

# The Making of Tantric Orthodoxy in the Eleventh-Century Indo-Tibetan World: \*Jñānākara's \*Mantrāvatāra (Gsang sngags la 'jug pa)

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**Abstract** My paper focuses on one of the most influential, but hardly explored, scholar of the *phyi dar* period \*Jñānākara (eleventh century). \*Jñānākara's \**Mantrāvatāra* (An Introduction to the [Path of] Mantra) and his auto-commentary, \**Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti*, which have been lost in the original Sanskrit, but can be accessed in Tibetan translation as *Gsang sngags la 'jug pa* and *Gsang sngags la 'jug pa'i 'grel pa* respectively, provides a comprehensive picture of doctrinal debate that dominated the scene in the intellectual history of the eleventh-century Indo-Tibetan world, through demonstrating various perspectives on tantric practices that were forced to enter the battlefield of a critical discussion during the 'tantric age'. The paper will try to reconstruct the most controversial issues of this debate, such as 'cenobitic fornication'—that is whether monks should obtain tantric initiation and engage in the practices in which copulation was a central part—and the so-called wrathful rites (*mngon spyod*). Motivated by polemical ends, \*Jñānākara's \**Mantrāvatāra* aims at establishing its self-authenticity and preeminence by contrasting its 'correct tantric practice' with the so-called 'perverse tantric practice' promoted by 'frauds' and attributing to them, often pejoratively, erroneous or willful misappropriation of tantric scriptures. In this context, the making of orthodoxy goes hand in hand with questioning the legitimacy of certain tantric practices.

**Keywords** Orthodoxy · Tantric practice · Heresy · \*Jñānākara · *phyi dar* period · Cenobitic fornication · Tantric hermeneutics · *Mantranaya*

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## Introduction

The focus of this paper is \*Jñānākara's \**Mantrāvatāra* (An Introduction to the [Path of] Mantra) and his auto-commentary, \**Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti*, which have been lost in the original Sanskrit, but can be accessed in Tibetan translation as *Gsang sngags la 'jug pa* and *Gsang sngags la 'jug pa'i 'grel pa* respectively.<sup>1</sup> As far as I know, no academic study on these texts exists today. A few verses of the root text have been translated by Hopkins (2008, pp. 227–230). A short note has been included in the encyclopedia entry on the tantric *prakaraṇas* (*Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Szántó 2015b, p. 758). The author of this treatise, an eleventh century \*Jñānākara, was a famous translator of the *niruttarayoga* tantras in the Ārya transmission lineage of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. He is generally known as 'mahāpaṇḍita Jñānākara', the 'great scholar Jñānākara'. This nomen clearly indicates his preeminence as a scholastic expert. The identity of our *paṇḍita* \*Jñānākara should not be confused with his 'doppelgänger', Jñānākara mtshur, whose translations of mostly tantric works, bereft of Indian collaborators, also appear in the Tibetan Bstan 'gyur. The \**Mantrāvatāra* aims at providing an introduction to the basic concepts and practices of the tantric path under fifteen headings. Special emphasis is put on exposing the fault of perverse views promoted by fraudulent teachers in order to correct them. \*Jñānākara's *Mantrāvatāra* tries to establish legitimacy of certain tantric practices in order to delimit "the orthodoxy of tantric practice". This itself comes about by establishing the patterns of heretical refutation, conceived as the defense of orthodoxy, 'the correct belief'. \*Jñānākara takes pains to construct tantric heresy by identifying, describing and refuting "the other" through emphasizing its harmfulness to the orthodox ways. My paper contains a critical edition of the Tibetan text of *Gsang sngags la 'jug pa* and an English translation, done for the first time. The critical edition is established on the basis of the various editions of the Bstan 'gyur, including the Cone, Gser bris ("Golden Tengyur"), Derge, Peking, Narthang, as well as the partial extracanonical transmission of Bu ston Rin chen grub.

## Who Was \*Jñānākara?

Tibetan tradition unfortunately tells us very little about *paṇḍita* \*Jñānākara (Tib. *dpal ye shes 'byung*). His name is given in various forms depending on the source of the reference: Jñānākara or Śrījñānākara (in the colophons of the some texts he translated). He was certainly from Kaśmīr in northern India. The historical records most often refer to him as 'Kashmirian Jñānākara'. The scant biographical references to \*Jñānākara associate him with the intellectual circle of the *siddha* Nāropā (c. 1016–1100) and the transmission lineage of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. Nāropā, a contemporary of \*Atiśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, was a major figure in the eleventh century spread of esoteric Buddhism (Vajrayāna, Mantrayāna) in India and

<sup>1</sup> I am greatly indebted to Péter-Dániel Szántó (All Souls College, University of Oxford) for his assistance in selecting this text for research as well as constant academic support. I thank Chris Jones (St. Peter's College, University of Oxford) for proofreading this text.

Tibet. *The Blue Annals* (Tib. *Deb ther sngon po*) of the famed Tibetan historian 'Gos lo tsa ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481) clearly describes \*Jñānākara as a disciple of Nāropā.<sup>2</sup> According to this account, \*Jñānākara belongs to the Ārya transmission lineage (*gsang 'dus 'phags lugs*) of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* (Tib. *gsang 'dus rtsa rgyud*).<sup>3</sup> The biography (*rnam thar*) of Nāropā also lists \*Jñānākara as Nāropā's pupil, but adds that he was one among many hundreds of *paṇḍita* disciples<sup>4</sup> and certainly not among Nāropā's seven famous students,<sup>5</sup> who, in terms of scholarship, were his equal.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, according to Rdo rje kun dga' 'od, \*Jñānākara had received the tantric teachings of the *Guhyasamāja* in the transmission line presented below (Table 1).

According to Rdo rje kun dga' 'od, \*Jñānākara had received the teachings from Gser ling pa, a Tibetan designation of Dharmakīrtiśrī (c. 1000) of Suvarṇadvīpa (Sumatra) who is known as the most important teacher of \*Atiśa Dīpaṅkara.<sup>7</sup> Gser ling pa was a disciple of Kusāli, the Junior, known also as Maitrīyogin, due to his eager meditation on Maitreya.<sup>8</sup> Kusāli, the Junior was initiated by Kusāli, the Elder, who received numerous tantric transmissions of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*.<sup>9</sup> Gser ling pa gave the *Guhyasamāja* initiation to (1) Piṅḍo pa, (2) Abhijñā, (3) Yoṣa, and (4) \*Jñānākara. The Bengali scholar Abhijñā, and the Zahor scholar Yoṣa were Nāropā's two contemporaries.

As a disciple of Nāropā, \*Jñānākara was a recognized authority in the field of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*.<sup>10</sup> The account given in *The Blue Annals* indicates that even the great \*Atiśa Dīpaṅkara wished to learn from him. When in 1054, at the

<sup>2</sup> Roerich ([1949] 1997, p. 361).

<sup>3</sup> Among the two transmission lineages of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, the Jñānapāda tradition (*ye shes zhabs lugs*) and the Ārya tradition (*'phags lugs*), the latter is based on the exegetical literature attributed to Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Nāgārjuna's disciple Nāgabodhi, Śākyamitra, and Candrakīrti (Szántó 2015a).

<sup>4</sup> Guenther (1999, p. 99).

<sup>5</sup> The list of seven famous disciples of Nāropā includes Maitrīpa, Śrīśāntibhadra, the *mahāsiddha* Dombhipā, Śāntipā, Spyī ther ba from Nepal, Prajñāsiṃha, and Ākarasiddhi from Kashmir. Cf. Guenther (1999, p. 99).

<sup>6</sup> Guenther (1999, p. 99).

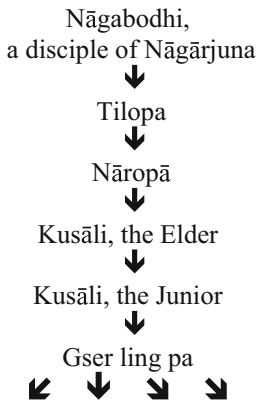
<sup>7</sup> For more information about Gser ling pa's association with Atiśa, see Yeshé (2012, p. 26).

<sup>8</sup> Vetturini (2007, p. 71).

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 71.

<sup>10</sup> \*Jñānākara's scholarship attracted disciples and collaborators, such as Khu ston dngos grub, of whom we know nothing, and Rig pa gzhon nu, a student of the eleventh century (presumably Kashmiri) *paṇḍita*, Dharmasrībhadrā. It was not until later, however, when he found an able and enthusiastic collaborator and disciple in the future translator 'Gos Khug pa Lhas btsas that his fame as the *Guhyasamāja* expert began to reach a wide public, particularly among the leading intellectuals who had risen to positions of influence during the *phyi dar* period. 'Gos Khug pa Lhas btsas came to India twice, where he studied the precepts of the *Guhyasamāja* with \*Atiśa and \*Jñānākara. Upon his return to Tibet, he became a leader in the promulgation of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* in his native country. \*Jñānākara paid a visit to Nepal around the year 1054. The visit brought him into contact with Nag tsho (who was forty-three years old at that time), \*Atiśa's closest disciple, who, as we see from the record of translations listed below, soon became one of his most important collaborators.

**Table 1** The *Guhyasamāja* transmission lineage according to Rdo rje kun dga' 'od



1) Piṅḍo pa, 2) Abhijñā, 3) Yoṣa, 4) **Jñānākara**<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Roerich (1997, p. 260)

invitation of the Newar nobleman Dhoga Bhāro,<sup>11</sup> \*Jñānākara arrived to Nepal,<sup>12</sup> \*Atiśa sent his most trusted disciple and great translator, Tshul khrim s rgyal ba<sup>13</sup> (c. 1011–1070), also known as Nag tsho to meet with him. Their meeting marked the beginning of a long-term collaboration between \*Jñānākara and Tshul khrim s rgyal ba. Together they translated many important scriptures of the Tibetan Buddhist canon. *The Blue Annals* narrates the story in the following words:

Formely, when the master (\*Atiśa Dīpaṅkara) was residing at Khub gung-thang, he said (to Nag-tsho): “I intended to hear the exposition of the *Guhyasamāja* according to the system of Nāgārjuna from a disciple of Nāropā, named the Kashmirian Jñānākara”. The *lo-tsa-bā* was surprised to hear it and asked his Nepalese host that if a scholar of this name should arrive to Nepal, a message should be sent to him. The *lo-tsa-bā* then received at *sÑe-than* (Nyétang in the Kyichu valley near Lhasa) a message saying that Jñānākara had come to Nepal. Nag-tsho, seeing that the health of the master was

<sup>11</sup> According to Davidson (2004, p. 135), “Bhāro, was a new political name title given to important members of the merchant (*vaiśya*, *urāya* or similar) castes and marked in the bearer as a minor aristocrat with a title attested primarily from the eleventh century onward. These Newar nobles had a particular involvement with Buddhism, and in the mid-eleventh century Gasu Bhāro and his son Dhoga Bhāro were patrons to Buddhist masters”.

<sup>12</sup> Petech (1984, p. 190). See also Lewis (1996, p. 154).

<sup>13</sup> At the request of the king Lha bla ma Ye shes 'od, Tshul khrim s rgyal ba *alias* Nag tsho was sent to India with a mission to bring \*Atiśa Dīpaṅkara, a scholar of Vikramaśīla to Tibet. The mission led by Nag tsho succeeded and in 1042, when he was thirty-two years old, he accompanied the master to Nari (*mnga ris*), Nag tsho's native place where \*Atiśa met Rin chen bzang po.

deteriorating, did not wish to separate from him, but feeling he would be unable to meet the paṇḍita (Jñānākara), he felt sad.

Afflicted by sorrow, his body became emaciated. Then the Master himself ordered him: “It is difficult to meet kālyāṇa-mitras (‘spiritual friends’) of the Mahāyāna. You, *lo-tsa-bā*, should go yourself! I shall not remain for long and we shall meet in Tuṣita (heaven).<sup>14</sup> Later, Nag-tsho translated many texts assisted by Jñānākara.<sup>15</sup>

As the quote from the *Blue Annals* indicates, \*Jñānākara was one of the leading translators<sup>16</sup> in the *phyi dar* period—the ‘new penetration’ or the ‘later spread’ (to distinguish it from *snga dar* or ‘the first dissemination’), during which a mighty cultural effort of translations of Buddhist dharma from Sanskrit into classical Tibetan took place. One of the ways in which we could expose \*Jñānākara’s background would be to throw some light on the historical context and intellectual climate in which he lived.

The era of the ‘later spread’, which witnessed the emergence of an exuberant translation period, was ushered in from the tenth century and may be considered to have started with the accession of Lha bla ma Ye shes ’od to the throne of Guge in 967 CE.<sup>17</sup> This was the time when Ye shes ’od became suspicious of the widespread cult of the tantras across Tibet whose practices (especially *sbyor/mithuna*, *sgrol/slaying rituals*, *tshogs/gaṇacakra*) were carried out in wild fashion quickly becoming heretical in doctrine and antinomian in praxis. As Karmay (1998, p. 6) mentions: “already towards the end of the eighth century A.D. there was the question of whether the tantras, especially the Anuttarayoga tantras, were to be practiced literally”. Confronted with the fears of doctrinal distortion, the king of Guge-Puhrang issued a

<sup>14</sup> Roerich (1997, p. 260).

<sup>15</sup> Roerich (1997, p. 261).

<sup>16</sup> Among the works \*Jñānākara translated, assisted in the translation of, or revised, the majority are tantras of the *niruttarayoga* class: both the Father tantras and the Mother tantras; the tantras belonging to the canon of the Ārya transmission lineage; and the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by Śāntideva, a famous Mahāyāna work. (1) **The Father Tantras of the Niruttarayoga Class:** (a) *Dpal gsang ba ’dus pa zhes bya ba rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po* (Skt. *Śrī Guhyasamāja-mahātantrarāja*), translated by Śraddhākaravarman and Rin chen bzang po, revised by Śrījñānākara and ’Gos Khug pa Lhas btsas; (b) *Ye shes rdo rje kun las btus pa zhes bya ba* (Skt. *Jñānavajrasamuccayatantra-nāma*), translated by Jñānākara and Khu ston Dngos grub. Revised by Khu ston Dngos grub, Tshul khriims rgyal ba (Nag tsho). This is tantrikā Candrakīrti’s explanatory tantra on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* and a canonical text of the Ārya tradition; (c) *Sgron ma gsal bar byed pa zhes bya ba’i rgya cher bshad pa*, (Skt. *Pradīpodyotana-nāma-ṅikā-ṣaṭkoṭī-vyākhyā*), translated by Śraddhākaravarman and Rin chen bzang po, Śrījñānākara, and ’Gos Khug pa Lhas btsas. Revised by Tshul khriims rgyal ba. This is Candrakīrti’s commentary on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* that belongs to the Ārya canon; (d) *Sems kyi sgrub pa rnam par sbyong ba zhes bya’i rab tu byed pa* (Skt. *Cittaviśuddhi-prakarana*), translated by Jñānākara and Tshul khriims rgyal ba. The text is attributed to Āryadeva, the founder of the Ārya transmission lineage. (2) **The Mother Tantras of the Niruttarayoga class:** (a) *Mngon par brjod pa’i rgyud bla ma zhes bya ba* (Skt. *Abhidhāna-uttaratāntra-nāma*), translated by Jñānākara, Rig pa gzhon nu. Revised by Prabhakāra, Shakya ye shes ’Brog mi. This is essential a *sādhana* collection of various types of *Samvara* and his retinue; (b) *Rdo rje phag mo mngon par ’byung ba* (Skt. *Vajravārāhyabhyudaya*) translated by Jñānākara, Khu ston dngos sgrub. This is considered to be an explanatory tantra of the *Cakrasamvaratantra*. (3) **Mahāyāna works:** (a) *Byang chub sems dpa’i spyod pa la ’jug pa*, (Skt. *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by Śāntideva), translated by Jñānākara and Tshul khriims rgyal ba.

<sup>17</sup> Handa (1994, pp. 58–59).

decree (*bka' shog*) criticizing the alleged impiety of tantric practices. Not only did he oppose the tantric practices that had no basis in the Indian tantric texts (since the knowledge of them was a sign of orthodoxy and proper tantric conduct), he also issued the ordinance in which Rin chen bzang po was ordered to travel to Kashmir in order to find out whether these practices were correct or not (Karmay 1998, p. 6). Moreover, Ye shes 'od sent a Tibetan monk, the above-mentioned Nag tsho, who had already studied at Vikramaśīla, with a mission to bring \*Atiśa Dīpaṅkara, the great scholar of Vikramaśīla to Tibet. Ye shes 'od conceived this mission as, in part, a restoration of the true dharma. Nag tsho's mission was successful and he did not only become the great translator but also one of the most trusted disciples of \*Atiśa. Nag tsho stayed with \*Atiśa until his master's death in 1054. Nag tsho is regarded as one of Tibet's greatest translators. He is credited with more than one hundred translations preserved both in the Bka' 'gyur and Bstan 'gyur. The evidence of their collaboration appears to indicate that \*Jñānākara was a highly respected scholar in his day, admired for his knowledge even by the leading intellectuals of the time. Nag tsho died in 1064, ten years after their fateful meeting.

## The Making of Tantric Orthodoxy

In a manner consistent with the official *phyi dar* ideology of Western Tibet, launched by Ye shes 'od in defense of authentic tantric practices and the clearing of doubts, \*Jñānākara saw his responsibility to warn practitioners about what he considered to be potentially dangerous tantric praxis. Having resolved sometime in the early eleventh century to compose his only known pair of works, the \**Mantrāvatāra* and \**Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti*, he felt free to vent fully against the corrupted tantric praxis taught by unqualified teachers. What is striking in his writings is a constant preoccupation with exposing the misunderstandings of his intellectual adversaries. Indeed, the major current of discourse in the \**Mantrāvatāra* is to label the antinomian tantric practices with a ring of immorality and to promote 'correct' tantric practice within the Buddhist community. Apart from wrathful rites (*sgrol*), one of the most debated tantric practices of that period were sexual rites. \*Jñānākara was critical of teachers who understood tantric scriptures literally, which he saw to be wrong in principle. Rejecting efforts to discover a hidden meaning appeared to him to be a misdirected quest for the truth in the wrong place, a quest for truth which—contrary to its intention—produces falsehood. They are also criticized for ignoring the motivational aspect of tantric conduct and for cultivating desire.

## Jñānākara's Hermeneutical Model

\*Jñānākara makes use of hermeneutical categories to critique those unqualified teachers who—on account of their impurities—understand tantric scriptures literally,<sup>18</sup> hanging dangerously close to the abyss of realism (*samāropa*) and

<sup>18</sup> \*Jñānākara explicates his intentions further saying that, since the *mantranaya* teachings have given rise to a variety of unjustified interpretations promoted by 'frauds' who, on the account of their impurities,

nihilism (*apavāda*).<sup>19</sup> Their main fault, he suggests, is lack of hermeneutical awareness. \*Jñānākara's making of tantric orthodoxy and hope of reconciling *mantranaya's* authentic teachings had rested largely with the enterprise of a proper hermeneutical exegesis. In adopting his hermeneutical model, \*Jñānākara merely follows the footsteps of the great Ārya scholar, Candrakīrti<sup>20</sup> who, in his *Pradīpodyotanā* (a commentary on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*) sets up the hermeneutical matrix, known as the 'six alternatives' (Tib. *mtha' drug*, Skt. *ṣaṭkoṭi*). \*Jñānākara's line of argumentation is structured in such a way as to expose the falsity of the opponent's position (*pūrvapakṣa*) in order to reprove it. He pursues this intention not by apodictically stating that they are wrong—for example, by simply condemning them—but by critically examining the reasons behind their alleged wrongness. The opponents are clearly identified as his fellow tantric colleagues, labeled rather pejoratively as 'small-minded people' (*blo chung rnams*), 'false teachers' (Tib. *dam pa ma yin pa'i bla ma*, Skt. *asad-guru*), or 'heretics' (*mu*

Footnote 18 continued

accept tantric scriptures literally and, subsequently, fall into the trap of 'unjustified denial' (*apavāda*) and 'false attribution' (*samāropa*), it is mandatory to write a treatise in order to bring about the understanding of the unmistakable meaning (*phyin ci ma log pa'i don rtogs shing go bar byed pa'i phyir*). \*Jñānākara says that heresy arises from epistemological error (Tib. *'khrul pa*, Skt. *bhrānti*), which is defined as 'understanding wrongly' (Tib. *log par rtogs pa*). The term *'khrul pa* also includes the meaning of confusion, delusion, and going astray (Skt. *vibhrama*, *vyākula*). \*Jñānākara specifies saying that 'understanding wrongly' means 'apprehending the incorrect view' (*log par rtogs pa ni phyin ci log tu bzung ba*) which is further defined as a tendency to exaggerate/impose (Tib. *sgro 'dogs*, Skt. *samāropa*) and underestimate/deny (Tib. *skur pa 'debs*, Skt. *apavāda*).

<sup>19</sup> *Skur pa* (Skt. *apavāda*) and *sgro 'dogs pa* (*samāropa*) are two technical terms of the early Yogācāra formulated in response to the earliest Madhyamaka doctrine of emptiness and the Middle Way. The early Yogācāra asserts that the true Middle Way consists in neither superimposing (*samāropa*) what do not actually exist nor negating (*apavāda*) what actually exist. In a tantric context, however, these two technical terms are used in reference to the *mantranaya's* soteriology. For example, in the *Vajrayānāntadvayānirākaraṇa* ascribed to Jñānaśrī, *apavāda* means to "exclude inferior people (*mchog ma yin pa*) from those to be instructed (*gdul ba*)", while *samāropa* refers to the superimposition of difference between the proper accomplishment and the path (Kyuma 2009, p. 280).

<sup>20</sup> The success of the Ārya tradition, to which \*Jñānākara belonged, lay not only in its ability to institutionalize its teachings by aligning themselves to the Buddhist monastic centres, but also in its ability to legitimize its authority by adopting the names of the famous Mādhyamika authors: Nāgārjuna, Nāgabodhi, and Candrakīrti (Davidson 2004, p. 38), and, thus suggesting a link between the Madhyamaka's established authority and the relatively new tantric teachings of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. The fact that those Madhyamaka authors lived many centuries before the emergence of the Ārya tradition should not necessarily attest to fraud on the part of the Ārya masters. As Christian Wedemeyer (2007, p. 21) argues, tracing the Ārya tradition back to the Madhyamaka masters is theologically authentic, even if historically anachronistic. The thinkers of the ninth/tenth century Ārya tradition needed to sanction the new forms of religious and philosophical discourses they were creating as participants in the ongoing efflorescence of sacred literature. They found a way to ensure legitimacy of their scriptural production by claiming that the major works of the school were attributable to the early first millennium Madhyamaka authors. In order to explain the considerable lapse of time between the early Madhyamaka authors and the emergence of the Ārya tradition in the ninth/tenth century, the trope of visions and treasures, as the validating source of inception or creation of the new scriptural revelation, was brought forth. The tendency to authorize the validity of the newly emergent text by maintaining it was previously concealed only to be re-discovered at the proper time is a well-attested pattern in the scriptural production of Buddhist literature (Wedemeyer 2007, p. 36).

*stegs can*).<sup>21</sup> The methodological device employed to object and rebut their argument is based on the well-known six principles of tantric hermeneutics (Tib. *mtha' drug*, Skt. *ṣaṭkoṭī*). In adopting this hermeneutical scheme, \*Jñānākara follows the great exegetes of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. Of particular interest is for him the intended purport (Tib. *dgongs pa can*, Skt. *ābhīprāyika*) of tantric teachings. Noteworthy is the space he devotes to two further categories of tantric hermeneutics: the literal meaning (Tib. *sgra ji bzhin pa*, Skt. *yathāruta*, i.e. standard linguistic usage) and the non-literal meaning (Tib. *sgra ji bzhin pa ma yin pa*, Skt. *na yathāruta*, i.e. non-standard linguistic usage). The opponent's ideas—for example, taking a physical consort during tantric initiation—are ultimately rejected on grounds that are exclusively hermeneutical.\*Jñānākara states that the literal meaning and the non-literal meaning differ, and, therefore, a correct interpretation of tantric scriptures should not rely solely on a literal meaning, but should also include a non-literal meaning.

*Literal (sgra ji bzhin pa) Versus Non-literal Meaning (sgra ji bzhin pa ma yin pa)*

\*Jñānākara begins exposition of his hermeneutical model with the quotations from the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, a text widely known for its antinomian practices that posed the major controversial challenge to the prevailing understanding of tantric path.

Having visualized the place by means of empowering a sixteen-year old girl,<sup>22</sup> one should commence worship in an isolated place.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, it is said: having placed the penis in the vagina, he should unite the two genitals, etc.<sup>24</sup> You should kill living beings, take what is not be given, speak lies, and have

<sup>21</sup> Technically speaking, a 'heretic' is someone within the tradition who opposes some part of the doctrine or practice, which is generally accepted by others within the tradition. This is probably what \*Jñānākara means here, but his thinking is more along the lines of 'no better than a non-Buddhist (*tīrthika*)'. I thank the anonymous reviewer for this explanation. For a more detailed study on the *tīrthika* as a 'heretic', see Jones (2018, forthcoming).

<sup>22</sup> The cult of a sixteen-year old girl is a common feature in tantric texts. A relatively late sixteenth century Śrī-Vidyā text known as *Śakti-saṅgama-tantra* (II. 42) contains the following ritual prescription for a tantric novice: "The initiate must seek, following the rules, to obtain a girl of sixteen whom he loves, who is fair and fresh and seductive, who has the exalted spirits of youth, who has lively eyes, who is intoxicated with passion and always moved by desire, who is attentive only to true love" (Tucci 1969, p. 42). As pointed out by Sanderson (2009, p. 145), the *Guhyasamāja* proper (chapters 1–17) mentions a sixteen-year old in the context of post-initiation rites. The *Guhyasamāja* (16.96) says thus: "After obtaining a girl of sixteen with a charming face and wide eyes, adorned with every adornment, he should practice the Vidyāvratā [with her]". According to Sanderson, it is only in the chapter seventeenth, known as *Samājottara* that we find descriptions of initiation rites involving sexual intercourse with a sixteen-year old consort. See also Tanemura (2015, pp. 326–333).

<sup>23</sup> *bu mo lo ni bcu drug pa/ byin gyi rlabs kyis gnas bsams te/ dben par mchod pa brtsam par bya/ zhes gsungs pa dang/ \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti*, Derge, folio 407. Another version of this passage from the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Guhyasamāja* found in the Bka' 'gyur Derge (BDRC vol. 966, folia 200, 201) reads: *bud med gzugs ldan mngas bzang/lo grangs bcu drug lo na rnyed nas byin gyis rlob pa'i gnas gsum gyis/ dben par mchod pa rab tu brtsam/* (Having visualized the three places [of body, speech, and mind] on the sixteen-year old girl endowed with a beautiful body, one should commence the worship in an isolated place).

<sup>24</sup> *de bzhin du bha ga la ni li nga gzhang dbang po gnyis ni mnyam sbyor te/ zhes bya ba la sogs pa gsungs pa dang/ Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti*, Derge, folio 407. This phrase does not occur in this form in the



sex with another's man wife.<sup>25</sup> If someone were to ask, how is it possible? [I would reply:] These [quotations from the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*] should be understood either in literal or metaphorical meaning.<sup>26</sup>

\*Jñānākara seems to leave aside the discussion about the transgressive practices of killing, stealing and lying, but he does engage with more problematic issues, from his point of view, relating to sexual rites. He is especially troubled by the *niruttarayoga tantras*' claim that initiation (Skt. *abhiṣeka*, Tib. *dbang bskur*) requires from a *mantrin* an intercourse with a physical consort because of the implications of such a position for a monastic. \*Jñānākara directly refers here to the empowerment of the knowledge of wisdom (*prajñājñānābhiṣeka*), which consists of an initiate's sexual union with a consort. The *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* formed a part of a disputed list of four tantric empowerments,<sup>27</sup> namely: (1) the empowerment of the vase (*kalaśābhiṣeka*); (2) the secret empowerment (*guhyābhiṣeka*); (3) the empowerment of the knowledge of wisdom (*prajñājñānābhiṣeka*); and (4) the fourth (*caturtha*) which eventually became a standard orthodoxy of tantric initiation process. This list first appeared in the *Samājottara*, the text which later was to be included as the final, eighteenth chapter of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* (Isaacson 1997, p. 20).

The *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* was problematic for a variety of reasons. Not only because it stood in a diametrical contradiction to the vows of celibacy taken by monastics, but also because of the problem of exogamy that was viewed as a threat to the existing social order. The decree of king Lha bla ma Ye shes 'od launched against the transgressive tantric conduct, clearly states that the main danger of sexual rites is mingling of nobility and commoners.<sup>28</sup> The problematic issue of *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* created a clash in tantric circles between the traditionalist perspective who like Abhayākara Gupta or Darpañācārya preferred to adhere to the views of the early tradition maintaining that "any Buddhist, layperson or monk, may take the tantric vows and receive all the consecrations, including the problematic consecrations involving sexual intercourse" (Sanderson 1994, p. 87) and the more restrictive views of some of the others who, like \*Jñānākara or \*Atiśa tried to resist these disruptive infringements claiming that the sexual rites were suitable only for the married householders. \*Atiśa, who came to Tibet at the invitation of the king

Footnote 24 continued

*Guhyasamāja-tantra* recension that is available in Sanskrit. It is possible that the Tibetan translation went wrong here.

<sup>25</sup> \*Jñānākara cites a famous passage from the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, chap. XVI, verse 61: *prāṇināś ca tvayā ghātyā vaktavyam ca mṛśāvacaḥ / adattam ca tvayā grāhyam sevnam yoṣitām api* // \*Jñānākara's translation reads: *khyod kyis srog chags gsad par bya/ ma byin par yang blang bar bya/ brdzun gyi tshig kyang smra bar bya/ gzhan gyi bud med spyad par bya/ zhes gsungs//* \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 407. It reflects another reading of the same verse that substitutes *yoṣitām* with *parayoṣitām*. I thank the anonymous reviewer for this input.

<sup>26</sup> *ci lta bu yin zhe na /de dag ni sgra ji bzhin pa dang/ ci bzhin pa ma yin par shes par bya ste/* \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 407.

<sup>27</sup> On the historical development of four initiations, see Isaacson (1997).

<sup>28</sup> *Bka' shog* of Lha bla ma Ye shes 'od, v. 50. 'As sexual rite became popular, the different classes of people are mixed' (*sbyor ba dar bas mi rigs 'chol ba 'dres*). See Karmay (1998, p. 11).

Byang chub 'od, was especially concerned about *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*, which would necessarily involve the violation of the monastic vows of celibacy. In his *Bodhipathapradīpa* (*The Lamp on the Path of Enlightenment*), written to clear off the points of dispute on tantric empowerments, he strongly condemns monastics' involvement in the sexual initiations. He writes thus:

Due to the specific prohibition in the *Ādibuddhamahā-tantra*, the secret and wisdom [-gnosis] [*guhyaḥbhiṣeka* and *prajñājñānābhiṣeka*] consecrations should not be received by the celibate. If these consecrations are taken, since those who live celibately and ascetically would be engaging in what is prohibited to them, their ascetic vows would be broken, and they would incur the downfalls which defeat the observant. And as they would certainly fall into the evil destinies, [for them] there would be no success.<sup>29</sup>

In his auto-commentary (*pañjikā*), \*Atiśa further reinforces his argument saying that taking Secret and Wisdom empowerments are deemed permissible only for the married householders and not for monastics, for whom it would be in violation of their principal vows.

Regarding consecrations there are two types: those on which householders rely, and those on which the celibate rely. Those on which the householder may rely include everything taught in the tantras, while the celibate from amongst those should avoid the secret and wisdom-gnosis consecrations. Why should they avoid those two? Celibacy is understood to be one of the virtues which occurs as a point of doctrine, in reliance upon the Buddha's teaching. Those two consecrations are regarded as not being in accordance with the practice of celibacy. The two consecrations would bring about the end of celibacy, and the end of celibacy would be the end of the Buddha's teaching. And by its ceasing the continuum of merit making would be broken. Since from that basis there would arise innumerable non-virtuous people, the celibate should thus avoid those two [consecrations].<sup>30</sup>

There was no final agreement as to what could actually be known as universally accepted tantric conduct, but it is demonstrably certain that \*Atiśa's strict distinction between the types of empowerments permissible for the monks and the householders had its impact on the restructuralization of those controversial practices within the traditional monastic context in Tibet. Thus, rather than prohibiting monks from taking *prajñājñānābhiṣeka* with a flesh and blood woman, the sexual ritual with a consort could be relegated to a symbolic domain. A division between a real and a symbolic woman precipitated a split into two modes of tantric practice: (1) practice with a real woman (*karmamudrā*), or (2) practice with an imagined consort (*jñānamudrā*).

\*Jñānākara considered himself to be true to the real heart and soul of the restrained tantra tradition promoted by some of the *phyi dar* scholars, such as \*Atiśa, and proved to be its advocate and defender in a time when heretics and

<sup>29</sup> *Bodhipathapradīpa*, v. 240b–241a, quoted in Gray (2007, p. 125).

<sup>30</sup> *Bodhipathapradīpa*, v. 290 a–b, quoted in Gray (2007, pp. 125–126).

frauds held a grip on the popularization and promotion of perverse tantric conduct. Simply by writing the book on *mantranaya*, \*Jñānākara welcomed the opportunity to enter the fray of debate as a leading intellectual who was more than willing to continue \*Atiśa's efforts to fight the good fight of circumscribing the limits of tantric orthodoxy in India. For him, the debated issue as to whether it was appropriate or not to advocate sexual rites for the monastics became the centre of hermeneutical exegesis. \*Jñānākara adopts a conservative standpoint on a debatable matter pertaining to sexual initiations. Building his argument on the solid principles of Candrakīrti's *Pradīpoddyotanā*, he says that those who think that sexual rituals are permissible for the monastics should familiarize themselves with hermeneutical categories (i.e. literal and metaphorical meanings). It is, \*Jñānākara thought, largely from mixing these literal and metaphorical meanings that some people are led to believe that sexual rites are indeed advocated for the ascetic practitioners. First, he explains the 'literal meaning', which, according to him, is taught for the householders:

As for the literal meaning—the secret initiation, and the like, has been taught in order to gradually educate the householders who are one-pointedly attached to the object that is the woman [and] who, except for relying on that [i.e. a physical woman], have no chance to find knowledge.<sup>31</sup>

The first point he makes is that the meaning of tantric scriptures will vary depending on the intended audience. In other words, tantric scriptures are tailored intentionally in a particular way to meet the specific needs of the audience, in this case, the householders. The notion of intentionality (*dgongs pa*)<sup>32</sup> in reference to different adaptation of Buddhist teachings to suit different needs of practitioners was based upon the doctrine of 'skillful means' (*upāya-kauśalya*) that became a very prominent pedagogical device in the *Mahāyāna-sūtras*.<sup>33</sup> In the tantric schools, the division of audience was related to the level of practitioners' understanding. Thus, to those at the elementary level of understanding, only 'interpretable meaning' (*neyārtha*) was available; on the other hand, those at the advanced level of understanding were given the 'definitive meaning' (*nītārtha*).<sup>34</sup> These two often correspond to the two truths (Tib. *bden pa*, Skt. *satya*): the relative truth (Skt. *saṃvṛti-satya*, Tib. *kun rdzob bden pa*) and the ultimate truth (Skt. *paramārtha-satya*, Tib. *don dam bden pa*).<sup>35</sup> Thus, beginners are given *neyārtha*, which corresponds to *saṃvṛti-satya*, while advanced practitioners are given *nītārtha* which corresponds to *paramārtha-satya*. In some tantras, for example, in tantrikā Candrakīrti's *Jñānavajrasamuccaya-tantra*, *neyārtha/nītārtha* are used for literal/non-literal meaning. It seems that, in this case also, \*Jñānākara follows the lead of

<sup>31</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa ni gcig tu bud med kyi yul la sred cing zhen pa rnams de la ma brten par ye shes tshol ba'i skabs med pa'i khyim pa rnams rim gyis drang ba'i phyir gsang ba'i dbang bskur la sogs pa bstan pa yin te/ \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti*, Derge, folio 407.

<sup>32</sup> Ruegg (1985, pp. 309–335) and Broido (1984, pp. 1–33).

<sup>33</sup> Lamotte (1993, p. 20).

<sup>34</sup> Broido (1993, p. 80).

<sup>35</sup> Broido (1993, p. 80).

Candrakīrti.<sup>36</sup> It is quite clear that for \*Jñānākara, the literal meaning of the tantras corresponds to *neyārtha* and *saṃvṛti-satya*. Thus, the literal reading of the tantras, i. e. the reliance on the external woman is meant for the householders, who are not ready to comprehend *nītārtha/paramārtha-satya* but are only able to grasp *neyārtha/saṃvṛti-satya*. \*Jñānākara, then, contends, that the *neyārtha*-based type of practice is taught according to the dispositions and inclinations of the practitioners, and once they get adjusted to that practice, they are able to give up *neyārtha* and reach for *nītārtha*. Thus, adhering to the literal aspect of tantric scriptures is just the means to reach the ultimate truth. For \*Jñānākara, adhering to the literal meaning of the tantras only to transcend it, at the advanced level is, in some ways, similar to the treatment of an illness. He explains it in the following words:

For example, those skilled doctors who initially give to those ill patients craving for a fish that makes them sick, a medicine similar in taste and colour to that of a fish, and once they got accustomed to it, they are given the actual medicine, similarly, those who are strongly attached to the object that is the woman, initially, it is easier to [teach them the practices] that focus on relying on bliss, and once they are accustomed to it, they are shown the ultimate reality.<sup>37</sup>

\*Jñānākara supports his argument by saying that the puzzle of taking the tantras literally is dissipated when one advances on the path. For the beginners, however, or those who are unable to grasp the metaphorical meaning, the tantric scriptures encourage adepts to indulge in their biological impulses and not to subject them to spiritual reduction.

Next, \*Jñānākara gives two examples of non-literal/metaphorical meaning in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate

<sup>36</sup> In adopting his hermeneutical model, \*Jñānākara merely follows the footsteps of the great Ārya scholar, Candrakīrti who, in his *Pradīpodyotanā* (a commentary on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*) sets up the hermeneutical matrix, known as ‘six alternatives’ (Tib. *mtha’ drug*, Skt. *ṣaṭkoṭi*). The ‘six alternatives’ that are a part of a larger hermeneutical system, the so-called ‘seven ornaments’ (Skt. *saptālaṃkāra*, Tib. *rgyan bdum*) are listed as follows: (1) *dgongs pa (-bshad)*, Skt. *abhiprāya*, ‘[communicated] with [special] intention’; (2) *dgongs pa ma yin pa (-bshad)*, Skt. *na abhiprāya*, ‘[communicated] without [special] intention’; (3) *drang don*, Skt. *neyārtha*, ‘interpretable meaning’; (4) *nges don*, Skt. *nītārtha*, ‘definitive meaning’; (5) *sgra ji bzhin pa*, Skt. *yathāruta*, ‘literal meaning’; (6) *sgra ji bzhin pa ma yin pa*, Skt. *na yathāruta*, ‘non-literal meaning’.

<sup>37</sup> *dper na nad pa’i nad la gnod pa’i nya la sred pa la sman pa mkhas pas nya’i [D xyl: nyi ma’i] kha dog dang ro dang ldan par bcos pa’i sman dang por byin nas de la goms pa dang/ physis sman dngos ster bar byed pa ltar/ bud med gyi yul la thag par zhen pa rnams la dang por de dang bsten pa’i bde ba dmigs pa la sems goms par slabs nas physis de kho na nyid dngos su ston par byed pa yin noll \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti*, Derge, folio 407.

This passage strongly resembles the logic of the eleventh century Krama text, the *Mahānayaprakāśa* 9.4–8: “People are generally seen to be attached to sex, wine and meat. Some are attached more to one of them, some to another. If the teaching imported to them requires that they first give up these things, the teaching does not develop in their minds. The mind of the people who for hundreds of births have been in the habit (of enjoying) sense object is hard to control, just as it is hard to prevent an old cow from grazing on crops. Even so they require instruction. If, from the very beginning, the teaching requires from them the abandoning of enjoyment, they will end up hating it. If, on the contrary, the teaching permits the enjoyment of these things, the people who are given the teachings will hold to it with faith”.

another. Quoting from the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa*, a commentarial tantra on the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, he says:

As for the ‘metaphorical meaning’, from the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa*:  
Sixteen, beginning with the emptiness of the inner, etc. is the non-arising, peaceful, [and it] is said to be the woman.  
The ultimate reality designated as the woman has been taught through the meaning of the non-arising of existence that is to be realized in sixteen moments (*skad cig*) as the forbearance for the knowledge of the *dharma* of suffering (Tib. *sdug bsngal la chos shes pa’i bzod pa*), etc. or as the sixteen types of emptiness.<sup>38</sup>

\*Jñānākara interprets these enigmatic verses of the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa* as an example of the metaphorical meaning that identifies different doctrinal positions and, therefore, gives the possibility for different interpretations. Thus, the phrase: “Sixteen, beginning with the emptiness of the inner, etc.”—which is figuratively compared to the woman—refers to the sixteen types of emptiness explained in Candrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvatāra*.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, the ‘woman’ is interpreted by \*Jñānākara in the light of the “path of seeing” doctrine elaborated in the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, a Mahāyāna-sūtra attributed to Maitreya and revealed to Asaṅga. The *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* teaches the realization of the essential emptiness that constitutes the nature of all the phenomena. According to this teaching, the “path of seeing” consists of sixteen moments (*skad cig*) that show how to overcome the distinction between the form and the formless realms. The first moment is ‘the forbearance for the knowledge of the *dharma* of suffering’ which involves cutting through the distortions pertaining to the truth of suffering.

The second example of metaphorical/non-literal meaning is the quotation from the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*: “putting the vagina and penis together”. \*Jñānākara says this verse should be understood in metaphorical sense as designating the inseparable nature (Tib. *gnyis su med par*, Skt. *advaya*) of the two truths: the relative truth and the ultimate truth, and not literally as the union of the two genitals.<sup>40</sup>

#### ‘Twilight’ Language (*dgongs pa bshad*) Versus ‘Words Only’ (*tshig tsam*)

There are other hermeneutical categories that appear equally indispensable in developing a correct dogmatic conclusion, such as the distinction between ‘twilight’ language and ‘words only’. \*Jñānākara seems to suggest that these approaches must be combined to afford a sound basis for correct interpretation. According to the

<sup>38</sup> *sgra ci bzhin ma yin pa ni dgongs pa lung bstan pa’i rgyud las/ nang stong la sogs bcu drug pa/ ma skyes pa yi zhi ba gang/de ni bud med yin par gsungs /zhes gsungs pas/ stong pa nyid bcu drug gam/sdug bsngal la chos shes pa’i bzod pa la sogs skad cig ma bcu drug gis rtogs par bya ba’i skye ba’i skye ba med pa’i don de nyid bud med kyi sgras bstan pa yin nol* \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 407.

<sup>39</sup> For the sixteen types of emptiness mentioned in Candrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvatāra*, see Chandrakīrti (2004).

<sup>40</sup> *bha ga la ni li nga bzhag /ces bya ba’i don yang ’di yin nol/ bha ga ni don dam par bden pa’o/ li nga ni kun rdzob kyi bden pa’o/ bzhag pa ni bden pa gnyis /gnyis su med par dmigs pa yin gyi dbang po gnyis spyod ba la ni mi bya’ol* \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 407–408.

*Samdhyāvya-karaṇa*, quoted by \*Jñānākara, the employment of ‘twilight’ or intentional language as a hermeneutical technique seems to be the only available remedy to reform people who have fallen under the trap of incorrect interpretation of tantric teachings.

Then, Bhagavan, Vajradhara, the Great Light spoke thus: Since you saw the people of the future, since you asked me a specific question, Well-done, the Great Hero, Well-done, the Patron of the Guhyakas (Yakṣas) (*guhyakādhipati*<sup>41</sup>). I shall reveal [to you] the practice according to your question. In the future, the people will abide in the perverse view (Tib. *log par lta*, Skt. *mithyā-dṛṣṭi*), they will admit to the authority of Lokāyatas/Cārvākas [materialists] [and] do whatever they like. [Some of them will be] greatly inclined towards laughing and flirting, some others [will be] fond of singing and dancing, [some of them will] enjoy scents and garlands, in the same way, [some others will] become joyful in sexual intercourse. Some ignorant ones [will become] hateful, in the same way, some others [will be] supremely inclined towards ignorance, in the same way, some of them [will be] attached, still others will desire knowledge. Fish, meat, likewise, alcohol, excrements, urine, semen, blood: those foolish (Tib. *glen pa*, Skt. *jaḍa*) people will eat those things, proclaiming the nihilist view (i.e. the non-existence of all the phenomena; Tib. *med par smra ba*, Skt. *nāstika-vāda*) as the *dharma*. They will adopt mothers and younger sisters, etc. [as their consorts) which is inappropriate conduct. They will kill parents, likewise, they will kill all other creatures, they will tell lies. Moreover, they will be especially fond of stealing and also they will attend to another’s man wife (Tib. *gzhan gyi chung ma*, Skt. *para-bhāryā*), they will also do other disgusting [things] (Tib. *smad pa*, Skt. *nindā*). They will give up the *samayas*, and in the same way, they will perform the sins of immediate retribution. Even though, they have committed various sins, they wish to attain mantric *siddhis*, proclaiming with a great joy: “I am a practitioner”. Always cultivating pride (Tib. *mngon pa’i nga rgyal*, Skt. *abhimāna*), fond of wealth and fake dharma, relying on the exponents of the secret mantra, they will argue (Tib. *rtsod pa*, Skt. *vivāda*) with each other. Arguing in the crowd,<sup>42</sup> they will indulge in food (Tib. *kha zas*, Skt. *bhojana*) like a dog (Tib. *khyi*, Skt. *kukkura*). They will imitate the conduct of a dog, pig, and crow. Not knowing the *Guhyasamāja* (Tib. *gsang ba ’dus pa*) they will practice *samayas*, etc. Without maintaining secrecy, they will reveal everything. Without concealing themselves, they will become those who transgress the *samaya*. They will perform the destructive magic rites (Tib. *mngon spyod*, Skt. *abhicāra*) even on the account of some little (Tib. *cung zad tsam*, Skt. *alpa-mātra*) fault (Tib. *nyes pa*, Skt. *doṣa*). Having totally abandoned one’s own *samayas*, unfettered, they will make a living by means of *mantra* and *mudrā*. Where there is a profit to be obtained, they will teach

<sup>41</sup> I thank the anonymous reviewer for this information. The passage also survives partially in quotation in the *Pradīpoddyotana* (ed. Chakravarti, p. 11).

<sup>42</sup> This is perhaps a reference to the violation of the *gaṇacakra* ritual where verbal fighting is strictly forbidden. I thank Péter-Dániel Szántó for this explanation.

the true *dharma*. In order to reform those people, ***I have explained [to you] the intention of the secret.*** By means of this [teaching], bring them all into line, those who have fallen from the *samayas*.<sup>43</sup>

\*Jñānākara quotes this long passage from the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa* as an example of misinterpretation of tantric teachings, encouraging violation of the vows (Skt. *samaya*, Tib. *dam tshig*) and spreading heretical doctrines while falsely claiming them to be the authentic tantric dogma. He quotes this passage to illustrate the emergence of the deluded practice (*'khrul par spyod pa*) precipitated by the erroneous interpretation of the meaning behind *vajra*-words. It is interesting to point out that, according to the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa*, this 'deluded practice' is a direct result of abiding in a perverse view (Tib. *log par lta*, Skt. *mithyā-drṣṭi*) attributed to Indian Materialists (i.e. Lokāyatas/Cārvākas) who believed in gratifying the senses and living up the passions to the fullest. According to the argument put forward by the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa*—which \*Jñānākara seems to endorse—most acts of violation of the vows are the result of taking words too literally. A solution to this problem came from developing a new hermeneutical technique, known as 'twilight language'. The 'twilight language' or 'intentional language' (Skt. *sandhā-bhāṣa*, *sandhyā-bhāṣa*, Tib. *dgongs pa bshad pa*) was popular in the tantric traditions, Buddhist and Hindu alike. This term indicates that a double sense underlines its words, according to whether it is to be understood in its commonplace or in its mystical connotation.<sup>44</sup> According to Tsong kha pa's commentary on Candrakīrti's *Pradīpoddyotanā*, the contradictory nature of intentional language refers to the opposition between the word (Skt. *śabda*, Tib. *sgra*) and the meaning (Skt. *artha*, Tib. *don*).<sup>45</sup> Thus, one may infer from this explanation that the tantras were actually written in some type of sophisticated code-language and that their true

<sup>43</sup> *de nas bcom ldan rdo rje can /'od chen ldan pas bka' stsal pa/ ma 'ongs skye bo mthong nas ni/ gang zhid khyod kyis nga dris pas/ legs so legs so dpa' bo che/ gsang ba'i bdag po khyod legs so/ zhus don de ni ci lta bar/de lta spyod la lung bstan bya/ ma 'ongs dus na mi nams ni/ 'jig rten rgyang 'phen mchog gzhol 'gyur/log par lta la gnas pa ste/ ci dga' ba yang gnas par byed/ la la glu dang gar la dga' /dgod dang sgeg la mchog tu gzhol/ dri dang phreng ba la dga' zhing/de bzhin 'khrig pa la dga' 'gyur / rmongs pa la la sdang ba dang/ de bzhin gti mug la rab gzhol/ la la de bzhin 'dod chags zhen / shes pa gzhan dag 'dod par 'gyur/nya dang sha dang de bzhin chang/ bshang gci khu ba khrag nams ni/ skyes bu glen pas za bar byed/ med par smra ba chos su sgrogs/ ma dang sring mo la sogs pa/bgrod min la ni bgrod pa dang/ pha ma la yang gsod pa dang/de bzhin srog chags gzhan nams gsod/ brdzun gyis tshig ni smra ba dang/khyad par du yang rku ba dang/gzhan gyi chung ma'i thad 'gro ba/smad pa gzhan yang byed par 'gyur/la la dam tshig spong pa dang/de bzhin mtshams med byed pa dang/ sna tshogs sdig pa byas nas kyang/sngags pa [Derge: pas] dngos grub 'dod par 'gyur/rab tu dga' dang ldan pa yis/ mal 'byor pa ni bdag ces smras/ mngon pa'i nga rgyal la rtog dga' /rgyu dang bcos ma'i chos la dga' / gsang sngags smra ba la brten nas/ gcig la gcig rtsod par 'gyur/ tshogs pa'i nang du rtsod pa dang/ khyi bzhin kha zas la spyod 'gyur/ khyi dang phag dang khya nams kyi spyod pa dag ni ston par byed/ gsang ba 'dus pa mi shes par /dam tshig la sogs spyod par byed/ gsang ba srung bar mi byed par / thams cad du ni ston par byed/ bdag nyid sba bar mi byed pas/dam tshig 'das par byed par 'gyur/nyes pa cung zad tsam gyi phyir/ mngon spyod rab tu byed par 'gyur/ rang gi dam tshig yongs spangs nas/ lcags kyu med pa bzhin du spyod/sngags dang phyag rgya'i sbyor ba yis/ de nams 'tsho ba bsgrub par 'gyur/ gang du rnyed par thob 'gyur ba/ dam pa'i chos ni ston par byed/de nams yang dag 'dul ba'i phyir/ gsang ba'i dgongs pa bshad pa yin/dam tshig nyams te bshad pa nams/ 'di yis thams cad dgug par bya/ zhes gsungs pa dang// \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 408–409.*

<sup>44</sup> Bharati (1966, p. 168).

<sup>45</sup> Broido (2010, p. 18).

meaning could be grasped only by those who were initiated to their secret code. Perhaps, this is the reason why the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa* refers to it as “the intention of the secret” (*gsang ba'i dngogs*). Unfortunately, Jñānākara does not offer his own interpretation of this term. He simply warns the practitioners against literal application of tantric texts. Those who would follow the tantric scriptures without understanding its hidden, intentional meaning are bound to take a terrible fall. Quoting from *Daśatattva* by \*Alaṃkāra/Bhūṣaṇa,<sup>46</sup> he says:

Whosoever has grasped [the Buddhist teachings] erroneously by means of desire, hatred, and ignorance, having killed sentient beings, glancing down into the pit, one goes to the most torturous hell (Skt. *avīci*).<sup>47</sup>

In the next quotation, again from the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa*, \*Jñānākara is sharper in clarifying his position regarding the ambiguity of tantric language, saying explicitly: “as for [the passage in the *Guhyasamāja*], one should tell lies, etc. the intention (*dgongs pa*) behind that passage is again taught in the *Samdhyāvvyākaraṇa*”, thus:<sup>48</sup>

Dependent origination is taught to be two-fold, inner and outer, and that is said to be the pleasure of telling lies. The *yogin* is established in non-abiding. That which is the knowledge of the perfect Buddha is said to be wealth. The very method of stealing that [knowledge] is said to be attachment to other's wealth. That what is truly real is one, it continuously applies to [all] reality in like manner. Whatever the sentient beings delight in, they attain the highest [state] pertaining to the supreme achievement.<sup>49</sup>

One may infer from the above explanation that all these terrible things the tantras seem to promote, e.g. lying and stealing, are not meant literally. Since the referent of the word points out to the designation different from what is commonly accepted, this should be understood as a form of twilight or intentional language. In order words, ‘lying’ does not refer to the act of speaking untruth, but to the teachings of dependent origination. Similarly, ‘stealing’ does not refer to the act of taking the property of another without permission, but to the knowledge of a perfect Buddha. Twilight language, therefore, is used to encode the secret or double meaning of words.

<sup>46</sup> The Sanskrit original of this text is lost and the name of the author is preserved only in the Tibetan translation as Rgyan pa (Skt. Alaṃkāra/ Bhūṣaṇa). The text was translated into Tibetan by Dar ma grags and appears in Derge Bstan ‘gyur (BDRC volume number 1360, folio 488)

<sup>47</sup> *yang de kho na nyid bcu pa las/ chags dang zhe sdang gti mug gis /gang gis log par bzung 'gyur nas/ 'gro ba rnam ni gsad byas nas /'og tu bltas te mnar med 'gro /zhes gsungs pa yin nol* \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 409.

<sup>48</sup> *de la brdzun du smra ba la sogs pa bstan pa'i dgongs pa yang dgongs pa lung bstan pa'i rgyud las/* \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 409.

<sup>49</sup> *nang dang de bzhin phyi rol dag/ rten 'byung gnyis su bstan pa ni/ de ni brdzun smra dga' ba ste/ gnas med la gnas rnal 'byor pa'o/rdzogs sangs rgyas kyi ye shes gang/ de ni rjas (D: rjes) su shes bya ste/ de 'phrog dang tshul gang yin pa/ gzhan gyi nor la chags par 'dod/gang zhig de nyid dngos gcig pu/ de bzhin nyid la rtag sbyor ba/ sems can de de 'dod la dga' /bsgrub pa mchog la dam par 'gyur/* \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 409.



In contrast to the ‘twilight, intentional language’, there is the ‘words only’ approach, which comes close to literal interpretation. The danger of adopting ‘words only’ methodology is explained in Jñānākīrti’s *Tattvāvātara*:

Master Jñānākīrti also [said]: “Concerning the fault of relying only on words: those who perform the non-virtuous acts with the mind attached to desire, etc. will fall straight down, [and] further below”.<sup>50</sup>

\*Jñānākara inherited his interest in the hermeneutical exegesis of tantric scriptures from the Ārya masters, but in view of a growing number of antinomian practices, he raised the question of how to distinguish correct tantric teachings from false. He sought to answer this question by establishing clear signs for the former. The correct tantric teachings, he said, are based on sound hermeneutical principles that distinguish between literal and non-literal/metaphorical meaning, as well as between ‘twilight language’ and ‘words only’ interpretation.

*The Teachings [Communicated] with Special Intention in Mind and the Teachings Without Special Intention*

Moreover, for \*Jñānākara, the distinction between the teachings [communicated] with special intention (*dgongs bcas*) and the teachings without special intention (*dgongs pa can ma yin pa*) is equally important. The *dgongs bcas* corresponds to Sanskrit *ābhiprāyika* ‘pertaining to intention’ which is described as having a specific motivation (*prayojana*) intended for a specific trainee according to the principle of skillful means (*upāya-kauśalya*) [Ruegg 1985, p. 309]. Thus, *dgongs bcas* corresponds to the ‘interpretable meaning’ (*neyārtha*) conditioned by space and time. On the contrary, *dgongs pa can ma yin pa* has no special intention behind the words, therefore, it corresponds to the ‘definitive meaning’ (*nītārtha*).

\*Jñānākara gives two examples of *dgongs bcas* or the teachings communicated with a special intention drawn from two different tantras:

The *Guhyendutilaka* says:

If you rely on attachment, hatred, ignorance, you will attain *siddhi* quickly.<sup>51</sup>

The *Vajramaṇḍālaṃkāra-tantra*<sup>52</sup> says:

<sup>50</sup> *slob dpon ye shes grags pas kyang/ tshig tsam la ni brten nas su/ chags sogs zhen pa 'i sems kyis ni/bsod nams ma yin byed pa gang/de dag 'og nas 'og tu 'gro / zhes bshad pa yin no/\*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 410.*

<sup>51</sup> *zla gsang thig le las kyang/'dod chags zhe sdang gti mug rnam/bsten na dngos grub myur du 'thob/ ces gsungs pa lta bu 'o/ \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 414–415.*

<sup>52</sup> The tantra called *Gsang ba 'i rgyan* quoted by \*Jñānākara was identified by me as *Rdo rje snying po rgyan gyi rgyud*, (Skt. *Vajramaṇḍālaṃkāra*), “Ornament of the Vajra Essence Tantra”, translated by Kamalagupta and Mnga’ bdag ye shes rgyal mtshan, Derge Bstan ‘byur (BDRC volume number 971, folio 50).

All the Buddhas arise from attachment, and in the same way, from hatred and ignorance.<sup>53</sup>

\*Jñānākara provides one example of *dgongs pa can ma yin pa* or the teaching [communicated] without any special intention from the *Yamārikṣṇakarmasarvacakrasiddhikara-tantra*.<sup>54</sup>

As for the teaching [communicated] without special intention: living beings should not be killed, what is not given should not be taken, one should refrain from inappropriate sexuality, one should not tell lies. Alcohol, which is the source of all harm, should be abandoned.<sup>55</sup>

\*Jñānākara's hermeneutical exegesis of tantric texts is organized around three foci: (1) *the literal and non-literal meanings* that correspond to the different levels of practitioner's understanding, (2) *the twilight or intentional language*, where the conventional meaning of the word is in a direct opposition to the intention behind the linguistic usage, and *the words only* method which, when followed, is deemed to bring dire consequences, and (3) *the teachings [communicated] with special intention in mind* and *the teachings without special intention*. All of these foci reflect \*Jñānākara's own indebtedness to the hermeneutical tradition of the Ārya tradition, and especially to the Ārya scholar Candrakīrti.

### Debating Desire and Wrathful Rites: \*Jñānākara on the Wrong Path

\*Jñānākara's debate on controversial tantric practices continues with a strong critique of his fellow tantrics, whom he ironically calls 'heretics', the proponents of the wrong path. While his first objection identifies the fallacy of erroneous interpretation of tantric scriptures due to hermeneutical unawareness, the second objection is against incorporation of desire. \*Jñānākara's adversaries are attacked for advocating initiation that relies on a flesh and blood consort (i.e. the *prajñājñānābhīṣeka*). His critique is framed in such a way as to accentuate the pitfalls of engaging in the practices that rely on desire. He tries to expose the weakness of the opponent's position by demonstrating that the fault of taking a physical consort lies in setting a relentless escalation of desire—that very 'thing' responsible for the tragedy of human bondage. Although it is not explicitly said, it is clear from the previous discussion that \*Jñānākara's objection against initiation with a physical consort is directed only against the celibate monks, and not the householders. Hence, for \*Jñānākara, sexual initiations formed a part of the wrong

<sup>53</sup> *dgongs bcas ni gsang ba'i rgyan zhes bya ba'i rgyud las/ sangs rgyas thams cad chags la 'khrungs/ de bzhin sdang dang rmongs las 'khrungs/ zhes gsungs pa dang/ \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti*, Derge, folio 414.

<sup>54</sup> This unknown quotation was identified by me as *Gshin rje'i gshed dgra nag po'i 'khor lo las thams cad grub par byed pa*, Skt. *Yamārikṣṇakarmasarvacakrasiddhikara-tantra* translated by Rva (Ra) lotsāwa and Nepali scholar Bhāro. See Derge Bstan 'gyur (BDRC volume number 968, folio 355). The version given in Derge Bstan 'gyur reads as follows: *ma byin par yang mi blang do/ 'dod pa mi spyad brdzun mi smra/ gnod pa'i rgyu phyir chang mi btung/*

<sup>55</sup> *dgongs pa can ma yin pa ni/ srog chags dag ni gsad mi bya/ ma byin par yang mi blang do/ 'dod spyod dag ni mi bya zhing/ brdzun du smra bar mi bya'o/gnod pa kun gyi rtsa ba yi/ chang ni rnam par spang bar bya/ zhes gsungs pa lta bu'o/ \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti*, Derge, folio 415.

path that together with perverse entry, engagement in the ten kinds of unwholesome actions, performance of deeds motivated by afflictive emotions, and transgressive practices of killing, etc. ensured a terrible downfall. In \*Jñānākara's own words:

As for the wrong path, it is as follows: to enter perversely and to pursue [the path] perversely [that is to say] to commit the ten unwholesome actions that are forbidden. For example, some heretics, even at the time of the conduct of entering, that is initiation, rely on a [real] woman. Desire will increase [in due practice] because they were attached to that [woman] since [time] immemorial. At the time of the conduct of application also, they embrace her and the desire will grow bigger again even if they perform meditation and *mantra* recitation. At the time of the conduct of achievement also, they find pleasure in that [sexual] act and do not concentrate properly. If they are unable to transgress even the realm of desire, how [could they ever] achieve the miraculous one? In the same way, actions already performed before, preceded by hatred, ignorance etc. [such as] killing, taking what has not been given, lying, slander, etc., all these are taught as the wrong path.

\*Jñānākara's commentary enlarges on the issue in the following words:

For example, 'others' [means] '**some heretics**' [claim that] 'at the very beginning' [means] 'even at the time of the **entering**', they make [an adept] take initiation with a flesh and blood woman,<sup>56</sup> for instance. 'Attached to **that**' [means] 'to the body of a woman', '**since [time] immemorial**' [means] 'from beginningless time', '**attached**' [means] 'to be firmly bound, not knowing it to be the wave of one's own mind'. They become unusually attached and set up on the path of desire. '**Initiation**' [means] 'initiation through [the procedures of] the wrong path'. Later, '**at the time of the conduct of application also**' [means] 'those practitioners [who] embrace the woman's neck, their desire will gradually grow bigger, even if they perform meditation and *mantra* recitation'. It is for this reason that I say: "Because of that, by embracing [the woman], the desire will grow bigger again, even if they perform meditation, and *mantra* recitation". Likewise, '**at the time of the conduct of achievement also**', [means] 'if they perform meditation through the activity that is sexual intercourse, the desire will become fully blown, more than before'. For this reason, they do not concentrate properly. Therefore, '**if they are unable to transgress even the realm of desire (*kāmadhātu*), how [come] the miraculous one?**' [means] 'how could [they ever] achieve the state of Vajradhara?' This is the meaning.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> In this case *mngon par* which is Tibetan translation of Sanskrit *sākṣāt* means 'embodied' or 'in bodily form'.

<sup>57</sup> *dper na gzhan mu stegs can kha cig dang po 'jug pa'i dus na yang/ bud med bsten pa'i mngon par dbang bskur ba len par byed pa lta bu'o/ thog ma med nas der zhen pas/ zhes bya ba la/ de dag bud med kyi lus la thog ma med pa'i dus nas zhen pa dam pos bcings shing rang gi sems kyi dba' rlabs su ma shes nas/ lhag par chags pas de la brten pa'i lam du 'gro zhing/ log pa'i lam dbang bskur bas dbang bskur te dus de'i phyi nas/ sbyor ba'i spyod pa'i dus su yang sgrub pa po de dag bud med kyi mgul nas 'khyud cing / sgom pa dang bzlas brjod byed na yang rim gyis 'dod chags 'phel bar 'gyur ro/ de'i phyir de la 'khyud cing zhen pa yis/ bsgom dang bzlas brjod byed na yang/ chags pa phyir zhing 'phel bar 'gyur/ zhes*

In his vehement critique directed against heretics promulgating sexual initiations, \*Jñānākara superimposes ‘desire’ onto his three-fold model of tantric conduct: ‘conduct of entering’ (which is just another name for initiation), ‘conduct of application’ and ‘conduct of achievement’, to illustrate the ways in which relying on desire corrupts the three conducts. The conduct of entering is the most important among the three, because it immediately sets the adept up on the path of desire, making him ‘unusually attached’ (Tib. *lhag par chags pa*, Skt. *adhyavasāna*). According to \*Jñānākara, attachment entraps (Tib. *bcings*, Skt. *baddha*) the tantric novice because of his inability to recognize attachment’s true nature, which according to the tenets of the Mind-Only school (*citta-mātra*) is just the wave of one’s own mind (Tib. *rang gi sems kyi dba’ rlabs*, Skt. *svacittataraṅga*). This statement gives us a direct hint of the philosophical context from which \*Jñānākara speaks. Thus, his emphasis on the mind, the driving force behind the activation of desire, seems to be influenced by the theory of synchronic causality between the desire and the mind, elaborated in Asaṅga’s *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha*, one of the earliest texts of the Yogācāra school. The text stresses the fact that activation of the latent impressions of desire (*rāgavāsanā*), for those engaged in sensual desire, arises simultaneously and inseparably from the mind (*citta*), which [also] arises as the cause (*nimitta*) of that desire.<sup>58</sup> In other words, since desire is a part of the fluctuating state of one’s own mind itself (*svacittataraṅgavṛtti*), the arising of desire is a mental event and as such it is directly cognizable.

After giving his philosophical standpoint on the mental nature of desire, Jñānākara goes on to elaborate on the two remaining versions of tantric conduct corrupted by the presence of desire. Thus, the ‘conduct of application’ which follows initiation, and which rests on adept’s actual engagement in the practices taught during initiation, plays a fundamental role in fueling the desire that gradually grows bigger (Tib. *’phel bar ’gyur*, Skt. *vṛddhiṃ gacchati*). \*Jñānākara explicitly says that one of those practices is embracing<sup>59</sup> the woman’s neck (Tib. *’khyud pa*, Skt. *pariṣvajana*), which could also include copulation. Finally, the ‘conduct of achievement’, which normally sets up the stage for a one-pointed concentration, is corrupted through the engagement in the sexual intercourse meditation, in which desire becomes fully blown (Tib. *brtas pa*, Skt. *puṣṭa*), much more than before (Tib. *phyir zhing*, Skt. *bhūyas*). This fully blown desire is the sole reason for the adept’s failure to concentrate properly. This is a serious accusation, because, as it is widely known, it is precisely the repeated practice of tantric meditation that opens the doors

Footnote 57 continued

*bya ba smros so/ de bzhin du bsgrub pa’i spyod pa’i dus na yang ’khrig pa’i tha snyad kyis sgom par byed pas ’dod chags phyir zhing brtas par ’gyur te/ tshul bzhin ma yin pa yid la byed pa dang ldan pa’i phyir ro/ des na ’dod pa’i kham las kyang ’da’ bar nus pa ma yin na rmad byung zhes bya ba/ rdo rje ’chang gi go ’phang ’hob par lta ga la ’gyur zhes bya ba’i don to/ \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 406.*

<sup>58</sup> “Also while the predisposition of sensual desire, etc. (*rāgādivāsanā*) of those who are engaged in sensual desire, etc. (*rāgādicarita*) arise and cease simultaneously with sensual desire, etc., mind (*citta*) arises as the cause (*nimitta*) of that desire”. Asaṅga’s *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha*, v. 1.15. quoted in Waldron (2003, p. 136).

<sup>59</sup> Tib. *’khyud pa* is a translation of Sanskrit ‘embrace’ (*pariṣvajana*), ‘copulation’ (*dharṣita*), ‘strong attachment’ (*āśakta*), or ‘clinging to’ (*āśliṣṭa*). *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, p. 329.

to enlightenment in tantric Buddhism (Isaacson 1997, p. 6). \*Jñānākara's teaching on the wrong path concludes with a rhetorical question: "If they are unable to transgress even the realm of desire, how could [they ever] achieve the state of Vajradhara?"

\*Jñānākara's views on tantric conduct are not exactly an apotheosis of desire, as one would rather expect from a tantric master. On the contrary, there is something deeply Brāhmaṇical in \*Jñānākara's dismissal of desire as never stilled and relentlessly increasing even upon its satisfaction. \*Jñānākara's exposition of desire could easily have been lifted directly from the *Manusmṛti*, the principal *Dharmaśāstra*, which declares desire to be the insatiable consumer (*mahāśana*). 'Desire is recurrent even after its fulfillment, just as ghee poured as oblation in fire makes the flame rise higher and higher' (*Manusmṛti* 2.94, in Rao 2011, pp. 418–420). Here, it is not \*Jñānākara, the tantric master speaking, who restores the flow of desire that tends to be halted by the Brāhmaṇically-tainted ascetic milieu, who affords to desire a soteriological value in accordance with the famous tantric Buddhist stanza: "People are bound through passions and they are again liberated through the passions". Here, it is \*Jñānākara, the tantric orthodox, speaking, who have embraced the conservative views on tantric practice and who considers desire as a foe that must be controlled and not utilized in the service of enlightenment. Such persistent rejection of desire was also at odds with the tantric goal of enjoyment (*bhoga*) or pleasure (*sukha*) that was exalted as concomitant with spiritual perfection.

\*Jñānākara's strategy of dismissing one of the core tantric elements had, as its goal, the advancement of the orthodoxy of tantric practice promoted by the leading *phyi dar* thinkers, such as \*Atiśa or Rin chen bzang po who were, above all, concerned with denying the monks the right to sexual initiations with a real woman. The fact that cenobitic fornication, justified as the means of spiritual advancement, precipitated one of the most heated debates in the eleventh century India and Tibet<sup>60</sup> indicates that monks and nuns were actually engaging in it. To support his conservative views on the cenobitic fornication as exhibiting immoral characteristics of the wrong path, \*Jñānākara turns to the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*<sup>61</sup>, one of the earliest texts of the Vajrayāna:

<sup>60</sup> The debate on cenobitic fornication started much before the tantric age. The textual evidence from Asaṅga's *Bodhisattvabhūmi* is perhaps the earliest case in point. Asaṅga rejects the possibility of sexual transgression for the monks, as it would violate the vows of celibacy, but he seems to have nothing against the householders. Asaṅga says: "When a woman is alone and her thought is prey to the agony of the desire to put an end to her celibacy, the lay Bodhisattva approaches her with the dharma of sexual union. He then thinks: "May she not develop a thought of unfriendliness, which would lead to demerits. May she on the contrary, under my influence abandon her unwholesome thoughts, so that the object of her desire becomes a root for good." Adopting this thought of pure compassion, he resorts to the dharma of copulation, and there is no error; but this produces on the contrary many merits." *Asaṅga's Chapter on Ethics With the Commentary of Tsong-Kha-Pa, The Basic Path to Awakening, The Complete Bodhisattva*, trans. M. Tatz, pp. 215–216. Quoted in Faure (1998, p. 34).

<sup>61</sup> Even though \*Jñānākara clearly states that he quotes from the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*, the quotation does not bear any similarity to the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* given in the Derge Bka' 'gyur. Regarding this, there are two possible explanations: (1) the text \*Jñānākara quotes from is not the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*, even though, it bears the same title, (2) \*Jñānākara quotes from a different recension of the

When the Silent One (i.e. Buddha) will have passed and the Great Noble Ones will have vanished, the whole world will become pervaded by darkness. At that time, O You, the Children of the Conquerors: Look! Authentic paths are being violated, monks and nuns lapse. Since they are unable to put up with my inexhaustible ascetic practice, [and] since they are unable to produce great benefits, they refute the true asceticism. Because they are fond of sexual practice, they hold on to the perverse path. [Moreover], they make others to enter that [perverse] path, at all times, [and] they make others to enter the path that relies on a woman. At that time, logicians<sup>62</sup> and nudists<sup>63</sup> will have become the leaders on the great path that is perverse through many kinds of practices based on the *mantra* texts. Since, it is said so, [practices] of those kinds are taught to be the path that is accompanied by confusion of relying on the heterodox teachings.<sup>64</sup>

The last sentence of this passage is particularly interesting as it explicitly supports the argument put forward by Sanderson (1994, 2009) that the Buddhist tantras, composed during the tantric age, drew on the authoritative Śaiva tantras, transforming Śaiva elements into their Buddhist equivalents. By adopting sexual rites from heterodox Śaiva teachings, the tantric Buddhists affiliated to monastic institutions propagated the type of Buddhism that would have to be seen as violating the rules of the *prātimokṣa* vows (Sanderson 1994, p. 97). The *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* argues that sexual practices, adopted from heterodox Śaiva tantras, are condemned as heretical, precisely because of their break with asceticism. The violation of asceticism was closely aligned to the belief that the welfare of the entire monastic community (Skt. *saṅgha*) would be forfeited by such transgression. The basic underlying assumption was that through allowing cenobitic fornication the very foundation of Buddhist monasticism would be severely shaken. Such a tremor, as narrated in the apocalyptic verses of the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*, could be potentially disruptive and could lead to conflicts within the *saṅgha*. Hence, asceticism deemed necessary to maintain the order in which celibacy was valued according to the accepted doctrine and discipline.

Footnote 61 continued

*Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*. The second explanation is more probable, as it is a commonly known fact that different recensions of the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* did exist.

<sup>62</sup> The hostile attitude towards logicians is a common feature in the Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist literature alike.

<sup>63</sup> It would be interesting to identify who the nudists (Skt. *nagna*) might have been. The term is probably used here to refer to the Śaiva (e.g. Kāpālika ascetics) who are usually described as naked madmen, roaming around. As far as I know, there is no any extensive study on the subject of nudity in Sanskrit or even Tibetan tradition.

<sup>64</sup> 'jam dpal la gyi rgyud chen po las kyang/ gang tshe thub pa nod pa dang/ 'phags pa'i skye bo chen po zad/ sa steng mun pas khyab pa ste/ de tshe 'jig rten rab tu mdongs/ rgyal ba 'i sras po khyod ltos shig/ yang dag lam rnam dang/ rab gcod/ gcog cing/ dge slong dge slong ma rnam dor/ nga yi dka' thub mi zad par/ don chen byed par mi nus pas/ yang dag dka' thub rab sun 'byin/ de dag 'khrig par dka' ba yis/ log pa 'i lam ni 'dzin byed cing/ jug par byed bcas dus kun du/ bud med bsten pa 'i lam 'jug byed/ de tshe rtog ge pa dag dang/ gcer bu gsang tshig la bren pa 'i/ sngags kyi gzhung spyod du ma dag/ log pa 'i lam chen 'dren pa 'byung/ zhes gsungs pas/ \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 408.

After having expressed his conservative views regarding dismissal of desire and cenobitic fornication, \*Jñānākara now sets out to give us his opinion about the third distinguishing element of tantric conduct, that is enjoyment (*bhoga*).<sup>65</sup> The tantric path promoted the new concept of liberation or enlightenment identifying *mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa* as enjoyment (*bhoga*) characterized as the ultimate attainment (*parasiddhi*). It was, in part, in effort to lend a conceptual specificity to the experiential dimension of liberation advocating blissful adoration of life engaging the body. As a result, enjoyment came to be exalted as concomitant with spiritual perfection, and sensual pleasure was inexorably equated with spiritual experience. \*Jñānākara (assuming the garb of the imaginary interlocutor) raises objection to the assertion about the dismissal of desire arguing that even Tathāgata himself enjoys the perfect enjoyments. Does it mean that he has succumbed to the terrible power of afflictive emotions? \*Jñānākara tries to refute the opponent's position by formulating a pedagogical model of enjoyment with a commendable dexterity. \*Jñānākara rejects the *pūrvapakṣin*'s view on the following basis:

Well, if someone were to ask, how come that even Tathāgata himself displayed the conduct of enjoyment after having relied on the perfect enjoyments (Tib. *longs spyod phun sum tshogs*, Skt: *bhoga-sāmpad*) of his queen, son, etc. As for that [I would reply]: Tathāgata does not actually enjoy the entourage of his queen, sons, etc. [as a result of] having fallen under the sway of afflictive emotions, [he does so] in order to remove [Tib. *bsal ba*, Skt. *parihāra*] the egoity of the arrogant ones: gods, such as Kāmeśvara, etc. [that grows bigger] through the enjoyment of spouse and children, by showing [them] that his servants and possessions, etc. are exceptionally superior to that of [other gods] and that he has more than gods. Having renounced their ego, those [beings] arise in [their] intellectual faculty. Having produced the desire to achieve the riches of the Tathāgata, they diligently practice the cause of those riches, the four immeasurables, the six perfections, etc. It is not the case that this conduct [of enjoyment] was performed by the Tathāgata in such a way because of desire, hatred or delusion, it was [rather] taught for the sake of [gods] obtaining its causes.<sup>66</sup>

Unlike desire and cenobitic fornication rejected at the outset, enjoyment becomes a pedagogical tool for teaching the non-Buddhist gods, like Śiva (i.e. Kāmeśvara) himself the limits and constraints of egoity by applying the method of jealousy that has a propaedeutic function. Through extravagant display of numerous enjoyments,

<sup>65</sup> *bhukti mukti-padaṃ divyaṃ nirvāṇākhyam param padam*/. *Guhyasiddhi*, Ms, p. 13 (A), quoted in Dasgupta (1958, p. 134).

<sup>66</sup> 'o na de bzhin gshes pas kyang/ btsun mo dang sras la sogs pa'i longs spyod phun sum tshogs pa bzung nas/ longs spyod pa'i tshul bstan pa ji lta bu yin zhe na/ de ni de bzhin gshes pa nyon mongs pa'i dbang du gyur nas/sras dang btsun mo la sogs pa 'khor gyi nang na 'dod pa la dngos su longs spyod ma yin gyi/ 'dod pa'i dbang phyug la sogs pa'i lha rnam bu dang chung ma la sogs pa longs spyod kyiis dregs pa rnam kyī nga rgyal bsal ba'i phyir/ lha de bas kyang ches khyad par du 'phags pa'i 'khor dang longs spyod la sogs pa bstan pas/de dag yid byung zhing nga rgyal dang bral nas/ de bzhin gshes pa'i phun sum tshogs pa la 'dod pa skyes nas/de'i rgyu tshad med pa bzhi dang/ pha rol tu phyin pa drug la sogs pa la/ nan tan du byas nas de thob par bya ba'i phyir bstan pa yin gyi/de bzhin gshes pa chags sdang dam/ rmongs pas de ltar spyod pa ni ma yin nol \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 410.

much superior to that of the other gods, Tathāgata aims first at suppression of their ego and, then, at fuelling their desire for his riches and enjoyments. This, in turn, becomes a motivating force behind conversion into Buddhism and adaptation of specifically Buddhist practices. The promise of superior enjoyments, similar to the psychological manipulation of “dangling carrot tactics” becomes a technique for ensuring that the heterodox gods of the Hindu pantheon become Buddhist converts. Because they have allegedly renounced their ego, this newly purified form of desire to obtain the Buddha’s riches and enjoyments is no longer the source of afflictive emotions. On the contrary, since at this stage desire is stripped of a corrupted object perpetuated by egoistic concern (‘it is mine’, etc.) it becomes relegated to the pure dimension, in which its neutral power is emphasized. Thus, for \*Jñānākara, the Tathāgata’s *bhoga* is justified for its pedagogical objective insofar as it is deliberately intended and capable of reforming others and advancing Buddhist ideal.

\*Jñānākara’s critique of desire is important as it affords as a view of the points of dispute between Jñānākara and his opponents, namely his fellow tantric colleagues. Thus, with regard to the debate that existed between the fully-fledged tantrics (i.e. \*Tripiṭakamalla, Abhayākaragupta, etc.) and tantric orthodox proponents (i.e. \*Atiśa, Rin chen bzang po, etc.) on the question whether sexual initiations for the monastics, cenobitic fornication, etc. should be allowed or not, \*Jñānākara conforms with the view of the tantric orthodox promoters in that monastics’ involvement in the sexual rites should be forbidden as it only adds negatively to fuelling of desire that destroys meditation. In doing so, he combats against the perceived heresies of those who deny the validity of his orthodox views.

The third point of tantric dispute that caught \*Jñānākara’s attention was the problem of intention (*cetanā*) and actual action (*karma*). This age-old distinction widely attested in early Buddhism was based on the idea that intention is an integral part of any action. The Buddha explicitly says: “it is intention that I call *kamma*” (Gombrich 1996, p. 50). As a result, *karma* came to refer to intentional action. Moreover, it was precisely the intention behind the act that was considered to be the causal factor of transmigration (*saṃsāra*). Intention can be either genuine or wicked, hence, “the ethic of intention” that became the greatest innovation of early Buddhism (Gombrich 2006, p. 68) placed an obligation to examine one’s own motivations. \*Jñānākara seems to follow this line of reasoning when he enters tantric debate regarding the right and wrong intentions. The leading premise of \*Jñānākara’s argument in support of an intentional action is based on the assertion that intention wholly determines success or failure of tantric practice. He elaborates on this statement saying that wrong intention either brings limited results or very dire consequences, such as rebirth in lower realms. He says that not all tantric adepts will achieve the coveted status of Vajradhara. On the contrary, those who engage in tantric practice motivated by wicked intentions, go straight to hell. He gives three examples of wrong intentions. The most important among the three is deficiency in cultivating compassion for all the sentient beings, while pursuing tantric practice. Such practice can only bring the limited results of the Hīnayāna practitioners.

Although the sandalwood is cool if you do not apply it as anointment, but rather apply it as a firewood, all you would get is violent burning and



suffering, in the same way, through engagement with *mantranaya*, even if he pacifies affective emotions of all the sentient beings, if he is divorced from the goad of compassion, he enters into an isolation without attributes, and achieves *nirvāṇa* through Hīnayāna. For this reason, they are called the minor *siddhis*.

The commentary enlarges on these verses with the following words:

Just like in the analogy [above], he who has entered the door of *mantranaya*, and his practice is also to pacify (Tib. *zhi bar bya*, Skt. *śamayet*) the entire pain (Tib. *gdung ba*, Skt. *dāha*) of afflictive emotions and *karma* of all the sentient beings, who are as many as the end of the sky, even if he has generated *bodhicitta*, [but] he is without the “elephant hook” which is not to abandon the sentient beings out of the great compassion (*mahākaruṇa*). If he enters the isolation of the signless (Tib. *mtshan ma med pa'i dgon pa*, Skt. *alākṣaṇaviveka*) and becomes disgusted by *saṃsāra* and being separated from the attitude of a great *bodhisattva*, he achieves *nirvāṇa* (Tib: *mya ngan las 'da' ba*, Skt. *nirvāṇa*) through the path of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas.<sup>67</sup>

With this statement, \*Jñānākara wanted to make sure that the compassionate *bodhisattva* ideal, one of the distinguishing features of the Mahāyāna, secures its place as the ultimate tantric goal. He deliberately contrasts the generation of “the enlightenment mind” (*bodhicitta*)<sup>68</sup>, that is “the intention of enlightenment for the sake of others”, with the actual exercise of compassion. Using the sandalwood analogy, he compares *bodhicitta* to firewood that burns violently, if the adept fails to actually implement this noble intention of *bodhicitta* into actual practice of compassion. Thus, \*Jñānākara goes even further than only accentuating the importance of the right intention. In his understanding, the right intention, such as *bodhicitta*, must be realized in the actual practice of compassion, only upon satisfying these conditions, is tantric practice deemed to bring all the expected results.

The second wrong intention behind tantric practice expounded by \*Jñānākara is a materialistic pursue of worldly gain.

Likewise, those who seek (Tib. *don du gnyer ba*, Skt. *arthin*) worldly gain, having obtained (Tib. *thob nas*, Skt. *prāpya*) only that alone (Tib. *de tsam zhig*, Skt. *tena tāvan mātrakeṇa*), they fall down (Tib. *zad*, Skt. *hīyatayaḥ*).<sup>69</sup>

Although \*Jñānākara does not specify what kind of worldly gains has he in mind, it is plausible to argue that he is referring here to the magic rite of invigoration

<sup>67</sup> *dpe bstan pa de bzhin du gsang sngags kyi sgor zhugs shing/ spyod pa yang nam mkha'i khams kyi mthas gtugs pa'i sems can thams cad kyi las dang nyon mongs pa'i gdung ba thams cad zhi bar bya ba'i phyir zhugs shing bskyed pa yin na yang snying rje chen pos sems can yongs su mi gtong ba'i lcags kyu dang bral zhing/ byang chub sems dpa' chen po'i sems dang bral bas 'khor bas skyo la mtshan ma med pa'i dgon par 'jug par 'gyur na/ nyan thos dang rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pas mya ngan las 'da' bar 'gyur ro// \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 402–403.*

<sup>68</sup> *bodhicittam parārthāya samyak-sambodhikā matā/ Abhisamayālaṃkāra-nāma-prajñā-pārami-topadeśa-śāstra-kārikā* 1.18

<sup>69</sup> *de bzhin du 'jig rten pa'i 'bras bu don du gnyer ba rnams kyang de tsam zhig thob nas zad par 'gyur ro/ \*Mantrāvātāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 403.*

(*pausṭika*) effective in generating prosperity and material wealth. He could also have in mind the fee obtained for the performance of rites, e.g. initiation, etc. Those who fall prey of engaging in tantric practice motivated by greed in obtaining welfare, are likely to be consumed.

Finally, the last wrong intention \*Jñānākara warns against is the afflictive power of emotions.

Likewise, those who perform unauthorized destructive magic rites (Tib. *mngon spyod*, Skt. *abhicāra*) motivated by past anger, and those who delight in killing (Tib. *srog gcod*, Skt. *prāṇātīpāta*), etc. will be reborn (Tib. *skye bar 'gyur*, Skt. *upapadyate*) as hell-beings (Tib. *dmyal ba*, Skt. *nāraka*), or as bloodthirsty demon (Tib. *srin po*, Skt. *rākṣasas*) or as a *yakṣa* (Tib. *gnod sbyin*), etc.<sup>70</sup>

\*Jñānākara warns against destructive magic rites, such as killing—that belongs to the cruel rite (Skt. *krūra-karman*, Tib. *drag las*) and forms one of the infamous transgressive tantric practices (prescribed, for example, in the *Vajrabhairava-tantra*)—that are wrongly motivated by anger. The performance of those rites fuelled by anger entails the terrible consequence of rebirth in hell. In rejecting the value of performing magic rites popular in the tantras of the *niruttarayoga* class, and condemning them as motivated by wrong intentions, \*Jñānākara again makes it clear that he adheres to the views of restrained tantric practice that abstains from those controversial practices.

\*Jñānākara ends the passage with a warning:

For that reason, is it not the case that all those who have entered through the door of the *mantranaya* will attain the status (Tib. *go 'phang*, Skt. *pada*) of Vajradhara, but some who practice perversely will be reborn in the lower realms (Tib. *ngan song*, Skt. *niraya*) just like anybody else. It is for this reason that they are called 'minor *siddhis*', when one obtains the lower state, even if he has entered through the gateway of *mantranaya*.<sup>71</sup>

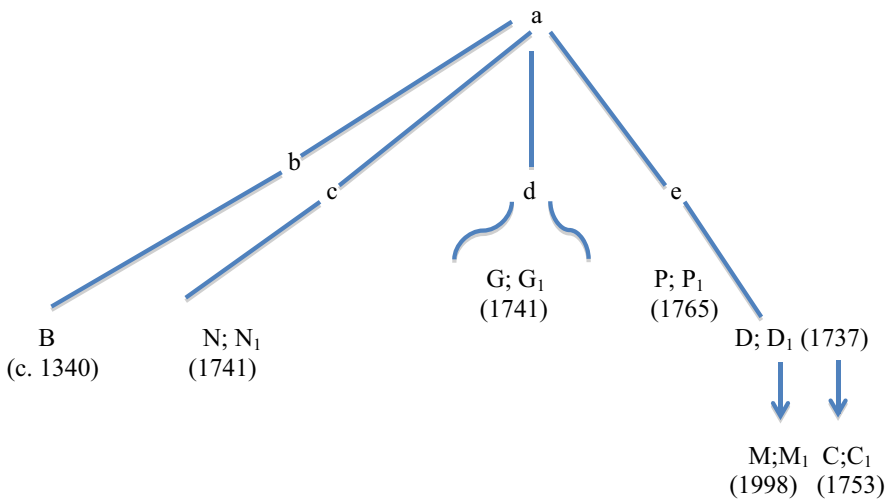
#### A Critical Edition and English Translation of \*Jñānākara's \**Mantrāvatāra*

This critical edition is based on five block prints (xyl.) of the root text, i.e. the Cone (C), Derge (D), Gser bris (G), Peking (P), and Narthang (N) and the root text lemmata extracted from the commentaries, i.e. C1, D1, G1, P1, N1, both of which are included in the Tibetan Bstan 'gyur and reproduced here in Wylie transliteration. In addition to these, I collated textual witnesses of the Bstan 'gyur Pedurma edition (M, M1) and partial extracanonical testimony recorded in Bu ston's *gsung 'bum* (B). A comparison between variant readings yielded the following results. A first division is to be made between the xyl. N—on the one hand—which, as the oldest

<sup>70</sup> *de bzhin du zhe sdang sngon du song bas ma gñang ba'i mngon spyod byed cing/ srog gcod ba la dga' ba rnams ni dmyal ba 'am/ srin po 'am gnod sbyin la sogs par skye bar 'gyur ro// \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 403.*

<sup>71</sup> *de'i phyir gsang sngags kyi skor zhugs so cog thams cad kyi rdo rje 'chang gi go 'phang thob pa ma yin gyi/ 'agal bar spyod pa kha cig ni ngan song du skye bar yang nges so/ des na gsang sngags kyi sgor zhugs kyang dman pa'i gnas thob par 'gyur bas na 'bras bu dman pa zhes bya'o// \*Mantrāvatāra-vṛtti, Derge, folio 403.*

one, has lacunae, *errores conjunctivi*, and, in general, gives less satisfactory readings, and the xyl. C D G P—on the other—which, in comparison with N, are less corrupted and give better readings. Moreover, within the xyl. C D G P, two groups could be established with certainty: CD and GP. The CD group has more archaic readings and no *errores separativi* which indicates that they must have directly or indirectly descended from the same hyparchetype. I could have excluded C from the critical apparatus because I am assuming that it is an apograph of D, but I did not, because C has corrected misspellings found in D. The Pedurma edition (M, M<sub>1</sub>) is clearly based on the CD group. The GP group shows many of the identical readings between its members, but it also shares many of the features found in N and in the CD group.<sup>72</sup> Among the GP group, G shows more variants than P, and therefore it is more likely to have been contaminated. It seems that the GP group somehow stems from the same hyparchetype, but cannot be regarded as having this alleged hyparchetype as its only source. The partial, extracanonical transmission of Bu ston (B), on the other hand, shows a high degree of *errores separativi*, therefore, it is likely to have descended from a different hyparchetype. Already on the basis of these findings, it is possible to attempt to outline a *stemma codicum*.



In order to minimalize the critical apparatus, some insignificant variants were not noted. These include variants of *b* for *p* and *p* for *b*, and vice versa. Similarly, the use of *yi* as genitive particle and its alternative *'i* were not generally noted. Furthermore, lacunae where it can be assumed with certainty that the text has been transmitted correctly, e.g. *'phags pa* for *'pags pa* and illegible, smudged letters were

<sup>72</sup> My findings to some extent agree with Tropper (2005) who also assumes two main groups: GP and CD, and regards C as a copy of D with a few similar readings found in the GP group. However, Tropper adds N to the GP group, but according to my findings, N, as the oldest and most corrupted, does not belong to the GP group. I thank Prof. Ulrike Roesler for providing me with the summary of Tibetan Bstan 'gyur stemmata.

not generally noted. Archaic readings peculiar to Cone and Derge editions, i.e., *stsogs* for *sogs* as well as common orthographical variants indicating quotation marks, i.e., *zhes* for *ces* and vice versa were not noted in the critical apparatus.

The following critical edition contains two types of registers, namely, the substantive variants (marked in bold) and the non-substantive variants. These two types of variants are based on two degrees of relevance, namely 1 (one) and 0 (zero). The former pertains to those variants which significantly change the meaning of the text and also record differences in the text's transmission and the latter to differences in spelling that could simply be the result of the worn-out wooden blocks. The non-substantive variants can also stem from spelling differences of various Tibetan scripts. For example, the orthographical variables of Narthang edition that come under the non-substantive variants must have followed orthographical conventions of *dbu med* script.

The division into thematic sections was not part of the original text, but was added in order to facilitate a clear overview of the contents. For this reason, \*Jñānākara's original division into verses (*ślokas*) consisting of four lines each (*pādas*) could not be retained. All these block print editions were available to me through the TBRC Website.

### Sigla:

**B:** Bu ston Rin chen grub (*gsung 'bum*). Collected Works by Buton Rinchen Drub (1290–1364) and his disciple Dratsepa Rinchen Namgyal (1318–1388) of the Zhalu order. Printed from the Lhasa New Zho Printery woodblocks.

Rgyud sde spyi'i rnam bzhag 11a-b, 12a, 14b

**C:** Co ne Bstan 'gyur. Library of Congress, Washington D.C. Orient China 242. Microfilms.

Rgyud Tsu 193a–95a.

**C1:** Co ne Bstan 'gyur.

Rgyud Tsu 195b–207a

**D:** Sde dge Bstan 'gyur. Produced in 1737–1744 under the patronage of the De ge King Tenpa Tsering. Edited by Shuchen Tsultrim Rinchen. Facsimile was published in India in 1982–1985 as a part of Karmapa 16 Rangchung Rikpai Dorje's (1924–1981) memorial ceremonies.

Rgyud Tsu 194a–196b.

**D1:** Sde dge Bstan 'gyur.

Rgyud Tsu 196b–208a

**G:** Bstan 'gyur (gser bris ma). "Golden Tenjur". Beijing: National Library, 1988.

Rgyud 'grel Nu 270a–273a

**G1:** Bstan 'gyur (gser bris ma).

Rgyud 'grel Nu 274a–286b

**P:** Bstan 'gyur (Peking). The Tibetan Tripiṭaka, Peking Edition. Tokyo-Kyoto: Tibetan Tripiṭaka Research Institute, 1957.

Rgyud 'grel Nu 219a–221b

**P1:** Bstan 'gyur (Peking).

Rgyud 'grel Nu 221b–233b

**M:** Bstan 'gyur (dpe bsdur ma). Pe cin: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang. 1994–2008.

Rgyud Tsu 575–582

**M1:** Bstan 'gyur (dpe bsdur ma). Pe cin: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang. 1994–2008.

Rgyud Tsu 536–564

**N:** Bstan 'gyur (snar thang). (Originally published 1741–1742).

Rgyud 'grel Nu 220a–222b

**N1:** Bstan 'gyur (snar thang).

Rgyud 'grel Nu 222b–234b

## An Introduction to [the Path] of Mantra (Skt. *Mantrāvatāra*, Tib. *Gsang sngags la 'jug pa*)<sup>73</sup>

### 1. Homage of the Author and Purpose of the Treatise

*dnogs po'i de nyid rang bzhin 'od gsal mngon mdzad nas  
gdul bya'i dbang gis sku yi cha byad sna tshogs dang  
tshig<sup>74</sup> dang yi ge dag gis de nyid ston mdzad pa  
rdo rje mi phyed gsum dngos sku la phyag 'tshal nas*

*rab tu gsang ba blo mchog yul gyur gsang sngags don  
log par rtogs pa'i<sup>75</sup> dbang gis sgro<sup>76</sup> 'dogs skur 'debs<sup>77</sup> shing  
nyon mongs dbang gis sgra<sup>78</sup> bzhin 'jug par byed pa rnam  
go bar bya phyir mdor bsdus cung zhig bdag gis bris<sup>79</sup>*

Having prostrated before the actual, indestructible body of the three *vajras* (of body, speech, and mind) who teaches about reality through a (spoken) word and a letter and who has various implements on his body due to (various capacities of the) trainees [and] having fully realized the true reality of [all] phenomena, the nature of

<sup>73</sup> The text is preceded by scribal note regarding the title of the text and short invocation to Mañjuśrī: *rgya gar skad du*

*mantra a ba tara (mantra a C D | mantra G P N )  
bod skad du (bod skad du C D G P | bod skadu N (dbu med convention)  
gsang sngags la 'jug pa*

In the language of India [it is called], An Introduction to [the Path of] Mantra. In Tibetan language, [it is called], An Introduction to [the Path of] Mantra. *'phags pa 'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa la phyag 'tshal lo (gzhon C D G P | gzhan N)*I pay homage to the noble Mañjuśrīkumāra-bhūta.

<sup>74</sup> *tshig C D G P | chig N*

<sup>75</sup> *rtogs pa'i C D | rtog pa'i G P N*

<sup>76</sup> *sgro C D G P N | sgra M M1*

<sup>77</sup> *'debs C D G P | 'debs N*

<sup>78</sup> *sgra C D G P | sgro N*

<sup>79</sup> *bris C D | bri D1 G P M M1 N, dri G1 P1 , dris N1*

which is the clear light, I am writing down a little (treatise), in brief, in order to bring about an understanding for those who exaggerate and depreciate (tantric teachings), on account of [their] afflictive emotions, and [for those who] on account of [their] perverse understanding of the meaning of *mantranaya*, the subject which is supremely esoteric and [and, therefore, can be grasped only] by those with the finest intellect, have entered (the tantric path) perversely following [the scriptures] literally.

## 2. Questions

*bskal pa chen po*<sup>80</sup> *rab mang bas*  
*bgrod par bya ba'i sa rnams dang*  
*'og min la sogs zhing dag par*  
*bsgom dang bzlas dang mchod*<sup>81</sup> *sogs*<sup>82</sup> *kyis*

*skye ba 'di 'am gzhan dag la*  
*sngags pa*<sup>83</sup> *myur du 'jug*<sup>84</sup> *'gyur ba'i*  
*rgyu dang rkyen ni gang dang gang*  
*bya ba dang bcas byed pa gang*

*de yi grub pa gang zhig yin*  
*grub pa de yi*<sup>85</sup> *spyod pa gang*<sup>86</sup>  
*grub pa'i dus ni nges pa gang*  
*'bras bu dman 'grub ci lta bu*  
*bdag dang lha de'i bdag nyid gang*  
*sngags kyi de nyid ji lta bu*  
*lam dang lam min gang*<sup>87</sup> *dang gang*  
*gzhi dang yan lag dam tshig gang*<sup>88</sup>

*cho ga'i bya ba rnam nges gang*

(1–2) What are the causes and the conditions for a *mantrin* engaged in the (*mantranaya* way of) meditation, recitation, and worship, and the such, to arrive quickly at the Pure Lands, i.e. the Unsurpassed/Akaniṣṭha, etc. and heavens, which are to be reached (by the other vehicles) in the very many great eons, in this life or the next? (3) Who is the agent and what are his actions? (4) What exactly is his

<sup>80</sup> *po* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> | *por* G N P

<sup>81</sup> *mchod* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *chod* N

<sup>82</sup> *sogs* G P | *soks* N, *stsogs* C D M

<sup>83</sup> *sngags* C D G M P | *sngaD pa* N (*dbu med* convention)

<sup>84</sup> *'jug* C D G M P | *'jug par* N

<sup>85</sup> *yi* G N P | *yis* C D M

<sup>86</sup> *gang* C D G M N | *dang* P

<sup>87</sup> *dang* C D G P | *kang* G

<sup>88</sup> *gang* C D G N P | *dang* M

accomplishment (*siddhi*)? (5) How is the conduct related to that accomplishment? (6) What is the timeframe for *siddhi*? (7) What are the minor *siddhis*? (8) What is the nature of the self? (9) What is the nature of the deity? (10) What is the nature of *mantra*? (11) What is the right path? (12) What is the wrong path? (13) What are the fundamental pledges? (14) What are the ancillary pledges? (15) What are the rules concerning the rituals?

### 3. “The Ox-Drawn Cart” Analogy

*dper na skyes bu stobs chung ba'am*<sup>89</sup>  
*phyugs kyi shing rtas dus ring gis*  
*bgrod par bya ba'i gnas der ni*

*rkang mgyogs*<sup>90</sup> *grub pa'am nyi zlas ni*  
*myur ba nyid du 'gro bar 'gyur*  
*de bzhin pha rol phyin pa 'am*  
*lam gzhan dag la brten*<sup>91</sup> *nas ni*

*yun rings*<sup>92</sup> *'jug par gyur pa der*<sup>93</sup>  
*sngags pas*<sup>94</sup> *tshe 'dir*<sup>95</sup> *'jug pa ni*<sup>96</sup>  
*mnyam med mthu la brten phyir*<sup>97</sup> *ro*

For example, just like a weak person or an ox-drawn cart will get to that place in a long time, the one who has acquired the *siddhi* of swift-footedness, or the sun and the moon will get there quickly, in the same way, ‘there’ where one arrives after a long time relying on the *pāramitānaya* or some other paths [whether Śrāvakas or Pratyekabuddhas], the *mantrin* arrives in this lifetime, because he relies on the [mantric] power that is unequalled.

### 4. The Cause

*de yang rgyu rkyen phun tshogs kyis*

<sup>89</sup> For the preservation of 7-syllable *pāda*, *ba* and *'am* have to be conjoined.

<sup>90</sup> *mgyogs* B C D G M P | *'gyogs* N

<sup>91</sup> *brten* B C D G M P | *brtan* N

<sup>92</sup> *yun rings* C D G M P | *yun ring* B N

<sup>93</sup> *der* B C D G M N | *dar* P

<sup>94</sup> *sngags pas* C D G M P | *sngags pa* S N

<sup>95</sup> *'dir* C D M | *'dis* B C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub>

<sup>96</sup> *ni* G P M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> | *na* C D M

<sup>97</sup> *phyir* C D G P | *byi* N

*rgyu yang*<sup>98</sup> *lus ngag yid kyi las*  
*sngon tshe legs par*<sup>99</sup> *spyad*<sup>100</sup> *pa yis*  
*da ltar rnam par smin pa'i rgyud*  
*mtshan dang ldan pa'i lus thob cing*

*tshangs dbyangs ka la ping ka'i ngag*  
*'dod chags zhe sdang gti mug tshogs*  
*nyon mongs bsrabs*<sup>101</sup> *pa'i sems ldan pa'o*

As for that [attainment of the path in this lifetime], it [comes about] due to the accomplishment of causes and conditions. Among these two, the cause has come to fruition in this lifetime as a result of the wholesome deeds of body, speech, and mind of previous lives; [in other words] having obtained a body endowed with these characteristics, a melodious voice [like that] of the *kalaviṅka*, and the mind that keeps the afflictive emotions—the [aggregate] of desire, hatred, and ignorance—under restraint.

## 5. The Three Conditions

### (a) *The Conduct of Entering*

*rkyen yang rnam pa gsum nyid de*

*'jug dang sbyor*<sup>102</sup> *dang sgrub pa yi*<sup>103</sup>  
*spyod pa rnam pa gsum nyid*<sup>104</sup> *do*  
*de la 'jug pa'i spyod pa ni*  
*sngags la dad pa'i slob ma yis*

*bla ma yon tan ldan pa la*<sup>105</sup>  
*dus ring bsnyen pa sngon 'gro bas*  
*mnyes nas gsol ba gdab byas la*<sup>106</sup>  
*dkiyl 'khor 'jug dang dbang bskur zhing*  
*rang gi 'dod lha gzung*<sup>107</sup> *ba ste*  
*de ni gzhi yi rkyen zhes bya*

<sup>98</sup> *yang* G P N | *dang* C D M

<sup>99</sup> *legs par* B C G M N | *lags par* D, *yegs par* P

<sup>100</sup> *spyad* C D G M N P | *spyod* B

<sup>101</sup> *bsrabs* C D M | *srab* B G P N

<sup>102</sup> *sbyor* C D G M N P | *sbyar* B

<sup>103</sup> *yi* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N P | *yis* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>104</sup> *nyid* C D G M P | *nyi* N

<sup>105</sup> The lemmata from all the commentaries (C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>) record this *pāda* as follows: *bla ma yon tan dang ldan pa* which may reflect Sanskrit more faithfully.

<sup>106</sup> *gdab byas la* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> | *gdab pa byas la* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>107</sup> *gzung* C D G M N P | *bzung* B. This is the same word with alternative prescript letters.



The conditions are threefold and three are: the conducts of entering, application and accomplishment.

Among these, the conduct of entering [is explained] as follows: the disciple who has faith in [the way of] *mantra*(s), first serves a virtuous master for a long time, and [then] having pleased him, he places the formal request [by which he] enters the *maṇḍala*, receives initiation and adopts his chosen deity. This is called the fundamental condition.

(b) *The Conduct of Application*

*de la sbyor ba'i spyod*<sup>108</sup> *pa ni*  
*mithun*<sup>109</sup> *pa'i gnas sogs de dang der*<sup>110</sup>

*dang por stong nyid byams sogs dang*  
*rang 'dod lha yi cho ga yis*  
*thun gsum mam ni thun bzhi ru*  
*bsgom*<sup>111</sup> *dang bzlas dang kha ton*<sup>112</sup> *dang*

*gtor ma sbyin pa'am mchod sogs brtson*  
*sdig chen kun las*<sup>113</sup> *grol nas ni*  
*bskal pa du mar spyad pa yi*<sup>114</sup>  
*byang chub sems dpa' dang mtshungs*<sup>115</sup> 'gyur

*'di ni yongs 'gyur rung ba'i rkyen*  
*gnyis pa yin par bstan pa yin*

Among these [three conditions] the conduct of application is [as follows]: in whatever place [the initiate] finds pleasing [to him], and so forth, in three or four meditation sessions [per day], he should, first of all, meditate on emptiness and then on the four immeasurables [beginning with loving kindness], and [then] on his chosen deity according to the ritual prescriptions; he should perform *mantra* recitation within the formal recitation sessions and also outside the formal recitation sessions; he should offer oblations or worship, etc. with diligence. [Through these ritual actions], an initiate is freed from a great many sins and he becomes equal to a *bodhisattva* who has practiced for many eons. This is proclaimed to be the second condition that enables total transformation.

<sup>108</sup> *spyod* B C D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>] 'dod C<sub>1</sub>

<sup>109</sup> *mithun* B C D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> P ] 'thun G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>110</sup> *de dang der* B C D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> P ] *de dang de* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>111</sup> *bsgom* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *sgom* B

<sup>112</sup> *kha ton* B G N P ] *kha don* C D M

<sup>113</sup> *las* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N P ] *nas* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>114</sup> *yi* B C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> ] *yis* C D G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>115</sup> *mtshungs* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N P P<sub>1</sub> ] *tshungs* G N<sub>1</sub>

(c) *The Conduct of Achievement*

*de la sgrub pa'i spyod pa ni  
dper na legs par bkrus pa'i ras*

*kha dog rnams<sup>116</sup> su bsgyur ba na  
tshegs ni chung ste gzab 'os ltar  
sgrub pa'i spyod pa'am<sup>117</sup> bsgrims<sup>118</sup> dgos kyi<sup>119</sup>  
ha cang dka' ba'ang ma<sup>120</sup> yin no*

*sbyor ba'i spyod pas rgyud smin<sup>121</sup> pa'i  
gang zag bsgrub<sup>122</sup> la 'jug pa na<sup>123</sup>  
gnas dang grogs dang longs<sup>124</sup> spyod dang  
bsam pa ma yin pa rnams spangs<sup>125</sup>  
dmigs pa'i don la rtse gcig gzahag  
'di ni myur du 'phags<sup>126</sup> pa'i rkyen  
gsum pa yin par bstan pa yin*

Among these, the conduct of achievement is [as follows]: for example, just as it is not difficult to dip in some dye a cloth, clean [and bright], but care must be taken [when doing it], likewise, in the conduct of achievement too, heedfulness is required, but it is not very difficult. If a person, whose mental continuum has been ripened through the [previous] conduct of application, enters the achievement [level], he should cast away all ill-suited places, ill-suited companions, ill-suited enjoyments and ill-suited intentions, and having established a one-pointed concentration, he should concentrate in a focused manner on the matter at hand. This is taught to be the third condition by which one becomes a noble one, quickly.

**6. The Agrarian Analogy**

*de la 'jug pa'i spyod pa ni*

<sup>116</sup> *rnams* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N P P<sub>1</sub> | *rnām* N<sub>1</sub> (*dbu med* convention)

<sup>117</sup> *spyod pa'am* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N P P<sub>1</sub> | *spyod pa'ang* B, *spyod pa* N<sub>1</sub>

<sup>118</sup> *bsgrims* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> | *bsgrīm* G G<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>, *sgrīm* B

<sup>119</sup> The lemmata from the commentaries C<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> give different reading of this *pāda*: *sgrub pa'i spyod pa bsgrīm dgos kyi*. The lemmata from the D<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> give yet another version of the same *pāda*: *sgrub pa'i spyod pa bsgrims dgos kyi*.

<sup>120</sup> *dka' ba'ang ma* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *dka' ba ma* B

<sup>121</sup> *smīn* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> | *min* G N P

<sup>122</sup> *bsgrub* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N P | *sgrub* B, *bsgrub pa* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>123</sup> *na* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N | *ni* B G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>124</sup> *longs* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *long* N

<sup>125</sup> *spangs* C D M M<sub>1</sub> | *spang* B C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>126</sup> *'phags* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *'phag* G G<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub>

*angos grub skye ba zhing dang 'dra*  
*de la sbyor ba'i spyod pa ni*  
*angos grub 'byung ba myu gu 'dra*  
*de la sgrub<sup>127</sup> pa'i spyod pa ni*

*'bru yi tshogs rnams smin<sup>128</sup> pa bzhin*  
*de dag kun la'ang gtso bo ni*  
*las bzang du mas smin byas<sup>129</sup> pa'i*  
*sems ni sa bon 'dra ba'i phyir*

*phul du byung ba'i rgyur rab<sup>130</sup> gnas*  
*de ltar rgyu rkyen phun tshogs pa'i*  
*sngags pas sa rnams rab gnon cing*  
*mngon par shes pa lngas rtse la*  
*dag pa'i sangs rgyas zhing du 'gro*

Among these, the conduct of entering is similar to a field that gives rise to the accomplishment [*siddhi*]. Among these, the conduct of application is similar to the sprout [that is] the arising of the accomplishment. Among these, the conduct of achievement is similar to the ripening of the crops. However, chief among all these is the mind, which is similar to the seed that has been ripened by many virtuous deeds [in previous lives]. Because of that, the mind is established as the most excellent cause. Thus, the *mantrin*, endowed with completed causes and conditions, ascends through the levels of [the *bodhisattva*] and amuses himself with five kinds of supernatural knowledge, [and, moreover], he travels to the pure Buddha realms.

## 7. Agent and His Actions

*de la bya ba dang bcas pa'i*  
*byed pa po dang 'dra bar ni*  
*rnam pa gsum du shes bya ste*

*brtson 'grus shin tu 'bar ba dang*  
*sems ni dmigs la rtse gcig dang*  
*yang dag lta dang ldan pa 'o*

Among these, he is similar to the agent and his actions—that should be known as three [attributes]: (1) he is endowed with a blazing diligence, (2) a one-pointed mind, and (3) he is endowed with the right view.

<sup>127</sup> *sgrub* B C D G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *bsgrub* C<sub>1</sub>, *bsgrub par* D<sub>1</sub>

<sup>128</sup> *smin* B C C<sub>1</sub> D G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *sman* D<sub>1</sub>

<sup>129</sup> *byas* B C C<sub>1</sub> D G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *bas* D<sub>1</sub>

<sup>130</sup> *rgyur rab* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G N M M<sub>1</sub> P | *rgyu rab* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

## 8. Accomplishment (*siddhi*)

*de lta'i bya ba dang ldan pa'i*  
*grub pa'i dngos grub gang zhe na*  
*lus dang gnas dang longs spyod dag*  
*mi las khyad par 'phags pa ste*  
*tshes la dbang bsgyur<sup>131</sup> mi khom par*

*skye las<sup>132</sup> gtan du grol ba dang*  
*sangs rgyas 'byung dang phrad sogs dang*  
*'dod yon lnga po shes bzhin du*  
*spyod la<sup>133</sup> 'bying<sup>134</sup> bar mi 'gyur dang*

*bdag gzhan phan pa bskyed<sup>135</sup> nus pa'o<sup>136</sup>*

If one were to ask, what [kind of] *siddhi* is achieved by a *siddha* endowed with these actions? The body, place and enjoyments are more superior to those of ordinary people, that is to say, he achieves lordship over his lifespan and is totally liberated from future rebirths of [eight] *akṣaṇas* (leisureless states). He meets, etc. with the Buddhas who have manifested in the world and he engages in the five sense objects intentionally, i.e. knowing [their essence] he is unfettered [by their afflictive power]. [Furthermore] he is capable of bringing benefit to oneself and to others.

## 9. The Conduct of the *siddha*

*grub pa'i spyod pa gang zhe na*  
*yul dang dus ni de dang der*  
*'byor pa'i bde<sup>137</sup> ba la spyod cing*

*de bzhin 'phags pa rnams la yang*  
*ci nus par ni mchod pa dang*  
*phan gdags tshar geod kyis 'dul ba'i*  
*sems can rnams la rjes mthun par*

<sup>131</sup> *bsgyur* B C D P ] *sgyur* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>132</sup> *skye las* B C D G N M P ] *skye ba las* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>133</sup> *spyod la* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *spyod pa* B

<sup>134</sup> *'bying* C D M P ] *'bring* G N, *'ching* B C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>. The *'bying* variant in reference to the state of being 'unfettered' (Skt. *bandha*) by the power of the senses appears to be more appropriate than the 'sinking' variant (Tib. *'ching*, Skt. *majjana*), especially taking into account the fact that the senses come into existence through the transformation of the *guṇas*, literally 'cords' or 'strings' that bind the soul.

<sup>135</sup> *phan pa bskyed* C D G M N P ] *phan skyed* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>, *phan pa skyed* B

<sup>136</sup> The lemmata from the C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> give the following reading of this verse *bdag gzhan phan skyed nus pa'o* and the lemmata from the G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> give yet another reading *gzhan phan skyed nus pa'o*.

<sup>137</sup> *bde* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P ] *bda* P<sub>1</sub>

*rdzu 'phrul sna tshogs kyis 'dul zhing  
dmyal la sogs par<sup>138</sup> yud tsam la'ang  
bsil dang drod sogs sbyin pa dang  
de bzhin sems can sna tshogs la*

*chos rnam sna tshogs ston pa ste  
sman gyi ljon shing chen po ltar<sup>139</sup>  
mthong dang thos dang reg pa dang  
dran pas kun la phan gyur<sup>140</sup> ba'o*

If one were to ask what the conduct of the *siddha* is, [we reply:] He takes delight in the pleasure of enjoyments in all places and at all times. Likewise, he also offers worship to the noble ones, in accordance with his means. Through display of [a wonderful] variety of magical powers [he benefits and refutes] those who are to be trained. He gives coolness and heat, etc. in an instant, to those who are in [the hot and cold] hell[s]. Likewise, he teaches different doctrines to different sentient beings, according to their inclination. Just like the medicinal properties of a great magical tree, [the *siddha*] brings benefit to all [beings] by being seen, heard, touched, and remembered.

## 10. Timeframe for the *siddhi*

*grub pa'i dus ni gang zhe na  
rgyu dang rkyen ni phun tshogs<sup>141</sup> shing<sup>142</sup>  
rgyun du<sup>143</sup> bzlas dang bsgom<sup>144</sup> pa dang  
rgyal ba sras bcas la dad pa'i*

*dka' thub can gyis<sup>145</sup> dngos grub ni  
tshe 'di nyid la'ang 'grub<sup>146</sup> par 'gyur  
rgyu dang ldan yang rkyen 'ga' zhig<sup>147</sup>  
ma tshang pa ni tshe gsum gyis*

*stong nyid legs mthong dus<sup>148</sup> med grol*

<sup>138</sup> *sogs par* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N P | *sogs pa* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>139</sup> This line is missing in Bu ston's testimony of this passage

<sup>140</sup> *phan gyur ba'o* C D G M N P | *phan ba 'o* B, *phan 'gyur ba'o* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>141</sup> ***phun tshogs C D G M N P | kun tshogs B***

<sup>142</sup> The lemmata from the commentaries (C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>) give the following version of this verse-quarter: *rgyu dang rkyen rnam phun tshogs shing.*

<sup>143</sup> *du* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> | *tu* G N P

<sup>144</sup> *bsgom* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | *sgom* B

<sup>145</sup> *gyis* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> | *gyi* B G G<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>146</sup> *nyid la 'ang 'grub* B C D G P | *nyid la 'grub* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>147</sup> The lemmata from the B C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> add one line in between '*rgyu dang...*' and '*ma tshang...*' that is *sman gyi ljon shing chen po ltar* which is missing in the root text.

<sup>148</sup> *dus* B C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> | *du* G N P

If I were to ask, what is the [expected] timeframe to achieve the *siddhi*? As for the *siddhi* [achieved] by the one who earnestly strives, who has accumulated all the causes and conditions, and who meditates and continuously recites the *mantra* and who has faith in the Buddhas and *bodhisattvas*, he will achieve *siddhi* even in this lifetime. [If] he has accumulated all the causes, but some of the conditions are incomplete, then it will take him three lifetimes [to achieve *siddhi*]. Liberation [can happen] at any time if one perceives emptiness properly.

### 11. Minor *siddhis*

*'bras bu dman pa rnam mang las*  
*nyan thos rang rgyal 'grub pa ni*  
*tsan dan shing ni*<sup>149</sup> *bsil mod kyang*

*byug pa'i sbyor bas ma bsten par*  
*bud shing sbyor bas bsten na ni*  
*shin tu sreg*<sup>150</sup> *cing gdung bar 'gyur*  
*de bzhin gsang sngags sgor spyod pas*

*sems can kun gyi nyon mongs pa'i*  
*gdung ba zhi byed yin na yang*  
*snying rje'i lcags*<sup>151</sup> *kyu dang bral zhing*  
*mtshan med dgon par zhugs gyur na*

*theg pa dman pas mya ngan 'da'*  
*des na 'bras bu dman zhes bya*

From among many minor *siddhis*, the accomplishment of Śrāvakas and Pratyek-abuddhas is [as follows]: although the sandalwood is cool, if you do not apply it as anointment, but rather apply it as a firewood, all you would get is violent burning and suffering; in the same way, through engagement in *mantranaya*, even if he pacifies afflictive emotions of all the sentient beings, [still] if he is divorced from the goad of compassion, he enters into an isolation without attributes, and achieves *nirvāṇa* through the Hīnayāna. For this reason, they are called the minor *siddhis*.

### 12. Ātma-tattva<sup>152</sup>

**Obj:** *bdag lus sha khrag rus pa dang*  
*rtsa rgyus spu sogs 'dus pa tsam*

<sup>149</sup> *shing ni* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N P ] *shing gi* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>150</sup> *sreg* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> ] *bsreg* G N P

<sup>151</sup> *lcags* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *lcaD* N (*dbu med* convention)

<sup>152</sup> This passage poses some difficulties for interpretation. In order to facilitate a clear overview, I divided it into an 'objections and answers' format because I assume that \*Jñānākara engages here in an exchange of scholarly views regarding the principle of the self (*ātma-tattva*).

*bdag tu brjod par bya ba yin*

**Ans:** *chos dbyings sbyor ba'i gsang sngags dang*

*de nyid la ni mos pa'i mthus*

*lha yi gzugs<sup>153</sup> su 'byung ba'i rten<sup>154</sup>*

*khyad par can du gnas pa ni*

*rags<sup>155</sup> pa'i bdag gi de nyid<sup>156</sup> yin*

**Obj:** *gzhan yang rtog pa zhib<sup>157</sup> pa dang*

*'khor bar mngon par phyogs pa'i sems*

*lus dang gnas dang longs spyod dang*

*dba'i rlabs<sup>158</sup> ldan pa 'di kho na*

*bdag tu<sup>159</sup> brjod pa'i<sup>160</sup> gzhi<sup>161</sup> ru 'dod*

**Ans:** *de ni gzung 'dzin dang bral zhing*

*rang rig 'od gsal dngos gyur pa*

*bdag gi<sup>162</sup> de nyid ces brjod do*

**Objection:** [Those ignorant men] hold that the self is merely the aggregate of the ego,<sup>163</sup> body, flesh, blood, bones, veins, sinew, hair, etc.

**Jñānākara's Answer:** The self [in its] gross form<sup>164</sup> abides as the special support which will arise in the form of the deity through *mantra* joined with *dharmadhātu* and through the power of firm conviction concerning that very thing.

**Objection:** Moreover, those with fine understanding [hold that] the mind slopping towards transmigration [and] endowed with the body, place, enjoyments, waves alone, is accepted to be the foundation expressed as the self.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>153</sup> *gzugs* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *gzug* N N<sub>1</sub>

<sup>154</sup> *rten* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> P ] *brten* N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>, 'rten G<sub>1</sub>

<sup>155</sup> *rags* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> ] *rag* G N P

<sup>156</sup> *de nyid* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> ] *bde nyid* G N P

<sup>157</sup> *zhib* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P ] *zhig* P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>158</sup> *dba'i rlabs* C D G N P ] *dba' rlabs* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>159</sup> *tu* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *du* N

<sup>160</sup> *brjod pa'i* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>] *brjod pa* M

<sup>161</sup> *gzhi* G P ] *bzhi* C D M N, *gzhir 'dod do* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>162</sup> *gi* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> ] *gis* G N P

<sup>163</sup> There are two translation variants of *bdag* possible here: (1) *bdag* in the meaning of *ātman*, or (2) *bdag* in the meaning of *sva*.

<sup>164</sup> There are two translation variants of *rags pa'i bdag* possible here. One is the 'gross form of the self', and the other, supported by *Mahāvīyutpatti*'s translation of *rags pa* as *audārika* in the sense of 'exhalted', 'the exhalted form of the self'. Since \*Jñānākara's commentary clearly states that the *ātma-tatva* which is "manifestation of the clear light of reflective awareness, devoid of subject-object duality" is identical with all the material constituents, sense organs (Tib. *kams dang skye mched*, Skt. *dhātu-āyatana*), and with the five elements (Tib. *phung*, Skt. *skandha*) that sum up the individual's physical and mental characteristics, I assume that by referring to the unusual "gross self", \*Jñānākara tries to make a point and refute 'gross' understanding of the self as purely physical aggregate.

<sup>165</sup> Even though, \*Jñānākara does not give us any explanation of these verses, it is plausible to assume that when he uses the term 'those with fine understanding' he does so to refer to some important Buddhist teachings. I argue that he is, in fact, referring to the *Blaze of Reasoning* (Skt. *Tarkajvālā*) of

**Jñānākara's Answer:** As for that: that is said to be the principle of the self (*ātma-tattva*) which, devoid of subject-object duality, becomes the manifestation of the “clear light” of self-awareness.<sup>166</sup>

### 13. Devatā-tattva

*de la lha yi de nyid ni  
rang sngags chos dbyings thugs chud cing*

*nam mkha'i<sup>167</sup> ngos ltar gyur pa las  
klu rnams kyi ni byin rlabs kyis  
mdog dang dbyibs ni tha dad pa'i  
sprin rnams nam mkhar<sup>168</sup> 'byung ba ltar*

*lha yi<sup>169</sup> sku ru<sup>170</sup> 'byung ba yin  
rnam thar sgo gsum gyis brtags pas  
yod med gnyis las 'da<sup>171</sup> bar 'gyur*

Among these, the principle of the deity [is as follows]: just like the serpents [are thought] to have the power over the rain-clouds that appear in the sky in distinct shapes and colours, in the same way, when one realizes [the inseparable nature] of one's own *mantra* and the *dharmadhātu*, the deity of the body becomes just like the [limitless] sky. Through [careful] examination of the three gateways of liberation,<sup>172</sup> [the nature of the deity] transcends the duality of existence and non-existence.

Footnote 165 continued

\*Bhāvaviveka, the founder of the Svātantrika school of the Madhyamaka tradition who accepts the sixth mental consciousness, that is the mind to be the self (*pudgala*). Bhāvaviveka's view was in opposition to the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka view that did not accept the argument that either the body or the mind can be regarded as the self. In his allusion to the ‘waves alone’ (Tib. *dba'i rlabs*, Skt. *taraṅgavṛttī*), \*Jñānākara probably refers to the teachings of the *Lankāvatāra-sūtra* in which the thought-constructs that arise out of the quiet stillness of the mind are compared to the waves rising out of the ocean of the mind.

<sup>166</sup> The commentary does not provide any explanation on these verses, but one can notice a certain thematic similarity between \*Jñānākara's explanation and the *Six Yogas of Nārōpā*, both of which support the description in which the experience of the clear light is concomitant with the experience of the reflective awareness (Tib. *rang rig pa*, Skt. *svasaṃvedana*) of one's own mindstream.

<sup>167</sup> *nam mkha'i* C D M M<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *namkha'i* G G<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> (*dbu med* convention)

<sup>168</sup> *nam mkhar* C D M M<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *namkhar* G G<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> (*dbu med* convention)

<sup>169</sup> *lha yi sku* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> ] *lha'i sku* C D G M N P

<sup>170</sup> *sku ru* C D G M N P ] *sku ni* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>171</sup> *'da' bar* C D G M N P bar ] *'das par* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>172</sup> These are the three *vimokṣamukhas*: (1) liberating gateway of emptiness [there is nothing to find, because there is nothing to grasp]; (2) liberating gateway of signlessness [if we examine the causes, we come to realize that there are no signs]; (3) liberating gateway of wishlessness [if we again carefully examine the basis of causes and effects, we realize that effects do not inherently exist, [therefore] there is nothing to wish for].



## 14. Mantra-tattva

*de la sngags kyi de*<sup>173</sup> *nyid ni*

*thabs dang shes rab tshul gnas lha*<sup>174</sup>  
*mi rtog bzhin du der ston*<sup>175</sup> *cing*  
*spyang drangs mchod nas gshegs gsol ba'o*

As for the true nature of the *mantra* [*mantra-tattva*]: [it is] the deity, which is abiding in the manner of [union of] means (*upāya*) and wisdom (*prajñā*). It manifests there [and there]<sup>176</sup> in such a way that it cannot be fathomed by the mind; it is invited, worshipped and dismissed.

## 15. The Right Path

*lam ni spyod pa rnam gsum sogs*  
*ji skad gong du sngar bstan pa'o*

As for the right path, they are three practices, etc., which have been taught before.

## 16. The Wrong Path

*lam ma yin pa 'di lta ste*<sup>177</sup>  
*log par 'jug cing tshol ba ste*  
*bkag pa'i mi dge bcu spyod pa'o*  
*dper na*<sup>178</sup> *mu stegs can 'ga' zhig*<sup>179</sup>

*'jug pa'i spyod pa'i dus na yang*  
*bud med bsten pa'i*<sup>180</sup> *dbang bskur zhing*<sup>181</sup>  
*thog ma med nas*<sup>182</sup> *der zhen pas*

*sbyor ba'i spyod pa'i dus na yang*  
*de la*<sup>183</sup> *'khyud cing zhen pa yis*

<sup>173</sup> *de* C C<sub>1</sub> D G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *da* D<sub>1</sub>

<sup>174</sup> *lha* C C<sub>1</sub> D G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub>] *lta* D<sub>1</sub>

<sup>175</sup> *ston* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> ] *rtog* P

<sup>176</sup> *de* is to be understood here unusually as *de dang der* 'in various places'.

<sup>177</sup> *ste* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *sta* N

<sup>178</sup> *dper na* C C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *dpar na* D

<sup>179</sup> *'ga' zhig* C D G M N P ] *kha cig* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>180</sup> *bsten pa'i* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *brten pa'i* N

<sup>181</sup> *zhing* G N P ] *bzhin* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>182</sup> *nas* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *bas* G<sub>1</sub>

<sup>183</sup> *de la* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *de la la* N

*bsgom dang bzlas sogs byed na yang  
chags pa phyir zhing 'phel bar 'gyur*

*sgrub<sup>184</sup> pa'i spyod pa'i dus na yang  
de yi tha snyad la dga' zhing  
tshul bzhin ma yin yid byed pas  
'dod khams 'da' ba'ang mi nus na<sup>185</sup>*

*rmd byung thob par ga la 'gyur  
de bzhin zhe sdang gti mug sogs  
sngon du song bas<sup>186</sup> byas pa'i las  
srog gcod ma byin len pa dang*

*brdzun<sup>187</sup> du smra dang phra ma sogs  
de dag thams cad lam min bstan*

As for the wrong path, it is as follows: to enter perversely and to pursue [the path] perversely [that is to say] to commit the ten unwholesome actions that are forbidden. For example, some heretics, even at the time of the conduct of entering, that is initiation, rely on a [real] woman. Desire will increase [in due practice] because they were attached to that [woman] since [the time] immemorial. At the time of the conduct of application also, they embrace her and the desire will grow bigger again even if they perform meditation and *mantra* recitation, etc. At the time of the conduct of achievement also, they find pleasure in that [sexual] act<sup>188</sup> and do not concentrate properly. If they are unable to transgress even the realm of desire, how [could they ever] achieve the miraculous one? In the same way, actions already performed before, preceded by hatred, ignorance etc. [such as] killing, taking what has not been given, lying, slander, etc., all these are taught as the wrong path.

## 17. Fundamental Pledges

*de la gzhi yi dam tshig ni  
rnam pa bzhir ni shes bya ste<sup>189</sup>*

*yang dag lta dang ldan pa dang  
dkon mchog gsum po mi spong dang  
byang chub sems dang ldan pa dang  
dbang bskur yang dag mi spong ba'o*

<sup>184</sup> *sgrub* C D G G<sub>1</sub> M N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *bsgrub* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub>

<sup>185</sup> The lemmata extracted from the commentaries (C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>) read it as follows: 'da' bar yang mi nus.

<sup>186</sup> *bas* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N P ] *ba* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>187</sup> *brdzun* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub> ] *rdzun* G N P

<sup>188</sup> I translate *tha snyad* in the sense of 'business' or 'normal practice' (*vyavahāra*), even though one could also take it to mean 'metaphor' or 'convention'.

<sup>189</sup> *shes bya ste* C D G G<sub>1</sub> M N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *shes par bya* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub>

As for the foundational pledges: they should be known as four: (1) to have the right view, (2) not to forsake the Three Jewels, (3) to be endowed with a *bodhicitta*, (4) not to forsake the correct tantric initiation.

### 18. Ancillary Pledges

*de la yan lag dam tshig ni  
bzhi po de la brten pa yis  
thun mong thun mong ma yin pa'i  
bye brag lhag pa thams cad<sup>190</sup> do*

The ancillary pledges are all additional types, which can be grouped as common and uncommon by relying on those four [foundational pledges described above].

### 19. Rules concerning the Rituals

*cho ga'i bya ba rnam nges ni  
yang dag lta sogs gsum ldan zhing<sup>191</sup>  
bla ma mnyes byed bslab la gus  
dus gsum lha mchod klog 'don zlos<sup>192</sup>*

*rnam thar sgo gsum la gzhol zhing  
dmigs pa gcig la brtan<sup>193</sup> par bya  
byang chub sems dpa'<sup>194</sup> rab byung bas  
rang gi 'dul dang cho ga las  
ma 'das par ni 'bad pa yis*

*sngags<sup>195</sup> kyi dngos grub la reg bya  
khyim par gyur pa'i sngags pa yis  
rab tu byung ba'i sngags pa dag  
bdag gi slob mar gyur pa na  
rkang pa bkru dang phyag la sogs<sup>196</sup>  
nam yang bdag gir mi bya 'o  
rtag tu rab tu byung ba la*

<sup>190</sup> *cad* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> N M M<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *ca* N<sub>1</sub> (*dbu med* convention)

<sup>191</sup> *sogs gsum ldan shing* ] C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P ] *sogs ldan shing* P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>192</sup> *zlos* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N P ] *bzlos* G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>193</sup> *brtan* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N P P<sub>1</sub> ] *brten* N<sub>1</sub>

<sup>194</sup> *chub sems dpa'* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P ] *chub sems dpar* G<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>

<sup>195</sup> *sngags* C C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *sngkas* D

<sup>196</sup> *sogs* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *sog* N

*shA kya'i dbang po ltar 'dzin pas  
gus pas bsnyen bkur<sup>197</sup> bya ba yin  
sang s rgyas bstan pa rin chen sgron  
'bar ba'i snod ni dka' thub can*

*ngur smrig 'dzin pa shA kya'i sras  
dge slong rnams ni yin phyir<sup>198</sup> ro*

As for the prescription of the ritual duties [these are as follows]: (1) to be endowed with the three, the right view, etc. (2) gratifying the *guru* [and] devotion to learning, (3) worship of the deity, three times a day, (3) reading, recitation, and repetition of the *mantras*. Mounting the three doors of liberation, he should become established in one-pointed concentration on the object of perception.

The *bodhisattva* who is a monk: if he is diligent in not trespassing his own discipline and ritual, he will obtain the *mantrasiddhi*.

[As for] the householder who is a *mantrin*: if the monastic *mantrin* becomes his disciple, he shall never allow him wash his feet and bow down to him, etc. [in public]. Those who have left home, [i.e. monastics] should be treated with respect as if they were the Lord Śākyamuni [himself] because the monks who are the sons of Śākyā and who wear saffron robes [and] the one who earnestly strives, are the very vessel for the jewel-lamp that are the teachings of the Buddha.

## 20. Dedication of Merit

*de ltar dgongs pa can gyi gsung<sup>199</sup>  
dgongs bcas dgongs min ji lta bar*

*mdor bsdu bsdag gis bris pa las<sup>200</sup>  
ston ka'i zla ba ltar dkar ba'i  
dge ba cung zhig gang thob des  
'gro bas ma nor lam rtogs<sup>201</sup> shog*

*ma nor rgyud kyi don brten<sup>202</sup> nas  
blo chung rnams phyir bris pa la  
tshig dang don la 'khrul pa dag  
mkhas pa rnams kyi bzod par mdzod*

In such a way, I have written concerning intentional speech [distinguishing between] intentional and non-intentional [meaning] accordingly. May the beings

<sup>197</sup> *bkur* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N P P<sub>1</sub> ] *bskur* N<sub>1</sub>

<sup>198</sup> *phyir* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> ] *phyi* N (*dbu med* convention)

<sup>199</sup> *gsung* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N P P<sub>1</sub> ] *gsungs* N<sub>1</sub>

<sup>200</sup> The lemmata from the commentaries (C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> G<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> P<sub>1</sub>) give the following version of this line:  
*bsdus nas bsdag gis bris pa las*

<sup>201</sup> *rtogs* C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> N P P<sub>1</sub> ] *rtog* N<sub>1</sub>

<sup>202</sup> *brten* C D G<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> M P<sub>1</sub> ] *bstan* G N P, *brtan* C<sub>1</sub> D<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub>

attain the path which is without error, by means of whatever little merit, which is as white as an autumn moon, I have obtained from writing [this treatise] in a condensed form. I have written it for the sake of small-minded people, having relied on the meaning of the unmistakable tantras. May the wise ones forgive errors regarding the word and the meaning.

gsang sngags la 'jug pa'i rab tu byed pa drug cu pa slob dpon dznyA na A ka ras mdzod pa rdzogs<sup>203</sup> so/ pa NDi ta dznyA na A ka ra nyid dang/ lo tsa ba dge slong tshul khriims rgyal bas bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o//

The exposition of the Introduction to the [Path of] Mantra in sixty verses has been completed by *ācārya* Jñānākara. Paṇḍita Jñānākara himself and *lotsāwa*-monk Tshul khriims rgyal ba (Nag tsho lotsāwa) translated, revised and edited the final version.

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<sup>203</sup> rdzogs C C<sub>1</sub> D D<sub>1</sub> G G<sub>1</sub> M M<sub>1</sub> P P<sub>1</sub> | rdzog N N<sub>1</sub>

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