

35 Esler 2018: 267, n. 149.

analyses how Nubchen reinterprets key tantric concepts from a Dzogchen perspective, thereby demarcating Dzogchen from the matrix of Mahāyoga ritualized contemplation that informs it. The third chapter looks at one of Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's important predecessors, Nyak Jñānakumāra, in order to show that Nubchen was not creating the category of Dzogchen out of nothing, but was building on and systematizing the work of previous exegetes in the tradition he inherited. The fourth chapter addresses an apparent contradiction in Nubchen's own works, namely the contrast between his championing Dzogchen as a distinct vehicle on the one hand, and his being deeply involved with the transmission and practice of Mahāyoga on the other. The fifth chapter seeks to provide an understanding of what we might call 'the paradox of a practice of effortlessness'. The question to be tackled here is: how is effortlessness to be learnt in the context of contemplative practice? In addressing this topic, I apply the concept of the transcendence-immanence relational polarity in order to place our enquiry within a wider intellectual horizon and to compare Dzogchen with other Buddhist approaches. In the interests of simplicity, I have deliberately refrained from broadening the scope to include non-Buddhist contemplative traditions. Building on this enquiry, the sixth chapter attempts to flesh out the implications of effortlessness for the Dzogchen conception of the path, and the seventh chapter investigates the ramifications, in terms of embodied practice, for the kind of inwardness accessed through Dzogchen meditation. The eighth chapter tackles the question of method in Dzogchen meditation, which is perhaps the area where the paradox of effortlessness is especially heightened, and the ninth chapter takes a look at the Dzogchen attitude towards conduct, i.e. the activities taking place outside of formal sessions of meditation. Finally, the tenth chapter highlights the important role played by the context of transmission in the way these texts become scripts for an effortless form of practice. Overall, the first part of this study provides the keys for an all-round appreciation of the central ideas that are articulated in the texts.

The second part of the book contains annotated English translations of the entire set of Nubchen's commentaries, giving readers easy access to the textual corpus on which the study is based, along with an edition of the Tibetan texts on facing pages. As mentioned above, the Tibetan texts come from the recently published NKJ. While other editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma* exist, the texts they contain are either simple reproductions or emended computer input versions of those found in NKJ. The upshot of this situation is that we have but a single textual witness for these commentaries. These issues are discussed at greater length in the introductory remarks preceding the edition of the Tibetan texts. The introductory material provided

there includes an account of the history of the textual collection of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*, within which Nubchen's commentaries have been transmitted, and an overview of the root texts in their different versions.

PART 1

An Essay in Approaching Effortlessness



Evoking Effortlessness

In seeking to understand the notion of effortlessness in early Dzogchen, the first thing we must do is to examine some of the key terms used to evoke effortlessness in Nubchen's commentaries. In this chapter we will look at the following notions that are pertinent in this regard: purity, spontaneous presence, effortlessness and integral being. Without claiming to be exhaustive, this selection will provide a multifaceted perspective on the ways effortlessness is circumscribed in the commentaries. As will immediately become apparent, effortlessness, as a term of art, is itself found in our textual corpus, yet it is also, on a more fundamental level, the theoretical rubric of analysis that informs our study as a whole. While it is natural, after all, to examine occurrences of this term in the texts, it is important not to lose sight of this distinction between a term of art and a deeper rubric of theoretical analysis.¹ This allows us not to limit ourselves to a mechanical search for specific terms but instead to look for deeper structures underlying the articulation of early Dzogchen doctrine and practice.

In its most basic sense, purity (*dag pa*)² refers to the absence of contaminating factors, which in Buddhism are the afflictions (Skt. *kleśa*) and their imprints (Skt. *vāsanā*), the causes of karmic conditioning.³ In the Dzogchen context, purity does not signify a goal to be attained at the end of an arduous process of purification but rather indicates the most fundamental state of the nature of the mind, variously termed 'intrinsic awareness' (*rang rig*), 'mind-as-such' (*sems nyid*; Skt. *cittatva*) and 'the enlightened mind' (Skt. *bodhicitta*).⁴ The idea is that regardless of the thoughts and emotions that occur on the mind's surface, this deeper dimension of the mind is always pure and unaffected by them. This assumes a structural asymmetry in the relationship between the ordinary mind, considered to be derivative and parasitic, and the nature of mind, which is given ontological primacy⁵—even though the

1 On this issue in the context of *wuwei* (無為) in early Chinese thought, see Slingerland 2003: 11.

2 Purity can be variously qualified, so we have terms such as 'alpha-purity' (*ka nas dag pa*) and 'utter purity' (*rnam dag*). For a lengthy passage containing the latter term, see TBG 205,5–207,4. On alpha-purity, see Karmay 2007: 151.

3 Lamotte 1974; Guenther 1989: 52–61.

4 Germano 1994: 212.

5 Higgins 2013: 26, 189. See also Arguillère 2007: 382.

ontologically ‘prior’ pole remains for the most part hidden. Once the deeper and ontologically prior dimension of the mind is attuned to, the bothersome complications and entanglements that make up cyclic existence are supposed to lose their grip; they become transparent and diaphanously pure, that is, insubstantial, without self-sufficiency,⁶ and uncontaminating. They are thus unable to weigh down or obstruct the mind’s intrinsic clarity, being instead refined through its light touch.⁷ Whereas a teleological perspective would tend to understand the ideal of purity as a result to be achieved in the future,⁸ the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* reminds us that the cause of this purity is already present in the three times,⁹ which is to say that it transcends temporal duration and time-bound causality. From the perspective of the ontological (not temporal!)¹⁰ priority which is assigned to the nature of mind, even deviations are said to be pure from the beginning, being described as “intrinsically alpha-pure.”¹¹ The *Victorious Peak Commentary* thus lists various components of cyclic existence and correlates them to what it sees as their pure dimension, claiming that the afflictions are pure, that conceptions are wisdom and that sufferings are enjoyments.¹² This perspective entails that it is unnecessary to resort to transformative techniques or antidotes of any sort.¹³ Put quite simply, the fact of purity is equated with the wisdom dimension of mind, whereas the fiction of impurity derives from the straying of discursive consciousness into its own illusory projections. In this way, the *Piercing Awl Commentary* can equate purity with non-abiding wisdom,¹⁴ while also specifying that we are here dealing with a level of primordial diaphaneity where the bifurcation into the notions of pure and impure has not yet occurred.¹⁵ The crucial point is thus for the practitioner to recognize and become attuned to the already present purity of intrinsic awareness, a form of meditation framed not as the discovery of something new but as a process of deepening familiarization.¹⁶

6 TBG 205.6.

7 DPG 318.2.

8 On the ways in which Dzogchen thought differs from such a teleological perspective, see Esler 2017: 176.

9 DPG 323.6.

10 Achard 1999: 103.

11 DPG 323.2: [...] *gol sa ka nas rang dag pa'o/*.

12 TBG 194.4.

13 TBG 216.4–5.

14 DZG 384.3–4.

15 DZG 391.5–6.

16 TBG 193.4–5.

Not only is intrinsic awareness pure, it is also spontaneously complete, which is to say that all the qualities of enlightenment are present in it; as “the great excellence in self and others,” spontaneous presence is compared to the wish-granting gem (Skt. *cintāmaṇi*).¹⁷ In fact, in the later pith instruction section (*man ngag sde*) of Dzogchen, alpha-purity (*ka dag*) and spontaneous presence (*lhun grub*) are conceived of as a pair,¹⁸ with a third term, compassion (*thugs rje*), denoting their inseparability.¹⁹ While these terms are clearly found in the early texts of Dzogchen, they occur separately and are not correlated as a specific relational set.²⁰ Spontaneous presence in particular is used to express the superiority of the Dzogchen approach, indicating, as in the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One*²¹ and in the *Victorious Peak Commentary*,²² the absence of effortful accomplishment in this vehicle. Furthermore, the Dzogchen vehicle is itself identified with the ultimate state of realization that it gives access to, a state which the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* describes as equality²³ and which is presented in the *Piercing Awl Commentary* as luminous peace.²⁴ In both cases, there is a connection between the notions of spontaneity and primordiality since completeness is spontaneous precisely because it is primordial. This applies to the fruition of awakening itself, which is held to manifest spontaneously and effortlessly at the culminating stage of the path,²⁵ as well as to the purposes of self (Skt. *svārtha*) and others (Skt. *parārtha*)—a staple notion of Mahāyāna doctrine relating to the bodhisattva’s accumulations of wisdom and merit²⁶—since both these purposes are said to be accomplished through great compassion.²⁷ This indicates that despite being a path which emphasizes non-action and non-effort, Dzogchen does not do away with these standard elements of Mahāyāna soteriology, nor indeed with the notion of achieving enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings. On the contrary, Nubchen is careful to integrate these notions into his presentation, showing that Dzogchen is superior to other spiritual pursuits, not because it dispenses with the two purposes but because it accomplishes them in an attitude of effortlessness.

17 DZG 382.2–3: *yid bzhin nor ltar lhun grub bdag gzhan legs pa che/*.

18 Germano 1994: 287.

19 Achard 1999: 68, n. 31; Arguillère 2007: 383–388.

20 Esler 2012: 126–127.

21 JDG 293.4–5.

22 TBG 181.1.

23 DPG 323.6.

24 DZG 387.6.

25 TBG 211.5, 229.3–4.

26 Lamotte 1980: 2374; Esler 2017: 166–167.

27 TBG 208.6–209.1.

This brings us to the next term in our survey, effortlessness (*rtsol med; rtsol ba dang bral ba*), which again is brought into relief as a distinguishing feature to highlight the supremacy of the Dzogchen teaching.²⁸ In the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* the other paths are chided for relying on effort,²⁹ and the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One* likewise correlates the lower yogas' effortful practices with the limitations of grasping and grasped.³⁰ Effort comes to be associated with the limiting concepts of discursive thinking, such as subject and object, or being and non-being, whose narrowness is particularly evident against the backdrop of the unlimited spaciousness of Dzogchen meditation.³¹ Because these conceptual elaborations are held to result from a fundamental mismatch with reality and to require constant strain in order to sustain them, they are described as painful in the *Piercing Awl Commentary*.³² A contrast is thus drawn between the sufferings of effort on the one hand, and the carefree bliss of intrinsic awareness and of the Dzogchen pith instructions that promise to reveal it on the other.³³ Since in a Buddhist context suffering is so clearly connected to the unsatisfactoriness of cyclic existence as a whole, it is not too far a stretch of the imagination to see the force of this implicit criticism: the lower vehicles are chastised for perpetuating the vicious circle of suffering by their very reliance on effort as a means to counteract, transform, or otherwise put an end to cyclic existence. In contrast to this, Dzogchen is portrayed as free from effort and its inevitable involvement in hope and misgiving. It transcends such involvement by refusing to conceive of awakening as a goal to be pursued, instead considering it a state to be settled into in the immediacy of the present.³⁴

To emphasize the fact that this state of intrinsic awareness, which as the true nature of mind represents the cornerstone of Dzogchen doctrine and practice,³⁵ is an immediately present inward reality, it is frequently described using terms such as 'integral identity' (*bdag nyid*) or 'integral being' (*bdag nyid chen po*; Skt. *mahātman*). These terms—which literally mean 'self' and 'great self', respectively—are certainly provocative in a Buddhist context, where it is of course well known that the existence of a self (Skt. *ātman*) is denied. One of

28 TBG 182.4–6.

29 DPG 312.3.

30 JDG 293.4: *rnal 'byor bzhi po ni rtsol sgrubs dang ma bral zhing gzung 'dzin gyi mtha' yod la/ [...]*.

31 DZG 395.1–2.

32 DZG 391.5.

33 DPG 319.2–3.

34 TBG 203.3–4.

35 Cf. Arguillère 2007: 382.

the Buddha's most forceful arguments against the notion of a self is the fact that anything that is impermanent, unsatisfactory and beyond one's control is, quite simply, unfit to be regarded as one's self. Since no such permanent, satisfactory and controlled element is to be found, there is nothing that can be identified as one's self. Moreover, the denial of the self does not merely consist in refuting its existence on an intellectual level but most importantly revolves around counteracting the affective attachment that such a notion entails.³⁶ In the Mahāyāna, selflessness does not only apply to the individual (Skt. *puḍgalanairātmya*) but also to phenomena in their entirety (Skt. *dharmanairātmya*). While in this context the provocative nature of terms such as 'integral identity' and 'integral being' is undeniable, it must also be recognized that they are interpreted in a manner which precludes reification into a self.³⁷ Why, then, are such 'self-like' terms being introduced at all? The answer would seem to lie in the assumption that they convey something of the unmistakability involved in recognizing intrinsic awareness as one's own true face. In Dzogchen thought intrinsic awareness is the mind's true nature and hence can be understood as one's integral identity; yet it is not a self if such a self be interpreted as a permanent essence, for such an interpretation would contradict the Buddhist doctrine of selflessness.

In connection with the topic of effortlessness, integral identity is supposed to indicate that the perfection of the enlightened qualities is not to be sought outside. The *Piercing Awl Commentary* explains that because one is already the integral identity of awakened body, speech and mind, the qualities of these three dimensions of enlightenment are accomplished without one having to undergo effortful forms of meditative praxis that hinge upon the dichotomy of action and agent.³⁸ This theme of all-encompassing perfection is also picked up on in the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary*, where integral being refers to the fact that all excellence and glory is found within—so much so that one is free from the very concept of otherness.³⁹ The soteriological implication seems to be that once perfection has been realized within, it is in fact found to be all-pervading, thereby transcending the very notions of bondage and liberation,⁴⁰ notions which only make sense if perfection is considered to be at a remove. Such an interpretation is supported if we turn to the *Victorious Peak Commentary*, which connects integral being with great bliss, while specifying

36 Collins 1982: 97–98, 119–120.

37 For a fuller discussion, see Esler 2012: 91–94.

38 DZG 388.5–6.

39 DPG 308.3, 324.1.

40 DZG 383.3–4.

that it is free from desire.⁴¹ Great bliss and desire are related in the same way that intrinsic awareness is related to the mind, the latter being a coagulated disfigurement of the former:⁴² great bliss preserves the intensity of desire, yet it is not predicated on the restlessness of seeking its fulfilment in something outside itself, however elevated.⁴³

41 TBG 189.3–4.

42 Guenther 1996: 18.

43 For more on bliss in the context of early Dzogchen, see Esler 2012: 96–97.

Effortlessness as a Trope of Demarcation

This chapter focuses on the ways in which the notion of effortlessness is mobilized in our commentaries to establish the superiority of Dzogchen over and above the other vehicles, particularly Mahāyoga. This is an important topic since Nubchen Sangye Yeshe seems to have played a key role in demarcating Dzogchen as a vehicle distinct from Mahāyoga.¹ We will begin our discussion by looking not at an abstract idea but by turning instead to the figure of the primeval Buddha Samantabhadra, who may be considered to be a symbolic personification of the Dzogchen approach as a whole.² Already in the Mahāyoga context of the **Guhyagarbha-tantra*, Samantabhadra and his consort Samantabhadrī are linked to the primordial goodness of the mind and of phenomena, respectively,³ an association which we find repeated in many evocations (Skt. *sādhana*) that draw on the same tantric lore.⁴ Interestingly, one of the two Dunhuang manuscripts dealing with Dzogchen, the *Cuckoo of Awareness*, features a self-conscious discussion regarding the superiority of Samantabhadra and the justification for his occupying the central place in the configuration (Skt. *maṇḍala*), a position usually reserved for Vajrasattva. The reason given is that Vajrasattva is the central deity in contexts emphasizing effort and striving, whereas Samantabhadra occupies the prominent position when transcending such goal-oriented endeavour.⁵ This explicit discussion, which occurs at the very beginning of the commentary to the root text, seems to bear witness to an underlying negotiation taking place between different modalities of tantric doctrine and practice, some of them characterized as involving effort, the others as being effortless in their orientation.

The *Victorious Peak Commentary* might be said to occupy a middle ground, for it frequently mentions Samantabhadra in conjunction with Vajrasattva in a manner that suggests that the latter is to be considered as the radiance of the former.⁶ On the other hand, the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One*

1 Germano 1994: 219; van Schaik 2004: 195–196.

2 Kapstein 2000: 163. Samantabhadra's symbolism is also discussed in Guenther 1989: 197–198; Achard 1999: 175, n. 70; Arguillère 2007: 570; Hatchell 2014: 57–59.

3 *Guhyagarbhatantra*, ch. 2, prologue, edited and translated in Dorje 1987: 185–186, 437–438.

4 An example of one such evocation from Dunhuang is found in IOL Tib J 437, fol. 1v–2r, translated and edited in Dalton 2011: 303, 309.

5 IOL Tib J 647, fol. 1r.4–6, translated and edited in Karmay 2007: 52, 56.

6 TBG 182.3–4, 185.1, 198.1, 200.5–6.

is more uncompromising in its assertion of Samantabhadra's superiority, a theme central to its ethos since Samantabhadra is the referent of the title of its root text. The commentary therefore goes to quite some lengths to explain why Samantabhadra may be considered to surpass other Buddhas, such as Vairocana and Vajrasattva. The reason for his superiority is that he is identified with the universal ground (*kun gzhi*)—a Dzogchen term for the enlightened mind, which already in Nubchen's *Mun pa'i go cha* [*Armour Against Darkness*] is clearly differentiated from the universal ground consciousness (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*) of the Vijñānavāda, of which it is considered to be the diaphanous essence.⁷ Samantabhadra's identification with the universal ground entails that he can be said to virtually encompass all the other Buddhas,⁸ with everything being considered his ornamentation.⁹ The commentary then launches into a discussion concerning various doxographical categories, where the state of Samantabhadra is placed above lower stages of realization, including those of the auditors (Skt. *śrāvaka*), of the independent buddhas (Skt. *pratyekabuddha*), of the Mahāyāna, and of the Mantrayāna.¹⁰ The reason for Dzogchen's superiority to these vehicles is elsewhere said to lie in the fact that the wisdom it teaches is beyond cause and effect.¹¹ Nonetheless, its superiority can have an inclusive (and inclusivist) aspect since in the *Victorious Peak Commentary* Dzogchen is tellingly compared to the ocean, which encompasses the various lesser rivers that flow into it,¹² the point being that the lower vehicles ultimately lead to, and are even pervaded by, the Dzogchen approach.

Perhaps somewhat controversially, Nubchen explains in the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One* that Samantabhadra is a refuge for those *yogins* who have broken their pledges, for remaining in the state of great peace without deteriorating from the bliss of Samantabhadra is presented as a self-sufficient means to atone for any broken pledge.¹³ Here we see that Samantabhadra symbolizes a state of realization that is supposed to effortlessly include the kernel of the tantric pledges, yet without getting bogged down in their details. This is clearly connected to the notion that in Dzogchen there is only one all-suffusing pledge (*snum pa'i dam tshig*), which encompasses all the twenty-eight pledges

7 Higgins 2013: 141, 193–195; quoting gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *Mun pa'i go cha*, in NKD, vol. 51/zhi: 58.3–59.5. For a detailed discussion of this topic, see Germano and Waldron 2006.

8 JDG 292.5.

9 JDG 293.1.

10 JDG 294.1–5.

11 TBG 207.1–2.

12 TBG 188.4–5.

13 JDG 296.3–4.

of Mahāyoga.¹⁴ This pledge, of course, consists in remaining in the enlightened mind of intrinsic awareness, which the *Victorious Peak Commentary* equates with the essence of all the Buddhas.¹⁵

This brings us to a central trope of demarcation found in Nubchen's commentaries: that of reinterpreting basic tantric categories from a Dzogchen perspective, while emphasizing a simpler, formless and effortless mode of practice. Typically, this effortless mode of interpretation does not overtly contradict the validity of the tantric terms but tends instead to transpose them on a higher and inward level. For example, in the *Piercing Awl Commentary*, Dzogchen meditation is declared to transcend the use of emblematic gestures (Skt. *mudrā*), mental objects of thematic focus (*gza' ba'i yul*) and incantatory repetition (Skt. *japa*) of spells (Skt. *mantra*),¹⁶ all three categories being typical of Mahāyoga praxis.¹⁷ Simultaneously, in an obvious play on the tantric pledge never to interrupt the practice of the emblematic gesture and spell,¹⁸ Nubchen assures his readers that there is no impairment, since "the unwavering emblematic gesture and the spell of the inexpressible incantatory repetition are themselves free from appearance and expression."¹⁹ The point being made is that, although Dzogchen meditation is ostensibly free from the emblematic gestures and the spells of regular tantric evocation, it is claimed to be superior to the latter because it realizes the ultimate significance of these ritual elements on a higher level which transcends their external performance. In a similar vein, the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One* expressly maintains that despite transcending the effortful practices of the spell, emblematic gesture and visualization that are integral parts of tantric evocation, the non-referential vehicle of Dzogchen²⁰ is an evocation insofar as the meditator constantly remains in

14 JDG 299.4–5: [...] *dam tshig nyi shu rtsa brgyad la sogs pa bsrung ba'i phyogs yod pa la snum pa'i dam tshig ces bya'o'*. On these twenty-eight pledges, see van Schaik 2010: 71–72. For their reception in the Chinese language material from Dunhuang, see Sørensen 2019: 24–25. On the Atiyoga understanding of 'pledge' as beyond transgression, see Dorje 2012: 86. On the multivalence of the term *samaya* in the Yoga and Mahāyoga materials, where, as well as meaning an oath to be observed, it already carries the sense of a Buddha's non-dual wisdom, see Dalton 2022: 272–273, 282, 285–286.

15 TBG 213.6–214.1.

16 On the choice of this translation for *mantra*, see Snellgrove 2004: 143.

17 DZG 386.6–387.1.

18 van Schaik 2010: 67, 78.

19 DZG 388.6–389.1: *sngags dang phyag rgya bral yang nyams pa med/ mi g.yo phyag rgya bzlas brjod med pa'i sngags/ de nyid bdag la snang brjod bral nyams med/*.

20 It may be recalled that in the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* the vehicle of Dzogchen is characterized as being without the support of referential imaging and that this feature serves to distinguish it from the tantric approach of Mahāyoga; see SM 28, 222, translated

the quintessential meaning and thereby abides in the flow of the practice.²¹ The implication here is that, despite the absence of those external factors that define what an evocation is in the tantric context, Dzogchen meditation is in no way lacking, since it fulfils the essential requirement of maintaining the continuity of a practice of non-practice.²² What transpires from such statements is that the rhetorical denial of ritual is itself part of a process of negotiation in which Dzogchen is defined not merely by its exclusion of ritual elements but also by its transposition of these elements on to a higher (or inward) plane. Yet the very fact that the ritual components of tantric praxis are repeatedly mentioned only to be denied or sublimated goes to show that they continue to haunt Dzogchen by their absence, so to speak.²³

A similar procedure of transposition is applied specifically to the term ‘seal’ (Skt. *mudrā*), which as we have seen above can also mean ‘emblem’ or ‘emblematic gesture’. Nubchen writes that remaining in the state wherein phenomena are just as they are, is to be identified with the seal of the doctrine (Skt. *dharmamudrā*). Playing on the multiple meanings of the word *mudrā*, Nubchen states that all seals abide within the seal of the doctrine and discourages his readers from practising the tantric visualization of a deity’s emblems (*lha’i phyag rgya*) since all the purposes which might be achieved by relying on these more relative and external interpretations of the term are complete in the great seal (*phyag rgya chen po*; Skt. *mahāmudrā*)²⁴—to be understood, it would seem, as the nature of the mind itself. This interpretation of the term *mahāmudrā* to mean the nature of the mind may seem straightforward in the context of the later (post-11th century) understandings of *mahāmudrā* as formless meditation practice,²⁵ yet it may in fact have been quite a bold hermeneutical move in Nubchen’s time. If we turn for instance to the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 754, *mahāmudrā* is used to mean meditation on oneself

in Esler 2018: 48, 203. While references to the SM in this book are to my 2018 PhD thesis, my full translation of the text will be published in Esler 2023, in press.

21 JDG 297.2–4: */klung du gnas pas bsgrub thabs so zhes bya ba/ [...] sngags dang phyag rgya dang/ sgom sgrub rtsol ba’i sa la mi gnas kyi/ mi dmigs pa’i theg pa khams gsum las nges par ’byung ba’i don gyi snying po la rtag du (sic! = tu) gnas pa nyid bsgrubs pa’i thabs so/*

22 This paradox is alluded to in Turpeinen 2018: 146.

23 Germano 1994: 209.

24 JDG 298.1–3: */don kun phyag rgya rdzogs pa yin zhes bya ba/ chos ji bzhin pa’i ngang la mi gnyis pa’i tshul gyis gnas pa ni chos phyag rgya yin la/ di’i nang du phyag rgya ril gnas pa’i phyir/ thams cad phyag rgya chen po ma lus pa yin pas rdzogs pa zhes kyang bya’i/ lha’i phyag rgya gsal ba tsam la ni mi bya’o/*

25 Sobisch 2020: 174.

as the deity²⁶ and is also divided into four categories—called ‘awakened body’ (*sku*), ‘doctrine’ (*chos*), ‘pledge’ (*dam tshig*) and ‘activity’ (*las*)—which correspond to body, speech, mind and activity.²⁷ It is clear that these four were known to Nubchen since he briefly alludes to them, somewhat disparagingly, in his *Victorious Peak Commentary*.²⁸ This classification presents a minor variation on the *Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha*’s [*Compendium of the Suchness of All the Thus-gone Ones*] classic association of *mahāmudrā* with awakened body, of *dharmamudrā* with awakened speech, of *samayamudrā* with awakened mind, and of *karmamudrā* with awakened activities,²⁹ since in IOL Tib J 754 we have the same overall rubrics, with the difference that the term *mahāmudrā* comes to refer to the four seals as a whole. This shift is also noticeable in other Dunhuang manuscripts, such as PT 42.³⁰ In a similar fashion, the root text of the *Victorious Peak Commentary* attributes to *mahāmudrā* a more inclusive sense since it signifies the inseparability of awakened body, speech and mind³¹—it may be observed that no mention is there made of the activities which would correspond to *karmamudrā*. In the *Thabs kyi zhags pa* [*Noble Noose of Methods*] commentary, the term *mahāmudrā* is used to indicate the culminating moment of meditative absorption, which occurs after the generation of the seminal enlightened mind (Skt. *bodhicitta*) in the context of sexual yoga³² and following the meditation on the configuration of deities.³³ Since the process of meditating on the deities is described in that text in fairly effortless terms—the Buddhas are already present without it being necessary to invite them from elsewhere, all speech is the spell, and all of the body’s movements are the deity’s emblems—the culminating absorption of *mahāmudrā* might here be said to provide a link to the more formless type of meditation Nubchen seems to be hinting at. Nevertheless, it must still be emphasized that in the *Noble Noose of Methods* the term is framed by the ritual context of visualization of and identification with the tantric deities.

It will therefore be seen that in the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One*, Nubchen is reinterpreting several of the key terms relating to *mudrā* in a

26 Cantwell and Mayer 2008: 36, 142.

27 Cantwell and Mayer 2008: 140–141, 145–146.

28 TBG 206.3.

29 Dalton 2020: 124–125.

30 Dalton 2020: 133.

31 For the line in the root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 238. The line is quoted twice in TBG 190.1, 199.1.

32 On this usage of the notion of enlightened mind, see Samuel 2009: 350.

33 Cantwell and Mayer 2012: 71, 257.

new light: *dharmamudrā*, associated in early sources with awakened speech, here refers to remaining non-dually in the state of phenomena's being as it is, whereas *mahāmudrā*, associated with meditation on the form of the deity, takes on a more expansive sense of all-inclusive completeness. Indeed, it is somewhat difficult to tell the difference between both terms since Nubchen's presentation of *dharmamudrā* also has an inclusive sense, in that "all the seals abide within it," a sense which paves the way for his characterization of *mahāmudrā* as being all-encompassing. What I would like to highlight is that Nubchen's interpretation does not necessarily overtly contradict the ritualistically informed understandings of these terms current in his time but emphasizes, in a typically Dzogchen fashion, their inward sense relating to effortless practice. As we have just seen in the relevant passage from the *Noble Noose of Methods* commentary, this inner and effortless sense is not absent from Mahāyoga, but it is more clearly emphasized in the Dzogchen context.

The *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* likewise engages in a Dzogchen reinterpretation of fundamental tantric categories, notably the correlation of the female and male sexual organs with the principles of acumen (Skt. *prajñā*)³⁴ and means (Skt. *upāya*), respectively. The womb is thus associated with the spontaneously present open dimension of infinite space, whereas the phallus is connected to the functionality of appearances.³⁵ The hermeneutical shift is quite subtle since it does not contradict the usual tantric connotations but brings them into the focus of a meditative culture of effortlessness and naturalness by alluding to particular states (openness and multifarious appearance) accessed through Dzogchen contemplation. This process of hermeneutical probing is also applied to the specific symbols used to instantiate the masculine and feminine principles, namely the *vajra* and the lotus, respectively. The former is specifically explained, on a secret level, as non-dual and hence as beyond the distinctions of male and female. Likewise, the lotus is understood to refer to meditation without the subject–object dichotomy implied in more wilful forms of practice, a meditation which reconciles the two poles of acumen and means.³⁶ In these ways, tantric symbols are appropriated and then subtly subverted to highlight the superiority of the Dzogchen approach which,

34 Following Guenther 1989: 34, I consider this translation for *prajñā* to be preferable to the widely used rendering as 'wisdom', a term which I reserve for *jñāna*. Cf. also Guenther 1984: 5.

35 DPG 310.1–2.

36 DPG 310.2–4: /gnyis su med pa'i rdo rje la/ /zhes pa/ de ltar chas bsnyad pa la ngo bos yab yum 'byed pa'i rtsol ba med de gsang ba'i rdo rje'o/ /dzin chags med pa'i pad ma'o/ /zhes pa/ phrin las ci mdzad pa ched du byed pa'i gzung 'dzin tsam gyis kyang ma bsgom pa'i phyir thabs dang shes rab lhun gyis rdzogs pa'o/.

through its effortlessness, is held to transcend the dichotomizing framework of tantric practice.

Given the extensive use of symbols in tantric praxis on the one hand, and the importance in Dzogchen meditation of encountering, recognizing and remaining in mind-as-such on the other, Nubchen raises the interesting question as to whether and to what extent this deeper dimension of the mind is compatible with being symbolized at all. He does this in his *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* in a lengthy discussion concerning the syllable *HŪṂ* and its capacity to adequately symbolize mind-as-such. The passage shifts across various positions on this delicate subject, starting with “*HŪṂ* searching for *HŪṂ* yet *HŪṂ* not being found,”³⁷ which is *not* taken to be indicative of a problem with the syllable itself. Rather, more fundamentally, the concern here is to pinpoint what the nature of mind is in the first place, through an invitation to scrutinize whether or not the mind and the syllable are one and the same,³⁸ hinting at their *apparent* identification (“*HŪṂ* is the awakened mind’s intrinsic insignia”).³⁹ This latter identification is not straightforward, however, and is qualified by two considerations that are supposed to set it apart from normative tantric understandings: it is unique rather than manifold (as in the case of the five wisdoms, for example), and it is the self-arising of intrinsic awareness.⁴⁰ Whether or not the latter can function as a convincing argument is open to question, given the pervasiveness of ‘self-originated’ symbols in tantric doctrines in general,⁴¹ yet it is used by Nubchen to demarcate Dzogchen symbols as apparently less contrived (or more natural) than their tantric counterparts. Despite what might appear as a slight ambivalence on this topic, Nubchen concludes that ultimately “the quintessence, the enlightened mind, does not abide in syllables,”⁴² and that awakened body, speech and mind cannot be accomplished by means of such syllables, since it is the wisdom of awareness wherein they are spontaneously present.⁴³

37 DPG 313.3: *HŪṂ gis HŪṂ tshol HŪṂ mi rnyed/*.

38 DPG 314.3.

39 DPG 314.5–6: *HŪṂ ni thugs kyi rang rtags yin/*.

40 DPG 314.6.

41 See, for example, the *Guhyaagarbhatantra*, ch. 13, v. 14, edited and translated in Dorje 1987: 233, 985. See also the discussion regarding the *Noble Noose of Methods* in Cantwell and Mayer 2012: 63; and the lengthy hermeneutical explication of the term *rang byung* (‘self-originated’) in Guenther 1996: 175–176, n. 119.

42 DPG 315.5–6: */snying po byang chub sems de ni/ /yi ge la yang mi gnas shing/ [...]*.

43 DPG 315.6–316.1: *rig pa'i ye shes 'bru gsum re res mtshon pa'i tha snyad med par gsum lhun gyis grub pa'i ngo bo'o/*.

Looking Back: A Precedent in Nyak Jñānakumāra

We have seen that Nubchen mobilizes the notion of effortlessness in order to distinguish Dzogchen from Mahāyoga. As suggested by both Karen Liljenberg and David Higgins,¹ this concern with clarifying doctrinal issues and with establishing doxographical boundaries for Dzogchen is not limited to Nubchen but is also witnessed in a work attributed to one of Nubchen's own masters, Nyak Jñānakumāra, whom Nubchen is believed to have sought out after being dissatisfied with the teachings of Jñānakumāra's student, the Sogdian Palgyi Yeshe (dPal gyi ye shes).² The work in question, the *sPyi gsang sngags lung gi 'grel pa* [*General Commentary on an Authoritative Scripture of Secret Mantra*; henceforth PSG], is a commentary on one of the eighteen texts of the mind section, the *sPyi chings* [*The Universal Bind*]. Both the root text, which Liljenberg has succeeded in restoring from the lemmata found in Jñānakumāra's work,³ and its commentary warn against the negative consequences of mixing up the different registers of teachings, particularly those pertaining to Madhyamaka and Chan on the one hand and Tantra on the other.⁴ A further interesting feature of this commentary is that it repeatedly makes reference to Dzogchen as a discrete category, indeed classifying the text it is commenting on as a Dzogchen scripture.⁵ Moreover, Nyak Jñānakumāra describes the rubric of Dzogchen as spontaneously present and as all-encompassing, explaining that it signifies all dualistic entities to be of the essence of the single taste of mind-as-such.⁶ He further points out that Dzogchen, being the vehicle of the fruition, is beyond causes and conditions,⁷ requiring no effort because awakened body, speech and mind are spontaneously present.⁸ While such a description is very much in line with later self-understandings of the Dzogchen tradition, it must also be emphasized that Nyak Jñānakumāra's explanations are couched in discussions concerning the ultimate nature of the deity that is visualized and identified

1 See Liljenberg 2012b: 36 and Higgins 2013: 38.

2 Esler 2014: 11.

3 Liljenberg 2012a: 147, 152; 149, 153.

4 PSG 442.2–443.5 (for Madhyamaka) and 471.6–472.2 (for Chan); the latter passage is translated in Liljenberg 2012b: 36.

5 PSG 481.1.

6 PSG 451.4–5.

7 PSG 464.3–4.

8 PSG 452.2–3.

with in the course of tantric praxis (the so-called generation phase). The following passage is fairly typical in this regard:⁹

Since the cause, the enlightened mind without characteristics, is essentially the source of all deities, when mind-as-such appears as a deity, it does not become an object. Even though previously unseen, through much familiarization, it intrinsically appears. Clarity, as the non-duality of appearance and emptiness, is the supreme fruition and is without contradiction.

Several things may be remarked upon: the enlightened mind, or mind-as-such, is directly identified with the deity, so much so that the clarity achieved in visualizing¹⁰ the deity becomes synonymous with realizing the inseparability of emptiness and appearance, the latter being two complementary qualities of the nature of mind that signify its unobstructed potential and its absence of thing-ness.¹¹ This is indeed a theme that is regularly picked up on in Nyingma discussions regarding deity yoga over the centuries,¹² particularly insofar as they emphasize that visualizing the deity is not about artificially constructing a fanciful imaginary world of one's wishful thinking but is supposed, on the contrary, to correspond to the way things truly are.¹³ It also goes to show that Dzogchen discourse, despite being functionally independent, is also deeply embedded in the framework of tantric practice and exegesis,¹⁴ especially in early expositions such as those of Nyak Jñānakumāra.

9 PSG 465.1–2: *rgyu byang chub kyi sems mtshan nyid med pa nyid lha thams cad kyi 'byung gnas dang ngo bor gyur pas sems nyid lhar snang bas yul ma gyur pa dang/ sngon ma mthong yang mang du goms par rang snang ba la snang stong gnyis su med par gsal ba ni/ 'bras bu'i mchog ste/ gal ba med do/.*

10 Indeed, the term *gsal* (clarity) is sometimes used in Tibetan tantric texts as a shorthand for *gsal 'debs* (visualization), the important thing being the clarity of the visualization. Cf. Germano 2007: 63.

11 Guenther 1984: 232, n. 12; Achard 1999: 199, n. 178.

12 For two recent examples, see Dudjom 1991: vol. 1, 249–250; and Dudjom 2015: 32.

13 Köppl 2008: 87, 98 (English translation), 116 (Tibetan text), 100–102 (English translation), 119–121 (Tibetan text).

14 van Schaik 2008: 20–21.

An Internal Contradiction?

The Dzogchen commentaries by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe differ from Nyak Jñānakumāra's work precisely because of the clearer distinction they seek to establish between Dzogchen and Mahāyoga. Yet it must also be observed that Nubchen's apparent rejection of tantric procedures in the context of his Dzogchen commentaries may be surprising in view of the fact that he himself is closely associated with the transmission of Mahāyoga teachings. His connection to Mahāyoga is evident from the *rDzong 'phrang srog gsum* [*The Fortress, Chasm and Life-Force*],¹ a collection apparently redacted by Nubchen and his student Nub Yönten Gyatso, which integrates pith instructions relating to the three inner yogas. Additionally, the connection is evident from the fact that there are many Mahāyoga texts, particularly regarding the deity Yamāntaka, whose translation and transmission are attributed to Nubchen and for which a detailed inventory has yet to be published. It is also reflected in the long chapter devoted to Mahāyoga found in the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*. While the Mahāyoga approach is placed below Dzogchen in this doxography, Nubchen's in-depth treatment of Mahāyoga betrays a level of personal familiarity which is not found in the Chan chapter,² for instance, the latter consisting mainly of citations drawn from Chan anthologies.

How, then, are we to resolve the apparent contradiction of Nubchen being a pivotal figure in several Mahāyoga transmissions on the one hand, and yet of his downgrading Mahāyoga in the face of Dzogchen on the other? I would suggest that the key to making sense of this lies in recognizing these works' different functions, which may reflect their author's different aims in each case. With the *Fortress, Chasm and Life-Force*, Nubchen is acting as a redactor and transmitter of the entirety of instructions he received (perhaps even in the state in which he received them, with all three inner yogas intertwined, etc., although to date we cannot ascertain this), so as to pass them on to posterity. These tantric instructions were, after all, a valuable component of his own practice, and one which it was his duty, as a master, to preserve, consolidate and transmit. His function in this regard is somewhat akin to Longchenpa's (Klong chen pa, 1308–

1 gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *rDzong 'phrang srog gsum gyi chings kyi man ngag*, in NKJ, vol. 29/ha: 15–425. An initial foray into this vast collection has been made in Cantwell 2022, in press.

2 Esler 2018: 22.

1364) role as redactor of the *sNying thig ya bzhi* [*Four Volumes on the Seminal Heart*], a collection in which he brought together, in his thirties, the teachings he had fairly recently received from his own master Kumarāja.³ On the other hand, in the Dzogchen commentaries studied here, and even more so in his *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*, Nubchen is concerned with demarcating Dzogchen as a distinct vehicle, separate from Mahāyoga. Whereas in the former case he is transmitting a corpus of inherited doctrines, in the latter case he is organizing the tantric teachings in an ideal doxographical scheme, with Dzogchen positioned as the highest vehicle. We might even speculate that these various texts were written at different points in the course of Nubchen's life, thus reflecting his different concerns over time. Given the tradition that he wrote his *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* in his old age,⁴ this work probably represents his most mature thinking on the subject, with the Dzogchen commentaries being comparable to run-ups thereto, and the *Fortress, Chasm and Life-Force* being perhaps an earlier work designed to gather together all the diverse tantric teachings he had been entrusted with. Of course, given the problems in establishing Nubchen's dates with any degree of certainty,⁵ any such attempt at constructing a relative chronology for his works must remain a mere tentative hypothesis. Yet I believe such a hypothesis is worth entertaining since it helps to make sense of any apparent contradictions we find in his different works.

3 Arguillère 2007: 145.

4 Esler 2014: 15.

5 See above, Introduction.

Coalescence of the Transcendence-Immanence Relational Polarity

As we have seen, effortlessness is a fundamental principle that transpires in several of the key terms of Dzogchen exegesis, and it is also used by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe as a trope of demarcation to distinguish Dzogchen from Mahāyoga. Yet it is also an inherently paradoxical notion: for if Nubchen is keen to present Dzogchen not just as a resultant state but as a self-sufficient vehicle, with effortlessness as its defining feature, how then is one to learn to practise effortlessness? Or, seen from the perspective of the inherent perfection of the goal, why do we find ourselves in darkness when awakening is already present?¹ As a genuine paradox, it can neither be dismissed as illogical nor as being just about rhetorical effect² and may even defy any simple attempt at clear-cut resolution.³ In many ways, the paradox of effortlessness in Dzogchen is akin to the paradox of *wuwei* (無為) in Chinese thought, which has been studied by Edward Slingerland in some depth. It entails a tension between an ideal state of ease, spontaneity and effortlessness and a regime of training, which involves at least *some* degree of effort or discipline in order to reach that state.⁴

To approach the paradox of effortlessness in the context of early Dzogchen, I will make use of the transcendence-immanence relational polarity. This paradigm refers to a distinction, that between transcendence and immanence,⁵ which is fundamental to the generation of religious meaning.⁶ Both terms of this polarity must be understood not substantially but relationally.⁷ Religion's wider function can be seen as an attempt to use immanent means to create a

1 This paradox is explicitly stated in the opening lines of the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* (DPG 304.1–2).

2 Sells 1994: 21.

3 Slingerland 2003: 19, 268.

4 Slingerland 2003: 38.

5 Kim 1987; Stünkel 2017. A far more extensive discussion of this analytical tool is found in Stünkel forthcoming. Stünkel proposes to view transcendence not as a binary term opposed to immanence but instead as a transcending process involving several gradations, which he identifies as basic, formal and specific transcendence. A detailed attempt to apply this analytical tool to the context of the tantric practice of evocation (Skt. *sādhana*) is found in Meinert 2022: 314–320, 353–354, 364–365.

6 Krech 2021: 42, 100.

7 Krech 2021: 24, 89.

bridge towards transcendence.⁸ The relevance of such a concept in the framework of Dzogchen more generally can be seen, for example, in Rigdzin Gödem's (Rig 'dzin rGod ldem, 1337–1408) revelation of the *Kun bzang dGongs pa zang thal* [*Transparent Intent of Samantabhadra*], where the primordial Buddha Samantabhadra is assigned a narrative role, thereby straddling a transcendent dimension beyond time and space—the body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*)—on the one hand, and the temporal and spatial categories of mundane existence on the other.⁹

In establishing a relationship between transcendence and immanence, a number of strategies can be at play, ranging from separation to coalescence.¹⁰ For example, in mainstream Buddhism, we have the contrast between the plight of cyclic existence, characterized by karma, time and conditioning, and the ineffable peace of *nirvāṇa*. These terms are mutually dependent, and the transcendent pole can be said to provide a form of closure to the representation of the universe as an ocean of suffering.¹¹ Buddhism as a religious system is replete with practices that seek either to ameliorate the conditions of existence or to effect an arrest of the process of conditioning itself. For example, amelioration can be achieved by accumulating merit (Skt. *puṇya*) and by calling on the compassionate intervention of high-ranking bodhisattvas and Buddhas. On an individual level, an arrest of the process of conditioning entails a concomitant annulment of time, the latter being conceived of as an illusion that is generated by compounded phenomena.¹² While it might be tempting to classify these practices as popular versus elite, there is a great deal of overlap on the ground since elite religious specialists may also engage in rituals of protection or healing, etc.,¹³ and since virtuous forms of behaviour and devotional activities are usually considered conducive to enlightenment. What I would like to underline in this context is that one can see these different practices as distinct ways of creating a bridge towards transcendence: in the former case, by petitioning the symbols of transcendence (the bodhisattvas, Buddhas, etc.) to intervene in the course of conditioned events; in the latter case, by transcending the processes that lead to conditioning in the first place. Moreover, certain trends of Buddhism tend to efface the demarcation between transcendence and immanence, for example by positing the radical identity of cyclic existence

8 Krech 2021: 20, 29.

9 Turpeinen 2018: 144, 156–157.

10 Komjathy 2015a: 39.

11 Collins 2006: 124.

12 Collins 2006: 143–144, 168, 250; see also Silburn 1989: 190–191, 278, 285.

13 Samuel 1993: 31; Samuel 2009: 233.

and woe-transcendence¹⁴ (Skt. *nirvāṇa*), as in the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature.¹⁵ We can observe the same tendency to be at work in the case of Chan Buddhism, which has been described as a form of ‘radical immanentism’, seeking to do away with the traditional structures of mediation and insisting on the immediacy of the transcendent realization of enlightenment.¹⁶ Seen in the light of our analysis of the relational axis formed by the transcendent and immanent poles, such a solution can be viewed as a way of bringing transcendence into the realm of the immanent strictures of human contingency. In fact, we witness a similar solution in our Dzogchen commentaries,¹⁷ which frequently emphasize the coalescence of both poles, albeit perhaps with a tendency to use more cataphatic forms of language.¹⁸ They do this in one of two ways: on the one hand, the transcendent pole in some sense comes to englobe the contingency of immanence or even to cancel it out by its very expansiveness. Thus, we have statements to the effect that in the enlightened mind the third order chiliocosm¹⁹ (i.e. the entire cosmos of contingent existence) is a mere sesame seed,²⁰ or that when the spontaneously complete cause of non-abiding transcendence (Skt. *apraṭiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa*)²¹ ripens, the name of cyclic existence is no more.²² On the other hand, and with greater frequency, we have what seems to be a straightforward identification of both poles: the *Piercing Awl Commentary* claims that the phenomena of the afflictions and of utter refinement (Skt. *vyavadāna*) are non-dual,²³ and the *Victorious Peak Commentary* similarly equates sentient beings and Buddhas, explaining that since awakening is already present in beings, it cannot be accomplished separately from them.²⁴

Let us now look more closely at how our Dzogchen commentaries bring together the transcendent and immanent poles and at how this relates to the principle of effortlessness. Thematically, the very notion of effortlessness (*rtsol*

14 This translation is based on the Tibetan rendering of *nirvāṇa* as *mya ngan las 'das pa*.

15 E.g. Conze 1990: 186.

16 Faure 1991: 57–58, 305.

17 The closeness of certain aspects of Chan and Dzogchen has resulted in an occasional syncretism between both traditions, as witnessed in the Dunhuang area for instance. See Meinert 2007: 241, 268–269, 277–281.

18 Studstill 2005: 170–171.

19 On this notion, see La Vallée Poussin 1971: vol. 2, 170.

20 DPG 308.2.

21 On this attainment, see Makransky 1998: 85–87.

22 TBG 190.6–191.1.

23 DZG 391.6.

24 TBG 202.5–6. The theme of the equality of sentient beings and Buddhas is also taken up in Padmasambhava's visionary training as depicted by Rigdzin Gödem in his 14th-century revelations. See Turpeinen 2018: 159–160.

med) is closely connected to that of non-searching (*ma btsal*).²⁵ That is to say, once it has been established that the goal of enlightenment is already present as the deeper dimension of the practitioner's mind, any attempt to search for perfection outside makes little sense. In the words of the *Victorious Peak Commentary*, once mind-as-such has been encountered and perceived as the Buddha, there is no need to search for the Buddha elsewhere.²⁶ While in theory this may not be so different from mainstream Mahāyāna and tantric Buddhist notions regarding the Buddha-nature and its presence in the mind or body,²⁷ Dzogchen tends to go the extra mile in emphasizing that the only adequate response to this state of affairs is a practice of effortlessness. In passing, it may be remarked that this presents some rather striking parallels with Abhinavagupta's (ca. 950–ca. 1016) notion of non-means (Skt. *anupāya*) in the context of Kashmiri Śaivism, where the immersion in absolute consciousness is both the means and the end of the practice.²⁸

Our Dzogchen commentaries take pains to explain that perfection is not a distant goal to be achieved following an arduous regime of strenuous effort. Instead, it is present in the appearances of cyclic existence (Skt. *saṃsāra*), which in Buddhism are usually conceptualized as being impure. For example, the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* points out that since all the appearances, sounds and thoughts making up the classical triad of body, speech and mind are self-originated wisdom, there can be no abiding in cyclic existence in the first place.²⁹ A very close formulation occurs in the *Victorious Peak Commentary*, where the same three aspects are said to return to awakening, without bypassing it, so that the three realms dwell on the stage of awakening.³⁰ Similarly, we are told in the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* that the mental continua of those in the six realms are primordially free from limitations³¹ and that the six realms and six afflictions can be identified with self-originated wisdom.³² In such statements, the Buddhist cosmos, which though ordered is usually considered to be inherently impure, is squarely identified with a pure

25 Achard 1999: 63, n. 6.

26 TBG 218.2–5.

27 On the value placed on the body as a locus of enlightenment in tantric practice, see Samuel 2009: 271–276. For the Dzogchen developments, see Germano 2007: 63–79; and Hatchell 2014: 103–105, 118–119.

28 Flood 2015: 155.

29 DPG 306.1.

30 TBG 190.2–3: *de phyir snang grags dran stong ril/ gsum du sangs rgyas pas log par mi 'da' ni khams gsum nyid sangs rgyas kyi sar bzhugs pas [...]*.

31 DPG 311.1.

32 DPG 316.2–3.

field.³³ While normally a pure field is created for the sake of beings by a Buddha through the power of the compassionate aspirations they have made while on the path,³⁴ the implication here is that the pure field manifests spontaneously through the non-duality of means (Skt. *upāya*) and acumen (Skt. *prajñā*) in accordance with the needs of beings.³⁵ Quite clearly, it is not that the cosmos is transformed into a pure field. Instead, suffering, which in Buddhism is held to pervade all forms of existence, constituting the very reason the cosmos is considered to be impure, is said in the *Piercing Awl Commentary* to be blissful on the path.³⁶ This is because once perfection has been realized, it is all-pervading—which in the text is expressed as being spontaneously present in both self and other³⁷—so that suffering itself is effaced by bliss. What we see in these statements is that the distinctions that constitute the normative Buddhist categories of suffering and bliss, of existence and its transcendence, are being intentionally blurred; or perhaps more precisely, they are being brought into sharp relief, only for a deeper level identity to be asserted. Such a dialectical logic of extremes is in fact quite typical of apophatic mysticism more generally, where the absolutely transcendent is identified with and can only be known as the absolutely immanent.³⁸

I would like to close this chapter by suggesting that the paradigms of Mahāyoga and Dzogchen can be seen to present differing ways of dealing with and of articulating the complementary transcendence-immanence polarity, with Dzogchen being an intensification of some of the basic positions expressed in the tantric ethos.³⁹ A fundamental tenet of Mahāyoga thought is the non-duality of the conditioned world of cyclic existence and of the unconditioned dimension of woe-transcendence.⁴⁰ This has numerous repercussions on the level of tantric praxis, where the ritual evocation of a deity, which involves the practitioner's meditative identification with that deity,⁴¹ is held

33 DPG 311.4–5.

34 Cornu 2006: 123; Tanaka 2015: 412–413.

35 DPG 310.5–6.

36 DZG 382.3: *spyod yul zug rngu kun bral sdug bsgal lam du bde/*.

37 DZG 382.2.

38 Sells 1994: 22, 149, 171.

39 A similar suggestion concerning a deepening interiorization in the historical development of tantric practice has been made by Dalton 2004: 3, 26–27; and by Germano 2007: 52, 59, 61–62.

40 Nubchen's *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* discusses a view of non-duality at length in the Mahāyoga context; see SM 204–210 (ch. 6), translated in Esler 2018: 191–196. For a detailed discussion of this view, see Esler 2021a: 58–67.

41 On the centrality of this practice in the tantric context, see Samuel 1993: 15–16; Germano 2007: 51–52.

not only to bring about a deconditioning of the impulses that bind one to the world of illusory appearances but also to correspond to a more fundamental order of reality, to thusness (Skt. *tathatā*) or the way things truly are. That is to say, when the afflictions and their imprints are transfigured through tantric meditation, what shines through is their deeper dimensionality of wisdom. This mode of presenting things might thus be said to be bringing the transcendent (= wisdom) into the sphere of the relative and immanent (= the afflictions, cyclic existence, etc.).

In Dzogchen, the optic is quite the same but with one significant difference: it is no longer necessary to resort to the symbols of primordial perfection (the configuration (*maṇḍala*) which the practitioner visualizes and the deity identified with in the tantric context), for perfection is seen to be spontaneously present as the mind itself.⁴² According to the *Victorious Peak Commentary*, the manifestation of all such configurations and of the Buddha's characteristics and marks—the latter being the signs of having attained the Buddha's form body (Skt. *rūpakāya*)—is realized in the simplicity of the direct perception of intrinsic awareness, which is the ground from which they arise in the first place.⁴³ The symbols having yielded their inward reality, effortful clinging to their outward shell is pointless; the only obstacle to realizing the mind's primordial completeness is the tendency to strive for perfection teleologically.⁴⁴ It is interesting to observe that here again we have a parallel in Kashmiri Śaivism, with Kṣemarāja (ca. 975–ca. 1025) writing in his commentary to the *Vijñānabhairava-tantra* of a stage in meditation where the external elements of tantric ritual are transcended in the recognition of the practitioner's essence as absolute consciousness, a consciousness that is beyond all visualization and mental supports.⁴⁵

If Mahāyoga's non-dual stance seeks to reconcile the transcendent-immanence distinction by stating the fundamental identity of both poles, Dzogchen may be said to take this a step further, by holding that the very act of channelling the transcendent into the immanent through the medium of culturally potent symbols vitiates the mind's unaltered completeness. Perfection, considered to be the natural state of the mind, is thus squarely placed in the immanent dimension, with effort being a symptom of malaise. The locus of perfection has shifted from the symbol (= the syllable, the deity, the config-

42 Norbu and Lipman 2001: 10, 106–107.

43 TBG 213:3–4.

44 Esler 2017: 175–176, 181. On the problems involved in a static teleological conception of the path and its goal, see Guenther 1989: 95, 101, 245.

45 Flood 2015: 128–129.

uration of divine figures) to the symbolized (= the mind). The central paradox of Dzogchen thought, then, is the embeddedness of the transcendent (i.e. intrinsic awareness, mind-as-such) within the immanent (i.e. the ordinary mind), without awareness being stained by the ordinary mind, the latter being not only its veil but also its expression and playing field.⁴⁶ A further paradox, which is of no little significance, is that despite seemingly doing away with tantric symbols, the early Dzogchen tradition is deeply informed by and steeped in those same symbols,⁴⁷ as the frequent references to them in our texts attest.

46 Arguillère 2016: 478. On the complex relationship of the ordinary mind and awareness in classical Dzogchen thought, see Higgins 2013: 21, 26, 30.

47 Germano 1994: 225–227.

Effortlessness as Path

The coalescing of transcendence and immanence we see depicted in our Dzogchen commentaries has wider ramifications for the structure of the spiritual path, which would normally be conceived of as a roadmap leading from ‘here’ to ‘there’,¹ culminating in the standstill of a pre-established goal.² Once the ideal of completeness and perfection is identified as the very ground (*gzhi*) of the meditator’s being,³ or as her integral identity,⁴ the individual stages of the path collapse into each other and are swiftly traversed, without it being necessary to tread them separately, since the entire universe of appearance-existence (*snang srid*) is pervaded by the primordial continuity of the enlightened mind.⁵ There seems to be here an uncanny resemblance to Ibn ‘Arabī’s (1165–1240) idea of a station of no station, according to which any fixation on a particular station is a dead end, the highest station being beyond the high-low polarity.⁶ While there is thus no need to strive through a series of distinct stages, the notion of a path still applies, we are told, for it is a process which culminates in greater genuineness.⁷ The implication is that the path in Dzogchen is not about getting from ‘here’ to ‘there’ but is rather a process of unfoldment where an innate ground of perfection spirals open.⁸ The limitations preventing this ground from unfurling are dissolved in their own innate potential for release. Such a spiralic notion of the path, on examination, entails combining directional hierarchies, which are imagined in the relative terms of space and time and enable moral and intellectual distinctions (= the stages on the path), with a more fundamental sense of absolute equality and identity, which prevents the hierarchies from being solidified into too rigid a system.⁹

1 It is interesting to note the way in which spatial metaphors, derived from the encounter of the human body with its lived environment, shape our thinking and discourse regarding abstract notions, as here the related ideas of a spiritual path and its destination. See Slingerland 2003: 21, 23.

2 Guenther 1989: 82.

3 Esler 2018: 291, 641–642.

4 DPG 308.3.

5 DPG 320.1–2: *sa ma bgrod par non pas dus shin tu myur ba'o/ /sa gang zhe na/ dbyings dang snang srid thams cad kun/ /ye nas rgyun gyi byang chub sems/.*

6 Sells 1994: 104–105.

7 TBG 187.5.

8 Guenther 1989: 2, 85.

9 Sells 1994: 213.

These ideas, which are the hallmark of a disclosive paradigm of goal-realization,¹⁰ are succinctly expressed in the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* through the image of the sacred padlock of the awakened mind, wherein wisdom is full yet beyond any indication.¹¹ This image hints at the paradox that wisdom is both already fully present and beyond the reach of verbal and conceptual pointers. That it is, in some sense at least, inaccessible, can be seen from the metaphor of the padlock (*sgo lcags*). However, this does suggest that it manifests once the padlock has been opened. As mentioned above, one of the peculiarities of religious and particularly of mystical communication is the tendency to play with the possibilities afforded by presence and absence in a game where in every act of disclosure the referent (here, 'wisdom') must in principle already be at a remove, always remaining inexpressible and non-communicable.¹² The avowed point is to constantly lead thought onwards beyond its own complacency in referential reification,¹³ gently confounding it until it breaks down at the threshold of its own nothingness.¹⁴

The image of the padlock is also interesting in that it suggests a process of unlocking an inner potential. The potential that is unlocked, wisdom, is described in the *Piercing Awl Commentary* as self-originated and is compared to a blazing wish-granting gem, which fulfils all its possessor's desires. Its completeness is said to be uncompounded (*'dus ma byas*; Skt. *asamskrta*), which is to say it is not made, being independent of any conditioned efforts to achieve it; specifically, its clarity neither wanes nor waxes, and there is nothing that needs to be picked out in order to improve its inherent completeness.¹⁵ The consequence is that self-originated wisdom is totally autonomous, without needing to rely on any external support.¹⁶ Hence, the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* advises that in order to gain realization one should examine the bliss which is primordially present within.¹⁷ In these and many other instances, the meditator is invited to turn inwards to discover a state of perfection and completeness that has always been there, yet simultaneously this sense of inwardness

10 Higgins 2013: 27–30; Esler 2017: 175.

11 DPG 306.6–307.1.

12 Krech 2021: 69, 143.

13 Sells 1994: 7.

14 Certeau 1982: 204–205.

15 DZG 383.2–3.

16 DZG 391.2–3.

17 DPG 306.4.

is set apart from any dichotomy separating the outer and inner spheres¹⁸—in other words, it is an inwardness in which ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ lose their meaning and fuse into an all-encompassing whole.

18 DZG 384.3, 389.1.

Inwardness and Spaciousness

We have seen that our Dzogchen commentaries advise the meditator to turn inwards to discover the source of perfection within the nature of mind and that the inwardness which is revealed in this encounter is one that blurs the boundaries marked by the ‘within’ and the ‘without’. This brings us to an important component of inwardness in premodern traditional cultures, which is that the inner world is not separated from the outer world of the subject’s situatedness in society and, more widely, the cosmos of which society itself forms part. The inward reality encountered in meditation is not individualistic, as in the modern sense of self, but is embedded in a broader cosmological framework, which is, moreover, vertically oriented towards transcendence, so that in contemplation the metaphors of inward depth and of vertical ascent come together.¹ In mainstream Buddhism, progress along the four contemplations (Skt. *dhyāna*) and four meditative equilibria (Skt. *samāpatti*) corresponds to an ascent along the realms of form (Skt. *rūpadhātu*) and formlessness (Skt. *ārūpyadhātu*),² until finally the grip of the cosmological realms is transcended altogether in the tilting point of enlightenment. As we have seen above, Dzogchen operates using an alternative model of the path, which I have characterized as being spiralic, yet even so it remains true that the inwardness encountered in Dzogchen meditation is one that is not conceived of as an isolated reality, englobing as it does a multidimensionality that transcends the individual.

This becomes especially clear when we turn to the many instances where the ultimate nature of mind and meditative familiarization with it are compared to the limitless vastness of the sky or of space³—both words being identical in Tibetan (*nam mkha’*).⁴ A particularly striking passage is found in the *Piercing Awl Commentary*:

1 Flood 2015: 31, 46, 244.

2 La Vallée Poussin 1971: vol. 5, 128; Griffiths 1999: 17.

3 Cf. Guenther 1996: 94, n. 50.

4 This theme pervades Dzogchen texts in general but becomes especially pronounced in the expanse section (*klong sde*). See Anspal 2005: 122. In the pith instruction section and its distinctive practice of crossover (*thod rgal*), the sky is the locus where the spontaneous visions of the seminal nuclei and Buddhas manifest from within the body’s interior. See Germano 2007: 77–78; Achard 1999: 192–193, n. 149; Turpeinen 2019: 135.

Intrinsic awareness, aware of space, is free from thoughts:
 Endowed with the force of abiding naturally,
 It is without thoughts and occurs like the sky itself.⁵

Space here signifies a state that is groundless and free from thoughts,⁶ yet this freedom from thoughts is itself not to be fixated upon since the sky-like mind is free even from the absence of thoughts.⁷ This hints at a further movement in the transcending process, which does not stop at mere non-thinking. In a similar vein, the infinity of space is used to indicate a transcendence of the limitations of being and non-being, both of which are connected to effort,⁸ and of the conceptual elaborations of existence and non-existence.⁹ While this transcendent quality of space is often described using negative terms, such as non-existence or absence (*med pa*),¹⁰ these negations themselves are in turn negated in order to avoid the pitfall of conceptual reification. We thus read that “being non-existent, even the sky is spaceless,”¹¹ and that while reality-as-such (Skt. *dharmatā*) is non-existent like the sky, it is not a sheer absence.¹² Such statements are in fact typical of apophatic forms of religious discourse, where any negation calls for a further negation in a dynamic movement of unsaying that, in principle at least, can know no end.¹³

Space is used in our Dzogchen commentaries as a vector-term that points to a process of transcending; what is particularly important about the metaphor of space is that it conveys a situation that is limitless and open-ended, just like the transcending process it signifies. We are not dealing with an enclosed space, which by definition is limited, but with the unfathomable expanse of the sky, such as it presents itself on the Tibetan plateau with its vivid skylscapes. The centrality of space also suggests that Dzogchen meditation tends towards expansiveness (of the mind’s focus) and openness (of the senses) rather than the intense isolation and control over sensory and mental stimuli fostered by

5 DZG 397.4–5: /rang rig mkha’ la rig pas bsam dang bral/ /de la rang bzhin gnas pa’i mthur ldan pas/ /bsam du med pas nam mkha’ de nyid ’byung/.

6 DZG 397.2–4.

7 DZG 386.1–2: /bsam dang bral ba’i sems rnam de nyid ni/ /nam mkha’ ’dra ba’i sems de nyid dang bral/.

8 DZG 395.1–2.

9 DZG 391.5.

10 DZG 395.1: /nam mkha’ med pas nam mkha’ khyab pa med/.

11 DZG 396.3: /med pas nam mkha’ la yang nam mkha’ med/.

12 DZG 396.4: /chos nyid nam mkha’ ji bzhin nyid med pa/ /med pa nyid med ’di ltar mkha’ la bsam med ’dra’ang/.

13 Sells 1994: 2–3, 7.

exclusively concentrative techniques.¹⁴ Whereas the Dzogchen conception of space certainly operates within a wider Buddhist cosmological framework that is vertically aligned,¹⁵ there is an important sense in which space/sky in Dzogchen transcends the notion of verticality itself since it beckons the meditator to step into a space without mental props¹⁶ or reference points, one in which the very notions of ‘above’ and ‘below’, of ‘left’ and ‘right’, have lost their hold.

When looked at from a broader, comparative perspective, the implications of this might be stated as follows: vertically structured hierarchies, as exemplified by an ordered cosmos and the Buddhist notion of traversing a gradual path with stages,¹⁷ are a manner of indicating a transcending process. However, the Dzogchen conception of the path only fits uneasily with such a structure. It calls for a distinct manner of understanding the transcending process itself, one in which such hierarchies are themselves transcended, as poignantly illustrated by the image of infinite space which the texts frequently invoke. Paradoxically, that which is truly distinct lacks all distinction and is, in this sense, equal to nothing.¹⁸ Likewise, that which is truly transcendent must transcend the hierarchies by which the transcendent is conceptualized in directional terms. Of course, the hierarchies and structure that are negated provide the indispensable background for their deconstruction to be meaningful in the first place. Yet the space that their suspension opens up is a crucial moment in the perspectival and hermeneutical shifts that give Dzogchen its identity.

14 Germano 1994: 228. See also the vivid account in Turpeinen 2018: 160. For similar comments in the context of classical Daoism, including correlations with neuroscientific research on different styles of meditative practice, see Roth 2015: 113–114.

15 This is witnessed in the fairly frequent allusions in our commentaries to standard Buddhist cosmological categories. For a fuller discussion of the usage of such categories in a closely related context, see Esler 2016.

16 DZG 386.4.

17 A brilliant discussion is found in Guenther 1989: 151–176.

18 Sells 1994: 171.

The Question of Method

At this point, it is appropriate to ask by what means the practitioner is to access this state of completeness and spaciousness. As indicated above, the answer is that she should turn inwards, so as to encounter intrinsic awareness, the true nature of mind. There seems at first sight to be a slight ambiguity as to whether this process of turning inwards involves searching—and hence, effort—or not. On the one hand, the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* points out that when abiding in this state, all of one’s desires are already fulfilled, so there is no searching to speak of,¹ and emphatically denies that it could be accomplished by means of the effort of searching.² Yet on the other hand, in an allusion to the tantric technique of identifying the enlightened mind with the seed-syllable *HŪM*, the root text upon which he is commenting reads: “searching, the meaning of *HŪM* is sought for.”³ This ambiguity is quickly clarified, however, since Nubchen comments on this passage by stating that it is by depending on intrinsic awareness that one can investigate intrinsic awareness in the first place.⁴ The implication is that an activity, such as searching or, as here, investigating (*rtsad gcod pa*), which *a priori* would involve effortful striving due to the dualistic structure of the subject–object dichotomy that underlies it,⁵ is displaced and subverted since the aim of the search and the vantage point which makes the search even possible are identical. What this means will become clearer if we recall the fundamental distinction that operates in Dzogchen texts between the ordinary mind (*sems*) and mind-as-such (*sems nyid*), a distinction which, as we have seen earlier, presupposes a structural asymmetry between both aspects and the impossibility to arrive at the latter by relying on the former.⁶ This, of course, is highly relevant to Nubchen’s position since it entails that ‘investigating’ the enlightened mind is not a conceptual activity based on the ordinary mind but is tantamount to recognizing or finding oneself in the nature of mind itself. What is thus called for is not to search for the enlightened mind from the vantage point of a subject look-

1 DPG 311.5–6.

2 DPG 312.6: [...] *tshol ba'i rtsol bas mi 'grub pa'o/*.

3 DPG 313.3: */tshol yang HŪM gi don cig tshol/*.

4 DPG 313.3.

5 Levin 1988: 66.

6 Higgins 2013: 26.

ing at an object but rather a shift in perspective where the nature of mind is encountered as the very lighting-up of the mind's own gaze.⁷

"The mind searching for the mind finds the mind"⁸—the imperceptible shift marked by such a statement may perhaps not be a dramatic visionary revelation, yet it is in some ways something even deeper, a meaning event wherein searching fades away in the recognition that there is nothing to see.⁹ Such a meaning event does not refer to a specific content that could be described or paraphrased (a 'what'), nor can it really be possessed but only repeated in a process whereby the gaze keeps being led to shift away from the 'what', withdrawing from any and all attempts at definition.¹⁰ In our context, this means that the 'what' of the nature of mind, of intrinsic awareness, of the enlightened mind must always remain elusive and, to a great extent, ineffable¹¹—if it were to be otherwise, this would reify it and make it into a content of the ordinary mind's concepts.

Yet our texts are remarkable precisely for seeming to offer a way of stabilizing the meaning event that defines the entire thrust of the Dzogchen path, namely the recognition of the nature of mind. Indeed, while this recognition may initially be fleeting, the practitioner is instructed, once she has encountered the enlightened mind, which as we have seen above is beyond searching and seeing, to meditate thereon;¹² in the Dzogchen context, this means to deepen, prolong and stabilize her familiarity with it. How is she to go about this?

In concrete terms, the practitioner is simply instructed to familiarize herself with intrinsic awareness, which is originally pure in itself, and this familiarization will allow the full realization that characterizes the fruition to blossom of its own accord.¹³ In fact, there is a strong sense in which, once the nature of mind is encountered, wisdom arises continually and realization is already present.¹⁴ This has aptly been described as a process of self-optimizing dynam-

7 Guenther 1987: 6; Levin 1988: 88.

8 DPG 318.6–319.1: */sems kyis sems tshol sems de rnyed/*.

9 DPG 317.1. Similarly, the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* describes seeing as an analogy for non-seeing; see SM 307, translated in Esler 2018: 254–255.

10 Sells 1994: 215.

11 This does not mean, however, that no attempts at definition are made but only that these attempts are always intentionally open-ended; a good example is found in Nubchen's nine complementary definitions of the ground of intrinsic awareness, which are extensively discussed in Esler 2012: 86–103.

12 DPG 313.6.

13 TBG 193.4–6, 194.1; see also Esler 2017: 179–180.

14 TBG 194.2.

ics,¹⁵ which is rather typical of the Dzogchen reinterpretation of the term ‘contemplation’ (*bsam gtan*; Skt. *dhyāna*), in that the encounter with or recognition of intrinsic awareness (= the view), if attended to with the proper care and attention (= meditation), sets in motion a process which deepens and stabilizes its own optimization. Meditation thus consists in familiarizing oneself with the deeper dimension of the mind, variously termed ‘intrinsic awareness’ or the ‘enlightened mind’. Because at this level the mind is unperturbed by the ceaseless stream of thoughts that constitutes ordinary consciousness, it can be termed changeless¹⁶ and without thoughts.¹⁷

This does not imply, however, that we are dealing with a permanent ontological essence of some sort—Nubchen is careful to point out that changelessness characterizes the inseparability of emptiness and appearance¹⁸ and hence is not the attribute of a reified substrate—nor does it mean that thoughts are a problem needing to be solved or fought against. Nubchen’s detailed instructions in his *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* on how to deal with thoughts during meditation are clear enough in this regard: basically, one should not tamper or meddle with them, nor should one attempt to rectify them in any way.¹⁹ Because thoughts themselves are considered to be the manifestation of wisdom, they do not disrupt the unwavering clarity of meditation.²⁰ The implication is that awareness is sufficiently vast and spacious for it to accommodate the light ruffle of thoughts without this causing any disturbance. This is emphasized in the many instances discussed above where awareness is compared to the limitless sky: the latter is free from thoughts, and any thoughts that might arise during meditation simply fade into insignificance, without it being necessary to do anything about them. It is in this sense, then, that awareness liberates from the objects of thinking:²¹ not because thoughts are blocked out but rather because the practitioner has learnt to settle in a spacious awareness that has no bias towards either peace or unrest,²² which is to say that thoughts do not disturb it. This is clearly brought out in the words of the *Victorious Peak Commentary*:

15 Guenther 1989: 92.

16 DPG 317.4.

17 DPG 317.5–6.

18 DPG 317.4.

19 Esler 2018: 315–316, 318–319, 328–329.

20 TBG 200.1–2.

21 DZG 392.1.

22 DZG 391.4–5.

Meditation is not about turning the conceptual into the non-conceptual. Rather, it is about not wavering from the intrinsic illumination of awareness that is free from appellations.²³

The process of meditation certainly involves a level of discipline: meditators who feel regret when realizing their shortcomings and their lack of constancy in meditation are told not to be ashamed but instead to use this recognition to spur on their practice through perseverance.²⁴ However, this discipline is directed not at controlling or rectifying thoughts but at learning to abide in intrinsic awareness. Hence, this form of discipline is called the ‘diligence of non-action’ (*bya ba med pa'i brtson 'grus*).²⁵ The mind's gaze is thus brought to rest, yet without being fixated; it remains open to the field of possibilities (thoughts, appearances, sounds), which it does not seek to control, maintaining instead a spacious attitude of letting-be.²⁶

It will thus be seen that the actual practice of meditation as taught in early Dzogchen is fairly simple, in the sense that there are not a lot of specific things to do—quite the contrary. This is perhaps why we might be disappointed if we scan these early Dzogchen texts searching for the particulars of meditative techniques,²⁷ or be left with the somewhat misleading impression that these texts are merely speculative and do not concern actual practice. First of all, early Dzogchen is not without ancillary meditative (and even visionary) techniques,²⁸ as is illustrated by those expounded by Nubchen in his *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* that concern the moment of death.²⁹ But more fundamentally, by focusing too much on the occurrence of such techniques, we may in fact be missing the point and need to readjust our own gaze as researchers in order to see that the kind of practice being referred to operates on another level. This is not necessarily to imply that we are dealing with a metalevel of practice, i.e. an inner attitude of non-striving that could be applied to any external religious practice. This certainly corresponds to one important strand of Dzogchen exegesis. It is reflected for instance in some (though not all) of

23 TBG 205.4–5: /*des na rtog rtog pa las mi rtog par gyur pa ma yin te/ bla dwags bral bar rig pa rang snang ba ma g.yos par sgom pa'o/.*

24 TBG 216.1–2.

25 TBG 218.6. This expression is also used in the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*; see SM 412, 416, translated in Esler 2018: 311, 313.

26 Levin 1988: 240, 244–245.

27 Similarly, the early Chan tradition is also conspicuous for its absence of focus on meditative technique; see Meinert 2007: 259.

28 Achard 1999: 247, n. 40.

29 Esler 2012: 112–113.

Longchenpa's theoretical works, which seek to explain the lower vehicles from the viewpoint of Dzogchen.³⁰ It is also witnessed in the way Rigdzin Gödem assimilates the lower vehicles into an overarching Dzogchen perspective, narrativized as the timeless vision of Samantabhadra that pervades the unfolding of Buddhist history in time.³¹ However, this is by no means the whole picture, and Nubchen is adamant that we approach Dzogchen on its own terms as an autonomous vehicle with a distinct form of meditation. If at times the term 'non-meditation' (*bsgom med*) is used to counteract a fixation on meditation as an act of wilful striving, this is not to deny the value of meditative familiarization with the nature of mind in formal sessions of practice. Since non-meditation itself runs the risk of being reified in a similar manner, the *Piercing Awl Commentary* reminds us that in the sky-like wisdom of non-objectification, there is no taking up even non-meditation.³² The point is thus to undermine the ways in which meditation (or non-meditation) becomes conceptualized as a goal-oriented activity, not to advocate abandoning formal sessions of practice altogether.

The absence of focus on meditative technique can be interpreted in various ways.³³ On the one hand, it is quite possible that the instructions regarding actual contemplative practice were initially transmitted separately and orally, only later to be written down.³⁴ One example of a textual systematization of earlier guidance that was mostly given orally is Longchenpa's 14th-century instructions³⁵ relating to the *Kun byed rgyal po* [*The All-Creating King*], a Dzogchen *tantra* incorporating some of the short early texts of the mind section. This *tantra* seems to postdate the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*³⁶ and contains little if anything in terms of formal meditative instruction.³⁷ This would suggest that in compiling his instructions Longchenpa was probably drawing on an oral tradition which accompanied the transmission of the *tantra*. At the same time, it is important to recall that Nubchen's own corpus of instructions, the *Fortress, Chasm and Life-Force*, briefly discussed in Chapter 4, itself represents a rather complex set of practical tantric teachings that also treat Dzogchen. This illustrates that such instructions were often recorded in written

30 Arguillère 2007: 201–206.

31 Turpeinen 2018: 138, 192.

32 DZG 396.4–5.

33 A number of complementary scenarios are discussed in Germano 1994: 228–229.

34 Anspal 2005: 129.

35 For a translation, see Lipman and Peterson 2000.

36 van Schaik 2004: 196, 202.

37 Germano 1994: 264.

form, demonstrating once again that there is a close interrelationship between orality and textuality in the Tibetan context.³⁸

On the other hand—and this observation is meant to complement rather than to contradict the former remark about oral transmission—I would like to suggest that we look at early expositions of Dzogchen, with their pronounced technique-free style of presentation, as scripts for an unscripted form of practice, which has profound implications for the bodily self-understanding of those engaged with these texts, engendering what we might call a sky-like sense of self.³⁹ While not always explicit, our Dzogchen texts do pay attention to the body as a site of religiously inscribed meaning and indwelling perfection. The *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* thus speaks of the body as a treasury containing infinite pure fields.⁴⁰

Generally speaking, religious traditions are replete with practices involving the appropriation and internalization of texts⁴¹—in some cases, this can even go so far as to include their literal ingestion.⁴² It is relatively plain to see that in the context of tantric Buddhism, the practitioner's meditative identification with the deities and symbols of the tradition has a deeply transformative effect on her own subjectivity,⁴³ since her sense of self is overwhelmed by the prescribed sense of self (or non-self) handed down by the tradition. This process of internalization is an encoding of the prescribed symbolic system on to the practitioner's body and might be termed an 'entextualization' of the body.⁴⁴ Such a mapping of text on to the practitioner's body⁴⁵ occurs by means of ritual⁴⁶ and is facilitated by the multisensory ways in which practitioners engage with their texts in the Tibetan religious context,⁴⁷ ways which involve the visual (through visualization and contemplation of icons), sonic (through vocal recitation or hearing), kinetic (through the posture taken when reading the text),⁴⁸ tactile (through wearing amulets)⁴⁹ and even gastrosemantic⁵⁰ dimensions. Given

38 See Klein 1994: 285, 287, 293; van Schaik 2007: 188.

39 Germano 2007: 63.

40 DPG 306.5–6.

41 Flood 2006: 53.

42 See Garrett 2009.

43 Levin 1985: 195–196.

44 Flood 2015: 134.

45 Germano 2007: 62.

46 Levin 1985: 173, 181; Flood 2015: 231; Meinert 2019: 57–58.

47 Gentry 2019: 78–70, 83–84; Cantwell 2019: 151, 153–155.

48 Klein 1994: 296, 311.

49 Note that technically speaking, liberation through wearing (*btags grol*) is distinguished from liberation through touching (*reg grol*). See Turpeinen 2019: 140–143.

50 Garrett 2009: 105–106.

this background, it seems likely that our Dzogchen commentaries, despite their lack of interest in complex techniques of meditation and their overt disdain for external ritual, can in fact be seen as scripts for practice in their own right. What I am proposing is thus that there is a performative aspect to early Dzogchen texts which it is important to acknowledge. That is to say, just as a tantric evocation is meant to be enacted—the lines describing the visualization recited or chanted, the divine figures vividly imagined, the hand gestures performed at appropriate points in the ritual sequence, etc.—and thus to take on life beyond the page in the embodied self of the practitioner,⁵¹ I would suggest that these Dzogchen commentaries too can be looked at in similar terms. They can be viewed as scripts that provide a starting point for an *unscripted* form of meditative practice,⁵² one that unfolds of its own accord yet is nonetheless gently guided by the texture of the text and in which the practitioner is invited to embody an open awareness of vibrant spaciousness.

51 Klein 1994: 307–308.

52 Germano 1994: 254.

Effortlessness and Conduct

The Dzogchen attitude towards conduct, i.e. the activities taking place outside of formal sessions of meditation, is governed by the same principle as that which we saw in the context of meditation. Rather than recommending specific virtuous actions to be performed, the key is the view, or the recognition of intrinsic awareness. As stated in the *Piercing Awl Commentary*,

Without the view, one's conduct is bound to illusion.
Without the eye that is free from thematic focus,
Whatever one does or engages in will be bound by the lies of grasper
and grasped.¹

On the other hand, with the proper view in place, it matters little which form of activity the practitioner temporarily engages in, she will be untainted thereby.² According to the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary*, whether she be walking, lying down, sitting or standing, there will be no risk of deviation, since self-originated wisdom has been encountered in its depth³ and thus pervades, effortlessly and unselfconsciously, all that she does.⁴ The implication for conduct is that the very wellsprings of self-centred and self-defeating action, the afflictions of desire, hatred and stupidity, need not be forcefully relinquished or blocked out, since they are present as the ever-fresh ornament of great bliss.⁵ Statements such as these no doubt provoked the criticism of those who, like Lha Lama Yeshe-ö (lHa bla ma Ye shes 'od, 947–1024) and Podrang Zhiwa-ö (Pho brang Zhi ba 'od, fl. eleventh century), condemned Dzogchen for being indifferent to the moral teachings of Buddhism.⁶ When considered in their proper doctrinal context, however, these statements should not be read as an invitation to licentiousness,⁷ since their concern is instead to highlight non-doing as

1 DZG 385.3–4: /lta ba 'di med spyod pa sgyu mas 'ching/ /gza' gtad bral spyan med na thams cad du/ /ci byas ci spyad gzung 'dzin brdzun pas 'ching/.

2 TBG 195.1–2.

3 DPG 323.4–5.

4 It is interesting to observe that effortlessness and unselfconsciousness also play an important role in Chinese thought, both in Confucianism and in Daoism; cf. Slingerland 2003: 61, 105.

5 DPG 319.4–5.

6 Karmay 2009: 10, 37.

7 Esler 2012: 118.

a deeper source, or guiding principle, of action that is timely, ever apposite and flexible.⁸ The problem of reckless forms of behaviour is addressed in the *Victorious Peak Commentary* in the context of discussing deviations of conduct. It is linked to spiritual pride, which itself stems from a disconnect between a mere theoretical understanding of the view and the practical demands of daily life.⁹

If the conventional Buddhist accumulations of merit and wisdom seem to be bypassed in Dzogchen, this is not because they are denied in themselves but because the very purposes of self and other, which the accumulations are supposed to accomplish, are primordially sown in self-originated wisdom.¹⁰ From the Dzogchen perspective, therefore, the only accumulation that matters is that of self-originated wisdom, yet the latter is identified with the all-knowing eye of acumen¹¹ and cannot, of course, be accumulated. The point is not to pretend that the accumulations, in their conventional sense, are useless or that the fruition has already been attained but to evoke a shift in perspective, where the focus is on the primordially of self-originated wisdom, not as something which has always existed in time but as being beyond temporal duration.¹² For the gaze to adjust to this new perspective, the metaphor of accumulation needs to give way to that of letting-be.¹³

As with Dzogchen meditation, where the openness of intrinsic awareness provides a spaciousness which renders obsolete all attempts to interfere with the thoughts arising in the mind, this same principle extends to conduct. Acting according to pre-conceived patterns is discarded in favour of a situationally specific compassionate responsiveness attuned to the demands of circumstances. The *Victorious Peak Commentary* explains that once intrinsic awareness, the essence of the sky-like wisdoms, has been encountered, compassion manifests continuously to cleanse away suffering in all its guises.¹⁴ The confidence this procures allows the practitioner to perform all manner of activities in the self-illumination of intrinsic awareness, without needing to rely on effortful actions¹⁵ and without either having to relinquish or adopt biased activities.¹⁶

8 Again, similar concerns with timeliness and flexibility are found in Confucian thought; see Slingerland 2003: 63, 65.

9 TBG 223.4–224.4.

10 TBG 194.3–4: *bdag dang gzhan don lhun grub ma spangs pa'i/ [...] rang byung ye shes su ye byungs thebs pas [...]*.

11 DZG 395.6.

12 Arguillère 2007: 463.

13 Levin 1988: 238–239.

14 TBG 192.5–6.

15 TBG 195.5–6.

16 TBG 194.5.

While Dzogchen works do not tend to concern themselves with virtuous activities for their own sake,¹⁷ this does not entail relinquishing action, which would be a rather gross misunderstanding of the principle of non-action, amounting to a conceptual reification thereof.¹⁸ Moreover, given that Dzogchen texts were engaged with in a setting of contemplative retreat,¹⁹ it is probable that standard Buddhist patterns of conduct were routinely observed by those focusing on Dzogchen practice, as is indeed still the case in present times. The Dzogchen attitude to action is in some ways comparable, despite the very different doctrinal context, to that of the Christian mystics Marguerite Porete (d. 1310) and Meister Eckhart (ca. 1260–ca. 1328), both of whom taught the futility of pursuing virtuous deeds as an end in itself, yet led active lives and would have considered the forceful abandoning of activity to be itself a form of wilful action.²⁰ Similarly, judging by his literary output and by the hagiographies that have come down to us, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe did not lead a life of quietistic passivity,²¹ far from it, and the same could indeed be said of the majority of Dzogchen authors. Non-doing is therefore not opposed to action *per se* but is rather an inner disposition that imbues action with a contemplative spirit of effortless spontaneity; that is to say, the actions that are engaged in are not performed in an attitude of wilful striving. They are rather the natural expression of the practitioner's ability to remain attuned to intrinsic awareness while responding to situational demands. This responsiveness, which in Dzogchen is referred to as 'compassion' (*thugs rje*),²² is not a superadded quality. It pertains to the very nature of intrinsic awareness which, as we have seen, is a grounded yet spacious openness to whatever occurs, a sky-like wisdom where there is nothing to adopt or to reject.²³

17 See SM 45, translated in Esler 2018: 62–63.

18 Esler 2012: 124.

19 This context is made explicit in the SM 5–10, translated in Esler 2018: 30–35.

20 Sells 1994: 193.

21 See Esler 2014.

22 Arguillère 2007: 486–487.

23 TBG 196.3.

Encounter and Transmission

Because of the rhetoric of negation and deconstruction¹ and the emphasis on formless practice that we find prevalent in early Dzogchen texts, it could be tempting to view them as operating in a space without parameters, as a kind of free-floating ‘universal wisdom’. Yet such an interpretation would be naïve and uninformed at best, disingenuous at worst. On the contrary, as we have discussed at some length in Chapter 2, these texts are to a great extent defined by that which they seemingly exclude and reinterpret in the course of demarcating Dzogchen from tantric Mahāyoga. As with other styles of apophatic contemplative praxis, the informing worldview cannot so simply be brushed aside, and doing so—for instance in modern adaptations of various kinds—would profoundly alter the tradition being studied.² The meditative practices of the Dzogchen tradition, even if scripted only tenuously in our early commentaries, are embodiments of its view, with both this view and the practices that prolong it being shaped by the tantric Buddhist tradition of Mahāyoga. This background is creatively engaged with in our texts, at times through differentiation, at others through integration and transposition. Incidentally, it is particularly to the *background* that we must turn if we want to distinguish Dzogchen from other forms of Buddhist apophatic practice, such as Chan, which may present a superficial level of resemblance.³

In this chapter, I would like to look more closely at the parameters that define the contemplative space of early Dzogchen. This is an important topic since the space of inwardness accessed through Dzogchen-style meditation is not just a blank canvas waiting to be discovered. On the contrary, it is shaped by the contemplative theories and practices of the tradition.⁴ Religious practices are embedded in texts which prescribe particular, tradition-specific standards of interiority. As mentioned above in Chapter 7, the journey within is not an individualistic path, since the practitioner’s success is to a large extent dependent on the degree of conformity to the script of interiority prescribed in the tradition’s authoritative texts.⁵ Moreover, these texts and the standards of interiority

1 Germano 1994: 211.

2 Komjathy 2015b: 61–62.

3 See Achard 1999: 63–64; van Schaik 2012: 10, 14–15.

4 Flood 2015: 208.

5 Flood 2015: 40.

they convey are not just abstract notions and disembodied objects, for they are intimately tied to concrete situations of human relatedness. In this chapter, I will examine the ways that our Dzogchen texts are deeply steeped in such situations of human encounter and transmission.

The dimension of encounter is repeatedly brought to the fore in our commentaries when discussing what I have called above, borrowing a term from Michael Sells,⁶ the ‘meaning event’ of the Dzogchen path. For example, the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* speaks of encountering absolute meaningfulness and self-originated wisdom,⁷ and the *Piercing Awl Commentary* similarly mentions an encounter through symbolic means.⁸ The *Victorious Peak Commentary*, too, has repeated references to such situations of encounter,⁹ including on one occasion an encounter with self-originated awakening¹⁰ and on another an encounter with the great seminal nucleus.¹¹ The fact that verbs of encounter are used in all these cases indicates that although the meaning event takes place inwardly, being an internalization of specific doctrinal notions and practices of the tradition, it is also a dialogical situation¹² that is framed by the meeting of practitioner, teaching and spiritual mentor. The master in particular plays a critical role, both in epitomizing and in transmitting the body of knowledge that the aspirant is, in turn, to embody, and in checking the student’s progress as the process of internalization unfolds.¹³ This becomes especially obvious in the later tradition’s codification of the introduction (*ngo sprod*) to mind-as-such, an event of singular importance where the master points out to the disciple the nature of mind.¹⁴ This meaning event, which is often (though it need not necessarily be) highly ritualized, functions as a kind of initiation,

6 Sells 1994: 112, 215.

7 DPG 308.4, 311.1–2, 318.5. In the first instance, the verb *gtugs pa* is used, whereas elsewhere we have *mjal ba*.

8 DZG 394.6.

9 TBG 183.1, 192.6, 195.2, 195.5–6, 198.6, 214.4, 220.3.

10 TBG 208.2.

11 TBG 211.2. It may be recalled here that a view of this name is discussed in the SM 369–375, translated in Esler 2018: 287–291.

12 On this dialogical and interpersonal dimension of contemplative practice, which includes a wider sense of community and participation in an intergenerational process of transmission (i.e. lineage), see Komjathy 2015a: 20, 35.

13 Indeed, this tends to hold true for contemplative traditions in general. See Komjathy 2015b: 64.

14 Germano 1994: 228; Achard 1999: 58. It is noteworthy that such a formal introduction does not seem to be discussed in the earliest strand of Dzogchen texts (such as those that are the subject of the present study), although this does not necessarily mean that nothing of the sort occurred in practice. See Dalton 2019: 168.

in the sense that it shows, through words, gestures or other forms of verbal and nonverbal communication, the student what her intrinsic awareness is like. The outer master functions, in a sense, as a catalyst, triggering for the disciple the recognition of the 'inner master' that is intrinsic awareness and prompting a shift in the locus of perfection, which is mirrored from a situation of charismatic contact to one of inward awakening. The master thus reveals to the disciple the view as an existentially significant shift in perspective that opens on to a vista of panoramic awareness, providing a glimpse of what the student's subsequent endeavours in meditation will seek to stabilize and prolong.

The master's crucial role is highlighted in the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One*, which unambiguously states that since it is the master who reveals to the student the treasure of reality-as-such, such a teacher is to be viewed as a Buddha.¹⁵ The student is therefore urged to have devotion (*mos pa gus pa*) towards the teacher and to seek to serve and gladden them.¹⁶ While completeness and perfection are to be discovered as an inward reality, as we saw in Chapter 7, their discovery is made possible through a dialogical situation,¹⁷ by means of *hearing* the pith instructions from the master.¹⁸ In this regard, we need to bear in mind that our commentaries self-identify as pith instructions (*man ngag*)¹⁹ or instructions (*gdams pa*),²⁰ either straightforwardly or as elucidating commentaries thereon.²¹ Such pith instructions are the crystallization of a dynamic teaching event, where a master bestows their heartfelt advice on their disciple in a way that is tailored to the particular needs of the circumstances.²² Timing and economy of words²³ come to play an essential role in the effectiveness of the instructions for the disciple.²⁴ The ability to choose the right time and to create a conducive pedagogical setting presupposes contemplative expertise, compassion and discernment on the part of the master. These

15 JDG 298.3–4.

16 JDG 298.6–299.1.

17 This dialogical format of instruction and the master–disciple relationship that underlies it are discussed in Turpeinen 2018: 187–188.

18 JDG 299.3.

19 JDG 301.2; TBG 186.1–2.

20 DZG 383.1.

21 TBG 180.1; DZG 398.2.

22 Kapstein 1996: 275–276.

23 The emphasis on 'few words' is made explicit in JDG 300.4–5: *man ngag gi don yi ge* [em. *yig ge*] *nyung na yang don gyis 'dus par bstan te/*.

24 Klein 1994: 290.

are precisely the qualities which the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation* recommends a prospective student to look out for in a master.²⁵

The master is of particular importance as a source and transmitter of the authoritative texts and pith instructions that allow the aspiring meditator to gain realization of the nature of mind. In this regard, the relationship of such realization to the texts that give access to it is fairly complex. On the one hand, the authoritative scriptures are said to be contained within the enlightened mind²⁶ and on the other, intrinsic awareness, along with its various qualities, is compared to a jewel found within the same texts.²⁷ Overall, this indicates that while realization of intrinsic awareness can be said to encompass the teachings found in the texts, being their *raison d'être*, such realization is itself predicated on the proper assimilation of the message of these texts. In general, it can be said quite unambiguously that Nubchen Sangye Yeshe placed great value on textual erudition,²⁸ a quality he embodied in his own writings.

This immediately brings us to another issue in the transmission of Dzogchen knowledge, which is the extent to which something as elusive as intrinsic awareness can be conveyed through written words and language. This issue is addressed in our commentaries. The *Victorious Peak Commentary* compares the words of the text to a finger pointing at the moon.²⁹ Similarly, in critically responding to the notion that there is nothing whatsoever to teach, the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary* answers that spoken words are a key.³⁰ More precisely, they are the key to the padlock of the awakened mind, referred to above in Chapter 6, which when unlocked reveals the inner potential of wisdom. This theme is taken up and elaborated on in the *Piercing Awl Commentary*, which explains that although the absolute meaning cannot be taught³¹ or indicated in the context of Dzogchen, one nonetheless has to rely on the “lamp of names and words.” Yet even so, the text emphasizes that the signified is beyond thought and speech³² and that when elucidated by means of words, the locutions themselves are not what is meaningful. No doubt in an attempt to highlight the porousness of the boundary between words and the ineffable meaning they are supposed to transmit, Nubchen further speculates that words

25 SM 30–32, translated in Esler 2018: 50–52.

26 DPG 307.6, 318.4.

27 DPG 317.6.

28 SM 223, translated in Esler 2018: 205.

29 TBG 209.3–4.

30 DPG 307.2.

31 DZG 389.6.

32 DZG 394.4–5.

themselves are soundless.³³ The idea being worked out in these various passages is that it is possible to use language while being free from its shackles³⁴ and that this quality is especially evident in the pith instructions, which are presented as an elixir arising from the open dimension of phenomena (Skt. *dharmadhātu*),³⁵ a term signifying the absolute nature of reality. There is thus a strong sense in which the texts are identified with the spiritual reality they seek to communicate.

We can observe an inbuilt paradoxicality in these statements, which indeed pertains to religious communication more generally since one of the latter's central roles is to render present an absence through the use of signs, symbols, images and language.³⁶ This is part of religion's wider function of attempting to represent transcendence with immanent means, an attempt which is by necessity fraught with paradox since the referent of religious communication is in principle non-communicable. This paradox is especially heightened in the case of mystical discourse, which seeks to create a form of language that can render transcendence accessible (and almost palpable), all the while underscoring its fundamentally ineffable character.³⁷ In such a context, ineffability is not merely a critique of language but points towards its absence in silence.³⁸ And yet, every statement about the ineffable itself occurs by means of language:³⁹ mystics are rarely content to remain silent about that which cannot be spoken!

A further issue concerns secrecy and the question of who can have access to the Dzogchen teachings. There is a passage in the *Victorious Peak Commentary* which suggests a slight ambivalence here, for it gives the impression that the text is destined for all those who are under the power of ignorance, which would in effect include all beings.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe clarifies that in fact the pith instructions are intended for fortunate students who are willing to disregard their life and possessions for the sake of spiritual knowledge.⁴¹ It is not too far-fetched to see in this an allusion to the hardships which Nubchen himself endured, first when seeking out and later when pre-

33 DZG 395.2–3: /*bshad pa bzhin te dpe dang tshig gis kyang/ /ji bzhin sgra ltar don yod ma yin phyir/ /tshig med tshig kun sgra med tshig dang bral/.*

34 DZG 390.2.

35 DZG 384.2.

36 Krech 2021: 302.

37 Krech 2021: 20, 69, 143.

38 Certeau 1982: 158.

39 Krech 2021: 99–100.

40 TBG 183.3–4.

41 TBG 185.6–186.1.

-serving these teachings for posterity.⁴² In the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary*, Nubchen makes it clear that those receiving the Dzogchen teachings should keep them secret, using the image of a stone hidden in the depths of the ocean, and should refrain from divulging them even if their life be endangered.⁴³ He specifies that the reason for this attitude of secrecy is to prevent the precious instructions from falling into the hands of unworthy recipients. The latter are portrayed as being intent on trading the teachings away in their insatiable thirst for fame and renown, as roaming about due to the distractions of appearances and as being reckless with their pledges, particularly those of secrecy.⁴⁴ In the *Commentary on the Holy Revered One*, they are referred to derogatorily as being “yogins only by name.”⁴⁵

Of course, on one level practices of secrecy in the religious sphere help to demarcate an in-group, which is privy to the knowledge and rituals of the tradition, from the out-group of those either hostile, indifferent to, or ignorant of it. Anthropologists of religion have pointed out that mobilizing the secret through veiled allusions, for instance, allowing it to remain close to the social surface, is in some ways more important than the content of the secret *per se*, for such mobilization provides the holders of the secret with a form of symbolic capital.⁴⁶

On another level, the practice of secrecy has to do with ensuring that the teachings are transmitted in the proper context. Nubchen contrasts the unworthy recipients described above with the fortunate vessels of his Dzogchen instructions,⁴⁷ emphasizing their outstanding spiritual *cum* intellectual faculties⁴⁸ and the fact that they are faithful to their pledges. He does this in an almost eschatological fashion,⁴⁹ showing concern with how these teachings will be received and transmitted in the future, as witnessed by the phrase “their time will come,” which we find in the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss Commentary*.⁵⁰ This concern with the future of the transmission is also underlined in the *Piercing Awl Commentary*, which contains an aspiration that it may become an “eye for

42 Esler 2014: 9, 13–15.

43 DPG 325.3–4.

44 DPG 326.1–2.

45 JDG 301.2: *ming gi rnal 'byor rnams* [...].

46 Bernat and Puccio-Den 2011: 158; Coleman and Dulin 2020: 4.

47 DZG 382.4–383.1.

48 TBG 181.2.

49 Of course, in the case of Buddhism, with its notion of a beginningless universe characterized by oscillating cycles of formation and dissolution (cf. La Vallée Poussin 1971: vol. 2, 181), one can only speak of relative eschatologies. See Apple 2010: 109–110, 119.

50 DPG 326.2: */skal ldan dus bab snod dam can/*.

those in future times,⁵¹ as well as in the *Victorious Peak Commentary*. The latter claims that the instructions it contains will be particularly suited to the *yogins* of the age of degeneration (*snyigs ma'i dus*),⁵² having been declared for those of the future,⁵³ and urges the holders of the lineage to bestow the teachings on appropriate students when the time arrives.⁵⁴

The concern with lineage is typical of tantric Buddhism more generally, which depends for its transmission on an initiatory context framed by the relationship between master and disciple.⁵⁵ In this respect, lineage is much more than something that is passively received, for in the process of transmission it is shaped, adapted and transformed by those who come to hold it.⁵⁶ It is no doubt with such considerations of living transmission in mind that particular attention is paid to the qualities of the potential disciple. The *Commentary on the Holy Revered One* classifies worthy disciples as being of three types: there are those who can disregard difficult conditions due to their single-pointed focus on the view, those who have great faith and those who are karmically predestined for the teachings.⁵⁷ Presumably, the latter category is introduced to explain a natural gift for contemplation among some students, whereas the other two types refer, schematically speaking, to the proclivities for intellectual intuition and devotional fervour, respectively.

Overall, we can conclude from the above that the context of the relationship between master and disciple plays a significant role in the transmission of these texts, i.e. in the way that they are to be assimilated and internalized. While these texts are no longer studied actively in the curricula of contemporary Tibetan practitioners, their living transmission is still preserved in the form of the scriptural authorization (*lung*),⁵⁸ which continues to be bestowed as part of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*.⁵⁹

51 DZG 398.2: [...] *ma 'ongs spyan gyur cig/*.

52 TBG 183.5–6.

53 TBG 185.2.

54 TBG 185.5–6.

55 Samuel 2009: 253–254.

56 Dalton 2016: 78.

57 JDG 300.2–3.

58 On which, see Klein 1994: 293.

59 On this collection, see below, Part 2, Introductory Remarks, § 1, pp. 63–67.

Conclusion

This study has focused on effortlessness as a structuring theme in the self-understanding of the early Dzogchen tradition, specifically as exemplified in the commentaries of Nubchen Sangye Yeshe. We have explored how this theme is reflected in a number of the key terms of Dzogchen's technical vocabulary and have examined the manner in which it serves Nubchen's overall purpose of establishing and reinforcing the doxographical category of Dzogchen as an independent vehicle. As shown by the case of Nyak Jñānakumāra, Nubchen's efforts in this direction were not unprecedented, though he seems to have been more systematic in his approach than his predecessors. In this process of demarcation, several important notions of Mahāyoga ritual are reinterpreted in more effortless terms. While this helps to carve out a hermeneutical and doxographical space for an unmistakable and clearly identifiable style of Dzogchen exegesis, which in later centuries would be taken up by several of the Nyingma tradition's greatest luminaries, it also underlines the importance of the tantric context within which Dzogchen emerged.

A further goal of this study has been to present a multi-layered understanding of what the paradox of effortlessness entails in terms of contemplative practice. To approach this question, we have made use of the analytical framework provided by the transcendence-immanence distinction, understood not substantially but as a relational polarity which can, broadly speaking, be applied to religious traditions in a comparative sense. This has allowed us to contrast Dzogchen's principle of effortlessness with other Buddhist understandings of the practitioner's situatedness in relation to the goal of the Buddhist path. In particular, I have argued that Dzogchen can be seen to represent an internalization and intensification of some of the basic principles articulated in the tantric paradigm. Moreover, I have suggested that Dzogchen operates using a non-linear conception of the path and that this distinctive model is reflected in the ways the meditator relates to inwardness and spaciousness in the process of contemplative training. I have also endeavoured to show that the texts that are the focus of this study must be read not as abstract speculation but as scripts for an unscripted form of meditative practice, and that the kind of interiority they invite the meditator to access is profoundly shaped by the interpersonal context of transmission that makes them meaningful in the first place.

It may be added that the unscripted, formless kind of meditation we see hinted at in these commentaries continues to represent an important strand of Dzogchen practice up to the present day. While it has certainly been codified by the rich texture of further developments in the Dzogchen tradition and

layered within a wider range of visionary and other contemplative techniques, it may be compared to an underground current that continues to nourish and to define *all* Dzogchen practice, however seemingly complex, as being fundamentally oriented towards effortless spontaneity.

PART 2

The Texts



Introductory Remarks

1 A Note on the Editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*

As mentioned in the Introduction above, Nubchen's Dzogchen commentaries are found in the NKJ edition of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*. This edition is itself part of a wider multi-generational project of publishing ever more exhaustive collections of this rubric of texts.¹ The concept of the transmitted literature (*bka' ma*) as a contrasting category distinct from revealed treasure texts (*gter ma*) is probably fairly old, although before the 11th century there is a great deal of overlap between both categories.² The actual codification of the transmitted literature as a corpus seems to go back to Gyurme Dorje Terdak Lingpa ('Gyur med rdo rje gTer bdag gling pa; 1646–1714) and his younger brother Lochen Dharmasrī (Lo chen Dharmasrī; 1654–1718). The first formal compilation (in nine volumes) of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma* is quite recent and was made by Gyalse Zhenpen Thaye (rGyal sras gZhan phan mtha' yas, 1800–1855) in 1840–1845. This edition is held to have been based on manuscripts brought to Kham from Mindroling (sMin grol gling) monastery.³ Only a few years later, in 1875, a second compilation, consisting of an additional sixteen volumes to supplement the existing collection, was prepared at Palyul (dPal yul) monastery by Gyatrul Pema Dongak Tendzin (rGya sprul Padma mDo sngags bstan 'dzin, 1830–1893). These efforts reflect the desire of learned Nyingma masters during the 19th century both to preserve their unique intellectual and spiritual heritage and to design a curriculum integrating the Dzogchen teachings into a format amenable to monastic scholastic instruction, in part as a response to and in conversation with the well-structured curricula of Geluk (dGe lugs) monasteries.⁴ To some extent, many of these luminaries may also have been inspired by a certain religiously motivated antiquarian bibliophily, directed towards the literary heritage of their own school.⁵

1 The information given here on the different compilations of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma* is derived from the instructive article by Paldor and Sheehy 2014.

2 Mayer 2019: 171–173.

3 Dalton 2016: 118.

4 Pearcey 2018: 29–32; Duckworth 2021.

5 Kapstein 2000: 78, 238, n. 77.

The third compilation of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma* was prepared by Dudjom Rinpoche (bDud 'joms Rin po che, 1904–1987) in India and published in Kalimpong in 1982–1987. This edition in 58 volumes (NKD) can be said to participate in a wider endeavour on the part of senior 20th-century Nyingma masters to salvage their texts following the destruction wrought by the Chinese takeover of Tibet and the Cultural Revolution.⁶ Still further editions were published inside Tibet from the 1990s onwards. A whole series of incremental editions was prepared under the auspices of Khenpo Munsel (mKhan po Mun sel, 1916–1994) through the efforts of his disciples, notably Khenpo Jamyang Gyaltzen (mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan; 1929–1999), Karma Delek (Karma bDe legs) and Nyakrong Tsering Gyatso (Nyag rong Tshe ring rGya mtsho), with the assistance and advice of Alak Zenkar Rinpoche (A lags gZan dkar Rin po che):⁷ this includes a set of 52 additional volumes intended as a supplement to Dudjom Rinpoche's earlier edition and distributed to selected monasteries and libraries, making a total of 110 volumes (NKM). In parallel, Khenpo Jamyang Gyaltzen published a further edition in 120 volumes in 1999 (NKJ), which reproduces manuscripts from various sources. Subsequently, and advised by Alak Zenkar Rinpoche, Tsering Gyatso produced an edition in 133 volumes of computer input texts (NKG) in 2009. Yet a further edition in 137 volumes was published in 2013 by Tulku Tupten Pelzang (sPrul sku Thub bstan dpal bzang, 1936–2021), who had been working on this project since 1982 (NKT). A number of the texts in this edition are published in the traditional wood-block format, for which the wood-blocks were especially carved, although for others the edition reproduces manuscript copies.

While these editions are incremental and aim to be as exhaustive as possible, it must also be said that in many cases they simply reproduce texts published previously. I have already discussed this elsewhere in relation to the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*.⁸ As alluded to in the Introduction above, the situation is even more pronounced here. We can summarize this state of affairs as follows:

The entirety of NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 5–630 is reproduced photostatically (with some very minor adjustments) in NKM, vol. 93/ge. Only the table of contents (*dkar chag*) has been rewritten. This adjustment was necessary because the next volume of NKM (vol. 94/nge: 4–219) reproduces texts found in NKJ,

6 Cantwell 2020: 295–296.

7 Aside from the above-mentioned article by Paldor and Sheehy 2014, these recent Tibetan editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma* are also discussed in Almogi and Wangchuk 2016: 15–17.

8 Esler 2018: 380–386.

vol. 103/pe: 631–847. Given the fact that NKJ and NKM are closely related—the editions are near-contemporaneous and were produced by the same group of scholars—one might wonder whether NKM is a copy of NKJ or whether the opposite is true. In the case of our commentaries, it is clear that the texts were copied from NKJ to NKM. A simple glance at NKM will reveal smears that are absent from NKJ and that occurred during the process of photostatic reproduction, as in DZG 385–386, for instance. Similarly, the first two lines of TBG 183 are perfectly clear in NKJ but have become faint and almost illegible in NKM, again due to the photocopying process.

Moreover, the dependence of NKM on NKJ is especially apparent from adjustments in the page layout that were made to accommodate additions or text that had spilled over into the margins of NKJ. For example, in TBG 224, NKJ inserts an omitted phrase below the margin of the page. If we turn to the corresponding page in NKM, the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth lines have been rewritten in order to incorporate this phrase within the main body of the text. This means that the scribe of NKJ realized that he had forgotten a phrase and inserted it beneath the lower margin. Those responsible for the production of NKM then decided to rewrite the surrounding text in order to seamlessly incorporate the missing phrase. In TBG 212 a verbal particle *ba* has been inserted above the first line, correcting *mthong* to *mthong ba*. The end of the line has been rewritten in NKM so as to incorporate the correction within the body of the main text. Similarly, in NRN 98 (a text by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe that is not part of the present study), two words in the second line spill over on the right margin in NKJ. However, in NKM the end of the line has been rewritten to incorporate all the words within the margins of the page in an attempt to produce a neater copy.

NKM's dependence on NKJ is also evident from minor errors in NKJ which have been corrected in NKM (and subsequently in NKG). TBG 195.3 has the misspelling *rab 'byam* in NKJ, which has been emended to *rab 'byams* in NKM through the addition of a small *sa* below the line, a correction that has subsequently been incorporated in NKG 172.1. Likewise, TBG 195.6 has the erroneous *gzugs 'dzin* in NKJ, which has been corrected to *gzungs 'dzin* in NKM and further emended to *gzung 'dzin* in NKG 172.3. Furthermore, TBG 202.5–6 has the grammatically irregular *bsgrub du med* in NKJ, corrected to *bsgrub tu med* in NKM and NKG 177.6. Curiously, the very same mistake a few lines above (TBG 202.3) has not been corrected in either NKM or NKG 177.4. We have similar cases in TBG 203.4, where NKJ has the irregular *byang chub du*, which is corrected to *byang chub tu* in NKM and NKG 178.4, and in JDG 295.6, 297.3–4, where we have repeated instances of *rtag du* being emended to *rtag tu* by hand in NKM and this correction being carried over in NKG 253.4, 254.5–6. Similar

cases of handwritten corrections having been made in NKM and incorporated into NKG are found in TBG 211.2 (NKJ's *lhun gyis grub du* corrected to *lhun gyis grub tu* in NKM and NKG 182.2); TBG 221.4 (NKJ's *mchog du* corrected to *mchog tu* in NKM and NKG 193.5); DPG 305.2 (NKJ's *mig du* corrected to *mig tu* in NKM and NKG 177.6); DPG 312.1 (NKJ's *rdzogs ste* corrected to *rdzogs te* in NKM and NKG 266.2); and DPG 325.2 (NKJ's *chags ste* corrected to *chags te* in NKM and NKG 276.6).

We can conclude that in the case of our commentaries, NKM is a slightly edited version of NKJ. This is intriguing in view of the fact that NKM seems to have been published before NKJ. While NKM was published in the early 1990s, the publication date of NKJ is given as 1999. This would suggest that although NKM was published first, it appears to have been based, in the case of the commentaries examined in this study, on a photocopied edited version of the texts, whereas the later NKJ publication reproduces the earlier, uncorrected copy. Such a conclusion also seems to be supported by some of the other works that are part of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*, notably the *Fortress, Chasm and Life-Force*. This collection of tantric material seems to have been redacted by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe and his student Nub Yönten Gyatso. It is found in vol. 29/ha: 15–425 of NKJ and in vol. 67/ju: 15–425 of NKM. While both reproductions are virtually identical, for at least one of the texts contained in the *Fortress, Chasm and Life-Force*, it is apparent that errors found in NKJ have been corrected in NKM,⁹ indicating that here again NKJ is the earlier, unedited copy. Nonetheless, it must be stressed that while this conclusion can be accepted for our specific commentaries, it would be overhasty at present to make any general statements regarding the overall relationship of both editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*. After all, this is a vast collection of texts and text-critical analysis needs to determine this on a case-by-case basis.

Regarding the other versions of our commentaries that are found in the other editions of the *Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the Nyingma*, the entirety of NKJ, vol. 103/pe is reproduced photostatically in NKT, vol. 115/se; only the table of contents and the page numbers have been slightly modified.

Since NKG is a computer input version based on NKJ (via the intermediary NKM), it can also be discounted for text-critical purposes, even though it does occasionally provide useful corrections, including some that are not found in NKM. For example, both NKJ and NKM have the erroneous *mdzod spyod* in TBG 195.4, whereas NKG 172.1 emends this to *mdzad spyod*. NKG is not a direct

⁹ See Cantwell 2022: 48.

copy of NKJ, however, being based instead on the handwritten emendations found in the intermediate NKM. NKG's overall reliance on NKM can be gleaned from the above-mentioned passage in TBG 224.6, where the text adjacent to the phrase inserted below the line in NKJ has been rewritten in NKM. While doing so, NKM introduces a hypercorrection, modifying *sa'i ya thog* to *sa'i la thog*; this hypercorrection is then taken over in NKJ 196.3.

We are thus left with a single witness of these texts, despite their reproduction across various collections. I have based my edition of the Tibetan texts on NKJ since it appears to be the earliest of the available editions.¹⁰ Where a suggested emendation seemed to be called for or where NKG (= the computer input version) provided a useful correction,¹¹ the variants have been recorded in the notes. For quotations of the root texts found in the commentaries, I have refrained from including all the variants stemming from the multiple versions of the root texts,¹² since the latter have already been critically edited by Karen Liljenberg. Where meaningful, I refer to the root texts in the widely available mTshams brag (= M) edition or in Liljenberg's work.

2 Overview of the Root Texts in Their Various Versions

The root texts¹³ have been critically edited by Liljenberg.¹⁴ Note that she bases her editions on the M version of the texts, which she collates with T, (occasionally R,) D and BGB, as well as the versions preserved in the *bKa' ma* commentaries. In some cases, notably the *rJe btsan dam pa* and the *Nam mkha'i rgyal po*, where the D version differs substantially,¹⁵ she has produced a separate edition for the D version.

In this overview of the different versions of the root texts, I have additionally supplied the references to the other Bhutan NGB editions and to R.

rJe btsan dam pa¹⁶

NGB editions

D, vol. 25/ra: 214r–214v (pp. 427–428).

10 This is the approach suggested in such cases by Katre 1954: 88–89.

11 On the basic principles involved, see West 1973: 48–59.

12 See next section (Introductory Remarks, § 2).

13 For the sigla used here, see p. XII.

14 Liljenberg 2012b.

15 Liljenberg 2012b: 233.

16 Critical edition in Liljenberg 2012b: 292–294; for a translation, see *Ibid.*: 225–227.

Bhutan NGB group

G-a, vol. 1/ka: 268v¹⁷ (EAP039/1/3/1/1, photo 262).

G-b, vol. 1/ka: 284v–285r (EAP039/1/3/2/1, photos 284–285).

M, vol. 1/ka: 592–594.

GR, vol. 1/ka: 256v (EAP105/1/1/2, photo 256)

S, vol. 1/ka: 265r–265v (PDF 265–266).

South Central NGB group

T, vol. 1/ka: 442–443.

R, vol. 1/ka: 193r–193v (photos 195–196).

BGB edition

BGB, vol. 4: 144.5–145.2; 150.2–3 [As pointed out by Liljenberg in her critical edition, the BGB version is fragmentary.]

bDe ba phra bkod¹⁸

NGB editions

D, vol. 6/cha: 96r.7–97r.7 (pp. 191–193).

Bhutan NGB group

G-a, vol. 1/ka: 283r–284r (EAP039/1/3/1/1, photos 273–274).

G-b, vol. 1/ka: 297v–298v (EAP039/1/3/2/1, photos 297–298).

M, vol. 1/ka: 621–624.

GR, vol. 1/ka: 267v–269r (EAP105/1/1/2, photos 267–269).

S, vol. 1/ka: 277v–278v (PDF 278–279).

South Central NGB group

T, vol. 1/ka: 453–455.

R, vol. 1/ka: 202v–204r (photos 205–206).

BGB edition

BGB, vol. 1: 463–469.

17 Folio 268r is called “268/9” (*nyis brgya re brgyad re dgu*).

18 Despite the similarity of the name, the *bDe ba phra bkod* of the NGB evidently does not correspond to the root text quoted in Nubchen’s commentary, where it is called *Byang chub sems bde ba ’phra bkod*. For the NGB versions, see the critical edition in Liljenberg 2012b: 265–267; for a translation, see *Ibid.*: 189–193.

Nam mkha'i rgyal po¹⁹

NGB editions

D, vol. 6/cha: 89r–91r (pp. 177–189).

Bhutan NGB group

G-a, vol. 1/ka: 272v–274v (EAP039/1/3/1/1, photos 264–266).

G-b, vol. 1/ka: 288v–290v (EAP039/1/3/2/1, photos 288–290).

M, vol. 1/ka: 601–606.

GR, vol. 1/ka: 259v–261v (EAP105/1/1/2, photos 259–262).

S, vol. 1/ka: 268v–270v (PDF 269–271).

South Central NGB group

T, vol. 1/ka: 461–464.

R, vol. 1/ka: 191v–193r (photos 194–195).

BGB edition

BGB –.

rTse mo byung rgyal²⁰

NGB editions

D, vol. 6/cha: 91r–95r (pp. 181–189).

*Bhutan NGB group*G-a, vol. 1/ka: 274v–280v (EAP039/1/3/1/1, photos 266–272).²¹

G-b, vol. 1/ka: 290v–296r (EAP039/1/3/2/1, photos 290–296).

M, vol. 1/ka: 606–618.

GR, vol. 1/ka: 261v–266v (EAP105/1/1/2, photos 261–266).

S, vol. 1/ka: 271r–276v (PDF 271–277).

South Central NGB group

T, vol. 1/ka: 432–442.

R, vol. 1/ka: 193v–198v (photos 196–201).

19 This is the root text of the *rDo rje gzong phugs kyi 'grel pa*, though the lines in the commentary are presented in a very different order to the root text. See Liljenberg 2012b: 69, 124–126. Critical edition of the root text in Ibid.: 253–258 (M version), 259–264 (D version); for a translation, see Ibid.: 177–181 (M version); 181–188 (D version).

20 Critical edition in Liljenberg 2012b: 236–252; for a translation, see Ibid.: 160–176.

21 Folio 281r is called “281/2” (*nyis brgya gya gcig gya gnyis*).

BGB edition

BGB, vol. 1: 317–329.



Although as mentioned above in the Introduction, the NRN commentary is not dealt with in this book, I have nonetheless supplied the references for its root text here.

Nam mkha' che = rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud²²

NGB editions

D –.

Bhutan NGB group

G-a, vol. 3/ga: 58v–68v (EAP039/1/3/1/3, photos 60–70).

G-b, vol. 3/ga: 73r–84v (EAP039/1/3/2/3, photos 73–84).

M, vol. 3/ga: 165–191.

GR, vol. 3/ga: 63r–72v (EAP105/1/1/4, photos 63–72).

S, vol. 3/ga: 72v–83r (PDF 73–83).

South Central NGB group

T –.

R –.

BGB edition

BGB –.

3 Categories of Variants

In my edition of the Tibetan texts, I have applied some of the suggestions put forward by Cathy Cantwell and Robert Mayer for the critical editing of Tibetan tantric texts from the NGB corpus,²³ particularly their suggestion to make explicit the editor's background workings.²⁴ The advantage of this approach is that

22 There are a number of texts containing *Nam mkha' che* in their title, these being secondary *tantras* (Clemente 2017: 7, 211–212), but this one seems to be unique to the Bhutan NGB group.

23 See Cantwell and Mayer 2006.

24 I already followed this approach in my edition of the *Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation*; see Esler 2018: 393–394.

it enables the reader to discern at a glance the reasoning behind a particular emendation. While the recognition of different types of variants is nothing new in textual criticism,²⁵ such a clear enumeration of categories to be applied during the editing process greatly facilitates the editor's work—for instance, among other things, the task of gathering statistical data. Following Cantwell and Mayer, I distinguish between the following categories of variants; I have assigned an abbreviation to each category, which is noted in brackets behind each variant recorded in the critical apparatus:

- alt. Permissible alternative: words or phrases with a similar meaning, that make sense in the context.
- ann. Editorial annotation: alternative readings or explanations suggested by the editor in notes added to the text.
- arch. Archaism: archaic forms of a given word.
- cod. Codicological: factors of the manuscript or edition, in particular handwriting or printed letters, that impinge on the reading of the text.
- ditto Dittography: the inadvertent repetition of a word or phrase.
- eyeskip Eyeskip: omission (sometimes repetition) of a word or phrase because the eye jumps to another occurrence of that word or phrase.
- gramm. Grammar: grammatical errors.
- haplo Haplography: the inadvertent omission of a necessary repetition.
- hom. Homophony: scribal errors derived from similar sounding words.
- metr. Metrical: here one should note that it is not invariably the case that a text has originally been written in correct metre.
- orth. Orthography: simple spelling mistakes, such as *gnyi* for *gnyis*.
- psych. Psychological errors: an error which is generated because the scribe has understood the meaning of the word and writes a word with a similar meaning, or else a word with a different meaning that for him is somehow psychologically associated with the word in question.
- punct. Punctuation: in the Tibetan context, this refers mainly to the placement of *shads*, which, especially in prose, may influence the meaning of the text.
- rec. Recensional: variants where a deliberate editorial emendation has been made.
- scrib. Scribal correction: a correction, such as a letter inserted beneath the line, made by the scribe.
- spoon. Spoonerism: reversal of the order of a word in a phrase.

25 Cf. West 1973: 20–29.

- styl. Stylistic: this includes alternative spellings for the same word, as well as abbreviations.
- tense Tense: the tense forms of verbs, whereby it should be noted that Tibetan is more permissive of tense variation than English, for instance. Moreover, it cannot be invariably assumed that a text was originally written in perfect grammar.
- visual Visual error: errors caused by certain letters that in Tibetan script resemble each other visually, such as *nga* and *da*, or *ja* and *dza*.

Evidently, in many cases these categories overlap. For example, one may encounter a homophone that is also a grammatical error, e.g. *kyis* for *kyi* (hom., gramm.), or also a grammatical variant that is a viable alternative (gramm., alt.). However, as noted above, enumerating the different types of variants has many practical advantages, both for the editor of a text and for the reader.

rJe btsan dam pa'i 'grel pa (JDG)

[References: *rJe btsan dam pa'i 'grel pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 292–301. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 292–301. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 250–257.]

༄།། །རྗེ་བཙུན་དམ་པའི་འགྲེལ་པ་བཞུགས།

བཙུན་ལྷན་འདས་དཔལ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་སྐྱེ་གསུང་བྱགས་དོ་རྗེ་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ལྷན་གྱིས་རྗོགས་པ་
ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།

།ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ལྷའི་ལྷ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། རྣམ་པར་སྣང་མཛད་དང། རྗེ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔལ་འབས། ཀུན་
5 ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་འཕགས། ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་འཕགས་པས་ལྷའི་ལྷའོ། །ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན། རྒྱལ་བ་རིགས་
ལྷ་རིལ་འདུས་པའམ། ཀུན་གྱི་གཞི་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་བདག་པོ་ཉིད་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་རྗོགས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་
ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། །ཨ་ཏི་ཡོ་ག་ནི། ལྷག་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཞེས་བྱ་སྟེ། རྣལ་འབྱོར་རྣམ་པ་བཞི་ལས་
ཟུང་པར་དུ་འཕགས་པ་དང། མ་འདྲེས་པ་ [293] དང་ཡོངས་སུ་རྗོགས་པའི་ཚོས་ཉིད། དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་
10 བ་ཆེན་པོ་ནི་ལྷའི་ཡང་ལྷའོ།

1 ༄།།] The *yig mgo* has been added by the editor for the sake of consistency with the other editions presented in this book. Since in NKJ the text is placed immediately after a commentary by Nyak Jñānakumāra, it is merely preceded by the *rin chen spungs shad*. 2 བཙུན་ལྷན་འདས་དཔལ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་] In this edition the root text is placed in colour in order to help distinguish it from the surrounding commentary.

Commentary on the Holy Revered One (JDG)

The commentary on the *Holy Revered One*.¹

“Homage to the Hallowed One, the glorious Samantabhadra” refers to the spontaneously compete adamantine great bliss of awakened body, speech and mind.

“The Apex Yoga is the divinity among gods”² means that Samantabhadra is superior to Vairocana, Vajrasattva, etc. Because Samantabhadra is superior, he is the deity among deities. If it be asked why, it is because he comprises all the five Victorious Ones, or because, as the universal ground that is the ruler of all of them, Samantabhadra is the Great Completeness.

Regarding Atiyoga, it is called the Eminent Yoga because it is superior to the four types of yoga,³ its reality being unmixed yet thoroughly complete. [NKJ 293.1; NKG 251.2] Having assimilated suchness, everything is an ornament of Samantabhadra, whence there is no deterioration. It is the great bliss of Samantabhadra that is the god of gods.

1 Critical edition of the root text (the *rje btsan dam pa*) in Liljenberg 2012b: 292–294; for a translation, see Liljenberg 2012b: 225–227.

2 This and the following four lines are quoted in the SM 332; see Esler 2018: 268.

3 It is somewhat unclear what these four types of yoga are. The Dunhuang manuscript 10L Tib J 454 (panel 1.1–9) discusses four yogas, which are as follows: (1) the yoga of the nature, which consists in remaining in spontaneous presence; (2) the yoga of the accomplishment, which consists in familiarizing oneself with that state, whereby the Buddhas, bodhisattvas and awareness-holders become naturally present; (3) the yoga of abiding by the pledges, which consists in reminding the local deities and spirits of their previous pledges; and (4) the yoga of subsequently accomplishing the pledges, which underscores the necessity of abiding by the pledges oneself, whereby the practitioner eventually attains the qualities of the previous masters. See van Schaik 2008: 26 (English translation), 38 (Tibetan text). Nonetheless, it will be seen that the subsequent reference in our text to the four *yogins* hints at a different taxonomy to that found in the above-mentioned Dunhuang manuscript. Perhaps Nubchen is here referring to the four approaches discussed at length in his SM.

རྣམ་འབྱོར་པས་ཀྱང་རྣམ་འབྱོར་མཚོག་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། གང་ཟག་གི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་པ་དང་། དེས་པའི་
 རྣམ་འབྱོར་པ་དང་། ཡང་དག་པའི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་པ་ལས་ལྷག་པའི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་བྱང་པར་དུ་འཕགས་
 པའི་ཕྱིར། རྣམ་འབྱོར་མཚོག་གོ། །ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན། རྣམ་འབྱོར་བཞི་པོ་ནི་རྩོལ་སྐྱབས་དང་མ་བྲལ་ཞིང་
 གཟུང་འཛིན་གྱི་མཐའ་ཡོད་ལ། ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣམ་འབྱོར་རམ། ལྷག་པའི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་ནི། ལྷན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་
 5 པའི་ས་འཛིན་ཅིང་རྩོལ་སྐྱབ་དང་བྲལ་བས། ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་སྦྱོང་ཡུལ་གཟུང་འཛིན་གྱི་མཐའ་ལ་
 མི་གནས་ཏེ། སྦྱོང་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་དང་། ལྷ་བ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་ངང་དུ་གྱུར་པས་རྣམ་འབྱོར་
 མཚོག་གོ།

འཕགས་པ་ལས་ཀྱང་འཕགས་པས་ན་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། ཁམས་གསུམ་ལས་འཕགས་ [294] པ་
 ནི་ཉན་ཐོས་ཡིན་ལ། དེ་ལས་རང་སངས་རྒྱས་འཕགས། རང་སངས་རྒྱས་ལས་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་མདོ་
 10 སྡེ་འཕགས། དེ་དག་ལས་སྤྲུགས་པ་ནི་སྤྲུགས་གྱི་ཐེག་པའོ། །དེ་ལས་ཀྱང་སྤྲུགས་པོས་བརྒྱན་པ་
 དང་། ཡེ་ཤེས་སྒྲ་མའི་ས་དང་། རྫོང་སེམས་དཔའ་མཚན་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་ས་ནི། ཀུན་ཏུ་འོང་
 གྱི་ས་ལས་འདས་པའི་ཕྱིར་འཕགས་པའའམ། ཡང་ན་ཀུན་ཏུ་འོང་ཉིད་ཁམས་གསུམ་ལས་འདས་
 བས། རིག་འཛིན་བྱང་རྒྱབ་ས་ལ་མི་ལྡོག་པར་གནས་པས། འཕགས་པ་ཡིན་གྱིས་ཀྱང་། ཡེ་ཤེས་
 མཚོག་གི་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་ས་འདི་ད་ལྷ་ཉིད་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་དགོངས་པ་ལ་བཞུགས་
 15 པས། ལས་ཀྱང་འཕགས་ཞེས་བྱའོ།

རྫོང་རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་གྱི་མེས་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། འདུས་མ་བྱས་པའི་ཚོས་རྫོང་ལྷ་བུའི་ཉིང་འཛིན་ཐོབ་
 པའམ། བཅུད་བཞི་ལས་ཀྱང་རྒྱལ་བར་བྱེད་པའམ། ལྷ་བ་འོག་མ་ཀུན་ལ་སྤྲུགས་ཤིང་། སངས་ཡེ་
 བས་རྒྱས་པར་གྱུར་པས་རྣམ་འབྱོར་ [295] གྱི་ཡུལ་ཡ་ཐོག་མེས་ཆེན་པོ་ལྷ་བུ་སྟེ། ཨ་ཉི་ཡོ་ག་
 20 འབྲུང་བ་ཡང་། ཚོས་གྱི་སྐུ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་གྱི་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྐབས་དེ་ལས་བྱུང་ལ། ལྷག་པའི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་ཨ་
 ཉི་ཡོ་ག་ནི། ཡིད་བཞིན་གྱི་ལོ་ན་བུ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ལྷ་རྩེ་དང་ཚོས་མ་ཡིན་པའི་གཉེར་ཐམས་ཅད་འབྲུང་
 བའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

8 ན] Cf. M 593.2, which has *ni* (rec., alt.). 22 ར] NKG 253.1 omits *ro* (eyeskip, rec.).

“This yoga is supreme among yogas” means that because the Eminent Yoga is superior to the individual *yogin*, the definitive *yogin* and the genuine *yogin*, it is the supreme yoga.⁴ If it be asked why, it is because the four yogas are not free from effortful accomplishment and have the limitations of grasper and grasped. [On the other hand,] the Apex Yoga or Eminent Yoga holds the locus of spontaneous completeness and is free from effortful accomplishment. Hence, Samantabhadra’s scope does not abide on the limitations of grasper and grasped. Since its conduct is universally good and its view is the state of Samantabhadra, it is the supreme yoga.

“It is nobler than noble” means that the auditors are superior to those in the three realms; [NKJ 294.1; NKG 251.6] superior to them are the independent buddhas; the Sautrāntika [Madhyamaka] of the Mahāyāna are superior to the independent buddhas; better still is the Mantrayāna.

The stages of the densely adorned, of the wisdom master and of the thoroughly complete names of Vajrasattva are ‘noble’ because they transcend the stage of universal light (Skt. *samantaprabhā*). Or else, the stage of universal light itself is ‘noble’ because, having transcended the three realms, one remains on the non-revertible stage of an awareness-holding bodhisattva. Yet this stage of supreme wisdom’s (Skt. *jñāna*) great bliss abides right now as the Thus-gone One’s intent; therefore, it is ‘nobler than’ [the previously mentioned stages].

“The adamant sceptre (Skt. *vajra*) is the ancestor of all the Victorious Ones.” This means that whether one obtains the diamond-like concentration (Skt. *vajropamasamādhi*) on uncompounded phenomena, or whether one is victorious over the four demons,⁵ it rises above⁶ all the lower views. Since it is primordially awakened, it is prior to being an object of yoga. [NKJ 295.1; NKG 252.5] Because, like a great ancestor, Atiyoga is the mainspring, it is called ‘ancestor’. If it be asked why, it is because it is the origin of all *yogins*, who occur due to the blessings of the suchness of the body of reality (Skt. *dharma-kāya*). Atiyoga, the Eminent Yoga, like the precious wish-granting gem (Skt. *cintāmaṇi*), is the origin of all treasures, whether they be religious or not.

4 Note that there is a subtle shift in the text from talking about the practice (the yoga) to talking about the practitioner (the *yogin*). This is also reflected above in the identification of Atiyoga with the primordial Buddha Samantabhadra, the paragon of the Great Completeness.

5 Viz. the demon of the aggregates (Skt. *skandhamāra*), the demon of the afflictions (Skt. *kleśamāra*), the demon of death (Skt. *māraṇamāra*) and the demon of carnality, lit. “of the divine son” (Skt. *devaputramāra*).

6 On the word *spags*, see below, Text 4, note 105.

1 **རྗེ་བཙུན་དམ་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་ཞེས་བྱ་བ།** མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་རྒྱན་གྱིས་བཞགས་ཤིང་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་
 པོའི་དོན་ལས་མི་འདེད་བའི། ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་མངའ་བརྟེན་པའི་ཕྱིར། དབང་ལྷུག་ཀྱང་ཡིན་ལ། ཐམས་
 ཅད་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་ངང་ཡང་ཡིན་ལ། མི་བདེ་བ་དང་དཔྱད་པ་རྩལ་ཅམ་ཡང་མེད་
 པས། དེའི་གོང་ན་ལ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར། **རྗེ་བཙུན་ཡང་ཡིན་ནོ།** |ད་ལྟ་ཉིད་ནས་ཁམས་གསུམ་ཟིལ་གྱིས་
 5 **གཞོན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རྗེ་བཙུན་ཡང་ཡིན་ནོ།** |མ་ནོར་བའི་དབྱིངས་ལ་རྟག་ཏུ་གཞོལ་བས་དམ་པ་ཡང་
 [296] ཡིན་ནོ། |ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན། ཡེ་ཤེས་མཚོག་གི་ས་ལ་མི་གནས་པའི། རྒྱལ་གྱིས་གནས་པའི་
 ཕྱིར་རོ།

འདྲི་རྗེ་འཆང་རྒྱལ་འཛིགས་པའི་སྐབས། |**ཉམས་པའི་ཆད་པ་བྱུང་བ་ལ་**ཞེས་བྱ་བ། རྣལ་འབྱོར་
 པའི་དམ་ཚིགས་གཉན་པོ་ཉམས་པའི་དུས་ན། གསོ་བའི་ཐབས་གཞན་ཅིས་ཀྱང་མི་སྐྱོངས་གྱིས་དྲོ་
 10 ཞེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་དེ་ཉིད་ལ་གནས་པས། ཉམས་པ་སྐྱོངས་ཤིང་འཛིགས་པ་ལ་སྐབས་པས་སམ། ཡང་
 ར་ཁམས་གསུམ་དུ་འཁོར་བའི་འཛིགས་པ་ལས་སྐྱོལ་བའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། |དེ་ཡང་ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན། ཀུན་
 ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ལས་མ་ཉམས་ན། འཛིགས་པ་དེ་དག་གིས་མི་རྒྱགས་ཤིང་། ཆད་པའི་
 གནས་མེད་དོ།

ལམ་གོན་བཙུན་དེ་ལས་གཞན་མེད་དོ་ཞེས་པ། འཛིག་རྟེན་དང་འཛིག་རྟེན་ལས་འདས་པའི་
 15 བགོགས་གྱིས་ཟིན་པའི་སྐབས་དང་། དཔུང་གཉེན་དུ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

འདྲི་གཞོལ་དེར་ནི་མཚོན་པའི་སྤྲིན་ཞེས་པ་ནི། མི་དང་ལྷའི་འབྱོར་པ་ཅམ་གྱིས་ [297] མི་སྤི་
 བར་མཚོན་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡིན་གྱིས། འདུ་འབྲལ་མེད་པའི་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་མཚོན་པའི་
 སྤྲིན་གྱིས་མཚོན་པའི་ཕྱིར། དེར་གཞོལ་ཞེས་སྐྱོས་སོ།

འཇུང་དུ་གནས་པས་བསྐབས་ཐབས་སོ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། དམ་ཚིག་མཚོག་ཏུ་བརྟག་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་
 20 སྤྲུགས་དང་ལྷུག་རྒྱ་དང་། སྐྱོམ་སྐྱུབ་རྩལ་བའི་ས་ལ་མི་གནས་ཀྱི། མི་དམིགས་པའི་ཐེག་པ་ཁམས་
 གསུམ་ལས་ངེས་པར་འབྱུང་བའི་དོན་གྱི་སྤིང་པོ་ལ་རྟག་ཏུ་གནས་པ་ཉིད་བསྐབས་པའི་ཐབས་སོ།

1 རྗེ་བཙུན། NKG 253.2 has *rje btsun* (alt.). || རྗེ་བཙུན་དམ་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། This passage (up to *rje btsan yang yin no/*) is misplaced in NKG 253.1-3: *dbang phyug kyang yin la/ thams cad kun tu bzang po'i bde ba chen po'i ngang yang yin la/ mi bde ba dang ngan pa rdul tsam yang med pas/ de'i gong na la med pa'i phyir/ /rje btsun dam pa kun tu bzang zhes bya ba/ mnyam pa nyid rgyan gyis bzhags shing kun tu bzang po'i don las mi 'da' ba'i/ thams cad la mnga' bmyes pa'i phyir/ rje btsan yang yin no/.* 5 གཞོན་པའི། em. *gnan pa'i* (orth.); see NKG 253.3. || རྟག་ཏུ། em. *rtag du* (gramm.); see NKG 295.6 and NKG 253.4. 6 མི་གནས་པའི། NKG 253.4 omits *shad* (punct.). 11 གསུམ། em. *sum* (orth.); see NKG 253.6. 14 མགོན་བཙུན། em. *'gon btsun* (orth.); see M 593.3 and NKG 254.1. 16 འབྱོར་པ། NKG 254.2-3 has *'byor ba* (alt.). 19 རྒྱང་དུ། Cf. M 593.3, which has *kun tu* (rec., alt.). 21 རྒྱ། NKG 254.5 has *gyis* (hom., gramm.). || རྟག་ཏུ། em. *rtag du* (gramm.); see NKG 297.3 and NKG 254.5.

“The holy revered one, Samantabhadrā” signifies that, being adorned with the ornament of equality, there is no trespassing against the absolute meaningfulness of Samantabhadrā. Since everything has been mastered, it is the omnipotent one (Skt. *īśvara*).⁷ Since it is the state wherein everything is Samantabhadrā’s great bliss, there is not a dust particle’s worth of ill-being or evil. Since there is nothing to top it, it is the ‘revered one’. Since it outshines the three realms right now, it is the ‘revered one’. Since it constantly embarks on the unmistakable open dimension, it is ‘holy’. [NKJ 296.1; NKG 253.4] If it be asked why, it is because on the stage of supreme wisdom one abides in the manner of non-abiding.

“The Victorious One, Vajradhara, is the refuge from fear for those [whose pledges are] impaired or broken.” This means that when a *yogin*’s severe pledges have deteriorated, one does not make amends through any other means of restoration. By abiding in great peace, the impaired [pledges] are amended and one is sheltered from fear. Or else, [this is said] because one is liberated from the fears of the three realms of cyclic existence. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] since there is no deteriorating from the state of Samantabhadrā’s great bliss, one is unaffected by fears, and there is no abiding in broken [pledges].

“There is no other revered warden⁸ than him” means that he is the refuge for those seized by obstructions, both worldly and supramundane, since he is the ally, Samantabhadrā.

“To embark thereon is a cloud of offerings”⁹ means that it is like offering unsparingly the assets of gods and men. [NKJ 297.1; NKG 254.3] Great bliss, which is without coalescing or dissociating, is offered as the offering clouds of Samantabhadrā; therefore, it is said ‘to embark thereon’.

“To abide in the stream¹⁰ is an evocation” means that in supremely examining the pledges, etc., one does not abide on the stage of effortful accomplishment through the spells, emblematic gestures and meditation. Yet the non-referential vehicle is an evocation insofar as one constantly abides in the quintessential meaning, i.e. deliverance from the three realms.

7 Starting with the phrase “it is the omnipotent one” (*dbang phyug kyang yin la/*) and up to “Since there is nothing to top it, it is the ‘revered one’” (*de’i gong na la med pa’i phyir/ rje btsan yang yin no/*), NKG 253.1–3 produces a garbled order and misplaces the passage before the lemma “The holy revered one, Samantabhadrā” (*rje btsan dam pa kun tu bzang zhes ba ba/*).

8 NKJ erroneously reads *’gon btsun*, but NKG has emended this to *mgon btsun*.

9 This and the following four lines are quoted in the SM 348; see Esler 2018: 277–278.

10 The version quoted in the SM reads *klong du* (‘in the expanse’) instead of *klung du* (‘in the stream’), whereas M 593.2 has *kun tu* (‘always’).

1 །ངང་གིས་མི་ལྷོག་དངོས་གྲུབ་པས་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། ཚོས་ཉིད་མཉམ་པ་ཚེན་པོ་ལ། རྟག་ཏུ་གནས་
 ཤིང་ཡིད་ཆེས་པ་ལ། ཚོས་ཉིད་དང་ཡི་ཤེས་གཉིས་དབྱེར་མི་བྱེད་པ་ལ་གནས་པ་ནི། དངོས་གྲུབ་
 ཡིན་གྱི། བསྐྱོམ་པའི་མཐུ་དང་། བསྐྱབ་པའི་མཐུ་དང་། ལས་འབྲེའི་མཐུ་དང་། བན་གཞོན་སྐྱ་འགའ་
 ཅོམ་རྩས་པ་ནི་དངོས་གྲུབ་མ་ཡིན་ནོ། །ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན། འདུ་འབྲལ་མེད་པའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་རྩལ་ཆེན་
 5 པོ་ནི་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཡིན་གྱི། [298] ཚོ་འཕྲུལ་དང་ཁྱད་པར་སྐྱ་འགའ་ཅོམ་རྩས་པ་ནི་ཟད་ཤེས་པའི་
 མཐུ་འབྲེལ་ཅོམ་ཡིན་ནོ།

1 །དོན་ཀུན་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་རྩོགས་པ་ཡིན་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། ཚོས་ཇི་བཞེན་པའི་ངང་ལ་མི་གཉིས་པའི་ཚུལ་གྱིས་
 གནས་པ་ནི་ཚོས་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཡིན་ལ། འདིའི་ནང་དུ་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་རིལ་གནས་པའི་ཕྱིར། ཐམས་ཅད་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་
 ཚེན་པོ་མ་ལུས་པ་ཡིན་པས་རྩོགས་པ་ཞེས་ཀྱང་བྱའི། ལྷའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་གསལ་བ་ཅོམ་ལ་ནི་མི་བྱའོ།

10 །འདི་དག་ཀུན་གྱི་སྒྲ་མ་ཡང་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། འདི་རྟེན་སྟོན་པའི་སྟོབས་དཔོན་ནི་སངས་རྒྱས་དང་
 གཉིས་ཐ་མི་དང་པར་བལྟའོ། །ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན། ཚོས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་གཏེར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་སྤྱགས་ལ་མི་
 མངའ་བ་མ་ཞོར་པར་སྟོབས་མ་ལ་སྦྱིན་པར་མཇེད་པ་ཡིན་ལ། སྟོན་པ་ཞལ་བཞུགས་ན་ཡང་འདི་
 ལས་ལྷག་པའི་ཚོས་བརྟན་དུ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

15 མངོན་སུམ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཡིན་པས་ན་ཞེས་སྟོས་སོ། །འདྲ་བ་དང་བས་མཚོག་བསྐྱེད་དེ་ཞེས་
 བྱ་བ། འདི་སྟོན་པའི་སྟོབ་དཔོན་དང་། སངས་རྒྱས་གཉིས་ཐ་མི་དད་ཅིང་ [299] མོས་པ་གྲས་པ་
 མཚུངས་པར་བྱ་ཞིང་། སེམས་དང་བ། སྐྱ་མེད་པས་དག་བའི་བཤེས་གཉེན་ལ་བརྟེན་ཅིང་མཉེས་པ་
 ལུལ་ཏེ། ལུང་བཞེན་བཀོད་པར་བྱ་བ་དང་། ཚོས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ལུང་ཟབ་མོ་ལ་བརྟེན་ཅིང་གོམས་པར་བྱ་བ་
 ལ་བྱའོ།

1 རྟག་ཏུ། em. *rtag du* (gramm.); see NKM 297.4 and NKG 254.5-6. 3 ལས་འབྲེའི། NKG 254.6 has *las phros* (hom., gramm.). 4 རྩལ། em. *tshal* (hom.) 9 བྱའི། NKG 255.3 has *hya'o* (gramm., alt.). 10 སྟོབས་དཔོན། NKG 255.4 has *slob dpon*. Note that *slobs dpon* represents an archaic spelling convention. See rNam rgyal tshe ring 2001: 586. 11 གཉིས། NKG 255.4 omits *gnyis* (eyeskip). 14 མངོན་སུམ། em. *mngon gsum* (hom., orth.); see NKG 255.5.

“Inherently non-revertible is the accomplishment” means that one constantly abides in and trusts the great equality of reality-as-such (Skt. *dharmatā*). Abiding in the inseparability of reality-as-such and of wisdom is the accomplishment. The force of meditating, the force of evocation and the force of karmic predestination, and the varied capacities to inflict benefit and harm, are not the accomplishment. If it be asked why, the great dynamism¹¹ of acumen (Skt. *prajñā*) which neither coalesces nor dissociates is the accomplishment. [NKJ 298.1; NKG 255.1] Yet varied capacities, though they be distinct from miracles, are merely a minor force that will know exhaustion.

“All purposes are complete in the seal” means that the seal of the doctrine is to abide in a non-dual manner in the state of phenomena’s being as it is. Since all the seals abide within it, everything without exception is the great seal—hence it is “complete.” One should not perform the mere visualization¹² of a deity’s emblems.

“The¹³ master of all these” means that one should look at the instructor who reveals this as being no different from the Buddha. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] for those not in possession of the Buddha’s awakened mind he unerringly provides the treasure of reality-as-such to his disciples. Even if the Teacher [i.e. the Buddha] in person were to dwell before us, he would not teach a doctrine more eminent than this.

It is said that “he is an actual Buddha.” “Through admiring such a one, one generates supreme [faith].” This means that an instructor who teaches thus is no different from the Buddha, [NKJ 299.1; NKG 255.6] and one should have concomitant devotion. With a mind of admiration and without craftiness, one should depend on one’s virtuous friend (Skt. *kalyāṇamitra*) while gladdening him. He will lay out [the meaning] according to the authoritative scriptures. Depending on the profound authoritative scriptures of reality-as-such, one should familiarize oneself therewith.

11 The Tibetan reads *tshal chen* (‘great garden’), but I take this to be a homophonic error for *rtsal chen*.

12 Here *gsal ba* (‘clarity’) must be understood as signifying *gsal ’debs* (‘visualization’).

13 As pointed out by Liljenberg, our commentary misses out the following line from the root text: *bde chen lhun gyis rdzogs pa yang/*. See Liljenberg 2012b: 292, n. 2428.

།འདི་བསྟན་འདི་དག་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་འདི་ལྟ་བུ་དོ་རྗེ་སློབ་དཔོན་ལ་བརྟེན་ཏེ། མན་ངག་
 འདི་ཐོས་པས་མ་བཅོས་པ་ཡི་ནས་སྣུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་སྟེ། ཐམས་ཅད་ནས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་སངས་རྒྱས་
 ཉིད་ཡིན་པས་གཞན་ལ་རྟེན་མི་དགོས་ཏེ། རང་ཉིད་སྣུན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་པ་ཚེན་པོའོ།

།སྣུམས་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་བསྐྱེད་བའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ནི། དམ་ཚིག་ཉི་ཤུ་ཙུ་བརྒྱུད་ལ་སོགས་པ་
 5 བསྐྱེད་བའི་ཕྱོགས་ཡོད་པ་ལ་སྣུམ་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་ཅེས་བྱའོ། །ཐམས་ཅད་ནས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ། འདུ་
 འབྲེལ་མེད་པའི་གཞུངས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་མོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་མོའི་དོན། འགྲོ་ཉལ་འདུག་སྟོན་དུ་དོན་གྱི་སྣོད་པོ་
 ལས་མི་འདའ་བ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་བཅུད་དེས། རྫོགས་པ་ཚེན་པོ་ཐོབ་པར་བྱེད་པའི་ [300] ཐབས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་
 མོ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། སྣུམ་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་ཅེས་སློབ་སོ། །བསྐྱེད་བའི་ནི། ཀུན་གྱིས་ཀྱང་དེ་ལྟར་རྟོགས་
 པའི་དུས་དེན། དོན་མཛད་པའམ། སངས་རྒྱས་པ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མེད་དོ།

།ཕན་པར་མཛད་པའི་སྐྱེ་བོ་ལ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། སྟོན་རྣམ་པ་གསུམ་སྟེ། རྒྱུ་ཅི་བྱུང་ཡང་ཇི་མི་སྣུམ་པ་
 10 དང་ལྟ་བུ་ལ་ངོམས་པ་མེད་པ་དང་། དད་པ་ལ་སྐྱེ་བའི་མེད་པ་དང་ལྡན་པའི་སྐྱེས་བུ་ནི། སྟོན་སྐྱེད་ས་
 པའི་འགྲོ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན་པས། དེ་ལྟ་བུ་སློབ་བུ་ལ་ཕན་གཏན་གསུམ་པའི་ཕྱིར་འོ།

།ཆལས་ཚང་བར་མདོར་བསྡུས་ནས་ཞེས་བྱ་བ། མན་ངག་གི་དོན་ཡི་གེ་ཉུང་ན་ཡང་དོན་གྱིས་
 15 འདུས་པར་བསྟན་ཏེ། ལུང་དང་མན་ངག་གིས་ལུང་རིལ་འགྲེལ་ཅིང་། ཐེག་པ་འདོག་མ་བ་དག་གི་དོན་
 གསལ་བར་དགོད་པའི་ཡིན་ལོ།

1 །འདི་བསྟན། This line paraphrases several lines from the root text: /nges pa'i lung ston dpa' bo yis/ /lung chen de dag la bstan nas/ /mkhas pas lung bzhin rgyud pa yis/. See Liljenberg 2012b: 292, n. 2433. ། །ནས། NKG 256.2 has na (gramm., alt.). ། །འདི་ལྟ་བུ། NKG 256.2 has 'di lta ba (psych., orth.). 4 །སྣུམས་པའི། Cf. M 593.6, which has snum pa'i (alt.). ། །བསྐྱེད་བའི་ཕྱིར། Cf. M 593.6, which has bskang ba yin (rec., alt.). 5 །ཐམས་ཅད་ནས། NKG 256.4 has tham cad nas (orth.). 5-6 །འདུ་འབྲེལ། em. 'du 'bras (psych.); see NKG 256.4. 6 །ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་མོའི། em. kun tu bzang po'i (psych.) 10 །མཛད་པའི། Cf. M 593.6, which has bzhed pa'i (rec., alt.). 11 །སྐྱོངས། em. skyo ngas (orth.) 13 །ཚང་བར། em. bar bsam (psych.); see M 593.6. ། །མན་ངག། At this point, the commentary directly incorporates and paraphrases several sentences from the root text (M 593.7-594.1), which reads: lung dang man ngag gi don yi ge nyung yang don rgya chen bsdu te/ ma lus 'grel cing theg pa mtha' dag gi don bkod pa/. I have highlighted the words lifted from the root text in colour above. ། །ཡི་གེ། em. yig ge (orth.); see M 593.7 and NKG 257.2.

“One should depend on these teachings”¹⁴ means that one should depend upon such an adamant instructor. It is by hearing the pith instructions that uncontrived primordial spontaneity is accomplished. Everything—truly everything—is awakening, so there is no need to depend on anything else. Great Completeness is spontaneously within oneself.

“In order to protect the all-suffusing pledge” means that the pledge suffuses the orientation of guarding the twenty-eight pledges, etc. Everything—truly everything—is Samantabhadri,¹⁵ the queen of mnemonic formulas that neither coalesces nor dissociates.¹⁶ This means that while walking, lying down, sitting or standing up one does not trespass against the quintessential meaning. Since the ten kinds of religious conduct are [encompassed by] the queen of skilful means whereby the Great Completeness is attained, [NKJ 300.1; NKG 256.5] it is said that the pledge is all-suffusing. Protecting it means that when one comprehends everything in this manner, there is no purpose to effect nor is there even awakening.

“For persons who will benefit therefrom” refers to the three types of vessels: those who disregard whatever conditions occur and are without satiety with regard to the view; those who are endowed with faith that is without weariness;¹⁷ and those who are predestined through having previously trained—such are the disciples who will benefit.

“The parts in full¹⁸ are summarized here” signifies that the meaning of the pith instructions is comprised in few letters.¹⁹ “All the authoritative scriptures and pith instructions are elucidated; the meaning of the lower vehicles is clearly laid out.”²⁰

14 Liljenberg notes that the commentary paraphrases or conflates several lines (*nge pa'i lung ston dpa' bo yis/ lung chen de dag la bstan nas/ mkhas pas lung bzhin rgyud pa yis/*) in this line: *'di bstan 'di dag la brten nas*. See Liljenberg 2012b: 292, n. 2433.

15 The text reads *kun tu bzang po'i*, but I take this to be an error for *kun tu bzang mo'i*.

16 Here I have emended *'du 'bras* to *'du 'bral*.

17 Here *skyo ngas* must probably be read as an error for *skyo ngal*.

18 Here I have emended *bar bsam*, which makes little sense in this context, to *tshang bar* according to the root text in M 593.6.

19 Although not marked as such, this explanation paraphrases a subsequent lemma from the root text (see subsequent note).

20 Here the wording of the commentary is slightly different to what we have in the root text. The root text (M 593.7–594.1) reads: *lung dang man ngag gi don yi ge nyung yang don gyga chen bsdu te/ ma lus 'grel cing theg pa mtha' dag gi don bkod pa/*. The commentary, on the other hand, has: *lung dang man ngag gis lung ril 'grel cing/ theg pa 'og ma ba dag gi don gsal bar dgot pa'i yin no/*.

འཇུག་པ་ཚམ་ཞིག་སྐབས་འདིར་དབྱེ་ཅེས་བྱ་བ། དམ་ཚིག་ལ་འཇུག་པ་དང་། ལུང་ལས་འཇུག་
 པ་དང་། མན་ངག་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ལོ། །དབྱེ་བ་ཞེས་པ་ [301] རྟོག་སྤྲོད་ཆེན་པོ་སྣོད་དང་སྦྲུང་ཏེ་སྐབས་
 བསྟན་ཏོ།

ཤེས་ཚན་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་ཡི།
 5 །བདེ་མཚོག་ངང་དུ་གནས་པ་འི་མན་ངག་འདི།
 །ཡང་གསང་བྱུགས་ལ་གནས་པ་འི་རྒྱན་ཡིན་གྱིས།
 །མིང་གི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་མོང་མིན།
 །འོན་ཀྱང་གཏན་དུ་ལྷུང་པར་མི་བྱ་བས།
 །ཤེས་ཚན་དམ་པ་མཉམ་སྦྱོར་བཤེས་གཉེན་གྱིས།
 10 །ངེས་པའི་བསྟན་པ་དོན་གྱི་སྦྱིང་པོ་འདི།
 །ཡང་དབང་གཏེར་ལ་བརྒྱུད་དེ་བཞག་པ་ཡིན།། རྗེས་སོ།།

8 ལྷུང་བར་] em. nus par (psych.); see NKG 257.5. 9 བཤེས་གཉེན་] em. gshes gnyen (orth.); see NKG 257.5.
 10 རྒྱ] em. kyi (gramm.); see NKG 257.6.

“Merely the approaches are distinguished in this context.” This refers to the approach of the pledges, the approach of the authoritative scriptures and the approach of the pith instructions. [NKJ 301.1; NKG 257.4] Such divisions are taught contextually, being applied out of great compassion for the vessels [of the doctrine].

The pith instruction of the one abiding in the state of bliss supreme,
 Samantabhadra, the Holy Revered King,
 Remains within the ultra-secret awakened mind; due to this circumstance,
 It is not something common for those who are *yogins* only by name.
 In any case, it will never be made to decline.²¹
 The virtuous friend poised in union with the Holy Revered One
 Transmitted this quintessential meaning of the definitive teaching
 To Yang Wangter (Yang dbang gter).²²
It hereby is completed.

21 Here I follow the reading of NKG (*nub par mi bya bas*) in preference to that of NKJ (*nus par mi bya bas*) since the latter makes little sense.

22 This is Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's secret name; see Esler 2014: 7.

Byang chub sems bde ba 'phra bkod kyi don 'grel (DPG)

[References: *Byang chub sems bde ba 'phra bkod kyi don 'grel*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 303–326. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 303–326.

Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 259–277.]

༄༅། །བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་བདེ་བ་འཕྲ་བཀོད་ཀྱི་དོན་འགྲེལ་བཞུགས་སོ། །། [304]

།བདེ་བ་འཕྲ་བཀོད། །བྱང་ཚུབ་སླིང་པོ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ངང་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚེལ་ལོ།

།དེ་དེར་ཡེ་ནས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱང།

།ལུན་གཉིས་བསྐྱབས་པས་མ་བྲལ་སྟོར།

5 །དེས་དེར་གྱུར་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཕྱིར།

།ལྷན་མཉམ་བྱང་ཚུབ་བཤད་པར་བ།

།ཐོག་མར་དོན་གྱི་འོག་མོན་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

།བྱང་ཚུབ་ཀྱི་སེམས་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་བདེ་བས་འཕྲ་བཀོད་པ།

།ཞེས་པ་མཚན་བཤད་ཏེ། །ཞེན་པ་གཉིས་ལས་བརྒྱལ་བའི་ངོ་བོར་དངོས་པོ་གཉིས་པའི་ཅོག་གཅིག་

10 པས་མི་གཡོ་བས་ངེས་ཚིག་སྐྱབ་སྟེ་མཚན་ལྟ་དང་ལྟན་པའི་དོན་ངེས་པར་ [305] བཟུང་བ་ནི་གོལ་

སྐྱབ་རྣམ་པར་བཅད་པས་བདེ་བ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་དངོས་གཞི་དེ་གཡང་ས་དང་བྲལ་བས་མིང་འབྲུབ་སྟེ།

དེ་ནི་དཔེར་ན་གསེར་གྱི་འཕྲ་མིག་ཏུ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཚོན་ཤེལ་བཅུག་པ་ལྟར་སྐབས་ཀྱིས་གསུམ་དུ་

བཏགས་པ་རིལ་རྫོགས་པར་སྟོན་པའོ།

1 འཕྲ་བཀོད། NKG 259 has *phra bkod* (rec., alt.). 2 འཕྲ་བཀོད། NKG 260.1 has *phra bkod* (rec., alt.). 7 གྱི། NKG 260.2 has *gyis* (hom., gramm.). 8 འཕྲ་བཀོད་པ། NKG 260.2 has *phra bkod pa* (rec., alt.). 12 མིག་ཏུ། em. *mig du* (gramm.); see NKM 305.2 and NKG 260.4.

Meaning Commentary on the Inlaid Jewel of Bliss, the Enlightened Mind (DPG)

The meaning commentary on the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss, the Enlightened Mind*.¹

The *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss*: Homage to the state that is quintessential enlightenment!

Although awakening is primordially here,
One strays unfree, obscured by the twofold darkness.
For those subject to change
I will explain enlightenment, spontaneous and equal.

First of all, in order to teach the meanings that are below the surface,² we must explain the title, “inlaid jewel of bliss, suchness of the enlightened mind.” The verbal definition establishes that, as the essence of crossing beyond the twofold craving, all dualistic entities are one and unwavering. In defining the meaning of this fivefold name,³ [NKJ 305.1; NKG 260.3] since deviations and obscurations are resolved exclusively, the main part, which is twofold *bliss*, is free from precariousness—so this establishes the name. For example, it is like inserting coloured crystal *jewels* into *inlaid* gold. In this context, once three [of the jewels] have been affixed,⁴ everything is shown to be complete.

1 Note that the text quoted in Nubchen’s commentary is different from that found in the various NGB editions, despite the similarity of the title, *Byang chub sems bde ba ’phra bkod*. The latter no longer seems to be extant. A critical edition of the NGB root text (the *bDe ba phra bkod*) is found in Liljenberg 2012b: 265–267; for a translation, see Liljenberg 2012b: 189–193.

2 This seems to be the meaning of *don gyi ’og non*.

3 This would seem to refer to the five words making up the title: (1) *Byang chub kyi sems* (2) *de kho na nyid* (3) *bde bas* (4) *’phra* (5) *bkod* (NKJ 304.3).

4 The Tibetan reads *skabs kyis gsum du btags pa*, which I take to refer to three of the jewels affixed to the gold.

།དཔལ་རྗེ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔའ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།

།ཞེས་པ། བཏགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་མི་ལྟར་ཏེ། འདིར་སློང་པོ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་དོན་རྟོགས་པ་སྐོང་དུ་གྱུར་
པ་ལ་བྱ་སྟེ། གཉིས་ག་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

།སྐྱུ་གསུང་ཐུགས་གྱི་བདེ་ཚེན་པོ།

5 །ཞེས་ [306] པ། སྐྱུང་གྲགས་རྒན་རིག་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱན་དེར་རང་སྐྱུང་བས་འཁོར་བའི་གནས་མེད་པའོ།
།རྗེ་རྗེ་གསང་བ་ཐུགས་གྱི་གཏེར།

།ཞེས་པ། གསུམ་ཡང་མི་བྱེད་པ་མ་བཟུལ་བས་མི་འཇིག་པའི་དོན་སློའི་ཡུལ་མིན་པས་སྐྱུན་གྱིས་
གྲུབ་པར་གསལ་བའོ།

།ཡེ་ནས་སྐྱུན་རྗེ་གསུང་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས།

10 །ཞེས་པ། རང་རིག་པ་ནི་གདོད་ནས་ནོར་བུ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ལྟ་བུར་གྱུར་པའོ།

།སེམས་དག་གང་སླེད་གཏེར་གྱི་མཚོག

།ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པའི་གདེང་སླེད་པ་ནི་ཡོན་ཏན་ལ་འཕེལ་འགྲིབ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

།བདེ་བས་དོན་རྟོགས་དོན་དེ་རྟོགས།

།ཞེས་པ། རང་ཉིད་ཡེ་ཟེན་པས་དེ་ལ་བཏགས་ན་རྟོགས་པར་འགྱུར་བའོ།

15 །དམ་ཚིག་བདེ་རྟོགས་བདེ་བའི་མཚོག

།ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་མཇལ་ན་དམ་ཚིག་ལ་སྤང་པོ་གཉིས་པ་མེད་པས་བཅས་པའི་སྐྱུང་བ་མེད་པའོ།

།བདག་ལུས་རྗེ་རྗེ་མི་ཟེད་གཏེར།

།ཞེས་པ། རྟོགས་པ་རྗེ་དོན་མཐའ་ཡས་ཞིང་རྣམས་བདག་གི་རྗེ་རྗེ་སྐྱུར་གསལ་ཏེ་ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི་ཟླ་
མེད་པོ།

20 །ཐུགས་གྱི་ [307] སློ་ལྷགས་དམ་པའོ།

།ཞེས་པ། རང་བྱུང་གི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ནི་མཚོན་པ་ལས་འདས་པས་ཐ་རམས་ལྟ་བུའོ།

11 སློད། iso. rnyed (arch.). See rNam rgyal tshe ring 2001: 193. 12 གདེང། em. gding (orth.) || སློད་པ།
iso. rnyed pa (arch.) 14 འགྱུར་བའོ། NKG 261.4 has 'gyur pa'o (gramm.). 17 མི་ཟེད། em. mi bzang
(psych.). Cf. NKG 261.5, which has mi bzad (visual, rec.).

“Homage to the adamantine wisdom being!” This means that, unburdened by the ‘Buddha’ of labelling, one should become proficient in realizing the meaning of quintessential enlightenment, because it is both.⁵

“The great bliss of awakened body, speech and mind” [NKJ 306.1; NKG 261.1] means that since appearances, sounds and recollections are all self-appearing as the wisdom of awareness, there is no abode of cyclic existence.

“The treasure of awakened mind, the adamantine secret” means that one cannot divide the three nor strive towards them, so the meaning of fearlessness is not an object of the intellect but is spontaneously clear.

“The enlightened mind is primordially and spontaneously complete” means that intrinsic awareness is primeval, like a precious gem.

“The pure mind, however one finds it,⁶ is a supreme treasure” means that gaining confidence therein, the qualities develop and the obscurations are no more.

“Realizing the meaning through bliss, the meaning is realized” means that if one examines that which is primordially already there within oneself, one becomes realized.

“The pledge to realize bliss is bliss supreme” means that once encountered, the pledge is without dualistic aggregates and without downfalls.

“One’s body is an inexhaustible⁷ adamantine treasure” means that once realized, infinite pure fields are clearly [present] within one’s adamantine body, one’s qualities being peerless.

“The sacred padlock of the awakened mind” [NKJ 307.1; NKG 262.1] means that self-originated wisdom is full and beyond indicating.

5 The implication seems to be that the wisdom being encompasses both the Buddha labelled and the deeper realization that is hinted at by the label.

6 Here and below *rnyed* (‘to find’, ‘to gain’) is spelt *snyed*, which is an archaic spelling convention. See rNam rgyal tshe ring 2001: 193.

7 NKJ reads *mi bzang*, whereas NKG has *mi bzad*, both intending *mi zad* (‘inexhaustible’).

འོན་བསྟན་པ་ལ་དགོས་པ་མེད་དོསྟེ་མ་པ་ལ།

ཚིག་ཏུ་སྒྲུབ་ལྡེ་མིག་གོ།

ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལོན་ཅི་འདྲ་བར་སྟོན་པ་སྟེ་གཏན་ཚིགས་ཀྱི་ལྡེ་མིག་དང་། གཏན་ཚིགས་མེད་པའི་ལྡེ་
མིག་གིས་འབྲེད་པས་ཚོས་མཐུན་པའོ།

5 །མཚོན་གྱི་དོན་མདོར་ནི།

བདག་ལ་ཚོགས་དང་གཞན་ལ་གསལ།

ཞེས་པ། ཐོབ་བྱ་མེད་པར་བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོར་གྱུར་པ་དེ་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་བསམ་པ་ལྟར་སྤང་བའོ།

འདོད་དགུར་སྒྱུར་བའི་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

ཞེས་པ། བསམ་པ་དང་ཆེད་དུ་མ་བསྟན་པར་གྲུབ་པའི་ལེགས་པ་སྤང་བས་ཚོས་མཐུན་པའོ།

10 །རེ་དོགས་མེད་པས་མཁའ་དང་མཉམ།

ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟ་བུའི་ཕྱིར་རེ་བ་གསུམ་དང་དོགས་གསུམ་བྲལ་བས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ནམ་མཁར་གསལ་
བའོ།

འཕྲང་ནི་ཐིག་སྟན་སེམས་ལ་བཀོད།

ཞེས་པ། ལྡེ་སྟོན་གྱུད་དང་གལ་པོ་སྤྲུགས་ལ་ཚོགས་ [308] པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། །དེས་ན་གསང་བ་སྟོན་ཏོ།

15 །བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོ་ཡེ་ཡིན་པ་ནི།

དཔལ་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་དཔལ་ལ་ཚོགས།

ཞེས་པ། ཐེག་པ་དགུའི་འབྲས་བུ་རིལ་ཡང་སྟིང་པོ་བྱང་ཚུབ་རང་དུ་འབྱུང་བའོ།

སྟོང་ལམས་སྤྲུགས་སུ་ཉིལ་འབྲུ་ཅོམ།

ཞེས་པ། སྟོང་གསུམ་ཉུང་ས་འབྲུར་ཚུད་པ་ལྟར་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་བརྟག་དཀའ་བའོ།

20 །བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོ་ཀུན་འདུས་དཔལ།

ཞེས་པ། རང་གིས་གཞན་པ་བྲལ་བའི་ཕྱིར་ཀུན་གྲུབ་བདག་ཉིད་ཡིན་པས་ལེགས་པ་ཚེན་པོའོ།

ཀུན་ནས་འདུས་པས་སྟོག་གི་མཚོག

ཞེས་པ། བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོ་ནི་རིལ་གྱི་བརྟུང་དུ་གྱུར་པས་གཟུངས་དམ་པའོ།

དོན་ལ་གཏུགས་པས་གཏྲར་གྱི་དཔལ།

25 ཞེས་པ། སུ་ཞིག་ལ་མ་སྤུལ་བར་དེ་ཉིད་ལྟར་བསྟན་པས་གོ་བའི་ཕྱིར་ཡོན་ཏན་ནི་ཟད་པ་མེད་པའོ།

9 ལེགས་པ་] NKG 262.4 has *legs par* (gramm., alt.).

If you fancy, “Well then, there is no need to teach anything,” [it is replied that] “the spoken words are the key.” This means that teaching on just how it is can be divided into a key of axioms and a key of non-axioms, [both of] which are compatible with the doctrine.

In brief, the meaning of the treasury: “Complete within oneself, clear in others” means that there is nothing to obtain; becoming integral being, everything appears as one thinks of it.

“The jewel that bestows desires” means that, without deliberately complying with one’s thoughts, excellent appearances are compatible with the doctrine.

“Without hope and misgiving, equal to the sky” means that wisdom, being free from the three hopes and three misgivings, is clear as the sky.

“The authoritative scriptures, like tiny seminal nuclei, are installed within the mind” means that the baskets, the *tantras* and the important [pith instructions] are complete within awakened mind.⁸ [NKJ 308.1; NKG 262.6] Therefore, it is taught as secret.

Regarding the fact that integral being is primordial, it is said that “the nature of its glory is completely glorious.” This means that the results of the nine vehicles are consummately realized in the state of quintessential enlightenment.

“The third order chiliocosm⁹ is a mere sesame seed in the awakened mind” means that, just like containing the third order chiliocosm in a seed of sesame, it is difficult to examine the enlightened mind.

“Integral being is all-embracing glory”¹⁰ means that since it is inherently free from ‘other’, everything is one’s integral identity, which is great excellence!

“All-embracing, it is supreme vitality”¹¹ means that since integral being is the elixir of everything, it is the sacred mnemonic formula.

“By encountering absolute meaningfulness, [one has] the glory of treasure” means that since it is understood when it is shown to someone unspoken,¹² its qualities are inexhaustible.

8 This last sentence is actually a citation from the *Srog gi 'khor lo*, in M, vol. 1/ka: 601.1; it is also quoted in the SM 323; see Esler 2018: 263, incl. n. 118 and n. 119.

9 On this notion in a related context, see Esler 2016: 319.

10 Quoted in the SM 331; see Esler 2018: 267.

11 Also quoted in Ibid.

12 The Tibetan reads *ma rmal bar de nyid ltar bstan pas*. It is not clear what *ma rmal bar* means, though the context would suggest ‘unspoken’ or ‘unexplained’ (Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin: personal communication). If *rmal* were an error for *rmad*, with the sense of ‘asking’ (see bTsan lha ngag dbang tshul khriims 1997: 667), the text would have to read *ma rmad par* instead. A further possibility for *rmal bar* would be *rmel ba*, with the sense of ‘spinning yarn’ (see Chos kyi grags pa 1995: 661), but this does not fit the context.

།ཐུགས་ལས་འཕྲོས་པས་གཉིས་སུ་མེད།
 །ཞེས་པ། རིལ་རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་སྐྱེད་བའི་ཕྱིར་སྦྱོང་ཡུལ་མེད་པའོ།
 །འོན་ཏྟེང་ [309] རོ་ཞེ་ན།
 རྒྱུང་བར་གྱུར་པས་མ་བཀག་སྟེ།
 5 །རོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་རྒྱུང་བའི་ཕྱིར་སྦྱང་བྱ་མེད་པས་མ་འདྲེས་པའོ།
 །གསལ་བར་གྱུར་པས་སྦྱིང་པོའི་དོན།
 །ཞེས་པ། མ་འདྲེས་ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་ཕྱིར། ཀུན་སྦྱིང་པོ་བྱང་ཚུབ་ཡིན་པའོ།
 །འོན་བསྟན་དུ་ཡོད་དོ་ཞེ་ན།
 རང་བཞིན་མེད་དེ་སྟོགས་དང་བལྟ།
 10 །ཞེས་པ། དེ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཕྱིར་རང་བཞིན་འདི་འདྲར་བསྟན་པའི་རིས་མི་སྦྱེད་པའོ།
 །ཡི་ནས་རྫོགས་པས་ཐུགས་ལ་འདུས།
 །ཞེས་པ། རང་བཞིན་རྫོགས་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཕྱིར་རང་རིག་པར་གཅིག་པའོ།
 །འགྱུར་མེད་སེམས་ཀྱི་གཡུང་རྒྱུང་དོ།
 །ཞེས་པ། སེམས་ཀྱི་མཚན་ཉིད་བསྟན་པར་དཀའ་བས་རོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་རྟག་པའོ།
 15 །མ་ཆགས་ཐབས་ཀྱིས་དོན་ལ་བརྟེན།
 །མི་ལེན་དབྱིངས་ལྷུང་ཐུགས་རྗེས་འཛིན།
 །ཞེས་པ། འགྲོ་ལོག་སྦྱི་རྒྱུགས་གར་འགྲེས་ཀྱང་མ་གོས་པའི་མཛད་སྦྱོང་གིས་འགྲོ་དོན་རྒྱུན་མ་ཆད་
 ཀྱང་། ཚུལ་བས་དང་དུ་ལེན་པ་མེད་དེ། མཛད་སྦྱོང་ལྷུན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་པའི་གཟུངས་ཀྱིས་ཟིན་ [310]
 པ་སྟེ། རྗེས་སུ་འཇུག་པ་པོའང་དེ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཕྱིར་བྱས་པ་ལ་ཚུལ་བ་མེད་པའོ།
 20 །དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་བ་ག་སྟེ།
 །ཞེས་པ། ལྷུན་གྲུབ་པའི་དབྱིངས་ནི་ཡུམ་གྱི་མཁའོ།
 །བསྐྱོད་པའི་ལམ་རྣམས་ལིང་གའོ།
 །ཞེས་པ། དེ་ཉིད་ཅིར་ཡང་རང་སྐྱེད་བས་དོན་བྱེད་པ་ནི་ཡབ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་རོ་བོ་ཉིད་དོ།

4 བཀག་སྟེ། It is not entirely clear whether or not this phrase belongs to the root text since it is not marked off as a lemma by *zhes pa*. Nonetheless, the metre would suggest that it does. 21 གྱི] NKG 264.4 has *gyis* (hom., gramm.). 22 བསྐྱོད་པའི] em. *bskyod ba'i* (cod., gramm.); see NKG 264.4-5.

“Since it radiates from the awakened mind, it is non-dual” means that because everything is the self-illumination of self-originated wisdom, there is no objective scope.

If you say, “Well then, it is empty,” [NKJ 309.1; NKG 363.5] [it is replied that] “appearances are uninhibited.”¹³ Because they are the illumination of the essence, there is nothing to relinquish, and everything is unmixed.

“Luminously clear is the quintessential meaning” means that without mixing anything up, everything is thoroughly complete. Hence, the universal quintessence is enlightenment.

If you say, “In that case, it can be shown,” [it is replied,] “being without intrinsic nature, it is free from bias.” That is because in it cannot be found the partiality consisting of showing its nature to be such-and-such.

“Primordially complete, [all] is comprised in the awakened mind” means that since its nature is the Great Completeness, it is one in intrinsic awareness.

“Changeless, it is the perennial mind” means that since it is difficult to show the mind’s characteristics, it is essentially eternal.

“Persevering in the meaning through the means of detachment, one discovers the ungraspable open dimension and is held by its compassion”: this means that even if one writhes about upside down, rolling around,¹⁴ one’s untainted behaviour is uninterrupted for the purpose of wandering beings. Without taking up effort, one’s behaviour is seized by the mnemonic formula of spontaneous completeness. [NKJ 310.1; NKG 264.4] One is without the effort that works as follow-up.

“The nature of the open dimension is the womb” refers to the spontaneous open dimension that is the female sky-like womb.

“The paths of movement are the phallus” refers to the functionality of whatever appears, this being the essence of the male skilful means.

13 It is not entirely clear whether this phrase belongs to the root text or not.

14 This clause appears in the DZG (see NKJ 385.2–3) and in the SM 351; see Esler 2018: 279.

|གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའི་རྫོང་ལ།

|ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་ཆས་བསྟན་པ་ལ་ངོ་བོས་ཡབ་ཡུམ་འབྲེད་པའི་རྩོལ་བ་མེད་དེ་གསང་བའི་རྫོང་ལོ།

|འཛིན་ཆགས་མེད་པའི་པད་མའོ།

|ཞེས་པ། སྤིན་ལས་ཅི་མཛད་པ་ཆེད་དུ་བྱེད་པའི་གཟུང་འཛིན་ཅམ་གྱིས་ཀྱང་མ་བསྐྱོམ་པའི་ཕྱིར་

5 ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ལྷན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་པའོ།

|གསུམ་པ་མཐའ་ཡས་དག་པའི་ཞིང་།

|ཞེས་པ། ཅམ་ཉི་ལོ་གའི་ཐབས་ཤེས་རབ་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པས་དོན་བྱ་བས་མཐའ་ཡས་པའི་འགོ་བ་

རྣམས་འཆད་པའི་སྐྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་གྱིས་ཞིང་ཁམས་སུ་དག་པར་མཛད་པའོ།

|རྣམ་བཞི་དོན་ལ་ཐུག་པ་ལས།

10 |ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་བཞི་དོན་གྱི་མཐའོ། |དེ་གང་ [311] ཞེ་ན།

རྒྱུད་དུག་སྐྱེངས་པས་ཡེ་ཤེས་སོ།

|ཞེས་པ། འགོ་བ་རིགས་དུག་ཡེ་ནས་མཐའ་གསུམ་བྲལ་བས་རང་བྱུང་གི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཉིད་ཡིན་པའི་

དོན་མཇལ་བའོ།

|སྐྱ་ནི་སྟོང་པ་དངོས་མེད་བྲལ།

15 |ཞེས་པ། ལྷན་སྐྱབ་གྱི་སྐྱ་སྟོང་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ནི་སྟོང་པའི་མཚན་མ་མེད་པའོ།

|གསུང་ནི་སློན་མེད་ཡིད་ལས་འདས།

|ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པ་ལྟར་བསྟན་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་རིག་པ་ཡིན་པས་རང་གཞན་དུ་མ་ལུས་པས་རེ་

བའི་བསམ་ཡུལ་ལས་གྲོལ་བའོ།

|ཐུགས་ནི་མཚན་མེད་སྤིང་པོ་ལ།

20 |ཞེས་པ། མཚན་མ་བཞི་ལས་འདས་པའི་རང་བྱུང་བའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ཉི་ག་ཏུ་སྐྱེར་པའོ།

|མཐོང་བ་སྐྱེད་སྤིང་དག་པའི་ཞིང་།

|ཞེས་པ། ཁམས་གསུམ་ནི་མིང་ཅམ་ལས་ངོ་བོ་མ་ལོག་པའི་ཕྱིར་རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་འཛིག་རྟེན་ནོ།

20 ཉི་ག་ཏུ] em. tog du (gramm.); see NKM 311.4 and NKG 265.6.

“The adamantine sceptre of non-duality” refers to the fact that essentially, with regard to that which has been just explained, there is no effort to distinguish male and female, this being the secret adamantine sceptre.

“The lotus without grasping and attachment” means that whatever activities are to be performed, since one does not meditate with even the slightest subject–object dichotomy of deliberate doing, means (Skt. *upāya*) and acumen (Skt. *prajñā*) are spontaneously complete.

“Third,¹⁵ the infinite pure fields” means that since in Atiyoga the non-duality of means and acumen effects all purposes, pure fields are created through awakened body, speech and mind, as explained for infinite wandering beings.

“Meeting with the fourfold purpose” refers to the end of the four purposes.¹⁶ If you ask what they are, [NKJ 311.1; NKG 265.3] [it is replied,] “when the six continua of becoming have been cleansed, they are wisdom.” This means that since the six classes of wandering beings are primordially free from the three limitations,¹⁷ the meaning of self-originated wisdom is encountered.

“Awakened body is empty and free from reified entities”¹⁸ means that the spontaneously present awakened body is great emptiness, and emptiness is without signs.

“Awakened speech is aspirationless and transcends the psyche” means that since the entirety of the teaching, as explained, is intrinsic awareness, it is liberated from objects of thought that place their hope either in oneself or in others.

“Awakened mind is the signless quintessence” means that self-originated wisdom, transcending the four signs,¹⁹ has reached its universal crest.

“Appearance-existence, that which is seen, is a pure field”²⁰ means that since there is essentially nothing wrong with the three realms, which are mere names, this very world is utterly pure.

15 As this numbering is from the root text, it does not apply to the overall structure of Nubchen's commentary.

16 It is unclear what these four purposes are.

17 The three limitations, viz. eternalism and nihilism (*rtag chad kyi mtha'*), existence and non-existence (*yod med kyi mtha'*) and grasping at the duality of emptiness and appearance (*snang stong gnyis 'dzin gyi mtha'*). See Nor brang o rgyan 2008: vol. 1, 294.

18 Here we have a correlation between awakened body, speech and mind and the three doors to utter release (Skt. *vimokṣamukha*).

19 The four signs are not a common enumeration, but they are discussed in a gloss in the SM 55 in a passage drawing on the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇi*; they are discursive examining (*rtog pa*) with regard to the nature, with regard to the antidotes, with regard to suchness and with regard to the attainment. See Esler 2018: 73. For the background passage from the *Avikalpapraveśa-dhāraṇi*, see Meinert 2004: 114–116.

20 Quoted in the SM 373; see Esler 2018: 290.

།དམ་པ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ལ་གནས་།

།ཞེས་པ། དེས་ན་འདོད་དགུ་རང་ལ་རྫོགས་པས་མི་ཚོལ་བ་སྟེ། དེ་ལྟར་ཇི་བཞིན་པ་ལ་ཇི་བཞིན་པས་
བསྟན་པས་གོ་བའི་ཕྱིར་ལྡེ་ལུ་མིག་ [312] གཉིས་པ་རྫོགས་ཏེ། །དེ་ལ་ཅུང་ཞིག་མཇལ་དཀའ་བ་ལ་
ལྡེ་མིག་དང་པོ་རིས་ལན་དང་ཆས་པར་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

5 དེ་ལྟར་རྫོགས་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པས་།

།ཆེད་དུ་བརྗོད་པ་འདི་བརྗོད་དོ།

།ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པའི་སྤྱིར་པོ་བྱ་བ་མེད་པའི་དོན་གོ་བས་མ་འོངས་པའི་ཕྱིར་རིས་ལན་བཤད་ལ་རྩད་
གཅོད་པའོ།

།རིང་དུ་འཁོར་བས་ཅི་ཞིག་བཅོལ།

10 །ཞེས་པ། ཚུལ་བའི་ལམ་གཞན་གྱིས་འབྲས་བུ་གང་འགྲུབ་རིས་པའོ།

།བརྟགས་པའི་གནས་ནི་སེམས་ལ་གཏུགས།

།ཞེས་པ། དང་པོའི་ལམ་མདོ་སྟེ་རང་བཞིན་གྱི་གཏན་ཚིགས་དང་ལུང་དང་མན་ངག་དང་དཔེ་དང་རང་
གི་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་དངོས་པོ་ཅི་ཡིན་དཔྱད་པའི་གཞི་དང་དོན་རང་གི་སེམས་ལ་ཐུག་པའོ།

།གཞན་ནས་བཅོལ་བས་ག་ལ་རྟེན།

15 །ཞེས་པ། གཉིས་པའི་ལམ་མདོ་སྟེ། རྒྱབ་མཐའ་ལོགས་ནས་ཚོལ་བའི་རྩོལ་བས་མི་འགྲུབ་པའོ།

།དེ་ལ་མ་ཉོར་བའི་ལམ་སྐྱབས་ལ་སྐྱབས་ལྗས་པ་གང་སྐྱམ་པ་ལ།

ཕུང་པོ་སྦྱངས་པས་ལམ་ཅིག་ [313] ལྟེད།

།དཀྱིལ་དུ་གྱུར་པས་དོན་ལ་གཏུགས།

།ཞེས་པ། ཐམས་ཅད་བདག་གི་ལུས་ཀྱི་ངོ་བོ་ཚད་མ་གསུམ་གྱིས་དཔྱད་པས་དེ་ཉིད་རང་གི་སེམས་
20 ཡིན་པའི་དོན་ཐོབ་པ་ནི། སེམས་ཉིད་མཐའ་རྣམ་པར་བྲལ་བའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

།དེའི་ཐབས་བཅས་བསྟན་པ་ནི།

།རྟེན་ཡང་ཡི་གེ་རྣམས་ལ་བབས།

།ཚོལ་ཡང་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དོན་ཅིག་ཚོལ།

3 ཉ། em. ste (gramm.); see NKM 312.1 and NKG 266.2. 4 དང་ཆས་པར། iso. dang bcas par (arch.). See rNam rgyal tsho ring 2001: 149. Cf. NKG 266.2, which has modernized the spelling to dang bcas par. 17 ལྟེད། iso. rnyed pa (arch.) 22 ལྟེ། The Tibetan text alternates between spelling HŪM with and without a candrabindu; I have standardized all occurrences to the spelling with a candrabindu.

“Abiding in the supernal enlightened mind”²¹ means that since all one desires is intrinsically complete, there is no searching. Because it is understood when it is shown just as it is, the second key²² [NKJ 312.1; NKG 266.1] is complete. For those for whom encountering it is difficult, there is the first key; it is therefore taught through questions and answers.

“The *yogin* having realization describes these deliberate expressions” means that since the quintessence of the explanations is to understand the meaning of non-action, one investigates for the future the explanations based on questions and answers.

“What is there to search for by circling around for so long?” This asks what fruit can be accomplished through the other effortful paths.

“The place that is examined is to meet the mind” refers to the first answer: on the basis of scrutinizing what the reified entities are, using natural arguments, authoritative scriptures, pith instructions, examples and one’s own acumen, one meets with one’s own mind, which is the whole purpose.

“Searching elsewhere, where will it be found?” This refers to the second answer: being aside from tenets, it will not be accomplished through the effort of searching.

If you fancy in this regard: “What is the unmistakable path whereby awakened body, speech and mind might unfold?”, [it is replied that] “by cleansing the aggregates, a path [NKJ 313.1; NKG 266.6] is found; coming to the core, one meets with absolute meaningfulness.” This means that everything is the essence of one’s own body; by scrutinizing it through the three valid criteria,²³ one attains the meaning that it is one’s own mind since mind-as-such is utterly free from limitations.

“The means is to show it through symbols: the support is to descend upon the letter *HŪM*; searching, the meaning of *HŪM* is sought for.” This means that it

21 Also quoted in *Ibid*.

22 This would seem to refer to the key of non-axioms (*gtan tshigs med pa'i lde mig*) mentioned above (NKJ 307.2–3).

23 Viz. actual perception (Skt. *pratyakṣa*), inference (Skt. *anumāna*) and the authoritative scriptures (Skt. *āgama*).

ཞེས་པ། རང་རིག་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་རང་རིག་པ་འི་རྩད་གཅོད་པ་འོ།

སྤྱི་གིས་སྤྱི་ཚོལ་སྤྱི་མི་ཆེད།

ཞེས་པ། སེམས་ཀྱི་སེམས་བཅའ་ན་སེམས་ཀྱི་དོ་བོ་འདི་འདྲར་མི་མཐོང་བ་འོ།

དེ་ལས་སྤྱི་གིས་དོན་ཅིག་ཆེད།

5

དོན་གྱི་དོན་ཆེད་སེམས་ལ་གཏུགས།

ཞེས་པ། ཅིར་ཡང་མ་མཐོང་བ་དེ་ལོ་ན་སེམས་ཉིད་མཐོང་བ་ཡིན་པ་འི་ཕྱིར་རང་སེམས་ལས་ཤེས་བྱ་
གཞན་ན་མེད་པ་འོ།

སེམས་ཀྱི་དེ་ཉིད་བརྟག་པར་བྱ།

ཞེས་པ། སེམས་ཀྱི་དོན་བཅའ་ཞིང་ཆེད་ནས་བསྐྱོམས་ཤིག་པར་གདམ་པ་འོ།

10

ཐབས་དེ་གང་ཞེ་ན།

ཡི་གེ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ཞེ་འཇ།

ཚོས་ [314] ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ཉིད་ཡི་གེ་འཇ།

ཞེས་པ། དཔུང་ཐབས་ནི། གལ་ཏེ་བརྗེས་ཡིན་པར་ཡི་གེ་ལོ་ནས་མཚོན་ནས་སྐོམ་མོ་ཞེ་ན་འང་། ཡི་
གེ་དང་ཚོས་ཉིད་གཅིག་གམ་ཐ་དད་པ་གང་ཡིན་བརྟག་པ་འོ།

15

ཐུགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱིང་པོ་ཡི་གེ་སྤྱི།

སྤྱི་གིས་ཐུགས་ལ་ཇི་ལྟར་མཚོན།

ཞེས་པ། འདི་ལྟར་སྐོས་དཔུང་པ་འོ།

ཐུགས་ལ་དངོས་པོ་ཡོད་ཞེ་སྐྱེམ།

ཡི་གེ་དངོས་པོ་གང་གིས་བགྱི།

20

ཞེས་པ། སེམས་སྤྱི་ལྟ་བུ་ཅིག་ཡོད་དམ་འོན་ཏེ་ཡི་གེ་ཉིད་དངོས་གཞི་ཇི་ལྟ་བུ་ཡིན་དཔུང་ན་ཆེད་
པར་འགྱུར་ཞེས་དྲིས་པ་འོ།

དངོས་མེད་དངོས་བྲལ་བྱང་རྒྱུ་སེམས།

བྱང་རྒྱུ་སེམས་ནི་ཀུན་གྱི་རྒྱ།

ཞེས་པ། ལན་ནི་དེ་ལྟར་བརྟགས་ན་རང་རིག་པ་ནི་ཐེར་ཟུག་པ་མེད་དེ་རིལ་མ་སྤངས་བྲལ་བ་འོ།

25

དེའི་ཕྱིར་ཚོས་སོ་ཅོག་གི་གཞིར་གྱུར་པས་ཡི་གེའི་དོ་བོ་འང་ཡིན་པ་འོ།

5 གྱི། em. *kyi* (gramm.) 9 གདམ་པ་འོ། NKG 267.5 has *gdams pa'o* (tense).

is by depending on intrinsic awareness that one can investigate intrinsic awareness.

“It is *HŪM* that searches for *HŪM*, yet *HŪM* is not found.” This means that when the mind searches for the mind, the mind’s essence cannot be seen as being this or that.

“It is through *HŪM* that the meaning is found; finding absolute meaningfulness, one meets one’s mind.” This means that since seeing mind-as-such is precisely not seeing anything at all, there is nothing other to know than one’s own mind.

“One should examine the very thatness of mind” means that having sought and found the mind’s absolute meaningfulness, one is instructed to meditate thereon.

If you ask what the means to do so are, it is replied, “is there a syllable that is the open dimension of phenomena (Skt. *dharmadhātu*), or is the open dimension of phenomena [NKJ 314.1; NKG 267.5] a syllable?” The means of scrutiny: If it is not a symbol, yet you say that [the open dimension] is indicated through a precise syllable and that you meditate thereon, then examine whether the syllable and reality-as-such are one or different.

“The quintessence of the awakened mind is the syllable *HŪM*; how is the awakened mind to be indicated through *HŪM*?” Thus, one should scrutinize with one’s intellect.

“Fancying that there are entities in awakened mind, what are you doing with the entity of a syllable?” Is the mind one with the *HŪM*? In that case, scrutinizing whether this syllable is an actual basis, ask yourself where it is to be found.

“Not an entity and free from reification is the enlightened mind; the enlightened mind is the universal cause.” The answer is that, by examining in this way, [you will find that] intrinsic awareness is non-perdurable,²⁴ yet is free from relinquishing anything. Therefore, since it is the ground of all phenomena, it is also the essence of the syllable.

24 The point is also made in the SM 388, in the section defining the characteristics of suchness; see Esler 2018: 297.

འཇིག་ལྷན་གྱི་རང་རྟགས་ཡིན།

ཞེས་པ། རྒྱུད་ལུང་མན་ཆད་ལྟར་ཡི་ཤེས་ལྟར་བྱེ་ནས་མཚོན་པ་ནི། འདིར་མི་ལེན་མི་སྤོང་སྟེ་རང་
རིག་རྩྭ་དུ་རང་ཤར་བ་ [315] རྟོག་ དཔེར་དཔའ་མཚོན་ལྟ་བུ་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ་དཔའ་བའི་རྟགས་སྐྱེ་ལ་
མཚོང་བ་ལྟ་བུ་སྟེ་ཡི་གེ་གཉིས་ཀྱང་རྗེས་སུ་སྦྱར་རོ།

5

འཇིག་རྒྱུ་དུ་རྟེན་ལྟར་བསྐྱེད།

ཞེས་པ་དག དྲིས་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ནི། ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་ཡི་གེ་དང་ཡི་ཤེས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་བ་མི་དད་པར་རང་
སྤང་བས་འཇིག་རྟེན་པ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་ཏེ་རྩྭ་གི་རྗེས་སུ་སྦྱར་རོ།

ལག་སྲུང་ནི་ཕྱོགས་བྲལ་མཐའ་ཡས་པ།

འཇིག་གིས་གསུང་ནི་རི་ལྟར་འགྲུབ།

10

ཞེས་པ། དྲིས་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ནི། འདིའི་གསུང་རྣམ་པ་དང་བྲལ་བ་དེ་ཡི་གེ་ཕྱོགས་ཆ་ཅིག་གིས་རི་ལྟར་
འགྲུབ་དྲིས་པའོ།

འཇིག་གི་གསུང་ལ་མི་གནས་སོ།

ཞེས་པ། ལན་ལྟ་བུ་ནི་འཇིག་ཉིད་རང་རིག་བརྗོད་པ་དང་བྲལ་བ་ཡིན་པས་ཕྱོགས་ཆལ་རྟེན་མཚོན་མེད་
པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། །ཡང་ན་རྩྭ་འཇིག་གི་རྗེས་སུ་མཐུན་པར་འགྲུབ་ཏེ།

15

སྤོང་པོ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དེ་ནི།

ཡི་གེ་ལ་ཡང་མི་གནས་ཤིང་།

སྐྱེ་གསུང་ལྷན་གྱི་རང་མི་བསྐྱེད་པའོ།

ཞེས་པ། རིག་པའི་ཡི་ཤེས་འབྲུ་གསུམ་རེ་རེས་མཚོན་པའི་བྲ་སྟངས་མེད་པར་ [316] གསུམ་ལྷན་
གིས་སྐྱེ་བ་པའི་ངོ་བོའོ།

20

སྤོང་པ་མཚོན་མེད་སྟོན་མེད་པའི།

རྣམ་ཐར་སྟོགས་སྐྱེ་གསུང་ལྷན་གསུང་།

ཞེས་པ། དེ་རི་ལྟར་སྐྱེ་བ་ཞེ་ན། བཤད་པའི་སྐྱེ་གསུང་ལྷན་གསུང་ཉིད་བཅིངས་གྲོལ་མེད་པར་ཐམས་ཅད་
དུ་སྤང་བ་མི་འཇོག་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

2 རྟེ། em. te (gramm.) 3 དཔའ་བའི། em. dpa' pa'i (gramm.); see NKG 268.5. 18 རིག་པའི། NKG 269.3 has rigs pa'i (hom.). 20 མཚོན་མེད། em. mtshon med (psych.)

“*HŪM* is the awakened mind’s intrinsic insignia” means that from the *tantras* and authoritative scriptures onwards, it indicates wisdom distinguished as being fivefold. Here, there is neither accepting nor relinquishing, so intrinsic awareness’ self-arising as *HŪM* [NKJ 315.1; NKG 268.4] is not like the example of the marks of heroism: the indications of heroism are various, such as jumping, so it would follow that the syllables must also be two.

“How could *ōM* be generated as awakened body?” This question means that since the syllables, all thoroughly complete, and the awakened body of wisdom intrinsically appear as not being different, there is no dependence on *ōM*. Therefore, [the same] applies for *HŪM*.

“Awakened speech is free from bias and infinite; how could awakened speech be established through *ōM*?” The question is being asked how awakened speech, which is free from all particular aspects, could be established by means of a positional syllable.

“*ōM* does not abide in awakened speech.” The answer provided is that since *ōM* itself is inexpressible intrinsic awareness, there is no indicating it with positional supports. Alternatively, it is elucidated that *HŪM* too agrees with [the case of] *ōM*.

“The quintessence, the enlightened mind, does not abide in syllables; awakened body, speech and mind will not be accomplished [thereby].” This means that the wisdom of awareness, being without the designations indicated through the three seed-syllables, [NKJ 316.1; NKG 269.3] is the essence wherein the three are spontaneously accomplished.

“Empty, signless²⁵ and aspirationless—the three doors to utter release are awakened body, speech and mind.” If you ask how this might be accomplished, it is explained that there is nothing to bind or to liberate in awakened body, speech and mind, so there is no inhibiting all that appears.

25 The Tibetan reads *mtshon med*, but this is an error for *mtshan med* (Skt. *animitta*), the second of the three doors to utter release.

རྒྱུད་སྤྱུག་ལམ་ནི་ཡི་ཤེས་སྤྱུག
ཞེས་པ། ཉོན་མོངས་སྤྱུག་ཉིད་རང་བྱུང་བའི་ཡི་ཤེས་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

ཕྱོགས་བྲལ་སྐྱེས་བུ་ཚེན་པོ་དེས།
ཕྱོགས་ཅིག་སྤོང་ཞིང་ཕྱོགས་དང་བྲལ།

5 ཞེས་པ། སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་མེད་པར་རྟོགས་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པས་ལྟ་ངན་ལ་མི་གནས་བཞིན་དོར་བ་མེད་
པའོ།

ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་དོན་ཅིག་ཕྱོགས་ལ་སྤོ།
སེམས་ཀྱིས་སེམས་ཚོལ་སེམས་མི་རྟེན།

10 ཞེས་པ། སུ་ཞེས་ཤེས་པ་ཚོས་ཉིད་ལ་པར་འབྲང་དེ་ཚོལ་སྤྱོད་པ་ནི་སྤང་བོ་ཞོན་ནས་སྤང་ཚོལ་བ་ལྟ་
བུར་མི་རྟོགས་སོ།

དེ་ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན།
སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་གཏིང་དཔག་དཀའ།

ཞེས་པ། མཚན་ཉིད་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།
སེམས་དེ་རྟེན་ན་བྱང་ཚུབ་ [317] སེམས་དོ།

15 ཞེས་པ། ཚོལ་བ་མེད་པས་ཅིར་ཡང་མ་མཐོང་ན་དེ་འཕྲོབ་པའོ།
དེ་མཚན་གྱི་དོན་གྱིས་བསྟན་པ་གང་ཞེ་ན།

གཟུགས་བྲལ་དེ་ལ་གཟུགས་ཀྱང་རྫོགས།
ཞེས་པ། བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ལ་རྣམ་པའི་གཟུགས་མེད་བཞིན་ཁ་དོག་དབྱིབས་ཀྱན་གྱི་རོ་བོར་གྱུར་པ་
བྱང་ཚུབ་པོ།

20 ཁ་དོག་དབྱིབས་ཀྱང་གཟུང་དུ་མེད།
ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟ་ཡིན་ཡང་རྣམ་པ་ཅན་ཞེས་ཏུ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་དངོས་པོར་ཐལ་བ་མེད་པ་སེམས་སོ།
དེ་ཀྱན་འགྱུར་མེད་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས།

ཞེས་པ། སྤང་སྤོང་རིལ་འཕོ་འགྱུར་མེད་པའི་རོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཡིན་པའོ།
རྟོག་པའི་སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་ལས་འདས་པ།

25 ཞེས་པ། ཡིད་ཀྱིས་ངེས་པར་བསམ་དུ་མེད་པས་བདེའོ།

9 རོན] em. zhen (psych., visual); see NKG 270.1. 18 ཀྱན] em. kun kun (ditto)

“The paths of the six continua of becoming are the six wisdoms.” This is because the six afflictions themselves are self-originated wisdom.

“The great person is free from bias; relinquishing unidirectional positions, he is free from bias.” This means that the *yogin* whose realization is without objective scope does not abide in evil views and is without rejecting anything.

“The only meaning of directions is to radiate in the directions; when the mind searches for the mind, the mind is not found.” Whoever follows after and searches for a cognizance of reality-as-such yonder does not realize that such conduct is like riding²⁶ an elephant while searching for that same elephant.²⁷

If it be asked why, [it is replied that] “it is difficult to fathom the depths of the nature of mind.” This is because it is without characteristics.

“If you find the mind, that is the mind of enlightenment” [NKJ 317.1; NKG 270.2] means that if, without searching, you do not see anything whatsoever, you have obtained it.

If you ask whether it can be taught through indicative meaning, [it is replied,] “free from forms, forms are complete therein.”²⁸ This means that while the enlightened mind is without aspectual forms, the essence of all colours, shapes, etc., is enlightenment.

“There is no grasping at colours or shapes”²⁹ means that since it is without the particularized aspect of being this or that, the mind cannot be overstated as being an entity.

“The enlightened mind is totally changeless” means that all that appears is empty, this being the essence of the immutable.

“It transcends the objective scope of discursiveness” means that it is well enough without the psyche thinking in terms of definiteness.

26 NKJ erroneously reads *zhen*, but NKG has emended this to *zhon*.

27 This example is also found in the SM 356, in the section concerning incomprehension of the view of great bliss; see Esler 2018: 282.

28 Quoted in the SM 373; see Esler 2018: 290.

29 Also quoted in *Ibid*.

།དེཉིད་རྟོག་མེད་ལོ་ནའོ།

།ཞེས་པ། བསམ་དུ་མེད་པར་རིག་ན་ལྟ་བ་མ་ལོར་བའོ།

།རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ནི་ལུང་དུ་བསྐྱུས།

།ཞེས། ཡོན་ཏན་རིལ་རང་རིག་ངེས་པའི་ལུང་ལ་རྫོགས་པ་བཀོད་པ་སྟེ།

5

།སེམས་ནི་ [318] རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ལ་གནས།

།ཞེས་པ། བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ཉིད་ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི་ངོ་བོར་བཞུགས་པའོ།

།སེམས་ཉིད་ལུང་དུ་བསྐྱུན་པའོ།

།ཞེས་པ། རང་གིས་སྒྲོ་སྐྱར་བྲལ་བར་གསུངས་པའོ།

།དཀར་ལ་ལྷེམ་ཚོར་དག་པ་སྟེ།

10

།ཞེས་པ། མཐའ་རྣམ་གྲལ་བས་ཅིར་ཡང་སྤང་བའི་རིག་པ་རང་གསལ་བས་བྱང་བའོ།

།བྱང་བའི་དོན་གྱིས་འགྱུར་བའི་སེམས།

།ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པའི་ཕྱིར་ངོ་བོ་མ་ངེས་པས་སྐྱུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའོ།

།མི་འགྱུར་ཤེས་པས་བརྟག་པར་བྱ།

།ཞེས་པ། འགྱུར་བའི་མ་ངེས་པ་མ་ཡིན་པར་རིག་པས་དེ་བསྐྱོམ་པའོ།

15

།བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ལུང་མན་དག་རྫོགས།

།འདི་ནི་སྤིང་པོ་རྫོགས་པའོ།

།ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་མཇལ་བ་ནི་ཚད་མ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་དོན་མཐར་ཕྱིན་པ་སྟེ། སྒྲོ་འི་གཏིང་དུ་མཇལ་བས་
མཚན་གྱི་དོན་མཐོང་བའོ།

།འོངས་སོ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བྲལ་བའི་དོ།

20

།དངོས་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས།

།ཞེས་པ། བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་སྤང་བ་དང་སྟོང་པ་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའོ།

།སེམས་ཀྱིས་སེམས་ཚོལ་ [319] སེམས་དེ་རྟེན།

།ཞེས་པ། ཐུན་མོང་མ་ཡིན་པའི་བསམ་དཔྱད་ཀྱིས་རྫོགས་སུ་བརྟུབ་པའོ།

།དེ་ནི་སེམས་ཀྱི་གཏིང་སེམས་ཡིན།

25

།ཞེས་པ། རྫོགས་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་གོ་སྟེ།

1 རྟོག] em. rtogs (hom.)

“It alone is non-discursiveness”³⁰ means that when there is awareness without thoughts, one’s view is unmistakable.

“It is a jewel contained within the authoritative scriptures” means that intrinsic awareness with all its qualities is completely laid out within the definitive authoritative scriptures.

“The mind [NKJ 318.1; NKG 270.6] abides within the jewel” means that the enlightened mind dwells as the essence of qualities.

“Mind-as-such is authoritatively taught” means that it is spoken of as inherently free from exaggeration and denigration.

“Its whiteness is flexible and pure” means that, being free from limitations, whatever appears to awareness is refined through its intrinsic clarity.

“The mind is transformed through the meaning of refinement” means that, as explained, the essence is spontaneously present because it is indefinite.

“You should examine it by knowing the unchanging” means that one should meditate with awareness that is not indefinite changeability.

“In the enlightened mind the authoritative scriptures and pith instructions are complete; it is their complete quintessence” means that by encountering it, one brings to culmination the purpose of the two valid criteria.³¹ Encountering it as the depth of one’s intellect, the meaning of the signs is seen.

“It is free from all coming, yet all entities are thoroughly complete” refers to the fact that in the enlightened mind, appearance and emptiness are non-dual.

“When the mind searches for the mind, [NKJ 319.1; NKG 271.5] the mind is found” means that it can be realized through uncommon scrutinizing thought.

“The treasure of mind is the mind” refers to the qualities of realization; this is easy to understand.

30 The Tibetan reads *rtogs med*, but this is clearly an error for the homophone *rtog med*.

31 Viz. actual perception and inference.

ལྷུང་ནི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དེ་ཡིན།

ཞེས་པ་བཤད་ཟིན་ཏོ།

མཉམ་དག་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ཉིད།

ཞེས་པ། རང་རིག་རྩོལ་བའི་སྤྲུག་བསྐྱེད་དང་བྲལ་བའོ།

5

ཐེག་ལེ་འཁྲིལ་པས་དོན་ལ་གཏུགས།

ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་དོན་དང་གཏན་ཚིགས་ཀྱན་རང་ཡིན་པས་དབྱེར་མེད་པར་ཐག་ཚོད་པའོ།

སྦྱོད་པ་ནི།

འདོད་ཆགས་ཞེ་སྤང་གཏི་སྤྲུག་ཀྱང་།

འབདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་རྒྱན་ཡིན་པས།

10

ཞེས་པ། ཉོན་མོངས་པ་སོ་མ་སྲུབ་པས་དུག་གསུམ་གྱི་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ། མ་སྤངས་བྲལ་བས་སྤང་དུ་མེད་དོ།

མ་བཀག་བག་ལ་ཉལ་བསལ་ཞིང་།

ཞེས་པ། དེར་མཇུག་བས་ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་བག་ཆགས་རང་སར་རང་གྲོལ་བའོ།

དོན་ལ་གཏོད་ཅིང་ལུང་ལ་གཏུགས།

15

ཞེས་པ། གདིང་ལས་མི་འགྱུར་བར་དེས་པའི་ལུང་དང་ཕྱད་ [320] པའོ།

གཏུགས་པའི་དོན་ལ་དེ་མ་ཐག

ཞེས་པ། ས་མ་བསྐྱོད་པར་མོན་པས་དུས་ཤིན་ཏུ་སྦྱར་བའོ།

ས་གང་ཞེ་ན།

དབྱིངས་དང་སྤང་སྲིད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱན།

20

ཡི་ནས་རྒྱན་གྱི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས།

ཞེས་པ། ཚོས་སོ་ཅོག་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་སྐད་ཅིག་མ་མེད་པར་རྒྱན་དུ་བྱུང་བའི་དོ་བོ་ཡིན་པ་ནི་སྤང་སྲིད་དག་པའི་ཞིང་སྟེ།

15 ཕྱད་པའོ། NKG 272.4 has 'phrad pa'o (tense).

“The authoritative scripture is the enlightened mind” has already been explained.

“The pith instructions are great bliss” means that intrinsic awareness is free from the suffering of effort.

“The swirling seminal nucleus touches absolute meaningfulness” means resolving that since absolute meaningfulness and the axioms are all intrinsic, they are inseparable.

Regarding conduct, “even desire, hatred and stupidity are the ornamentation of great bliss.” This means that since the afflictions are established as ever-fresh, the suchness of the three poisons is great bliss.

“Free from relinquishing, there is nothing to relinquish; uninhibited, the impregnations are eliminated” means that once [intrinsic awareness] is encountered, the afflictions’ imprints self-liberate in their own locus.

“Focusing on absolute meaningfulness, one meets with the authoritative scripture” refers to meeting the authoritative scripture of certainty in its unchanging depths. [NKJ 320.1; NKG 272.4]

“Immediately meeting absolute meaningfulness” signifies that since one treads without traversing any stages, the time [required] is veritably fast.

If you ask what the stages are, [it is replied,] “the open dimension and all of appearance-existence are the enlightened mind as primordial continuity.” This means that all phenomena are the enlightened mind. Its essence is to occur continuously without momentary lapses, so appearance-existence is a pure field.

དེའི་ཕྱིར།

འགོ་བ་རིགས་རྒྱལ་སྐྱེ་བ་བཞེ།

།འདི་ནི་འབྲས་བུ་རྫོགས་པ་འོ།

།ཞེས་པ། དེ་དག་མིང་ཅམ་སྐྱེ་བ་ལས་ངོ་བོ་ཅི་འང་མ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱ་ཆེན་པོ་འོ།

5

།ཁྱད་པར་མཚོག་དང་ཁྱད་པར་གྱི།

།ཞེས་པ། ཐེག་པ་འདི་ཉིད་དང་གཞན་གྱི་ལྟ་སྦྱོང་འབྲས་བུ་རྣམས་སོ།

།ཐུགས་ནས་བསྐྱེགས་པས་རྒྱན་གྱི་མཚོག།

།ཞེས་པ། དེ་དག་ལྟག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་གདོད་ནས་རང་ལུབ་པས་མཛོས་པའོ།

།རྫོགས་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་སྐྱེའི་རྒྱན།

10

།ཞེས་པ། མ་འདྲེས་གསལ་ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་ཕྱིར་སྟོང་གི་འཛིག་རྟེན་ཉིད་སྒྲ་མའི་སའོ།

།སྐལ་ལྷན་སྐྱེས་བུ་ཆེན་པོ་དེས།

།སྒྲ་མ་ཀུན་དང་ [321] མཉམ་སྦྱོར་བའི།

།རྩོ་རྩེ་ཡིས་ནི་དེ་མ་ཐག།

།ཞེས་པ། མ་ཞོར་བའི་སྒྲོ་ཅན་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་བ་དང་རིག་འཛིན་རིལ་དང་དགོངས་པ་གཅིག་པར་བཤད་

15

པའི་དོན་དེ་མཇལ་བའི་རིག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱིས་སྐྱད་ཅིག་ལ་ས་དེ་ཞོན་པའོ།

།དེའི་མཛོད་པ་ནི།

དེ་ལྟར་གསལ་ལ་རྟོགས་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པས།

།བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་མི་སྦྱོང་།

།ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པ་བཞིན་ལྟ་བ་དང་ཉིང་དེ་འཛིན་དུ་ལྷན་པས་རིལ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྒྲ་མའི་སར་བཏོན་པའོ།

20

།སྦྱོར་ལས་ཆགས་བུལ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས།

།དབང་ཕྱུག་ཆེན་པོ་མཁའ་ལ་སྦྱོར།

།ཞེས་པ། ཅིར་ཡང་དོན་མཛོད་པ་དེ་ལ་རྫོམ་སེམས་མེད་པའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོས་རིལ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱ་

ཆེན་པོར་སྦྱོར་བའོ།

14 རིག་འཛིན། em. rigs 'dzin (hom.) 15 མཇལ་བའི། em. mjal pa'i (gramm.); see NKG 273.4. 18 མི་སྦྱོང། em. ma skyong (tense)

Hence, “the six classes of wandering beings³² and the four kinds of birth³³ are complete as the fruition.” This means that since appearances, as mere names, are not in any way an essence, they are the great body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*).

“Distinctly superior and special” refers to [a comparison of] the view, conduct and fruition of this and the other vehicles.

“From [the perspective of] the awakened mind, obstructors are the supreme ornament” means that since they are consummately realized to be originally eminent wisdom, they are beautiful.

“The ornament of the awakened body of the Great Completeness” means that since unmixed clarity is thoroughly complete, the chiliocosm itself is the exalted stage.

“The fortunate great person is poised in union with all the masters, [NKJ 321.1; NKG 273.3] immediately through the adamant sceptre.” This means that he whose intellect is unmistakable treads the stages instantly through the wisdom of awareness that encounters the meaning explained as the single intent of all the Victorious Ones and awareness-holders (Skt. *vidyādhara*).

Regarding the tasks, “the *yogin* whose realization is clear does not protect the open dimension of the enlightened mind.” This means that, because of being endowed with the view and concentration as previously explained, everything is extracted on the stage of exalted wisdom.

“The activity of union is the enlightened mind free from attachment; the great omnipotent one unites with the sky.” This means that, whatever purposes one performs, one’s integral identity, which is free from conceit, unites everything with the great body of reality.

32 Viz. the gods, titans, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and denizens of hell.

33 Viz. birth from a womb (*mṅgal nas skye ba*; Skt. *jarāyujā*), from an egg (*sgo nga las skye ba*; Skt. *aṅḍaja*), birth from warmth and moisture (*drod gsher las skye ba*; Skt. *saṃsvedaja*) and preternatural birth (*brdzus te skye ba*; Skt. *upapāduka*). See Skorupski, Dorje and Nima 2002: 197–198.

ཁི་ཡང་ཡིན་ནོ་གང་ཡང་རུང་།
 །སུ་ཞིག་སྤྲུགས་ཀྱི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་དུ།
 །གཏོར་དང་ལྷན་ནོ་ལྷན་པར་ཆེ།

༥ །ཞེས་པ། རིལ་མཛད་སྤྱོད་དུ་མ་གྱུར་པ་མེད་པའི་གདེད་ཅན་ནི་ཟད་པ་མེད་པའི་གཏོར་རྗེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་
 རྟོགས་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ནོ།

།མ་བཀག་སེམས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་པར་ལ།
 །གཡང་ས་ཞེས་པ་ག་ [322] ལ་ཡོད།

།ཞེས་པ། ཐམས་ཅད་རང་རིག་རང་སྣང་བའི་ཕྱིར་གཡང་ས་གཞི་ལ་མ་གྲུབ་པའོ།

།སུ་ཞིག་གཡང་ས་གང་ནས་སྤྲེས།
 10 །གཡང་ས་ཚོལ་བ་སུ་ཞིག་ཡིན།

།ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟ་བུའི་རང་ལ་གཡང་ས་གང་གི་རིག་པ་ལས་བྱུང་། དེ་རྗེས་དུ་གཉེར་བ་སུ་ཡོད་དེ་མ་
 གྲུབ་པའོ།

།བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་ནི་བདེ་ཆེན་གྱིས།
 །གཡང་ས་ཞེས་པ་གཏན་དུ་ཕྱུང་།

15 །ཞེས་པ། དམུལ་བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་སྤྲུག་བསྐྱེད་ཚོས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཡོ་ལང་ཡིན་པས་ལྷུང་བ་ཀ་
 རས་མེད་པའོ།

།དེ་ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན།

།གཡང་ས་ཉིད་ཀྱང་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས།

20 །ཞེས་གསུངས་ཏེ། དེ་ཉིད་ལས་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་གཞན་ན་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་མི་བཟད་ཁམས་ལ་བག་མི་ཚ་
 བའོ།

།སུ་ཞིག་དུས་གསུམ་གང་ནས་ཚོལ།
 །དུས་གསུམ་བྱ་བ་གང་ན་ཡོད།

།ཞེས་པ། རྒྱ་རྒྱན་འབྲས་བུ་ཉིད་རང་འབྲས་བུ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་ཐ་མི་དད་པ་ལ་གང་ཞིག་འདས་པ་དང་མ་
 འོངས་པ་དང་ད་ལྟར་གཉེར་བ་ཡོད་དེ་གཞི་ལ་རིམ་པ་མ་གྲུབ་པའོ།

25 །འབྲས་བུ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པས་ན།

།དུས་གསུམ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་ [323] པའི་རྒྱ།

“It is anything at all, apt at everything;³⁴ whoever is in the configuration (Skt. *maṇḍala*) of the awakened mind is endowed with a treasure: that is its great distinction.” This means that having changeless confidence in all forms of behaviour, one gains an inexhaustible treasure; hence, that is the quality of realization.

“Uninhibited is the distinction of the mind—where could there be an abyss?” [NKJ 322.1; NKG 274.2] This means that since everything is the self-illumination of intrinsic awareness, a basis for an abyss is unestablished.

“In whom and whence is an abyss produced? Who is the one searching for an abyss?” This means that in that state, whenever there is awareness of an abyss, the existence of someone deliberately pursuing it is unestablished.

“Since the enlightened mind is great bliss, the so-called abyss is perpetually removed.”³⁵ This means that since the sufferings of the hells themselves, etc., are the panoply of reality-as-such, there is nowhere to fall down to in the first place.

If you ask why, [it is replied,] “the abyss itself is the enlightened mind.” This means that because great bliss is nowhere else, there is no anxiety with regard to the intolerable realms.

“Who is the one searching during the three times? What is there to do during the three times?” This means that since causes, conditions and effects are undifferentiated in the wisdom of the fruition, the existence of one pursuing the past, future and present has no basis that could be gradually established.

“If the fruition is thoroughly pure, the cause of this thorough purity is present throughout the three times.” [NKJ 323.1; NKG 275.1] This means that cause and

34 Quoted in the SM 383; see Esler 2018: 295.

35 Quoted in the SM 354; see Esler 2018: 280.

ཞེས་པ། གདོད་ནས་རྒྱ་ལྷན་དབྱེར་མེད་དེ་ལྷན་སུ་ཉིད་དུ་སློན་ཟེན་པའི་ཕྱིར་ལྷན་པ་པའི་དུས་
ཀྱི་རིམ་པ་ལས་གྲོལ་བའོ།

རྒྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བདེ་ཆེན་ལ།
ཤོལ་ས་བྱ་བ་གཤམ་ཡོད།

5 ཞེས་པ། ཐམས་ཅད་རྒྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཆེན་པོར་སངས་རྒྱས་པས་གོལ་ས་ཀ་ནས་རང་དག་པའོ།

སུ་ཞིག་གོལ་ས་དོན་དུ་གཉེད།

ཞེས་པ། མེད་བཞིན་ཚོལ་བ་མི་ལྷུང་བའོ།

གདེང་གིས་དག་པའི་ཕྱིར།

ཡེ་ཤེས་རྟོགས་འདི་བྱུང་པར་གྱིས།

10 སྦྱོད་ལམ་རྣམ་བཞི་གང་སྦྱང་ཀྱང་།

འཆིང་བར་མི་འགྱུར་རྣམ་གྲོལ་རྫོགས།

ཞེས་པ། རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་གཏིང་ཕྱིན་པར་མཇུག་བས་འགོ་ཉལ་འདུག་སྦྱོང་ལོངས་སྦྱོང་དུ་སྦྱོང་བ་
རིལ་ལ་སྦྱང་ཀྱང་གོལ་བ་མེད་དེ་ཡང་དག་པའི་མཚན་སྦྱོང་ཉིད་དུ་སློན་ཟེན་ཏེ།

དེ་ཅི་འདྲི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན།

15 ལྷ་བས་མཐོང་ལ་རྟོག་པ་མིན།

ཞེས་པ། ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པར་རིག་པ་རང་གསལ་བས་ཡུལ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

ཡེ་ནས་ལྷན་རྫོགས་མཉམ་པའི་ངང་།

དེ་ལ་གོལ་ས་གཤམ་ཡོད།

ཞེས་པ། བདག་ཉིད་ [324] ཆེན་པོར་ལྷན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་པས་ཟུག་རྩ་མེད་པ་དང་བྲལ་བ་ལ་གཞན་
20 པ་མ་དམིགས་པའི་ཕྱིར་གོལ་བའི་ས་མེད་པའོ།

མཁའ་མཉམ་དབྱིངས་ལ་གཏེར་ལྷན་པའི་།

དོན་ཆེན་རྟོགས་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པས།

ཞེས་པ། ལྷན་གྱིས་སྐབ་པའི་དོན་རྟོགས་པ་ཡོད་པས་ཡོན་ཏན་ཅི་འབྱུང་ཞེ་ན།

1 དབྱེར་མེད་] NKG 275.2 has *dbye med* (psych., orth.).

effect being originally inseparable since the fruition has already ripened, one is liberated from gradually established temporality.

“In the great bliss of awakened body, speech and mind, where could one deviate towards?”³⁶ This means that since everything is awakened as body, speech and mind, deviations are intrinsically alpha-pure.

“Who could pursue a deviation?”³⁷ This means that [deviations] being non-existent, no searching for them occurs.

For the sake of those having this confidence, [it is said,] “It is especially through the realization of wisdom that, whatever one engages in with regard to the four types of conduct, one does not become fettered, utter liberation being complete.”³⁸ This means that having encountered self-originated wisdom in its depth, one can engage in all types of conduct, enjoying walking, lying down, sitting and standing, yet there is nowhere to deviate, for the behaviour of genuineness has already ripened.

If you ask why, [it is replied,] “Seeing with the view is not discursive.” This is because through the intrinsic clarity of omniscient awareness, there are no objects.

“In the state of equality, which is primordially and spontaneously complete, where could there be a deviation?” This means that since integral being [NKJ 324.1; NKG 275.6] is spontaneously complete, one is free from all pain and does not referentially image anything else; hence, there is no deviation.

“Endowed with a treasure, the sky-like open dimension, the *yogin* realizes the great meaning.” If you ask what the qualities that occur from having realization of the spontaneously present absolute meaningfulness might be, [it is

36 Quoted in the SM 354; see Esler 2018: 281.

37 Quoted in Ibid.

38 Quoted in the SM 452; see Esler 2018: 337.

ལྷན་པར་ཅན་དང་ལྷན་པར་གྱི།

།ཚུ་ཤིང་རུལ་པའི་སྣིང་པོ་ལྟར།

།གཏན་དུ་མེད་པ་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ།

།སྲུ་བྱའི་འོད་དང་ཅན་དྲ་བཞིན།

5

།དངོས་པོ་མེད་ལས་སྣིང་པོ་འབྱུང།

།ཞེས་པ། མདོན་པར་མཐོ་བའི་འབྲས་བུ་ཆེན་པོ་ཉིད་དང་མདོན་ཤེས་རྒྱ་འཕྲུལ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཤིན་

དུ་བྲག་པ་མེད་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ནི་ཚུ་ཤིང་ལྟར་མེད་པ་མིན་ཏེ། ཉིམ་དང་རྒྱ་བའི་འོད་བཞིན་དུ་རང་རིག་

ཅིང་མ་ཡིན་པ་ཉིད་ཞེན་པ་གཉིས་དག་པ་ཅོམ་གྱིས་འབྲས་བུ་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་རང་འཆར་བའོ།

།དེས་ན་དངོས་བྲལ་དངོས་མེད་ཆོས་དབྱིངས་ལ།

10

།སེམས་ཀྱི་ཉི་ཟེར་སྲོ་ཞིང་བསྐྱ།

།ཞེས། མཐའ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་ཆོས་ཇི་བཞིན་པ་ལ་རང་རིག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་གསལ་བའི་ [325] ཉི

མས་རང་བཟའ་ཞིང་དེར་བརྒྱུམས་པ་འང་ཐ་སྲེད་ཅོམ་སྟེ། རོ་བོས་ཡུལ་དུ་སློམ་པར་ཐལ་བ་ནི་མེད་

པའོ། །དེ་ཅི་འི་ཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན།

ཆགས་པ་ཉིད་ན་མ་ཆགས་ཏེ།

15

།ཞེས་པ། བསློམས་ཅོམ་ཉིད་ན་ཡུལ་དུ་ཞེན་པ་མེད་དེ་སློམ་སྲོུད་ཀྱི་སྐྱིབ་པ་ཉིད་སེམས་ཀྱི་ཡེ་ཤེས་

སྲུ་རང་གསལ་བ་ནི་སྲུན་པ་ཉིད་སྤང་བར་གསལ་བ་ལྟ་བུའི་ཕྱིར།

ཅུབ་ཀའི་ཟེར་དང་ནམ་ལངས་བཞིན།

།ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ། །འདི་བཙའ་བའི་ཐབས་ནི།

རྒྱ་མཚོའི་རྟིང་གི་རྩོད་བཞིན།

20

།སྐལ་པར་དགྲུག་ཀྱང་ཁར་མི་དབྱུང།

།ཞེས་པ།

སྲོག་ལ་བབ་ཀྱང་གསང་བའོ།

།རྟོགས་ལ་མ་ཆགས་སེམས་དང་ཡུལ།

།སྲོུར་ཞིང་མ་ཆགས་སྲོུལ་ཞེས་བྱ།

14 ཏེ] em. ste (gramm.); see NKM 325.2 and NKG 276.6. 18 བཙའ་བའི] em. btsa' pa'i (gramm.); see NKG 277.2. 19 རྟིང] NKG 277.2 has gting (rec., alt.). 20 དབྱུང] NKG 277.2 has 'byung (hom., psych.).

replied that] “distinctive and special, it is not inconsistent, like the heart of the plantain tree; like the moon or like sunlight, its quintessence occurs as an absence of reified entities.”³⁹ This means that the upraised great fruition itself, along with its veritably uncontaminated qualities, such as the miraculous supracognitions, etc., is not non-existent like the plantain tree. Intrinsic awareness, like the light of the moon or sun, is nothing in itself, yet through the mere purification of the twofold craving everything self-arises as the fruition.

Then, “in the open dimension of phenomena, free from reification and not an entity, the sunrays of the mind radiate and are absorbed.” This is merely a designation for the fact that in the being as it is of phenomena, free from limitations, the sun of intrinsic clarity, i.e. the wisdom of intrinsic awareness, [NKJ 325.1; NKG 276.5] self-expands and contracts.

Meditating on the objects in terms of their essence, there is no vanishing thereof. If it be asked why, [it is replied that] “attachment itself is detachment.” This means that craving towards objects is absent merely during meditation. Yet the obscurations of meditation and conduct being themselves intrinsically clear as the mind’s wisdom, this is like darkness that is illuminated. It is therefore said, “like the rays of dusk and like daybreak.”

Regarding the means of safeguarding [this doctrine], it is said that “like a stone at the bottom of the ocean, even if one’s fortune is disturbed, it will not be drawn forth from one’s mouth.”

“Even if one’s life be at stake, one will keep them secret. In realization, detachment is the union of mind and objects, and detachment is their liberation called.”

39 Quoted in the SM 342–343; see Esler 2018: 274.

ཞེས་པ། ཡོན་ཏན་ཅི་ལ་འང་ཞེན་པའི་སྐྱེས་བུས་ཡུལ་སེམས་གཉིས་མེད་དུ་རྟོགས་པས་སྦྱོད་
ཡུལ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པས་སྦྱོར་སྦྱོལ་གཉིས་དུས་ཅིག་ཏུ་ལྷན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་པའོ།

འཕྲ་བཀོད་ལུང་དོན་གྱི་སྐྱང་ཟིལ་ནས། རྩོགས་མཐོང་དོན་དུ་འགྲེལ་པ་འདི་བྱས་པའི། ཉེས་པ་
རང་སེམས་གྲོང་དུ་བཤགས། །དགོ་ [326] ཅུས་མཐའ་ཡས་བྱ་བལ་ཤོག། བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་བདེ་བ་

5 འཕྲ་བཀོད་ཀྱི་དོན་འགྲེལ་རྫོགས་སྟེ།

ཁོར་མཚོག་མི་གཏོང་སྐྱོམ་མི་བྱེད།

ཤོབ་ནས་ཚོང་སེམས་ཁེ་གྲགས་གཉེར།

སྦྱང་རྒྱར་འཕུན་ཞིང་སྤེལ་བྱེད་པའི།

སྦྱོད་དམ་བུལ་དང་མ་སྲད་ཅིག།

10 སྐལ་ལྷན་དུས་བབ་སྦྱོད་དམ་ཅན།

རྒྱུད་དེས་འཚོ་བྱེད་ཀྱི་འདི་ལྟ།

ཡང་དབང་གཉེར། །།

2 ཅིག་དུ། em. *cig du* (gramm.); see NKM 325.5 and NKG 277.4. 3 འཕྲ་བཀོད། NKG 277.4 has *phra bkod* (rec., alt.). ། ལུང་དོན། em. *lung don don* (ditto) 5 འཕྲ་བཀོད། NKG 277.5 has *phra bkod* (rec., alt.). ། ལྟོ། NKM 326.1 and NKG 277.5 have *so* (rec., alt.). I have refrained from emending the sentence final particle, since *sto* is an archaic spelling convention frequently found in the older literature. One also encounters the variants *s+ho*, *s+h+yo* and *sts+ho*. See Cantwell and Mayer 2012: 228, 348; and Cantwell and Mayer 2008: 124. 11 དེས། NKG 277.6 has *nges* (visual).

This means that whatever qualities a person craves for, by realizing that objects and mind are non-dual, one's objective scope is thoroughly purified, so both union and liberation⁴⁰ are at once spontaneously complete.

Condensing the meaning of the authoritative scripture, the *Inlaid Jewel*, I made this commentary for the purpose of those whose sight is biased. Whatever faults there may be, I confess them in the expanse of my own mind. Through these roots of virtue, [NKJ 326.1; NKG 277.5] may infinite beings be free from action!

The meaning commentary on the *Inlaid Jewel of Bliss, the Enlightened Mind* is completed.

May this supreme wealth, which can neither be given up nor meditated on,
 Not meet with those who, having obtained it, trade it away, their mind pursuing renown,⁴¹
 Nor with those who roam about among manifold appearances,
 Nor with those who are vessels free from pledges and who spread it far and wide!

The time for the fortunate will come: vessels holding pledges,
 They will be nourished through this *tantra*.
 By Yang Wangter.

⁴⁰ See below, Text 4, note 108.

⁴¹ The verse is somewhat cryptic and could also be translated as follows: "Not meet with those who, having obtained it, pursue renown with a mercantile mind."

rDo rje gzung phugs kyi 'grel pa (DZG)

[References: *rDo rje gzung phugs kyi 'grel pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 381–398. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 381–398. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 329–343.]

༄༅། །དོ་རྗེ་གཟོང་ཕུགས་གྱི་འགྲེལ་པ་བཞུགས་སོ།། [382]

།དོ་རྗེ་གཟོང་ཕུགས་འགྲེལ་པ་ནི།

ཡེ་ཤེས་རྗོངས་ལུས་ལྷན་རྒྱུ་རྗེ་གསུམ་ངང་དུ་བཅོམ།

།དེ་ཉིད་ཀུན་དངོས་མང་བསྐྱུས་རྗེ་གསུམ་པར་ལྷན་འགྱུར་ཡང་།

5 །རང་གི་རོ་བོ་འདི་ཞེས་སྐྱ་བསམ་སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་འདས།

།ཡིད་བཞིན་མོར་ལྷན་ལྷན་གྱུ་བ་བདག་གཞན་ལེགས་པ་ཆེ།

།སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་ཟུག་རྗེ་ཀུན་བྲལ་སྐྱུ་ག་བསྐྱུས་ལམ་དུ་བདེ།

།འབྲས་བུ་དེ་བཞིན་ཆེ་བ་ལྷན་ལྷན་པ་ནི་གནས།

།དེ་ཉིད་གདེང་འགྱུར་གྱི་འགྲེལ་མཛོད་བྲལ་གང་གྱུར་པ།

10 །མཉམ་ཉིད་ལྷན་པའི་འདུད་པ་མཚོན་པ་ཀུན་གྱི་མཚོན།

7 ལྷན། NKG 330.2 has 'bral (tense). 9 གདེང། em. rdeng; see NKG 330.3.

Commentary on the Adamantine Piercing Awl (DZG)

The commentary on the *Adamantine Piercing Awl*.¹

Having *conquered* the state in which all the adamantine wisdoms without exception are spontaneously complete,²

You are *endowed with* the completeness of assembling numerous paradigms;

Your essence *transcends* the objective scope of speech and thought.

Like the wish-granting gem, spontaneous presence is the great excellence in self and others.

Its scope is free from all pain, so on the path, suffering is bliss.

It abides as the fruition, endowed with the five greatnesses.³

Whenever it is actualized by confidently⁴ entering its stream,

Bowing down in the eminent equality is supreme among all offerings.

1 Critical edition of the root text (the *Nam mkha'i rgyal po*) in Liljenberg 2012b: 253–258 (M version), 259–264 (D version); for a translation, see Liljenberg 2012b: 177–181 (M version); 181–188 (D version). There are vast differences in the placement of the lines in this commentary when compared to the NGB root text. Generally, the version found within the commentary here tends to be closer to the D version of the root text than to its M counterpart. See Liljenberg 2012b: 233. References to Liljenberg's study in this chapter are thus primarily to her edition of the D version.

2 The first three lines play on the term *bcom ldan 'das* (Skt. *bhagavat*: 'Hallowed One'), the individual components of which in Tibetan are given in *italics* in the translation.

3 The five greatnesses are discussed in the SM 336–337. They evoke various aspects of awakening as seen from the Dzogchen perspective and refer to (1) the greatness of awakening to phenomena's open dimension; (2) the greatness of awakening as actual perception; (3) the greatness of awakening as integral being; (4) the greatness of awakening to that which is; and (5) the greatness of the non-existence of awakening. For a full translation, see Esler 2018: 270–271.

4 NKJ has *rdeng 'gyur*, whereas NKG emends this to *gdeng 'gyur*. In any case, the sense of *gdeng* seems to be called for.

སྐྱོད་དང་སྐལ་ [383] བར་ལྡན་ལ་གདམས་པའི་བྱིར།

ཡིད་བཞིན་ཡེ་ཤེས་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་མཐའ་བྱབ་པ།

གྲོལ་ཞིང་རྟོགས་ཏེ་དོན་ལྡན་བརྩོན་པས་ཉོན།

ཡིད་བཞིན་འབར་བ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་བྱུང་སྟེ།

5 ཅིར་སྐྱང་འཕེལ་འགྲིབ་མེད་པར་གསལ་བ་ཉིད།

གདང་ཡང་མ་བཀོལ་རྗེས་པ་འདུས་མ་བྱས།

སྐྱ་མཐའ་མེད་པས་འགྲོ་འོང་མེད་པར་འབྱུང།

ཀྱུན་བྱབ་བདག་ཉིད་འཆིང་འགྲོལ་མེད་པའི་དོན།

རྟོགས་པའི་སྐལ་ཡོད་ཚུབ་སྐྱོད་ལྡན་ལ།།

10 ལྟེ། །ལོ་རྒྱས་དོན་གྱིས་ལྷག་པའི་དོན་བསྟན་བྱིར།

སྐྱང་ [384] མེད་བརྗོད་པ་མེད་ལས་འདས་པའོ།

འདས་པར་བསྟན་པ་སྐྱང་གཤགས་སྐྱུན་རྗེས་ཀྱང།

དེ་དེ་ཡོད་དང་མེད་ལས་གདང་འདས་པ།

འདས་པའི་ཕྱོགས་སུ་གྱུར་མེད་མན་ངག་མཚན།

15 ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ལ་བསྐྱུས་ཏེ་རྣམ་བཤད་པ།

བྱ་བྱེད་མེད་པར་མན་ངག་བཅུད་ཤར་བའི།

སེམས་ལ་ཚིག་ཏུ་བརྗོད་མེད་སྐྱེའང་མེད།

ཕྱི་ནང་སྐྱོད་ཡུལ་མེད་པར་ནང་ཉིད་ལ།

བརྗོད་སྐྱང་ཀྱུན་དངོས་འདི་འདྲ་འདི་ཞེས་མེད།

20 ཡེ་ཤེས་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་ཅིག་ཕྱིར་ཏེ།

མི་གནས་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་དག་ཐ་དད་མེད།

2 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 263 (D version). Although the lemmata from the root text are not marked off in the extant version of Nubchen's commentary, in this edition they are placed in colour in order to distinguish them visually from the surrounding commentary. It should also be noted that the order in which the lines are placed in the commentary differs significantly from the extant versions of the root text. 9 ལ] NKG 331.1 has *pa* (rec., alt.). 10 ལྱིས] em. *kyis* (gramm.) 11 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 258 (M version), 263 (D version). 17 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). 20 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version).

Because these instructions are for fortunate vessels,⁵ [NKJ 383.1; NKG 330.3] [They are] “the wish-granting wisdom that pervades the limits of the open dimension.”⁶

Listen well and strive in what is meaningful, i.e. liberation and realization!
The wish-granting blazing wisdom is self-originated—
Whatever appears, its clarity is without developing or fading away.
Without picking out anything, its completeness is uncompounded.
Being without extremes, it is without coming or going.
All-pervading, one’s integral identity means being without binding or liberation.
Those with the fortune of realization are endowed with river-like conduct.

In order to teach the eminent meaning in terms of history,
“It transcends appearance and expression.”⁷ [NKJ 384.1; NKG 331.1]
Although appearance and resonance are spontaneously complete within the definitive teaching,
It transcends existence and non-existence.
From the position of transcendence, the name of this pith instruction is the ‘changeless’,
[Yet] included within phenomena’s open dimension are explanations.
Being without action and agent, it arises as the elixir of pith instructions.
“The mind [of enlightenment] is without expression in terms of words and without body”:⁸
Its inwardness is without objective scope in terms of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’.
All expressions and appearances are without identifiable realness.
“Because the utter purity of wisdom is one,”⁹
Non-abiding wisdom is not different from its intrinsic purity.

5 Here there is a change from an eleven-syllabic metre to a nine-syllabic one.

6 A close variant of this line is found towards the end of the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 263 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 342; see Esler 2018: 274. Although the lemmata from the root text are not marked off in the extant version of Nubchen’s commentary, I have placed them in quotation marks in the English translation in order to distinguish them visually from the surrounding explanatory verses.

7 This line is found towards the end of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 258 (M version), 263 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 342; see Esler 2018: 274.

8 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version).

9 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 370 (see Esler 2018: 288) as part of a citation from a text called the *sPros pa med pa’i tig*. This may have been an alternative title for the *Nam mkha’i rgyal po*; see Liljenberg 2012b: 126.

ཁབ་དག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོའི་གཏན་ཚིགས་དོན་ཡིན་པས།

གྲོལ་བའི་ལས་ནི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།

ཁ་ཅིངས་པ་གཉིས་བྲལ་འཕྲིན་ལས་འདི་འདྲར་མེད།

ཁམམ་བྲལ་གཏན་ཚིགས་སྒོ་ནས་མཐུན་བསྟན་པ།

5 གཅིག་དང་དུ་མའི་མཐའ་ལས་འདས་པ་ནི།

གཅིག་ལས་མ་གཡོས་ཐ་དད་སྐྱད་བ་དང་།

ཀྱུན་བྲལ་ཉལ་གཅིག་ཅི་མ་སྐྱངས་པའི་ཕྱིར།

རྒྱ་མཚོའི་རྒྱབས་དང་དེ་ཉིད་མཚུངས་བཞིན་དང་།

རྩོམ་གྱི་དབྱིངས་གྱི་མཚན་ཉིད་བཟ། [385] བ་མེད།

10 དེ་བས་གཟུགས་བྲལ་གཟུགས་ཀྱུན་དཔོས།

རྩོམ་ལྡེ་བསྐྱེས་བཞིན་འདི་འདྲར་བསྟན་པར་དཀའ།

ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་ལྟས་དབུ་མ་ཟེལ་གྱིས་གཞོན།

འདི་འདྲ་དོན་མཚོག་མ་རྟོགས་སྐྱོན་བསྟན་ཕྱིར།

ཀྱུན་གྱི་བདག་ཉིད་དུས་གསུམ་དབྱིངས་མི་གཡོ།

15 འབྲེལ་ལོག་སྤྱི་རྒྱུགས་གར་འབྲེལ་གར་སྦྱོད་ཀྱང་།

སྒྲིང་པོའི་དོན་ལས་མི་འདའ་མཁའ་ལྟ་བུའི།

རྟོ་བ་འདི་མེད་སྦྱོད་པ་སྐྱེ་མས་འཆིང་།

གཟའ་གཏད་བྲལ་སྐྱུན་མེད་ན་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ།

ཅི་བྱས་ཅི་སྦྱད་གཟུང་འཛིན་བརྟུན་པས་འཆིང་།

2 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). 5 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). 9 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). 14 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version). 17 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 262 (D version). 19 གཟུང་འཛིན། NKG 332.4 has *gzungs 'dzin* (tense).

Since the axiom of integral being is absolute meaningfulness,
 “The activity of liberation is without characteristics.”¹⁰
 Being free from dualistic bondage, there is no identifiable awakened activity.
 Since it is taught through the axiom of freedom from limitations,
 “It transcends the limitations of singularity and multiplicity,”¹¹
 Appearing as different, yet without wavering from the one.
 Since in its unicity, free from all, it has nothing to relinquish,
 It is congruent with the ocean’s waves:
 “The characteristic of phenomena’s open dimension is its absence of glitter.”¹²
 [NKJ 385.1; NKG 332.1]
 Therefore, being free from form, it is the paradigm of form.
 As it blends the five colours, it is difficult to show.
 From the perspective of the omniscient, it outshines the middle.¹³

In order to show the flaws of not realizing the supreme meaning,
 “The universal paragon does not waver from the open dimension throughout
 the three times.”¹⁴
 Even though one’s conduct writhes about upside down, rolling around,
 One does not trespass against the quintessential meaning, like the sky.¹⁵
 Yet “without the view, one’s conduct is bound to illusion.”¹⁶
 Without the eye that is free from thematic focus,
 Whatever one does or engages in will be bound by the lies of grasper and
 grasped.

-
- 10 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 370 in the citation from the *sPros pa med pa'i tig*; see Esler 2018: 288.
- 11 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 370 in the citation from the *sPros pa med pa'i tig*; see Esler 2018: 288.
- 12 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 370 in the citation from the *sPros pa med pa'i tig*; see Esler 2018: 288.
- 13 This line means that any concept of a middle that avoids extremes is also left behind.
- 14 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 371 in the citation from the *sPros pa med pa'i tig*; see Esler 2018: 288.
- 15 These two phrases appear in the SM 351 (see Esler 2018: 279), as well as in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 647, fol. 2r.3–4, translated and edited in Karmay 2007: 53, 57. The first clause also occurs in the DPG (NKJ 309.5–6).
- 16 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 262 (D version). It is quoted in the SM 456; see Esler 2018: 340.

།དེ་བས་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་དོན་བསྟན་བྱིང།
 །ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་དང་མ་ལོག་བྱང་ཚུབ་སྟེ།
 །བྱང་ཚུབ་ཉིད་ལ་ལོག་དང་མ་ལོག་མེད།
 །རང་བཞིན་ངོ་བོ་མཚན་ཉིད་མ་ལོར་ལམ་ལོག་པའི།

5 །འཁོར་དང་དེ་བསྐྱོག་ལྷ་རྩལ་འདས་པའི་ཚོས།
 །གསུམ་གྱིས་ཐ་དད་མེད་པས་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས།
 །འོན་ཀྱང་དེ་ལ་དེའི་ཕྱོགས་འགྲུང་མེད།
 །དེ་ནི་གཉེན་མར་གནས་པའི་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས།
 །ཕྱོགས་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཤེས་ [386] རབ་འཆལ་པའི་སྟོ།

10 །ཡང་དག་ལྷ་དང་བསྐྱོམ་པའི་དོན་བསྟན་བྱིང།
 །བསམ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་སེམས་རྣམས་དེ་ཉིད་ནི།
 །ནམ་མཁའ་འདྲ་བའི་སེམས་དེ་ཉིད་དང་བྲལ།
 །མཐའ་ཡས་སེམས་བརྒྱད་ལོག་རྟོག་ཐ་དད་རྣམས།
 །དེའི་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་ནི་རིགས་དང་རྒྱུད་མེད་ཕྱིན།

15 །ལྷན་སྐྱབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་བྲལ་བའི་དཔེ།
 །མཁའ་ལ་མཁར་སེམས་མེད་འདྲར་དེ་ཉིད་དེར་སེམས་བྲལ།
 །ཡོད་མེད་དབྱུང་མ་མ་དམིགས་བརྗོད་མེད་ན།
 །ནམ་མཁའ་མི་གནས་བརྗོད་དུ་མེད་ལས་འདས།
 །སྤང་སྦྱོང་མཐའ་དབྱུང་དང་ཉིད་ཡུལ་མེད་བསྟན་དཀའ་བ།

20 །གདེང་དུ་རྒྱུད་ན་ཡེ་ཤེས་ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་འང།
 །སེམས་རྟེན་མི་འཆའ་བརྗོད་མེད་སྤང་དུ་མེད།
 །དོན་དེ་གང་ལྷན་མཉམ་བཞག་བསྐྱོམས་པའི་སྤང།
 །དེ་ཕྱིར་གསལ་བ་ཕྱི་ནང་ལས་འཕགས་པས།

2–3 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). 11–12 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version). 17–18 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 256–257 (M version: the second line is quite different), 262 (D version).

Hence, in order to reveal the non-dual meaning,
 “With regard to enlightenment being distorted and undistorted,
 Enlightenment itself is without distortedness and undistortedness.”¹⁷
 The unmistakable characteristic of the essential nature, as well as
 The phenomena of the distorted path, cyclic existence (Skt. *saṃsāra*), and its
 reverse, woe-transcendence (Skt. *nirvāṇa*),
 Are not different as three, being the enlightened mind.
 In any case, its orientation being changeless,
 The enlightened mind abides as the innate;
 [Yet] the intellect searches with acumen for positions, etc. [NKJ 386.1; NKG
 332.6]

In order to show the meaning of the genuine view and meditation,
 “Minds may be free from thought,
 Yet the sky-like mind is free from that too.”¹⁸
 For the lineage of infinite mind, the different misconceptions
 Are in their suchness without class and pedigree.
 Spontaneous wisdom is free from objective scope; for example,
 Mindlessness is like a castle in the sky, yet freedom from mind,
 “Inexpressible, cannot be referentially imaged as existing, non-existing or their
 middle.
 Non-abiding, like space, it transcends expression.”¹⁹
 Appearance-emptiness, without the objects pertaining to extremes or their
 middle, is difficult to show.
 When assimilated with confidence, in the sky of wisdom,
 Mind has no support to set up; inexpressible, there is nothing to take up.
 Whoever is endowed with this meaning takes up meditation in equipoise.
 Therefore, this secret is superior to all outer and inner [practices].

17 These two lines are found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version).

18 These two lines are in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 262 (D version).

19 Again, these two lines are in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 256–257 (M version: the second line is quite different), 262 (D version).

།མཚན་མ་འཇིལ་བའི་སྐྱེ་མེད་དག་པས་ན།
 །རྟོགས་པའི་ཆེན་པ་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་བསྐྱོམ་མེད་ཕྱིར།
 །གཟའ་བའི་ཡུལ་མེད་བརྩམ་བའི་དབང་པོས་སྟོང་།
 །གཞི་བསྐྱོམ་བཞུས་པས་ཐོབ་ [387] བྱི་སྟོད་ཡུལ་མེད།

5 །དུས་གསུམ་མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱང་འབྱུང་འཇུག་གོ།
 །དོན་དམ་དུས་གསུམ་མཉམ་ལ་ལྡང་འཇུག་པ།
 །ཆེད་དུ་བྱེད་པ་གཟུང་འཇིན་གཙོ་བོ་ཡིན།
 །དེ་བས་འདི་ལ་དེ་མེད་དོན་བསྟན་ཕྱིར།

།ལེན་མེད་འཇིན་དང་ཡོངས་སུ་བྲལ་བས་ན།

10 །དུས་གསུམ་བདག་ཉིད་དོ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཆེ།
 །དུས་གསུམ་བདག་ཕྱིར་སྟོང་ལེན་གཟུང་འཇིན་མེད།
 །དེ་ཕྱིར་ཆོས་ཀུན་སོ་སོའི་གནས་ན་དཔལ།
 །དོ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔའ་དུས་སྐབས་མེད་པར་གནས།
 །གཅིག་གིས་སྐྱབས་པས་ཐེག་པ་ཀུན་བས་ཆེ།

15 །བརྟགས་པའི་སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ལས་འདས་པའི་ཕྱིར།
 །སེམས་ཉིད་ཆོས་པས་སེམས་ལ་སྐྱེ་མི་མངའ།
 །རང་སེམས་ཆོས་སྐྱར་གནས་ཕྱིར་དབྱིབས་དང་ལ་དོག་མེད།

1 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version). 2 རྟོན་པ། iso. *myed pa*. See bTsan lha ngag dbang tshul khriṃs 1997: 225. Cf. NKG 333.5, which introduces the hypercorrection *bsnyen pa* (hom., rec.). 3 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version). 5 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 9–10 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version: separated by two further lines), 261 (D version). 16 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

“Since the absence of awakened body, in which signs are expelled, is pure,”²⁰
In gaining²¹ realization, there is no meditating on emblematic gestures (Skt.
mudrā); hence,

“One is empty of the faculties of striving, being without thematic object.”²²
There is no objective scope obtainable through meditating on the basis [of the
deity]²³ and through incantatory repetition. [NKJ 387.1; NKG 333.5]
“Throughout the three times there is occurrence and involvement even in
equality.”²⁴

In absolute truth, one emerges and enters the three times as equal.
Deliberate performance is chiefly about grasping and grasped.

Hence, in order to reveal the meaning in which they are absent,
“Which is without acceptance and is thoroughly free from grasping,
The paragon of the three times, the great Vajrasattva,”²⁵
Being the custodian of the three times, is without relinquishing or acceptance,
without grasping and grasped.
Therefore, abiding in all individual phenomena, he is glorious.
Vajrasattva abides without time frame.
Being alone to rise up,²⁶ it is greater than all the vehicles.

Because it transcends awakened body, speech and mind insofar as they are
examinable,
“The spiritual practitioner of mind-as-such possesses no awakened body in his
mind.”²⁷
Because one abides in the body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*) that is one’s own
mind, there is neither shape nor colour.

20 Variants of this line are found in the versions of the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version).

21 NKJ reads *rtogs pa'i rnyen pa*, whereas NKG has *rtogs pa'i bsnyen pa*. The term *rnyen* is equivalent in meaning to *rnyed* ('gain'); see bTsan lha ngag dbang tshul khriims 1997: 225.

22 This line is quoted under the title *Byang chub sems tig* in the SM 318; see Esler 2018: 260. The line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version).

23 Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin comments that in this context the word *gzhi* refers to the basis of the deity that is meditated on.

24 This line is quoted in the SM 436; see Esler 2018: 325. It is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

25 These two lines are found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version: separated by two further lines), 261 (D version).

26 On the word *spags pa*, see below, Text 4, note 105.

27 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

གྲགས་ལས་འདས་པས་གྲགས་ཉིད་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏེ།

འདི་འདྲར་སྐྱར་བཟོད་མེད་ཕྱིར་སྐྱ་ཉིད་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྣང་།

ཞི་བའི་འོད་གསལ་གདོད་ནས་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ།

ལེགས་འཛིན་གསུམ་བུ་ལ་ལྷན་གྲུབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ནི།

5 ཡེ་ནས་ [388] དེ་བཞིན་གྲུབ་དང་མ་གྲུབ་བདག

འགྱུར་བས་ཆགས་པ་མེད་པའི་ཚོས་ཡུལ་ཀྱང་མི་འགྱུར།

དེ་ལས་བསམ་ཞིང་སྣང་བས་འཛིན་མེད་ཏུགས་འགྱུར་མེད།

སངས་རྒྱས་ཡེ་ཤེས་རིམ་མེད་ཞེས་བྲ།

རྒྱལ་བའི་ཐུགས་ནི་ཡོད་མེད་དབུས་བུལ་བདག

10 བསྟན་པར་དཀའ་ལ་ཚོད་ཕྱིར་དེ་སྐད་མཚོན།

མི་འབྱུང་མི་འཇུག་ཡུལ་མེད་དབང་པོས་སྟོང་།

མཁའ་ལ་འབྱུང་འཇུག་ཡུལ་མེད་དེ་ལྟ་བུ།

སངས་རྒྱས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ངང་གིས་དེ་ལྟ་བའོ།

མི་ཏུག་གཏན་ཚིགས་བདག་ལྟ་སུན་འབྱུང་ཕྱིར།

15 སྐྱེ་འཇིག་འབྱུང་ཕྱིར་བདག་མཐའ་ཡེ་ནས་མེད།

སྐྱིད་པོ་བདག་རིག་ཡོད་ན་དེ་ལྟ་འབྱུང་མི་རིགས།

ཚོལ་བས་འདི་ལ་བྱ་བ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

1 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 3 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version). 8 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version). 9 རྒྱལ་བའི། NKG 334.5 has *rgyas ba'i* (psych., gramm.). 10 དཀའ། NKG 334.6 has *dkal* (orth.). || ཚོད། NKG 334.6 has *mchod* (hom.). 11 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 12 མཐའ། NKG 334.6 has *mkhas* (psych., rec., alt.). || དེ་ལྟ་བུ། em. *de ltar bu* (orth.) 15 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version), 261 (D version).

“Since it transcends noise, resonance itself is wisdom”:²⁸

Since it is inexpressible in terms of locution, sound itself appears as wisdom.

“The luminosity of peace is primal and spontaneously present”:²⁹

Being free from the triad of grasper, grasped [and action], spontaneous wisdom
Is primordially thus; when one’s identity, established yet unestablished, [NKJ
388.1; NKG 334.4]

Changes, the principle of detachment does not change in the manner of an
object.

Therefore, being without grasping towards thoughts and appearances, there are
no changing indications.

“The wisdom of the Buddha is said to be without essence.”³⁰

As for the awakened mind of the Victorious One, its identity is free from exist-
ence, non-existence and their middle;

In order to get across³¹ that which is difficult to show, it is indicated thus.

“Unoriginated, uninvolved, without object and empty of sense-faculties,”³²

Like the sky,³³ in which there is no origination, no involvement and no object,
Such is the inherent wisdom of the Buddha.

The axiom of impermanence is to repudiate the view of a self:

“Since it occurs as something that is produced and is destroyed, the limitation
of a self is primordially absent.”³⁴

If there is awareness of a quintessential self, it is inappropriate for it to occur
like that.

Because there is no effortful action,

28 A variant of the line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

29 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version).

30 Variants of this line are found in the versions of the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 256 (M version), 261 (D version).

31 NKJ has *chod* (‘to get across’, ‘to deal with’, ‘to cover’; cf. *sa chod*), but NKG reads *mchod* (‘to worship’) instead.

32 Here we have an instance of intertextuality with another mind section text, the *rMad du byung ba*, in M, vol. 2/kha: 843.6, which shares this line. The line is quoted from that source in the SM 366; see Esler 2018: 286. For the line as found in the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

33 NKJ has *mkha’ la*, but NKG reads *mkhas la*; this would suggest a translation as follows: “For the sage there are no objects of origination and involvement.”

34 This line is found in the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version), 261 (D version).

།སྐྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་དང་བུལ་བས་ཆེ་བའི་མཚོག

།སྐྱ་ཚོགས་སྐྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་བདག་ཉིད་ལ།

།གསུམ་ཐོབ་ཚོལ་བས་དེ་བསྐྱོམ་བྱ་བྱེད་མེད།

།སྲུགས་དང་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་བུལ་ཡང་ཉམས་པ་མེད།

5 །མི་གཡོ་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་བསྐྱས་བཟློག་མེད་པའི་སྲུགས།

།དེ་ཉིད་བདག་ [389] ལ་སྐྱེད་བཟློག་ཉམས་མེད།

།ཕྱི་ནང་སྐྱོ་ཕྱགས་མེད་པས་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པ་ཉིད།

།བྱ་བྱེད་མེད་པས་བསྐྱོད་མེད་ཡུལ་བུལ་རྟེན་དང་བུལ།

།མཐའ་དབུས་ཀུན་དང་བུལ་བས་སྤིང་པོ་ཉིད།

10 །བརྒྱད་མཐར་ཐུག་དང་དབུམ་ཀུན་དངོས་མེད།

།འདི་ལ་འདིས་རིག་མེད་པས་དོན་བཅུད་ནི།

།བདེ་དང་མི་བདེ་མཉམ་པ་ཡི་ནས་མེད།

།ལོངས་སྤྱོད་སྲུག་བསྐྱུལ་བཟང་ངན་མ་འདྲིས་རྫོགས།

།དེ་ལ་དེ་འདྲར་ཡི་ནས་བརྟག་ཏུ་མེད།

15 །འཛིན་མེད་སྐྱོ་ནི་གང་དང་འང་མི་སྐྱེ་ན།

1 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version), 261 (D version). 4 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version: the end of the line is slightly different), 261 (D version). 7 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 9 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 12 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 15 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

“Being free from awakened body, speech and mind, it is supremely great.”³⁵
 As the integral identity of awakened body, speech and mind in their variety,
 The three are attained, yet there is neither the action nor agent of effortful meditation.

“Though free from spells and emblematic gestures, there is no impairment”:³⁶
 The unwavering emblematic gesture and the spell of the inexpressible incantatory repetition,
 Being in themselves free from appearance and expression, are unimpaired.
 [NKJ 389.1; NKG 335.3]

“Being without outer and inner, exterior and interior, it is extensive inwardness.”³⁷
 Being without action and agent, there is nowhere to travel, and one is free from objects and free from supports.

“Since it is free from the extremes and their middle, it is the quintessence”:³⁸
 All the eight limitations³⁹ and their middle are nonentities.
 Without the awareness of this and that,⁴⁰ in the elixir of absolute meaningfulness,

“Pleasure and displeasure are equal, primordially non-existent”:⁴¹
 Enjoyment and suffering, good and bad, are unmixed yet complete;
 They are primordially unexamined in terms of being this or that.
 “Without grasping, if the intellect is not produced,”⁴²

35 This line is quoted in the SM 349; see Esler 2018: 278. For the line as found in the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version), 261 (D version). Here we witness a further instance of intertextuality with the *rMad du byung ba*, in M, vol. 2/kha: 843.6, which shares several of these lines, though they are given in a different order; for a translation, see Guarisco 2013: 145.

36 This line is also quoted in the SM 349; see Esler 2018: 278. For the line as found in the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version: the end of the line is slightly different), 261 (D version). This line too is found in the *rMad du byung ba*, in M, vol. 2/kha: 843.7.

37 For the line as given in the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). Again, this line is shared with the *rMad du byung ba*, in M, vol. 2/kha: 843.6. It is quoted from that source in the SM 366; see Esler 2018: 286.

38 The line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

39 The eight limitations are production (*skye ba*), cessation (*’gog pa*), permanence (*rtag pa*), nihilism (*chad pa*), going (*gro ba*), coming (*’ong ba*), singularity (*don gcig*) and difference (*tha dad pa*). See Nor brang o rgyan 2008: vol. 2, 1848.

40 A more literal translation would be “without the awareness of this through that” (*’di la ’dis rig med pas*).

41 The line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

42 The line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

|མཉམ་པར་འཛོག་ཚེ་འདུ་ཤེས་ཡུལ་གང་ལ།

|འཇུག་པ་མེད་དེ་མེད་པ་ལེན་པ་འང་མེད།

|བྲལ་དང་མ་བྲལ་དངོས་མེད་གཟུང་དུ་མེད།

|དོན་ལ་མཐའ་དང་ཞེན་རྟོག་ཡོད་དང་མེད།

5 |སྒོམ་སྐྱར་འདི་འདྲར་མེད་ཕྱིར་དམིགས་གཟུང་མེད།

|དེ་ལ་དུག་གི་འཛིན་པ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་དོ

|ཐོས་མེད་མ་ཐོང་མེད་རེ་མེད་དོགས་པ་མེད།

|དོན་ལ་འདི་འདྲར་སྟོན་མེད་དབྱིངས་ལ་བཀྲ་བ་མེད།

|ཤེས་དང་ཐོབ་པའི་ཡུལ་མེད་གཡངས་ [390] མེད་དོ

10 |དུག་གི་སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་སྤངས་པ་རང་བྲལ་ལ།

|དག་དང་མ་དག་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚིག་མཐའ་བྲལ།

|མ་རིག་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐ་དད་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

|ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་སྐྱབས་སྤངས་པས་ཐ་སྐྱད་མཚོན་དུ་མེད།

|ཚིག་ཏུ་འཛིན་མེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཡེ་ནས་དབེན།

15 |སྤྲོ་ཚིག་རིག་ཕྱིར་ལྷགས་གོལ་སྒོམ་སྐྱར་མེད།

|ལྷ་སྟེགས་ལྟ་བུ་འང་མ་སྤངས་བྲལ་བ་སྟེན་ཕྱིར།

|རྟག་ཆད་འབྱེད་མེད་སྤྲང་སྤྲོད་ཀུན་མེད་དོ།

|རྟག་ཆད་གཉིས་གར་རང་སྤང་དེ་ལ་དེར་འཛིན་མེད།

|སྐྱེ་བོས་གཟུང་འཛིན་དེ་ལྟར་དེ་བཞིན་ནོ།

20 |དེ་དག་འདི་འདྲར་བརྟག་དཀའ་ཉིད་བས་བརྗོད་དཀའའི་ཕྱིར།

3 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 7 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). 11 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). 14 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). 17 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

When remaining in equipoise, there is no involvement
 In the objects of one's notions, nor is there any taking up this absence.
 "Free and unfree are nonentities, and there is nothing to grasp."⁴³

In absolute meaningfulness, limitations and discursive craving, existence and non-existence,
 Exaggeration and denigration are absent. Hence, there is nothing to grasp through referential imaging.

Since there is no grasping at these six,⁴⁴

"There is nothing to hear and nothing to see, nor is there hope and misgiving."⁴⁵
 Absolute meaningfulness cannot be taught, and phenomena's open dimension is without glitter.

There is no object to know or to attain, nor is there an abyss: [NKJ 390.1; NKG 336.2]

Relinquishing the objective scope of these six, one is intrinsically free from them.

"Pure and impure—wisdom is free from the limitations of words":⁴⁶

Since ignorance and wisdom are not different,

The cleansing of the obscurations cannot be indicated through designations in the state of wisdom.

"Without grasping at words, wisdom is primordially void":⁴⁷

Being aware of spoken words, one is liberated from their iron chains,⁴⁸ without exaggeration or denigration.

Since freedom from the heretical views is taught without relinquishing them, "Eternalism and nihilism are indistinguishable and totally absent from appearance-emptiness."⁴⁹

Intrinsic illumination, as both eternalism and nihilism, is without any grasping, So the person, including grasper and grasped, is just thus.

As they [i.e. persons] are difficult to examine, they are difficult to describe:

43 The line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

44 It is likely that this refers to the previously enumerated six items, viz. limitations and discursive craving, existence and non-existence, exaggeration and denigration.

45 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

46 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

47 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

48 This line refers to the fact that the practitioner remains aware of spoken words, yet without reacting to them—hence, the metaphor of being liberated from iron chains, these chains being the tendency to reify words into solid, graspable existents.

49 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

།དངོས་པོ་མེད་ཕྱིར་ཞི་བས་ཆད་པ་འང་མེད།

།རང་བྱུང་རྟགས་བྲལ་བྱུག་རྟུ་ཀུན་གཞིའི་ཕྱིར།

།ཆད་པར་འཛིན་གསུམ་ནམ་ཡང་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།

།ཀུན་ལ་བྱབ་པས་བདག་དང་བྲལ་བའོ།

5 །བསྐྱོས་མེད་ཀུན་སོན་གཏམ་ཚིགས་དོན་དེས་ན།

།བདག་ཉིད་རིས་སུ་བྱེ་བར་ཤིན་ཏུ་དཀའ།

།ཉིང་འཛིན་གོལ་སྐྱིབ་ངེས་པར་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

།ཉིང་འཛིན་ [391] ལྷུ་མས་སྦྱོད་པ་ལྷུ་མའི་ནད།

།དམིགས་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་མ་ནི་བསྐྱེད་ཀྱི།

10 །ཕྱི་ནང་སྐྱིབ་སྦྱོང་འདོད་པའི་ནད་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱབས།

།དེ་བས་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཆེ་བའི་ཆེན་པོའི་ཕྱིར།

།རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་དབང་ལ་མི་རྟེན་པས།

།རེ་ཞིང་དོགས་པའི་མཐའ་ཀུན་རྣམ་པར་ཞི།

།ཡེ་ཤེས་ཆེན་པོ་ཉིད་ལ་རག་ལུས་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

15 །རང་དབང་ཅན་འདྲར་ཀུན་ལ་དབང་སྐྱུར་ཡང་།

།སེམས་ཕྱིར་དམིགས་པའི་རྟེན་འཆང་མི་སྲིད་ཕྱིར།

།འཛིན་རྟོག་མེད་པས་རེ་དོགས་བརྒྱད་འཇམ་དཔལ།

།འོན་ཞི་འདོད་རེ་འབྱུང་ཐེ་ཚོམ་ཟའོ་ཞེ།

།ནམ་མཁའི་མཐའ་ཀུན་མེད་དེ་ཕྱོགས་མེད་ན།

20 །ཞི་དང་མ་ཞི་མེད་དེ་ཕྱོགས་རྣམས་བྲལ།

1 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version: reads *chags pa'ang med* instead of *chad pa'ang med*). 4 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). 8 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). 12–13 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version), 260 (D version). 19–20 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

“Since [the person] is a nonentity, it is pacified yet is not nil.”⁵⁰

Because the universal ground of pain is self-originated and free from insignia,
The threefold grasping at nihilism⁵¹ has never existed:

“All-pervading, it is free from a self.”⁵²

Without tainting anything, it is the universal seed; the meaning of this axiom
is that

It is veritably difficult to analyse selfhood.

In order to definitively show the deviations and obscurations pertaining to concentration,

“Engaging in illusory concentration is an illusory illness.”⁵³ [NKJ 391.1; NKG 337.1]

The mystic lady of referential imaging engages in deception:

Cleansing the outer and inner obscurations, one is obscured by the illness of desire.

Therefore, the greatness of Atiyoga is greater:

“As self-originated wisdom does not depend on any [outer] power,

All the limitations of hope and misgiving are utterly pacified.”⁵⁴

Since the greatness of wisdom is without pivoting on anything,

It is autonomous and wields power over all.

Since it is impossible for the mind to hold the supports of referential imaging,
There is no discursive grasping. Regarding the eight hopes and misgivings,⁵⁵ O

Mañjuśrī,

[It might be said,] well, if one desires peace, hope occurs and one doubts.

[It is replied that] “all limits are absent in space, and so there is no bias:

Since there is neither peace nor unrest, it is free from biased positions.”⁵⁶

50 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version). It reads *chags pa'ang med* instead of *chad pa'ang med*.

51 It is not quite clear what this threefold grasping at nihilism (*chad par 'dzin gsum*) refers to.

52 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 261 (D version).

53 A close variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

54 These two lines are quoted in the SM 436; see Esler 2018: 325. They are found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 255 (M version), 260 (D version).

55 This refers to the eight worldly phenomena (Skt. *aṣṭau lokadharmāḥ*): gain and no-gain, pleasure and suffering, praise and blame, fame and infamy. See Nāgārjuna 2007: 35.

56 These two lines are found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

།རང་བྱུང་བྱང་སེམས་མཁའ་ལྟར་ཐུག་མེད་ཕྱིར།

།སྒོམ་པའི་ཟུག་རྩུ་ཡོད་མེད་ཕྱོགས་རྩོལ་བལ།

།ཡེ་ནས་དག་དང་མ་དག་གང་ཡང་མེད།

།ཀྱུན་ནས་ཉོན་མོངས་རྣམ་པར་བྱང་བའི་ཚོས།

5 །གཉིས་མེད་ལྷན་གྲུབ་ཐ་སྙད་གཉིས་དང་བལ།

།ཞི་བས་སྒྲ་ [392] མེད་རྟོགས་པའི་མཐའ་ལས་འདས།

།ཟུག་རྩུ་མ་སྦངས་བལ་ཕྱིར་ཚིག་གིས་བརྗོད་དུ་མེད།

།དེ་བས་འདི་འདྲར་བསམས་པའི་ཡུལ་ལས་གྲོལ།

།མཐར་ཐུག་མེད་པས་ཁྱོན་དང་བལ་བས་འདས།

10 །མཐའ་རྣམས་ལྷན་གྲུབ་གང་གི་མ་དེག་ཕྱིར།

།མཐའ་དབུས་རྟོགས་པའི་སྒྲིད་ཡུལ་ཚད་ལས་འདས།

།དེ་ལ་རྟོག་དཔྱད་ཚད་མས་ཚོལ་འབྲུལ་ཕྱིར།

།ཚད་མས་གཟུང་ཕྱིར་འཛིན་པ་དེ་སྐྱེས་ཏེ།

།དེ་བས་མཚོན་བྱེད་སེམས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུད་ཁ་འཁོར།

15 །དོན་གྱི་གྲུབ་མཐའ་དེས་པར་ཉག་ཆེད་དུ།

།མཛོན་སུམ་རྗེས་དཔག་རྟོག་པས་དོན་ཚོལ་བ།

།སྒྲིགས་རྒྱུའི་ཚུལ་རྗེས་འཛིན་དེས་འཛོག་སྐྱེ།

།དེ་ཕྱིར་བརྩོན་རྟོག་རྩོལ་བའི་ལ་བརྒྱད་པས།

།བརྩོན་རྟོག་དཔྱད་དང་བལ་བའི་དོན་མི་ཆེད།

3 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). 6 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version: *thog ma* instead of *rtogs pa'i*). 13–14 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version: the first line differs), 260 (D version). 15 ཞི། em. *kyi* (gramm.)

Since the self-originated enlightened mind, like space, is untouched,
It is free from the biased effort regarding the existence or non-existence of painful elaborations.

“Primordially, there has never been purity or impurity”:⁵⁷

The phenomena of total afflictions and of utter refinement
Are non-dual, spontaneously free from dualistic designations.

“Being pacified, it is soundless, having transcended the limitations of comprehension.”⁵⁸ [NKJ 392.1; NKG 337.6]

Since it is free from pain without relinquishing it, it is inexpressible through words.

It therefore liberates from the objects of thinking.

Ultimately an absence, it transcends and is free from quantification.

Because it is spontaneously untouched by any limitations,

It transcends the criteria of the scope of comprehension relating to the extremes and their middle.

Since one is confused by searching with the criteria of examination and scrutiny,

“Grasping is produced because [the absolute] is grasped in terms of criteria.

Hence, one’s mental continuum is encircled by indicators.”⁵⁹

In order to definitively examine the tenets of absolute meaningfulness,

One searches for absolute meaningfulness discursively through actual perception and inference,

Only to certainly posit it as being like water in a mirage.

Therefore, one does not find absolute meaningfulness, which is free from perseverant examination and scrutiny,

Through the oral lineage of perseverant discursive striving.

57 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

58 A variant of the line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). The text reads *rtogs pa'i*, referring to ‘[ordinary] comprehension’, as opposed to ‘realization’ (which *rtogs pa* often, though not always, means). An alternative interpretation would be to take this to be a homophonic error for *rtog pa'i*, referring to ‘discursive [limitations]’, but Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin comments that here it seems unnecessary to emend the text. The variant in the NGB root text (D version) is *thog ma*, which, meaning ‘beginning’, is of little help.

59 These two lines are quoted in the SM 304; see Esler 2018: 253. They are found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version: the first line differs), 260 (D version).

ཉིང་འཛིན་གོལ་ས་རིམ་པར་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

ཉིང་འཛིན་བདེ་བའི་རོལ་ཆགས་གནས་པའོ།

འཇིག་རྟེན་བསམ་གཏན་གསུམ་པ་གོལ་བ་སྟེ།

ཡོད་མེད་རྒྱུ་ལ་མི་ [393] ལྟོས་ཚོས་ཉིད་ཡིན།

5 དེ་ལ་དེ་ཡོད་ཕྱིར་ན་མཐའ་ལྗོངས་གཉིས།

རྒྱུ་ལ་མི་ལྟོས་ཚོས་ཉིད་མཐོང་མ་ཡིན།

ཞི་བའི་ཉིང་འཛིན་སྤང་བ་མི་འདའ་ཡིས།

རྟོག་དང་འདུ་ཤེས་དག་ལྟ་ཞི་འདོད་པ།

ཉན་ཐོས་རང་རྒྱལ་མི་གནས་འདས་ཐོབ་མིན།

10 དབུ་མའི་ལྟ་བའི་གོལ་ས་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

རང་སེམས་མ་བཅོས་མ་སྦྱངས་ཚོས་ཉིད་དེ།

དགོས་པས་གདགས་སེམས་བརྗོད་ཀྱི་སེམས།

གསང་བའི་དབྱིངས་དེ་བྱས་མེད་གསལ་སྦྱངས་མེད།

གང་ཟག་རྒྱུ་མ་བཞི་དོན་བདེན་གཉིས་མེད།

15 དབུ་མ་དམན་རངས་བདེན་གཉིས་བསྟན་པ་ཡང་།

བདེན་བརྟན་ལྟན་ལྟབ་རང་ལས་རིས་ལྟ་མེད།

དེ་བས་བདག་དང་བསྐྱབ་པ་འདི་ལ་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན།

བག་ཅམ་གཏོང་སེམས་དེ་དག་གཡང་ས་ཆེ།

དབུགས་རྒྱའི་ཡུད་ཅམ་དོན་དམ་ཕྱོགས་འཇུག་པའི།

20 ལྟོང་མཐས་ལྗོངས་ཕྱིར་གཡང་ས་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆེ།

དོན་བྲལ་དེ་ལ་སེམས་མེད་ཆད་པའང་མེད།

དོན་དམ་མཚོག་ལྟ་མེད་ལ་དེ་ཡུལ་བྱེད་པའང་མེད།

2 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 260 (D version). 11 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). || མ་སྦྱངས། NKG (and NKM) has an erased *na ro*, indicating that *sbyongs* was corrected to *sbyangs*, as found in NKG 338.6. 14 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version). 20 ལྟོང་། NKG 339.3 has *stong* (psych.). 21 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

In order to gradually show the deviations in concentration,
 “There is abiding in attachment to the taste of concentration,”⁶⁰
 The deviation of the third worldly contemplation.⁶¹
 That which is not associated with the causes of existence or non-existence is
 reality-as-such. [NKJ 393.1; NKG 338.5]
 Because of existence, there is the dualistic experience of limitations, and
 Reality-as-such, which is not associated with causes, is not seen.
 Not transcending the concentration of pacification,⁶²
 One sees conceptions and notions as enemies, desiring peace:
 The auditors and independent buddhas do not obtain non-abiding transcend-
 ence (Skt. *apraṭiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa*).
 Being without the deviation of the view of Madhyamaka,⁶³
 “One’s own mind, uncontrived and uncleansed, is reality-as-such.”⁶⁴
 The mind of labelling and the mind of description are due to necessity,
 Yet the secret open dimension is uncreated; its clarity is without relinquishing.
 “The two truths pertaining to the provisional meaning of illusory individuals
 are non-existent”:⁶⁵
 Though the Madhyamaka teaches two truths to guide the lowly,
 In the state of spontaneity, there is no partial view regarding what is true and
 what is spurious.
 Therefore, there is neither self nor anything to accomplish.
 The mind that gives up for a while is a great abyss.
 Entering the direction of absolute truth for a breath’s fleeting second
 Is a downfall due to the limit of emptiness; hence, it is a veritably great abyss.⁶⁶
 “Free from any purpose, there is neither mind nor nihilism”:⁶⁷
 The supreme absolute truth in which views are absent is without objectifica-
 tion.

60 This line is from the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 260 (D version). It is quoted from the root text, along with several other lines, in the SM 432; see Esler 2018: 322.

61 On the deviations of the four contemplations seen from an Atiyoga perspective, cf. the SM 430, in Esler 2018: 321.

62 In the SM 431–433, this deviation is discussed under two headings, relating to the auditors and independent buddhas, respectively; see Esler 2018: 321–323.

63 Cf. the section concerning the deviation of the Madhyamaka in the SM 433–434, translated in Esler 2018: 323.

64 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

65 This line is quoted in the SM 366; see Esler 2018: 286. The line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version).

66 Cf. Inada 1993: 93 (translation of Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, ch. 13, v. 8).

67 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

།དེ་མེད་པས་ན་ཆད་པར་ [394] ལྷུང་བ་མེད།

།ཏིང་འཛིན་ཆེ་བའི་ལུང་དེ་དོན་བྲལ་ཆེ།

།ཏིང་འཛིན་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྣོ་སྣུང་མེད་པ་ལ།

།མི་རྟོག་ལེན་པ་མེད་པས་ཁྱད་པར་འཕགས།

5 །སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་པ་དེ་ཉིད་ཉན་པ་ཡིན།

།ལྷན་གྲུབ་ཇི་བཞིན་ཕྱོགས་སུ་སྐྱེ་མེད་པར།

།གོ་བ་གང་ཡིན་དེ་ཉིད་ཐོས་པའི་ཕུལ།

།སེམས་མེད་མ་སྐྱེས་དོན་མེད་བྲལ་བ་འང་མེད།

།དམིགས་ཡུལ་དེ་ལ་ཤེས་པ་པར་སྐྱེ་མེད།

10 །དེ་ལ་དོན་ལེན་མེད་པར་བདག་ཕྱིར་ལྷན།

།རྟོག་དཔྱད་ཚོལ་བ་མོས་པ་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

།དོན་ལ་མཚོན་པར་རྒྱལ་བས་གང་གསུངས་པ།

།མཚོན་ཅིང་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་དེ་ཉིད་དོ།

།ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣལ་འབྱོར་མཚོན་ཏུ་མེད་པའི་དོན།

15 །མིང་ཚིག་སྟོན་མས་དོན་གྱི་གསེར་འཚོལ་བ།

།ཚིག་གི་རྣམ་གྲངས་གསུང་གི་འཁོར་ལོ་ཅན།

།དེ་ལྟར་སྟོན་པས་གསུངས་པ་མཚོན་བྱ་བ།

།སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་རང་གོལ་སྤྲོ་བསམ་མེད་པ་ཡི།

།དོན་ཉིད་དེ་ལྟར་བསྟན་པས་བདུན་མཇལ་བྱེད།

20 །འོ་ན་དོན་མཚོན་གཟུང་འཛིན་ཡོད་དོ་ཞེ།

2 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 260 (D version). 5 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). || མེད་པ། NKG 339.5 has *med pa'i* (alt). 8 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version). 12–13 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 260 (D version). 15 རྒྱ] em. *kyi* (gramm.) 20 ཡོད་དོ། NKG 340.3 has *yong ngo* (visual).

Because it is an absence, there is no falling down into nihilism. [NKJ 394.1; NKG 339.4]

“The authoritative statement of great concentration is great freedom from all purpose.”⁶⁸

For the king of concentration, being without exaggeration and denigration, There is no taking up non-discursiveness, to which he is superior.

“It is the birthless which is listened to.”⁶⁹

Spontaneous presence, just as it is, is without directional birth.

Whatever is understood is exquisite hearing.

“The absence of mind is unborn; it is purposeless, yet without being free from [purpose].”⁷⁰

For referential objects, there is no cognition that is born thither.

In this regard, without taking up a purpose, one is oneself re-endowed with [purpose].

In order to teach those with a predilection towards searching through examination and scrutiny,

“Whatever the Victorious One declares to indicate absolute meaningfulness, That is the indicated and should be realized.”⁷¹

In Atiyoga the meaning is without indicating, yet

The gold of the meaning is sought with the lamp of names and words,

So verbal enumerations are the wheeled vehicle of awakened speech;⁷²

Thus, what the Teacher declares is the indicated:

Its objective scope self-liberated, it is unspeakable and unthinkable—

By thus teaching absolute meaningfulness, it is encountered symbolically.

[It might be said,] well, if the meaning can be indicated, grasped and grasped are there.

68 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 260 (D version).

69 A variant of this line is found in the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

70 This line is found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 260 (D version).

71 These two lines are found in the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 260 (D version).

72 A close variant of these two lines is found in the *rTse mo byung rgyal*, in M, vol. 1/ka: 612.1–2; Valby 2014: 6–7 (English translation), 41 (commentary). The line is quoted from that source in the SM 13; see Esler 2018: 37 (translation), 404 (critical edition).

མཉམ་དང་མི་མཉམ་ནམ་མཁའ་ལས་འདས་པ། [395]

ནམ་མཁའ་མེད་པས་ནམ་མཁའ་ཁྲབ་པ་མེད།

ཁ་བཟང་དན་མཐོན་དམན་ཡོད་མེད་ལྷན་རྒྱུགས་སེམས།

མཁའ་ལྟར་ཡིན་མིན་སྟོང་བ་མཐའ་ལས་འདས།

5 མཁའ་ལྟར་འདི་འདྲ་མེད་པས་འདི་ལ་འདིས་ཁྲབ་མེད།

དེ་ཉིད་མཚོན་པས་འདི་ཞེས་མི་རུས་སོ།

ཁ་ཤད་པ་འཛིན་ཏེ་དཔེ་དང་ཚིག་གིས་ཀྱང་ཏོ།

ཇི་བཞིན་སྐྱེ་ལྟར་དོན་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན་གྱིར།

ཚིག་མེད་ཚིག་ཀྱན་སྐྱེ་མེད་ཚིག་དང་བྲལ།

10 ཚིག་ཀྱན་ལྷན་རྒྱུགས་ཡོད་མེད་འདི་འདྲར་དཀའ།

དེ་བས་དེ་མཚོན་དབྱེས་མེད་དེས་རེག་མེད།

ལྟ་སྦྱོང་གོལ་ས་འདི་ལ་མེད་པའི་གྱིར།

དགོ་སྒྲིག་སྒྲིང་པོ་མེད་དེ་དབྱས་མཐའ་ཀྱན་དང་བྲལ།

ཁ་བཟང་དང་བཟུང་བྲལ་བ་སྐྱོམ་གཉིས་སོ།

15 རང་བྱུང་ངལ་བསྐྱོམ་མེད་སྐྱིན་པའང་མེད།

དེ་བས་བྲལ་དང་མ་བྲལ་ཕྱོགས་ཐུག་མེད།

དབང་པོ་རང་གི་སློ་མེད་སྦྱོང་ཡུལ་བྲལ།

1-2 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). 6 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). 9 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version: a more distant parallel), 259 (D version). 13 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version: a more distant parallel), 259 (D version). 15 བསྐྱོམ་མེད། em. *bsgor med* (orth.) 17 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version).

[It is replied that] “space transcends equality and non-equality; [NKJ 395.1; NKG 340.3]

Since space is an absence, there is nothing that pervades the sky.”⁷³

Good and bad, high and low, existence and non-existence, are spontaneously complete in the mind:

Like the sky, it transcends the effortful limitations of being and non-being;

Like space, it is an absence, and there is no entailing this or that—

“Indicating it, one is incapable of saying: ‘It is this.’”⁷⁴

While explaining it, even though [one uses] examples and words,

The locutions are not what is meaningful; hence,

“Wordless, all words are soundless and free from words.”⁷⁵

All words have difficulty with spontaneous completeness since they [describe it] as existent or non-existent.

That is why, when it is indicated, it is without vowels⁷⁶ and untouched by them.

Since there are no deviations of the view and conduct,

“There is no quintessence with regard to virtues and sins, and one is free from a centre and from all limits.”⁷⁷

The ten [virtues] and their ten effects are two aspects.

I, the self-originated, am without meditation⁷⁸ and without ripening.

I am therefore untouched by the positions of being free and unfree.

“Without the intellect that is intrinsic to the sense-faculties, one is free from their objective scope.”⁷⁹

73 These two lines are found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version).

74 This line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version).

75 This line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version: a more distant parallel), 259 (D version).

76 Vowels (*dbyangs*; Skt. *svara*) are that which permits distinct articulation. Their absence here signifies that spontaneous completeness defies description. The Sanskrit term *asvara* can signify ‘indistinct’; cf. Monier-Williams 2001: 124.

77 A variant of this line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version: a more distant parallel), 259 (D version).

78 I take *bsgor med*, which does not readily make sense, to be an error for *bsgom med*.

79 This line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 341; see Esler 2018: 273.

།རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚེན་པོའི་ཚོགས་གཅིག་པོ།

།ཀུན་མཁུན་ཕྱིར་ན་ཤེས་རབ་སྐྱུན་མཚོག་ཡིན།

།ཡུལ་མེད་སྐྱུ་མ་ཡུལ་ལ་སྐྱུད་པས་འབྲུལ།

།ཉལ་སྐྱོད་སྐྱོད་ [396] ཡུལ་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པ་ལ།

5 །ཤེས་ཡུལ་འབྱེད་ནམས་གཟུང་འཛིན་གཙོ་བོ་ཡིན།

།ཚོག་ཉིད་མེད་དེ་ཚོག་ཕྱིར་འབྲང་བ་མེད།

།མཚོན་བྱེད་མེད་པས་དེ་ཕྱིར་འབྲང་བ་མེད།

།ནམ་མཁར་མི་གཅིག་པ་ཡང་དམིགས་སུ་མེད།

།གཅིག་གི་མཐའ་ནི་སྐྱོན་ཕྱིར་མི་གཅིག་དོན།

10 །མཚོག་ཏུ་དམིགས་སུ་སྐྱར་མེད་ཡུལ་དང་བྲལ།

།ནམ་མཁའ་མཚོན་ཉིད་ཀུན་ལས་རབ་འདས་པ།

།མེད་པས་ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་ཡང་ནམ་མཁའ་མེད།

།བསམ་གཏན་གཅིག་དང་དུ་མ་གང་དུ་འང་མི་སེམས་ཏེ།

།ཚོས་ཉིད་ནམ་མཁའ་ཇི་བཞིན་ཉིད་མེད་པ།

15 །མེད་པ་ཉིད་མིན་འདི་ལྟར་མཁའ་ལ་བསམ་མེད་འབྲའང།

།འོན་བསྐྱོམ་དུ་མེད་པར་དང་དུ་སྒང་དོན།

།ནམ་མཁའ་དེ་ཉིད་བསྐྱོམ་དུ་མེད་པ་སྟེ།

།ནམ་མཁའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཡུལ་དངོས་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

།བརྗོད་མེད་ནམ་མཁའ་བསྐྱོམ་དུ་མེད་ལས་འདས།

20 །བསྐྱོམ་མེད་བདག་ཕྱིར་དེ་ཡུལ་བྱེད་པའང་མེད།

།འོན་འདོད་པ་ཡུལ་དུ་བྱ་ཞེན།

།འདས་པ་བརྗོད་དུ་མེད་དེ་མི་གནས་ན།

།བསྐྱོམ་དུ་ [397] མེད་ལས་པ་ལོལ་འགྱུར་ན་དེ་ལྟ་སྟེ།

3 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version). 6 For the NGB root text, cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 259 (D version). 11–12 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version: first line only), 259 (D version). 17 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). 19 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version).

The only accumulation is that of the great self-originated wisdom;
Since it is all-knowing, it is the supreme eye of acumen.⁸⁰

“Since objects are non-existent, one is confused by engaging in illusory objects”:⁸¹

For the non-dual scope of the view and conduct, [NKJ 396.1; NKG 341.2]

The knowable objects that are analysed are chiefly grasped and grasper.

“The wordless is without following after words”:⁸²

Since it is without indicators, it does not follow after them.

In the sky, there is no referentially imaging that which is not one,

Yet since the limitation of oneness is a flaw, its meaning is not one;

In the supreme sense, it cannot be referentially spoken of and is free from objects.

“Space verily transcends all characteristics:

Being non-existent, even the sky is spaceless.”⁸³

In contemplation, one does not think in terms of singularity and multiplicity.

Reality-as-such, just like the sky, is non-existent;

Not being a sheer absence, the sky is without thoughts.

[It might be said,] in that case, this is taking up non-meditation.

[It is replied that] “the sky is without anything on which to meditate”:⁸⁴

Since for sky-like wisdom, objects are nonentities,

“Inexpressible, space transcends non-meditation.”⁸⁵

Since one’s identity is non-meditation, there is no objectifying.

It might be said, well, that is objectifying one’s desires.

[It is replied that] in non-abiding inexpressible transcendence,

One goes beyond even non-meditation: [NKJ 397.1; NKG 342.1]

80 The eye of acumen is one among five eyes, which comprise (1) the eye of flesh, (2) the eye of clairvoyance, (3) the eye of acumen, (4) the eye of the doctrine and (5) the eye of the Buddha. Its particular function is to realize the selflessness of all phenomena. See Nor brang o rgyan 2008: vol. 1, 1136.

81 A close variant of this line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version).

82 A variant of this line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 254 (M version), 259 (D version).

83 These two lines are found at the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version: first line only), 259 (D version). They are quoted in the SM 415; see Esler 2018: 313.

84 This line is found at the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 415; see Esler 2018: 313.

85 This line is found at the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 259 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 415; see Esler 2018: 313.

འདིལ་བྱ་བྱེད་མེད་པས་དེལ་རྟེན་མི་འཆའ།

དེའི་ཕྱིར་ན་རྟོག་པ་གཉིས་བྲལ་ཕྱིར།

ནམ་མཁའི་ལུས་མེད་ནམ་མཁའི་སེམས་དང་བྲལ།

མཁའ་འདྲའི་ཚོས་ཉིད་གཞི་མེད་དམིགས་པ་མེད།

5 བསམ་པ་ཀུན་བྲལ་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་དེ་དོག།

ནམ་མཁའི་བསྐྱོམ་པས་ཐོབ་མེད་འབྲས་བུའི་ཕྱིར།

ནམ་མཁའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཡི་ཤེས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱུ།

མཁའ་གསལ་བདག་ཉིད་མ་འདྲེས་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་སྐྱུ།

ཚོས་ཉིད་བསམ་དུ་མེད་པས་ནམ་མཁའ་ཆེ།

10 མཁའ་ལ་མཁའ་ཡིས་བསམ་མེད་ཇི་བཞིན་པས།

ནམ་མཁའ་བསམ་པ་དེ་དག་ཀུན་དང་བྲལ།

རང་རིག་མཁའ་ལ་རིག་པས་བསམ་དང་བྲལ།

དེལ་རང་བཞིན་གནས་པའི་མཐུར་ལྷན་པས།

བསམ་དུ་མེད་པས་ནམ་མཁའ་དེ་ཉིད་འབྱུང་།

15 དེ་ཉིད་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྷན་གྲུབ་ཀུན་དོས་ཕྱིར།

བསམ་པ་མེད་པས་མ་བསྐྱལ་རྟོག་སངས་ལྟར།

ཡོན་ཏན་རྣམ་གྲངས་དང་བསམ་རང་ཉིད་འཆར།

ཐོབ་པ་མེད་པའང་འདོད་པའི་རྣོམ་སེམས་བྲལ། [398]

རང་དོན་ཆེན་པོར་ནམ་ཀ་དེ་ཉིད་འབྱུང་།

20 ལྲོལ་ནས་ལྲོལ་བའི་ལམ་ཡང་སྟོན།

སྟོས་པ་མེད་དང་ཡོད་པ་ཀུན་བྲལ་རྒྱབ་པ་ཡི།

དོན་མཚོག་ངང་གསལ་མི་གཡོ་སེམས་ཆེན་པོ།

3 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). 7 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version). 9 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). 11 For the NGB root text, see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). 19 རྣམ་ཀ། iso. *nam mkha'* (arch.). See rNam rgyal tshe ring 2001: 281.

Since there is neither action nor agent, there is no support.
 Being thus free from dualistic conceptions,
 “The sky has no body; the sky is free from mind.”⁸⁶
 Reality-as-such, sky-like, is groundless and without referential imaging:
 Free from all thoughts, its essence is omniscience.
 Since the fruition is that there is nothing to obtain through sky-like meditation,
 “The king of space is the wisdom body of reality.”⁸⁷
 The clarity of space is the unmixed integral identity, the awakened body of thorough completeness.
 “Since reality-as-such is without thoughts, it is the greatness of space”:⁸⁸
 Just as the sky is without thoughts about the sky,
 “Space is free from all thoughts.”⁸⁹
 Intrinsic awareness, aware of space, is free from thoughts:
 Endowed with the force of abiding naturally,
 It is without thoughts and occurs like the sky itself.

Since it is the paradigm of spontaneously present qualities,
 It is without thoughts and does not quiver, like the dispelling of what sullies.
 The series of its qualities being limpid, they arise of themselves.
 Though there is nothing to obtain, one is free from the conceit of desire.
 [NKJ 398.1; NKG 342.6]
 Space itself arises as one’s own purpose.
 Being liberated, one shows the path of liberation.
 Free from all the elaborations of non-existence and existence, such is the consummation:
 The great mind is unwavering clarity in the state of supreme meaningfulness.

86 This line is found towards the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version).

87 This line is found at the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version).

88 This line is found at the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 415; see Esler 2018: 313.

89 This line is found at the beginning of the NGB root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 253 (M version), 259 (D version). It is also quoted in the SM 415; see Esler 2018: 313.

མ་ནོར་དགོངས་པའི་ཡང་ཉིག་མན་ངག་འགྲེལ།
 །དོ་རྗེ་གཟོང་ཕུགས་མ་འོངས་སྐྱུན་གྱུར་ཅིག།

ཤམ་ཅོཅུ་གསལ་བ་རྒྱལ། །ཉིག་འགྲེལ་ལྗོགས་སོ།
 །ཡང་དབང་གཉེར་གྱིས་མཛད། །དོ་རྗེ་གཟོང་ཕུགས་དཔེ་ལས་བཏགས། །།

This commentary on the pith instructions concerning the very nub of the
unmistaken intent

Is an *Adamantine Piercing Awl*; may it become an eye for those in future
times!⁹⁰

The commentary by Ācārya Salwagyal (gSal ba rgyal)⁹¹ is hereby completed.
It was made by Yang Wangter and labelled according to the exemplar of the
Adamantine Piercing Awl.

90 This is reminiscent of a formulation found in the SM 499; see Esler 2018: 368.

91 On this master, also known as Prakāśālamkāra (gSal ba'i rgyan), see Esler 2014: 10.

rTse mo byung rgyal 'grel pa (TBG)

[References: *rTse mo byung rgyal 'grel pa*, in NKJ, vol. 103/pe: 179–230. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 93/ge: 179–230. Computer input version (based on NKJ via NKM) in NKG, vol. 98/nye: 159–200.]

༄༅། །རྩོམ་བྱུང་རྒྱལ་འགྲེལ་བ་བཞུགས་སོ། །

[180] །མན་ངག་གི་ཡི་གེ་རྣམས་ནི་སྦྱི་དོན་ལྡན་བཤད་པ་བརྩམ་པར་བྱས་པ་བཞིན། །འདིར་
 །འཆད་དེ། །ལོ་རྒྱུས་དང་པོ་སེམས་ཉིད་སྟོན་པའི་བྲིན་བརྒྱབས་བརྒྱད་པའོ། །རང་གི་དོ་བོས་བཤད་པ་
 །ནི། །སངས་རྒྱས་སེམས་ཅན་དང་མཁའ་དྲུལ་ཡན་ཆད་ཀྱན་གྱིས་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་རྟོགས་པ་ཅན་ལ་
 5 །ལྷག་གི་ལྷང་དེ་ལྷན་ནེར་སྟོན་པར་བྱེད་པར་མན་ངག་གི་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་སྟོན་པར་གྱུར་པའོ། །གསུམ་པ་
 །ནི་ཤོ་ལོ་ཀ་རྩལ་བཅུ་ཅུ་བརྒྱད་པ་བཀོད་དེ་བསྟན་པས་ཁུངས་ཀྱིས་ཡིད་ཆེས་པར་འགྱུར་བའོ། །དོན་
 །གཅིག་ཏུ་བྲིལ་པའི་ [181] །ཕྱིར་བམས་ཅད་ལྷན་གྱིས་སྲུབ་པས་ཐེག་པའི་ཡང་རྩེར་སྟོན་ཏོ། །ཕྱོགས་
 །མཐུན་པར་བྱ་བའི་ཕྱིར་ཨ་ཏི་ཡོ་གར་སྟོན་ཏོ། །དགོས་ཆེད་སྐལ་བ་དང་སྦྱོང་དུ་ལྡན་པ་ཡང་རབས་ཀྱི་
 །ཕྱིར་རོ། །ཚིག་གི་དོན་བསྡུ་ན་མཚོན་པ་དང། །སྦྱང་དང་ཚོད་དང་གཞུང་དང་གསུམ་གྱིས་སྟོན་ཏོ།
 10 །བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་དཔལ་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་ལ་ལྷག་འཚལ་ལོ།
 །ཞེས་པ། །སྟོན་པ་ལ་མཚོན་པ་སྟེ། །ཡི་ཤེས་རྗེ་རྗེས་ཞེན་པ་རྩད་ནས་བཅད།
 །མ་བརྩམ་ [182] །ཀུན་རྗེ་གས་སྤྲོ་བསམས་བལ།

7 །གཅིག་ཏུ། em. *gcig du* (gramm.); see NKM 180.4 and NKG 160.3. 9 །རྩོད། em. *chod* (cod.); see NKG 160.5. 12 །མ་བརྩམ།] This initial stanza is by the author of the commentary and not part of the root text.

Commentary on the Victorious Peak (TBG)

Commentary on the *Victorious Peak*.¹

[NKJ 180.1; NKG 160.1] Having undertaken to explain the written words of the pith instructions through the fivefold general meaning, it is explained that first is the history, i.e. the lineage of the blessings of the Teacher of mind-as-such. [Secondly,] the explanation relating to one's essence: the enlightened mind is revealed by all the Buddhas and sentient beings, up to the dust particles in space, to those with realization as conspicuous, obvious and still; it is taught as the suchness of the pith instructions. Thirdly, one can trust the source since it is taught in an array of sixty-eight stanzas (Skt. *śloka*). [Fourthly,] because it condenses the single meaning, [NKJ 181.1; NKG 160.3] everything is spontaneously accomplished, so it is taught as the pinnacle vehicle. [Fifthly,] because it is conducive, it is taught as Atiyoga. Therefore, it is for those of outstanding [faculties] who are endowed with the requirements and who are fortunate vessels.

In summarizing the meaning of the words, one teaches the **eulogy**,² the **vessels and their measure**,³ and the **basic text**, these three.

Homage to the Hallowed One, the glorious Samantabhadra of great bliss.

This is the eulogy of the Teacher. Through [his] wisdom diamond, craving is eradicated.

Without striving, there is total completeness, free from speaking and thought.⁴ [NKJ 182.1; NKG 161.1]

1 Critical edition of the root text (the *rTse mo byung rgyal*) in Liljenberg 2012b: 236–252; for a translation, see Liljenberg 2012b: 160–176.

2 Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin comments that *mchod* needs to be understood in the sense of *mchod brjod*, meaning 'eulogy'.

3 NKJ appears to read *chod*, but this does not readily make sense; NKG corrects this to *tshod*.

4 This initial stanza is not part of the root text but is by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe. It comments on the homage just above.

|གདོད་ནས་ཉེས་བྲལ་ཅིར་ཡང་སྤང་།
 |དངོས་ཀྱི་དབང་མཛད་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ཆེ།
 |ཅིར་སྤང་ཅིར་སྲིད་མ་བསྐྱོས་པ།
 |ཀྱུན་རྗེས་ཀྱི་བྲལ་སྤྱོད་ལྷུལ་དག།
 5 |དེ་ཉིད་གཞིར་གྱུར་གང་མཇལ་བས།
 |མ་ལོར་ལྷུང་ལྷགས་གྲུས་པའི་མཚོག།
 |ཅེས་བྱ་བའི་དོན་ཏོ།

|མན་དག་ལ་འདུད་པ་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།
 བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་དཔལ་བདེ་ཆེན་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་ཐུགས།

10 |སྤྱོད་ཆོགས་ཀྱི་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་དོ་རྗེ་སེམས།
 |དབྱིངས་དང་ཡི་ཤེས་འདུ་འབྲལ་མེད་པའི་གསུང།
 |རྣམ་དག་བྱང་རྒྱུ་སེམས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།

|ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པའི་སྟོན་པའི་ཐུགས་རང་བྱུང་བའི་ཡི་ཤེས་རྣམ་པའི་མཚོག་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་
 དོ་བོ་ནི། ཆོས་སོ་ཅོག་སྟིང་པོའི་དོན་ལས་མ་འདས་པས་སྐྱེ་འཇིག་དང་བྲལ་བར་གསལ་བས་རྩོལ་བ་
 15 བ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་སྟོན་པ་རྣམ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་ཟབ་མོ་དབྱིངས་དང་ཡི་ཤེས་འབྱེད་པའི་རྩོལ་བ་
 དང་བྲལ་བས་སྐྱོ་སྐྱར་མེད་པའི་ལུང་ [183] ལྷན་གྲིས་གྲུབ་པའི་གསུང་དང་གིས་སྤྱོས་པ་གསུམ་
 དང་འབྲལ་བར་གདོང་གིས་མཇལ་ཅིང་རྣལ་འབྱོར་གྲིས་ལྷུངས་སུ་གྱུར་པའོ།
 |སྤྱོད་དང་དགོས་ཆེད་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

1 གདོད་ནས་] em. 'dod nas (hom.)

It is originally⁵ free from fault, appearing anywhere.
 It appears as whatever is desired, free from fault.
 Dominating all entities, it is great enjoyment.
 Untainted by whatever appears and exists,⁶
 Its pure scope is totally complete, yet free from everything.
 When one encounters the ground,
 One enters the unmistakable stream, which is a supreme [mark of] respect.

In order to show⁷ reverence for the pith instructions,

To the Hallowed One, the all-knowing awakened mind of glorious great
 bliss;
 To the variety of phenomena as Samantabhadra-Vajrasattva;
 To the awakened speech that is the symbiosis of the open dimension
 and wisdom:
 Homage to the enlightened mind of utter purity.

The awakened mind of the Teacher of these explanations has the essence of omniscience, the supreme aspect of self-originated wisdom. Without bypassing the quintessential absolute meaningfulness of all phenomena, there is clarity free from birth and destruction. The Teacher free from effort [bestows] the two types of profound teaching, free from the effort of distinguishing the open dimension and wisdom, the authoritative statement without exaggeration and denigration. [NKJ 183.1; NKG 162.1] The spontaneously present awakened speech is inherently free from the three elaborations.⁸ Encountering it with confidence, *yogins* enter the stream.

In order to show the vessels and requirements,

5 Here I take 'dod nas to be a homophonic error for gdod nas.

6 Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin comments that these four lines appear to refer to the three awakened bodies, with the first two lines signifying the body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*), the third line signifying the enjoyment body (Skt. *sambhogakāya*) and the fourth line signifying the emanation body (Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*).

7 The expression 'in order to show' (*bstan pa'i phyir*) is used repeatedly to introduce a passage from the root text. On this expression and its usage in a similar context, cf. Liljenberg 2012a: 142 and n. 47.

8 Valby 2014: 14, n. 16 suggests: the object of homage, the one who pays homage and the action of paying homage. According to Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, this could even refer to the elaborations of the three awakened bodies, in the sense of grasping towards them as separate identities, when in fact they are three dimensions of a single reality.

སྲོན་ཚེ་འདས་པའི་སྐལ་པ་མཐའ་རིངས་ནས།
 །འབྲུལ་འཁོར་སྐྱེན་ཚོངས་མདོངས་པའི་འགྲོ་བ་རྣམས།
 །ང་དང་བདག་བཅས་མཚན་མས་བཅིངས་པ་ཡིས།
 །ལམས་གསུམ་རྒྱུད་ལས་འཁོར་བའི་འགྲོ་དོན་པ།

5 །ཞེས་པ། རྩམ་མོང་གི་དགོས་ཚེད་འཆད་དེ། ཚུམ་པ་མེད་པའི་དུས་ནས་ཤེས་པ་ནོར་བས་འབྲུམས་
 ཤིང་མ་རིག་པས་ལྷ་བ་དང་བུལ་བ་དུག་པོ་ཀུན་རྩ་བའི་རྟོགས་པས་ཞགས་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་ཟེན་ཅིང་
 སྲོང་ཁྱེད་གསུམ་དུ་བར་མ་ཆད་པར་ཡང་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཆེད་དུ་བཀའ་སྣུལ་ཏེ།
 །འོ་ན་ཀུན་གྲང་མན་ངག་གི་སྲོད་དུ་ཐལ་བར་འགྱུར་འོ་བར་དགོས་པ་ལ།
 སྤྱིགས་མའི་དོན་ལས་གདམས་པའི་གསུང་མཚོག་འདི།

10 །རྒྱལ་སྤྱས་གང་འདོད་དབང་ཕྱུག་སྐལ་ལྷན་ལ།
 །ལྷགས་རྗེའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཕྱད་འབྲུང་བསམ་ཡས་པ།
 །རྣལ་འབྱོར་བྱི་རབས་དོན་དུ་གསུངས་པ་ཡིས།
 །སྐལ་བཟང་སྲོད་ལྷན་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣལ་འབྱོར་དོན།

15 །ཞེས་པ། དམན་པའི་དོན་དུ་གསུངས་པ་དག་ལས་ཁྱད་པར་དུ་བརྒྱགས་པའི་བཀའ་ངེས་པའི་ལུང་
 འདིན། [185] །ཁྱད་པར་གྱི་དགོས་ཚེད་རྒྱུད་དུ་འབྲུང་ངེས་པ་འདི་ལ་མོས་པ་ལ་བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོར་
 མངའ་བརྟེས་པའི་ཀུན་བཟང་རྗེ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔའ་ལས་འཕྲོ་མཚོག་དང་ལྷན་པ་དག་ལ་རང་བྱུང་གི་
 ཡེ་ཤེས་སྐྱེན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པས་རྒྱ་མེད་པའི་བྱིན་རྒྱབས་སྣང་བར་མཛད་དེ་མ་འོངས་པའི་ཆེད་དུ་བཀའ་

2 མདོངས་པའི] em. *mdongs ba'i* (gramm.) 8 འགྱུར་འོ་བར] This construction seems ungrammatical, but attempting a correction would be hazardous. 15 འདིན།] Page 184 is an auspicious blank page: *bkra shis ngos dkar*/.

From aeons of yore, so long ago,
 Blind wanderers, dull and fooled by the mechanisms of confusion,
 Bound by the signs of I and self—
 For the purpose of these wandering beings cycling in the continua of
 the three realms ...

The common requirements are explained:

Cognition has been roaming mistakenly from time without beginning: due to ignorance, i.e. being free from the view, and due to discursive comprehension, which is at the root all six [continua of becoming], [sentient beings] are seized by a twofold noose and are uninterruptedly born in the three cities⁹—this is declared for them.

In that case, if you assert the purported requirement that in consequence all are vessels for this pith instruction, [it is replied,]

During the age of degeneration, this supreme awakened speech of the
 instructions—
 Which to those fortunate heirs of the Victorious One, who are omnipotent over whatever they desire,
 Is an infinite and amazing configuration of compassion—
 Has been spoken for the purpose of future generations of *yogins*.
 The meaning of the Apex Yoga is for these vessels of good fortune.

These authoritative statements regarding the definitive injunctions, being superior to that which is declared for the purpose of the lowly, should be borne in mind.¹⁰ [NKJ 185.1; NKG 163.1]

The special requirements occur continually; for those with a predilection towards certainty, Samantabhadra-Vajrasattva has obtained mastery over integral being. For those who are supremely predestined, self-originated wisdom is spontaneously present, so they are illuminated by matchless blessings; this is proclaimed for the sake of those of future times.

9 This refers to the three realms, viz. the realm of desire (Skt. *kāmadhātu*), the form realm (Skt. *rūpadhātu*) and the formless realm (Skt. *ārūpyadhātu*).

10 Here NKJ 184 inserts an auspicious blank page (*bkra shis ngos dkar*). The blank page is simply due to a printing error, and the auspicious expression has been added lest readers of the volume might think that something is missing.

སྤྱུལ་པས། ལམ་མཚོག་གི་སྐལ་བ་ཡོད་ཅིང་སྦྱོན་བཞི་སྤངས་པ་ལ་ཐེག་མཚོག་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་
པའི་ཏིང་པོ་འཛིན་གཟའ་གཏད་དང་རེ་དོགས་མེད་པའི་ཤེས་བྱ་དམ་པ་གནང་བ་བྱིན་པ་ནི།

ལྷན་གྲུབ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་རྫོགས་དབང་དམ་ཚོག་ཅན།

།སྲ་མའི་མན་ངག་སྦྱན་ཁུང་ཐུགས་བརྒྱད་པ།

5 །དད་ཅན་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཐུགས་དང་འབྲ་རྣམས་ཁྱེད།

།ཞེས་པ། རོར་བུ་རིན་ཆེན་ལྷ་སུའི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ཚོས་སོ་ཅོག་གི་དངོས་གཞི་དབང་ཐུག་ཆེན་པོའི་
ཐེག་པ་འདི། ཁུངས་ཀྱི་དབང་ལུང་ཐོབ་ཅིང་བསྐྱེད་བ་ཀྱན་དང་ལྷན་པ་དུས་ལ་བབ་པས། སྦྱན་ཁུང་
བརྒྱད་པའི་མན་ངག་བརྒྱལ་མི་དགོས་པ་འདི་རྒྱལ་བ་རྣམས་དགོངས་པར་བརྒྱད་པའི་དོན་ལ་ཤིན་
ཏུ་མོས་པས་ཟང་ཟིང་དང། སྤོག་ལ་ [186] མི་ལྷ་ཞིང་འདི་ཡོད་པར་མེ་མར་སྐྱར་གྱི་འོབས་དང་སྦྱ་
གྱི་སོའང་བརྒྱལ་ཏུས་པའི་སྦྱེས་བུ་རྒྱལ་བ་ཉིད་དང་མཚུངས་པ་རྣམས་ལ་གནང་བ་ཅུལ་བའོ།

10

།དམི་མན་ངག་གི་གཞུང་ལ་བབ་པ་སྟེ། དེས་པ་བདུན་གྱིས་ཆེ་བ་བསྦྱན་པ་ལས་ཀྱང་བཀའ་འདི་
ལུང་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཡིན་པ་དེས་པར་བསྦྱན་པའི་བྱིར།

སྐྱ་དང་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཡོན་ཏན་ཐིན་ལས་ཀྱི།

།ཐུགས་ཀྱི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཡོན་ཏན་སྦྱོ་ཕྱེ་ནས།

15

།བདེར་གཤེགས་དཔལ་གྱི་མགུར་ནས་གསུང་བསྐྱགས་པ།

།གསང་སྤྱགས་དབང་ཐུག་རྣལ་འབྱོར་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཡིན།

།ཞེས་པ། གནང་བའི་དོན་དངོས་ནི་ལྷ་སོགས་གངས་ལས་འདས་པའི། ལྷན་གྲུབ་ཀྱི་སྦྱ་གསུང་
ཐུགས་ཡོན་ཏན་ཐིན་ལས་ཀྱིས་སྦྱིང་པོར་གྱུར་པས། ཀྱན་རྫོགས་པ་ནི་མཛོད་དམ་པ་སྟེ། གཏུལ་བྱ་
ལ་སྤང་བ་མི་འགོག་པས་ཚོག་ཏུ་བཀའ་སྦྱལ་པར་སྤང་བ་ནི། རྒྱལ་ཐབས་སྦྱི་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་དོན་རེག་

2 རེདོགས། em. *re dgos* (cod., psych.); see NKG 163.3.

The sacred point which is to be known is the spontaneously present concentration of the supreme vehicle without thematic focus and without hope and misgiving,¹¹ which is imparted to those having the fortune of the supreme path and having relinquished the four defects:

The hearing lineage of the awakened mind, the pith instructions of the master
 Possessing the pledges and complete empowerments of spontaneously present enlightenment,
 Will be carried forth by those with faith, who are like the Victorious One's awakened mind.

The enlightened mind, like a precious gem, is the real basis of all phenomena and the vehicle of great omnipotence. The time has come for those who have obtained the source, the empowerments and scriptural authorizations, and who guard [their pledges], to bestow these pith instructions of the hearing lineage, requiring no striving, on those with a veritable predilection for the meaning of the intent lineage: persons who can disregard their possessions and life, [NKJ 186.1; NKG 163.6] who are capable of crossing over burning ditches and iron blades, and who are congruent with the Victorious Ones.

Now, in order to definitively show that this text of pith instructions which has come down to us, an injunction that is greater even than the teachings on the seven certainties, is the king of all the authoritative scriptures, [it is said,]

It opens the qualities of the configurations of awakened mind,
 [Comprising] awakened body, speech, mind, qualities and activities.
 Proclaiming the songs of the glorious Bliss-gone Ones,
 It is the king of omnipotent *yogins* of the secret spell.

While the real meaning that is imparted transcends numbers, such as five, etc., it is the quintessence of the spontaneously present awakened body, speech, mind, qualities and activities. Its total completeness is a sacred treasury. It appears as being declared in words by unceasingly appearing to those to be tamed. Since its great blessings are difficult to contact, being the meaning of

11 NKJ has *re dgos med pa'i* ('without requiring hope'), though some of the letters are written in smaller characters, as if they had been inserted subsequently, which may account for this misreading. NKG has corrected this to *re dgos med pa'i*, which is the reading I have adopted in the translation.

དཀའ་ལ་བྱིན་རྒྱལ་ས་ཆེན་མེད་པའི་ཡང་ཕྱེ་སྦྱོང་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ངོ་བོ་སྤྲིང་པོ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལས་མི་གཡོ་
བ་འདི་ལྷུང་གི་རྒྱལ་པོར་གྱུར་པས་ [187] ཚོད་མའོ།

།ལྷུང་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་འགྲེལ་ཡིན་ངེས་པ་ནི།

མཉམ་སྦྱོར་ཀུན་ཏུ་བབས་པོ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

5 །ཞེས་པ། ཐམས་ཅད་རྒྱང་དོར་མེད་པའི་ངང་དུ་བྱུང་བེད་ས་པས་སྦྱོང་ལུལ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པར་སྟོན་
པའི་དགོངས་པ་ནི། ལྷན་གྲུབ་སྤྱི་མཐའ་མེད་པའོ།

།རྣམ་དག་ལམ་ཆེན་ཀུན་སྦྱོལ་དགོངས་པའི་ཐུགས།

།ཞེས་པ། རྣམ་པ་དང་བུལ་བའི་རྩོལ་བ་མེད་པར་ས་ཚོན་པའི་ཐེག་པས། ཐེག་པ་གཉིས་པོ་ཐམས་
ཅད་རྒྱུད་མི་གསོན་པར་གནས་ཆེན་པོར་འདོན་པ་ནི་རྒྱལ་བའི་འང་ཞེ་ཐུགས་སུ་གྱུར་པའོ།

10 །དེའི་ངོ་བོ་ནི།

བསྐྱོད་མེད་རྣམ་གྲོལ་རྫོགས་པ་ཆེན་པའི་ལམ།

།ཞེས་པ།

བྱ་མེད་ལྷན་རྫོགས་སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

15 །ཞེས་པས། བཅིངས་པ་གདོད་ནས་མེད་པས་ས་ལ་མི་རྩོལ་བ་ནི། ཡང་དག་པ་ཉིད་དུ་མཐར་འབྲིན་
པས་མིང་འཐོབ་སྟེ། དེ་ལ་ནི་བྱ་བ་རྒྱལ་དང་བུལ་བས་གཞན་དུ་སྦྱོན་རེ་མེད་དེ་རང་རིག་འདུས་མ་

བྱས་པས་དངོས་གཞི་མེད་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་འབྱུང་གནས་དེས་ཐམས་ཅད་གསལ་བར་ [188] བྱེད་
པས་ལྷུང་གི་ངོ་བོ་ལོ་ནའོ།

།བསྟན་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་འབྱུང་གནས་ཡིན་པར་ངེས་པ་ནི།

the anointing coronation, the essence of the great conduct of the pinnacle of vehicles is not to waver from the quintessential enlightenment—these are the criteria of the king of authoritative scriptures. [NKJ 187.1; NKG 164.5]

It certainly is the general commentary on the authoritative scriptures:

Union in equality is the open dimension of Samantabhadra.

Since everything occurs within the state wherein there is neither acceptance nor rejection, one's objective scope is thoroughly pure, and the Teacher's intent is spontaneously without extremes.

The great path of utter purity is the awakened mind of the universally liberating intent.

Since it is the vehicle which treads upon the stages without effort and free from aspects, nothing in the other two vehicles is wasted;¹² it should be positioned in a great place since it is the heart of the Victorious Ones.

Its essence is as follows:

The path of Great Completeness is utter liberation, there being nowhere to journey.

The birthless open dimension is spontaneously complete without action.

Since from the beginning there are no fetters, there is no striving on stages. Yet because it culminates in genuineness, the name [path] still obtains. In this regard, since it is free from the six actions, it is without aspirational hopes [for perfection] from elsewhere. Since intrinsic awareness is uncompounded, it has no real basis. Since it is the origin of everything, it makes everything clear—this is the very essence of this authoritative scripture. [NKJ 188.1; NKG 165.5]

It is certainly the origin of all the teachings:

12 This means that the qualities of the Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna are encompassed in Dzogchen's higher perspective. Valby provides an alternative interpretation, suggesting that Dzogchen does not waste anything as in the two lower vehicles, implying that it does not have to relinquish the afflictions. See Valby 2014: 18.

ཐེག་པའི་རྣམ་གྲངས་གྲུལ་ཐབས་ཚམཉམ་པ།

།མ་འདྲེས་ཚེས་རྣམས་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་རྒྱན།

།ཞེས་པ། ཐེག་པ་ཆེ་འཕྲའི་གྲུལ་བཀོད་པ་རིལ་ཡང་སྐོ་སོ་སོར་གཤག་ཕྱེད་པར་སྦྱོད་པ་ཉིད་ན་འདི་ལ་
རིས་མེད་པས་རིལ་འབྲུབ་པ་ནི་བདག་ཉིད་ཀྱི་མཛེས་པའོ།

5 །ཀྲོང་ཡངས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་རྒྱུ་འཕྲོ་འདྲུ་བཞིན།

།རྒྱལ་ཐབས་སྦྱི་སྦྱགས་དབང་ཕྱག་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མཛོད།

།ཞེས་པ། དེ་ནི་མཚོན་པའི་དཔེ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཆེན་པོར་རྒྱུ་བཞི་དང་རྒྱུན་འདུས་ལ་དེ་ལས་བྱུང་བ་ལྟ་
བུར། ཨ་ཉི་ཡོ་གའི་ཐེག་པ་ཐེག་པ་ཀུན་གྱི་བདག་ཉིད་པས་ཐེག་པ་རྣམས་ལ་མ་བཀའ་པར་བྱབ་
པས་སྦྱི་མེས་ཆེན་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་འབྱུང་བའི་མཛོད་ཡིན་ལོ།

10 །ཐེག་པའི་ཡང་རྩེར་ངེས་པ་ནི།

ཤེས་བྱ་ཤེས་བྱེད་ཀུན་གྱི་གཞིར་གྱུར་པ།

།ཀུན་གཞི་གནས་གྱུར་རྫོགས་པའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ནི།

།རྣམ་ཤེས་གདེངས་ཀ་ནམ་མཁའི་རྒྱས་མཉམ་པ།

།རྩོ་མོ་བྱུང་རྒྱལ་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་དབྱིངས།

15 །སྡེ་ [189] རྒྱུད་ཡངས་དོག་སྒྲ་ན་མེད་པའི་ས།

།ཞེས་པ། ཐེག་པ་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡུལ་དང་ལྟ་བུ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་རྩ་བར་གྱུར་པ་ནི། ལོན་པའི་ཤེས་པ་ཉིད་མ་
སྤངས་པར་རང་སར་དག་པས། རང་བཞིན་མེད་པའི་རྣམ་པར་ཤེས་པ་དགུ་པ་རིལ་གྱི་འབྱུང་ནས་
ལྷན་གྲུབ་རྫོགས་ཆེན་མ་འདྲེས་ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་ཁྱོན་ནི། རྒྱ་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་ཕྱིན་པ་མེད་པར་
ཀུན་ཏུ་བྱབ་པས་ནམ་མཁའ་ལྟ་བུའི་ཕྱིར་གཉིས་པ་མེད་པས་འཆད་པར་འགྱུར་བ་ལྟར་ཐམས་ཅད་
20 དུ་རང་ཤར་བའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོ་ནི་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་འདོད་པའི་འདོད་ཆགས་དང་བྲལ་བས་རྩ་བར་

1 ཚམཉམ་པ། em. cha mnyams pa (orth.) 13 རྣམ་ཤེས། em. rnams shes (orth.); see M 607.5. 15 ཡངས་
དོག། em. yang dog (orth.); see Liljenberg 2012b: 238. Cf. M 607.5, which has ya thog (rec., alt.).

The means pertaining to the series of vehicles are balanced;¹³
 The unmixed doctrines are the ornament of thorough completeness.

The entire array of great and subtle vehicles is divided with regard to individual doorways, yet engagement therewith being impartial, all of them are the beauty of integral identity.

Just like the effervescent current of the ocean's vast expanse,
 So the anointing coronation is the treasury of the omnipotent ones.

This is an indicative example: just as the great ocean includes the four rivers and lesser rivulets, so the vehicle of Atiyoga, being the integral identity of all vehicles, pervades the other vehicles without refuting them. Hence, as the great ancestor, it is the treasury whence everything originates.

It is certainly the pinnacle of vehicles:

It is the ground of all the knowable and knowers;
 It is the abiding transformation of the universal ground, the configuration of completeness.
 It is the cobra's hood of consciousness, equal to the seal of space;
 It is the victorious peak, the open dimension of great bliss.
 It is the breadth¹⁴ of the tantric section, the unsurpassed stage.
 [NKJ 189.1; NKG 166.4]

It is the object of all vehicles and the root of their views; it is where knowledge arrives, pure in its intrinsic locus, without relinquishing anything. When all of the consciousnesses, which are without intrinsic nature, occur, their extent is thoroughly complete in the unmixed Great Completeness of spontaneous presence. Going nowhere, this totality¹⁵ is all-pervading like space. Hence, it will be explained as non-duality. As the self-arisen integral being of everything, it is the root of great bliss, free from the passion of desire. This means that it certainly is

13 This and the following four lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 371; see Esler 2018: 288.

14 Here I emend *yang dog* to *yangs dog*.

15 The exact sense of *rgu pa nyid* is not clear, but it seems to refer to a totality. The term *rgu pa* also occurs with a similar sense in NKJ 211.5.

ལྷུང་པའི་དོན་དེ་གསུམ་དང་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་ལ་སོགས་པས་གཞུང་བཙུགས་པའི་ཐེག་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྒྲར་
ལྷུང་པ་ཚོགས་པ་སྦྱིར་ཚིབ་ཀྱི་སར་ངེས་པའོ།

།མན་ངག་གི་རྩ་བར་ངེས་པ་ནི།

ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་རང་བྱུང་བཙོམ་ལྡན་འདས།

5 །ཞེས་པ། སྲིད་གསུམ་ཚུ་ལྟར་སྲུག་ཅིང་ཁམས་གསུམ་རླུང་ལྟར་གཡེངས་ཀྱང་གཡོས་པ་མེད་པའི་
སྲུང་རང་སྲུང་བ་ནི་གཉེན་པོར་ལྷུང་པའོ།

།གཅིག་ཕུ་རབ་ཏུ་ཚེམ་ཚོག་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱ།

།ཞེས་པ། །ཐམས་ [190] ཅད་དུ་རང་གི་སེམས་རང་སྲུང་བས་གཞན་པའི་རྒྱ་དང་བལ་བས་གཉིས་
སྲུ་མེད་པའོ།

10 །ལྷན་ཚོགས་སྐྱེ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཚེ།

།སྲ་ན་མེད་པའི་ལོ་འཕང་མཚོག་ལ་གནས།

།ཞེས་པ། དེ་ཕྱིར་སྲུང་གྲགས་ཉན་སྟོང་རིལ། གསུམ་དུ་སངས་རྒྱས་པས་ལོག་པར་མི་འདའ་བ་ནི་
ཁམས་གསུམ་ཉིད་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་སར་བཞུགས་པས་དོན་དེ་ལས་ལྷག་པར་བྱ་བའི་གཞི་མེད་པའི་
ཕྱིར་རོ།

15 དོན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་མཚུག་སྲུང་དུ་ངེས་པར་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

ཚོས་དབྱིངས་མ་སྐྱེས་སེམས་ཅན་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

།སྲིད་པའི་ཚོས་རྣམས་ཡེ་ནས་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ།

the completely pervasive stage, more exalted than the other vehicles with their textual traditions consisting of three or eighteen [categories].¹⁶

It is certainly the root of the pith instructions:

The self-originated Hallowed One, Samantabhadra.¹⁷

Though the three existences well up like a river and the three realms are tossed about like the wind, the antidote is intrinsic illumination, which is without wavering till the end.

Verily alone and supremely great is the body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*).

Since one's own mind intrinsically appears as everything, [NKJ 190.1; NKG 167.3] it is unrivalled by others, being non-duality.

The great seal of the spontaneously complete awakened body, speech
and mind
Abides on the supreme unsurpassed rank.

Therefore, everything that pertains to the three empty aspects of appearance, resonance and rumination returns to awakening, without bypassing it. The three realms themselves dwell on the stage of awakening. Hence, it is baseless [to expect that] anything could exceed this meaning.

In order to definitively show that it contains the conclusion of all purposes,

Because in the unborn open dimension sentient beings are non-existent,¹⁸

The phenomena of existence are primordially spontaneously accomplished.

16 It is not quite clear what the referents of these categories are. Valby suggests the three baskets and the eighteen *tantras* of Mahāyoga; cf. Valby 2014: 21, n. 38, n. 39. While the former seems plausible, I am less convinced by the latter suggestion and would rather propose the eighteen schools of early Buddhism. On the latter, see Lamotte 1958: 584–606.

17 This and the following four lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 372; see Esler 2018: 288–289.

18 This and the following four lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 372; see Esler 2018: 289.

ཞེས་པ། ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་དེ་བོ་མ་བཀོལ་མི་ལྟན། ཀུན་ཡིད་ལ་འདི་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་མེད་པས་འགོ་བ་
མིང་ལས་དེ་བོ་མ་གྲབ་པའི་གཏན་ཚིགས་ཀྱིས། སྲིད་གསུམ་ཉིད་མ་སྤངས་པར་བྱང་ཚུབ་ཚེན་པོར་
སངས་རྒྱས་པའོ།

དེ་རྒྱུ་ལྟན་ཚོགས་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

5 །མི་གནས་ལྷ་ངན་འདས་པའི་འབྲས་བུར་གནས།

ཞེས་པ། དོན་དེ་ནི་ལྟན་གྱིས་ཚོགས་པའི་རྒྱ་སྟེ། [191] །མཚན་ཉིད་བསྟན་དུ་མེད་པས་ལྷ་ངན་ལས་
འདས་པ་ཚེན་པོ་སྟེ་འཁོར་བ་མིང་མེད་པར་སྲིན་པའི་དོན་དུ་ལ་བཅད་པའོ།

ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་མེ་ལོང་དུ་ངེས་པ་བསྟན་པ་ནི།

ཟླ་རྒྱས་བཞེན་དུ་སྟོས་པ་མི་མངའ་བ།

10 །ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་འབྲིལ་པའི་དབྱིངས་དང་མཚུངས།

ཞེས་པ། བཅུ་དྲུག་གི་རི་བོང་ཅན་ལྟ་བུར་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ནི་དེ་བོས་གཞན་པས་ལས་དང་བྲལ་ལོ།
འོན་ཀླུ་མ་པ་ཅན་ལོ་ཞེ་ན། རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཚེན་པོར་ཐམས་ཅད་འདུས་ཤིང་ངང་ལ་ཀུན་གསལ་བ་ལྟ་བུ་བས་
ཐམས་ཅད་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ཀྱིས་གསལ་བར་བྱེད་པའོ།

སྟོས་ཀྱང་དེ་བཞེན་བསྟུས་ཀྱང་ཇི་བཞེན་པ།

15 །བསོད་ནམས་ཡེ་ནས་སྐྱ་གསུང་བྲགས་ལ་ཚོགས།

ཞེས་པ། བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་སྟོད་ཡུལ་མེད་པའི་སེམས་འགོ་འོང་སྤང་ཅམ་ན་སྐད་ཅིག་མ་མེད་པའི་
ཚོས་ཉིད་ཡིན་པའང་ཉི་ཚོ་བའི་སྟོང་པ་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ། བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱབ་པའི་མཚན་དཔའི་དེ་བོར་ལྟན་

6 བསྟན་དུ། em. *bstan tu* (gramm.) 7 དོན་དུ། em. *don tu* (gramm.) 11 སྟེ། em. *gi gi* (ditto); see NKG 168.4. 17 ཡིན་པའང། em. *yin ba'ang* (gramm.); see NKG 168.6. || ཉི་ཚོ་བའི། em. *nyid tshe ba'i* (orth.); see NKG 168.6.

The essence of everything is neither picked out nor endowed with [anything]. It is not that there is a so-called ‘universal psyche’, for the argument is that an essence with regard to wandering beings cannot be established other than nominally.¹⁹ Hence, without relinquishing the three existences, one is awakened in great enlightenment.

The cause is spontaneously complete in the open dimension of the
enlightened mind,
Abiding as the fruition of non-abiding transcendence.

This means that the cause is spontaneously complete: [NKJ 191.1; NKG 168.2] since it cannot be taught in terms of characteristics, it ripens as great transcendence, wherein there is not even the name of cyclic existence—thus should the meaning be resolved.

In order to definitively show it as a mirror of all phenomena,

Like the full moon, it has no elaborations;²⁰
Wisdom is similar to the swirling dimension of the ocean.

The enlightened mind is essentially other than the moon of sixteen parts, being free from activities.²¹ Well, if its aspects be described, in the state wherein everything is included in the great ocean, all is clear. Likewise, everything is made clear by the enlightened mind.

Even as it radiates, so it absorbs.
Merit and wisdom are complete in the awakened body, speech and
mind.

The enlightened mind is without objective scope: when the mind merely appears to come and go, it is reality-as-such (Skt. *dharmatā*), which is not momentary, yet it is not empty in the sense of being ephemeral.²² The essence of [the Buddha’s] characteristics and illustrative attributes being inconceiv-

19 Here my translation differs quite substantially from that proposed in Valby 2014: 22.

20 This and the following four lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 372; see Esler 2018: 289.

21 The moon is said to be full when it is endowed with all its sixteen parts. Unlike the moon, which wanes after having attained its state of fullness, the enlightened mind is free from such changing activity.

22 NKJ has *nyid tshe ba'i*, but NKG corrects this to *nyi tshe ba'i*.

གྲིས་སྐྱབ་པའི་སྐྱེ་གསུང་སྐྱགས་ཉིད་བཞུགས་པས་ཚོགས་མ་ [192] བརྩལ་བར་རྫོགས་པ་དེ་ལྟར་
ཐག་ཚད་པར་བྱའོ།

།མའོན་དུ་གྲུང་པའི་སྐྱགས་རྗེ་རྒྱན་ཆད་མེད་པར་ཅིར་ཡང་སྤང་བའི་བྱིར།

ལྷ་བ་ནམ་མཁའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་འཕང་གཅོད་པས།

5

།བཏང་སྟོམས་ཆེན་པོར་ལྷན་རྫོགས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

།ཞེས་པ། འདིར་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་སྐྱེན་དམ་པས་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོར་ཐག་ཚད་པས་ལྷ་ངན་ཟེལ་གྲིས་་
མནན་པའི་བྱིར།

བདག་ཉིད་ངང་ལ་ཡོང་བསྐྱིམ་མེད་པ་ནི།

།དོགས་པ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་བཏང་སྟོམས་ཆེན་པོ་སྟེ།

10

།རིག་པ་ཉིད་ངང་དུ་རང་གསལ་བར་སྤང་བའོ།

།མ་སྐྱེས་མི་གནས་ནམ་མཁའི་རང་བཞིན་ལ།

།སྐྱགས་རྗེའི་ཚོའ་སྤུལ་ཡ་མཚན་ཆེན་པོར་སྟོན།

།ཞེས་པ། སྒོ་བྱར་དུ་མ་བྱུང་བས་མཚན་ཉིད་ཅིར་ཡང་མི་ཟིན་པས་ནམ་མཁའི་ལྷ་བྱའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐམས་་
ཅད་ཀྱི་འབྱུང་གནས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་རོ་བོ་མི་གཡོ་བ་ཅིར་ཡང་སྤང་བ་ལ་ངེས་པ་མེད་པས་མི་འབྱུང་མེད་པར་

15

དོན་མཛད་པའོ། །དེ་ལྟར་མཛལ་བས་སྐྱགས་རྗེ་རྒྱན་དུ་འབྱུང་བས་སྐྱག་བསྐལ་སྐྱུངས་ཟིན་པའོ།

།རྟོགས་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ནི། [193]

།ལྷུང་ཆེན་གཤོག་རྫོགས་མཁའ་ལ་ལྷིང་བ་བཞིན།

།རྒྱུ་ལྷུང་རིའི་བ་གྲེན་སྐར་ཉམ་མི་ང།

།བར་སྤང་མཁའི་ཁམས་ཀྱུན་ལམ་དུ་བདེ།

20

།གང་དུ་དམིགས་པའི་ས་ཀྱུན་གཅོད་པར་བྱེད།

།ཞེས་པ། ལྷུང་མཁའ་ལ་ལྷིང་བ་ནི། བག་ཚབ་མེད་པ་དང་། ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་ལམ་དུ་བདེ་བ་དང་། ཤིན་་
དུ་མགྲོགས་པ་གསུམ་གྲིས་ཚོས་མཐུན་པར་སྟོན་ཏོ།

3 རྒྱན་ཆད་མེད་པར། em. *rgyun med par* (psych.) 17 ལྷིང་བ། em. *ldings ba* (tense, gramm.); see M 608.3. 18 གྲེན་སྐར། em. *gyen thar* (orth.); see Liljenberg 2012b: 239. M 608.4 has *gyen 'thur*. 21 ལྷིང་བ། em. *ldings ba* (tense, gramm.)

able, it dwells as the spontaneously present awakened body, speech and mind. Therefore, one should resolve that it is complete without striving for the accumulations. [NKJ 192.1; NKG 169.1]

Because actualized compassion can continuously²³ appear anywhere,

The view, like the king of the sky, takes flight:

The open dimension of phenomena (Skt. *dharmadhātu*) is spontaneously complete as great equanimity.

Here, since dismal views are outshined by resolving integral being through the supernal eye of acumen, [it is said,]

The state of integral identity is without tightness:²⁴

It is great equanimity free from misgiving.

The state of awareness is illuminated through its intrinsic clarity.

In the sky-like nature which is unborn and non-abiding,²⁵

The miracle of compassion is revealed as a great marvel.

Neither occurring adventitiously nor seizing upon characteristics, the unwavering essence which is at the origin of all the sky-like wisdoms appears anywhere and is indefinite, performing its purpose in the absence of non-occurrence. By encountering it, compassion occurs continuously, cleansing away suffering.

The qualities of its realization [NKJ 193.1; NKG 169.6]:

Like the great *garuḍa*, whose wings are complete and who soars in the sky,

Dreading neither streams nor mounts nor slopes,²⁶

Comfortable in the atmosphere and in all the realms of space,

Gets across to wherever it is he imagines.

The sky-soaring *garuḍa* is without anxiety, is comfortable anywhere and is veritically fast; [Atiyoga] is taught to be compatible with these three principles.

23 Here I follow Valby's proposed emendation of *rgyun med par* ('discontinuously') to *rgyun chad med par* ('continuously'); see Valby 2014: 23, n. 43. Alternatively, *rgyu med par* ('without cause') could also fit.

24 The first three lines do not appear to be found in the extant editions of the root text; cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 239.

25 These two lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 445; see Esler 2018: 331.

26 I have emended *gyen thar* to *gyen thur*, following the root text in Liljenberg 2012b: 239.

།དེ་བཞིན་ཡེ་ནས་སློ་སྦྱངས་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཐུགས།

།བྱང་ཆུབ་སྣིང་པོར་འགྲོ་བའི་སྐལ་ལྷན་པའོ།

།སངས་རྒྱས་མཛོན་དུ་བྱས་པའི་མན་ངག་ཅན།

།བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་རྟོགས་ཡོན་ཏན་བྱང་པར་འཕགས།

5 །ཞེས་པ། དཔེ་དེ་ལྟར་གདོད་ནས་རང་རིག་རང་དག་པས་དོན་དེ་ལ་གོམས་པར་བྱས་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་
 ཚེན་པོའི་རིག་པ་སྣིང་པོ་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཏུ་འགྲོ་བ་མེད་པའི་སོན་པའི་སློ་ཅན་དེ་ལ་འབྲས་བུ་ཚོགས་ཆུང་
 རུས་འགྲུབ་པ་ལྟ་བུ་འདྲེས་ཡིན་ཏེ། བརྩམ་མི་དགོས་པར་གྲུབ་ཟིན་པའི་ཐབས་མ་ཞོར་བ་ཐོབ་ཅིང་དེ་
 དང་ལྡན་པས། ཕྱི་མོ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་དོན་རྟོགས་པའི་ [194] ཡོན་ཏན་ནི། མི་ཟད་ལམས་ལ་བག་མི་ཚ་
 བ་དང་། ཐ་སྐད་ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ཞོར་ལམ་དུ་མཇུག་པས་མི་རྩོལ་བ་དང་། བགོད་མི་དགོས་པར་ས་ཞོན་
 10 བར་བྱེད་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའོ། །དེ་ལྟར་མཇུག་ན་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱན་དུ་འཆར་བས་རྟོགས་ཀྱང་ཟིན་ལ། འཕོ་
 འགྲུར་ལ་ཡང་ཉམ་མི་ང་བའི་ཡིད་ཆེས་པ་འབྱུང་ངོ།

།ཐིན་ལས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

བདག་དང་གཞན་དོན་ལྷན་གྲུབ་མ་སྦྱངས་པའི།

།སྦྱོད་པ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཅི་བདེར་སྦྱོད།

15 །ཞེས་པ། གཉིས་ག་རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་ཡེ་བྱུངས་ཐེབས་པས་འཁོར་བ་དབྱིས་ལུང་ཉོན་མོངས་པ་
 ལམ་དུ་དག །རྟོག་པ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་ཤར། ལྷུག་བསྐྱེད་ལོངས་སྦྱོད་དུ་གྱུར་པས་བྱ་བ་གྲུབ་ཟིན་པ་ལ་
 ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གང་ཡང་སྦྱང་སྦྱང་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར། རྣམ་གྲངས་བརྒྱ་རྟོལ་སྦྱོད་པ་ཐ་དང་ལ་དཀའ་ཐུབ་
 མེད་པར་སྦྱོད་པའོ།

།དེས་སྦྱར་ལྷུང་བར་དོགས་པ་ལ།

6 བྱང་ཆུབ་དུ། em. *byang chub du* (gramm.); see NKG 170.4. 8 ལྷུང་རྒྱལ། em. *khyung rgyal* (psych.); see NKG 170.5.

Thus, the mind of the *yogin* having primordially trained his intellect
 Has the fortune of going to the quintessence of enlightenment.
 Endowed with the pith instructions that make awakening actual,
 He has the superior qualities to realize the enlightened mind.

As in this example, since originally intrinsic awareness is pure in itself, the awareness of the great *yogin* familiarizes himself with this fact. For one whose intellect has the seed of quintessential enlightenment without having to go anywhere, it is not that the fruition is accomplished with a little strain. Having obtained and being endowed with the unmistakable means, whereby [the fruition] is already accomplished without the need for striving, the qualities of realizing the meaning of the victorious²⁷ peak [NKJ 194.1; NKG 170.5] are that one is without anxiety throughout the inexhaustible realms; that amidst all designations one does not have to strive to encounter the unmistakable path; that one treads all stages without having to journey anywhere, and so forth. When thus encountered, wisdom arises continuously, so realization is already there, and one can trust it without dreading change and mutation.

In order to show its activities,

The purposes of self and others are spontaneously accomplished;
 without relinquishing [anything],²⁸
 One blissfully engages in an ocean of variegated conduct.

Since both [purposes] are primordially sown in self-originated wisdom, cyclic existence is removed from its root,²⁹ the afflictions are pure on the path, conceptions arise as wisdom, and sufferings become enjoyments; hence, all actions are already accomplished, and there are no biased activities to be relinquished or taken up. Therefore, one engages without asceticism in the different forms of conduct relating to a hundred thousand enumerations.

As for misgivings regarding downfalls,

27 NKJ has the erroneous *khyung rgyal*, which NKG corrects to *byung rgyal*.

28 These two lines are quoted in the SM 452; see Esler 2018: 337.

29 The text reads *dpyis phyung*, the past tense of *dpyis 'byin pa*, which is defined as 'removing from the root' (*rtsa ba nas 'byin pa*); see bTsan lha ngag dbang tshul khriims 1997: 447.

བསྐྱེ་བའི་རྒྱ་ནི་འདམ་ཡིན་ཏེ།
 །པདྨ་ལ་ནི་འདམ་གྱིས་གོས་པ་མེད།
 །ཚོས་ཉིད་ཆགས་པ་མེད་པ་རྟོགས་འགྲུང་ན།
 །ཡེ་ [195] ནས་ཆགས་མེད་ཉམས་པ་རྩལ་ཡང་མེད།

5 །ཞེས་པ། དེས་བཤད་པ་གོ་སླའོ། །དེ་ལྟར་ཟིན་ཆགས་མེད་པའི་ལྟ་བ་གནད་ཚུད་ན། ལས་ཅི་ལས་
 སྤྱད་ཀྱང་ཡེ་ཉིད་སྤྱད་པ་མེད་པ་ལ་འབྲལ་དུ་སྤྱད་པས་ཅི་བསྐྱོ་སྟེ། འཕོ་འགྲུང་མེད་དེ་མ་གཡོས་སོ།
 །དེ་ལྟར་མཇལ་ན་ཕྱིན་ལས་ཀྱིས་དོན་བྱས་ཀྱང་ཟིན་ལ་འཆི་འཕོ་ལ་འཇིགས་པ་བྲལ་བར་ཡིད་ཚེས་
 ཏེ་ལྟ་བའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ནོ།

།རྗེས་སུ་འཇུག་པ་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

10 །ཐུགས་རྗེ་སྦྱོང་པ་རབ་འབྲུམས་ཇི་ལྟ་བ།
 །རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཐབས་ཀྱི་སྦྱོང་པ་དེ་བཞིན་སྦྱོང།

།ཞེས་པ། སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་མཛད་སྦྱོང་ནི་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་འགོ་འོང་མེད་པར་སྣང་བས་དོན་མཛད་པ་ལ།
 རྣམ་པ་ཅན་དུ་མ་གྱུར་པ་བཞིན། རྗེས་སུ་འཇུག་པ་པོ་འང་དེ་དང་ཐ་མི་དད་པས་དེ་ལྟར་གདེང་དང་ལྡན་
 བ་སྦྱོང་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་རང་རིག་རང་སྣང་བར་མཇལ་བ་སྤྱད་པ་སྟེ། དེ་ལ་སྐྱོ་གསུམ་རྩོལ་བས་བྱ་བ་
 15 མེད་པའོ།

།ཐུགས་རྗེ་འབྲུང་ལུགས་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།
 རྣམ་རྟོག་སྦྱོས་བྲལ་གཟུང་འཛིན་ [196] མི་མངའ་ཡང་།
 །མཁའ་མཉམ་རྒྱལ་པོས་འདོད་དགུ་རེ་བ་སྐྱོང།

10 རབ་འབྲུམས། em. *rab 'byam* (orth.); see NKM 195.3 and NKG 172.1. 12 མཛད་སྦྱོང། em. *mdzod spyod*
 (tense); see NKG 172.1. 17 གཟུང་འཛིན། em. *gzugs 'dzin* (psych.); see M 609.1 and NKG 172.3. NKM 195.6
 has *gzungs 'dzin* (tense).

The cause of the lotus' growth is mud,³⁰
 Yet untainted by mud is the lotus.
 If one realizes that reality-as-such is without attachment, [NKJ 195.1;
 NKG 171.4]
 One is primordially without attachment and without even an iota of
 deterioration.

This explanation is easy to understand. If one assimilates the crucial point of the view, which is without attachment, whatever activities one engages in are primordially unengaged, so how could one be tainted by temporarily engaging therewith? That which is without change and mutation does not waver. When it is encountered, the purpose of the awakened activities is already effected, and its quality is trust free from the fear of death and mutation.

In order to show the follow-up [modes of conduct],

Whatever be the profusion of compassionate conduct,³¹
 The *yogin* engages in the conduct of salvific means.

The Buddha's behaviour appears everywhere without coming and going, effecting the purpose [of wandering beings] yet not taking on a particular aspect. Likewise, it is not different when it comes to the follow-up [activities]: if one is endowed with confidence, one can engage in all forms of conduct while encountering the self-illumination of intrinsic awareness, without the effortful actions relating to the three doors.

In order to show the mode of compassion's occurrence,

Not possessing the conceptual elaborations of grasper and grasped,³²
 [NKJ 196.1; NKG 172.3]
 The king equal to space fulfils all desires and hopes.

30 These four lines are quoted in the SM 452; see Esler 2018: 337.

31 These two lines are quoted in the SM 452; see Esler 2018: 337.

32 NKJ has *gzugs 'dzin*, but NKG corrects this to *gzung 'dzin*, a reading which is confirmed by the root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 240.

སྐྱེ་མེད་དབྱིངས་ནས་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོ་འབྲུལ་རྣམས།

ལྷན་དག་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ཀྱིས་དབྱིངས་ནས་འབྲོས།

ཞེས་པ། དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་ཐིག་ལེ་སྡོམ་པ་གཉིས་དང་བུལ་བ་ནི། ཡེ་ཤེས་ལ་བདག་ཏུ་འཛིན་པ་དང་།

དབྱིངས་ཡུལ་དུ་བྱེད་པ་མེད་དོ། །མི་མཐུན་པ་ནི་སྟོང་པ་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ། ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ནམ་མཁའ་སྐྱང་དོར་

5

མེད་པ་ལྷན་གྱིས་སྐྱབ་པས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཚོམ་པར་བྱེད་པ་ནི། མ་སྐྱེས་པའི་རིག་པ་ཉིད་ཅིར་ཡང་མ་

ངེས་པར་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་རང་སྐྱེད་བའོ། །དེ་ལྟར་རྟོགས་ན་འདོད་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་ལས་བྱུང་བར་ཡིད་

ཚེས་སོ།

འདི་སྐྱེད་བ་གང་ཞེ་ན།

མཁའ་དབྱིངས་རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ནི།

10

ལྷན་སྐྱབ་ཡིད་བཞིན་རིན་ཆེན་གཞལ་ཡས་ཁང། [197]

ཞེས་པ། མཐའ་རྣམས་དང་བུལ་བའི་ཚོམ་ཉིད་ཅུ་བ་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ཀྱི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་མ་འདྲེས་

ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པ་ནི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཆེན་པོ་ལས་སྐྱབ་པའི་གནས་ཉིད་ཡིན་པའོ།

འབྲོགས་དུས་ཀྱན་ནས་འབྱིལ་པ་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཚོགས།

ཞེས་པ། བཅུ་བཞི་པོ་རིལ་གཅིག་དང་དུ་མ་ལས་གྲོལ་བའི་བདག་ཉིད་དུ་ཐ་མི་དད་པ་ནི་འབྲོ་བ་

15

ཉིད་ལྟ་ཚོགས་ཀྱང་ཡིན་པའོ།

རྒྱལ་བ་ཉིད་ལས་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྐྱུར་སྟོན་པ།

རྒྱལ་ཚོགས་དོ་རྩེ་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་རྣམས།

འབྲོ་དོན་རྒྱལ་བའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

From within the birthless open dimension, miracles are produced,³³
 Radiated from the open dimension by the utterly pure enlightened
 mind.

The seminal nucleus of the open dimension is free from both elaborations [of subject and object], for wisdom is without self-grasping, and the open dimension is without objectification. [Both] being incompatible, they are not just empty. In the sky of wisdom there is nothing to take up or to reject, and one is spontaneously contented with everything. Unborn awareness, which is indefinite in terms of being anything particular, intrinsically appears as everything. When this is realized, one can trust that all desires are self-originating.

If it be asked what appearance is, [it is replied,]

The configuration of utter purity, the open dimension of space,
 Is the spontaneously present seraphic mansion of the precious wish-
 granting gem.

[NKJ 197.1; NKG 173.1] The root of reality-as-such, free from limitations, is the unmixed and thoroughly complete configuration of the enlightened mind, whose very abidingness is established from its great qualities.

The host of Victorious Ones, swirling in from all directions and times ...

All of the ten [directions] and four [times] are not different in integral identity, which is liberated from singularity and multiplicity: wandering beings are a host of deities.

From the Victorious One's reality, teachers who are the Victorious One's
 embodiments,
 Hosts of Victorious Ones, *yogins* of the adamantine open dimension,
 Reveal the Victorious One's configuration for the purpose of wandering
 beings.

33 This and the following line of the root text are quoted in the SM 484; see Esler 2018: 357.

ཞེས་པ། འགོ་བྱལ་རང་བྱུང་མཚོག་གི་སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་དོ་བོ་ཉིད་ལ་སྐྱུ་སྐྱུང་བ་ནི། འཆད་པའི་
 དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ལྷ་རྣམས། རང་གི་རང་བཞིན་མ་ལོང་བ་མ་མཐོང་བའི་ཆེད་དུ། འདུལ་བྱེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་
 རྗེ་རང་སྐྱུང་བའི་ལྷ་རྣམས་སྐྱུང་བའི་བྱིར།

འགོ་འདུལ་རྗེ་རྗེ་དབྱིངས་གྱི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་འཕྲོ།

5 ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ། །དེའི་དཔེའི་དོན་ནི།

སྤྱིན་མེད་མཁའ་ལ་སྐྱར་ཚོགས་རྒྱས་པ་ [198] བཞིན།

།དཀར་གསལ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྗེགས་པ་འཁོར་དང་བཅས།

།ཀུན་བཟང་རྗེ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔའ་མཉམ་སྦྱོར་བ།

།ཤེས་རབ་དབྱིངས་ནས་ཐབས་ཀྱིས་ཕྱག་རྒྱར་གསལ།

10 ཞེས་པ། གསལ་ལ་ལ་མ་འདྲེས་པར་རྗེགས་པ་མཐའ་དབུས་མེད་པར་བྱབ་པས་ཚོས་མཐུན་པ་ལྟར།
 གསལ་བ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྗེགས་པའི་གཙོ་འཁོར་གྱི་ལྷ་རྣམས་ནི། ལྷོན་པ་རྣམ་གཉིས་ཉིད་ལེགས་པ་
 ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་དོ་བོར་བཞུགས་པ་མཚོན་པ་ལས་འདས་པའི་རང་ལས་བྱེ་བྲག་ཐམས་ཅད་པར་
 ལྷང་བ་ནི་སྐྱེའི་ཕྱག་རྒྱའོ།

།སང་དེས་ལེ་མཉམ་ལ་མ་འདྲེས་པ།

15 །ཡུང་པོ་ཁམས་དང་སྤྱེ་མཆེད་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཚོགས།

4 འདུལ་] em. 'du (psych.); see M 609.4 and NKG 173.6.

The six classes of wandering beings appear as awakened bodies in the essence of supreme self-originated awakening. The deities explained in terms of the configuration appear as tamers for the sake of those who do not see their own unmistakable nature; the deities are the intrinsic illumination of adamantine wisdom. Hence,

To tame³⁴ wandering beings, the configurations of the adamantine open dimension radiate forth.

The meaning is exemplified as follows:

Just as the stars unfold in a cloudless sky, [NKJ 198.1; NKG 173.6]
 So Samantabhadra-Vajrasattva,³⁵ poised in union,
 Along with the brilliant retinues of their enjoyment body,
 Are clear as the seal of means within the open dimension of acumen.

Clear and unmixed, complete, without centre and periphery, pervasive, compatible with the doctrine, the chief deities of the secret enjoyment body and their retinues abide as the essence of the spontaneously present excellence of the two kinds of teachers.³⁶ From the state which is beyond indicator, they appear with all particulars: this is the seal of awakened body.

Pristine and lambent, equal and unmixed,
 The aggregates, constituents and sense-bases are a host of *yogins*.

34 NKJ has *'gro 'du*, but NKG corrects this to *'gro 'dul*, a reading confirmed by the root text; see Liljenberg 2012b: 240.

35 It may be remarked that the three awakened bodies are sometimes classified into nine different aspects. Thus, we have the reality body of the reality body, the enjoyment body of the reality body and the emanation body of the reality body, and so forth. See Nor brang o rgyan 2008: vol. 2, 1957. The context makes it probable that here we are dealing with the enjoyment body aspect of the body of reality, that is to say, the body of reality as it manifests on the level of the enjoyment body.

36 According to Valby 2014: 29, n. 48, this refers to Samantabhadra and Vajrasattva, or to the body of reality and enjoyment body.

ཞེས་པ་དེ་དག་གི་མ་མེད་པར་གསལ་ཆེ་རྒྱུ་མེད་པར་གཤག་ཕྱི་བ་ནི་ལྟ་དང་བཅོ་བརྒྱད་དང་
བརྒྱ་གཉིས་སུ་གྲགས་པ་ཉིད་རང་རིག་པའི་མཛོན་སུམ་དུ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཆེ་བ་སྟེ། དེ་ལྟར་མཇལ་བ་ལ་
ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡོང་གིས་འོད་གསལ་བར་ངེས་པས། ལྷུང་གི་ལྟ་ལས་འཕགས་པའོ།

།ཀུན་ཏུ་བབས་པོ་རང་ [199] ལྷུང་བཅོམ་ལྟན་འདས།

5

།གཅིག་ཕུ་རབ་ཏུ་ཆེ་མཚོག་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱ།

།ལྷུན་རྗོགས་སྐྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ཆེ།

2 བརྒྱ་གཉིས་སུ། em. *bcu gcig su* (psych., gramm.). Cf. NKM 198.5 and NKG 174.4, which introduce the hypercorrection *bcu gcig tu*. || མཛོན་སུམ་དུ། em. *mngon gsum du* (hom., orth.); see NKG 174.4.

Stainless clarity is without size; when dissected, all that is renowned as the five [aggregates],³⁷ eighteen [constituents]³⁸ and twelve [sense-bases]³⁹ is great awakening, evident as intrinsic awareness. When [awareness] is encountered, it is certain that all phenomena are luminosity. This is superior to the deities [explained] in the authoritative scriptures.

Samantabhadra, the self-originated Hallowed One,⁴⁰ [NKJ 199.1;

NKG 174.5]

Alone is the verily supreme body of reality,

The great seal in which awakened body, speech and mind are spontaneously complete.

37 The five aggregates are form (Skt. *rūpa*), feelings (Skt. *vedanā*), notions (Skt. *saṃjñā*), dispositions (Skt. *saṃskāra*) and consciousness (Skt. *viññāna*).

38 The eighteen constituents (*khams*; Skt. *dhātu*) are (1) the constituent of the visual faculty (Skt. *caṣṣur-indriya-dhātu*), (2) the constituent of the auditory faculty (Skt. *śrotrendriya-dhātu*), (3) the constituent of the olfactory faculty (Skt. *ghrāṇendriya-dhātu*), (4) the constituent of the gustatory faculty (Skt. *jihvendriya-dhātu*), (5) the constituent of the tactile faculty (Skt. *kāyendriya-dhātu*) and (6) the constituent of the psychic faculty (Skt. *mana-indriya-dhātu*); (7) the constituent of form (Skt. *rūpa-dhātu*), (8) the constituent of sound (Skt. *śabda-dhātu*), (9) the constituent of odour (Skt. *gandha-dhātu*), (10) the constituent of taste (Skt. *rasa-dhātu*), (11) the constituent of tangibles (Skt. *spraṣṭavya-dhātu*) and (12) the constituent of [psychic] phenomena (Skt. *dharmā-dhātu*); (13) the constituent of visual consciousness (Skt. *caṣṣur-viññāna-dhātu*), (14) the constituent of auditory consciousness (Skt. *śrotra-viññāna-dhātu*), (15) the constituent of olfactory consciousness (Skt. *ghrāṇa-viññāna-dhātu*), (16) the constituent of gustatory consciousness (Skt. *jihvā-viññāna-dhātu*), (17) the constituent of tactile consciousness (Skt. *kāya-viññāna-dhātu*) and (18) the constituent of psychic consciousness (Skt. *mano-viññāna-dhātu*).

39 The Tibetan text reads *bcu gcig su* ('eleven'), but this is certainly a transmissional error since the Buddhist tradition invariably speaks of twelve sense-bases. Furthermore, grammatically speaking, the terminative particle *su* also indicates that the original reading must have been *bcu gnyis su* ('twelve') since after a *-ga* ending *tu* would have been required (i.e. *bcu gcig tu*). (Incidentally, the latter hypercorrection is introduced in NKG, even though philosophically this makes no sense.) The twelve sense-bases are (1) the sense-basis of the visual faculty (Skt. *caṣṣur-indriyāyatana*), (2) the sense-basis of the auditory faculty (Skt. *śrotrendriyāyatana*), (3) the sense-basis of the olfactory faculty (Skt. *ghrāṇendriyāyatana*), (4) the sense-basis of the gustatory faculty (Skt. *jihvendriyāyatana*), (5) the sense-basis of the tactile faculty (Skt. *kāyendriyāyatana*) and (6) the sense-basis of the psychic faculty (Skt. *mana-indriyāyatana*); (7) the sense-basis of form (Skt. *rūpāyatana*), (8) the sense-basis of sound (Skt. *śabdāyatana*), (9) the sense-basis of odour (Skt. *gandhāyatana*), (10) the sense-basis of taste (Skt. *rasāyatana*), (11) the sense-basis of tangibles (Skt. *spraṣṭavyāyatana*) and (12) the sense-basis of [psychic] phenomena (Skt. *dharmāyatana*).

40 This and the following five lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 372; see Esler 2018: 289.

ཞེས་པ་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ཀྱི་ངང་ལས་འཁོར་བ་མིང་མེད་དེ་སྤྱི་མཉམ་གྱི་མ་གྲུབ་པར་སངས་རྒྱས་
 པའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་གཞན་པའི་སྐྱབས་ལྷན་མེད་པས་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པར་རྫོགས་པ་ནི། བསམ་
 གྲིས་མི་བྱབ་པའི་སྐྱབས་གསུང་བྲགས་ཀྱི་བདག་ཉིད་པར་གསལ་བས་བདག་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཆེ་བའོ།

ཡེ་ནས་ལྷན་སྐྱབས་བྱང་ཚུབ་སླིང་པོ་ནི།

5 སྐྱབས་མེད་རྒྱལ་བའི་གོ་འཕང་མཚོག་ལ་བཞུགས།

ཞེས་པ། གདོད་ནས་རྫོགས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་ཡང་ཕྱེ་བྱང་ཚུབ་སེམས་ཀྱན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་དབྱེ་
 བ་མེད་པའི་སངས་སངས་རྒྱས་པས་བྱ་བ་ཕྱེ་བ་གདོད་བསྐྱབ་མེད་པར་གནས་པའོ།

ཉིད་དང་གཞན་དུ་རྟོག་པ་མི་མངའ་བ།

འཇིག་རྟེན་རྗེ་རྗེ་ཉིམ་ཤར་བ་བཞིན།

10 ལྷན་ནེ་ལྷང་དེ་གསལ་བའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ནས།

ཞེས་པ། དེའི་མཚན་ཉིད་ནི། བདག་གྲུང་གཞན་ཡིན་ལ། གཞན་ཡང་བདག་ཡིན་པས་ [200] རིས་
 སུ་འཛིན་པ་དང་བུལ་བ་ནི། འཇིག་རྟེན་ཁམས་སུ་ཉིམ་ཤར་བ་ཉིད་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱག་པ་སྟེ། གསལ་བ་
 དང་མི་གཡོ་བས་མཚོན་པ་ནི་རྟོག་པ་སྲ་ཕྱི་རིལ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་སྣང་བས་ཅི་བྱུང་ཡང་། མི་གཡོ་བར་
 གསལ་བ་མངའ་བའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཉིད་སྤྱི་མཉམ་རྟོགས་པ་དང་ལྷན་པ་ནི་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱན་ཏུ་འཆར་བར་
 15 ཡིད་ཆེས་སོ།

ནམ་པར་ཐར་པའི་ཞལ་གསུམ་ཕྱག་རྒྱལ་ནི།

སྐྱབས་གསུམ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱག་དང་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

ཞེས་པ། སྐྱའི་དོན་ནི་འཆད་པའི་སྐྱབས་གསུང་བྲགས་ལ་བཅིངས་པ་དང་གིས་མེད་པ་དང་། ཡེ་ཤེས་ལྷ་
 དང་རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱན་ལ་རྒྱས་བཏབ་པས་སུ་མཐའ་མི་རྙེད་དེ་སྐྱར་ཤར་བའོ།

12 ཤར་བ། em. *shar pa* (gramm.); see NKG 175.5.

In the state of enlightenment, there is not even the name of cyclic existence. The integral being of awakening, not created by anyone, is without the reflection of otherness; it is complete in non-duality. Because it is clear as the identity of inconceivable body, speech and mind, it is the greatness of integral identity.

The quintessence of enlightenment is primordially and spontaneously present
And abides on the supreme rank of the unsurpassed Victorious One.

Original Great Completeness, the pinnacle of all, the enlightened mind, abides on the indivisible stage of Samantabhadra, awakened without effortful action and accomplishment.

Without discursive thoughts relating to self and other,
The adamant sun rises in the world; likewise,
So does the configuration of luminosity, still and obvious.

Its characteristic is that since self is other and other is self, [NKJ 200.1; NKG 175.4] it is free from grasping at partiality. The rising sun in the realm of the world refers to the six wisdoms:⁴¹ clear and unwavering. They are indicated as follows: since the entire temporal succession of discursive thoughts is the intrinsic illumination of wisdom, whatever occurs is the configuration of unwavering clarity. Whoever is endowed with this realization can trust that it arises as an ornament of wisdom.

The three faces and six hands of utter release
Are the three bodies, six wisdoms and phenomena's open dimension.

The meaning of 'body' is explained as the inherently unfettered awakened body, speech and mind. Since the five wisdoms⁴² and self-originated wisdom seal everything, there are no extremes to be found: this is the arising as awakened bodies.

41 As is made clear below in the text, this refers to the five wisdoms plus self-originated wisdom.

42 The five wisdoms (*ye-shes*, Skt. *jñāna*) are the wisdom of the open dimension of phenomena (Skt. *dharmadhātu-jñāna*) corresponding to stupidity, the mirror-like wisdom (Skt. *ādarśana-jñāna*) corresponding to hatred, the wisdom of discernment (Skt. *pratyavekṣaṇa-jñāna*) corresponding to attachment, the wisdom of equality (Skt. *samatā-jñāna*) corresponding to pride, and the action-accomplishing wisdom (Skt. *kṛtyānuṣṭhāna-jñāna*) corresponding to jealousy.

། ཇི་ལྟར་སྐར་ཚོགས་གཞན་དུ་མ་འཕྲོས་བཞིན།
། ཉི་མའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་འབར་བས་ཟིལ་གྲིས་གཞོན།

། ཞེས་པ། དཔེ་གོ་སྟོན།

། དེ་བཞིན་ཀུན་བཟང་དོ་རྗེ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཡང་།

5 ། ཉི་མ་སྟོང་གི་གཟི་ཚེན་འབར་བས་བརྗིད།

། རྒྱལ་པའི་ཚོགས་རྣམས་འདུས་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་སྟེ།

། ཕྱི་ནང་གསང་བའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ [201] ཀུན་གྱི་བདག

། རྣམ་པར་ཤེས་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཀུན་གྱི་གཞི།

། ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་གཙོ་བོའང་ཆ་ལུགས་ཐམས་ཅད་པའི་ཕྱིར་ཉི་མ་སྟོང་དུས་ཅིག་ཤར་
10 བ་ལྟ་བུའི་གཟི་བརྗིད་གསུམ་མངའ་བས་རྒྱལ་བ་རིལ་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྟེ། གཟུགས་བརྟན་དང་ཉིང་ངེ་
འཛིན་དང་། བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་ཀྱི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཇི་སྟེད་པའི་རོ་བོ་སྟེ། དེ་གཞན་དུ་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ་གཞི་དོན་
གྱི་ཀུན་གཞི་དགུ་པ་རྟོག་པ་དང་བུལ་བ་ཉིད་ཡིན་པས་རྒྱ་འབྲས་ཐེག་པའི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་ཇི་སྟེད་
པའི་དངོས་གཞིའོ། །དེས་ན་དེ་ཡིན་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་པའི་ཆེ་བའོ།

། ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོའི་ཐེག་ལེ་སྟོང་རྗེའི་སྟོན་པ་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

15 རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་དབྱིངས་ལས་མ་གཡོས་ཀྱང་།

། སྟོང་ཁམས་ཡོངས་སུ་སྟོམས་པའི་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཅན།

། འགྲོ་བའི་དཔལ་མགོན་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་།

། དབྱེ་བས་ལ་སྒྲུང་དོར་གཉིས་མེད་དོན་དུ་གཅིག

Just as hosts of other stars radiate forth,
Yet the blazing disc of the sun outshines them ...

This example is easy to understand.

So Samantabhadra-Vajrasattva,
Resplendent with the blazing dazzle of a thousand suns,
Is the chief encompassing the hosts of Victorious Ones,⁴³
The ruler of all the outer, inner and secret configurations, [NKJ 201.1;
NKG 176.3]
The ground of all, chief among consciousnesses.

In this way, since the chief of configurations includes all the attires [of the various deities], he possesses a threefold dazzling resplendence, like that of a thousand suns shining all at once; he is the king of all Victorious Ones. He is the essence of all the configurations of images, concentrations and the enlightened mind. Not being elsewhere, he is the universal ground as absolute basis, free from discursive thoughts. He is the real ground of all the configurations relating to the vehicles of cause and effect.⁴⁴ This being the case, he is the greatness of awakening.

In order to show the compassionate conduct of Samantabhadra's seminal nucleus,

Without wavering from the open dimension of self-originated wisdom,⁴⁵
Your compassion thoroughly equalizes the third order chiliocosm;
O Samantabhadra, variegated glorious warden of wandering beings,
Your purpose is one, without the dualism of analysing and eliminating,
of acceptance and rejection.

43 This and the following line of the root text are quoted in the SM 331; see Esler 2018: 268.

44 As pointed out by Valby 2014: 32, n. 53, this refers to the sūtric and tantric vehicles, respectively.

45 This and the following two lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 445; see Esler 2018: 332.

ཞེས་པ། རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྤྱི་མཐའ་མེད་པས་འགྲོ་འོང་དང་བྲལ་ཀྱང་། དཔེ་སྤྱུ་མས་ [202]
 ཚབ་ཆེ་རྒྱུད་མེད་པར་ཀུན་ལ་ཁྱབ་པའི་སྤྲུགས་རྗེ་མངའ་བས་བྱ་བ་མེད་པར་འགྲོ་བ་ཀུན་སྐྱོབ་པ་ནི།
 ཐམས་ཅད་སྟོན་པ་ཉིད་ལས་མི་གཞན་པས་སྤང་བྱང་བྲལ་ཏེ། དེ་རྟོགས་ན་བྱམས་པ་ལ་མི་ཆགས་
 པས་སྤང་བ་ལ་སེམས་མི་འཁྲུག་པར་ཡིད་ཆེས་སོ།

5 །ཡོན་ཏན་ལྷན་གྱིས་རྫོགས་པའི་དོན་གྱིས་ཆེ་བས་སྦྱོམ་ཟེན་པ་ལ་བསྐྱབ་ཏུ་མེད་པར་བསྟན་པའི་
 ཕྱིར།

ཕྱི་དང་ནང་ཀུན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཚོས་གྱི་དབྱིངས།

ཞེས་པ། སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་དང་སྦྱོད་བཅུད་ཉིད་ནི་བཏགས་པ་ཅམ་ལས་དེ་བོ་རང་རྒྱུད་པ་མེད་དེ་མཐའ་
 གསུམ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

10 །རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི།

ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་མཐའ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ་ལ་བསྐྱབ་པ་ཡང་བ་མེད་པར་
 སངས་རྒྱས་ཟེན་པས་སེམས་ཅན་ལས་སངས་རྒྱས་སུ་བསྐྱབ་ཏུ་མེད་དེ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་སྒྲ་
 དུགས་དང་ཡང་བྲལ་བའི་ཐིག་ལའི་ཕྱིར།

སངས་རྒྱས་སེམས་ཅན་སྤང་དོར་གཉིས་མེད་དེ།

15 །ལམ་གྱིས་བཅོས་སུ་ [203] ག་ལ་ཡོད།

ཞེས་གསུངས་ཏེ། དེ་ལྟར་རྟོགས་ན་སྤང་སྤིད་ནམ་མཁའ་གཅིག་པས་དངོས་པོ་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མེད་
 པར་ཡིད་ཆེས་པའོ།

སྦོམ་ལམ་འགྲུབ་པས་ཡོན་ཏན་གྲུབ་ཟེན་པ་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

2 ཚབ་] em. *tshabs* (hom., orth.) 5 བསྐྱབ་ཏུ་] em. *bsgrub du* (gramm.) 12 བསྐྱབ་ཏུ་] em. *bsgrub du* (gramm.); see NKM 202.5-6 and NKG 177.6. 12-13 སྤྲུགས་] em. *bla dags* (orth.)

Self-originated wisdom is without extremes, free from coming and going. The examples of oil and of the regent⁴⁶ [NKJ 202.1; NKG 177.2] indicate that since [Samantabhadra] is endowed with all-pervading compassion, without distinguishing between great and small, he is the protector of all wandering beings yet is without action. Since there is nothing other than the teacher of everything, one is free from acceptance and rejection. If one realizes this, one trusts without being attached to kindness and without one's mind being disturbed by hatred.

In order to show that all boasting is finished and that there is nothing to accomplish in the greatness of spontaneously complete qualities,

Everything, whether outer or inner, is the open dimension of phenomena.

One's objective scope and the universe with its inhabitants are nothing aside from imputation, being without essence and self-sufficiency; this is why they are free from the three limitations.⁴⁷

Everything is the objective scope of utter purity.

Thus, one's objective scope, free from limitations, is thoroughly pure and there is nothing to accomplish. Since awakening is already finished, there is no awakening to accomplish aside from sentient beings. This is because the seminal nucleus is free from the very appellation 'Buddha'.

There is no duality of Buddhas and sentient beings to accept and to reject.

How could there be anything to rectify through a path? [NKJ 203.1; NKG 178.1]

When this is realized, since appearance-existence is only space, one can trust that reified entities are without intrinsic nature.

In order to show that qualities are already accomplished through one's aspirations,

46 According to Valby 2014: 32, n. 55, the example of oil indicates that the oil suffuses the seed, whereas the example of the regent points to his working efficiently on behalf of the king.

47 For the three limitations, see above, Text 2, note 17.

སྐྱབ་མེད་ཕྱལ་སྐྱབས་སྐྱོན་པ་མེད་པ་ཡི།

ཁྱུང་མེད་ལྷན་རྒྱུགས་བདེར་གཤེགས་དེ་བཞིན་ཏེ།

ཞེས་པ། བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོར་སངས་རྒྱས་པས་དོན་དུ་གཉེར་བ་དང་བུལ་བ་ནི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚེན་པོའི་
མཐུས་འཁོར་བ་དོར་སྐྱབས་པས་རེ་དོགས་ཚེད་ཚོལ་བ་མེད་པས་སྤིང་པོ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ཏུ་བཞུགས་པའོ།

5

ཉོག་དཔྱོད་རྣམ་དག་གཉིས་མེད་ཚོས་དབྱིངས་ལ།

འོག་སྐྱོད་འཁྲུལ་པའི་དབང་དུ་ག་ལ་འགྱུར།

ཞེས་པ། དེ་བས་ན་དམན་པའི་ཚད་མས་མཇུག་ལ་གྲུབ་མཐའ་བརྟག་ཏུ་མེད་དེ་སྐྱོད་ཡུལ་ལས་གྲོལ་
བས་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་དབྱིངས་ལས་མ་ཉོགས་པའི་འོག་ཉོག་བཙའ་གྱིས་མི་རྙེད་པས་མི་འགྱུར་
བར་རོལ་ཉིད་ཉུག་པའོ།

10

དངོས་གྲུབ་གྲུབ་བྱིན་པ་ནི།

ཉོག་དང་མི་ཉོག་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱ། [204]

མཐའ་ཐུག་མེད་ཅིང་དབྱིངས་ལ་བྲི་བ་མེད།

ཞེས་པ། སེམས་ཅན་སངས་རྒྱས་རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་སངས་རྒྱས་འབྲས་བུའི་རོ་བོར་རྫོགས་པ་ལ་
མཐའ་རྣམས་བུལ་བས་ཁྱོན་མེད་ཅིང་འཁོར་བར་སྐྱང་ཡང་རྒྱུད་དུ་མ་སོང་སྟེ་དེ་ཉིད་དེའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

15

སྐྱེ་མེད་དབྱིངས་ནས་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོའམུལ་རྣམས།

ཁག་ཡང་མ་ཡིན་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

3 དོན་དུ། em. *don tu* (gramm.) 4 བྱང་རྒྱལ་ཏུ། em. *byang chub du* (gramm.); see NKM 203.4 and NKG 178.4.

There is nothing to achieve, no aspiration of endeavour:
 Without action and spontaneously complete—thus is the Bliss-gone
 One.

Since one is awakened as integral being, one is free from anything to pursue. Since cyclic existence has been shaken from its depths by the force of great wisdom, one is without the deliberate effort of hope and misgiving; one's quintessence abides in enlightenment.

How could the non-dual open dimension of phenomena, wherein
 examination and scrutiny are utterly pure,
 Come under the power of depraved conduct and confusion?

Therefore, the spontaneously complete open dimension cannot be examined through tenets that speak of⁴⁸ it in terms of their lowly criteria, and it is liberated from an objective scope; it will not be found by searching for it through the misconceptions of non-realization; changeless, its essence is permanent.

The accomplishments have already been achieved:

The discursive and non-discursive wisdoms, as the body of reality,
 [NKJ 204.1; NKG 178.6] Are without an ultimate end-point and do not
 diminish in the open dimension.

As self-originated wisdom, sentient beings and Buddhas are complete in the essence of the fruition of awakening, free from limitations and unquantifiable. Even that which appears as cyclic existence is not in any way smaller.

From the birthless open dimension miracles are produced:
 Nothing in themselves yet variegated, they are phenomena's open
 dimension.

48 The exact sense of *rma* is unclear, as it is not found in any of the dictionaries. However, Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin suggests that it is probably close to the verbs *smra ba* and *mol pa*, both of which mean 'speaking'. *Mol pa* (cf. *bka' mol*, 'conversation') is still used in this sense in the *sTod pa* dialect, where it is pronounced *mol ba*. The term *rma* is also found in the DPG (see NKG 308.5).

ཞེས་པ། རང་བྱུང་ངང་ལས་འཁོར་བ་དང་མྱ་ངན་ལས་འདས་པར་སྐྱད་བ་མ་དེས་པར་ཀྱུན་ཀྱང་ངོ་
བོ་ཅི་ཡང་མ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་སོ།

ཁམས་གསུམ་རྣམ་དག་མ་བྱུང་མ་སྐྱེས་ན།

འདུས་མཐའ་མི་དམིགས་རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་ལས་འདས།

5 ཞེས་པ། འཁོར་བ་མིང་ལས་ངོ་བོ་མ་གྲུབ་པས་ཚོས་ཉིད་དུ་དེས་པར་རྟོགས་ན། ཅིར་ཡང་སྐྱད་ལ་ངོ་
བོ་མི་ཟེན་པས་གཉིས་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་མཐའ་གསུམ་གྱི་རྟོག་པ་མེད་པ་ནི། ཚོས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཐིག་ལེ་སྟེ། དེ་
ཁོ་ན་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་མ་བཅོས་པར་དེས་པ་སྐྱེའོ།

སྒོམ་པའི་གོལ་ས་ནི།

རྣམ་རྟོག་གཉེན་པོར་རྣམ་པར་མི་རྟོག་སྒོམ།

10 མི་རྟོག་ [205] འདོད་པ་རྟོག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡིན།

ཞེས་པ། རྟོག་པ་གཞི་ལ་མ་གྲུབ་པའི་ཕྱིར། མི་རྟོག་པ་ཆེད་དུ་བྱེད་པ་ནི། མི་རྟོག་པ་ལ་ཆགས་ཤིང་
རྟོག་པ་སྐྱོང་བའི་འཛིན་པ་དང་མ་བྲལ་བས་སྐྱར་ཡེངས་པའི་སྒོམ་པའོ།

འོ་ན་ཇི་ལྟར་བསྒོམ་སྐྱེས་པ་ལ།

ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ཉིད་མི་རྟོག་རྟོག་ལས་འདས།

15 རྟོག་དང་མི་རྟོག་གཉིས་གཚིག་གི་མཐའ།

ཞེས་པ། ཇི་བཞིན་པ་ཉིད་ནི་ཡེ་ཕྱི་མོ་ནས་མི་རྟོག་པས་མི་རྟོག་པར་བྱེད་པ་དང་། རྟོག་པ་སྐྱོང་བའི་ཐ་
སྟོན་ལས་གོལ་བའི་ཕྱིར། གཉིས་གསུམ་མི་ཕེབས་ཏེ་མཐར་འགྱུར་རོ། འདས་ན་རྟོག་རྟོག་པ་ལས་མི་
རྟོག་པར་གྱུར་པ་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ། སྐྱ་དུགས་བྲལ་བར་རིག་པ་རང་སྐྱད་བ་མ་གཡོས་པར་སྒོམ་པའོ།

འདབྱིངས་རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་ཐིག་ལེ་བསྟན་པ་ནི།

20 རྣམ་རྟོག་སྒོམ་པ་བྱང་ཚུབ་སྦྱིང་པོ་ནི།

ཀྱུན་གཞི་རྣམ་དག་རྣམ་ཤེས་རྣམ་པར་དག

21 རྣམ་ཤེས། An erased *sa*-post-postscript after *mam* is visible in NKJ. This has been fully removed in NKM.

Since all that appears indefinitely as cyclic existence (Skt. *saṃsāra*) and woe-transcendence (Skt. *nirvāṇa*) is from the self-originated state and is not an essence, it is phenomena's open dimension.

The utter purity of the three realms, unoriginated and unborn,
Does not referentially image a centre or periphery and transcends concepts.

Aside from being a name, there is no essence that can be established with regard to cyclic existence; when one definitely realizes that [cyclic existence] is reality-as-such, whatever appears is not seized in terms of an essence. Since it is non-dual, it transcends the discursive thoughts relating to the three limitations: the seminal nucleus of reality-as-such is the suchness wherein all phenomena are born in an uncontrived manner.

Regarding the deviations of meditation,

Meditating on non-conceptuality as an antidote to concepts
Is the great concept of desiring non-conceptuality. [NKJ 205.1; NKG
179.5]

Because there is no basis that could be established with regard to concepts, to deliberately implement non-conceptuality is attachment to non-conceptuality. Since one is not free from grasping at the relinquishing of concepts, such meditation will again be distracted.

Well, if you wonder how you should meditate, [it is replied,]

Phenomena's open dimension transcends the concept of non-conceptuality:
Both concepts and non-conceptuality are mere verbal limitations.

Being as it is, primordially and fundamentally, is non-conceptual. Hence, it liberates from the designations of implementing non-conceptuality and of relinquishing concepts. Both are limiting and do not get it. Meditation is not about turning the conceptual into the non-conceptual. Rather, it is about not wavering from the intrinsic illumination of awareness that is free from appellations.

Showing the seminal nucleus of the open dimension's utter purity,

Conceptual elaborations are the quintessence of enlightenment:
The universal ground is utterly pure; consciousness is utterly pure.

ཁེས་པ། རྟོག་པ་ཐ་དད་པར་གྱེས་པ་ཉིད་ན་ངོ་བོ་མ་ངེས་པས་ཅིར་ཡང་སྤང་བ་ལ་རང་རྒྱུད་པ་མེད་
 དེ་བྱང་རྒྱུ་སྟིང་པོར་སངས་རྒྱས་པའི་ [206] དོན་ནི། གཞི་དོན་གྱི་ཀུན་གཞི་དགུ་པ་མཐའ་རྣམས་
 བལ་བ་ཚོགས་བརྒྱད་ཀྱི་རྟོག་པའང་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚེན་པོར་རྗེ་མ་མེད་པར་གསལ་བའོ།

ཡེ་ཤེས་རྣམ་དག་ཚོས་རྣམས་རྣམ་པར་དག།

5 ཁེས་པ། རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྤྲོ་བས་མ་ལས་འདས་པ་དེ་ཉིད་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

འདས་ཚོག་རྣམ་དག་ལྟ་རྣམས་རྣམ་པར་དག།

ཁེས་པ། འདིར་བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོ་བསྐྱེད་མཚམས་དང་བལ་བས་ཕྱག་རྒྱ་བཞིའི་རྟོག་པའང་མེད་
 དེ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་སྤང་བའོ། །དེས་ན་གཞན་པ་མེད་པའི་སྒྲ་དྲུགས་ཅོམ་ལས་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་རིག་པའི་
 ཕྱིར་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་པ་མེད་དེ་སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་ལས་གྲོལ་བའོ།

10 ལྟ་བ་རྣམ་དག་སྦྱོད་པ་རྣམ་པར་དག།

ཁེས་པ། ལྟ་བ་གཟའ་གཏང་མེད་པས་སྦྱོད་པ་ལ་ཟིན་ཆགས་མེད་དེ་ཡ་མ་ཆ་བའོ།

ཁེས་པ་ཅན་རྣམ་དག་སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམ་པར་དག།

8 རྩ་དྲགས། em. bla dags (orth.)

When different conceptions disperse, their essence is uncertain, and however they appear, they are without self-sufficiency. The meaning of awakening to quintessential enlightenment is that [NKJ 206.1; NKG 180.4] the ninth,⁴⁹ the universal ground as absolute basis, is free from limitations; even the conceptions of the eight consciousnesses⁵⁰ are stainlessly clear as great wisdom.

Wisdom is utterly pure; phenomena are utterly pure.

Self-originated wisdom transcends speaking and thinking because it is phenomena's open dimension.

The pledge is utterly pure; the deities are utterly pure.

Integral being is free from boundaries to guard and is without any conceptions relating to the four seals:⁵¹ it is the intrinsic illumination of wisdom. Without even the appellation of otherness since everything is intrinsic awareness, there is no aspect of duality, and one is liberated from an objective scope.

The view is utterly pure; conduct is utterly pure.

Since the view is without thematic focus, there is no attachment towards conduct and one is unsurprised⁵² about it.

Sentient beings are utterly pure; Buddhas are utterly pure.

49 The universal ground is here counted as ninth to signify its standing aloof from the eight consciousnesses of Yogācāra that are mentioned below. On the difference between the universal ground and the universal ground consciousness in Dzogchen thought, with particular reference to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe's *Armour Against Darkness*, see Higgins 2013: 193–195.

50 Viz. the five sense-consciousnesses, the psychic consciousness (Skt. *manovijñāna*), the afflicted psychic consciousness (Skt. *kliṣṭamanovijñāna*) and the universal ground consciousness (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*).

51 Viz. the great seal (Skt. *mahāmudrā*), the seal of the doctrine (Skt. *dharmamudrā*), the seal of the pledge (Skt. *samayamudrā*) and the seal of activity (Skt. *karmamudrā*), which are associated with the deity's body, speech, mind and activities, respectively.

52 *Ya ma cha ba* in Tibetan. While this term is not found in any of the dictionaries, Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin comments that it refers to a state of being unconcerned, of not being surprised about anything—hence my translation as 'unsurprised'. The same expression also occurs towards the end of our text; cf. NKJ 229.3.

ཞེས་པ། གཞི་ལ་འགྲོ་བ་རིགས་དུག་མིང་ལས་ངོ་བོར་མ་གྲུབ་པས་མ་གྲོལ་བ་གྲོལ་བར་གྱུར་
པ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

རྒྱ་རྣམས་རྣམ་དག་འབྲས་བུ་རྣམ་པར་དག

ཞེས་པ། རྒྱ་རྣམས་ངོ་བོ་རང་བྱུང་ [207] ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་དག་པས་དེས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ངོ་བོ་མི་དམིགས་པའི་
5 ཕྱིར་རོ།

རྟེན་འབྱུང་རྣམ་དག་འབྲེལ་བ་རྣམ་པ་དག

ཞེས་པ། རྒྱ་འབྲས་དག་པས་རྒྱ་རྒྱེན་ཉིད་མ་སྐྱེས་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ཕྱིར་གཞི་ལ་རྟེན་ཅིང་ཕྱི་མ་སྤང་
རྒྱ་མེད་པས་ངོ་བོ་རྒྱ་འབྲས་ཚུལ་དུ་འབྲེལ་བའང་བཙལ་གྱིས་མི་རྟོན་དོ། །དེས་ན་སེམས་ཙམ་དབུ་
མ་གསང་སྲགས་དང་། །འཇིག་རྟེན་ལམ་ལ་ལྟ་མི་དང་། །ཉན་ཐོས་རང་རྒྱལ་གོལ་སྐྱིབ་རྣམས། །འོལ་
10 བརྒྱ་ཤལ་བ་ཡུག་ཅིག་ཚུལ་ཞེས་པའི་དོན་ཏོ།

འབདག་མེད་གཉིས་མེད་བྱང་ཚུབ་སྟིང་པོ་ལས།

འདབྱིངས་དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་མཉམ་སྦྱར་མ་གཏོགས་པ།

ཚོས་ཉིད་ཚོས་ཚོལ་ཚོས་རྣམ་གཞན་ན་མེད་།

ཞེས་པ། དེ་ལྟར་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོའི་རྣམ་པའང་མི་རྟོན་པས་ཐ་དད་པ་མི་རྟོན་པའི་སྟིང་པོ་བྱང་ཚུབ་
15 ཀྱི་གཞི་དེ། ཐ་སྤྲད་དུ་གོ་མཇལ་བྱེད་པ་ཙམ་ལས། །ངོ་བོས་རང་རིག་པ་བྱང་ཚུབ་སྟིང་པོས་འབྲས་

4 རྒྱ་རྣམས་] NKG 181.4 introduces the hypercorrection *rgyud nas*.

In terms of the ground, there is no essence, other than being mere names, that could be established with regard to the six classes of wandering beings, so there is nobody unliberated to liberate.

The cause is utterly pure; the effect is utterly pure.

Causally,⁵³ the essence is pure as self-originated wisdom. [NKJ 207.1; NKG 181.4] Therefore, one does not referentially image an essence that would need to be generated [separately].

Dependent origination is utterly pure; its connections are utterly pure.⁵⁴

Since cause and effect are pure, wisdom is not produced from causes and conditions. Hence, there is no cause for it to appear later by depending on a ground. Its essence cannot be found by searching for its connections in the manner of cause and effect. Therefore, the deviations and obscurations of the Cittamātra, Madhyamaka, secret Mantrayāna, the worldly vehicles of gods and men, the auditors and independent victors are each said to be like one of the tines of a hundred-tined harrow.⁵⁵

Aside from the quintessence of enlightenment, which is selfless and
non-dual,
And unless one is poised in the union of the open dimension and wis-
dom,
There is no other principle that might be searched for as the principle of
reality-as-such.

Hence, since there is no aspect of integral being that can be found, the ground of quintessential enlightenment cannot be gained through something different. Because essentially intrinsic awareness is the quintessence of enlightenment, no result, aside from a mere terminological understanding, will be

53 NKJ has *rgyu nas*, but NKG introduces the erroneous *rgyud nas*, which does not fit the context.

54 This line concerns the notion of interdependence (Skt. *pratītyasamutpāda*) and plays on the individual words making up the term in Tibetan.

55 I take the expression *rol brgya shal ba yug cig* to refer to the tines of a harrow, following the definitions of *rol* and of *shal ba* provided by rNam rgyal tshe ring 2001: 536, 555–556. On the other hand, cf. Valby 2014: 39, who interprets it as “one bead on a rosary with one hundred beads.”

བྱུང་ཚེས་གཞན་ནས་གཉེར་བས་འབྲས་བུ་རྣམས་མི་ཐོབ་སྟེ། ཚུ་བ་གནས་སུ་ལུང་དན་འབྲམས་
པའི་ [208] ལྷིང་ལོ། །དེ་བས་ན་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོར་ལྷུན་གྲིས་གྲུབ་པར་དེས་སོ།

།རྒྱ་ཉིད་འབྲས་བུར་དེས་པ་ནི།

རྒྱ་འབྲས་དོན་རྟོགས་ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་སྟེ།

5

།མཁུན་ལྡན་ལྷན་སེལ་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་དང་མཉམ།

།ཞེས་པ། རྒྱ་སེམས་ཉིད་བཤད་པ་ལྟར། རང་བྱུང་གི་སངས་རྒྱས་སུ་མཇལ་བས་མི་དམིགས་པ་
བཞིན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཏུ་རང་སྣང་བའི་ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་དབྱེར་མེད་པ་རྣམས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁུན་པའི་
ཡེ་ཤེས་མ་རིག་པ་ཀ་ནས་དག་པར་སོན་པ་ཉིད་དོ།

།དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་ལས་བྱུང་བ་ནི།

10

།སྐྱེ་མེད་འགག་མེད་ཚོ་འཕྲུལ་སྣ་ཚོགས་འབྱུང།

།ཞེས་པ་ཤེས་རབ་ཆེན་པོས་མཇལ་བས་ཐབས་སྤྲུགས་རྗེའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་རང་ལ་འཆར་ནས་དོན་
མཛད་པ་ནི། རྒྱུད་གཅིག་ནས་སྐྱེ་བའང་མེད་ལ་སྐྱད་ཅིག་མའི་མི་རྟོག་པའང་མེད་པར་རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་
ཤེས་ཅིར་ཡང་སྣང་བ་ལ་ཕྱོགས་མེད་པའོ།

།དེའི་རྩལ་ནི།

15

མཐུན་འཇུག་འཚོམ་པའི་སྤྱད་པ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ན།

།བདག་དང་གཞན་དོན་ཡེ་ནས་ལྷན་སྲུབ་ཀྱང།

།སྤྲུགས་ [209] རྗེ་ཆེན་པོས་འགྲོ་དོན་རྟོགས་པར་མཛད།

།ཞེས་པ། གདུལ་བྱའི་བསམ་པ་དང་མཐུན་པར་བྱ་བ་མེད་པས་དོན་མཛད་པས་རྒྱུད་མི་གསོན་པའི་
མཛད་པ་རྒྱབས་པོ་ཆེ་ཤིན་ཏུ་བབ་པ་ནི། བཤད་པ་ལྟར་དོན་གཉིས་སྲུབ་ཟིན་ཀྱང་དེའི་གདེང་མ་རྗེད་
པ་རྣམས་དོན་མཐར་ཕྱིན་པར་མཛད་པ་ལ་དུམ་བུ་མེད་དོ།

20

obtained by pursuing the principles of the fruition elsewhere, since at root this is like roaming in a dismal valley. [NKJ 208.1; NKG 182.3] It is therefore certain that integral being is spontaneously accomplished.

The cause is definitively the effect:

Realizing the meaning of cause and effect corresponds to means and acumen:

Endowed with this knowledge, one is equal to the enlightened mind that dispels darkness.

This explains that the cause is mind-as-such. By encountering self-originated awakening, everything is self-illuminated without imaging in the inseparability of means and acumen, and one arrives at the omniscient wisdom wherein ignorance is alpha-pure.

The configurations that originate from the enlightened mind
Occur as variegated miracles, without birth and without halt.

When encountered through great acumen, the means, the configurations of compassion, arise of their own accord: in this way, one encounters absolute meaningfulness. Self-originated wisdom, which is not produced from a single continuum and is not a momentary non-discursiveness, appears as anything and is unbiased.

Its manner is as follows:

In the ocean of harmonious and fitting conduct,
The purposes of self and others are primordially and spontaneously accomplished;
The purpose of wandering beings is completed through great compassion.

[NKJ 209.1; NKG 183.2] Since these purposes are achieved through non-action, which is compatible with the thoughts of those to be tamed, the veritably profound great energy of one's deeds is not wasted. Although, as explained above, the two purposes are already accomplished, for the sake of those who haven't gained confidence in this, there is no incoherence⁵⁶ in bringing them to culmination.

⁵⁶ Lit. "there is no fraction" (*dum bu med*).

།དེའི་ཕྱིར།

མིང་ཚིག་སྒྲོན་མས་དོན་གྱི་གསེར་མཚོན་པ།

།ཚིག་གི་རྣམ་གྲངས་གསུང་གི་འཁོར་ལོ་ཅན།

།ཞེས་པ་དམན་པའི་ཆེད་དུ་འཇུག་མོས་རི་བོང་ཅན་ལྟ་བུར་ཚིག་གིས་དོན་མཚོན་པའང་དོན་ཅི་འདྲ་

5 བར་སྒོ་ཁྲིད་ནས་སྤང་བར་བྱེད་པ་ནི་ཡི་གེ་གྲངས་གསུང་གི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་དང་ལྡན་པའོ།

།མཚོན་པའི་དོན་དང་ཡི་གེ་ནི།

།ཡོད་མེད་མཐའ་ལས་འདས་པ་ཀུན་གཞི་ནི།

།མིང་ཚིགས་ཚིག་གི་རྣམ་གྲངས་སྤྱང་པའི་བདག

།ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པ་ལྟར་མཐའ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་རང་རིག་པ་ནི། ལྡེ་མིག་མང་པོའི་ཐ་རམས་ལྟ་བུར་གྱུར་

10 པའི་ཕྱིར་དང་། མཚོན་བྱེད་ཀྱང་དེ་ཉིད་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

།ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་དེ་ [210] བཞེན་མེད་མ་ཡིན།

།ཞེས་པ། བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ལས་གྲོལ་བའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

།རྟག་པར་མ་ཡིན་ཆད་པའི་མཐར་མ་ཡིན།

།ཞེས་པ། ཐེར་བྱུག་མེད་པར་ལྷུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

15 །བདག་ཏུ་མ་ཡིན་མཚོན་མར་འཛིན་པ་མེད།

།ཞེས་པ་རྣམ་པ་མེད་པར་འདུ་ཤེས་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བྲལ་བའོ།

།སུ་སྟེགས་ཀྱི་གོལ་ས་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

།སྱི་ནང་གཟུང་འཛིན་དངོས་པོར་གང་རྟོག་པ།

།མི་མཁས་རྗེ་དང་པས་སུ་སྟེགས་རྟག་ཞེ་ན།

20 །སྣ་ཚོགས་སྤང་བཞེན་མེད་པར་གང་སྟོབ་བ།

།མེད་པར་མཐོང་བས་སུ་སྟེགས་ཆད་པའི་ལམ།

།རྟག་ཆད་གཉིས་གར་གང་གི་སྟོ་ཞེན་པ།

།དོན་གྱི་སྟིང་པོ་བཞེད་ལས་གོལ་བར་གསུངས་པ།

6 ཡི་གེ། em. *yi gi* (orth.); see NKG 183.6. 15 བདག་ཏུ། em. *bdag du* (gramm.); see M 612.3, NKM 210.2, NKG 184.2. 23 སྟིང་པོ། em. *sn̄yi po* (orth.); see M 612.5, NKG 184.4.

Therefore,

The lamp of names and words indicates the gold of the meaning.⁵⁷
Verbal expositions are the wheeled vehicle of awakened speech.

For the sake of the lowly, the words indicating the meaning are like a finger pointing to the moon: they direct their intellect to the meaning. Illuminating it, such written words are associated with the configuration of awakened speech.

The meaning indicated and written words:

The universal ground, transcending the limitations of existence and
non-existence,
Is a custodian comprising names, words and verbal expositions.

As explained, intrinsic awareness, which is free from limitations, is like a lock that has many keys; the indicators [i.e. names and words] are these very [keys].

It is neither existent nor non-existent. [NKJ 210.1; NKG 184.1]

This is because the enlightened mind liberates from the two truths.

It is neither permanent, nor is it the limitation of nihilism.

It is spontaneously present without being something perdurable.

It is not a self, and there is no grasping at signs.

Being without aspects, it is free from all notions.

Showing the deviations of the heretics,

Outer and inner, grasper and grasped—whatever is conceptualized as a
reified entity—

The heretics, being unskilful and dull-witted, call it permanent.

[On the other hand,] saying that what variously appears is non-existent,

The path of the nihilistic heretics sees everything as non-existent.

Whether one's intellectual preference be for eternalism or nihilism,

Both deviate from what is maintained to be the quintessential meaning.

57 A variant of these two lines of the root text is quoted in the SM 13; see Esler 2018: 37 (translation), 404 (critical edition).

ཞེས་པ། གོ་སྐབ་བློ་སྐྱེ་ཇི་བཞིན་སྐྱར་རོ།
 ཡང་དེ་ཡིན་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་པའི་ཆེ་བ་བསྟན་པ་ནི།
 གང་ཡང་མ་ཡིན་སྐྱོ་ཚོགས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་དོ།

ཞེས་པ། ཚོས་སོ་ཅོག་རྣམ་པའི་མཚན་ཉིད་དང་བྲལ་བའི་ཕྱིར་ཚོས་ཉིད་ཡིན་པའོ།
 5 །ཤེས་པའི་རིས་ཅན་བྱང་ཆུབ་སྣོང་པོ་ནི།

ཞེས་པ་ [211] ནི། ཤེས་པ་དང་ལྡན་པའི་འགྲོ་བ་རྒྱལ་ཉིད་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཚེན་པོ་ཡིན་པའི་དོན་གང་ཞེ་ན།
 འོད་གསལ་ལ་དོན་རྟོགས་རྫོགས་ཚེན་རྣམ་འབྱོར་པ་དོ།
 །ཡི་ཤེས་རྣམ་དག་ལྷན་སྦྲུང་གྲུབ་པའི་མཐའ།

ཞེས་པ། ཐིག་ལེ་ཚེན་པོར་མཇུག་པའི་སྐྱེས་བུ་རིག་པའི་སྦྱོང་ཡུལ་དག་པས་རིམ་ལྡན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་
 10 ཏུ་རྒྱས་བཅའ་པས་འབྲས་བུའོ།

།རེ་དོགས་མེད་པས་དབྱིངས་ལ་དབྱིངས་ཉིད་གསལ།
 །སངས་རྒྱས་གཞན་ནས་ཚོལ་བ་གྲུབ་མཐའ་མེད།
 །ཀུན་གཞི་རྣམ་པར་ཤེས་པ་ཡི་ནས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།

ཞེས་པ། བདག་ཉིད་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རེ་དོགས་གཞི་ལས་འདས་པས་རང་རིག་སྤྱི་མཐའ་མེད་པ་ཉིད་
 15 ཏུ་རིག་པ་རང་གསལ་བ་ལ། ལོགས་སྤྱི་ཚོལ་བ་ནི་ལོ་རྒྱུ་ལེ་ལྟེན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རང་རིག་རྒྱ་པ་ཚོས་
 རྐྱར་བསྟན་ཏོ།

9–10 ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་ཏུ། em. *lhun gyis grub du* (gramm.); see NKM 211.2 and NKG 185.2. 14 གཞི། em. *bzhi* (hom.); the emendation is suggested by Valby 2014: 43.

These lines are easy to understand, linguistically speaking.
Showing the greatness that awakening is that which is,

Variegated [appearances], being nothing in themselves, are the open dimension of phenomena.

Since all phenomena are free from aspectual characteristics, they are reality-as-such.

The categories of cognition are the quintessence of enlightenment. [NKJ 211.1; NKG 184.6]

The six classes of wandering beings, endowed as they are with cognition, are great enlightenment. If it be asked what this means, [it is replied,]

By realizing the meaning of luminosity, the *yogin* of the Great Completeness⁵⁸
Spontaneously unites with utterly pure wisdom—that is the tenet.

For a person who has encountered the great seminal nucleus, the scope of his awareness is purified and everything is sealed in spontaneous presence: that is the fruition.

Without hope or misgiving, the open dimension is clear to the open dimension itself;
One is without the tenets that involve searching for awakening elsewhere;
The universal ground consciousness is primordially the open dimension of phenomena.

Since it is one's integral identity, it transcends the ground⁵⁹ of hopes and misgivings: intrinsic awareness is intrinsically clear and aware without extremes. Because it will not be found by mistakenly searching for it elsewhere, the totality⁶⁰ of intrinsic awareness is revealed as the body of reality.

58 These two lines from the root text are quoted in the SM 324; see Esler 2018: 263.

59 The Tibetan has *bzhi* ('four'), but here I follow Valby 2014: 43 in reading *gzhi* ('ground') instead.

60 The Tibetan reads *rgu pa*. On this term, see above, note 15.

།ཡེ་ནས་ལྷན་གྲུབ་སངས་རྒྱས་མངོན་སུམ་ན།
 །གང་དུ་སྐྱེ་ལ་སངས་རྒྱས་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས།
 །འབྲུལ་འཁོར་ཉམས་ཐག་རིལ་གས་སྒྲིགས་རྒྱ་རྟེན་པ་འདྲ།
 །སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ལ་ཚོལ། [212]

5

།རྒྱ་མཚོའི་དབྱིངས་ནས་སྒྲིགས་རྒྱ་རྟེན་པ་བཞིན།
 །ཞེས་པ། ཡོ་ག་སྤི་པ་དངོས་གྲུབ་ལྷ་ལ་རེ་བ་གོལ་བ་ནི། མི་རྟེན་པ་དང་བདག་མ་མཐོང་བ་དཔེ་ཡིས་
 །གསལ་ལོ། །འོ་ན་གཤམ་ཉི་མི་འགྲུབ་པས་བཀའ་དུ་མ་ལས་གསུངས་པ་འདེད་ཅོད་ཅོད་དོ་བར་དོགས་
 །པ་ལ།

དེ་ལྟ་བུས་ན་སངས་རྒྱས་ཐོབ་འདོད་ན།

10

།ཉིང་འཛིན་རྒྱལ་པོ་བྱང་རྒྱུབ་སེམས་ལ་གསལ།
 །ཞེས་པ། སུ་ཞིག་འབྲས་བུ་འདོད་ན་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཛིན་ཉིད་ལ་ཡོད་པས་བསྐྱོམས་
 །ཤིག་པའོ། །དེ་ཅི་འཕྱིར་ཞེ་ན།

བརྟགས་ན་བདག་ཉིད་སངས་རྒྱས་མངོན་སུམ་སྟེ།

།ཞེས་པ། མཚོན་ཉིད་བརྟགས་ན་རང་རིག་ཉིད་འབྲས་བུར་མངོན་སུམ་ཚང་མར་སྣང་བའོ།

15

།མཉམ་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་མཉམ་ཉིད་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱ།
 །ཞེས་པ། མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་ལ་མ་ཚགས་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚེན་པོའི་བདག་ཉིད་ནི། ཚོས་སྐྱ་ཚེན་པོ་སྟེ་རང་
 །རིག་པ་ཉིད་དོ།

1 མངོན་སུམ། em. *mngon gsum* (hom., orth.); see M 613.1 and NKG 185.4. 6 མ་མཐོང་བ། The verbal particle *ba* is inserted as a correction above the first line in NKJ. In NKM, the end of the line has been rewritten to incorporate this correction more seamlessly into the text. 14 མངོན་སུམ། em. *mngon gsum* (hom., orth.); see NKG 186.3.

If awakening is actually perceived as primordial and spontaneously present,⁶¹

Where might there be a Buddha to pray to?

The wretched [beings caught up in the] mechanisms of confusion are like deer chasing after a mirage.

Having that which is awakened search for awakening [NKJ 212.1; NKG 185.5]

Is like a person within the ocean chasing after a mirage.

The deviation of the external yogas, which consists in placing one's hope for the accomplishments in a deity, is clear from this example: [the accomplishments] are not found, and one fails to see them in oneself. In that case, if there is nothing to accomplish, that which is declared in numerous transmitted injunctions is meaningless. To such misgivings [it is replied,]

If one desires to attain enlightenment right now,

The king of concentration is clear in the enlightened mind.

Whoever desires the fruition must meditate on the concentration of omniscience. If it be asked why, [it is replied,]

When examined, one's integral identity is actually perceived as awakening.

When its characteristics are examined, intrinsic awareness itself appears as the fruition, according to the criterion of actual perception.

The king of equality is the equality of the body of reality.

The integral identity of great wisdom is not attached to equality; the great body of reality is intrinsic awareness.

61 The first three lines of this citation from the root text are quoted in the SM 340; see Esler 2018: 272.

།གསང་དང་གསང་ཚེན་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཞེས་བྱ་བ།

།སངས་རྒྱལ་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་རྩོགས་པ་ཉིད་ལ་འདུས། [213]

།ཞེས་པ། །གསང་བ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྩོགས་པ་དང་། གསང་ཚེན་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཡང་
གཞན་ན་མེད་དེ་ལྷན་གྲུབ་མངོན་དུ་བྱས་པའི་རིག་པ་ཉིད་ལ་མ་འདེམས་པར་རྩོགས་པའོ། །དེ་ཅིའི་ཕྱིར་
5 ཞེ་ན།

བཅོམ་ལྷན་བསོད་ནམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚོགས་རྩོགས་པ།

།མངོན་སུམ་མཚན་དང་དཔེ་བྱད་ལྷན་པ་བཞིན།

།ཞེས་པ། བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཐམས་ཅད་པའི་དངོས་གཞི་ཅན་ཉིད་སྐྱུ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་བདག་
9 ཉིད་པས་རང་རིག་པའི་མངོན་སུམ་དུ་ཇི་སྟེད་པའི་རྩིས་ལས་འདས་པའི་མཚན་དང་དཔེ་བྱད་མངའ་
10 བའོ། །དེ་ལྟར་མཇལ་ན་ས་ལ་བགོད་དུ་མེད་པར་ཡིད་ཆེས་པའོ།

།དམ་ཚིག་ནི།

ཚོས་ཉིད་ཡུམ་དང་སྟིང་རྩེ་ཚེན་པོ་ཡི།

།དབང་ཕྱུག་རྩོགས་པ་ཚེན་པོའི་དམ་ཚིག་ལ།

།ཡི་ནས་རྣམ་དག་བྱང་ཆུབ་སྟིང་པོ་ནི།

15 །རྒྱལ་བའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་མཉམ་དང་མི་གཉིས་གཅིག

7 མངོན་སུམ། em. *mngon gsum* (hom., orth.); see M 613.4 and NKG 186.6. 9 མངོན་སུམ། em. *mngon gsum* (hom., orth.); see NKG 187.1. 12 ཡུམ། em. *yul* (psych., visual); the emendation is suggested by Liljenberg 2012b: 170, n. 807.

The secret and greatly secret configurations
 Are included in the realization of the configuration of awakening.
 [NKJ 213.1; NKG 186.4]

The secret configurations are those of the body of complete enjoyment (Skt. *saṃbhogakāya*) and the greatly secret configurations are those that are spontaneously accomplished: these are not elsewhere but are actualized as spontaneously present; they are complete and unmixed in awareness. If it be asked why, [it is replied,]

The Hallowed One, having completed the accumulations of merit and
 wisdom,
 Is in actual perception endowed with the characteristics and illustrative
 attributes.⁶²

Since the enlightened mind, as the real ground of all configurations, is the integral identity of the two awakened bodies,⁶³ one possesses characteristics and attributes beyond reckoning as the actual perception of intrinsic awareness. When this is encountered, one can trust that there are no stages to traverse.

Regarding the pledges,

The pledge of the Great Completeness of
 The consort,⁶⁴ reality-as-such, and the overlord of great compassion
 Is primordial utter purity, the quintessence of enlightenment;
 It is equal to and non-dually one with the configuration of the Victori-
 ous One.

62 This refers to the thirty-two characteristics and eighty illustrative attributes of a great person. For a list of these, see Nāgārjuna 2007: 50–60.

63 Viz. the body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*) and the body of form (Skt. *rūpakāya*); the latter includes the enjoyment (Skt. *saṃbhogakāya*) and the emanation bodies (Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*).

64 Here I follow Liljenberg's proposed emendation of *yul* ('object') to *yum* ('consort'); see Liljenberg 2012b: 170, n. 807. In this way, the principles of emptiness (= reality-as-such) and compassion are connected to the female and male consorts, respectively, in a manner that fits the normative tantric associations of these terms.

།ཞེས་པ། ཨ་རུ་ཡོ་གའི་དམ་ཚིག་གསུམ་ངང་གིས་རྒྱབ་པས་རིས་དང་བྲལ་བ་ནི་ཨ་ཏི་ཡོ་
 གའི་དམ་ཚིག་བཞིར་སངས་ [214] རྒྱས་པས་གདོད་ནས་འདས་ཉམས་ལས་གྲོལ་བའི་བྱང་རྒྱབ་
 སེམས་ནི། སངས་རྒྱས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་འོ་བོར་བཞུགས་པའོ།

།མཉེས་ལྡན་དངོས་གྲུབ་སྤངས་ན་ཐོབ་པར་ངེས།

5 །ཞེས་པ། དབྱེས་པ་ཚེན་པའི་དོན་རྟོགས་པའི་ལྟ་བ་ཅན་གྱིས་རིག་པས་ཇི་ལྟར་བསྐྱུར་བར་འགྲུབ་
 པའི་ཕྱིར་དོ།

།འཇིག་རྟེན་གསལ་བྱེད་ཉིམ་འི་དགྲིལ་འཁོར་བཞིན།

།གྲགས་ལྡན་སྟོང་ཁམས་ཡོངས་སུ་འབྱུང་བར་འགྱུར།

10 །ཞེས་པ། དཔེ་ཉིམ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ཤར་བ་ལྟར་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་ཀུན་ཏུ་བདལ་བའི་དོན་ངེས་པར་མཇལ་བ་
 ཡོད་ན་སྟོང་གི་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཉིད་སྐྱེ་དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་རང་ཤར་ནས་གང་དུ་འང་མ་བགོད་པར་འཁོར་བའི་
 རྣམས་བསྐྱེད་ལས་ཐར་པའི་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཐོབ་པར་འགྱུར་བའོ།

།འོན་དེ་ཡུན་ཇི་ཅིམ་ན་འགྲུབ་ཞེ་ན།

རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལྷ་དུམ་མ་རའི་དཔེ་བཞིན་དུ།

།བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་ནི་བརྒྱ་ལམ་ལན་ཅིག་ན།

15 །མི་གཏོང་ཏིང་འཛིན་བསྐྱོམས་ན་འགྲུབ་པར་འགྱུར།

4 མཉེས] em. *gnyes* (orth.); see M 613.6. Cf. NKG 187.4, which introduces the hypercorrection *gnyis*.

The three pledges of Anuyoga⁶⁵ are inherently and consummately realized, free from partiality. Awakening, as the fourfold pledge of Atiyoga,⁶⁶ [NKJ 214.1; NKG 187.3] is the enlightened mind, which is originally liberated from transgression and impairment and abides as the essence of all the Buddhas.

Gladly⁶⁷ receiving the accomplishment, one certainly obtains [the fruition].

Those who have the view that realizes the meaning of great delight can accomplish any transformation through awareness. Hence, it is said,

Just as the disc of the sun lights up the world,
So the sun⁶⁸ manifests in the entirety of the third order chiliocosm.

According to this example, just as the sun shines everywhere, so the enlightened mind expands everywhere. When this meaning has been encountered with certainty, the chiliocosm itself intrinsically arises as the awakened bodies and wisdoms. Without it being necessary to journey anywhere, one attains the accomplishment of release from the sufferings of cyclic existence.

Well, if you ask how long it takes to accomplish this, [it is replied,]

As in the example of the *udumbara* lotus,
The enlightened mind is a rarity,⁶⁹
If without giving up one meditates in concentration, it is accomplished.

65 According to Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, the three pledges of Anuyoga are the open dimension as the female consort, awareness as the male consort and great bliss as their son. Cf. the related discussion in Dorje 2012: 86. Valby 2014: 46, n. 69 gives an alternative explanation concerning the purities of awakened body, speech and mind, which correspond to visualizing the form of the deity, repeating the spell and remaining in concentration.

66 The four pledges of Atiyoga are absence (*med pa*), spontaneity (*lhun grub*), evenness (*phyal ba*) and unity (*gcig pu*). See Guenther 1984: 238, n. 24; Dorje 2002: 90; and Hillis 2003: 263–265. The *locus classicus* for the four pledges is, of course, Longchenpa's 14th-century discussion in his *gNas lugs mdzod* [*Treasury of the Abiding Mode*]; for translations of this text into English, see Longchen Rabjam 1998 and Dowman 2006.

67 NKJ has the erroneous *gnyes*, whereas NKG proposes *gnyis* instead. I have emended NKJ's reading to *mnyes*, following the root text in Liljenberg 2012b: 246.

68 The Tibetan reads *grags ldan* ('the renowned'), which corresponds to the Sanskrit *ravi*, an epithet of the sun. See Negi 1993: vol. 2, 526; and Amarasiṃha 2008: 56 (ch. 1, svargavarga, v. 31).

69 Lit. "once in a hundred times" (*brgya lam lan cig*).

ཞེས་པ། གོ་སྤྱོད་ལེ་ལོའི་དབྱ་བཅོམ་པའི་ཕྱིར་ཏེ། རྒྱལ་ [215] བ་ལ་བཏོས་པས་དུས་སྤོན་
གྱི་སྐབ་པ་གཞན་ནས་མི་ཚོའི་ཏེ། འགྲུབ་པར་བྱར་མེད་པའི་དོན་གྲུངས་སུ་གྱུར་པ་ལ་བྱའོ།

འབྲུང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་བསྐྱོན་པའི་ཚོ་འབྲུལ་པའི་སྤོན་ནི།

གལ་ཏེ་ཆགས་སྤང་སྤང་དོར་སྤོ་སྤྱེས་ཏེ།

5

འབྲུལ་སེམས་རྒྱན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཅིག་འཕྲོས་འགྱུར་ན།

འབྲུ་མེད་བྱང་རྒྱལ་དོན་ལས་འགལ་བའི་ཕྱིར།

རྣམ་ཅིག་མ་ལ་འགྲུབ་འགྱུར་སེམས་འདི་ལ།

འཕྲོག་ཏེ་ག་གསོག་ཞུགས་འབྲུལ་པའི་དབང་གིས་བརྒྱལ།

འབེན་ཐག་ཆད་འགྱུར་ཉེ་བར་འགྲུབ་མི་འགྱུར།

10

ཞེས་པ། སུ་ཞིག་དུག་གསུམ་གྱི་རྒྱུས་སྤོང་ལེན་བྱས་པའི་ལྷ་བ་ལོར་བའི་རྒྱན་གྱིས། ཞེ་སྤང་ལོང་
ལོ་བྱེད་པ་ནི། སྤང་དོར་མེད་པ་དང་མི་མཐུན་པས། དེས་འགྲུབ་པའི་རྣམ་ཅིག་གིས་རྟེན་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་
སེམས་འདི་ལས་འགྲུང་བར་བྱས་ཏེ་དོན་བརྒྱལ་ནས་ཤིན་ཏུ་འགྲུང་བར་བྱེད་པས། དེ་ལྟར་མི་སྤྱད་
པའོ།

འབཅོམ་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ནི།

1 ཕྱིར་ཏེ། em. *phyi te* (gramm.); see NKG 188.2. 2 འགྲུབ་པར་བྱར་མེད། em. *grub par byar med* (tense)
9 བེན། em. *'ban* (hom.) as found in M 614.2 and NKJ. Cf. Liljenberg 2012b: 170, n. 812 and 246, n. 1485,
who suggests *'ben*. 12 འགྲུང་བར། em. *'gyangs bar* (tense, gramm.)

This is easy to understand: due to⁷⁰ having conquered the enemy of laziness, it is owing to the Victorious One that one [gains accomplishment and] does not seek elsewhere an accomplishment through timely aspirations.⁷¹ [NKJ 215.1; NKG 188.2] One should enter the stream of the absolute meaning, wherein there is nothing that needs to be achieved.

The defects of confusion when meditating on the enlightened mind:

If the intellect produces attachment and hatred, acceptance and aversion,

The conditions of the confused mind instantly proliferate.

Because this contradicts the meaning of the unsurpassed enlightened mind,

The mind that is to be momentarily accomplished

Enters into misconceptions and falsehood, overwhelmed by confusion.

When the rope holding the pitcher is cut,⁷² one is far from being accomplished.

Whoever has the view that the cause of the three poisons can be dealt with in terms of acceptance and relinquishing will, due to this mistaken condition, get caught up in hatred and anger in a way that is incompatible with the absence of acceptance and rejection. This will delay the moment of accomplishment, whereby the enlightened mind is found. The absolute meaning will be lost and [the fruition] will be veritably delayed. One should therefore not behave in such a way.

The qualities of perseverance:

⁷⁰ NKJ has the ungrammatical and nonsensical *phyi te*, which NKG corrects to *phyir te*.

⁷¹ Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin remarks that passed a certain stage, the accomplishment no longer depends on the practitioner's own efforts or aspirations but rather occurs thanks to the blessings of the lineage: the Victorious One as originator of the lineage and the master as its transmitter into the present. Of course, such an explanation is unlikely to appeal to those with a vested interest in reducing Buddhism in general and Dzogchen in particular to an individualistic system of 'self-development'. For more on this issue, see Esler 2016: 316–319.

⁷² Here I take *'ban* to be a homophonic error for *ben* ('pitcher'), which also allows one to make sense of the phrase *thag chad 'gyur* ('the rope is cut')—the use of the intransitive form *chad* along with the auxiliary verb *'gyur* make it difficult to read this phrase in the sense of 'to decide'. My translation hence differs from that proposed by Liljenberg 2012b: 170, n. 812, who takes *'ban* to be an error for *'ben* ('target', 'aim').

སློབ་ལྷན་ནམ་ཞིག་འགྲོད་པ་དྲག་སྐྱེས་ན།

།རང་སེམས་དཔང་དུ་བརྩུགས་ནས་མི་ [216] གཏོང་བ།

།བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་མཚོག་སློབ་ལ་ཤར་བ་ཡིན།

།ཞེས་པ། སྐལ་པ་ཅན་རྟོགས་ནས་མ་བསྐྱོམས་པ་ལ་འགྲོད་པས་རང་གིས་མ་སློལ་བར་བྱས་ཏེ

5 བརྩོན་པ་ནི་གོ་བའི་རྟོགས་སོ།

།དེའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ནི།

སྐལ་པར་བསགས་པའི་སྐྱེན་ནག་ཐིབས་པོ་ཡང་།

།རིག་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཉི་ཟེར་གྱིས།

།སྐད་ཅིག་ཡུད་ཅོམ་ཉིད་ལ་དངས་པར་འགྱུར།

10 །ཞེས་པ། ཐོག་མ་མེད་པ་ནས་ལས་སྤྱད་པའི་མ་རིག་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱང་བརྩོན་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡོང་བའི་ལྟ་

བ་ཟབ་མོས་མཐོང་བའི་འོད་ཟེར་གྱིས་སྤྱད་དུ་མེད་པར་གསལ་བས། སེ་གོལ་དང་ཉུངས་ཀར་བསྐྱོར་

བའི་ཡུན་ལ་ཀ་ནས་རང་དག་པ་ལ་གནས་བསྐྱུར་བ་དང་གཉེན་པོ་མེད་པའོ།

།སྐྱེ་བོ་འབྲུལ་པའི་རྒྱལ་ནི།

མི་ཤེས་སྐྱེན་མོངས་སྐལ་མེད་སྐྱེ་བོ་རྣམས།

15 །བདག་དང་གཞན་དུ་འཛིན་པའི་སེམས་རྒྱུད་ཀྱིས།

།རང་འཛིན་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྐྱེ་བུ་བཞུགས་པ་ལ།

།འབྲུལ་པས་སེ་སོར་བརྟགས་ཏེ་མཐོང་བས་ནོར།

Whenever the intelligent feel fierce regret,
 They do not give up, taking their own mind as witness, [NKJ 216.1;
 NKG 189.1]
 And the supreme enlightened mind dawns in their intellect.

When the fortunate comprehend [their shortcomings] and feel regret at not having meditated, they persevere instead of being embarrassed: that is an indication of their understanding.

The qualities are as follows:

The overcasting gloom accrued during aeons⁷³
 Becomes limpid in just a fleeting moment
 Thanks to the wisdom sunrays of the king of awareness.

Even the twofold ignorance⁷⁴ in which we engage since time without beginning does not need to be cleansed, for it is clarified by the sunrays seen in the profound view that comes from great perseverance. Hence, in the period it takes to snap one's fingers or to turn around a seed of white mustard, [ignorance] is intrinsically alpha-pure, without needing to transform it or to apply any antidotes.

The manner in which people get caught up in confusion:

Unfortunate people, unknowing, foolish and dull,
 All have a mental continuum which grasps at [the notions of] 'self' and
 'other'.
 Though naturally they abide as the awakened body of the Victorious
 One,
 They discern confusedly and are mistaken in what they see.

73 These three lines from the root text are quoted in the SM 486; see Esler 2018: 358.

74 This is not a common categorization. Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin comments that it may refer to the co-emergent ignorance and the imputing ignorance, i.e. the second and third kinds of ignorance spoken of in the context of the threefold classification of ignorance typical of the Dzogchen pith instruction section. For a detailed presentation of the latter classification, see Achard 2008: 81.

ཞེས་པ། མ་རིག་པའི་ལམས་གསུམ་པ་རྟོགས་པའི་དབང་ [217] མེད་པ་ཀུན་ནི། ཕྱོགས་རིས་
 མེད་པ་ལ་རིས་གཉིས་སུ་འཛིན་པའི་ཤེས་པ་རྣམས། འབྲུལ་ཚམ་ཉིད་ན་མིང་ཚམ་ལས་རོ་བོ་སངས་
 རྒྱས་པའི་རང་བཞིན་ལ་ཐ་དད་པ་མེད་བཞིན་དེ་དག་གིས་ཡེ་ནས་མ་བྲལ་བ་རོ་མ་ཤེས། གང་དུ་འང་
 མ་སྦས་པར་མ་མཐོང་བས་གཟུང་འཛིན་དུ་ཞེན་པ་ལོག་པར་འབྱུངས་པའོ།

5 །འོ་ན་རིས་གཉིས་སུ་འགྱུར་རོ་བར་དོགས་པ་ལ།
 ཡེ་ཤེས་སྦྱུ་མ་རྒྱལ་བ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་དང།
 །ལོག་རྟོག་སྦྱུ་མའི་རྒྱུད་ལྗེ་སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས།
 །ཀུན་རྫོབ་སྦྱུ་མའི་བྱུང་པར་བསམ་ཡས་ཀྱང་།
 །དོན་དམ་དབྱིངས་སུ་རང་བཞིན་ཡོངས་ཀྱིས་མཉམ།

10 ཞེས་པ། རྟོགས་པའི་རིག་པ་སྣང་བའི་བྱ་ངན་ལས་འདས་པ་དང་། ལོག་རྟོག་སྣང་བའི་འཁོར་བ་
 འབྲུལ་པའི་རོ་ལ་བཟང་ངན་བྱུང་པར་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆེ་ཡང་། གཉིས་ག་རྟོག་པ་བཟང་ངན་སྣང་བ་ལས་གཞི་
 དེ་ཅི་ཡང་མིན་པས་བཟང་ངན་མེད་པའོ། །དེ་ནི་སྦྱོར་མོང་གི་དོན་དམ་པ་དང་ལྷག་པའི་དོན་དམ་པ་
 ལས་གྲོལ་བའོ།

།ཚེས་རྣམས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡེ་ [218] ནས་སྟོང་བ་ཡི།

15 །དེ་ཚམ་ཉིད་ནས་མི་གནས་ལྷ་ངན་འདས།
 ཞེས་པ། དདོས་པོ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ཚེས་ཀུན་མཐའ་གསུམ་ལས་འདས་པ་ཉིད་ལའང་སློ་རྟེན་བཅའ་བ་
 མེད་པ་ནི། གང་དུ་བ་བྲལ་བ་ཆེན་པོའོ།

All those who in the three realms of ignorance⁷⁵ are without the power of realization [NKJ 217.1; NKG 189.6] have a cognition which grasps at that which is unbiased in a dualistically partial way. This is merely due to confusion, and they are essentially no different, other than in name, from the nature of awakening, yet they do not recognize that they are primordially indissociable from it. Because they do not see that which is not hidden in the first place, they roam about wrong-headedly, craving for grasper and grasped.

Regarding any misgivings one might have about dualistic partiality,

The oceans of Victorious Ones are a wisdom illusion;
The sentient beings of the five continua of becoming⁷⁶ are an illusion of misconception.

The infinite illusory distinctions of relative truth
Are by nature thoroughly equal as the open dimension of absolute truth.

Woe-transcendence, as the appearance of the awareness of realization, and cyclic existence and confusion, as the appearance of misconception, are on the face of it greatly distinct in terms of being good and bad. Yet aside from both appearing in terms of good and bad concepts, their ground is nothing at all, and there is neither good nor bad. This liberates from the common and eminent absolute truths.⁷⁷

All phenomena are primordially empty [NKJ 218.1; NKG 190.5]
And that alone is non-abiding transcendence.

All the phenomena pertaining to the two entities⁷⁸ transcend the three limitations,⁷⁹ and the intellect has no support it can set up; this is the great freedom from torment.

75 I take this to be a standard reference to the three realms of Buddhist cosmology; see above, note 9. On the other hand, cf. Valby 2014: 49, n. 72, who proposes that this signifies the three kinds of ignorance of the Dzogchen pith instruction section.

76 Viz. the gods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and denizens of hell. See Skorupski, Dorje and Nima 2002: 686.

77 This distinction between a common and an eminent absolute truth does not seem to appear elsewhere. Lopon P. Ogyan Tenzin comments that it may possibly refer to absolute truth as understood in terms of the view (= common absolute truth) and absolute truth as experienced through the practice of meditation (= eminent absolute truth).

78 This probably refers to subject and object.

79 For the three limitations, see above, Text 2, note 17.

།སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་བྱང་རྒྱུ་སྣོད་པོ་ལ།

།ཞེས་པ། ཡི་ནས་སྣོན་ཟིན་པའོ།

།རང་གི་སེམས་ཉིད་སངས་རྒྱས་མངོན་སུམ་ན།

།གཞན་ནས་བཙུལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་བ་རྩལ་ཙམ་མེད།

5 །ཞེས་པ། རང་གི་ཡིད་གསལ་བའི་སྣོན་མར་གྱུར་པས་ཡི་ཤེས་རང་ལས་བྱུང་བར་ཡིད་ཆེས་པའི་དོན་
བཤད་པ་སྟེ། དེ་ལྟར་མངོན་པར་སངས་རྒྱས་པའི་ཆེ་བས་རག་གཞན་དུ་མ་ལུས་པར་གདེང་རྒྱུ་ན་
སངས་རྒྱས་གཞན་ན་མེད་པར་ཡིད་ཆེས་པའོ།

།འོ་ན་འདིར་ལྟ་སྟོན་སྟོན་པ་གསུངས་པ་དག་ལ་དོན་མེད་པར་འགྱུར་རོ་སྟམ་པ་ལ།

།འགོ་བ་སྐལ་ལྷན་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དོན་ཙམ་དུ།

10 །དེ་ལྟ་བུས་ན་མི་བསྐྱབ་པ་འང་མིན།

།ཞེས་པ། ལས་འཕྲོ་ཅན་གྱིས་བྱ་བྱེད་མེད་པའི་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་དང་མ་བལ་བས་ཡལ་བར་གྱུར་ [219]
པ་མེད་པའོ།

།རྗེས་སུ་འཇུག་པའི་སྟོན་པ་ནི།

།དེ་ལྟར་དེ་བཞིན་ཆེས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་རིག་ན།

15 །མ་རིག་རྣམས་ལ་སྣོད་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོར་སྟེ།

།ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པའི་གོ་བས་དོན་མཛད་པའི་རྒྱལ་བའི་མཛད་པ་ཅི་འདྲ་བར་འདིར་གདེང་ཡོད་ན་
གདུང་བ་མེད་པའི་སྣོད་རྗེ་འཆར་བའོ།

།སྣོད་རྗེ་སྟེས་ནས་སྐྱུ་མའི་ཉིང་འཛོན་གྱིས།

།འགོ་དོན་ཐབས་ཀྱི་སྟོན་པ་སྣ་ཚོ་གས་སྟོན།

9 ཙམ་དུ། This line from the root text is omitted in the commentary: /bsgom zhing bsgrubs pa'i
tha snyad lung du bstan/ (as given in M 615.2). 16 མཛད་པའི། em. mdzod pa'i (psych., tense); see
NKG 191.5.

All sentient beings are the quintessence of enlightenment.

This is because they have already ripened primordially.

One's very own mind-as-such is the Buddha actually perceived;
There is not even an iota of a Victorious One to be sought elsewhere.

This explains that when the lamp of one's own psyche is clear, one should trust in self-originated wisdom. In this way, one assimilates with confidence that the greatness of such actually perceived awakening does not pivot on anything else and trusts that awakening is nowhere else.

In that case, if you think that the statements regarding the view, meditation and conduct are meaningless, [it is replied,]

[The terms]⁸⁰ are merely for the purpose of fortunate beings.
Therefore, it is not that there is nothing to accomplish.

Since the lucky are never free from the diligence of non-action, there is nothing for them to forsake. [NKJ 219.1; NKG 191.4]

Regarding the follow-up conduct,

Being thus aware of phenomena's open dimension,⁸¹
Great compassion is produced for the ignorant.

By understanding this explanation, if one has confidence that whatever the deeds of the Victorious One be, they implement meaningfulness,⁸² there arises great compassion that is without longing.

Having produced great compassion, through illusory concentration⁸³
One shows the variegated conduct of skilful means for the purpose of wandering beings.

80 A line from the root text is omitted at this point in the commentary in a way that alters the sense of the passage: "The terms for meditation and accomplishment are taught [merely for the purpose of fortunate beings]" (*bsgom zhing bsgrubs pa'i tha snyad lung du bstan*). See Liljenberg 2012b: 172, 247–248.

81 These two lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 445–446; see Esler 2018: 332.

82 NKJ has the erroneous *mdzod pa*, which NKG corrects to *mdzad pa*.

83 These two lines of the root text are also quoted in the SM 446; see Esler 2018: 332.

ཞེས་པ། བདག་ཉིད་མཛད་སྐྱོད་ཅིར་ཡང་རང་སྣང་བར་རྟོགས་པའི་དགོངས་པས་བརྩམ་བ་མེད་
པར་དོན་མཛད་པའོ།

ལདག་དང་གཞན་དུ་རྟོག་པ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

ཡེ་ནས་གཉིས་མེད་དོན་གཅིག་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྐྱུ།

5

ཚོས་སྐྱ་སྐྱེ་མེད་རྟོགས་ནས་འགོ་དོན་དུ།

སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོ་འཕྲུལ་ཡང་ནས་ཡང་དུ་འབྱུང་།

ཞེས་པ། འདིར་ཡེ་ནས་བདག་གཞན་གཉིས་མེད་པའི། བདག་ཉིད་ཚེན་པོར་གྱུར་པའི་གཏན་ཚིགས་
ཀྱིས་དོན་གོ་བ་བརྟན་ནས་མ་གོ་བའི་ཕྱིར་སྐྱགས་རྗེ་རྒྱན་ཆད་མེད་པར་འཆར་བའོ།

མཛད་པ་བཅུ་གཉིས་འགོ་དོན་མཐར་ཕྱིན་པ། [220]

10

ཅིར་ཡང་འགྱུར་བའི་གཟུགས་ཅན་སྐྱུལ་པའི་སྐྱུ།

སྐྱགས་རྗེའི་ཚོ་འཕྲུལ་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་ཅིར་ཡང་གསལ།

སྐྱགས་རྗེ་སྐྱུལ་པས་གདུལ་བྱ་ཀུན་འདུལ་ཡང་།

སྐྱུ་མའི་སློ་ཅན་སློམ་སེམས་རྩལ་ཡང་མེད།

15

ཞེས་པ། རྒྱལ་བ་བརྟམ་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་འདུལ་བ་བཞི་ཅིར་ཡང་སྣང་བས་དོན་མཛད་པ་ལས་ང་
རྒྱལ་མེད་པ་ལྟར། འདིར་སྐྱེས་བུ་གདེང་ཅན་ནི་རྒྱལ་བ་ཉིད་དང་དགོངས་པ་གཅིག་པས་དོན་མཛད་
ཅོམ་ན། མ་འདྲེས་ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་རྗོགས་པ་ལ་བཤད་པ་ལྟར་བདག་གཞན་མེད་པར་མཛམ་བ་ཅན་གྱི་
ཕྱིར། བྱས་པའི་ངར་འཛིན་པ་དང་བྲལ་བས་ཀུན་དུ་བཟང་པོའི་ཐིག་ལའོ།

དགོངས་པ་རྗེས་སུ་ཞུགས་པའི་ཕྱིར།

18 རྗེས་སུ་ཞུགས་པའི། em. rjes su gzhuqs pa'i (orth., tense)

With the intent that realizes that all forms of behaviour are the self-illumination of integral being, one effects all purposes without striving.

Because it is without the concepts of self and other,
 The body of reality is primordial and non-dually a single meaningfulness.
 Having realized the unborn body of reality, for the purpose of wandering beings,
 The miracle of production occurs again and again.

This shows how to understand the absolute meaning through the axiom of integral being, which is the primordial non-duality of self and other; for those who do not understand, compassion arises uninterruptedly.

Bringing to culmination the purpose of sentient beings through the twelve deeds of a Buddha, [NKJ 220.1; NKG 192.3]
 The emanation body, taking manifold forms,
 Is clearly manifested in the variegated miracles of compassion.
 Its compassionate emanations tame all those to be tamed,
 And there is no one left untamed among those whose conceited intellects are under the sway of illusion.

The appearance of the birth of a Victorious One, his fourfold taming [of sentient beings],⁸⁴ and so forth, is all to implement the purpose [of sentient beings]—there is no pride involved. A person with such confidence can implement the purpose [of sentient beings] since his intent is one with the Victorious One. Because such a person has encountered the absence of self and other in a way that, as explained, is unmixed and thoroughly complete, he is free from the doings of ego-grasping and [stays in] the seminal nucleus of Samantabhadra.

In order to follow up⁸⁵ the intent,

84 Viz. (1) taming through the great merit of his awakened body, (2) taming through the various vehicles proclaimed by his awakened speech, (3) taming through the supracognitions of his awakened mind and (4) taming through his inconceivable activities. See Nor brang o rgyan 2008: vol. 1, 682.

85 The Tibetan has *gzhugs pa*, which I have emended to *zhugs pa*.

སངས་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་དགོངས་རྒྱུད་ཇི་ལྟ་བུ།

།རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་མ་བཅོས་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད།

།ཚོས་རྣམས་སྐྱུ་མར་མཛོན་སྐྱུ་གསལ་བའི་ཕྱིར།

།ཏིང་འཛིན་སྐྱུ་མ་ཚོ་འཕྲུལ་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་རྣམས།

5 །ཅིར་ཡང་མི་དམིགས་གར་ཡང་ངེས་པ་མེད།

།ཞེས་པ། [221] །སངས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་དགོངས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པ་ཅིར་ཡང་ལྟ་བུ་བའང་། ཚོས་སོ་

ཅོག་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་རྒྱ་རྒྱུན་མེད་པས་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་མ་འདྲེས་ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་
རྫོགས་པར་གསལ་བའི་གཏང་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས། རྣལ་འབྱོར་པའི་དགོངས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་
མཛད་པའང་གཟའ་གཏང་མེད་པའོ།

10 །དེའི་ཕྱིར།

རང་བྱུང་མུན་གྲགས་བྱང་ཚུབ་སླིང་པོ་འདི།

།གང་དུ་བསྟན་པ་གི་ལེན་ན་ལེན་འདྲ།

།ཞེས་པ། རང་བྱུང་གི་ཡི་ཤེས་མཚོག་ཏུ་བདལ་པ་ངེས་པ་བདུན་གྱིས་དངོས་གཞི་སྒྱུར་པས་ཆེ་བ་ནི།

སྐྱུ་ལ་བསྟན་ཅིང་གོ་བ་དེ་དཔེས་སྐྱོད་ཡུལ་རྣམ་དག་འཛིག་རྟེན་དུ་གསལ་བས་ཡི་ཤེས་ཆེན་པོའི་
ཐིག་ལེའོ།

15 །སངས་རྒྱལ་བ་མེད་པའི་ཆེ་བ་ནི།

སྐྱེ་འགྲོ་ཕྱི་ནང་གཟུགས་འདི་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི།

།སྐྱེ་མཚོག་མི་ཟད་རྒྱུན་གྱི་འཁོར་ལོར་རྫོགས།

13 མཚོག་བྱ། em. *mchog du* (gramm.); see NKM 221.4 and NKG 193.5.

The continuum of the Buddhas' intent
 Is the uncontrived thusness that is one's intrinsic characteristic.
 Because phenomena, as illusory, are clear to actual perception,⁸⁶
 The various miracles of illusory concentration
 Are not referentially imaged as anything, being indefinite. [NKJ 221.1;
 NKG 193.2]

Wherever one looks is the omniscient intent of the Buddhas. The intrinsic characteristic of phenomena is that they are without causes and conditions. Through the axiom which clarifies their spontaneously present thusness in a way that is unmixed and thoroughly complete, the *yogin* implements his omniscient intent and is without thematic focus.

That is why,

The quintessence of enlightenment, self-originated, amazing and
 renowned,
 Was taught at glorious Nālandā.⁸⁷

Expanding as supreme self-originated wisdom, it is great because it is the real ground endowed with seven certainties.⁸⁸ Since it is clear in the world as the utterly pure scope of those to whom it is taught and who understand it through examples, it is the seminal nucleus of great wisdom.

The greatness of non-awakening:

All the outer and inner forms of living beings
 Are complete as the inexhaustible unending ornamentation of supreme
 awakened body.

86 This and the next two lines of the root text are quoted in the SM 484; see Esler 2018: 357.

87 The Tibetan reads *shi len na len 'dra*, which is identified as Nālandā by Liljenberg 2012b: 173, n. 829. *Shi len* is a rough phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit honorific prefix *śrī* ('glorious'). Nālandā was a famous Buddhist monastic university in India, which is also associated with the transmission of the Dzogchen teachings.

88 It is unclear what these seven certainties are. Valby 2014: 54, n. 78 suggests that this might refer to the seven tones of the musical scale.

ཞེས་པ། ལས་སྒྲངས་པའི་སྐྱ་གསུང་ཐུགས་འཆད་པ་ལས། སྐྱ་ནི་སྣོད་བཅུད་ཀྱི་གཟུགས་སོ་
 ཅོག་མིང་ལས་རོ་བོ་མེད་ [2222] བཞིན་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་སྣང་བའི་ཕྱིར། སྐྱ་ལྡེ་ལ་སོགས་པར་བྱུང་པར་
 བྱུང་པས་མ་བསྐྱས་པར་ཀུན་བརྒྱན་ཆ་ལུགས་ཐམས་ཅད་པའི་སྐྱའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ལོའོ།

།སྐྱ་སྐྱད་རབ་འབྲིང་ཐ་མ་མ་ལུས་པ།

5 །གསུང་དབྱངས་མ་ལུས་རྒྱན་གྱི་འཁོར་ལོར་ཟབ།

ཞེས་པ། སྐྱ་གསུམ་རིལ་གྲགས་སྟོང་ལས་འདས་བཞིན་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་སུ་མཇལ་བ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཆེན་པོར་
 བྱེ་བྲག་མེད་དེ་མ་འདྲེས་ལ་རྫོགས་པ་གསུང་གི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ཏེ་ལྡེ་སོགས་གྲངས་དང་བྲལ་བས་
 རྫོགས་དཀའ་བའོ།

།ཐམས་ཅད་མ་ལུས་དབྱིངས་སུ་རོ་གཅིག་ཕྱིར།

10 །ཐུགས་མཚོག་མི་ཟད་རྒྱན་གྱི་འཁོར་ལོས་འདུས།

ཞེས་པ། དངོས་པོ་གཉིས་པ་རིལ་རང་རྒྱུད་མེད་པར་རང་གིས་མཐའ་དང་བྲལ་བར་གཅིག་པས་
 དན་རྫོག་རིག་ཤེས་རིལ་རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་རང་སྣང་བ་སུ་མཐའ་མེད་པས་ཡང་ལྡེ་ལས་འདས་པ་ནི་
 ཐུགས་ཀྱི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་དུ་ཐ་མི་དད་པའོ།

།མཉམ་སྦྱོར་ཐིམ་འགྱུར་གསལ་ནས་མི་མངོན་པའོ།

5 དབྱངས། em. *dbyings* (psych., eyeskip); see M 616.2.

Here is asserted the explanation of awakened body, speech and mind: awakened body signifies that the forms of the universe and its inhabitants, aside from being mere names, are without an essence. [NKJ 222.1; NKG 194.1] Hence, they are the intrinsic illumination of wisdom. The five awakened bodies, etc., are distinct and are not absorbed [in oneness], so the configuration of awakened body is replete with all [the deities'] ornaments and attires.

All sounds without exception—whether they be high-pitched, middling or low-pitched—
Are profound as the unending ornamentation of awakened speech's melody.⁸⁹

All of the three sounds⁹⁰ are beyond being empty resonance;⁹¹ even as they are encountered in their variety, there are no particulars in great wisdom, yet they are unmixed and complete as the configuration of awakened speech. Since it is free from numbers, such as five, etc., it is difficult to comprehend.

Since everything without exception is of a single taste in the open dimension,
It is all comprised in the inexhaustible unending ornamentation of supreme awakened mind.

Because all dualistic entities⁹² are one in being without self-sufficiency and in being inherently free from limitations, all forms of discursive rumination and abstract knowing are the intrinsic illumination of self-originated wisdom. Being without extremes and transcending [numbers, such as] five, etc., they are not different from the configuration of awakened mind.

Being dissolved in the union of equality, from clear they become imperceptible.

89 The Tibetan reads *dbyings*, which I have emended to *dbyangs*, following the root text in Liljenberg 2012b: 248.

90 Viz. high-pitched, middling and low-pitched.

91 The overall meaning of this passage is difficult to decipher with any certainty. 'Empty resonance' (or 'resounding yet empty') is often used in tantric texts to indicate that while sounds are heard, they are empty of any essence. By saying that sounds transcend empty resonance (*grags stong las 'das*), the author seems to be underlying the immediacy of the perception of sounds in their variety, beyond philosophical speculation.

92 That is, all entities involving the subject-object dichotomy.

ཞེས་པ། ཚེས་སོ་ [223] ཅོག་སྐྱ་གསུང་བླགས་ཚེན་པོར་རྟོགས་ན་ཐ་སྟོན་ཐམས་ཅད་དེར་གཅིག་པས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱང་སྐྱ་གསུང་བླགས་སུ་སངས་རྒྱས་པ་ཡན་ལག་མེད་པར་རྩིས་ལས་འདས་པས་མཚན་ཉིད་འདི་འདྲར་མི་མཐོང་བའོ།

ཚེས་ཀྱི་སྐྱ་མཚོག་བྱང་ཚུབ་སྤིང་པོར་ཐིམ།

5 ཞེས་པ། སྤང་བསྐྱབ་ཀྱིས་འདུས་པའི་ཚེས་སྐྱ་ལས་ལྷག་པར་འཕགས་པ་ནི། ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་མིང་བཞི་དང་ལྷན་པ་ཉིད་ཡིན་ཏེ། རིལ་དོར་གཅིག་པ་ལ་མ་གྲུབ་པ་འགྲུབ་པར་བྱར་མེད་པས་སངས་རྒྱས་སུ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཐ་སྟོན་ལས་འདས་པ་ལོ་ནའོ།

འར་གི་ལྟ་བ་བསྟེམས་པའི་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་སྤྱོད་པ་རྩིང་པོར་བྱེད་པ་གོལ་བར་བསྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

གསང་སྟགས་དབང་ལྷག་གོ་འཕང་ཚེན་པོ་འདིར།

10 ཕྱི་ནང་གསང་བའི་དོན་དང་མི་ལྷན་པར།

ལ་ལ་མཁས་འདོད་དྲེགས་པའི་རྒྱལ་ཅན།

འར་གི་ལྟ་བ་ཡ་རབས་མཐོ་འདོད་དེ།

ལག་ཏུ་སྟག་དབང་གིས་བག་ཐོན་མ་ཆགས་པས།

འདྲོད་འདོད་ [224] ཡས་བཞག་བཅོན་ཐབས་དྲེགས་པ་ཡིས།

15 འདག་ལས་གཞན་མེད་དཔེ་རྒྱ་འཕགས་འདོད་ན།

6 འགྲུབ་པར་བྱར་མེད། em. grub par byar med (tense) M 616.5.

13 མ་ཆགས་པས། em. ma chad pas (psych.); see

[NKJ 223.1; NKG 194.6] When all phenomena are realized to be awakened body, speech and mind, all designations are one and everything is awakening as body, speech and mind. Being without ancillaries and beyond reckoning, there is no characteristic to behold.

The supreme body of reality dissolves into the quintessence of enlightenment.

This is superior to a body of reality assembled through relinquishing and accomplishing.⁹³ It is endowed with the four name-[aggregates]⁹⁴ of wisdom. Discarding everything, there is not a single thing that is established, and there is nothing that needs to be achieved. Hence, there is no awakening, and that is exactly the transcendence of the designations of awakening.

In order to show the deviation of the coarse conduct that comes from pretentious pride in one's own view,

On this great omnipotent rank of the secret Mantrayāna,⁹⁵
 There are some not endowed with the outer, inner and secret meanings
 Who pretend to be scholars out of arrogant pride.
 Maintaining their view to be magnanimous and high,
 They are not attached⁹⁶ to caution and are under the power of stupidity.
 Leaving aside the warmth of recollection, they are compellingly arrogant.

[NKJ 224.1; NKG 195.5] They maintain that there is no other like them,
 that they are beyond compare.

93 It should be noted that there are two interpretations of the body of reality (Skt. *dharma-kāya*) current in Mahāyāna philosophy: one goes back to Haribhadra (late 8th century) and sees it as a corpus or collection of uncontaminated phenomena; the other goes back to Ārya Vimuktisena (early 6th century) and sees it as the embodiment of reality-as-such (Skt. *dharmatā*), i.e. a Buddha's realization of emptiness. See Makransky 1998: 200–202, 236, 445, n. 61. It seems that it is the former interpretation (or one along those lines) that is the target of Nubchen's criticism, since such an understanding would wrongly entail that the body of reality, which is unconditioned, is created by the accumulations of the path.

94 This refers to the four mental aggregates of feelings, notions, dispositions and consciousness, the aggregate of form being omitted in this count. Here, the wisdom nature of these aggregates is being alluded to.

95 Apart from the third, fourth and last lines, these lines from the root text are quoted in the SM 439–440; see Esler 2018: 327.

96 The Tibetan has *ma chad*, which I have emended to *ma chags*, following the root text in Liljenberg 2012b: 249. Even so, the meaning is not quite clear.

།གཞན་ལས་བརྒྱུ་འདོད་བདག་ཉིད་ལྟར་བསྐྱོམས་ཀྱང་།

།མཉམ་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དེ་ལས་འགལ་བའི་ཕྱིར།

།ལྟ་སྟོད་ཡ་ཆ་བདུད་ཀྱི་ལས་སུ་འགྱུར།

།མཐོན་དམན་སྐྱོམ་སེམས་དབང་དུ་མཉམ་པའི་གཙུག་པོ།

5 །ཞེས་པ། གོ་སྐྱ་སྟེ་མ་གོ་བས་ཆེ་རྒྱུ་རིས་འཛིན་པ་ནི། དགོ་བ་ཅི་སྤྱད་ཀྱང་མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་ལ་རྒྱབ་
ཀྱིས་སྟོགས་པས་མི་རྟོགས་མི་འགྲུབ་པའོ།

།འོན་གང་གིས་འགྲུབ་ཞེ་ན།

དཔེ་སྐྱམ་པའི་རྒྱལ་ཞི་བ་སྟེ།

།མཁས་པ་སློ་ཅན་སྐྱེ་མའི་ལུང་བཞེན་དུ།

10 །སྐྱོན་སྟོང་དགོ་ཅུ་འཕགས་གཤམ་ཁྱད་པར་ཅན།

།ཞེས་པ། རྒྱུས་བྱ་འགའ་ཞིག་བཤད་པའི་ཆེ་བའི་རྒྱལ་དང་བྲལ་བས་འདི་རྟོགས་པ་ཡོད་པ་ནི།

རྒྱལ་བའི་བཀའ་ལས་འབྱུང་བ་ལྟར་སྟོད་ལོག་བོར་ཏེ་རྒྱལ་བཞེན་སྟོད་པས། སའི་ཡ་ཐོག་སྟོགས་པ་

སྤྱིར་ཆིབ་ནོན་པར་འགྱུར་བས། མ་འོངས་པའི་སྐྱོན་ཡོན་བསྐྱེད་པ་གཅེས་སོ། །ཚིག་ལ་མཁས་ཀྱང་

དོན་ [225] མ་གོ་བས་དམ་ཉམས་ན་མི་འགྲུབ་པ་ནི།

15 །ཚིག་ལ་མཉམ་སྦྱོར་མཁས་པའི་རྒྱ་མེད་ཀྱང་།

།དམ་ཚིག་ཕྱལ་བར་བྱང་རྒྱུ་སེམས་སྤངས་ན།

།རྩི་རྩེ་ལྟ་བུར་འགྲུབ་འགྱུར་ཆོ་འདི་ལ།

12 ལོག་བོར་ཏེ་རྒྱལ་བཞེན་སྟོད། This phrase is inserted below the margin in NKJ. The surrounding text has been rewritten in NKM in order to integrate the missing phrase into the main text. Likewise, the phrase is seamlessly incorporated in NKG 196.3. || སའི་ཡ་ཐོག། NKM 224.6 and NKG 196.3 introduce the hypercorrection *sa'i la thog*. 14 མི་འགྲུབ་པ། em. *mi grub pa* (tense)

Though one meditates on oneself as a god while desiring to scorn others,
 Since this contradicts the king of equality,
 One's surprising⁹⁷ view and conduct become the activity of Māra.
 When under the power of the conceit of high and low, this is a slandering of equality.⁹⁸

This is easy to understand. When this is not understood, one grasps at the partiality of great and small, and whatever the virtues one engages in, one fails to realize and accomplish equality since one has turned one's back on it.

How is it accomplished?

Pacifying the pride that fancies an 'I',
 Those who are expert and intelligent, according to the authoritative statements of their master,
 Relinquish defects and practise the roots of virtue—they are superior.

Some people are free from the great pride that is explained here and comprehend this. Following the transmitted injunctions of the Victorious One, their proper conduct is one that has abandoned misbehaviour. For those who have completed the topmost stage⁹⁹ and approached the summit, it will be valuable to teach these defects and qualities in the future.

Those who are expert in the words but do not understand the meaning [NKJ 225.1; NKG 196.4] allow their pledges to deteriorate and thus are not accomplished.

If those who in words are unrivalled experts in the union of equality
 Are lax¹⁰⁰ in their pledges and relinquish the enlightened mind,
 Even though they speak words of truth, since they are falsely misled

97 *Ya cha* in Tibetan. For some comments on the antonym of this term, see above, note 52.

98 *mNyam pa'i gcugs* in Tibetan. The expression is not easy to understand. The word *gcugs* is usually held to mean 'beloved' (*mdza' ba*) or 'agreeable' (*mthun pa*), but neither of these senses fit the context. Cf. Skorupski, Dorje and Nima 2002: 994. However, bTsan lha ngag dbang tshul khriims 1997: 156 provides an alternative definition for *gcugs*, which he explains as 'slander' (*phra mar jug*). This is close enough to the meaning of the related term *gcugs mkhan*, which is defined as 'cunning' (*gyo can*) in Chos kyi grags pa 1995: 233 and Skorupski, Dorje and Nima 2002: 994.

99 NKJ has *sa'i ya thog*, but NKG (following NKM) introduces the variant *sa'i la thog*.

100 Here I understand *phyal ba* in the sense of '*chal ba*' ('lax').

|ལོག་འདྲན་གསོག་ཅན་བདེན་པའི་ཚིག་སྐྱེས་ཀྱང་།

|འབྲུལ་པའི་སེམས་ཉིད་ལོག་འདྲན་དབང་དུ་འགྱུར།

|ཞེས་པ། ལྷ་བ་ལ་ཡོད་པ་ཅམ་ལས་དོན་ཉིད་སྤངས་པའི་རྒྱལ། ཚེས་སྐྱའི་འདི་ལ་འགྲུབ་རྒྱུ་
ལས། འགྲུངས་ཏེ་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཡ་ཚ་བར་ལྷུང་བ་གོ་སྐྱའོ།

5 |གསང་སྲགས་ཀྱི་སྒོར་ཞུགས་ནས་སྐྱར་སྐྱེ་བོའམ་ཐེག་པ་དམན་པར་ལོག་པའི་སྐྱོན་ནི།

གསང་སྲགས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་སྐྱོ་འདི་ཡངས་པ་རུ།

|འཇུག་འདོད་རྒྱལ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྐྱབས་སྐྱེས་སྤོང་བ།

|བདུད་ཚི་ཚོང་ནས་དུག་དུ་འབྲུལ་པ་གང་།

|བདུད་ཚི་དེ་ལས་གཞན་ནས་མི་རྙེད་ཅིང་།

10 |བཟོ་ཡག་ཤས་དྲག་པོའི་སྤིང་ལ་གནས།

|ལུས་སྒོག་སྐྱུ་མ་རུལ་དུ་བརྒྱག་ནས་ཀྱང་།

|དམྱལ་བར་ངས་འགོ་གཏན་དུ་སྤིང་རེ་རྗེ།

|གནམ་ [226] ལྷགས་མཁའ་ལས་འདམ་དུ་བྱིང་བ་བཞིན།

|རི་དྲགས་མི་ཡུལ་སོ་མཚམས་འདས་དང་འབྲ།

15 |ཞེས་པ་གོ་སྐྱའོ། |མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དོན་བཤད་པའི་ཕྱིར།

རྒྱད་ཀྱི་དོན་ལ་བསྐྱབས་པས་ལུང་ཞེས་བྱ།

|ཞེས་པ། བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་ཚེ་མོ་བྱང་རྒྱལ་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་རྒྱད་ལས་བསྐྱེས་པའི་སྐྱོན་རྒྱུར་གྱི་ཉེས་པ་
ཟད་པའི་ཕྱིར་མིང་འབྲོབ་པའོ།

|ཐམས་ཅད་བྱང་རྒྱབ་སེམས་དཔས་ཚེ་མོ་སྤྲ།

2 འབྲུལ་པའི། em. 'khrul ba'i (gramm.); see M 617.2 and NKG 196.5. 8 དུག་དུ། em. dug du (gramm.); see M 617.3, NKM 225.5, NKG 197.2. 11 བརྒྱག། em. glags (hom.); see M 617.3. 18 ཕྱིར། em. phyir phyir (ditto); see NKG 197.4.

About achieving the adamantine accomplishment in this life,
They come under the misleading power of the confused mind.

Through the cause of merely mouthing the view and relinquishing the meaning, the cause of accomplishing the body of reality in this life will be delayed, and one will fall down into fretfulness—this is easy to understand.

The defect of returning to being an ordinary person or to the lower vehicles once one has entered the door of the secret Mantrayāna:

The gateway to the oceanic secret Mantrayāna is vast:
If those desiring entry deceive the awakened body of the Victorious One
and return to [being an ordinary person],
They will confuse the ambrosia they have tasted for poison.
When they fail to find ambrosia elsewhere,
The fierce adamantine goblin¹⁰¹ will dwell in their hearts.
When their illusory body and vitality have been smashed¹⁰² to dust,
They are sure to fall to hell—what a pity!
They are like meteors fallen from the sky and sunk deep into the mud,
[NKJ 226.1; NKG 197.3]
Or like deer having passed into the boundaries of human habitation.

This is easy to understand.

In order to explain the meaning of its characteristics,

Since it collates the meaning of the *tantra*, it is an authoritative statement.

This [authoritative scripture] is so named because it is abbreviated from the *Tantra of Suchness, the Victorious Peak of the Enlightened Mind* and because in it the faults of exaggeration and denigration have been exhausted.

Since everything is enlightened being,¹⁰³ it is the peak.

101 This no doubt refers to a protector of the teachings.

102 I have emended *glags* to *brlag*, following the root text in Liljenberg 2012b: 250.

103 The fact that the root text reads *byang chub sems dpas* instead of *byang chub sems kyis* ('enlightened mind', Skt. *bodhicitta*), for instance, is puzzling. However, it seems clear from the context that the term here means more than a practising bodhisattva. Hence, I have chosen a translation which respects the text as given, yet which is nonetheless suggestive of the wider associations of *bodhicitta* in the Dzogchen context, rather than use the more familiar Sanskrit equivalent 'bodhisattva'.

ཞེས་པ། ཚེས་མོ་ཅོག་རང་རིག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་སུ་གཅིག་པའི་དོན་ནི། གཉིས་པ་མེད་པས་སྒྲ་དང་
གཉེན་པོ་མེད་པར་སྤྲུགས་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

ཁམམས་པའི་སྤྲུགས་ལས་བརྒྱད་པས་བྱུང་རྒྱལ་ཉིད།

ཞེས་པ། ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་དང་དགའ་རབ་དོ་རྗེའི་སྤྲུགས་བརྒྱད་པ་ནི་ཐེག་པའི་ཡང་ཕྱིར་གྱུར་པའོ།

5

ནམ་གངས་བརྒྱད་ཏུ་བཀོད་པས་འཕྲིང་བ་སྟེ།

ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པ་ལྟར་ཐེག་པའི་གྲལ་མ་འདྲེས་ལ་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའོ།

འདྲེ་བསལ་སྒྲ་དོར་མེད་པས་དམ་པའི་ལུང་།

ཞེས་པ། འདྲིར་ [227] གཉིས་པ་རིལ་དང་བྲལ་བས་གཞན་ལྟར་སྒྲ་དོར་མེད་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱང་ཆེད་ཏུ་
བྱེད་པ་དང་བྲལ་བས་ལུང་གི་རྒྱལ་པོའོ།

10

འཕྲོབ་པའི་རྒྱ་ནི།

ཚད་མེད་བཞི་དང་ལྡན་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པ།

ཞེས་པ། གཏུང་བ་མེད་པ་སྒྲ་དོར་འབྱེད་པ་མེད་པ་རང་གིས་གཏུང་བ་བྲལ་བས་འབྱོར་པ་མེད་པ་དེ་
འགྲོ་དོན་རྩོམ་ཆད་མེད་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་མངའ་བ་ནི་ཁྲོ་གཏུམ་བྱམས་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་རྩོམ་བ་དང་
བྲལ་བའོ།

1 མེད་པས། em. *mdo pas* (cod., psych.); see NKG 197.5.

The meaning is that all phenomena are one as the wisdom of intrinsic awareness. [It is the peak] because it is non-dual¹⁰⁴ and rises up¹⁰⁵ to being without rival or antidote.

Since it is transmitted from the awakened mind of experts, it is self-originated and victorious.

Its transmission is through the awakened mind of Samantabhadra and Garab Dorje, so it is the pinnacle among vehicles.

The string [of doctrines] is arrayed into a series of eight.¹⁰⁶

As explained, the succession of vehicles is thoroughly complete without being mixed up.

Being without the acceptance and rejection involved in analysis and elimination, it is an authoritative scripture.

Being free from all dualism, [NKJ 227.1; NKG 198.1] there is no acceptance and rejection of anything deemed as other. Being free from all deliberate doing, it is the king of authoritative scriptures.

The cause of obtaining it:

The *yogin* endowed with the four immeasurables [...].¹⁰⁷

Being without longing, one does not distinguish things in terms of acceptance and rejection, and one is inherently free from torment and is without regret. Possessing the wisdom which uninterruptedly strives for the purpose of wandering beings, one is free from the efforts linked to aggressiveness, kindness, etc.

104 NKJ has *gnyis pa mdo pas*, but NKG corrects this to *gnyis pa med pas*.

105 The word *spags pa* is an archaic term for *'phag pa*; see rNam rgyal tshe ring 2001: 312; and bTsan lha ngag dbang tshul khriims 1997: 451.

106 This seems to be an oblique reference to the eight lower vehicles from among the ninefold doxographical classification that became predominant in the Nyingma school. On this ninefold scheme, see Dalton 2005: 143–145.

107 Viz. compassion, kindness, joy and equanimity.

འབདག་དང་གཞན་དོན་བསྐྱབ་པར་བརྟེན་པའི་སེམས།

སྦྱོར་སྦྱོལ་དུས་ལྡན་སྦྱིང་རྗེའི་གནས་རྣམས་ལ།

ཞེས་པ་གོ་སྐྱ་སྟེ་གདུལ་བྱ་དུས་ལ་བབ་པ་མི་འདོར་བའོ།

འསེམས་དོད་ལུང་ཞོད་འཁོར་དང་རྗེས་ལ་སོགས།

5 ཞེས་པ། རིག་པའི་དོད་དང་ལྡན་པའི་སྦྱོལ་བྱ་ལུངས་གྱི་དབང་ལུང་ཐོབ་པས། ལྟན་གན་གྱི་གདུལ་བྱ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་ཆེད་དུ་ཀར་མ་དང་གིང་ལ་སོགས་པ་འཁོར་དང་ཡོ་བྱད་འཇམ་དཔལ་ལ་སོགས་པར་ལྡན་པའོ།

འཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་འཛིན་ [228] རྒྱལ་བའི་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཅན།

ཞེས་པ། ཚུལ་དུ་འོས་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཚང་བར་མངའ་བ་ནི་རང་བྱུང་ཡེ་ཤེས་དང་ཡང་ལྡན་པའོ།

10 འདམིགས་པའི་དོན་དུ་ཕྱེ་གཅིག་མཐུར་ལྡན་པ།

ཞེས་པ། གདུལ་བྱའི་ཆེད་དུ་སྦྱོད་ཡུལ་མེད་པའི་དགོངས་པའི་བྱིན་རླབས་ཀྱིས་རྟགས་སུ་མི་འབྲལ་བའོ།

འདེས་ནི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཆེ་མཚོག་གྲུབ་པའི་རིག་འཛིན་ཐོབ།

Having the intention to persevere in accomplishing the purposes of self and others,
They compassionately abide in a timely manner for union and liberation.¹⁰⁸

This is easy to understand and refers to not discarding those to be tamed when the time has come.

With a warm mind and having received the authoritative statements, they have retinues, possessions, etc.

A person endowed with the warmth of awareness, having obtained the empowerments and authoritative scriptures that are the source, will for the sake of those to be tamed through *tanagaṇa*¹⁰⁹ have retinues of workers and messengers, as well as requisites, such as Mañjuśrī [statues],¹¹⁰ and so forth.

A holder of abundance has the compassion of the Victorious Ones. [NKJ 228.1; NKG 198.6]

One who possesses the wholeness of the worthy qualities consisting of conducive conditions is endowed with self-originated wisdom.

Endowed with the force of being one-pointedly focused on the purpose of his imaged reference.

For the sake of those to be tamed and through the blessing of the intent that is without objective scope, one is not free from the indications.

Thereby, the supremely great *yogin* attains [the level of] an accomplished awareness-holder (Skt. *vidyādhara*).

108 This refers to the twin rituals of sexual union and liberation through killing, which are highly important in the Mahāyoga context. For a discussion of the philosophical underpinnings of these rites, see Esler 2021a: 59–61.

109 The Tibetan reads *stan gan*, which is a rough phonetic rendering of *tanagaṇa*, a tantric code signifying the rituals of union and liberation (Esler 2021a: 59).

110 It is possible, though by no means certain, that statues of Yamāntaka (often called 'Jam dpal gshin rje or 'Jam dpal tshe bdag) are here being alluded to since Yamāntaka is the wrathful form of Mañjuśrī and the tutelary deity of Nubchen Sangye Yeshe.

ཞེས་པ། གོ་སྐྱོ་སྤྲེལ་གཤམ་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་གདུང་མི་འཚོར་བ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་ཉིད་དང་མཉམ་པ་
སྟེ། ལྷག་ཏུ་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ལས་དགོངས་པ་བྱུང་བར་དུ་གྱུར་པ་འོ།

སྟོང་རྗེ་མེད་པའི་ལས་ཀྱི་གཞི་རྣམས་ནི།

ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་ཚིག་ཅམ་སྤྲེལ་འང་ཡོད།

5

སྟོང་པོའི་དོན་ལས་འགལ་འགྱུར་འགྱུར་མི་འགྱུར།

ཞེས་པ་གོ་སྐྱོའོ།

ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་མོར་སྦྱོར་ལྡན་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཅན།

རྣལ་འབྱོར་གྲུབ་པའི་ཕྱིན་ལས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་རྣམས།

ཞེས་པ། སྦྱོང་བ་མ་ཞོར་བའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ནི། མི་དམིགས་པའི་ཤེས་རབ་དང་ལྡན་པས་ལས་རི་སྟོང་སྦྱང་
10 ཀྱང་མི་འཚིབ་འོ།

སྦྱི་ [229] མེད་དོན་དམ་ཀུན་རྫོབ་རྣམ་པར་སྤངས།

ཞེས་པ། ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་དབུ་མའི་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་དང་ལྷག་པའི་མཉམ་ཉིད་ལས་ཀྱང་གྲོལ་བ་འོ།

ཤེས་ཆེན་སྤྱི་སྤྱུགས་རང་བཞིན་རྣལ་འབྱོར་དོན།

ཞེས་པ། དོན་གྱི་ཕབ་ཕྱིས་ཡོ་ཟེན་པའི་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་དགོངས་པ་མི་གཡོ་བ་འོ།

15

ལྷུན་གྲུབ་རྫོགས་ཆེན་པ་རྣམས་ཀུན་གྱི་སྤྲི།

This is easy to understand: one does not lose the lineage of the Apex Yoga and is equal to Samantabhadra, the intent being superior to the great seal, etc.¹¹¹

Those whose basis of activity is without compassion
Merely pay lip service to Samantabhadra:
Since they contradict the quintessential meaning, they will not be
accomplished.

This is easy to understand.

Having the accomplishment of union with Samantabhadrī,
They perform oceans of activities that accomplish yoga.

The qualities of unmistakable conduct: one who is endowed with non-referential acumen does not die, whatever the activities he performs.

Utterly relinquishing [the dichotomy between] the unborn absolute and relative truths [...]. [NKJ 229.1; NKG 199.5]

Through acumen, one is liberated from the two truths of the Madhyamaka and from eminent equality.¹¹²

The meaning of the natural yoga is the anointment of the Mahāyāna.

Through the yeast of the absolute meaning, the intent, which is naturally already inclined thereto, does not waver.

The practitioners of the spontaneously present Great Completeness are exalted among all.

111 This is probably an oblique reference to the four seals, which frequently occur together in the early literature. In this context, the great seal (Skt. *mahāmudrā*) does not signify formless meditation on the nature of the mind as in post-11th century texts but rather refers to meditation on the deity's body. For a fuller discussion, see above, Part 1, Chapter 2.

112 Eminent equality (*thag pa'i mnyam nyid*) probably refers to the inseparability of the two truths as realized in Mahāyoga. This topic is discussed in the SM 212; see Esler 2018: 198. The point here is that Dzogchen goes beyond both Madhyamaka and Mahāyoga.

ཞེས་པ། ལྷ་སྦྱོད་ཡ་མ་ཆ་བས། ལྷུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་ཐིག་ལེར་བརྟེན་བ་མེད་པར་སྦྱིན་པ་ནི་
མཐར་ཐུག་པའི་ས་ཐོབ་པའོ།

།དེ་ལྟར་ཤེས་ལྡན་བདུན་བཞི་རྣམ་པར་སྦྲངས།

ཞེས་པ། བཤད་པ་ལྟར་རྟོགས་ཤིང་གོམས་ན་ངང་གིས་ཉོན་མོངས་པ་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོར་བརྟེན། རྣམ་
5 སྦྱང་འཕོ་འགྱུར་མེད། སྦྱི་ཤི་མེད་ཐིག་འགྱུར། བདག་ཆེན་པོར་སངས་རྒྱས་པའོ།

།སྤྲིག་འཛོམ་ཆེར་སྦྱེས་བསོད་ནམས་ཁི་སྤག་ཡས།

ཞེས་པ། རྟོགས་ནས་སྦྱོད་པ་ཞིབ་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་ལ་ཚད་བརྒྱུད་བ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

།ཚིག་དོན་གསུམ་ལ་དོན་བརྟུན་བདུན་གྱིས་བཀའ།

།དོན་བརྟུན་ [230] བདུན་ལ་ཡན་ལག་བཞི་བརྟུན་གཉིས།

10 སྦྱོར་དེས་ཁོང་ཕྱོད་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་ལ་བསྦྱས་པའི།

།དགེ་ཅུ་ཀུན་ཀྱང་སྦྱོར་མའི་སར་གནས་ཤོག།

།ཡང་དབང་གཏོར་གསུབས་སངས་རྒྱས་ལེ་ཤེས་རིན་པོ་ཆེའིས། ཕྱོམ་བྱུང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་འགྲེལ་པ་རྫོགས་སོ།།

6 ཡས། NKG 200.3 introduces the hypercorrection *las*. 8 ཚིག་དོན། This dedicatory stanza is by the author of the commentary and not part of the root text. 12 ཡིས། em. *gyis* (gramm.); see NKM 230.2 and NKG 200.5. ། ཕྱོམ་བྱུང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་འགྲེལ་པ་རྫོགས་སོ།། This concluding sentence is not in smaller letters in NKG.

They are unsurprised about the conduct of the gods.¹¹³ Ripening without striving into the spontaneously present seminal nucleus, they attain the ultimate stage.

Those endowed with such knowledge utterly relinquish the four demons.¹¹⁴

As explained, if one comprehends this and meditatively familiarizes oneself therewith, the afflictions inherently expand into great bliss. One becomes the seminal nucleus that is without ageing or decay, without mutation or change, without birth or death, and awakens to integral being.

Greatly avoiding sins, such a person is endowed with myriads of merits.

When realizing this, one is without grasping towards detailed measurements of merit with regard to conduct.

The three word-meanings¹¹⁵ are elucidated through the seven elixirs of meaningfulness;¹¹⁶

The seven elixirs of meaningfulness have forty-two branches. [NKJ 230.1; NKG 200.4]

Through the virtuous roots of opening up the inner meaning and condensing it with hardship in these verses,¹¹⁷

May all abide on the stage of the master!

By Yang Wangter (*i.e. Nubchen Sangye Yeshe Rinpoche*).¹¹⁸ *The Commentary on the Victorious Peak is hereby completed.*¹¹⁹

113 Alternatively, if we took *lha* to be a visual error for *lta*, the sentence would read: "One is unsurprised about view and conduct."

114 For the four demons, see above, Text 1, note 5.

115 Valby 2014: 64, n. 95 suggests that this might refer to the eulogy, the vessels [for the teaching] and the basic text. This suggestion seems highly plausible since this threefold classification is mentioned at the beginning of our text.

116 These lines are not from the root text and represent a dedicatory stanza by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe. The numbers mentioned in this stanza and the underlying classification it presupposes are not readily intelligible to me.

117 My translation of this line differs quite markedly from that proposed by Valby 2014: 64.

118 This name is mentioned in smaller letters in what seems to be a gloss, probably added by a later editor of the text.

119 In NKJ (but not in NKG), the title of the commentary is also given in smaller letters.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

For the commentaries and their root texts, see Sigla, pp. XII–XIII.

gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *Mun pa'i go cha*, in NKD, vols. 50/wi–51/zhi.

gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *rDzong 'phrang srog gsum gyi chings kyi man ngag*, in NKJ, vol. 29/ha: 15–425. Reproduced in NKM, vol. 67/ju: 15–425.

rMad du byung ba, in M, vol. 2/kha: 774–856.

Srog gi 'khor lo, in M, vol. 1/ka: 598–601.

Reference Works

[NB: In this section, Tibetan authors are listed in Roman alphabetical order. Tibetan names are listed under the first occurring Tibetan radical letter (*ming gzhi*); hence, rNam rgyal tshe ring will be found under 'n' rather than 'r'.]

Amarasiṃha. 2008. *Amarakoṣa*. Varanasi: Chaukhamba.

Chos kyi grags pa, dGe bshes (attributed to). 1995. *brDa dag ming tshig gsal ba*. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

Dalton, Jacob, and van Schaik, Sam. 2006. *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Stein Collection at the British Library*. Leiden: Brill.

Monier-Williams, M. 2001. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services.

Nāgārjuna, Ācārya. 2007. *Dharmasaṅgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrine*, translated by Tashi Zangmo and Dechen Chime. Sarnath: CIHTS.

rNam rgyal tshe ring. 2001. *Bod yig brda rnying tshig mdzod*. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang.

Negi, J.S. 1993–2005. *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, 16 Volumes. Sarnath: CIHTS.

Nor brang o rgyan. 2008. *Chos rnam kun btus*, 3 Volumes. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang.

Skorupski, Tadeusz, Dorje, Gyurme, and Nima, Tudeng. 2002. *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary: A Revised Version of Bod rGya Tshig mdzod chen mo*, vol. 1. Beijing: The Nationalities Publishing House / London: The School of Oriental and African Studies.

bTsan lha ngag dbang tshul khirms. 1997. *brDa dkrol gser gyi me long*. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

Online Resources

- BDRC Buddhist Digital Resource Center (formerly Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, TBRC). <https://library.bdrc.io/> (accessed 4 April 2021).
- EAP Endangered Archives Programme, British Library. <https://eap.bl.uk/> (accessed 7 May 2022).

Secondary Sources

- Achard, Jean-Luc. 1999. *L'Essence Perlée du Secret: Recherches philologiques et historiques sur l'origine de la Grande Perfection dans la tradition rNying ma pa*. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Achard, Jean-Luc. 2008. "L'irruption de la nescience—la notion d'errance samsarique dans le rDzogs chen." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 13: 75–108.
- Achard, Jean-Luc. 2012. "Zhang ston bKra shis rdo rje (1097–1167) et la Continuation des Essences Perlées (sNying thig) de la Grande Perfection." In *This World and the Next: Contributions on Tibetan Religion, Science and Society*, PIATS: Tibetan Studies, Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Königswinter 2006, edited by Charles Ramble and Jill Sudbury, 233–266. Andiast: Tibet Institut.
- Almogi, Orna, and Wangchuk, Dorji. 2016. "Prologue: Tibetan Textual Culture between Tradition and Modernity." In *Tibetan Manuscript and Xylograph Traditions: The Written Word and its Media within the Tibetan Cultural Sphere*, edited by Orna Almogi, 5–30. Hamburg: Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies.
- Anspal, Sten. 2005. "Lost in Space: Tibetan Formulations of the rDzogs-chen klong-sde." *Acta Orientalia* 66: 117–193.
- Apple, James B. 2010. "Eschatology and World Order in Buddhist Formations." *Religious Studies and Theology* 29 (1): 109–122.
- Arguillère, Stéphane. 2007. *Profusion de la Vaste Sphère: Klong-chen rab-'byams (Tibet, 1308–1364): Sa vie, son œuvre, sa doctrine*. Leuven: Peeters Publishers & Oriental Studies.
- Arguillère, Stéphane. 2016. *Tülku Tsullo: Manuel de la Transparution Immédiate*. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf.
- Beckwith, Christopher I. 2009. *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bernat, Chrystel, and Puccio-Den, Deborah. 2011. "Religion, secret et autorité: Pratiques textuelles et culturelles en clandestinité." *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 2: 155–161.
- Cantwell, Cathy. 2019. "The Ceremony for Imbibing the Siddhis, with Particular Reference to Examples from Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer's bKa' bryad bde gshegs 'dus pa." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 50: 150–165.

- Cantwell, Cathy. 2020. *Dudjom Rinpoche's Vajrakīlaya Works: A Study in Authoring, Compiling, and Editing Texts in the Tibetan Revelatory Tradition*. Sheffield: Equinox.
- Cantwell, Cathy. 2022. "A Short Text on the Four Phurpas Attributed to Padmasambhava, passed down through the Transmitted Teachings (*bka' ma*)."
Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines 64: 45–56.
- Cantwell, Cathy. 2022, in press. "Early Teachings on the Four Phurpas in the Light of the *Eightfold Buddha Word, Embodying the Sugatas (bka' brgyad bde gshegs 'dus pa)* revelation of Myang ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1124–1192), and the Relationship Between the Revelatory (*gter ma*) and Transmitted (*bka' ma*) Textual Traditions." *Journal of Tibetology* (Special Issue on "New Directions in Gter ma Studies," edited by Jue Liang).
- Cantwell, Cathy, and Mayer, Robert. 2006. "Two Proposals for Critically Editing the Texts of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 10: 56–70.
- Cantwell, Cathy, and Mayer, Robert. 2008. *Early Tibetan Documents on Phur pa from Dunhuang*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Cantwell, Cathy, and Mayer, Robert. 2012. *A Noble Noose of Methods, The Lotus Garland Synopsis: A Mahāyoga Tantra and its Commentary*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Cantwell, Cathy, Mayer, Robert, and Fischer, Michael. 2002. *The Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu Edition of the rNying ma rgyud 'bum: An Illustrated Inventory*. Canterbury: Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing, University of Kent. https://www.tbrc.org/ngb/Title_page_main.html (accessed 7 May 2022).
- Cantwell, Cathy, et al. 2006. "The sGang steng-b rNying ma'i rgyud 'bum Manuscript from Bhutan." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 11: 16–141.
- Certeau, Michel de. 1982. *La Fable Mystique, 1: XVI^e–XVII^e siècle*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Clemente, Adriano, trans. 2017. *Dorje Sempa Namkha Che: The Total Space of Vajrasattva*. Arcidosso: Shang Shung Publications.
- Coleman, Simon, and Dulin, John. 2020. "Secrecy, Religion, and the Ethics of Discernment." *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology*. DOI: 10.1080/00141844.2020.1765831
- Collins, Steven. 1982. *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Collins, Steven. 2006. *Nirvana and other Buddhist Felicities: Utopias of the Pali Imaginaire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Conze, Edward. 1990 [1975]. *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom, with the divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Cornu, Philippe. 2006. *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Bouddhisme*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
- Dalton, Catherine. 2019. *Enacting Perfection: Buddhajñānapāda's Vision of a Tantric Buddhist World*. PhD diss., Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley.
- Dalton, Jacob. 2004. "The Development of Perfection: The Interiorization of Buddhist Ritual in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32 (1): 1–30.

- Dalton, Jacob. 2005. "A Crisis of Doxography: How Tibetans Organized Tantra during the 8th–12th Centuries." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 28 (1): 115–181.
- Dalton, Jacob. 2011. "Mahāyoga Ritual Interests at Dunhuang: A Translation and Study of the Codex IOL Tib J 437/Pelliot tibétain 324." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 293–313. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
- Dalton, Jacob. 2016. *The Gathering of Intentions: A History of a Tibetan Tantra*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dalton, Jacob. 2020. "Mahāmudrā and Samayamudrā in the Dunhuang Documents and Beyond." In *Mahāmudrā in India and Tibet*, edited by Roger R. Jackson and Klaus-Dieter Mathes, 123–141. Leiden: Brill.
- Dalton, Jacob. 2022. "Bridging Yoga and Mahāyoga: Samaya in Early Tantric Buddhism." In *Buddhism in Central Asia II: Practices and Rituals, Visual and Material Transfer*, edited by Yukiyo Kasai and Henrik H. Sørensen, 270–287. Leiden: Brill.
- Dorje, Gyurme. 1987. *The Guhyagarbhatantra and its XIVth Century Commentary Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*. PhD diss., London: SOAS, University of London.
- Dorje, Gyurme. 2012 [1992]. "The rNying-ma Interpretation of Commitment and Vow." In *The Buddhist Forum*, edited by Tadeusz Skorupski, vol. 2: 71–95. Tring: The Institute of Buddhist Studies.
- Dowman, Keith. 2006. *Old Man Basking in the Sun: Longchenpa's Treasury of Natural Perfection*. Kathmandu: Vajra Books.
- Duckworth, Douglas. 2021. "The Dge mang Movement: Rnying ma and Dge lugs Hybridity in 19th-Century Khams." In *Nonsectarianism (ris med) in 19th- and 20th-Century Eastern Tibet*, edited by Klaus-Dieter Mathes and Gabriele Coura, 66–80. Leiden: Brill.
- Dudjom Rinpoche. 1991. *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History*, translated and edited by Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein, 2 Volumes. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Dudjom Rinpoche. 2015. *The Bountiful Cow of Accomplishments: Directives for the Two Phases of the Profound Path of the Khandro Thugthig*, Khye'u-chung Lotsāpa Translations, edited by Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin, translated by Dylan Esler. Norderstedt: BoD.
- Esler, Dylan. 2012. "The Exposition of *Atiyoga* in gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes' *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 24: 81–136.
- Esler, Dylan. 2014. "On the Life of gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 29: 5–27.
- Esler, Dylan. 2016. "Traces of Abhidharma in the *bSam-gtan mig-sgron* (Tibet, Tenth Century)." In *Text, History, and Philosophy: Abhidharma across Buddhist Scholastic Traditions*, edited by Bart Dessein and Weijen Teng, 314–349. Leiden: Brill.
- Esler, Dylan. 2017. "The Fruition in a Comparative Perspective." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 40: 159–188.

- Esler, Dylan. 2018. *The Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation, The bSam-gtan mig-sgron by gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas ye-shes: Hermeneutical Study with English Translation and Critical Edition of a Tibetan Buddhist Text on Contemplation*. PhD diss., Université catholique de Louvain.
- Esler, Dylan. 2021a. "Non-Duality in Chan, Tantra and rDzogs-chen: An Essay in the Transversal Enquiry of Metaphysical Paradigms." In *La non-dualité: Perspectives philosophiques, scientifiques, spirituelles*, edited by Jean-Michel Counet, 51–73. Leuven: Peeters / Louvain-la-Neuve: Éditions de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie.
- Esler, Dylan. 2021b. "Negotiating the Absence of Ritual: Dzogchen in the Tantric Manuscripts of Dunhuang and Beyond." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 44: 409–440.
- Esler, Dylan. 2023, in press. *The Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation: The Samten Migdrön by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, a 10th-century Tibetan Buddhist Text on Meditation*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Esler, Dylan. Forthcoming. "The Notion of 'Effortlessness' in the Dzogchen Commentaries by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe." *Entangled Religions* (Special issue on Contemplation and Non-Doing).
- Flood, Gavin. 2006. "Reflections on Tradition and Inquiry in the Study of Religions." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 74 (1): 47–58.
- Flood, Gavin. 2015. *The Truth Within: A History of Inwardness in Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Garrett, Frances. 2009. "Eating Letters in the Tibetan Treasure Tradition." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 32 (1–2): 85–113.
- Gentry, James D. 2019. "Liberation Through Sensory Encounters in Tibetan Buddhist Practice." *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* 50: 73–131.
- Germano, David. 1994. "Architecture and Absence in the Secret Tantric History of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*)." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 17 (2): 203–335.
- Germano, David. 2005. "The Funerary Transformation of the Great Perfection (*Rdzogs chen*)." *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 1: 1–54.
- Germano, David. 2007. "The Shifting Terrain of the Tantric Bodies of Buddhas and Buddhists from an Atiyoga Perspective." In *The Pandita and the Siddha: Tibetan Studies in Honour of E. Gene Smith*, edited by Ramon Prats, 50–84. Dharamsala: Amnye Machen Institute.
- Germano, David, and Waldron, William S. 2006. "A Comparison of *Ālaya-vijñāna* in Yogācāra and Dzogchen." In *Buddhist Thought and Applied Psychological Research: Transcending the Boundaries*, edited by D.K. Nauriyal, Michael S. Drummond and Y.B. Lal, 36–68. London: Routledge.
- Griffiths, Paul J. 1999 [1986]. *On Being Mindless: Buddhist Meditation and the Mind-Body Problem*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.

- Guarisco, Elio, et al., trans. 2013. *The Marvelous Primordial State: The Mejung Tantra, A Fundamental Scripture of Dzogchen Semde*. Arcidosso: Shang Shung Publications.
- Guenther, Herbert V. 1984. *Matrix of Mystery: Scientific and Humanistic Aspects of rDzogs-chen Thought*. Boulder and London: Shambhala.
- Guenther, Herbert V. 1989. *From Reductionism to Creativity: rDzogs-chen and the New Sciences of Mind*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Guenther, Herbert V. 1996. *The Teachings of Padmasambhava*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Halkias, Georgios T. 2004. "Tibetan Buddhism Registered: A Catalogue from the Imperial Court of 'Phang Thang." *The Eastern Buddhist* 36.1-2: 46-105.
- Hatchell, Christopher. 2014. *Naked Seeing: The Great Perfection, the Wheel of Time, and Visionary Buddhism in Renaissance Tibet*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Higgins, David. 2013. *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen in Tibet: Investigating the Distinction Between Dualistic Mind (sems) and Primordial Knowing (ye shes)*. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien.
- Hillis, Gregory. 2003. *The Rhetoric of Naturalness: A Critical Study of the gNas lugs mdzod*. PhD diss., Charlottesville: University of Virginia.
- Inada, Kenneth K., trans. 1993. *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.
- Kapstein, Matthew T. 1996. "gDams ngag: Tibetan Technologies of the Self." In *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*, edited by José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson, 275-289. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- Kapstein, Matthew T. 2000. *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, Contestation, and Memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Karmay, Samten Gyaltzen. 2007 [1988]. *The Great Perfection: A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism*. Leiden: Brill.
- Karmay, Samten Gyaltzen. 2009 [1997]. *The Arrow and the Spindle: Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point.
- Katre, Sumitra Mangesh. 1954. *Indian Textual Criticism*. Poona: Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute.
- Kim, Chin-Tai. 1987. "Transcendence and Immanence." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 55 (3): 537-549.
- Klein, Anne Carolyn. 1994. "Oral Genres and the Art of Reading in Tibet." *Oral Tradition* 9 (2): 281-314.
- Komjathy, Louis. 2015a. "Approaching Contemplative Practice." In *Contemplative Literature: A Comparative Sourcebook on Meditation and Contemplative Prayer*, edited by Louis Komjathy, 3-51. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Komjathy, Louis. 2015b. "Contemplative Traditions." In *Contemplative Literature: A Comparative Sourcebook on Meditation and Contemplative Prayer*, edited by Louis Komjathy, 53-86. Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Köppel, Heidi I. 2008. *Establishing Appearances as Divine: Rongzom Chözang on Reasoning, Madhyamaka, and Purity*. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- Krech, Volkhard. 2021. *Die Evolution der Religion: Ein soziologischer Grundriss*. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.
- Lamotte, Étienne. 1958. *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien: Des Origines à l'Ère Śāka*. Louvain: Institut Orientaliste.
- Lamotte, Étienne. 1974. "Passions and Impregnations of the Passions in Buddhism." In *Buddhist Studies in Honour of I.B. Horner*, edited by Lance Cousins et al., 91–104. Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- Lamotte, Étienne. 1980. *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)*, vol. 5. Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste.
- La Vallée Poussin, Louis de. 1971 [1923]. *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*. 6 Volumes. Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises.
- Levin, David Michael. 1985. *The Body's Recollection of Being: Phenomenological Psychology and the Deconstruction of Nihilism*. London: Routledge.
- Levin, David Michael. 1988. *The Opening of Vision: Nihilism and the Postmodern Situation*. London: Routledge.
- Liljenberg, Karen. 2012a. "On the *Thig le drug pa* and the *sPyi chings*, two of the *Thirteen Later Translations* of the *rDzogs chen Mind Series*." *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* 24: 137–156.
- Liljenberg, Karen. 2012b. *A Critical Study of the Thirteen Later Translations of the Dzogchen Mind Series*. PhD diss., London: SOAS, University of London.
- Lipman, Kennard, and Peterson, Merrill. 2000. *Longchenpa: You are the Eyes of the World*. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- Longchen Rabjam. 1998. *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, translated by Richard Barron. Junction City: Padma Publishing.
- Lopez, Manuel. 2018. "The 'Twenty or Eighteen' Texts of the Mind Series: Scripture, Transmission, and the Idea of Canon in the Early Great Perfection Literature." *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* 43: 50–94.
- Makransky, John J. 1998. *Buddhahood Embodied: Sources of Controversy in India and Tibet*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.
- Mayer, Robert. 2019. "Rethinking Treasure (Part One)." *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* 52: 119–184.
- Meinert, Carmen. 2004. *Chinesische Chan- und tibetische rDzogs chen- Lehre: eine komparatistische Untersuchung im Lichte des philosophischen Heilskonzeptes 'Nicht-Vorstellen' anhand der Dunhuang-Dokumente des chinesischen Chan-Meister Wolun und des Werkes bSam gtan mig sgron des tibetischen Gelehrten gNubs chen sangs rgyas ye shes*. PhD diss., Bonn: Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität.
- Meinert, Carmen. 2007. "The Conjunction of Chinese Chan and Tibetan rDzogs chen Thought: Reflections on the Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts 10L Tib J 689-1 and

- PT 699." In *Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet*, edited by Matthew T. Kapstein and Brandon Dotson, 239–301. Leiden: Brill.
- Meinert, Carmen. 2019. "Embodying the Divine in Tantric Ritual Practice: Examples from the Chinese Karakhoto manuscripts from the Tangut empire (ca. 1038–1227)." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 50: 56–72.
- Meinert, Carmen. 2022. "Beyond Spatial and Temporal Contingencies: Tantric Rituals in Eastern Central Asia under Tangut Rule, 11th–13th C." In *Buddhism in Central Asia II: Practices and Rituals, Visual and Material Transfer*, edited by Yukiyo Kasai and Henrik H. Sørensen, 313–365. Leiden: Brill.
- Norbu, Namkhai. 1984. *sBas-pa'i rgum-chung: The Small Collection of Hidden Precepts: A Study of an Ancient Manuscript of Dzogchen from Tun-huang*. Arcidosso: Shang-Shung Edizioni.
- Norbu, Namkhai, and Lipman, Kennard. 2001 [1986]. *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation by Mañjuśrīmitra*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Ostensen, Morten. 2018. "Reconsidering the Contents and Function of the rDzogs chen Classifications of *Sems phyogs* and *Sems sde*." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 43: 32–49.
- Paldor, Zagtsa, and Sheehy, Michael. 2014. "The Nyingma Kama Collections." Revised version 12 March 2014. <https://www.bdrc.io/blog/2014/03/12/the-nyingma-kama-collections/> (accessed 31 October 2021).
- Pearcey, Adam S. 2018. *A Greater Perfection? Scholasticism, Comparativism and Issues of Sectarian Identity in Early 20th Century Writings on rDzogs-chen*. PhD diss., London: SOAS, University of London.
- Roth, Harold D. 2015. "Daoist Apophatic Meditation: Selections from the Classical Daoist Corpus." In *Contemplative Literature: A Comparative Sourcebook on Meditation and Contemplative Prayer*, edited by Louis Komjathy, 89–143. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Samuel, Geoffrey. 1993. *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Samuel, Geoffrey. 2009. *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- van Schaik, Sam. 2004. "The Early Days of the Great Perfection." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 27.1: 165–206.
- van Schaik, Sam. 2007. "Oral Teachings and Written Texts: Transmission and Transformation in Dunhuang." In *Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet*, edited by Matthew T. Kapstein and Brandon Dotson, 183–208. Leiden: Brill.
- van Schaik, Sam. 2008. "The Sweet Sage and the *Four Yogas*: A Lost Mahāyoga Treatise from Dunhuang." *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 4: 1–67.
- van Schaik, Sam. 2010. "The Limits of Transgression: The Samaya Vows of Mahāyoga." In *Esoteric Buddhism at Dunhuang: Rites and Teachings for this Life and Beyond*, edited by Matthew T. Kapstein and Sam van Schaik, 61–83. Leiden: Brill.

- van Schaik, Sam. 2012. "Dzogchen, Chan and the Question of Influence." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 24: 5–19.
- Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina. 1999–2000. "Prière pour un apostat—Fragments d'histoire tibétaine." *Cahiers d'Extrême Asie* 11: 217–246.
- Sells, Michael A. 1994. *Mystical Languages of Unsayings*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Silburn, Lilian. 1989 [1955]. *Instant et Cause: Le Discontinu dans la Pensée Philosophique de l'Inde*. Paris: De Boccard.
- Slingerland, Edward. 2003. *Effortless Action: Wu-wei as Conceptual Metaphor and Spiritual Ideal in Early China*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Snellgrove, David L. 2004 [1987]. *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan Successors*. Bangkok: Orchid Press.
- Sobisch, Jan-Ulrich. 2020. "Jig rten gsum mgon's *Dgongs gcig* on the Relation between Mahāmudrā and the Six Yogas of Nāropa." In *Mahāmudrā in India and Tibet*, edited by Roger R. Jackson and Klaus-Dieter Mathes, 170–184. Leiden: Brill.
- Sørensen, Henrik H. 2019. "Tibetan Tantra and Chinese Esoteric Buddhism in the Melting Pot: A Study of a Chinese Recension of the Twenty-Eight Vajra Precepts." *BuddhistRoad Paper* 2.2.
- Studstill, Randall. 2005. *The Unity of Mystical Traditions: The Transformation of Consciousness in Tibetan and German Mysticism*. Leiden: Brill.
- Stünkel, Knut Martin. 2017. "Immanence/Transcendence." *Entangled Religions: KHK Working Paper Series* 7, n.p.
- Stünkel, Knut Martin. Forthcoming. "The Transcendence/Immanence Distinction: Religion as Contrast." In *Key Concepts in the Study of Religion in Contact*, edited by Volkhard Krech, Tim Karis and Kianoosh Rezania. Leiden: Brill.
- Takahashi, Kammie. 2010. "Ritual and Philosophical Speculation in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*." In *Esoteric Buddhism at Dunhuang: Rites and Teachings for this Life and Beyond*, edited by Matthew T. Kapstein and Sam van Schaik, 85–141. Leiden: Brill.
- Takahashi, Kammie. 2015. "Contribution, Attribution, and Selective Lineal Amnesia in the Case of Mahāyogin dPal dbyangs." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 32: 1–23.
- Takahashi, Kammie. 2018. "A Luminous Transcendence of Views: The Thirty Apophatic Topics in dPal dbyangs's *Thugs kyi sgron ma*." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 44: 159–177.
- Tanaka, Kenneth K. 2015. "Mahāyāna Buddhist Visualization: The *Guan wuliang shoufo jing*." In *Contemplative Literature: A Comparative Sourcebook on Meditation and Contemplative Prayer*, edited by Louis Komjathy, 407–455. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Turpeinen, Katarina. 2018. "Tales of Realization—Narratives in Rig 'dzin rGod ldem's Great Perfection Revelation." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 43: 134–195.
- Turpeinen, Katarina. 2019. "Luminous Visions and Liberatory Amulets in Rig 'dzin rGod ldem's Great Perfection Anthology." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 50: 132–149.

- Valby, Jim, trans. 2014. *The Self-Originated Victorious Peak of Pure Perfect Presence, with Tibetan Commentary by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe*. Shelburne Falls: Jim Valby Publications.
- Vitali, Roberto. 1996. *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.brang*. Dharamsala: Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang lo.gcig.stong 'khor.ba'i rjes.dran.mdzad sgo'i go.sgrig tshogs.chung.
- West, Martin L. 1973. *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique*. Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner.

Index of Sources

- All-Creating King 45
Armour Against Darkness 18
- Compendium of the Suchness of All the
Thus-gone Ones 21
Cuckoo of Awareness 1, 17
- rDzong 'phrang srog gsum *See* Fortress,
Chasm and Life-force
- Fortress, Chasm and Life-force 26–27, 45,
66
- General Commentary on an Authoritative
Scripture of Secret Mantra 24–25
Guhyagarbha-tantra 1, 17
- Kun byed rgyal po *See* All-Creating King
- Lamp for the Eye of Contemplation 4–5,
19n20, 26–27, 43–45
- Mun pa'i go cha *See* Armour Against Dark-
ness
- Noble Noose of Methods 21, 23n41
rNying ma bka' ma *See* Orally Transmitted
Injunctions of the Nyingma
- Orally Transmitted Injunctions of the
Nyingma 4, 6, 63–67
- sPyi gsang sngags lung gi 'grel pa *See* Gen-
eral Commentary on an Authoritative
Scripture of Secret Mantra
- Rig pa'i khu byug *See* Cuckoo of Awareness
- bSam gtan mig sgron *See* Lamp for the Eye
of Contemplation
- Sarvatathāgata-tattva-saṃgraha *See* Com-
pendium of the Suchness of All the
Thus-gone Ones
- Thabs kyi zhags pa *See* Noble Noose of
Methods

Index of Names and Subjects

NB: In the case of the commentaries (i.e. after page 74), page ranges in pairs refer to the facing pages of the Tibetan text and English translation.

- absolute basis (*gzhi don*) 180–181, 188–189
 see also universal ground
- absolute meaningfulness (*don*) 52, 54, 79,
 90–91, 96–97, 98–99, 106–107, 112–113,
 122–123, 130–131, 132–133, 136–137, 140–
 141, 152–153, 192–193, 204–205, 212–213
- absolute truth (Skt. *paramāthasatya*) 126–
 127, 138–139, 208–209, 209n77, 228–229
- accomplishment (*dnegos grub*; Skt. *siddhi*)
 80–81, 202–203, 228–229
- accumulations (Skt. *sambhāra*) 13, 49, 144–
 145, 166–167, 200–201
- acumen (Skt. *prajñā*) 22, 32, 80–81, 94–95,
 96–97, 124–125, 144–145, 166–167, 174–
 175, 192–193, 228–229
- afflictions (Skt. *kleśa*) 11–12, 30–31, 33, 48,
 102–103, 106–107, 136–137, 168–169,
 230–231
- Alak Zenkar Rinpoche 64
- alpha-purity (*ka dag*) 12–13, 112–113, 192–
 193, 206–207
 see also purity
- antidotes (*gnyen po*; Skt. *pratipakṣa*, *vipakṣa*)
 12, 162–163, 186–187, 206–207, 224–225
- Anuyoga 202–203
- apophatic practice 32, 39, 51
- aspirations (*smon lam*; Skt. *prañidhāna*) 32,
 182–183, 184–185, 204–205
 aspirationless 94–95, 100–101
- auditors (Skt. *śrāvaka*) 18, 76–77, 138–139,
 190–191
- awakened body (*sku*) 100–101, 108–109,
 126–127, 146–147, 174–175, 206–207,
 214–215, 222–223
- awakened body, speech and mind (*sku gsung
 thugs*) 15, 21, 23–24, 88–89, 94–95, 96–
 97, 100–101, 112–113, 130–131, 156–157,
 162–163, 164–165, 166–167, 176–177, 178–
 179, 216–217, 218–219
- awakened mind (*thugs*) 23, 36, 80–81, 84–
 85, 88–89, 90–91, 92–93, 94–95, 98–99,
 100–101, 110–111, 128–129, 152–153, 156–
 157, 158–159, 216–217, 224–225
- awakened speech (*gsung*) 94–95, 100–101,
 140–141, 152–153, 154–155, 194–195, 216–
 217
- awareness (*rig pa*) 43–44, 88–89, 104–105,
 108–109, 112–113, 166–167, 172–173, 186–
 187, 206–207, 208–209, 226–227
- intrinsic awareness (*rang rig*) 11, 13–16,
 23, 33–34, 39, 41–42, 49–50, 53–54, 92–
 93, 94–95, 98–99, 100–101, 106–107,
 110–111, 114–115, 146–147, 158–159, 168–
 169, 170–171, 176–177, 188–189, 190–191,
 194–195, 196–197, 198–199, 200–201,
 224–225
- bliss (*bde ba*; Skt. *sukha*) 14–16, 18, 32, 36,
 48, 74–75, 76–77, 78–79, 84–85, 86–
 87, 88–89, 106–107, 110–111, 112–113,
 118–119, 150–151, 152–153, 160–161, 230–
 231
- bodhicitta *See* enlightened mind
- bodhisattvas 29, 76–77, 223m03
- body of emanation (Skt. *nirmāṇakāya*)
 212–213
- body of enjoyment (Skt. *sambhogakāya*)
 174–175
- body of form (Skt. *rūpakāya*) 33, 201n63
- body of reality (Skt. *dharmakāya*) 29, 76–
 77, 108–109, 126–127, 146–147, 162–163,
 175n35, 176–177, 184–185, 196–197, 198–
 199, 212–213, 218–219, 222–223
- Buddhagupta 1
- Chan 24, 30, 44n27, 51
- chilioscosm 30, 90–91, 108–109, 180–181,
 202–203
- Christian mystics 50
- Cittamātra 190–191
- compassion (Skt. *karuṇā*) 13, 49–50, 84–85,
 92–93, 154–155, 166–167, 170–171, 180–
 181, 182–183, 192–193, 200–201, 210–211,
 212–213, 226–227, 228–229
- completion phase (*rdzogs rim*; Skt. *niṣpan-
 nakrama*) 1

- concentration (Skt. *samādhi*) 76–77, 108–109, 134–135, 138–139, 140–141, 156–157, 180–181, 198–199, 202–203, 210–211, 214–215
- conduct (*spyod pa*; Skt. *caryā*) 48–50, 76–77, 82–83, 106–107, 112–113, 114–115, 122–123, 142–143, 144–145, 158–159, 168–169, 170–171, 180–181, 184–185, 188–189, 192–193, 210–211, 218–219, 220–221, 228–229, 230–231
- configuration (Skt. *maṇḍala*) 17, 21, 33, 110–111, 154–155, 156–157, 160–161, 172–173, 174–175, 178–179, 180–181, 192–193, 194–195, 200–201, 216–217
- contemplation (Skt. *dhyāna*) 38, 43, 138–139, 144–145
- cosmos 31–32, 38, 40
see also chiliocosm; realms, three
- cyclic existence (Skt. *saṃsāra*) 12, 14, 29–32, 78–79, 88–89, 124–125, 164–165, 168–169, 178–179, 184–185, 186–188, 202–203, 208–209
- Darma, King 2
- defects (*skyon*; Skt. *doṣa*) 156–157, 204–205, 220–221, 222–223
- deviations (*gol sa*) 12, 48–49, 86–87, 112–113, 134–135, 138–139, 142–143, 186–187, 190–191, 194–195, 198–199, 218–219
- devotion (*mos gus*) 53, 80–81
see also faith
- dharmadhātu *See* open dimension of phenomena
- dharmakāya *See* body of reality
- dharmatā *See* reality-as-such
- dhyāna *See* contemplation
- dialogical situation 52–53
- disciple, qualities of 55, 57, 82–83, 156–157
- disclosive paradigm 36
- Dudjom Rinpoche 64
- Dunhuang manuscripts 1, 5, 17, 19n14, 20–21, 30n17, 75n3, 123n15
- Dzogchen
 as term 1
 as vehicle 4, 6, 17, 27, 45, 78–79, 150–151, 156–157, 158–159, 160–161, 224–225
 history of 1–2
see also Great Completeness
- effort 14, 17, 28, 33, 39, 41, 92–93, 96–97, 106–107, 136–137
- effortlessness 14, 30–31, 152–153, 158–159
 as term of art vs rubric of analysis 11
- eighteen texts of the mind section 3–4
- emblematic gesture (Skt. *mudrā*) 19, 78–79, 126–127, 130–131
- embodiment 46–47, 51
- emptiness (Skt. *śūnyatā*) 25, 43, 94–95, 100–101, 104–105, 124–125, 132–133, 138–139
- encounter 23, 31, 38, 42, 48, 51–52, 90–91, 94–95, 96–97, 98–99, 104–105, 106–107, 112–113, 140–141, 152–153, 166–167, 168–169, 170–171, 176–177, 192–193, 196–197, 202–203, 212–213
- enlightened mind (Skt. *bodhicitta*) 11, 21, 23, 25, 30, 35, 41–42, 54, 88–89, 90–91, 96–97, 98–99, 100–101, 102–103, 104–105, 106–107, 108–109, 110–111, 124–125, 136–137, 150–151, 156–157, 164–165, 168–169, 172–173, 178–179, 192–193, 194–195, 198–199, 200–201, 202–203, 204–205
- equality (Skt. *samatā*) 35, 78–79, 80–81, 112–113, 118–119, 142–143, 198–199, 220–221, 228–229
 union of equality (*mnyam sbyor*) 158–159, 216–217, 220–221
- equanimity (Skt. *upekṣā*) 166–167
- era of fragmentation (*sil bu'i dus*) 3
- evocation (Skt. *sādhana*) 17, 19–20, 32, 47, 78–79, 80–81
- faith (*dad pa*; Skt. *śraddhā*) 57, 80–81, 82–83, 156–157
- fruition (*'bras bu*; Skt. *phala*) 13, 25, 42, 49, 108–109, 110–111, 112–113, 114–115, 118–119, 146–147, 164–165, 168–169, 184–185, 192–193, 196–197, 198–199
- Garab Dorje 224–225
- Great Completeness (*rdzogs chen*) 74–75, 82–83, 92–93, 108–109, 158–159, 160–161, 178–179, 200–201
- Gyalse Zhenpen Thaye 63
- Gyatrul Pema Dongak Tendzin 63
- Gyatso, Nyakrong Tsering 64
- Gyurme Dorje Terdak Lingpa 63

- hierarchies 35, 40
- ignorance (*ma rig pa*; Skt. *avidyā*) 132–133,
154–155, 192–193, 206–207, 208–209
- immanence *See* transcendence-immanence
- imprints (Skt. *vāsanā*) 11, 33, 106–107
- independent buddhas (Skt. *pratyekabuddha*)
18, 76–77, 138–139, 190–191
- indications (*rtags*) (*also* insignia) 23,
100–101, 128–129, 134–135, 206–207,
226–227
- ineffability 36, 54–55, 100–101, 124–125, 128–
129, 130–131, 136–137, 144–145
- integral being (*bdag nyid chen po*; Skt.
mahātman) 14–15, 90–91, 112–113, 122–
123, 154–155, 160–161, 166–167, 178–179,
184–185, 188–189, 190–191, 192–193, 212–
213, 230–231
- integral identity (*bdag nyid*) 14–15, 35, 90–
91, 108–109, 120–121, 130–131, 146–147,
160–161, 166–167, 172–173, 178–179, 196–
197, 198–199, 200–201
- inwardness 14, 36–38, 120–121, 130–131
- Jamyang Gyaltzen, Katok Khenpo 4, 64
- jñāna *See* wisdom
- Karma Delek 64
- Kashmiri Śaivism 31, 33
- kindness (Skt. *maitrī*) 182–183, 224–225
- Lang Darma *See* Darma, King
- Lha Lama Yeshe-ö 48
- lineage 52n12, 57, 124–125, 136–137, 150–151,
156–157, 228–229
see also transmission
- Lochen Dharmasrī 63
- Longchenpa 26–27, 45
- Madhyamaka 24, 76–77, 138–139, 190–191,
228–229
- mahāmudrā 80–81, 162–163, 176–177, 228–
229
and four seals 20–22, 188–189
- Mahāyoga 1, 4, 6, 17, 19, 22, 26–27, 32–33
see also Mantrayāna
- maṇḍala *See* configuration
- mantra *See* spell
- Mantrayāna 76–77, 190–191
- master (*bla ma*; Skt. *guru*) 52–54, 76–77,
80–81, 82–83, 156–157, 220–221
- meaning event 42, 52
- means (Skt. *upāya*) 22, 32, 41, 82–83, 92–93,
94–95, 98–99, 114–115, 160–161, 168–169,
170–171, 174–175, 192–193, 210–211
- meditation (*sgom pa*; Skt. *bhāvanā*) 12,
19–20, 43–45, 78–79, 114–115, 124–125,
130–131, 142–143, 146–147, 186–187
discipline in 44
non-meditation 45, 144–145
- meditative equilibrium (Skt. *samāpatti*) 38
- merit (Skt. *puṇya*) 29, 49, 164–165, 200–201,
230–231
- mind (*sems*) 96–97, 98–99, 104–105, 124–
125, 138–139, 140–141, 204–205
- mind-as-such (*sems nyid*) 11, 23–25, 31, 52,
96–97, 98–99, 104–105, 150–151, 192–
193, 210–211
vs mind (*sems*) 41
see also nature of mind
- Mindroling monastery 63
- mind section 2n13
- mudrā *See* emblematic gesture *and* seal
- Munsel, Khenpo 64
- nature of mind (*sems kyi rang bzhin*) 11–12,
14, 23, 38, 41–42, 102–103
see also mind-as-such
- nirvāṇa *See* transcendence
- non-action (*also* non-doing) 13, 48, 50, 96–
97, 192–193
diligence of non-action (*bya ba med pa'i
brtson 'grus*) 44, 210–211
- non-conceptuality (Skt. *nirvikalpa*) 186–187
non-discursiveness 104–105, 140–141,
178–179, 180–181, 184–185, 186–187, 192–
193
- non-duality 22, 25, 30, 32–33, 80–81, 92–93,
94–95, 104–105, 116–117, 124–125, 136–
137, 160–161, 162–163, 178–179, 184–185,
186–187, 190–191, 212–213, 224–225
- Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, timeline 2–3
- Nub Yönten Gyatso 26, 66
- Nyak Jñānakumāra 2–3, 4, 24–25
- Nyen Pelyang 1
- obscurations (Skt. *āvaraṇa*) 86–87, 88–89,
114–115, 132–133, 134–135, 190–191

- open dimension of phenomena (*chos kyi dbyings*; Skt. *dharmadhātu*) 55, 98–99, 114–115, 120–121, 122–123, 132–133, 166–167, 178–179, 182–183, 184–185, 186–187, 188–189, 196–197, 210–211
- open dimension (*dbyings*) 22, 78–79, 92–93, 106–107, 108–109, 112–113, 138–139, 152–153, 158–159, 160–161, 162–163, 164–165, 172–173, 174–175, 180–181, 190–191, 208–209, 216–217
- optimization 42–43
- padlock (*sgo lcags*) 36, 54, 88–89
- Padmasambhava 2
- Palgyi Yeshe, the Sogdian 24
- Palyul monastery 63
- path (Skt. *mārga*) 35, 40, 96–97, 146–147, 156–157, 158–159, 168–169, 182–183
- pith instruction (*man ngag*; Skt. *upadeśa*) 84–85, 120–121, 154–155
- pith instruction section (*man ngag sde*) 2n13, 13, 38n4
- pledge (Skt. *samaya*) 18–19, 21, 56, 78–79, 82–83, 84–85, 88–89, 116–117, 156–157, 188–189, 200–201, 202–203, 220–221
- Podrang Zhiwa-ö 48
- prajñā *See* acumen
- Prajñāpāramitā 30
- pure field (*zhing khams*; Skt. *kṣetra*) 31–32, 94–95, 106–107
- purity 11–12, 104–105, 110–111, 120–121, 132–133, 136–137, 152–153, 158–159, 168–169, 172–173, 182–183, 184–185, 186–187, 188–189, 190–191, 196–197, 200–201, 214–215
see also alpha-purity
- reality-as-such (Skt. *dharmatā*) 39, 53, 74–75, 80–81, 98–99, 102–103, 110–111, 138–139, 144–145, 146–147, 164–165, 170–171, 172–173, 186–187, 190–191, 196–197, 200–201
- realms, three 154–155, 155n9
- referential imaging (*dmigs pa*; Skt. *ālam-bana*) 132–133, 134–135, 140–141, 226–227
- non-referential 19, 40, 78–79, 112–113, 124–125, 144–145, 146–147, 186–187, 190–191, 192–193, 214–215, 228–229
- relative truth (Skt. *saṃvṛtisatya*) 208–209, 228–229
- religious communication 28–29, 36, 55
- Rigdzin Gödem 30n24, 45
- ritual 19–20, 47
- sādhana *See* evocation
- Salwagyal, Ācārya 3, 148–149
- samādhi *See* concentration
- Samantabhadra 17–18, 29, 45, 74–75, 76–77, 78–79, 84–85, 150–151, 158–159, 162–163, 176–177, 178–179, 180–181, 212–213, 224–225, 228–229
- Samantabhadra-Vajrasattva 152–153, 154–155, 174–175, 180–181
- Samantabhadri 17, 82–83, 228–229
- samāpatti *See* meditative equilibrium
- samaya *See* pledge
- samsāra *See* cyclic existence
- script 51
for unscripted practice 46–47
- seal (Skt. *mudrā*) 80–81, 162–163, 174–175, 178–179
see also mahāmudrā
- searching 23, 41–42, 96–97, 102–103, 112–113, 136–137, 140–141, 184–185, 190–191, 196–197, 204–205
- secrecy 55–56, 84–85, 90–91, 114–115, 218–219
- selflessness (Skt. *nairātmya*) 15
- seminal nucleus (*thig le*; Skt. *bindu*) 52, 90–91, 106–107, 172–173, 180–181, 182–183, 186–187, 196–197, 212–213, 214–215, 230–231
- signs (*mtshan ma*; Skt. *nimitta*) 94–95, 104–105, 126–127, 154–155, 194–195
- signless 94–95, 100–101
- sins (*sdig pa*; Skt. *pāpa*) 142–143, 230–231
- spaciousness (*also* space or sky) 38–40, 43, 90–91, 124–125, 134–135, 142–143, 144–145, 146–147, 160–161, 172–173
- as embodied process 46–47
- spell (Skt. *mantra*) 19, 21, 78–79, 130–131, 156–157
- spiral 35
- spontaneous presence (*lhun grub*) 13, 24, 33, 76–77, 82–83, 92–93, 118–119, 138–139, 140–141, 142–143, 160–161, 196–197
- Śrīsiṃha 3
- subject–object dichotomy 14, 22, 41, 94–95, 172–173, 209n78, 217n92

- suchness (*de kho na nyid*; Skt. *tattvatā*) 74–75, 76–77, 106–107, 124–125, 150–151
see also thusness
- suffering (Skt. *duḥkha*) 14, 29, 32, 106–107, 110–111, 118–119, 130–131, 168–169
- Sufism 35
- syllables 23, 41, 96–97, 98–99, 100–101
- symbols 22–23, 29, 33–34
 internalization of 46, 52
- technique (in meditation) 1–2, 12, 40, 41, 44–47
- teleological perspective 12, 33n44
- Terdak Lingpa *See* Gyurme Dorje Terdak Lingpa
- thematic focus (*gza' gtad*) 19, 48, 122–123, 156–157, 188–189, 214–215
- thusness (*de bzhin nyid*; Skt. *tathatā*) 33, 214–215
see also suchness
- time 12, 29, 45, 49, 106–107, 110–111, 126–127, 154–155
- transcendence (Skt. *nirvāṇa*) 29–30, 32, 120–121, 124–125, 138–139, 144–145, 164–165, 186–187, 208–209
- transcendence-immanence 6, 28–34, 55, 58
- transcending process 28n5, 39–40
- transmission
 future of 56–57, 84–85, 116–117, 148–149, 154–155
 orality of 45–46
see also lineage
- treasure 53, 80–81, 88–89, 90–91, 104–105, 110–111, 112–113
- Tupten Pelsang, Tulku 64
- union and liberation 114–115, 116–117, 226–227
- universal ground (*kun gzhi*) 18, 74–75, 134–135, 160–161, 186–187, 194–195
see also absolute basis
- universal ground consciousness (Skt. *ālayavijñāna*) 18, 196–197
- Vairocana (Buddha) 18, 74–75
- Vairocana (translator) 3–4
- Vajradhara 78–79
- Vajrasattva 17–18, 74–75, 76–77, 126–127
see also Samantabhadra-Vajrasattva
- vehicle (Skt. *yāna*) 14, 17–18, 45, 78–79, 82–83, 90–91, 108–109, 126–127, 150–151, 156–157, 158–159, 160–161, 180–181, 190–191, 222–223, 224–225
- verticality 38, 40
- view (*lta ba*; Skt. *drṣṭi*) 43, 48, 53, 76–77, 82–83, 104–105, 108–109, 112–113, 122–123, 124–125, 138–139, 142–143, 144–145, 154–155, 166–167, 170–171, 188–189, 202–203, 204–205, 206–207, 218–219, 220–221, 222–223
- Vimalamitra 1
- virtues (*dge ba*; Skt. *kuśala*) 48, 50, 142–143, 220–221
- wisdom (*ye shes*; Skt. *jñāna*) 12, 23, 31, 33, 36, 43, 45, 48–49, 52, 54, 78–79, 80–81, 88–89, 90–91, 92–93, 94–95, 100–101, 102–103, 108–109, 110–111, 112–113, 114–115, 120–121, 124–125, 128–129, 132–133, 134–135, 144–145, 150–151, 152–153, 154–155, 164–165, 168–169, 172–173, 174–175, 178–179, 180–181, 182–183, 184–185, 188–189, 190–191, 192–193, 196–197, 198–199, 200–201, 206–207, 208–209, 210–211, 214–215, 216–217, 218–219, 224–225, 226–227
- wuwei 28
- Yamāntaka 26, 227n110
- Yang Wangter (name) 3, 84–85, 116–117, 148–149, 230–231
- Yudra Nyingpo 4

DYLAN ESLER,

PhD (2018), University of Louvain,
MA (2005) SOAS, London, currently
works as a researcher at the Center for
Religious Studies (CERES) of the Ruhr-
University Bochum. He has published
numerous articles and translations
relating to Tibetan Dzogchen and
Tantra, including *The Lamp for the Eye
of Contemplation* (Oxford University
Press, 2023).

The notion of effortlessness is central to the self-understanding of the Tibetan contemplative tradition known as Dzogchen. This book explores this key notion from a variety of perspectives, highlighting the distinctive role it plays in the Dzogchen approach's doctrinal architecture and meditative programme. The book's focus is on the early development of the Dzogchen tradition, especially as codified in a set of hitherto unstudied commentaries by the 10th-century scholar and meditation master Nubchen Sangye Yeshe. A full annotated translation of the commentaries is provided, along with an edition of the Tibetan texts on facing pages.



9 789004 534223

This book is volume 54 in the series
BRILL'S TIBETAN STUDIES LIBRARY.

ISBN 978-90-04-53422-3
ISSN 1568-6183

brill.com/btsl