The Author

Born in Degé, Eastern Tibet, in 1938, Namkhai Norbu was recognized at the age of three as the reincarnation of a previous great master of Dzogchen. He then received the full traditional education of a ‘Tulku’ or reincarnate Lama. Beyond his academic studies, he received teaching from and practised with several great masters in Tibet, before political events made it necessary for him to leave for India. When he was in India, Professor G. Tucci invited him to go to Rome to help with research at the Oriental Institute there. He subsequently took up his present post as Professor of Tibetan and Mongolian Language and Literature at the Oriental Institute, University of Naples. In addition to his work at the University, he travels extensively in response to the many requests he receives to give Dzogchen teachings at retreats and seminars all over the world.

Photo by Lissa Stutchbury
Rigbai Kujuyg
The Six Vajra Verses
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Editor’s Notes

Dzogchen, or Atiyoga, is one of the most ancient teachings in the world. It is usually regarded as the culmination of the philosophy and meditation practice in the Buddhist teaching. In the past few years during the Christmas period, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has been holding teaching retreats in Merigar, Arcidosso, Italy, and giving Dzogchen teachings to people from all over the world. In the 1985 Christmas retreat he spent many days explaining the original Dzogchen text, the *Six Vajra Verses*, also known as the *Rigbai Kujuyüg* (*rig.pai. khu.byug*), ‘The Cuckoo’s Cry of the State of Presence.’ This is the first time that Norbu Rinpoche gave a complete oral commentary to this text in a public retreat in the west. In the hope that more people may benefit from his explanation, I embarked on editing the transcript in such a way that the teaching is presented in three sections: an introduction and translation of the text, a concise explanation, and a long explanation, in a style similar to that of traditional Tibetan commentary books.

The compilation and edition of this book was kept to a minimum. I made little effort to change the way the teaching was originally presented, in order to preserve the direct and simple style typical of Norbu Rinpoche. All materials used in this book, except the appendix, are taken from the same retreat. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the meaning of the teaching, misrepresentation or mistakes may still remain, and are solely my responsibility.

There are a few things about this book that I want to point out. Firstly, although the layout of this book is such that the short commentary immediately follows the translation of the original text, readers unfamiliar with the Dzogchen teaching might find the explanation in the short commentary too condensed. Readers are, therefore, recommended to proceed to the
long commentary after reading the General Introduction, before returning to the short commentary for a summary.

The *Six Vajra Verses* can be divided into three parts of two verses, each explaining the base, the path and the fruit of the Dzogchen teaching, although ultimately when one fully understands what Dzogchen is, all three are one and the same thing: our *primordial state*, the real condition *as it is*. Because of the integral nature of the subject, it is practically impossible to use arbitrary divisions for the explanation of the different aspects of the teaching. As a result, the long commentary is mostly continuous, without sub-divisions. I have left it to the readers to find out the different aspects of Dzogchen teaching for themselves, providing only brief indications at the top of the pages.

The fundamental considerations in all Buddhist teachings, the refuge, Guru Yoga and the Samaya, or the vows, are highlighted in a special subsection in the commentary of the middle two verses. In the same chapter, there is another subsection on the practice. I hope that the Dzogchen teaching can thus be more clearly understood in the context of other Buddhist traditions, and the practice in the *Six Vajra Verses* more easily approached.

Readers unfamiliar with common Tibetan Buddhist terms, or indeed with Buddhism at all, may find the numerous appearance of Tibetan words discouraging. This frequent use of Tibetan has intentionally been preserved from the original talks. This is because many Tibetan words do not have an equivalent in the western language. Norbu Rinpoche always encourages his students, instead of coining long adjective ridden phrases, to try to fully understand the meaning of the Tibetan terms he uses, in order to avoid misunderstanding through intellectual conjecture. In most cases, an approximate western term is given immediately after the Tibetan words to guide the readers along. A glossary is provided at the end of the book.

The transcription system for the Tibetan word used in this book is that Norbu Rinpoche has developed and used for many
years in Italy, where he is Professor of Tibetan Language and Cultural History and Mongolian Language at the Instituto Orientale of the University of Naples. The Tibetan words are followed by the Wylie romanization where they first occur. This system is adopted to provide conformity with other books by Norbu Rinpoche. A guide to this pronunciation system can be found after the glossary.

The realization of this book has the full support of the Dzogchen Community in U.K. and Singapore. In particular, Judith Allen, Julia Smith and Brian Beresford provided many suggestions and stimulating inputs; Gabrielle Kearney transcribed a large part of the teachings; Mario Franchini and Carola Beresford-Cooke helped clarify points in the translation from Italian to English done alternately by Desmond Barry, Andy Lukianowicz and John Shane in Merigar; John Reynolds translated the Tibetan into English; Cristiana de Falco checked the spelling of the Tibetan and Sanskrit words; and Nina Robinson and Carola Beresford-Cooke proof read the final edition.

May all beings benefit from this book!

Cheh Ngee Goh
Bristol, U.K.
December 1989
Chapter 1

General Introduction

1.1 The Importance of the Text

The Rigbai Kujyûg (rig.pai. khu.byug.), or the Six Vajra Verses, is a synthesis of the Dzogchen teaching. These verses contain only a few words and there is a practice to go with them. Some of the original teachings which Garab Dórje\textsuperscript{1} taught and transmitted are a kind of quotation, or summary of the various Tantra of Dzogchen in a few words called the luñ (lung.). Some of these are a summary of the entire teachings, and the Six Vajra Verses is one of these principal Tantra.

The vajra is used to symbolize what is called the primordial state. The Song of the Vajra\textsuperscript{2}, for example, is a song which explains and transmits the knowledge of the primordial state. Similarly, the Six Vajra Verses is a synthesis and an explanation of this primordial state once you understand its meaning. It


represents the totality of the Dzogchen teaching, and there is a way of understanding it through practice and through developing one's knowledge. However, it will not have much significance for you if you just read it as dry words. When you know the meaning very precisely then the words become a key to understanding and applying the teaching.

Naturally enough, not only the Six Vajra Verses but many texts are like this. Sometimes people who are interested in the teaching follow a master; do some practice, learn some techniques, and they are very satisfied. As a result, in more recent traditions of the teaching, the original meaning of the texts is somewhat obscured when the disciples simply follow a method of practice that a particular master has taught. Certainly it is important to receive these methods from a master—this is called the Upadesa\(^3\). But you cannot just follow a method from a master without any base. The base means the principle of the teaching that you are following. The teaching is not like psychology where everyone has their own favourite method and applies it as they like. The teaching is connected to the primordial state. This knowledge is beyond our judgement and cannot be invented by mental reasoning. If we stay just at the level of reasoning and judgement, then we cannot find it corresponding with anything.

It all depends on the dava (Ita.ba.), the ‘view,’ or the ‘way of seeing.’ Usually we use our eyes to look outwards at an object in order to analyse it. In Dzogchen the approach is different. In the dava of Dzogchen we have to understand the difference between a mirror and a pair of glasses. When we look into a mirror, it reflects our existence and our condition. If we have a very good pair of glasses or binoculars, even if we can see very far away and discover many different details, we are still looking outwards. So, this is the principle: knowing the difference between looking outwards dualistically and observing oneself in

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\(^3\) The Secret Instruction series of Dzogchen teachings. See appendix, pp 120.
order to discover one's own condition. In Dzogchen, whether we refer to the way of seeing or to practices, the principle is always to discover ourselves. Those people who concretely have this knowledge transmitted all the complicated methods to us so that we can discover ourselves.

We believe that doing practice leads to something called realization. It means that the knowledge of realization was transmitted by someone who possessed it, such as Gárab Dórje, or the more well known masters like Padmasambhava and Vimālamitra. The transmission has been handed down from the time of Gárab Dórje right up to the present day. Not only the knowledge, but also the texts connected to it, like the Six Vajra Verses, have been transmitted throughout the ages. Even though you are interested in Dzogchen, you may not have the chance to study the original Dzogchen texts of which there are sixty or seventy volumes. Through your practice and your knowledge, it is much easier to understand a tiny and precise text like the Six Vajra Verses. For this reason I will try to give a little explanation.

1.2 Historic Note

The Six Vajra Verses is called the Rigbai Kuḻyūg, which, in my opinion, was probably a name given by Vairocana because this is not the original title. It is said that when Vairocana, at the time of Padmasambhava, or king Trisoñ Dézan (khri.srong.lde.brtsan.) went to Oḍḍyāna and met the master Śrīśimha, he had great difficulties bringing the texts into Tibet, and it is said that he had to conceal these texts by writing with goat's milk on a white piece of cotton cloth. The Six Vajra Verses is the first text he introduced.

There are about twelve to fifteen volumes of semdé texts,
but not all of them are original texts. Many were added a lot later. Very few were actually brought into Tibet by Vairocana. It is not difficult to see the reason: if you are going to write on a piece of cotton with goat's milk, how are you going to include twelve volumes? There is another text of some thirty to forty pages, also called the *Rigbai Kujyūg*. This is a Dzogchen Tantra and many people think that this is what Vairocana introduced originally. But the truth is that the fundamental part of the *Rigbai Kujyūg* has only these six verses.

Many people say that Dzogchen is not really an authentic teaching, but is a bit mixed up with something like the Chinese *Ch‘n*. Some say that Dzogchen has arisen only very recently. But they are ignoring the existence of the large number of Dzogchen texts. We need not argue about that, because the principle of Dzogchen teaching is not about discussions with other schools; it is only concerned with knowledge. Nonetheless, nowadays there is something to be known historically.

Situated in the north-east of Tibet near Amdo at the border with China is Tun Huang. There used to be a huge library there in ancient times. All the important texts during and after the time of Trisōn Dézän were kept there. For centuries they remained under the sand, which was blown down from Xin Jiang and Amdo. Recently this place was rediscovered and westerners have gone to that area. Many of these documents were brought back to the west, and they can now be found in London and Paris. They became the famous Tun Huang documents, and all scholars consider texts from Tun Huang to be very important and authentic. The *Rigbai Kujyūg*, as well as a commentary on it, probably by Vairocana, has also been found among these documents. Now nobody can say that Dzogchen is not authentic or is not an ancient teaching.
1.3 The Meaning of the Title

When Vairocana introduced the Six Vajra Verses into Tibet he called them the *Rigbai Kuṭyūg, Cuckoo’s Cry of the State of Presence*. The full title is *draxisbai bal rigbai kuṭyūg* (*bkra.shis.pai. dpal. rig.pai. khu.byug.*). *Draxisbai* means a good luck charm, *bal* means glory. *Rigba* is the state of knowledge, the presence of the pure state of awareness. *Kuṭyūg* is the cuckoo. In Tibet the cuckoo is a symbol that nature is beginning to breathe again after the cold winter. When the cuckoo sings everybody is happy because finally the ice and the snow of winter are beginning to melt. Spring arrives and plants begin to grow. Poor thin animals like yaks and horses which had very little to eat in the snow are now certain that they will not die. Tibetans who have not heard the cuckoo will go to the mountains to look for one. It has to do with Tibetan psychology. There is even a name for a person who has not heard the cuckoo for a long time, called *jyahön* (*bya.'on*), given to those who are ‘deaf to the cuckoo,’ who have illnesses such as low blood pressure. Such a person is actually asked to go in search of a cuckoo to hear it earlier. Surely it is not the voice of the cuckoo that serves the medical purpose. Because of the symbolic meaning of the cuckoo, Vairocana used it in the title for this text.

Before Vairocana introduced the *Rigbai Kuṭyūg* into Tibet there was not any particular Dzogchen teaching of Atiyoga⁶. Padmasambhava had introduced and given some Dzogchen teaching but all in the context of Anuyoga⁷. In order to introduce Dzogchen, or Atiyoga, into Tibet, Padmasambhava sent Vairocana to India to meet his master Śrīśīṃha and Vimalamitra to get the teaching. The *Rigbai Kuṭyūg* is the first Dzogchen text that was transmitted, introduced and translated in Tibet. That is why it is a very important text.

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⁶See appendix, pp 118.
⁷See appendix, pp 115.
Introduction To Dzogchen

What is Dzogchen? Truly speaking, Dzogchen is our condition. When we get together to do a retreat, what I explain throughout is the understanding of our own condition. Even if I explain it in different ways, that which we call Dzogchen, the Great Perfection, is our own condition. If you understand this, then there is a real basis for development. When we lack this knowledge, it is called marigba (ma.rig.pa.), 'ignorance.'

In Dzogchen, ignorance is not what we normally mean by ignorance. Ignorance generally implies a poor education. In the Dzogchen teaching, a well educated person can be ignorant, whereas a person with no education need not be ignorant. We are not denying the value of education, or implying that it is the basis of ignorance. If we know how to use education, it can be very useful. But usually it is an obstacle.

Take a person who is rather single minded about oriental philosophy, for example. Why is he so fixed on it? It is because western philosophy does not quite relate to his situation and has not satisfied him. As a result, he wants to go deeper into something else even though this still involves study and
mental analysis. This person may say that he agrees with what Buddha or Nāgārjuna said, or he may say that things seem to make more sense than in western philosophy. But that is just a mental decision to believe in a certain way of seeing. This kind of people want to get into Buddhism, Hinduism or Confucian thought, already convinced about what they have to study in oriental philosophy. Day by day they develop and deepen this conviction, and feel “rich in knowledge,” but in fact they have conditioned themselves with their ideology. If a person is convinced by everything Nāgārjuna said in Buddhist philosophy, then that person actually has become a perfect slave to Nāgārjuna’s ideology. It means he will disagree with other Buddhist schools, or with Hindu philosophy. It might seem marvellous, but it is false, because any view constructed through study and ideology can just collapse.

In Dzogchen you should not construct anything false. You have to understand the real condition and what you are doing. If we speak of dava, the way of seeing, we mean discovering what really is. Generally, dava is referred to by various schools as the way the philosophy of their particular school is explained. For example, in the Mahāyāna\(^1\) the way of seeing of Nāgārjuna is considered perfect. Someone who has learnt it will tend to criticize the views which disagree with what Nāgārjuna taught. If someone is more inclined towards the źiṅma (Nyingma, \(rNy-ing.ma\).) tradition, he will try to learn what Lōṅqenba\(^2\) taught. If people criticize źiṅmaba, he will use the text by Lōṅqenba to defend it. That is what is normally meant by dava, the way of seeing.

The way of seeing in Dzogchen, however, is not about looking outside and judging. What is involved in Dzogchen is to find oneself in the state of knowledge. Above all we use the example of a mirror and glasses. Glasses are for looking outwards at external objects, an example of dualism. The principle in Dzogchen is

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\(^1\)See appendix, pp 98.
\(^2\)Longchenpa, \(kLong.chen.pa\), (1308-1363)
the mirror: we should look at it to discover ourselves.

When you decide to follow a master, you should not blindly believe everything he says. A master is not a special commander whose every word you jump to, saying, “Yes sir!” Nor should you go to a master simply to argue. It is a mistake to enter into discussion with a master for the sake of discussion because it is just another mental reasoning. We have been using the intellect since time immemorial and have resolved nothing. We are not going to stop the process of transmigration by further reasoning. The point is that you have to try to understand what the master is trying to explain. The master is not making more mental construction for you. He is simply trying to give you a method to discover yourself. It is then up to you to try to understand and apply the method. Naturally, a master can give many different kinds of advice, methods and practices to help you to arrive at the knowledge, but he definitely cannot do a miracle to change you and give you instant enlightenment. Many people feel that they have been following different kinds of teachers for years and have not resolved anything. They hear of another master, so they rush there, hoping that they can now finally be enlightened. But no master can ever do this. The power of a master lies in his ability to explain the teachings. When a person has received the method, applied it, and truly entered into the state of knowledge, then the master has really performed a miracle.

Sometimes, however, it is difficult for the master to do this, because a disciple also has to have a certain capacity. For example, when I was in Nepal, many sherpas came to me to offer rice, money and white scarves called gadāg (kha.Ｂtags.). They received some blessings and left without asking for any teaching. I knew that they could benefit from understanding some teachings, but what could I do if they were not interested? People come passively, thinking, “Wow, this master is a great reincarnation, I should create a good cause and a good relationship

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3Tibetans offer a white scarf to show respect.
by offering some rice or money. I shall go to get some blessing and everything will be alright.” Certainly one can establish a good cause by making an offering, but a good cause can also be made by a dog or a cat. When a human being, who can speak, can reason, and has higher capacity than a dog, comes only for that, it is very sad. You must not be passive in this way. You must know that what a master teaches is for one to understand and apply in practice. There is a very famous saying of Buddha Śākyamuni, “I give you the way, but realization depends on you.” Even the Buddha, who is fully enlightened with all possible capacities, omniscient and possessing infinite compassion for the suffering of all beings, could not illuminate us. If he could only give the teaching and practice, how can anyone else do any better?

Generally the teaching is summed up in terms of the three principles: the base, the path and the fruit. This is characteristic not only of the Dzogchen teaching, but also of the Buddhist Sūtra and Tantra. In the Buddhist Sūtra, it is said that the base is the understanding of the two truths: the absolute truth and the relative truth. With this base it is said that there are two accumulations, the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom on the path. The accumulation of merit is related to the relative truth on the relative level of our body, speech and mind. For the body, this means doing positive actions such as prostrations; for the voice, reciting mantra, praying and avoiding negative actions like insulting and provoking people; and for the mind, cultivating compassion and avoiding negative thoughts such as hatred. In this way, we accumulate merit linked to the three aspects of our existence. The result of doing this is the elimination of obstacles and it helps one on the path of wisdom. That is also why, in the Tantric practice, one does the ｎोद्रो (sngon.'gro.), or ‘preliminary practices,’ in order to overcome obstacles and to purify oneself. One can then enter into the practice of meditation and contemplation, the path of wisdom. In the Sūtra, the main method is to follow the path of accumula-
tion of good actions and purification, before arriving at the path of wisdom. However, the Sūtra does not consider the accumulation of merit the more important of the two. It only implies that, without the accumulation of merit, it is not easy for a person to enter into the path of wisdom and progress in it. Buddha said in the Sūtra, "I have found a luminous path which is beyond explanation and concept. When I try to explain it, nobody understands." Why did nobody understand it? Because the experience of the path of wisdom is beyond explanation. In despair the Buddha said, "I am going into the forest to meditate."

In the Dzogchen teaching, there is an invocation in which it says that to explain this meaning, even the Buddha’s tongue is very weak. It does not mean that the Buddha did not have a perfect way of communication because the Sūtra mentions that the Buddha possesses sixty qualifications of voice. Rather, it means that this experience is beyond the relative level, and even the Buddha does not have a way of explaining it.

When it comes to the absolute truth in the Sūtra, the way of application is called the way of wisdom. For example, in the Chinese Ch’n or the Japanese Zen Buddhism, the emphasis is less on the accumulation of merit, but more on going directly to the path of wisdom, of understanding the absolute truth. That is why there are the so-called gradual path and the non-gradual path. We can enter the path of wisdom either gradually by first of all accumulating merit and doing purification practice, or non-gradually, directly entering the path of wisdom.

Whether one follows the gradual or non-gradual path, one always talks about the fruit, the result of the practice. The fruit in both cases is total realization and illumination. In Buddhism, we often refer to the dimensions of enlightenment as kāya. Kāya means ‘dimension,’ the condition that is, all of existence. It is not ‘body’ as is usually understood. We often talk about the two or three ‘bodies,’ as if there are different Buddhas who gained enlightenment in different ways. The fact is that each one of us has the essence of the Buddha, the different kāya, or dimensions,
within ourselves. It is because of our ignorance that we fail to understand this. That is why we need the explanation of the base and the path.

In the Sūtra, we usually talk about two dimensions, or the two manifestations. In Sanskrit they are called the Dharmakāya and the Rupākāya. Dharma means existence, the knowledge and the understanding of existence, and it is also the path. If there is something to be understood, then there is a way of understanding and that is the path. Buddha enabled people to understand what existence is. We ourselves are existence. This is the knowledge Buddha taught. That is what Dharma refers to, and it is not some kind of limited religion. Dharmakāya, therefore, refers to the dimension of the understanding of existence.

Rupā means form, and Rupākāya refers to the enlightened dimension of form. In Tantrism, Rupākāya is subdivided into Sambhogakāya and Nirmāṇakāya, because there can be two kinds of form, pure and impure. Enlightened beings who manifest through light are said to be a pure vision. Ordinary beings manifest as human, dog, cat, ant and so on physically as a result of karma, and are considered to be an impure vision. When we talk about Rupākāya, there is no such distinction. It can be the first or the second kind of vision.

What does it mean, that an enlightened being has the form of a human or an animal? There are two very distinct principles here: a being who freely chooses to take a physical form, such as a human being, and a being who takes it on account of karma. If Buddha manifests as an elephant in order to teach elephants, then that elephant and the normal elephant are very different, because Buddha was not obliged to take that form as a result of his past karma. Nonetheless he manifests that way through his own will, whereas other beings take the form of an elephant and that becomes a karmic vision just like any other beings. Buddha voluntarily takes on this form, that is why an enlightened being can appear on the level of impure vision of Rupākāya. In the Sūtra, because the base is explained in terms of the two truths,
there are the two accumulations on the path, and in the fruit there are the manifestation of Dharmakāya and Rupākāya the two dimensions.

Likewise in Tantrism, there is also the base, the path and the fruit. The principle of Tantric teaching is based on the two forces of the masculine and the feminine, or the lunar and the solar. That is why Tantra is taught and explained through the manifestation of energy. This principle is based on \( e \) (\( e. \)) and \( wam \) (\( wam. \)), which is emptiness and manifestation. These are respectively called \textit{tab} (\textit{thabs.}), ‘method,’ and \textit{zesrab} (\textit{shes.rab.}), ‘wisdom.’

How does one enter into this understanding and knowledge, and how does one develop it? In the path, there are two ways of application: \textit{gyedrim} (\textit{bskyed.rim.}), ‘development stage,’ and \textit{zógrim} (\textit{rdzogs.rim}), ‘completion stage,’ and the fruit can be explained, in the same way as in the Sūtra, with the two dimensions. In Tantrism, one can also explain the base with the ‘three vajra,’ which comprise the true state of existence of our body, voice and mind. In terms of the path, there are the solar and lunar forces, which are represented by \textit{gyedrim} and \textit{zógrim}, and \textit{sūnjüg} (\textit{zung.'jug.}), which is the union of the two. When one finally speaks of the fruit, one speaks of Dharma-kāya, Saṃbho-gakāya and Nirmāṇa-kāya, the three dimensions.

Some types of Tantrism are based on our five aggregates. In terms of the path, we use our five passions and transform them, so that they manifest as the five wisdoms. Finally these manifest as the five dimensions of illumination: the usual three and the addition of \textit{ñoovoñidgi gu} (\textit{ngo.bo.nyid.kyi sku}), or Svabhāvavākāya, which is the dimension of the existence of the union of the first three dimensions, and \textit{dórjéi gu} (\textit{rdo.rjei. sku.}), or Vajra-kāya, which is the dimension of the \textit{vajra}, representing the state manifested as the integration with the manifestation. In Tantrism, therefore, there are many different ways of explaining the base, the path and the fruit. We can understand from these examples that these three principles are present in Sūtra and
Tantra as well as in Dzogchen.

Dzogchen is the way of self-liberation. In this case the base is every individual, his primordial state. For those who are more in touch with the Sutra, we speak of the essence of the tathāgata. If we are more familiar with Tantrism, we speak of the vajra. For example, many people speak of semba dörjé (sems.dpa’ rdo.rje), 'the vajra of the mind,' or of the more encompassing name ‘the nature of mind.’ In Dzogchen we speak of the ‘primordial state,’ and we also use many other names to represent it. The very name zögqen (Dzogchen, rdzogs.chen.) itself means the base. Zög (rdzogs.) means ‘perfected,’ implying that nothing is missing and everything is included. Qen (chen.), which usually means ‘great’ or ‘large,’ here means total. Dzogchen means that in this primordial state, nothing is lacking, everything is perfect.

Regardless of the name we call it, however, there always exists a transmission from the master to open that state of knowledge in the individual. This does not mean that something miraculous happens and everything becomes fine. Rather, it is a state of knowledge that has to be made real, or in other words, realized. Many different types of methods exist for this purpose, so the master explains and transmits the knowledge and the methods, collaborates with individuals in order to help them.

Many people wonder why you have to follow a master if you want to follow the Dzogchen teachings? Why is it not enough to read a book which explains everything properly? It is not that a book has no value, but it depends very much on the person. We always think that people who follow the Dzogchen teaching have a good and precise cause to bring them there, otherwise they certainly would not meet the teaching. If a person does not have that precise cause, but nevertheless has a certain awakened quality, reading a book might be very useful. Ideally one should try to follow a master, because the master has the living transmission which has been handed down from the source of the teaching. He can use this transmission to work with the
individual at the level of body, voice and mind. That is why it is much easier for that individual to find himself in the state of knowledge, and he is no longer confused. In Tibetan we say that the person is no longer like a little dog in the fog who does not know where to go. The master also knows how to develop and to continue the application of knowledge using many different methods according to the needs of individuals. That is why one can do many things together with a master.

The Dzogchen teaching is a living knowledge which is transmitted and applied. It is not a specialist instrument for spirituality. The teaching is useful for those who want to go on living. If somebody has more faith in it, it is even more useful. For those who do not believe in anything and think that there is nothing after death, they might feel like having a more peaceful life. To find real tranquillity, you must have experience of the state of knowledge and know how to relax. When you discover the real condition for yourself and actually find yourself in this condition, you finally discover the real meaning of relaxation. Until then, even if you think you are relaxed, it is still a construction of the mind.

We always use this word ‘relax.’ It is very easy to say, “Relax, relax. Do not get uptight!” But most people do not understand how to relax at all. Some people know how to relax the body a little by lying down on the bed. Others may know how to relax the energy of the body by doing some breathing exercises. But these are relative ways of relaxing, because this kind of relaxation is at the relative level linked to time, and time is linked to secondary conditions.

Now I am relaxed. Everyone comes to me and says, “Happy Christmas.” They bring me cakes or presents. Why should I get uptight? The circumstances are very positive. But tomorrow it might begin to snow. Maybe I shall not even be able to walk. Someone may come up to me and, instead of giving me presents, get into an argument with me. Certainly in those circumstances, it is more difficult to relax. Conditions in the relative level are
connected to time, so everything changes. You may be able to relax your body, speech and mind, but it will still always be provisional. That is why the teaching is necessary.

Buddha explained that saṃsāra is characterised by suffering. This is real, not just something to talk about. Whether we observe ourselves or others, we can see that there is always suffering. Whoever does not know how to relax will get even more uptight when a problem arises. We know that when we are in a hurry, we get wound up, and nothing gets done. Some people get up late in the morning and have to go to the office. Since they are late, they are rushing. They put on their trousers back to front, which they do not usually do. They do the same when they put on their vest. And then when they want to go out, they cannot find their keys. Everybody has such experiences. It shows that when we have problems, we are charged up, and simple things become complicated. You might intellectually learn that, “I must not get charged up. I must relax!” But it is not so easy. You need a certain knowledge which is applicable, and that needs a basis. We could say that the Dzogchen teaching is a way of relaxing totally. Therefore you can understand why the learning, application and practice of Dzogchen is indispensable for every individual.
Vairocana giving Lóndé instruction to Bañ Mipam Gönbo by Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche.
Padmasambhava giving teachings to two disciples
by Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche.
The Six Vajra Verses

Nàcog rañzin miñis yañ
(sna.tshogs. rang.bzhin. mi.gnyis.kyang.)
Qaxas ŋiddu dros dãñ drãł
(cha.shas. nyid.du. spros. dang. bral.)
Jĩxĩnva xêš midog yañ
(ji.bzhin.ba. zhes. mi.rtog. kyang.)
Nãmbar nañzãd gundusãñ
(rnam.par. snang.mdzad. kun.tu. bzang.)
Sĩnbas zolvai nad banñde
(zin.pas. rtsol.bai. nad. spangs.te.)
Lhungis násbas zágba yìn
(lhun.gyis. gnas.pas. bzhag.pa. yìn.)

Even though the nature of diversity is non-dual,
In terms of individual things, it is free of conceptual elaborations (made by mind).
Even though there is no thought of what is called 'just as it is,'
These various appearances which are created are ultimately good (transcending relative good and evil).
Since everything is complete in itself, abandoning the illness of efforts,
One remains effortlessly with presence in the state of Contemplation.

Translation by John Reynolds
The Six Vajra Verses. Calligraphy by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
Chapter 3

Short Commentary

The *Rigbai Kujyūg*, like all Dzogchen teachings, is to enable us to have a deeper understanding of our own situation. When we approach the teaching, we should not regard it as an external object to look at. Rather, we have to look into ourselves, because the teaching is for reflecting our own condition. There are three principles in the teaching, called *xi* (*gzhi.*), *lam* (*lam.*) and *drasbu* (*’bras.bu.*), the base, the path and the fruit. These three principles apply to all levels of teaching.

The first of these three is known as the base. People tend to explain the base as a kind of origin from which different things arise. But it does not matter what term is used. Even if you know many different terms, so long as you have not really understood what the base means, you are still very far from the meaning of the teaching. The real base is ourselves. How we can begin to approach this understanding, and when we have the understanding, develop it? That is what we call the path. The path is the method by which we can develop ourselves until we arrive at what is called *realization*. When we have a certain state of knowledge which is not just a word or an idea but is something real, we call that the fruit. If you want to know what the path and the fruit are, you must first understand what the base is, otherwise you do not have a place to begin. It is like a
house, which must have a foundation, otherwise it will collapse. In order to understand our base, we have to observe our own condition a little.

In the Buddhist Sūtra, they also use the terms base, path and fruit. There, they speak of the famous two truths, the relative and the absolute truth. In the Dzogchen teaching, we do not speak so much of the two truths. But if you have an understanding of the two truths, you can easily understand what is meant by the base in Dzogchen.

When we speak of our existence, we can refer to the mind and the nature of the mind. It is not necessary to define one as the relative and the other as the absolute. What we call the nature of the mind is the condition of things as they are. But it is not possible to understand this condition if we do not really know our situation. When we speak about the capacity of a mirror, we refer to its capacity to reflect with clarity, purity and limpidity. These terms are there just to give us an idea; if we did not know what a mirror was, how could we understand clarity, purity and limpidity? The same is true of our existence of body, speech and mind. An intellectual understanding is not enough. What we need is a real knowledge.

Knowing things at an intellectual level is not very difficult. Whether a person has intellectual or real knowledge depends on whether what the person understands corresponds to reality. Take someone who has studied many Buddhist Sūtra. Such a person would have some understanding of the term śūnyatā, or voidness. There are many ways to understand this term. One way, for example, is by examining an object. Through a mental process you dissolve the object into its atoms and thus into voidness. That object still has not really turned into nothing. But, if you carry out this intellectual process, at a certain point, you arrive at something called nañdoñ (snang.stong.). The mind will then spontaneously enter into the state of voidness. That is what we mean by an actual experience of what was previously an intellectual understanding. You can follow this experience with
an explanation of how the entire material world is an illusion. If that which appears has no actual substance, then what is there other than illusion? Certainly we understand this intellectually. Even if we know everything is illusory, in practice, due to our attachment, things seem real to us. When you have a heavy headache, you can tell yourself that the headache is illusory. If by just thinking in that way you can get rid of the headache, you can say that your knowledge really corresponds to reality. Otherwise it means that your knowledge remains at the intellectual level. That is why, first of all, we must have a genuine understanding.

Of the three fundamental aspects of the teachings, the base, the path and the fruit, related to the path is dava, which is the way of seeing, gômba (sgom.pa.), which is the way of practice, and jyodba (spyod.pa.), which is the attitude, conduct or behaviour, and refers to how we integrate our practice with whatever it is we are doing. The Rigbai Kuṇyūg is divided into three parts of two verses, corresponding to the three aspects of the base, the path and the fruit.

3.1 First Two Verses

*Nàcog raïzîn miñîs yañ;*  
*Qaxas ŋiddu dros dâñ drâl.*

*Even though the nature of diversity is non-dual,*  
*In terms of individual things, it is free of conceptual elaborations (made by mind).*

*Nàcog* means diversity. It means that many things can arise at the level of appearance. In our human vision, we see many things, each one is distinguishable from another. For example, if we see two people, we see two different people. A single person alone is made up of all the different parts like the nose, the ears, the eyes, the hair etc. Whatever is distinct or diverse in our vision is called *nàcog*. 
We usually talk about three types of vision. The first is called lasnān (las.snang.), 'karmic vision.' For example, a normal person has a karmic vision, as a result of certain causes which are produced by our passions. The next type of vision is ēmnnān (nyams.snang.), the 'vision of practitioners on the path.' When we relax our body, voice and mind as well as our elements, we have ēm (nyams.), 'experience in practice.' Such visions arise not as a result of having purified our karma, but because when we relax our energy expands. The third one is dāgnān (dag.snang), 'pure vision.' If we have karmic vision, it is impure, and it is due to a cause. If this cause is taken away, we have pure vision. That is why we say that a realized person has pure vision. Whichever visions we have, they are all part of nācog. If we go into every single detail, then that becomes a collection of an infinite number of things.

Take our karmic vision as an example. We say that the causes of karmic vision are the five or six passions which lead to the five or six loka, or 'realms.' There are also other types of passions, such as the 84,000 mentioned in the Sūtra. Accumulating these different causes will produce the diverse corresponding effects which manifest as different karmic visions. Many of these visions are even unknown to us, because we are human beings and we can only speak about our condition. That is what nācog means: the many conditions that can exist.

Rañxīn means nature, the real condition of these infinite aspects that exist. Miñis means non-dual. Mi in Tibetan means negative, ūs means two. The nature of all these millions of aspects is non-dual. What does this actually mean? In the Dzogchen teaching, we do not have the consideration that "that is not dual," "there is no difference," or "all nature that exists is one." The Buddhist Sūtra speaks about the two truths. It is said that everything you see around you is part of the relative truth, and its condition is void. This real condition is the absolute truth. When one sits in lotus position with hands joined, spine straight, and is internally relaxed, one can enter into a state of
śunyatā, or voidness, and that person can be said to be in the absolute truth. When one finishes one's practice, stands up and starts walking around, we say that that condition is the relative truth. This is like having two legs, one is the relative truth and the other the absolute truth. One walks first with the leg of the relative truth, then with the leg of the absolute truth and so on. When we talk about denñis sünjüg (bden.gnyis. zung.'jug.), the union of the two truths, clearly the two legs are two separate things.

But in the Dzogchen teaching, non-dual does not mean two things united. Non-dual means that from the beginning this two truths approach does not apply. One must, therefore, discover for oneself what is the state of non-duality in all these aspects. This is very important as a way of seeing things, and as a base for understanding. When we do practice, for example, we can have millions of ŋam, or 'experiences.' But if we find ourselves in the state of contemplation of Dzogchen in our real condition, there is non-duality. We cannot say that one ŋam is the same as another and we cannot cancel or erase the different aspects of the ŋam. It does not mean that we erase or unite or do something mentally. This is a very important point indeed and one must understand it well.

If one finds oneself only in an experience, it is not a very high level of practice. If a person is all wound up with the sensation of pleasure, that is not contemplation. If one is in the state of voidness, where the voidness makes one really frightened, that is not contemplation either. Both are called experiences. Many practitioners remain in the state of experience but consider, or believe, that they are in the state of contemplation. This is called an obstacle.

If we look at the different aspects of experiences, they are different. Someone who is in an experience of pleasure and thus walks around with a smile on his face, believing that he is in the state of contemplation, and someone who is in a state of voidness and thus a little frightened, also believing that he is in
contemplation, are both in the so-called 'sleepy experience.' In the Dzogchen teaching, such experiences are not considered as contemplation. There is a big difference between a person who has a smile on his face and another who is frightened. That is called nācog. If there are a hundred people with an experience, each slightly different from the others, that is nācog.

Ranxin minis means one does not simply remain in the condition of the experience, but uses the experience as a method to find oneself in the state of contemplation. In these experiences there is a presence. It is not as if one has fainted or lost consciousness. There is somebody who remains in it. There is no difference whatsoever whether this presence is found in the experience of the person who is smiling or in the experience of the person who is frightened, even though the experiences are completely different. Miñis does not mean that two things are united, or that we think that they are the same. If we just say that the nature of those things is not real, thus they are the same, then it will remain as a mental construction. But if one goes through the diverse experiences and hence finds that the true state of presence has no difference, then the real state of nācog is one, and the presence is called rigba (rig.pa.). If we say different experiences are not equal, this is what we mean.

For someone who does not have this knowledge, the master transmits it. One follows the master in order to apply the teaching to develop this knowledge. Even if one does not have this knowledge of one's nature and the real condition, the base is always there. It is like the mirror which has the capacity to reflect whatever is in front of it, the secondary causes. That is what we call the base when we say that diverse things manifest but the inherent nature is one, called the primordial state. Yañ means however.

In the second verse we translate qaxas as 'single thing.' Qaxas means anything that is partial. Qa means 'a part of something,' xas means 'something that belongs to a group.' Nid means 'the real state of the single thing.' Dros dāñ drāl means 'beyond
consideration or judgement.’ What is the real meaning of qazas then? True knowledge is beyond the consideration of the two truths. With regard to the relative truth, we say everything manifests before us. In the Dzogchen teaching, there is another way of saying: yuldén gadāg (yul.bden. ka.dag.). Yul means ‘object,’ dén means ‘something real’ that actually appears. Gadāg means ‘pure from the very beginning.’ This is a very important point for the understanding of the Dzogchen teaching. When we look at this tent for example, it appears to all of us equally as yellow, red etc. This vision is called our common karmic vision because we are human beings. Why are we human beings? Because we have the karma. We see everything equally as a result of the same cause. But that does not mean that our cat Tigre will see things in the same way. Neither will a little bird or an insect. Therefore, vision exists in different ways. This means that a stable universal vision does not exist.

Qazas means belonging to, part of, or characteristic of all the individual things; it is the apparition of the energy of every single individual. But the apparition is considered to be pure from the beginning. Nothing exists but everything belongs to or is characteristic of our Primordial State. In this way everything manifests. When one has the knowledge as it really is, in that State, there is nothing to establish as regard to how things should be. That is why it is called dros dān drāl, beyond concept and judgement.

The conclusion of these two phrases is that apparitions of all types exist, but the apparitions, such as experiences, have a single nature which is the primordial state. When we talk about the base we refer to the three primordial wisdoms: the essence, the nature and the energy. The essence is void, the nature is clarity, and the energy is without interruption. That is how everything manifests. All appearances that manifest have the same nature, but each single thing that manifests has qazas, each appears as a separate object. For example, when we speak of energy such as zal (rtsal.), it is like a crystal at the window.
When the sunlight hits the crystal, light of five colours appears. Through the manifestation of the crystal, the light seems like an outside object. In the same way, every single thing that manifests is part of our primordial condition. When we have this understanding and knowledge we will be in a condition beyond concepts and dualistic judgement. If we enter into concept, we are nowhere near this knowledge. In the Dzogchen teachings, this ‘primordial state,’ which is simply called the base, means our condition, and is called ‘the nature of the mind’ in traditional Buddhism in general. Thus these two first verses explain that this knowledge of the base cannot be arrived at through concepts, but through practice.

3.2 Third and Fourth Verse

\[
\text{Jidzínva xēs midog yan;} \\
\text{Nambar nānzād gundusān.}
\]

Even though there is no thought of what is called ‘just as it is,’ These various appearances which are created are ultimately good (transcending relative good and evil).

Now we are explaining the path. Jidzínva means ‘as it is.’ As it is means we do not create or change anything but we leave things as they are. Dzogchen is said to be jyāzol drālva (bya.rtsol.bral.ba.), ‘without effort,’ which means without using effort to change or create anything. Dog (rtog.) means ‘thinking,’ creating something with the mind. Midog (mi.rtog.) means ‘not creating.’ Not even creating the concept called as it is because it is not by having a concept or by developing a concept that one enters into the practice of Dzogchen. For example, if somebody asks for your name and you say “I have no name,” although you really mean that you do not have a name, people will start calling you “I have no name.” This will become your name. Likewise
if we use the words ‘as it is’ and if we stick to the words, then it becomes a concept.

In the fourth line, námbar (rnam.par.) means ‘all that manifests is present,’ nothing is missing. Some people might think that if there is no concept, there is nothing—everything is annihilated, so one does not have to do anything. But in Dzogchen we do not have to create or change anything. As it is means how everything manifests. námbar means forms or colours that manifest in nācog. This vision is not interrupted and everything, as it is, continues.

For a Dzogchen practitioner, being in the state of contemplation does not mean that our impure vision suddenly disappears, transforms and reappears as pure vision. If we have a physical human body now, that means we still have a cause to be human, and thus have a human vision. We do not have to change it or get rid of it. We have to find ourselves in that understanding, in that knowledge. For example, if we know that the origin of ice is water, which comes from white light, then we would not be conditioned by the appearance of the ice. In other words, it is possible to reverse the process and go back to the origin and integrate with it. Nothing disappears and everything remains. That is what námbar nānžād means.

Usually námbar nānžād in Tibetan is translated as Vairocana, which seems to be the same as the name of Buddha Vairocana. The real meaning here is that we do not interrupt our visions. Vision means not only what we see, but refers to the perception of all our senses. Everything remains present. Gundusāñ usually means Samantabhadra, the Buddha who symbolizes the Dharmakāya. Here it is not the name of the Buddha. Gundusāñ means ‘all-good.’ There is nothing to get rid of, nothing without its value. Everything is valid and everything is perfect. If we find ourselves in the non-dual state with the apparition of thousands of things, nācog, what is wrong? There is nothing bad about it.

When we say all-good, we are not talking of good as opposed
to bad. We are very limited by our dualistic idea of good and bad. As soon as we speak of good, immediately we think of the opposite, bad, as if somewhere lurking behind there is the evil. That is not the idea. When we say good, it is not that we have got rid of all the evils. Rather, it means that it is good beyond the concept of good and bad. Dualism no longer exists. We have gone beyond dualism.

3.3 Last Two Verses

Sīnbas zolvai nad bañde;
Lhungis nāsbas xágba yin.

Since everything is complete in itself,
abandoning the illness of efforts,
One remains effortlessly with presence in
the state of Contemplation.

These last two lines are linked to our attitude, which is related to the fruit. The fruit here means the same thing as our attitude to this state of presence, or contemplation. The fruit is not considered as a product. When we say as it is, that already is the fruit. The point is whether or not we have that understanding. Sīnbas (zin.pas.) means ‘accomplished from the very beginning.’ When we say lhundrub (lhun.grub.) or zogqen (rdzogs.chen.), it means perfected from the beginning. There is nothing to be perfected. If we have the understanding of things as they are, that itself is the fruit. The problem is that we do not have that understanding! Because of our karma and our attachment, we tend to have only an intellectual knowledge which does not correspond to realization, much in the same way as knowing ice comes from liquid water, but in a very cold environment water remains ice solid.

In the Dzogchen semdé, there is an explanation of the twenty qualifications of ‘self-perfectedness,’ sīnbas. If we want to examine this explanation intellectually, it might be interesting to look
at the qualifications one by one. But to get the real meaning, it is not necessary for us to be limited by these twenty. They could also represent a thousand things. Rather, we must understand that there is nothing to create or construct. Šinbas means just that.

In the practice of Tantrism, we first visualize a syllable at the heart. The syllable is said to be the potentiality of the cause. Through that cause, energy manifests and develops, and slowly our transformation becomes real. We realize the transformation almost like building up something. If we have the understanding of self-perfectedness, then we cannot hold on to this idea, because self-perfectedness means as it is, simply having that knowledge of understanding. That is why it is said to be šinbas, accomplished from the beginning.

Zolvai (rtsol.bai.) means ‘commitment’ or ‘effort.’ When speaking of jixínva, we said that it is not necessary to assume a special position or a particular way of looking when we do the practice. We simply find ourselves in our condition as it is, unconditioned by our existence and not changing anything. This is called ‘beyond effort.’ When we think that we have to make an effort, or we worry that we have made a mistake, it is a characteristic manifestation of the mind. What we need is to go beyond this kind of effort.

Nad (nad.) means ‘like an illness.’ Bañ (spangs.) means ‘abandoned’ or ‘gone beyond.’ Nad bañ means that we have gone beyond that illness or disease. If there is a disease, it has its characteristic effects. The characteristic of a disease is never positive. It is always a problem. That effort, commitment and all that one does to oneself, is compared to the disease. Being beyond effort and beyond having to accomplish or construct anything, one is beyond the disease of effort. One has gone beyond that problem.

Lhungis means the condition of jixínva, as it is, the real condition. It is related to the condition of our body, voice and mind. Our material body is related to the material world, which
gives rise to many problems. When we have knowledge and understanding, that is called lhungs násbas. Without any effort, without abandoning or creating anything, we effortlessly remain in the relaxed state of presence. Continuing in it, we relate the state of our body, voice and mind to daily life. When we integrate all daily life into the continuity of the state of contemplation, that is the fruit. Everything manifests as its qualification.

When we talk of the fruit of Dharmakāya, Saṃbhogakāya and Nirmāṇakāya, that means its qualification manifesting as it is. When the sun is in the middle of an open sky, infinite light manifests. These infinite rays of light are evidence of the quality and are the qualification of the sun. When there are clouds, these rays do not manifest. When we say 'go beyond,' we mean that we go beyond the cloud, where there is this open space, and that already is the fruit. There is nothing called the fruit to construct. The only point is whether or not we have this knowledge, and whether we have integrated with the real meaning. In relation to the way, the attitude is about whether or not we have integrated everything with the great contemplation. The fruit means the same thing in Dzogchen. If we want to we can analyse the three dimensions, five dimensions and whatever you like. But that is not something outside ourselves. It simply is the same true jñānava, as it is, manifesting.


Nācog raňxín miñís yañ;
Qaxas ŋiddu dros dāñ drāł.

Even though the nature of diversity is non-dual,
In terms of individual things, it is free of conceptual elaborations (made by mind).

Nācog means ‘diversity,’ a variety of things. If we have a sack with a lot of objects and material, and someone asks, “What is in it?” we can say that it is a lot of nācog. In Tibetan nā (sna.) can mean nose, but in this case, nāka (sna.kha.) means many different types. If we have many objects, each slightly different from the other, we call them nāka. Cog means ‘accumulated,’ all these types of things put together. Even only at our level of human beings, there are many different types of people and different countries. In every different kind of country, we have many types of places, mountains, rivers and objects. If we go beyond the human dimension, there can be many other different types of situations which we do not even know about. Nācog refers to the diversity of phenomena, both of those which we know and those which we do not. It includes both our pure and
impure visions. For example, we might think of a paradise as a fabulous, luminous and wonderful place. This means that we are referring to a pure vision at the level of the essence of the elements. On the other hand, an impure vision of an impure realm is caused by the various types of passion, a consequence of the effect of our accumulation of these passions. All of this is included in the term *nācog*, diversity.

In the Buddhist Sūtra, 84,000 types of passions are spoken of. If there are so many types of passions, and each has its particular kind of good or bad effect, then there can be many types of effect which we do not even know about. If it is a passion, it has an impure result. Through some methods of practice, any particular impure cause can be transformed into a pure one.

There are three fundamental types of vision. What we generally have is karmic vision, which is the effect of the principal passions such as attachment, hatred, jealousy, pride and so on. People who are in love start by caressing each other, but they end up knifing each other. They are two different kinds of manifestation: stabbing is the manifestation of anger and hatred, while caressing is the manifestation of attachment. Nonetheless, deep down these manifestations of passion are linked. At a certain moment one may manifest more than the other, but really neither is missing.

The world of karmic manifestation is called *loka*, realm. Since passions have their characteristics, so the beings from the six *loka*, such as human, animal etc, have their own characteristic visions. We have human karma, so we all see things in the same way, whereas a group of mice will have the same mouse vision. The example used to explain karmic vision is as follows. Six different kinds of beings meet at a river. When a human being sees the river, the water is clear, limpid and fresh, and is something nice to drink. For a fish, the clear and limpid water of the river is a lovely house, whereas for a *preta*, which is a hungry ghost, the river is seen as lava that burns everything. Therefore,
how each being sees the water depends on their karmic causes. We human drinks the water and it can quench our thirst, but for a hungry ghost it is lava which burns them. For the gods, water in their vision is fantastic nectar. If there is a common cause, then there will accordingly be a manifestation, and the vision will be related to our karma.

There is another type of vision called namnāñ, the 'vision of experience,' experienced by some one who is on the way of practice. When a person relaxes the elements in his existence, or relaxes his body, voice and mind, and everything is harmonized, then experiences manifest. The manifestation does not have to be only visual in front of our eyes. We have five senses, so there can be five different kinds of manifestation. It can be a visual form, or a sound, or a smell. Since a practitioner has his senses and the objects of his senses, and he has infinite passions and his functions of energies in his condition, there can be infinite kinds of experiences. This is called the vision of experience.

There are three principal nam on the path: déva (bde.ba.), sālva (gsal.ba.) and midogba (mi.rtog.pa.), 'pleasurable feeling,' 'clarity' and 'emptiness.' We are not saying that there are only three types of nam. There exist thousands of them. We have our three existences of body, voice and mind. The aspects of these three existences are connected to the three principal types of nam. When we relax our mind, connected to it is the characteristic nam of midogba, which is an experience of thoughtlessness, or even if thoughts arise, we are not disturbed by them. When we are doing a practice such as xīnás (zhi.gnas.), especially in the Sūtra tradition, we can find ourselves in a state of midogba, emptiness. That, in Dzogchen, is called an experience of midogba. That is connected to the nature of the mind. Another aspect of our existence is connected to the voice. If we relax our energy in the body, which is related to the five elements, the aspects and characteristics of the elements will manifest. Apparitions of smoke, flashes, fog, lightning, or mirage will arise. That is connected to the relaxation of our energy. This is called
the experience of sàlva, clarity. Another of our aspects of existence is the physical body. When one’s practice of ziñás is going well, at a certain moment, one may feel as if one’s body ceases to exist. Or one may feel as if one is in space, with a great pleasure as if one is floating. That is connected with the body, and is called the experience of déva, pleasurable feeling. If we do a practice such as kundalinî, which is connected to the physical body, the sensation of pleasure increases. You are not pretending. You really feel it. This is what we call the experience of déva, which is connected with our physical body. We can, therefore, see that we have three characteristic experiences, déva, sàlva and midogba, which are respectively connected to our body, voice and mind. These three experiences are only given as examples because there could be millions of them.

There is another kind of vision, called dàgnâní, ‘pure vision.’ When one has purified and eliminated all the impure karmic visions, it does not mean that everything disappears. All visions remain, but they are now pure. For example, we have our five passions. A Tantric practitioner will transform them into five wisdoms. This is not the elimination or annihilation of passion, but is a manifestation in another way. If energy exists, it continues. The famous word gyúd (rgyud.), or Tantra, means continuity, which refers to our energy continuing. Nàcog means this, the many conditions that exist.

Rañxîn means ‘nature’ or ‘inherent condition,’ the condition of all the infinite aspects which we have just spoken of. Miñîs means ‘non-dual,’ the real condition of things as they are. Their true nature is not different from how they appear. This means that this condition is the base. Our base, our actual condition, is pure, limpid and clear, like the mirror. In this base, infinite reflections appear. Why are there reflections? It is because there are secondary causes. Relative conditions are linked to time and space. Time, of course, is not stable, but changes. When the sun is out, it seems like a beautiful spring. When it is foggy it seems that the sun does not even exist. Everything is linked to
time, place and other conditions. When things are linked to the secondary causes, they change. This is what we generally mean by the relative condition.

We know that thousands of different types of reflections can arise in a mirror as a result of the conditions present in front of it. Nācog, the diversity that we speak about, is linked to all the secondary causes. We are also referring to the effects and the manifestation of the real condition. But when we speak of the inherent condition, raṅgzin, of existence as it is, at that level, there are no differences between the manifestations. In the Dzogchen teachings, words such as miñis and ni méd (gnyis.med), which mean non-dual, are very important. If we speak of union, sūṇjug, we have the idea of two things put together and somehow united. As for non-duality, right from the very beginning there is no such consideration as two separate things existing at all. This is what we mean by the real condition of things, the base.

We can understand the non-dual condition in practice through the teaching. It cannot be constructed with the mind. If we create with the mind and use the mind to think that, "Yes, I've understood that well," that is all false and we have not understood anything, because the mind enters into judgement, and with judgement believes in something. Our mind and its judgement are at the relative level in time. We can observe whether or not, when we enter into mental reasoning and judgement, we are able to think about ten things all at once. We cannot, because the mind is limited. If we have ten things to think about, the second thing I want to think about is knocking at the door but the first says, "Oh, the mind is engaged!" So the mind is taken up with that and you obviously cannot think about the third or fourth thing. That means our mind is limited at the relative level of time. That is what we generally mean by the mind being limited. If we think about 'non-dual,' 'this and that are all the same,' it means we are 'engaged' in that moment with that thought. That is absolutely NOT non-dual. That is just the thought about non-duality. We have to differentiate this.
have to understand that there is the real non-duality and there is thinking about non-duality, which are absolutely not the same thing.

Doing a practice, in general and above all in the Dzogchen teaching, is for acquiring a particular experience. Through experience we can enter into, and develop, our state of knowledge. We can also overcome certain obstacles to the state of knowledge through the various experiences in the practice. Diversity refers to all aspects of pure and impure visions, including both karmic visions and the visions of experience. Even though there is infinite variety in the manifestations, their nature is said to be non-dual. That is why it is important, first of all, to understand what is meant by the base, and then really enter into contemplation by doing practice, through the experience of which we find out what is non-duality.

Doing practice is a good way of experiencing and finding the non-duality in our impure vision. One example is the dream. It is not very difficult to find awareness in a dream. The effect of our dream practice can be applied to our karmic vision to discover its unreality. It is more difficult to discover the unreality of our karmic vision than to discover the unreality of our dream through dream practice. In the same way, a practitioner practises in order to have different types of experience. It is not very difficult to enter into the understanding of the non-duality through experience. What is difficult is to integrate the state of non-duality with our karmic vision. But it is not impossible. One can eventually do it and thus develop that state. That is why it is important first to understand the diversity and non-duality of everything.

When we enter into a practice, we have our experiences. For example, we may visualize an A in the centre of our body. That is something we imagine, something we elaborate and work out with our mind. From there lights expand in all directions and the universe manifests as luminosity. We manifest in the centre of this illumination. In that instance we do not think so much, but
rather, are present in the middle of that clarity. We can remain for a long time in that presence. If we can enter into that presence, then we are present with clarity. In Tantrism, the final goal of visualizing a deity in front of oneself, or oneself as the deity, is for finding the experience of oneself in that state of clarity. Whether we do it through visualizing a deity or visualizing light, the experience is the same. If we are in the presence of that light, that is the experience of clarity.

Or perhaps we enter into the state of void, as if everything has disappeared and nothing is left. Even we ourselves are not there. What does that mean? There is no longer a house, there is nothing to sit on and there is total emptiness as if in the middle of space. So we have another experience—that of emptiness.

Maybe we transform ourselves into a deity like Kālacakra, a very joyous manifestation, in this presence. Minimally, therefore, there must be some sensation. It means that there is the sensation of pleasure. The sensation is an experience.

Now we have found three kinds of experiences which are different. One is clarity, one is emptiness and the other is sensation. This means nācog, diversity. Not only these three, there can be thousands of experiences which can be related to ourselves. The nature is non-dual, means that in all the different kinds of experience there is always a precise presence. Who is present in this illuminated universe? Who is present in the fear of total emptiness? Who is present in the moment of pleasure? There are differences in the experience, but there is no difference in the single presence. You must not go for the experience, but remain in the presence. When you know that, then you know the true meaning of contemplation and the meaning of non-duality.

Non-duality is our base. It is not something constructed by the rational mind. We speak of our base with the explanation of essence, nature and energy. That is the explanation of how the different aspects manifest. It also enables us to understand better what to do on the path and what the fruit is. The truth is that although there is nācog, the infinite aspects, they are
non-dual in nature.

At the end of the phrase is the word yan, which means 'but.' This is because if the essence of everything is non-dual, one may think that everything is mixed up. So, the second verse starts with qaxas. In Tibetan qa means 'part,' ras means 'belonging to.' For example, my hand is part of my body, and the finger is part of my hand. Qaxas means that: single things which belong. They are not independent and are neither global nor unique. In the Dzogchen teaching, the state of an individual is jigbu (gcig pu.), 'unique,' because the state of every individual is like the centre of the universe. All apparitions, manifestations and visions are aspects of the energy of the primordial state. Although everything singly appears as distinct, with each having precise functions, they are part of the energy of the individual, the manifestation of the single primordial state. Although these single things manifest with their own characteristics, the nature of the things themselves is beyond concept.

Nid means that there is only a single real state for these things. When we explain the base, we speak of the energy: zal, dan and rolba. These three are a single manifestation and that itself is beyond concept. This explanation is meant to make one understand the characteristic way energy manifests.

A crystal is often used in Dzogchen as an introduction of an individual's primordial state because it is transparent, and its nature is pure, limpid and clear. When there is a secondary cause, an enlightened being will manifest as a deity and its mandala according to that cause. This is what we mean by pure vision, and is part of the energy called zal. If our own state is the crystal, then all that manifests as light outside comes from us the crystal. There can be thousands of different colours and forms in the manifestation, but they all belong to the crystal. All of that light is qaxas, which belongs to and is part of the crystal.

It is the same for impure vision, which is produced by karma. If we accumulate a lot of karma with many secondary causes, it
will become much heavier and more solid by our attachment. Everything originally manifests as light. If one understands that, one still has pure vision because light is the essence of the elements. Gradually, however, it is made heavier and heavier through our karma. Through the association with our human karma, white light becomes the element water which we can drink to quench our thirst. According to the secondary causes that manifest, the pure elements transform. In this way, things can develop like water becoming ice. If ice melts and becomes water, which then re-enters into white light, then it is called reversing the process, reintegration. That is the idea of energy and how it manifests.

Energy also manifests as various passions. Recognising this manifestation as part of an individual’s energy, a Tantric practitioner will transform the passion into wisdom. Buddhist Sūtra, however, speaks of the cessation of negativities and passions. That is called the way of renunciation, because once the causes are cut off, there will be no more effect. When the Buddha taught, he started from the first Noble Truth, the Truth of Suffering. The second Noble Truth is about the cause of suffering. The third Noble Truth is the cessation of suffering, meaning when the causes are stopped, there is no longer the cause of suffering. How does one stop suffering? There is the last Noble Truth, which is the Truth of the Path. These are the famous four Noble Truths, which is the characteristic of the way of renunciation.

It is said that a Dzogchen practitioner should not be lacking in three things: yaṅdāggi dava, jyāmba and ņesjyūṅ (yang.dag.gi. lta.ba., byams.pa., nges.'byung.) Yaṅdāggi dava means ‘correct point of view.’ The correct way of seeing in Dzogchen is to observe oneself. Until one does that, it is not the pure way of seeing. Jyāmba means ‘compassion.’ ņesjyūṅ is usually translated as ‘renunciation,’ especially in the Buddhist Sūtra. But actually it is not an easy word to translate. The word ņesjyūṅ comes from ņesbar jyūṅva (nges.par. 'byung.ba.), where ņesbar
means 'real,' and *jyùña* means one is struck by this reality and sees that 'this is the way.' It is almost like having an impulse within oneself. There is no precise way to translate the word. Perhaps we can say that *ñesjyuñ* means participation, and this participation should not be lacking for a Dzogchen practitioner.

When one speaks of the way of renunciation, *ñesjyuñ* might mean one feels disgust. One may be disgusted by the suffering of existence and renounce it. But if it is translated as renunciation it does not correspond to Dzogchen because Dzogchen is absolutely not the path of renunciation. It might, therefore, seem strange to say that renunciation must not be lacking in Dzogchen. The same word is used, but the way of understanding it is different.

The characteristic of Dzogchen is said to possess *donba xí* (*rton.pa. bzhi.*), 'the four agreements of meaning.' Without this characteristic quality a teaching is no longer Dzogchen. The first agreement of meaning is

\[
Qosla \text{ midon } gāñsāgla \text{ don} \\
(\text{chos.la. mi.rton. gang.zag.la. rton.})
\]

*Qos* means the 'teaching,' and *gāñsāg* means the person interested in the teaching. *Midon* means the principle is 'not based on that.' In other words, this phrase means that the principle is not based on the teaching but is based on the person. This is the exact opposite to that explained in the Tantra and the Sūtra, which says,

\[
Gāñsāgla \text{ midon } qosla \text{ don}. \\
(gang.zag.la. mi.rton. chos.la. rton.)
\]

This is because in Tantra and Sūtra, *Gāñsāg* refers to the judgement of ordinary people, which is deceptive, and, therefore, we have to have faith in *qos*, the teaching. In the path of renunciation, a person is at the disposal of the teaching. This is because the person who follows the Sūtra has a lower capacity, and is incapable of being responsible for himself. That is why there are
regulations which set the limit for a person’s action. If I want to do something, I will check the Vinaya rules to see whether I can do it or not. If the rules say I should not do something, then I am prepared not to do it. This is what we mean by a person being at the disposal of the teaching.

But in Dzogchen, it is the opposite. One tries to find out what one’s condition is and look at the means and methods in order to make the most suitable decision. Dzogchen teaching never says what a person should or should not do. One applies different methods and by doing so discovers for oneself one’s own condition. One must not be worried about the methods one is using and become a slave to them. If one thinks that “Ah, I have learnt this practice and I must dedicate myself to doing this practice,” according to Dzogchen, this is a mistake. Teaching depends on the person, not the other way round.

In my wardrobe I have at least twenty kinds of clothes. Some are big, some are small. Some are useful when I am fat and some when I am thin. But whether they fit me or not, I do not have to worry about it: they are all in my wardrobe. The same applies to the teaching. One can use all methods, even those of another tradition; it does not change anything. If one does not understand the real condition, then one will become a slave of all these methods. That is why the principle is not based on the teaching but on the person.

The second agreement of meaning is

\[N\bar{\text{a}m}x\bar{\text{e}}s\bar{l}a \text{ midon ye}x\bar{\text{e}}s\bar{l}a \text{ don}\]
\[(rnam.shes.la. mi.rton. ye.shes.la. rton.)\]

Generally many teachings and knowledge are based on reason. \textit{N\bar{a}m\bar{x}e} means the knowledge of mind. The mind here means judgement. The principle is to use not the judging mind, but the primordial wisdom. Wisdom arises through the transmission received from the master. The master transmits and gives the methods through whose application one discovers the true condition \textit{as it is}. The characteristic of Atiyoga is the way of
rigba, not the mind. That is why one must find oneself in the state of contemplation from the beginning. Even if one learns thousands of methods, they are all secondary and are only for understanding, entering and developing this wisdom.

Then there is the third agreement of meaning, which is

\[\text{Cigla midon dønla don} \]
\[\text{(tshig.la. mi.rton. don.la. rton.)}\]

\text{Cig} means 'terms' and \text{døn} means the 'real meaning.' One should not rely on words but on the real meaning. For example, in the case of a word like \text{nesjyuñ}, it can be translated as renunciation. But it only means renunciation in the Sūtra. At the level of Dzogchen, you have to know the real meaning. That is what this \text{donba}, agreement of meaning, means: one has to look at the real meaning and not the word.

When you discover that in the various types of experience and manifestation, there is a unique and single state of presence, then finally you discover that nature which is non-dual. In Dzogchen this is the famous "state of contemplation." When one understands what contemplation is, one knows what relaxation is. It is not necessarily a kind of intention or commitment that says "I want to relax." The very principle is beyond any kind of tension. From that point one relaxes everything. In Dzogchen we often use the word \text{lhodba (lhod.pa.)}. \text{Lhod} means something totally loose, relaxed. Sometimes we say \text{lhodba qenbo}, total relaxation. Not that one has to relax, but that the nature of contemplation is relaxed. That is why in Dzogchen we also say \text{zolmed (rtsol.med.)}, without effort, or \text{jyāzol drālva (bya-rtsol bral-ba)}, without any commitment to do something.

When we enter contemplation, there is a Tibetan word for it called \text{jogxāg (cog.bzhag.)}. \text{Jogxāg} means not creating anything, leaving things as they are. One of the specific practices of the Dzogchen teaching is called \text{tregqod (khregs.chod.)}. Many people think that this term \text{tregqod} refers to a direct path, like an aeroplane or a missile that arrives right away. You can have
that idea if you like, but that is a mistaken idea. If we think of a missile taking off, it is leaving the earth and going to another planet. Already that has given us a limited mental idea of this place here which it is leaving and that place there to which it is going. In Dzogchen there is no such principle. It has a principle of the state of knowledge.

In some teachings, they speak of various levels of the teaching and various levels of attainment such as the first, second and third bhūmi\(^1\) of the Bodhisattva and so on, which go on and on up until one reaches the state of a Buddha. This way of seeing and looking is relative; there is none of that in the true non-dual state. That is why it is said that zögba qenbo sa jigba (rdzogs.pa. chen.po. sa.gcig.pa.), ‘great perfection with only one bhūmi.’ Sa jigba means one single bhūmi. You either have that state of Dzogchen or you do not. The state of knowledge arises at first and is developed through relaxation. The term tregqod does not mean going directly. Treg means something like a tied up bundle, qod means to remove that which binds this bundle so that it is untied and becomes loose. You should not think that this means a do-nothing, a lazy bones. Some people see tregqod as “doing nothing” and think, “Fine, I’ll do nothing at all.” The principle is really that you have to know what is meant by relaxing. That is what the Dzogchen teaching is about.

As far as the way of seeing is concerned, you have to, as it were, turn things around so that they are understood in terms of your own experience. If we do not turn them around in that way, how can we speak of something being non-dual? If I see on the one hand a giant and on the other a tiny child, I cannot say that the two of them are the same. When we see this tent, we can see red and yellow stripes. We cannot say that they are non-dual. In everything there is the subject and object relationship and that is dualism. That is the way we as individuals, as subjects, look out at objects. In Dzogchen, there is an explanation of where

\(^1\)A bhūmi is a stage of attainment in the Mahāyāna path to total realization.
and how energy arises. One learns about it as an idea in theory and then enters into it in practice. Then finally you know what is meant by non-dual and understand that the way of seeing does not mean looking out. If we always treat everything as external objects to look at, we cannot say that the nature of diversity is non-dual because if it is non-dual, why is there so much to discuss or debate? Some people may argue that, “Well, its absolute nature is non-dual, but relatively it is not non-dual.” But that is according to the Sūtra system. In the Dzogchen teaching this idea of relative and absolute condition does not correspond at all. You should not have two truths like two legs to walk with, thinking, “Ah, yes, now put the relative foot forward, now put the absolute foot forward.” That is just dualism. As long as it is dualism, it is always the basis of transmigration.

The way of seeing in Dzogchen is like looking at the mirror. By looking in a mirror I see my own face. Even if I cannot stand the sight of it I have to accept it. I discover that it is my face. Slowly I discover that maybe there is some other existence going on behind that face. You can see that the direction of seeing things is different. When you know how to turn things around in the direction of the mirror, you are beginning to understand something.

When a master explains that the base is more or less like this, one might think, “So, that is it.” Then that becomes a concept. That is how we create concepts if we do not understand the meaning of the base very precisely. We may not even be aware that it is just a concept. If we create a concept, that itself is an obstacle. Usually we talk about the obstacle of passions and the obstacle of karma as a result of bad actions in the past. Such obstacles can be discovered quite easily. But there is also what we call the obstacle of knowledge. This is especially heavy and damaging for practitioners, especially for those who have been on the path for a long time. In Tibetan it is called xesjyāi dribba (shes.bya'i. sgrib.pa.). Xesjyāi is knowledge and dribba is obstacle. If we create concepts, then we have created very
complicated obstacles and they are very difficult to discover. That is why the way of seeing and the understanding of the base in Dzogchen is very important indeed.
Chapter 5

Long Commentary On
The Second Two Verses

\[ Jjzïnva xës midog yañ; \\
nañmar nàñzàd gundusàñ. \]

Even though there is no thought of
what is called 'just as it is,'
These various appearances which are created are
ultimately good (transcending relative good and evil).

5.1 What is as it is?

\[ Jjzïnva \] means as it is, without correcting, changing or influencing. Changing or influencing is an activity carried out by the mind. Throughout our lives, we enter into mental reasoning and analysis. Reasoning is not part of peaceful living. If you want to relax, you have to go beyond this and find yourself in your condition as it really is. This is one of the principal things in practice. The fourth agreement of meaning in Dzogchen is thus related:

\[ dràñdônla midon ñesdônla don \]
The whole phrase means, do not rely on drāṇdōn, which means what things seem to be according to what people say, but on how things really are. Dōn means ‘meaning.’ Drāṇ can be understood in the following way.

If someone is a bit unfriendly to me, somehow I make him my friend. Whether it is a matter of giving him a present, or by saying some pleasant words, psychologically I make him feel that he is a wonderful person. Perhaps I enter into the person’s culture and habits. I might not like smoking because I know smoking is bad for me. But if I am with somebody who likes smoking, I might get on with him by trying a cigarette. That means I am entering into that person’s habits, at least, in order to communicate with him.

We know what causes the six lokas, each of which has its particular karmic vision. We know that Śākyamuni Buddha, for example, entered into the karmic vision of individuals in order to be able to communicate with them. He did not argue about what people believe at a relative level. You will know if you have studied some Buddhist philosophy, such as the Abhidharmakośa in particular, that there is an explanation of kham (khams.), the universe, or Dhātu in Sanskrit, which is about the world with Mount Meru and the four continents etc. Many pandits, particularly learned monks who are rather conditioned and limited by words, think that this is the specific Buddhist view of the cosmos, as expressed by Buddha. When you speak about the round planet earth, as we do today, they say, “How can that be possible?”

When I arrived in India for the first time, I was in Kalimpong for a few months, where there was an able and learned Mongolian gēxēs (dge.bshes).¹ This gēxēs interested me a great deal and I was a very good friend of his because I was studying Mongolian language and literature. Whenever I did not understand

¹A gēxēs has the equivalent qualification of a PhD in theology.
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something I went to him, so we spent a lot of time together. But we got into arguments sometimes. He said to me, “What do you think of this round earth business?” I said, “I do not think that it is very strange. I myself believe it.” He said, “For goodness sake, it is impossible to have a round earth! If you believe in that sort of thing you do not believe the Buddha’s words!” I said, “Who says that I do not believe the Buddha’s words?” He said, “Well, look at the whole Abhidharmakośa. The explanation is there, how could you possibly believe in a round earth?” I tried to argue a little, but felt that it was impossible, so it was better to leave him alone. I was afraid that if I argued too much, I would not be able to study Mongolian with him. A few days later, he showed me a whole exercise book he had written out with his argument disproving the round earth. He told me to take the book home to read what he had to say and wanted me to tell him what I thought. He was sure that if I read this book when I went home, I would discover that I was mistaken. I can understand that mentality perfectly, because there are a lot of people who think in the same way.

But the truth is that the Buddha entered into and communicated through the culture and habits of the people. In the Abhidharmakośa, the whole explanation of Dhātu, of the universe, is typical of the culture that existed well before the arrival of Buddha in India. Buddha did not take birth to provoke a revolution in India. Buddha knew very well that these were concepts one believes in, that is why he said that until final realization, everything is illusory. But if Buddha did not believe in anything real and did not confirm anything, why did he make such an explanation as in the Abhidharmakośa? What happened is that Buddha accepted and entered into people’s understanding in order to communicate with them. That is what we mean by drāṇḍōn, entering into the meaning of things to carry people through.

In the Buddhist teachings, we speak of drāṇḍōn and Ņesdōn. The Buddhist Sūtra is the vehicle of drāṇḍōn, the vehicle of the
What is as it is

cause, to carry people into understanding. Dzogchen teaching, however, is the vehicle of ņesdön. ņesdön means ‘real’, the true meaning. It is called the true meaning because we enter into the real meaning without changing anything, as it is. Ḗjīxinva means this. This is not a knowledge about the final stage of meditation. This is something very important to discover.

When people learn Tantrism, they learn a lot of subtle definitions and when they speak about the nature of mind, they think they are reserving it as the final point to arrive at. In Dzogchen, when we speak about Ḗjīxinva, we are not only speaking about the nature of mind, we are also speaking about our existence as it is. The real understanding of the existence of our body, voice and mind is not the conceptual idea of ‘the nature of mind,’ and we have to find it in the state of Ḗjīxinva. When there is this knowledge of Ḗjīxinva, that is called Dzogchen.

 Ḗjīxinva itself must not become a concept. In the Dzogchen teaching, when we speak of the aspects of our body, voice and mind in the practice, they must not be conditioned. This is exemplified in the text called Dőrjé Semba Namkā Qe (rdo.rje. sems.dpa’. nam.mkha’.che.),2 which means ‘the great space of Vajrasattva.’ In this text it says that if one makes any correction of the body it is no longer real Dzogchen. Another part of it says that remaining with spine straight and body controlled is not real contemplation, but is an obstacle for contemplation. Many people from other schools, therefore, say that Dzogchen negates everything about meditation and control of one’s posture. The problem is people, are too conditioned by the need to reject or accept things. They immediately say that Dzogchen negates something, but in truth it is not negating anything. Rather, it is simply an explanation of how one finds oneself in the state as it is without correction. If one says, “find oneself in the

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2This text is considered as one of the most important Dzogchen texts, and particularly in the Dzogchen Semdé series of teaching, because the first human master of Dzogchen, Gáráb Dőrjé, always recited this text when he was a very young child.
nature,” that nature is not something that needs to be changed or has been changed. One of the fundamental terms used in Dzogchen is majosba (ma.bcos.pa), ‘not correcting.’ If one has to correct something, it means that one is working with the mind. Consequently it is falsified. That is why it is said, “This is not contemplation.” One must understand that finding oneself in the state of contemplation means jīxīnva, as it is.

In the Upadesa, the way of contemplation is explained with the four jogstå (cog.bzhag.), which means remaining as it is. The first one is rivo jogstå (ri.bo. cog.bzhag.), the jogstå of the mountain and is related to the aspect of our body. What is the position to apply in contemplation? Simply find yourself in your condition as it is, relaxed without correction. A mountain can be high, low, wide or any way. Why should a mountain be pointed and high? Because there are hard rocks. Why should a mountain be wide and loose? Because there are loose rocks and earth. It is its own nature, just like that. The mountain does not have any idea of itself as high or low. Its shape is due to the secondary causes present. Human beings generally live in secondary conditions. If it is midnight, I am usually lying in bed. If it is eleven in the morning, you probably can find me dressed and walking about. This is due to the secondary causes called day and night. There are hundreds and thousands of secondary causes in existence. We do not know what the secondary causes will be at the time when we are in contemplation. If we find ourselves at the moment of contemplation in the condition of jīxīnva, then whatever position we are in is the position of contemplation. Enter into the slightest alteration and it is false. If I find myself entering into the state of contemplation lying down comfortably, and I suddenly think, “Oh here comes contemplation,” and have to jump up and sit straight, or if I am having a coffee in the kitchen, find myself in contemplation and have to rush into the next room immediately and sit in position, then that is not jīxīnva. If we want to integrate practice well into our daily life, we have to understand this jīxīnva.
Integrating practice into daily life does not mean that in every moment of our life we have to be doing some formal practice. Integrating means our daily life being just as it is, becomes the practice itself. This can come about when you truly understand the meaning of *jñānava*. The principle in the Dzogchen teaching is, when one speaks of contemplation, *majosba*, not correcting. Someone might say, "Oh well, that means I cannot do anything. No Yantra Yoga\(^3\), no breathing, no meditation, nothing." But really you have to understand that ‘not correcting anything’ is NOT negating anything. We are simply too habituated to yes or no. When I say something is not good, then everybody will take it to mean bad. A Dzogchen practitioner should not be like this. We must be looser. We should not just continue to live within our mental limits. We must know of other possibilities.

Our minds are limited by time. We can only think of one thing at a time. When we are thinking of the first subject, we cannot think of the second as well because the mind is occupied. That is why we have all these conflicts. But if we know what contemplation is, we can go beyond time, beyond the judgement of the mind, and beyond these problems. Not correcting, not creating, not influencing means you learn not to create problems.

There is a little story about two brothers, called Giorgio and Mario, who live together in a house. In that house there are only these two brothers and nobody else. In another place there are many families and all the people there know Giorgio and Mario. One day, some friends of Giorgio and Mario go to their house to see them. But while they are going up there, they see Mario going to the market. So they know that Mario is not at home. They think Giorgio may be at home. Of course, Giorgio may not be there either. But when the friends get near the brothers’ house, they hear someone playing a flute. They think, "So Giorgio is at home," because they know only these two live

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\(^3\)Yantra Yoga is a type of yoga exercises that combine breathings with movements of the body. See: Yantra Yoga, Namkhai Norbu, edited by Oliver Leick, Edition Tsaparang, Gleisdorf, Austria, 1988.
there. They do not know of a third person. When they knock on the door and it opens, someone they have never seen before appears. They are surprised that it is not Giorgio.

Similarly, we are limited by our usual way of seeing things. All these limits come about through the limits of our mind and its reasoning. Furthermore, the mind reasons with the help of our senses. All our sense faculties, like seeing with the eyes and listening with the ears, are all limited. A limited mind with the five limited senses is like a person with five very limited friends. This little group of five or six sets out without the ability to establish any fact, and cannot understand the real conditions. That is how we usually reason: yes or no, it is or it is not. This is called the manifestation through the mind. Going beyond this is what we called jīxinva, not correcting, without changing anything.

In the Dzogchen teaching, there is no need to say, “I belong to this school,” or “I belong to this way of seeing.” It does not change anything in the least whether or not you feel or say that you are a Buddhist. Doing so is already a limit, a mistake. One has to understand one’s own condition in order to be able to open oneself. Many of you may have heard of the rismed (ris.med.) school of non-sectarianism. Many people say, “Ah, there is this fantastic rismed, non-sectarian school.” From the point of view of Dzogchen, I am not at all amazed to hear about this rismed. Even this idea of non-sectarianism is limited. Rismed is a name used by someone to describe something, a limit set by that person even though this is not the way of being. When we explain the primordial condition, we say that it manifests as essence, nature and energy. These are called the three primordial wisdoms. But these are only used for those who are limited. We are so very limited, so we say that the basic condition of the individual is the essence, nature and energy. It seems very concrete. But that analysis of the primordial condition and how it is have nothing to do with each other. Such analysis is false and is limited, but nevertheless there is some truth in it because we find
ourselves in the relative condition. That which is explained is
done relatively according to our condition. However, it does not
mean that the explanation corresponds to the way things really
are.

When we speak about a non-sectarian school or sect, that
means the people in it are not limited by sectarianism. But it
does not correspond to the condition of things as they are. For
example, Jâmyañ Kyènezei Wâño and Jâmgôn Goñdrul Rin-
poche are said to be the masters who founded this non-sectarian
school. It is not that they sat down and said, “Yes, we want to
found this school which is non-sectarian.” When the sun rises
in space, it is inevitable that infinite light shines out. The sun
does not state anything or say, “Look, my rays are shining out.”
The rays themselves do not enter into the limit of saying “This
is wonderful brilliant sunshine.” Rather it is those who enjoy the
sunlight and see it, those who were in the dark, who say that the
sun is shining. When we speak about this non-sectarian school,
we are referring to the manifestation of those masters and prac-
titioner. Others could judge it to be that way, and call it that
way, but it does not mean that that really is it.

One of the principal masters involved and usually associated
with the non-sectarian movement was Jâmyañ Kyènezei Wâño.
He was a great Dzogchen master and he came from the Sakyaba
(Sa.skya.pa) school. Another is Jâmgôn Goñdrul who came from
the Gagyûdba (bKa’.brgyud.pa) school, and Baldrul Rinpoche
was from the Ňînma ba (rNying.ma.pa.) school. They were all
Dzogchen practitioners. This is the way of manifesting the view
of Dzogchen in practice. But none of them announced that this
was the non-sectarian school.

We need to understand the importance of this point. For
a Dzogchen practitioner, it is not necessary to publicise that
“we belong to the non-sectarian school.” If we speak of non-
sectarianism, it means you can come to my place, but it is my
place. If I close my door, you cannot come in. I will not close
the door on you and you can come to my house in a friendly way.
However, it is clear that if you come to my house, you must not disturb me. You have to respect my condition. There is this idea of you and me, your position and my position. If there exists you and me, that is plural, and from this plurality arises others as well. Naturally ideas such as non-sectarianism will arise.

By saying “non-sectarian,” we are simply admitting and confirming that “sects” exist. Even though we recognize and accept the existence of sectarianism, it does not mean that the circumstance that leads to it is valid. But claiming to be non-sectarian means we ourselves have that same sectarian position. If we have that way of thinking, it is already a mistake. In Dzogchen it says,

\[ \text{gyáqad qyogluṅ drālva} \]
\[ (rgya.chad. phyogs.lhung. bral.ba.) \]

\[ \text{Gyär maqadba} (rgyar. ma.chad.pa.) \text{ means ‘not falling into limits.’} \]
\[ \text{Qyogluṅ drālva} \text{ means if we fall into such limits, we are in the working of the mind and will continue to transmigrate. If we are not within such limits, we are in wisdom. That is what is meant by limitation and going beyond limitation. The real meaning is not only a mental consideration. It corresponds to our body, voice and mind. Thus } jīzinva \text{ means beyond limits, as it is.} \]

In Dzogchen you have to integrate everything. You have to remove this barrier of you and me, and understand the real condition as it is. This is called jīzinva, in which there is not any barrier. That is fundamental. When you have really learned the meaning of absence of barrier, then you know the way to relax tension. If we find a way of relaxing our tension, then we are in contemplation.

The fourth verse says, “Do not interrupt any object of the senses.” It is unlike the principle in Tantrism where you transform impure visions into pure visions. There is nothing to transform because transformation itself is a concept. This is a path of self-liberation and there is nothing to be transformed or to be
created by the mind. Whatever appears is simply present. This is called 'clarity' in Dzogchen. Anything that belongs to clarity is just that. Nothing is bad.

We see this tent now. Logically we find this as our karmic vision because we have our common human karmic vision. This is not a pure vision. But it is not necessary to change it into a tent of light because if we were to do that, that would be playing with the mind. Even if the tent belongs to our karmic vision, it is still part of our clarity. If I say to myself that, "This is a beautiful tent. Perhaps we need to buy a big tent like this," it is reasoning. Reasoning means we have entered into the judgement of the mind. This is the cause of karma and all that karma creates.

In the practice of jod (gcod.)⁴, for example, Majig Labdrón (Ma.cig. lab.sgron.) explained that the first demon is

\[
\text{wánbo togjasgi dūd.} \\
(\text{dbang.po. thogs.bcas.kyi. bdud.})
\]

\textit{Wánbo} means the senses. There is something that blocks the clarity in these senses, and it is said to be one of the demons. What does this mean? When we see something beautiful, not only do we see it, we immediately think, "How beautiful," and "I really want that." That is a desire, which is a passion. Following that one creates action and the mind enters into judgement. How did that thought arise? First the eyes saw that beautiful object. That is not so bad. But a blocking, or stopping, of this perception follows, and the mind starts creating the thoughts. When such a block happens, we call it the demon. If nothing is blocked, in Dzogchen, it is said to be like a snake, which ties itself in a knot and unravels itself. Something beautiful may arise, but I do not have a judgement of "I want it" or "I like it," and that is clarity. Not entering into mental judgement means that whether something is very beautiful or very ugly, there is

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no difference between them. Everything is present while the mind is not functioning, and that is the state of \( ji\text{\textbar}v\text{\textbar}na \). One is in the presence in the state of contemplation. That is not to be confused with the mind, where there is judgement and attraction.

\( N\text{\textbar}m\text{\textbar}ba\text{\textbar} n\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar}z\text{\textbar}d \) means that none of the apparitions is changed or transformed. There is no distinction between good and bad in whatever arises. When one finds oneself present in the state of \( \text{\textbar}r\text{\textbar}g\text{\textbar}b\text{\textbar}a \), everything is an ornament. That is why it is said to be \( \text{\textbar}g\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar}d\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}s\text{\\textbar}\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar}\text{\textbar} \), all good. How do you apply this \( ji\text{\textbar}v\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar}a \) in practice?

In Dzogchen, if it is a matter of using methods to have experience in order to arrive at the \( ji\text{\textbar}v\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar}a \), that is fine. But you must not confuse this as the principal issue.

Let us take the example of Tantrism. The principle of Tantrism is transformation. A particular limited method of transformation comes in a Tantra, such as Hevajra, although there are very many others. This is a method for transmitting knowledge through transformation. In this case, the realized individual who sets out to transmit the knowledge through transformation is called Hevajra. His dimension and function, wisdom and all that manifests is called the \( m\text{\textbar}a\text{\textbar}d\text{\textbar}a\text{\textbar}l\text{\textbar}a \). Through this means, one is able to receive the transmission of knowledge. One who has received such transmission sets out to apply it. Every day that individual will try to transform himself into the dimension of Hevajra, reciting mantras and trying to integrate his state of energy into the transformation. In this way, at a certain moment of manifestation, which represents clarity, everything is integrated into this clarity and one enters into the state of contemplation. This is called \( M\text{\textbar}a\text{\textbar}h\text{\textbar}m\text{\textbar}u\text{\textbar}d\text{\textbar}r\text{\textbar}a \), ‘the great symbol.’ An individual who tries to bring about this transformation in Tantrism must continue repeating the practice. This method becomes a very important path.

This is clearly a method very different from that of \( ji\text{\textbar}v\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar}a \), of not correcting. In the \( \text{\textbar}N\text{\textbar}n\text{\textbar}m\text{\textbar}m\text{\textbar}b\text{\textbar}a \) tradition, higher yoga is analysed into three levels: Mah\text{\textbar}y\text{\textbar}a\text{\textbar}y\text{\textbar}a, Anuy\text{\textbar}y\text{\textbar}a and Atiy\text{\textbar}y\text{\textbar}a.
Mahāyoga is the path of gradual transformation and Anuyoga is the path of non-gradual transformation. Both are paths of transformation. In these methods, until you find yourself in the state of contemplation in clarity, the method used throughout is always transformation. That which is not considered as important in Tantrism is the principal method in Dzogchen. However, when one arrives at the final point of Tantrism called Mahāmudrā, one sees that the method used to reach the final point was NOT in itself the principle. You can understand this if you read the Doha, the songs of the Mahāsiddhas, or if you read their stories. Related to the Hevajra Tantra, for example, is the story of Virupa who was one of the very important masters. Virupa was a very studious Indian pandit, who became a practitioner of Tantrism. For years and years he did the transformation practice of Hevajra. In order to transform his energy, he practised dāgmedma (bdag.med.ma.), the yum, or ‘female aspect,’ of Hevajra. One day, when he found himself in the real state of total contemplation in clarity, he picked up the mala that he had been using for the recitation of mantra and threw it into the toilet. The maṇḍala that he had prepared for practice was also thrown away. And off he went. Everyone said, “He’s gone crazy.” It is true, realized beings often appear a little crazy. In fact, they are not the crazy ones, we are. We are crazed with all our passion and all our attachment. We do not recognise we are crazy, but we think that others are always doing something a bit weird.

When people find themselves in their real condition as it is, without correcting or changing anything, they may seem crazy. When you find yourself in this state, this is the final point in Tantrism and you break the rules and methods by which you arrived. You no longer consider transformation as the main method. But while you are applying the method of transformation, it is not so important to know that it is not the principle. On the contrary, if you do not have at least a minimal faith or belief in the method you are working with, you will not carry it out. That is why it is given so much importance in Tantrism.
right to the end.

Atiyoga is a different path right from the beginning. It is not a path of transformation, but a path of self-liberation. There cannot be a principle of self-liberation if one does not enter into a certain state of knowledge. Finding oneself in the state of knowledge is not making some sort of mental decision that “I do not want to change anything.” Such a decision is called the creation of a falsification. Rather, you have to discover something. The only method of truly discovering something is to know the real condition of things as they are. Practice itself is just that. In the Dzogchen teaching, one explains the meaning to make another person understand, and that is called transmission. It is not necessary to prepare a maṇḍala, to have a thangka, or to use a vase for the teacher to touch or pour water over someone’s head. That is a different kind of transmission, called initiation in Tantrism. Many people who have received initiation through some kind of ritual think they have received the teaching. But they are not satisfied if they hear an explanation of the real meaning of the *Rigbai Kujyüg*. If one has not understood well, one even thinks that one has not received things like the refuge.

5.2 Refuge, Guru Yoga, Samaya

Some people say, “I have not taken refuge, I have only listened to the Dzogchen teaching.” This is a very strange idea if you think about it. If you have not yet taken refuge, then what are you doing learning Dzogchen? Here is the real refuge although it is not the refuge of reciting “Namo Buddhaya, Namo Dharmaya, Namo Sanghaya.” in front of the statues of Buddha. Buddha said in the Sūtra that the ultimate refuge is in the tathāgata, the Buddha within oneself, that one has to realize. Refuge is not simply going to a master who gives you a new name and cuts off bits of your hair, and you are thus satisfied about everything.  

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5 Tibetan painting of deities and their related dimension.
If someone is not capable of knowing anything more than that level, that can be satisfactory. But it is really not for those with the qualifications and characteristics of a human being.

In the Buddhist teaching, it is mentioned that the qualities, or characteristics, of a human being, are that they know how to think, reason and talk. If one has that capacity and is looking for a path, then one must know what to look for; one has to develop that capacity, and go beyond the idea of ritual.

It is very important to know the meaning of refuge in the Buddhist Sūtra, because whoever is interested in Buddhism nowadays talks about refuge. Some people go to take refuge to get a name, so that they feel like a Buddhist. It is fine if you do not have any other ideas to begin with. However, you should not think that saying “I am a Buddhist” is the path. What is more important is to understand why you are doing it. Any vow you have undertaken to carry out implies that you do not have enough self-control, and that you have inferior capacity. In the Dzogchen teaching, the point is not about deciding whether a person’s capacity is inferior or superior. It is about simply discovering for oneself one’s own capacity. That is not a decision made by someone else. It is relative to every single individual in that it is linked to each person’s personal circumstances. It also depends on what each person considers as capacity and what it is used for. Circumstances are not static or fixed, but are something we can change and improve. For example, in meeting a master, we must have the capacity to communicate. We must at least be able to ask about what we want to find out. When the teacher is teaching and explaining, we need the capacity to understand. We have to be able to integrate that knowledge into ourselves. These are called capacities. We use many methods of purification in practice, because we have many kinds of obstacles, and as a result, we do not have the capacity to understand the meaning of the teaching. So, if I know that I am lacking that capacity, then I work on purification for that.

You have to discover for yourself what you need, because
many people go to a master with great faith and trust, thinking that the master can create everything for everybody. They ask, “What is my capacity?” Those who have some idea of Tantrism would ask, “To what Buddha family do I belong?” An easy going master who likes to make people happy may say that they have superior capacity, or that they belong to the Buddha family or the Ratna family. Such people will be satisfied, and they decide that this is a fantastic master. But this is not true. A master has to enable you to find out what your capacity is. All of that is relative to you, not the master. Sometimes the master, simply by seeing or talking to the person, coming into contact with him, can discover his capacity. In that case, he can give some advice. But that is not the same as the master deciding and you following everything he decides. He gives an idea, a method, to enable you to open yourself, to enable you to find out what your own condition is. He will never tell you to do one thing and not the other. If he does, he is not giving Dzogchen teaching.

If you do not know what your capacity is, and you follow a teaching, without even the minimal capacity to understand, then what you are following becomes more of a teaching from Buddhist Sūtra. In this case you have to take a vow, and you are following a path of renunciation. The master will give you some limitations, and there will be a set of rules of what you can and cannot do. This is called receiving a vow from a master, and you follow everything specified in the vow. However, there is no universal vow because a vow must exist according to the circumstances. A vow has a certain number of rules. Since there are infinite secondary causes, there can be an infinite number of situations, so there cannot be any set of universal rules. Rather the limits set by the rules are according to what is the most relevant and necessary at a certain time.

Take the example of Vinaya, the monk’s rules, and see how they came about. This is the teaching the Buddha gave at the Hinayāna level. At the beginning, there was a group of monks

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6See appendix, pp 98.
around Buddha Śakyamuni called the *sangha*. There were no rules at that time. The Buddha was the master and the monks the followers. When the Buddha noticed something going wrong, he said, “Do not do this.” For example some monks went naked somewhere. Then the next day there would be a rule in the *Vinaya* which said, “Monks should not go around naked.” After that no one would go around naked because this had become the rule. Some monks, perhaps, were not too happy about this because it was hot in India. So they tucked up their robe a bit like a mini-skirt. Buddha then said it could not be like a mini-skirt, but the robe had to have a certain length, and another rule was born. Later some people ran about with the robe wrapped around them. So there was a rule saying that Buddha's monks should not run, but should walk slowly. Gradually there arose 253 rules. Unfortunately Buddha manifested his death at the age of eighty one, so there was no time to add more rules. If Buddha had lived to be 150 years old, certainly there would have been not 253, but perhaps 1200 rules, because man is capable of doing many things and the circumstances are infinite. Since the Buddha was no longer there, and no one could replace him, that was the end of the creation of the *Vinaya*.

After that, even though some conditions do not correspond to those of Buddha's time and place, if they fall in line with the ideas in the *Vinaya*, they are still included. When the monks started following *Vinaya* rules in Tibet, many of those rules laid down in India did not correspond. For example, it is hot in India, so the monks do not have the top half of the robe, but only have a scarf. If they walked around like this in Tibet, they would die of cold. They have to wear something. So they adopted what the nuns had to wear in India because if the nuns walked around topless like the monks, people would talk about it. So the Buddha said that they had better have something to cover themselves up. Men did not have that problem and thus remained the same. But how were the nuns going to dress? Buddha took his example from the head of an elephant and
suggested two flaps a little like the elephant’s ears that come down. This is now worn by all the Tibetan monks and nuns. That is how things grow.

This shows that whatever rules there are, they cannot correspond to every single situation. A person will not need such rules if he has the capacity to control himself and be responsible for himself. For example a Tantric or Dzogchen practitioner does not have to follow the Vinaya rule. Above all in Dzogchen, it is most important to be responsible for oneself. That is why a master says, “Open yourself.” If you open yourself, you see and you understand. If I am a blind man, I cannot see where I am going. I depend on a dog to lead me or somebody to help me along. It would be much better if somehow I could open my eyes, rather than depending on others to lead me around. That means we have to open our eyes and all our senses in order to understand. In the *Rigbai Kuju')}</p><p>yug*, talking about *jizhina* is about how to be as it is. It is very important to know the way of understanding and not to make mistakes. One must not get too confused in oneself, because usually we complicate things when they are very simple. This happens when we do not know how to discover ourselves.

For example, when people follow a teaching, they seem to follow only the minute details. If they are asked to sit in the lotus position, they worry about where the feet have to go or how the back is to be positioned. Giving such attention to these minute details makes them feel really important because it is a relative thing. In the case of a method of practice, for example, there are hundreds of slight variations. They give the details such importance because they do not know how to go to the real meaning of what they are doing. Therefore, when a person follows a teaching, particularly Dzogchen, he must not lose sight of the principle the master is talking about by getting involved in details in this way. If we talk about contemplation, there is a principle of how to find oneself in that state, but the way of sitting, the way of looking and the way of breathing are all
Relative. Relative things are secondary. One applies and uses them when necessary, but they are not indispensable.

One of the most important things in Dzogchen is *Guru Yoga*. One might think that this is not explicitly mentioned in the *Rig-bai Kujyūg*. But Guru Yoga is not something one talks about. It is related to the transmission. In the case of *jñātā*, how one has received this transmission and how one applies this contemplation, that in itself is Guru Yoga. Guru Yoga as practised normally is only an extended form. Guru Yoga exists when one has the knowledge of understanding. If a master has awakened that knowledge, which is inseparable from the transmission, in the disciple, then such knowledge is the real Guru Yoga. Visualising a fantastic master in front of myself so that I can receive light and wisdom from him is not the real Guru Yoga. This is just a practice in Yoga Tantra. In Yoga Tantra we visualize an enlightened being or bodhisattva in front of us, invite him in order to receive lights from him to purify ourselves, so that we can receive wisdom from him. This is a kind of Guru Yoga, but this is not the final point, and is not the Guru Yoga of Dzogchen. We may visualize Padmasambhava as the union of all the masters in front of us, and from that figure we receive the light, the transmission etc. This is a relative Guru Yoga, not a real Guru Yoga. The real practice is the unification of that state of understanding of the master and one's own state. The master has transmitted the knowledge and this understanding has arisen in us. That means there is something we can actually develop. If that is not the case, then the basis, the principle of Guru Yoga, is lacking. If one does not have anything within oneself to develop, even though one has great devotion for the Buddha or Padmasambhava, and makes invocations, that is all there is: devotion and invocation.

If we do Guru Yoga with a figure such as Padmasambhava, when we visualize and invoke, we should not have the idea that there is a holy being called Padmasambhava. Instead, he is the union of all the masters. We may have ten or twenty masters.
Some of them are more important because they have reawakened us at a certain point, while some are less important. However they are all related to the transmission. So in that presence I have the union of all these masters in the figure of Padmasambhava. That manifestation of Padmasambhava is also guru Padmasambhava himself, because he is in our lineage of transmission. Guru Padmasambhava is considered as a supreme body of light. So making use of this figure has something to do with Padmasambhava himself, but above all, we use the figure as the union of all our own masters. It is not just that we want to go straight to the top out of pride in order to have a direct link with Padmasambhava because he is so elevated. One might want to get in touch with Padmasambhava, Buddha Śakyamuni, the highest, instead of the master one received the teaching from, who, just like any one of us, eats spaghetti, goes to the toilet etc. Deep down we all have this habitual way of seeing because the human karmic cause is also pride and no one is lacking in it. But even if one wants to have a direct link with Padmasambhava or Buddha Śakyamuni, it is very difficult to achieve that. To have a link with Padmasambhava, one has to recognise the master is Padmasambhava.

In the Buddhist Sūtra Prajñāpāramitā Abhisamayālañkāra, there is a sentence

\[
\text{ Nimai hōdsêr rab ca yañ} \\
(\text{nyi.mai. 'od.zer. rab.tsha. yang.}) \\
\text{mexel medbar me mijyûñ.} \\
(\text{me.shel. med.par. me. mi.'byung.})
\]

which means that even though the rays of the sun are very powerful, without the concentrating power of a lens, you cannot have a fire. Even though the thousands of Buddhas are full of wisdom, one cannot receive the wisdom if it was not communicated by a master. This shows that even in the Sūtra, having a master is considered to be very important. When it comes to Dzogchen, he is completely indispensable. However, the ways of seeing the
In the Buddhist Sūtra, the master is regarded very much as a figure. In Tantrism, the importance of the master is his activity. In Dzogchen the principle is the transmission of the knowledge, the unification of our state with that of the master. In the Tantra of Rigbai Kujuyüg, it says that “One enters into the knowledge called jiźǐnvə, the knowledge of knowing one’s own state as it is, and thus develops it through contemplation, by receiving a transmission from the master. The value of the master is like a nagcūr (nag.mtshur.), which is a mineral used for cleaning gold.” If the gold does not manifest its own colour, rubbing the mineral on it will give the colour of gold. So the example in the Rigbai Kujuyüg compares the master to this mineral. The gold is called Dzogchen, our real condition, the primordial state which is self-perfected from the beginning. Our real state does not manifest due to our conditioning, our obstacles and our confusion. It is similar to a piece of gold which looks a bit red or dark yellow, and appears like a stone or a piece of iron. When we do not have this knowledge of being like gold, then it is called marigba, ignorance. The power of transmission through the master is to discover this. It is just like the mineral that rubs on the gold, which enables the quality and the colour of the gold to manifest. That is why in the Rigbai Kujuyüg, Guru Yoga is not considered as something separate.

Staying in the state of jiźǐnvə, the state of contemplation is Guru Yoga. That is everything. If you speak of Guru Yoga, that is Guru Yoga. If you speak of refuge, that is the supreme refuge. Until one is in that real true condition, any refuge is temporary, provisional. If you think of practice and are used to the Sūtras, you think that you have to do something with the body, such as having to sit in a very controlled posture, or having to do purification with movement like prostrations, or purification through reciting of mantra, or mentally creating deities. We are really very used to this kind of things. That is not to say that they are not practices, but they are practices of
a different kind. In the Dzogchen teachings, one second in the practice of じじん.va is the real practice itself and is indeed the supreme practice.

We also often speak of ｄａｍｃｉｇ, ｓａｍａｙａ, or ‘promise.’ When you receive some Tantric teaching, an initiation, you will be told that today you have received an initiation, you must promise and apply the method of transformation at least once every day. If you cannot do the long transformation practice, then you do something simpler. In order to integrate that transformation into your own energy, at least recite the mantra seven times or twenty one times a day. And many other relative samaya of this kind exist, which is an aspect of Tantrism.

That which is called samaya in Tantrism is called a vow in the Sūtra. For example in the Sūtra, one takes the vow of not drinking. When people see a glass of wine, they immediately become afraid, as if should they not be careful, they may transgress and drink that wine. It is as if one is taken over by the wine, and has to run away from it. One commits oneself heavily to the vow. These are examples of vows and samaya.

In the Dzogchen teaching, the samaya is to stay in the state of じじん.va. The master makes you understand that finding yourself relaxed in the state of じじん.va is the real condition. Everything else, when we judge, or create from the mind and enter into limits, is false, not real. The master does not tell you to leave your real condition and make up as much falsity as possible. On the contrary, he will try to make you understand the relative conditions, and that the real condition is to find oneself in the state of じじん.va. At any moment when you are not distracted, try to find yourself in that state; or when you are distracted, gradually bit by bit notice that you are distracted.

What does “being distracted” mean? Usually we think that distraction means we listen to something here and do not notice something else happening there. That is one kind of distraction, but that is not all. Here, distraction is the mind and everything which the mind creates, which we follow. When we are in the
state of contemplation, a lot of thoughts arise but we do not follow them, almost as if we have become some sort of a guard who notices everything that is going on around us. In that moment, we are not distracted because we notice everything that is happening. That is called presence. The state of ji'zinva is, therefore, the continuity of finding oneself in this presence. It does not mean getting rid of or blocking anything. When we are not present in that but are judging, thinking and following thoughts, that is called distraction. So the samaya of Dzogchen is to try not to be distracted and that is all there is. But when we are distracted, that does not mean we have broken our samaya. Samaya is the attempt of not to be distracted, which is also what we call the practice and the Guru Yoga.

There are two ways of trying not to be distracted. One way is to develop one's capacity of contemplation and gradually integrate everything into that presence. The final point for a Dzogchen practitioner is called diñnezin koryug qenbo (ting.nge. 'dzin. 'khor.yug. chen.po.), the 'Great Contemplation.' But this way of not being distracted implies great capacity for contemplation. Capacity here means the ability to apply and develop this non-distraction. Until one has developed that, there is another way of not distracting oneself, which works with the mind. Working with the mind here does not mean judging or creating anything. Rather, it is to have a minimal degree of attention and tension, in order not to be distracted. If we have any tension, it is always linked to the mind. Though the tension is not the goal, nevertheless it is very useful for developing the capacity of non-distraction in contemplation. One pays a little attention in order not to be distracted. A little tension is thus created from this, but one must not wind oneself up. Otherwise you will achieve the opposite result. Saying "I must not be distracted" all the time turn the whole thing into a struggle, and you will become uptight. That is why in the middle of that tension, there must be some relaxation in order to make it a positive help for contemplation.
Take an example from normal daily life, say, I think I am going out now. That is a thought. As that thought arises, I can recognise it as such, because I know I am thinking that I want to go out. With this recognition, the thought is not blocked, nor has it disappeared. It simply continues. Now the principle is that I do not want to be distracted. I maintain this attention, while also being relaxed internally. I get up and go out. While I go out and come back, I try always to be present in the that attention. That is a very important practice. We are not talking about position or something very complicated; simply walking out, moving a bit, doing something, but trying to be present in it. It is not so easy in the beginning, but it is not that difficult either. Anything can be learnt. Once it is learnt, it becomes easy. First one learns it with movement, then one learns with the voice.

When I am talking to people, reasoning and thinking with my mind, I can talk for one or two hours without being distracted. What does this mean? All the aspects of body, voice and mind can be integrated into that state. Many say, how can that be possible? How can I do that if I have to think? I think with my mind, but my mind is like the reflection in the mirror. It does not mean that thereby I have to ignore the pure, clear and limpid quality and capacity of the mirror. It does not mean that I must be dualistically outside the mirror and someone else is observing the reflection. I can also be the mirror and have the capacity to reflect.

That’s why it is said in the fourth donba, agreement of meaning, that the principle is not mind but wisdom. Wisdom means the state of rigba, presence. The state of presence of rigba is beyond the mind. Beyond the mind does not mean that the mind has nothing to do with it. What is the relationship between the clarity, purity and limpidity of the mirror and the reflections? The capacity of the mirror is beyond the reflections because the reflections are dependent on what is in front of the mirror. If we have a beautiful flower in front of the mirror, it will reflect
a flower. If we put a pig in front, it will reflect a pig. Beautiful or ugly, whatever is put in front of the mirror will manifest as a reflection. Relatively, it is distinguished by its colour or form. But one cannot say that that which is reflected is the totality of the nature of the mirror, nor can one say that because the nature of one’s reflection is “beyond” the reflection, the reflection is not included.

To reflect is the qualification of the mirror. It does not matter if the mirror reflects a pig or a flower, something beautiful or ugly. The principle is that it reflects. If one is ignorant of the capacity of the mirror, and is at the level of dualism, then one is outside the mirror looking at the reflection, ignorant of the nature of the mirror. That is the meaning of ignorance and the meaning of the state of rigba. The state of rigba and the mind are, therefore, two different things. When one does not know the real condition, then there is subject and object, and of course I like to see the flower but dislike the pig.

When one is in that state at that moment, or tries to be in that state, then THAT IS ALL in Dzogchen. You do not have to sit down with eyes closed, or open or whatever. Rather, wherever you are, try to be in that presence and not to be distracted. In this way we develop through practice, and we integrate the practice through the state of jìxìnvā.

5.3 The Practice

The practice in Dzogchen semdè begins with the fixation on an object such as a letter A. One then goes on to fix without an object. Gradually one is brought into a state of calm, or xìnás. In the Rigbai Kujyūg, there is not any specific explanation of how you can arrive at contemplation through fixation. You can use this method if you wish, but with regard to the practice, the Rigbai Kujyūg says that, in order to find oneself in the state of jìxìnvā, it is a matter of being present. In a state of presence, without changing or altering the position of the body, the voice
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or the mind, one relaxes. Relaxing does not mean allowing yourself to become sleepy. You are not fainting away. The senses are perfectly present, and the presence of the functions of the senses signifies clarity. This is what we mean by contemplation. At this level, we relax. In order to know whether we are in the state of jūxīnva or not while relaxing, there is an explanation of how the various experiences manifest.

5.3.1 Yóvai Ñam (g.yo.ba’i. nyams)

The first experience is called yóvai ñam, ‘experience of movement.’ The person seems to experience more movement of thoughts. One may wonder how it can be possible that when one does meditation like xīnās, instead of becoming more calm, there is more movement. What happens is that we are not correcting or creating anything. We are not controlling the position of the body or the breathing. We are just relaxed with presence. The fact is that the observed movement is not increasing; what is already is manifesting. Since the moment of birth, we have been winding ourselves up with reasoning, thoughts and all our confusions. Even if we think about doing a practice, we immediately start worrying about what we should be doing. What should happen now? What is happening next? Am I making a mistake? And so it goes on. The only thing we seem to know is how to worry ourselves. Not only do we wind ourselves up, but we have wound ourselves up infinitely already, so we have actually arrived at infinite confusion. Since we are already so confused, we do not even notice that we are confused!

When I go to the faculty meeting in the university, all the professors there smoke at least one cigarette, some of them two cigarettes. The windows are all closed, because in Naples, if the windows in the conference room are open, you cannot hear a thing. Even those who do not smoke are obliged to take in the smoke of the other professors. A person who does not smoke is hit by this even more. The double cigarette smokers are perfectly
comfortable in there. Similarly, because we are so wound up, we do not even know that we are in such a state any more. We do not even notice that we have so much mental confusion and movement in our mind. The moment we begin to relax, such movement manifests. Suddenly we notice how confused we are and think that we are developing the confusion at this moment. On the contrary, we are just beginning to notice the manifestation of how things are. Up until this point, we have been too agitated and wound up in our mind to notice it. Now we are like a cloudy well that is allowed to stand still for a while. It slowly becomes clear. Inside this well there are many types of frogs, fish, insects and worms. These creatures were there before but we did not see them because the water was too agitated. As the water settles down, we can see them all. In the same way, we notice the movement of our mind because we are relaxed. That is why there is the experience of yóva, movement.

What do you have to do with the movement? The only thing you have to do is to relax internally. If there is the slightest tension, just relax. Pay no attention to the movement; you can always have it, so do not get charged up by them. If you get charged up, that means you are distracted. If I see somebody and think, 'How nasty he is!' it is because I am distracted. I am thinking that here I am, there he is, he is nasty. If I am not distracted but simply present, I am here, he is there, why is he nasty? Even if he does seem nasty, it does not result in anything because there is no way I can become annoyed and the situation does not become heavy. That is why, whatever movement there is, there is no importance in it. Just be internally relaxed. This is called jixínva without any attention.

Relaxing does not mean thinking of relaxing. Relaxing internally means you should know what is happening but not get charged up about it. Observe if there is any tension. If there is, let go, but do not go to sleep: remain present and relax.

Do not do this practice for a long time because we are very used to an extremely agitated mind. Do this for a short time.
Then let yourself be distracted a little, as is your usual habit, then repeat this process many times. This is the way to begin the practice of *jëxínva*.

You do not have to take any particular position of practice, since *jëxínva* is like the *jogxág*, the position is as it comes. In Tantrism, for example, through the control of the breathing etc., one controls the mind. But in the practice of *jëxínva* in *Rigbai Kujyüg*, the breathing itself comes naturally. It is not necessary to control anything, just remain in this state of relaxed presence.

### 5.3.2 The Two Defects of Practice

*Jyïñva* (*bying.ba.*) and *gódba* (*rgod.pa.*) are the two main defects which often arise during practice. *Jyïñva* means that through relaxing, you become sleepy. You want to do some contemplation, but after a couple of seconds, you fall asleep. This is called *jyïñva*. On the other hand, if you want to do some contemplation but cannot succeed because you are agitated, this is called *gódba*. These two defects are respectively due to two different secondary causes. Secondary causes are linked to circumstances. The circumstances may be such that you are very relaxed in a warm place, and you have eaten a heavy meal with a bottle of good wine. For sure you will feel sleepy. If you have a lot of thoughts and movement, then *gódba*, agitation, will arise in you.

If you know how to relax internally with presence, then you can overcome the movement of agitation easily. If you want you can remain in a quiet place in silence for a while to do the practice. You can also try doing this practice during certain activities, such as walking, by relaxing internally. Generally speaking, however, since we are very nervous and confused, we should start this practice in a quiet place. For those who are more advanced in the practice, with greater capacity, and are able to integrate more, they can do it in a place where there is more confusion. A Dzogchen practitioner is not somebody who always runs away to a mountain top or hides in a cave like a marmot.
There is an aspect of the Dzogchen practice called the jogzág of vision. ‘Vision’ includes what we see with the eyes as well as the perception of other senses. We can remain quietly in a room without even a fly buzzing. We may be listening to some beautiful classical music, or some nerve-racking heavy rock music, or some terrible noise like that from a factory or the railway station. These different types of sounds are also part of our ‘vision.’ We also have our other senses, such as smell. We may smell something delicate like a rose or some wonderful French perfume. Or we may smell something rotten if we pass a toilet. These are all called visions related to our sense of sight, hearing, smell, etc, and we have good, bad or neutral relationships with them. When one is in the jogzág of vision, which is also the state of jii'xinva, these ‘visions’ are said to be ornaments of one’s own state. As mentioned in the second verse of the Rigbai Kujuyüg, they are said to be qaxas, part of the manifestation of the primordial state. There is nothing to accept or reject because this is the condition of things as they are. If one finds oneself integrated in this state, it is called the state of contemplation.

5.3.3 Tobbai Ñam (thob-pa'i. nyams.)

Tobbai ñam, ‘experience of obtainment,’ means that though there is movement arising, nevertheless, we are able to continue to relax. When we can remain in this presence, we continue for a long time. If you are not very present, it is easy to be disturbed again. But if you are present and are internally relaxed, you can succeed in continuing. Finding yourself in this condition is called the tobbai ñam. What should you do? In the Rigbai Kujuyüg, there is no explanation of how or what one should do. You have to understand the characteristics of the experience, then apply and develop the practice. All you have to do is to find a way of integrating your practice into daily life.

Practically speaking, we can categorise the experiences into two types. The first is the experience of yóva, movement. Move-
ment of thoughts arises when we relax. We do not need to find any antidote or to carry out any transformation. Instead, we know the condition of things and relax internally without going to sleep or losing presence. Relaxed with presence, that is how we practise with the experience of movement. As you continue in the state of *jīśīnva*, you may succeed for a long time. You still need a certain commitment to continue in the presence, otherwise, you might fall into the defects of sleepiness or agitation. When you manage to continue in this way, you'll find the experience of obtainment. Following that, there will be something else to be improved. These experiences are still very much at a relative level.

The *Rigbai Kujyūg*, being such a short text, does not have a long explanation as found in the Dzogchen *semdé*. What we explain here is an elaboration, and the following examples, as generally explained in the Dzogchen *semdé*,7 are always valid.

5.3.4 First Ŝam

The first experience is said to be 'like a waterfall.' In a waterfall there is a lot of movement and a lot of noise, and when the water falls to the bottom, it splashes all over the place. It means that we have a lot of confusion and we notice the condition of the confusion as it is. If we are in that presence, we will not be conditioned by movement. The Dzogchen *semdé* calls it the state of *násba* (*gnas.pa.*), 'calm.' It is not to say that all movement disappears. To think that a state of calm is the state of contemplation is a mistake. Nobody is ever in a state where the mind is not functioning or energy is not manifesting. The quality of the mirror is that it can reflect, because if it does not, it is not a mirror. We have to discover and find ourselves in that condition. The movement then will no longer have the power to disturb us. If we are disturbed by movement or thoughts,

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7From the text *dámṇag zöd* (*gdam.ngag. mdzod.*) vol I, by Jamgon Kong­trul.
everything becomes heavy. There is no way we can be relaxed when distracted in this manner. Even if we try to relax, it is not true relaxation. That is why we should relax internally in the middle of the movement.

5.3.5 Second Īnam

The second experience occurs when one is already in the state of nāsba. In this state, certain characteristic experiences develop. Following from the example in the first experience, the water that has gone down the waterfall becomes like a stream. A stream makes some noise and some movement but is not as violent as a waterfall. There is still movement but it is more co-ordinated and harmonised.

When one is present, at that moment one is no longer disturbed by the defect of being sleepy or agitated. But if one is not continuously present, it is still easy to be distracted. That is the example of the stream. That is the second kind of experience, tobbai īnam, or the experience of obtainment, as explained in the Rigbai Kujaug. One finds oneself in the state of calm. But if one stays too relaxed in that state for too long, or if there is a strong movement, one is immediately distracted. Even so, nevertheless one has obtained the capacity to continue in presence.

5.3.6 Third Īnam

There is an explanation of another experience called gōmbai īnam (goms.pa’i. nyams), ‘experience of habit.’ If I do something and repeat the process many times, then I become very familiar with it and I no longer have to look at, or bother with, what is happening. Things seem to happen spontaneously. Being in this experience means being relaxed with presence in any relative condition of the body, voice and mind. Even though causes may arise for the sleepy state or the agitated state, nevertheless we are able to overcome them and continue in this relaxed presence, capable of contemplating in this state for a long time without
being distracted. Using the example from before, the stream we had previously now becomes a river. The river is still flowing. There is still some movement. This is the experience of habit.

5.3.7 Fourth Ńam

The next experience is the danbai Ńam (brtan.pa’i. nyams.), ‘experience of stability.’ It means that even if one has many contacts with different secondary causes, one is able to remain in this presence undisturbed. In the Dzogchen semdé, after the state of násba, there is the state of miyóva (mi.g.yo.ba.). In general many schools describe xínás (zhi.gnas.) and lhagtön (lhag.mthong.) as different ways in which body, voice and mind manifest. In the Sūtra, for example, lhagtön is meant to arise within us, while continuing only the practice of xínás, whereas in the tradition more linked to Tantrism, as in the Anuttara Tantra, lhagtön is meant to be the realization of what one is applying in the transformation, giving rise to the realization of clarity, or development in our manifestation of energy like in the channels and cakras. Xínás is taken to be emptiness and lhagtön is taken to be energy or clarity. The union of the two is called zilhag sūñjug (zhi.lhag. zung.’jug.), the union of xínás and lhagtön, also known as nándoṅ sūñjug (snang.stong. zung.’jug.), the union of vision and emptiness. In the Dzogchen semdé, lhagtön is taken to be the state of miyóva. Miyóva means ‘no more movement.’ No more movement does not mean one is fixed and stationary. Movement refers to both the movement of the body and of the energy. It also represents our prāṇa, vital energy, and above all, our karmic prāṇa. Associated with the mind, this combination creates problems. This energy does not leave a person alone, but disturbs him. Miyóva does not mean that this energy has been cancelled out, but rather that it can no longer disturb us. Aspects of our body, voice and mind which might have disturbed

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us no longer have the power to do so. Now we are in the nature of the mirror, because whether the reflections are beautiful or ugly, they cannot disturb the nature of the mirror. That is one of the characteristic outcomes of integration.

When a person following the Buddhist Sūtra starts to do meditation, he tries to find internal peace and calm. For example, a practitioner is somewhere near the noise of a car. He feels that he cannot stay there to do the practice of xiṇās because he cannot remain calm. As soon as he gets into the state of calm, the car starts making a noise. So after a while, he goes to live on a mountain-top. This is a typical course of action for one who only strives to stay in the state of calm, xiṇās. For beginners, if there are thoughts and movement in their meditation, they are disturbed by it and annoyed about it. Why is that so? Because they have not integrated with all the movements. They are not yet in this presence. They are still working very much with experience. That is why the Sūtra does not speak of rigba, which is specifically related to the way of doing meditation and contemplation in Dzogchen.

We have five senses and the objects of the five senses. If I hear a sound, it is an object of one of my senses, and I consider that sound as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. If it is a sound like classical music which does not disturb, then I say it is pleasant. If a car makes a horrible noise, then I say that it is disturbing. That means we still have the consideration of nice and nasty, like or dislike, and we have not integrated with the object. When we are in the state of the nature of the mirror, then this concept no longer exists. Whether a mirror reflects something beautiful or something ugly, there is no difference between them. Integration means this: presence, without creating the idea of subject and object.

In the process of integration, we first integrate with the mind, then with energy and then with the material body. This is because we live in a karmic condition. Everything we see and touch is the result of our karma. To dissolve the karmic condition and
integrate it into our true condition takes time. It is not sufficient to know that ice comes from water. If we throw a glass of water onto somebody's head, it will not hurt. But if we take a glass of water that has turned into ice, and throw it on somebody's head, we are not going to stop it hurting him by saying, "You know this as ice, but its origin is water." This is the result of karma. Even though we may know the real meaning, it does not correspond to our condition. That is why we develop by integrating the mind, voice and body in that order.

When one is in the state of *miyóva* and is in the state of contemplation, one is first of all integrating with the mind. When one succeeds in integrating with the energy, then phenomena known as miracles can happen. The *danbai ſam*, or experience of stability, is, therefore, the same as *miyóva*.

Following the previous example, the river finally becomes the ocean. Above the ocean there are all kinds of movements. Birds fly, and all sorts of boats sail, and in the ocean there are also sharks or small fish. Even though there are boats and fish, however much they move, they cannot agitate the sea. Through our presence, we notice all the movements through our senses. Whatever the circumstances, whatever contacts our senses have with causes, there is no disturbance, only calm. This is called the experience of stability.

### 5.3.8 Fifth ſam

At the end there is the *târquynbai ſam* (*mthar.phyn.pai. nyams.*), 'experience of accomplishment,' which indicates to the practitioner that now he is in the state of integration. His presence is very precise. An example is that of somebody going to sleep at night. At night, when we sleep, we do the night practice\(^9\). We visualize something like a white A to continue this pres-

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ence. The goal of this practice is to be in the presence of jixínvā. Regardless of the practice one does, when one falls asleep, automatically presence arises. Or if one has become familiar with, is used to and is stable with the presence during the day, then as soon as one falls asleep and is in the dream state in which the mind begins to function, presence is activated. That is what we called tārqyinbai ūnam, the final experience of accomplishment.

Tārqyin means something is being accomplished. This experience is one that indicates that a person has accomplished the practice. Accomplishment refers to a person’s ability to apply this state of contemplation in any circumstances and any situation. This means that one is present in all circumstances, dead or alive. The moment one is in the state of the bārdo\textsuperscript{10}, the manifestation of Svabhavakāya is ready instantly. The practice called jixínvā is this continuation of presence.

### 5.3.9 Summary of practice

In general when we explain the way to continue in the state of contemplation, we relate it to our condition. Contemplation is related to emptiness, or to sensation or clarity, because there are the characteristic states of nāsba, calm, and gyūva (’gyu.ba.), movement. For example, if a thought arises and we do not follow this thought, we cannot say anything about where it came from, where it is now and where it is going. The appearance is there, but if one observes this thought to find out where it is, it disappears. Nature itself is like this. ‘The essence is empty’ means this. It is true not only of our thoughts, but also of our material body. For example, we may have a headache. If all we are aware of is how horrible it feels, then it seems that we really have a headache. We are not pretending and are feeling it. But if we observe this pain, where is it? What is it? We find nothing. If we look at it that way, perhaps we will feel less pain.

This is because the essence is empty, so though it manifests as something we cannot find it.

When we speak of \textit{násba}, calm, which is the characteristic of nature, it means empty. There is nothing to confirm. That is what the Buddhist Sūtra speaks about: absolute emptiness. When one searches mentally, one finds emptiness; and if one remains in that state of calm, it is called \textit{násba}. People who do \textit{xínás} try to find themselves in this state of calm. But then there is \textit{gyuva}, the characteristic of which is movement. When a thought arises, we look at it and there is nothing. Emptiness is there, but thoughts continue to arise.

Of the four \textit{diññezin}, or the four ‘contemplations,’ spoken of in the Dzogchen \textit{semdé}, the first is \textit{násba diññezin}, ‘the contemplation of calm,’ linked to \textit{xínás}, the state of calm. But finding oneself in the state of calm is not contemplation. It is an experience. In \textit{semdé}, the contemplation of calm is spoken of because when a practitioner is in the state of calm, the master indicates that this is an experience. The disciple has to discover who is in this state of calm. There is a presence, and remaining in that presence is the discovery of the contemplation of \textit{násba}. \textit{Násba} is the same as \textit{şunyatā}, emptiness. Knowing that this emptiness is an experience, one stays in the presence of \textit{rigba} and that is contemplation.

Many people wonder whether the state of \textit{şunyatā} in the Buddhist Sūtra is the same as the state of contemplation in Dzogchen. One cannot say either they are or they are not the same, because it depends on who is in this \textit{şunyatā}. If one is in the state of presence in the state of \textit{şunyatā}, then it is the same as contemplation. If one is using reasoning to arrive at emptiness and is just staying in the state of calm, then that is not the same as contemplation.

The principle in Dzogchen is \textit{rigba}. \textit{Rigba} means the recognition of presence. \textit{Rigba} can be accompanied by various kinds of experience, especially one’s experience of \textit{násba} and \textit{gyuva}. There is a very important phrase by Gárab Dórje. He said,
“Observe if thoughts or movement arises.” Observe means being present. The arising of thoughts or movement means *gyüwa*. When observed, the movement—thoughts—disappears. When the movement disappears one finds oneself in the state of calm. So there must not be any difference. This means that when doing meditation, one must not look for a state of calm, because calm is an experience, not contemplation. That is why Garab Dórje said, “There is no difference between the arising of movement and the state of calm.” But if we just look at the experience, no one can say that there is no difference. Whether it is calm, movement, or any one of hundreds of experiences, the important thing is to know the difference between experience and presence. When we know what is meant by *rigpa*, we ought to know how to integrate with all these aspects in our presence. Then at last we can discover what Garab Dórje meant by “No difference between movement and the calm state.”
Chapter 6

Long Commentary On The Last Two Verses

Sīnbas zolvai na bdāṇde;
Lhungis nāsba xāgba yīn.

Since everything is complete in itself, abandoning the illness of efforts, One remains effortlessly with presence in the state of Contemplation.

The last two lines explain the fruit of our practice, and our attitude and behaviour. Attitude is very important in Dzogchen. It is not because there are rules about what you should or should not do. Learning the Dzogchen teaching means becoming responsible for oneself. No one is going to tell you what to do. The teaching makes you understand that you must be responsible for yourself. This is an aspect of awareness and the presence of awareness. With that we can integrate our knowledge of contemplation into daily life. This is why attitude is important.

When we say integrating contemplation into attitude, first of all we must thoroughly understand what contemplation is. When we have that experience, we must try to find ourselves in a state of presence all the time. The principle of samaya, Guru
Yoga, and so on, is in that presence. That is not a denial of the value of doing other practices. The principle of Dzogchen is called *majosba*, ‘without correcting or conditioning,’ to continue *as it is*. But many people misunderstand this. Instead of staying relaxed in that presence, they become lazy. They think that if they do Dzogchen practice, in order not to condition themselves, they must not do anything. A Dzogchen master teaches and transmits this state of relaxation, explains how to remain in the state of presence and how not to wind yourself up. He does not tell people to stay in a state of distraction. That is the danger of misunderstanding the teaching.

When the master Padmasambhava taught the Dzogchen teaching, he said that the way of seeing is to follow Dzogchen, but behaviour should not. Rather, you should follow the Vinaya or the Mahāyāna in your behaviour. Padmasambhava did not consider it wrong to be responsible for oneself. It is a matter of being careful not to confuse things. If one understands what the teaching is for, then one must remember the goal.

There was a great Dzogchen master, Nūbqen Saṅgyās Yexes (*gnubs.chen. sangs.rgyas. yeshes.*) who was a disciple of Padmasambhava. He introduced the Anuyoga teachings to Tibet, and was a great scholar. He wrote a wonderful book which we still have today, called *Sàmdan Migdrón (bsam.gtan. mig.sgron.)*, ‘The Light of the Eye for Contemplation.’ One of the most detailed explanations in it is on Atiyoga, or Dzogchen. At one point it says that many teachers have taught that the principle of *majosba* does not lead to the state of contemplation. They may claim that they are teaching Dzogchen, but they are actually telling people to make many corrections. This is an error, like shooting an arrow without knowing what he is aiming at. You must not do things in that way if you are learning Dzogchen. You must know what the goal is. At the same time, you must know what your own capacity is. If I am incapable of living by awareness, cannot be responsible for myself, then conditioning myself in some way or limiting myself a little is not such a bad
thing. I cannot make it on my own, but I also know that this limitation is not the true final point. So I am not confused. I am just co-operating with myself.

Take drinking as an example. Someone who is a drunkard and always drinks until he is half crazy might know that it is not good for his health and his clarity of mind. He may have discovered that it is harmful to carry on in this way. That is called awareness. But he cannot make this awareness function because he is an alcoholic and has this urge to drink. In this case, although he is aware of it, he cannot overcome it. So he goes to take a vow from a master. Or he commits himself, by saying that he is not going to drink any more. He knows well that the principle is not the taking of a vow or limiting himself. But it is necessary at the moment and he is doing it with awareness. Using the body to control the mind or the mind to control the body, in one way or another, he tries to overcome his drink problem. For instance, the moment he picks up a bottle with his left hand, his right hand straight away gets a stick and hits it. This is one way of doing things. So it does not mean that you must not renounce certain things or follow rules. The most important thing is to be aware of the circumstances, and our capacity in relation to them.

In the Dzogchen teachings, we often talk about the capacity of the individual. Dzogchen is said to be a teaching for people with superior capacity. A person with superior capacity is not someone who is enlightened, or who has the ability to do everything. Capacity is relative to the circumstances where it is needed. If we have awareness, but this awareness is not working in practice, then we should know how to intervene in some way. In other words, we should know how to build up the necessary capacity according to the circumstances.

Although awareness is very important, it is not as important as presence. Sometimes awareness means only a certain knowledge. For example, you may know what the consequences of a certain action are, and that is the awareness of these conse-
Awareness and Presence of Awareness

quences. If I know that if I take some poison I will die, this is called ‘having the awareness of the consequence of taking poison.’ But if that awareness is not present in me, then it is just a piece of knowledge. Many people have died taking poison although they know it is poison. They take it because their attention is distracted. Such distraction is not only due to confusing circumstances but also due to passions such as anger.

Two persons are said to be in love. There is a time when it looks as if they cannot be separated. It seems that they are always embracing each other. When they eat, they even have to sit on the same chair. They do not know that what they are doing is false, because they are blinded by passion. If they sit on the same chair embracing each other when they are old, perhaps their love is real. But they are unlikely to be doing that because that falsification only goes on for the first year, or the first month, or only for the first few weeks. Afterwards, it becomes a little stale. The sensation begins to fade. It is no longer comfortable sitting on the same chair. It is even a drag if the two chairs are too near each other. They do not even want to sleep too close together because it is sweaty and sticky. They do not like stroking each other because it is rough on the hand. That is how it usually develops. Then it is like in films when people get angry, they grab a bottle of whisky and drink it straight down defiantly. Or if they know there is a bottle of poison around, they drink that instead, and they think they are making a point. This is the other kind of distraction: distraction by passion. There are many such kinds of distraction by passion in life. Even though there is awareness, it does not work.

A Dzogchen practitioner has to have this presence in mind, and try to be aware. He or she should know what the real condition is and should not falsify it. Relationships between people are an example of how practitioners should know what their condition really is. Some may wonder, “What is that to do with contemplation? It is not meditation.” Actually it is very important. If two people co-operate with each other and understand
each other, then it can be an advantage for them. A lack of understanding and co-operation creates problems, and can become serious obstacles if the people involved are practitioners.

In life, it is natural for a man and a woman to become a couple. Since that is the natural way, we have to be aware of the situation. If there are two practitioners together, they should not base their relationship on blind passion, because such a relationship is false and the consequences can be very heavy. Passions produce negative karma, so practitioners must be aware of them.

One does not have to renounce passion or refuse to recognise its value. If one knows the nature of passion, one can integrate that with practice. In Tantrism, passions are transformed into wisdom. Likewise in Dzogchen, if one knows how to be in the state of jñānā, then this presence is linked to all experiences. All our sensations and our circumstances linked to the passions are experiences. It is not necessary to devalue the passions. It does not mean that a practitioner should become a piece of stone. It is the opposite: a practitioner must have all the manifestations of this energy and notice it, and integrate it with contemplation. The point is not to be distracted by it. In terms of attitude, the integration of contemplation into our life is based on this presence. That is why we try to be present in life as it is.

Śīnbas means from the very beginning everything is fulfilled, accomplished. There is nothing to build or to do. There is no effort, because effort is something linked with the mind. If one does not have that knowledge or that knowledge is not present, then one must try to have it. Until one has that capacity, one must try in different ways to build up that capacity. In this case, one should not think that in Dzogchen effort and learning are all negated.

Everyone must do their best. Doing one's best means knowing oneself, knowing one's own capacity. A very important saying in Dzogchen is “Try to help yourself and collaborate with yourself.” One can only do so by knowing one's own condition.
Our Real Condition and Limits

If I lack a certain capacity, then I should try to build it up. If I am confused, I should give myself some space. If I am hungry, I should eat. If I am tired and wound up, I must relax, rest or sleep. That means I know my condition. I am not trying to force myself. If I actually do something like whacking my left hand with my right hand, I do that only with the understanding of the goal. In this way, we can cultivate an attitude of being responsible for ourselves, rather than allowing someone else to tell us what to do. Neither is it the same as thinking that one must not do something, or else the outcome of that negative karma is going to be heavy. In that case, it is only fear that is stopping one's action. That point of view is called the way of renunciation, and is only for overcoming negative causes. That outlook is not sufficient for Dzogchen, where one has to understand the nature of everything.

Understanding the nature does not mean only the understanding of the nature of the mind. There is the relative condition of body, voice and mind, which is even more important than the nature of the mind. Whenever people hear of 'the nature of mind' and 'beyond concept' etc., they think, "How profound this is!" The real condition is, however, much more than talking about the nature of the mind. It is much better to know our own condition, then it becomes meaningful to talk about the nature of the mind. Without understanding what the mind is, how can one really understand the nature of the mind? The mind is something we discover for ourselves. It is linked to our physical energy and our physical body. It is linked to the body in the same way that the material body is linked to the material world. Because of this, we have many limits. If it is cold, we have to cover ourselves up. If we are hungry, we have to eat. It is not enough to think that eating and not eating are the same, or to say that in the nature of the mind, food does not exist. It does not apply because we have a material body which is linked to the material world. If something is big, it is not small. If it is white, it is not black. These are our limits. Since
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this is a limited material world we are living in, this is what we must concretely understand first. Following that, talking about the nature of the mirror can make sense because the aspects of body, voice and mind are all limited like the reflections in the mirror. If we can understand the aspects of our existence, then we have the possibility to understand its nature.

When we learn and apply practices in Tantrism, OM, AH and HUM are used to represent the three states of body, voice and mind, called the 'three vajra.' In this case, the real condition, and not the relative level, of body, voice and mind are referred to. This idea, too, will become meaningful if we know our relative condition. It is better to observe our existence and discover what is its condition. When we have discovered the limits and characteristics of our conditions, then we can really be aware of our existence. We can also be aware of the falsification we create all the time, as well as of the real condition. This is of the greatest importance for a Dzogchen practitioner, because even if one is doing a practice, without this awareness it is not real. Talking about integration will make no sense. It will just be the mind thinking that "I want to integrate these, everything seems to be the same in its nature." It does not correspond in practice.

That is what

sīnbas zolvai nad baṅde

means: it is important to find oneself beyond the effort which is like an illness. At any given moment, finding oneself in that presence is the fruit, which is also contemplation. In the Dzogchen semdê, the final result is called lhundrûb. Lhundrûb is not just some concept about realization, and it is not the qualification or description of a realized practitioner. It means that at all moments, our aspects of body, voice and mind are integrated into contemplation. Whenever we are sleeping, walking, eating or any other moment, it is integrated into contemplation. That is how and what a practitioner has to develop. Doing a long retreat or going somewhere quiet to live for a long time is not
the important thing. You can if you feel like doing it, or have the need for it, especially if you are incapable of integrating your practice into daily life, because you must do everything possible to achieve this integration. But the most important thing is to have a very precise experience of contemplation. For that, one must observe oneself.

Every time a master explains or transmits the teachings, or when you read something, you should examine yourself to see if you really understand. If you remain in doubt, not knowing if you are in the state of contemplation or not, there are many types of practice like the semzin (sems.'dzin.)\(^1\) to make this certain. I have explained that there are many kinds of experience and that you must not confuse the experience with the presence in it. Try to get some experience from the practice. You do not have to do anything specific; you can do any kind of practice. You will then understand what is meant by experience. Having had all these experiences, one is more certain of what contemplation is. We also often do practice together, like Guru Yoga, linking that with direct transmission. Every time we do the practice of the Song of the Vajra together, the practice itself is the transmission. The practice and the transmission are linked with experience. So everyone does his best and must try to discover and have a real experience of contemplation.

Speaking of attitude in Dzogchen, we say that at the beginning a practitioner has to have the attitude of a bee. A bee goes to all kinds of flowers, red, blue, green or black. When it smells a scent, it knows there is nectar. Likewise a Dzogchen practitioner must, firstly, have no limitations with regard to meeting teachers, whether they are real masters or not. In general, with regard to a master who teaches, there should be an attitude of respect. But a master is not just someone who stays in a special place and lets others think that they are the disciples. If I have to give teachings to two or three hundred people, surely I have

\(^1\)Semzin is a set of practices belonging to the Upadeśa (see pp 120) series of Dzogchen.
to sit somewhere in order to explain. A master cannot talk to a few hundred people one by one, which is why here it seems a bit like in a theatre where actors are doing something and people are watching. That is not the way of being for a master and it is not exactly how the relationship between the master and the disciple should be.

Transmission can be direct or oral. Oral transmission takes place when two people talk to each other. It could be any kind of conversation. The subject does not have to be something like a sacred text which the master reads from beginning to end. For example, a master and a disciple come across a dead mouse and the master says, “Find out what this smells like.” If one understands, it could even be a stink, but that stink itself is still the transmission. We do not have to find a dead mouse. It does not mean one has to smell that stink. It is simply an example of the thousands of different things that exist. Through the experience of smelling a stink, a master can enable a person to understand what is meant by the state of contemplation and how it is different from experience. We can smell a dead rat. We do not have to pretend. We really do smell it. We say that it is not a good smell and it is unpleasant. We know that through our sense contacts and our judgements. But if the person who is smelling the stink is in that presence, the stink of a dead rat or the fragrance of French perfume is the same thing. If one is able to communicate that, then the stink of the dead rat is enough for the path. It means we must not create limits in the master/disciple relationship. Everything has got to be much looser. Neither do you have to think that the teaching is something sacred, something to do with lots of texts and books, because the principle of the teaching is the understanding of knowledge.

Gárab Dórje summed up the entire Dzogchen teaching in three statements, which form his famous testament. The first statement is

Ño raṅtogdu drad
or 'direct introduction.' Ño means a person's own condition as it is. The other words mean 'to introduce it directly to that person.' It means that in some way the master introduces the state of understanding and enables a person to understand his own state. Introduce the understanding of jìžìnvìa, our primordial state; that is the first statement. The second statement is

Tag jigtoqdu jad
(thag. gcig.thog.tu. gcad.),

or 'discover that understanding without any doubt.' Tag jig means 'one state,' this single presence. Even though there can be thousands of experiences, that one state is the same. One does not remain in doubt about that understanding. It is, therefore, not a decision or a belief. If somebody believes or decides upon something, it is false. One has to find this experience using different methods. Until we have direct experience of this understanding it is going to be false, because a decision by the mind is not the real state of rigba.

déŋ drōltogdu qa
(gdeng. grol.tog.tu. 'cha'.)

is the third statement, which means 'integrate that understanding into all circumstances in daily life and continue in this state in the knowledge.' Even though in the Dzogchen teachings there are hundreds of volumes of texts, Gáráb Dórje concluded and summarised them all in these three statements. That is why Dzogchen teaching is not in the words, it is an understanding. In some way, we have to have this understanding. All the tantra, luñ and hundreds of texts are relative. If we do the practice, we have a certain type of understanding, and these texts are useful because they explain different methods to enable us to have that experience and to develop that understanding. For that side of things, they are important.
The principal is our knowledge, not some convention of the teaching. This is more or less the essence of the Dzogchen teachings.
Gárab Dórje’s Testament in three statements. Calligraphy by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
Appendix A

A Brief Explanation of Tibetan Buddhist Traditions

There are many different types of teachings and traditions. In Tibet, there are Ňíŋmaba (Nyingmapa, rNying.ma.pa.), Gagyúdba (Kagyudpa, bKa’.brgyud.pa), Sakyaba (Sakyapa, Sa.skya.pa.), and Gélugba (Gelugpa, dge.lugs.pa.), the four main Buddhist sects, as well as the ancient Bönpo tradition. These four main traditions all claim that their sect is the most perfect. If they did not, there would not be different sects.

What is a sects? It does not refer to one particular path or method of teaching. A sect refers to a global set of Buddhist teachings in which different paths exist. Some people, for example, when they follow the Ňíŋmaba tradition, say that Ňíŋmaba is Dzogchen. It is not true. Ňíŋmaba also has Sūtra, Mahāyāna and Tantric teaching; it is a tradition with a global teaching. Similarly, there is also Sūtra and Tantra in Gélugba. As Tantrism is more developed in Tibet, all the Tibetan schools are exponents of Tantrism. However, if you follow a teaching in Tibetan Buddhism, or if you want to receive some important ini-
tiation such as Kālacakra, people will ask you if you have taken refuge or not. If you say no, they will ask you to take refuge first. This is because, globally speaking, the Hīnayāna teaching is represented by the refuge vow, and it has been integrated into Tibetan Buddhism. We must know the principles and the differences between the various types of teaching and traditions. Many people have a lot of confusion regarding the different titles, traditions, schools and methods. Some even think that there are differences in the real meaning of the teaching. Confusion is not the path for realization, so we must know the characteristic of each type of teaching we follow.

A.1 Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna: the Path of Renunciation

Hīnayāna teaching and Mahāyāna teaching belong to the Sūtra system. They are called the path of renunciation. The characteristic of this path is to renounce the cause of negativity. Whoever is interested in the Buddhist teaching and reads Buddhist books usually knows the Sūtra, which is the teaching actually spoken by Buddha Śākyamuni in his manifestation as human being. These explanations relate to our relative condition, so they work with and are intended to improve that condition. Sūtra is, therefore, a simpler form of teaching designed to be understood by ordinary people. In it, there is the teaching of the Four Noble Truths, which are found in both the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna tradition. The real meaning of the Four Noble Truths is not very difficult, but it can become very complicated when it is explained intellectually. Sometimes it is presented in three or four volumes, in the form of analysis. Buddha taught it to ordinary people, not as philosophy or a study. But today it has become the main traditional study of all schools, and if you learn the Four Noble Truths in the monastery, it becomes very complicated.
For example, many years ago I visited Switzerland and participated in some meetings of young Tibetans. They invited a lama to give some teaching. These young people feel that as they are Tibetans, they are Buddhist, even though they do not know what Buddhism is. So this lama, for two hours, explained the principle of the Four Noble Truths. But it was a very complicated and very intellectual explanation. I am sure most of these young people did not understand anything, because I spent many years in college studying Buddhist philosophy, and I could not understand when he explained. It only seemed that he had prepared well: analysis and words, which quotations from which book, which page, which line, etc. It means that he really studied a great deal. But if the Buddha had taught the Four Noble Truths that way, he would not have been able to communicate with peasants and ordinary people. Or if he had begun by talking about the nature of mind, then only intellectual people would have been able to understand. But then such people would never agree with him because everybody had their own limited ideas anyway! We are so used to comparing everything with our ideas, that an intellectual explanation can only become a problem, not an understanding.

A.1.1 The Four Noble Truths

The first thing that the Buddha taught was the First Noble Truth of Suffering. What does suffering mean? Suffering consists of whatever happens to our relative existence of body, voice and mind. We have our first real direct knowledge of suffering through our material body, because whatever problem we may have at the level of mind, or at the level of voice—energy, will first manifest at the grossest level of the body. It is very easy for us to understand the meaning of suffering at this level. We do not have to be a learned scholar capable of deep analysis to be able to understand this kind of suffering. We do not even need to have human consciousness to understand it; a dog or a cat
also knows what suffering is, because suffering is linked to our physical condition.

Since we do not enjoy suffering, why not try to seek a way out of it? In order to get out of suffering, we have to do some research into the cause of it. So Buddha taught the Second Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering. Using our reasoning power a little, we find that there is a cause to our suffering.

It is not enough just to discover the cause of suffering. We need to bring about the cessation of that cause. For example, supposing an individual has bellyache every day. He knows very well that his belly hurts, that he is suffering. If he is bothered by this disturbance, he has to discover the cause of it, or else he will continue to suffer. If he found that his bellyache is caused by bad food, he must do something about his discovery to stop his suffering. Thus the Buddha began to teach the Third Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering.

Finally, Buddha taught the benefits of the cessation of suffering and the consequence of the non-cessation of suffering. In this way he taught the law of cause and effect, the law of karma. If we need to bring about the cessation of suffering, what should we do? Many primary and secondary karmic causes exist, and there are ways of bringing about the cessation of these causes. But this is only working in a provisional way. If we want the complete and definitive cessation of suffering and the elimination of its causes, we must go beyond the relative condition entirely. That is why there arose the concept of absolute and relative truth. Both the Hīnayāna, the 'small vehicle,' and the Mahāyāna, the 'great vehicle,' traditions have the concept of the two truths, a main characteristic of the teaching in the Sūtra.

A characteristic of the relative level of the teaching is that Buddha Śākyamuni manifested as a human being to communicate the teaching to us human beings, and our way of understanding this level of the teaching is to apply the rules of moral behaviour. The basis of the approach in the Sūtra is the practice of the way of renunciation: by avoiding negative behaviour and
cultivating positive virtues, we can overcome our karma.

A.1.2 The Hīnayāna

The main concern of Hīnayāna teaching is, to avoid creating problems for others by controlling our own behaviour. So the first thing you do is to receive the refuge vow and keep certain rules. There are hundreds of rules to help us achieve this end. Buddha himself said, “Take the example of how you yourself feel, do not cause harm to others.” If somebody does something nasty to you, you notice it. Knowing what it is like to be disturbed, do not disturb others. The real sense of refuge is the acknowledgement of the path taught by Buddha for realization, and according to that path, you do certain actions and not others, and control your behaviour in that way.

When we take a Hīnayāna vow, we take it from this moment, now, until death. We do not take a vow from now until total realization. Why? Because a vow is linked to our present condition. It has to be applied through our behaviour, which comes to an end when we die. Our body goes to the cemetery and we are finished with that particular vow. If up until the moment of death we have maintained that vow purely, we have discharged a good action. There are no exceptions to the proper maintenance of such a vow. We do not vary it according to our own changing viewpoint. If there is a precise and genuine justification for handing a vow back, then there is no need to maintain it. Otherwise the vow remains binding from the moment we undertake it until the moment of our death. It is not correct to think that even though we have taken the vow, we are free to act differently according to our intention,

Later, the Hīnayāna system developed. Not only is the refuge vow given to monks and nuns, there is also the Upāsaka vow for lay people. It means that you can keep a vow with only one rule, such as not killing, or two rules, with the addition of not stealing and so on. Different levels are available, until you take
on the complete vow of a fully ordained monk or nun.

A.1.3 The Mahāyāna

The Mahāyāna teaching developed from the principle of intention. It was recognised that rules are important for stopping negative causes, but that is not sufficient. If we have good intentions, everything will have good effects. The Tibetan Buddhist master Jigmed Liṅba\(^1\) said that if our intention is good, then the path and the fruit will be good; if our intention is bad, the path and the fruit will also be bad. Thus we must train in good intention.

Today, in the tradition of Mahāyāna, there is the giving of a kind of vow, called the Bodhisattva vow. This is actually an influence from the Hīnayāna tradition. It was invented by someone later, because originally there was no such thing as a Bodhisattva vow. The principle of Mahāyāna is called labba (bshad.pa.), ‘training.’ There is the training of intelligence, the training of discipline which we need for co-ordinating our existence, and the training for our samadhi, or contemplation. These are the three principles in Mahāyāna. Mahāyāna is, therefore, not about self-control only, but is about being ready to help others. The Hīnayāna principle is to renounce all disturbance and harm to others, while the Mahāyāna principle is to be ready to go into action to benefit others. That is the main difference.

Mahāyāna is the cultivation of Bodhicitta, which means we check our intention in whatever we do, because it is very important in this particular teaching. To illustrate the principle of the Mahāyāna, there is this famous example of the story of a head merchant who had taken the Hīnayāna vow not to kill. He took a group of merchants on an expedition to an island to get jewels. On the way back, one of the merchants, a very bad and powerful man, wanted to kill all the others in order to have all the jewels for himself. The head merchant found out this man’s intention,

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\(^1\)Jigmed Lingpa, 'jigs.med. gling.pa. (1729–1798)
and, in order to stop the bad merchant from accumulating an infinitely heavy karma and to save everyone else’s life, he killed this evil merchant. But he felt a great deal of guilt because he broke his vow of not killing. As soon as he got back to dry land, he went to Buddha Śākyamuni to confess. Buddha Śākyamuni said, “You have indeed broken your vow, but you have not done anything negative. You did not kill with hatred or with anger, but with compassion, in order to save that man from the consequences of his greed, and in order to save the lives of others.” This example given in the Mahāyāna Sūtra illustrates the importance of intention. However, it certainly does not mean we should go out killing people with good intention!

In Mahāyāna teaching, there are two principles, mônba (smon. pa.) and gyüba (’gyug. pa.). Mônba is our intention to do something, and gyüba is the action we actually carry out. In The Guide to a Bodhisattva’s Way of Life (Bodhicaryāvatāra), the great master Śantideva explains that it is like having the intention to make a journey and actually packing your bags and going. The intention of our doing practice to benefit others is mônpa. But it is not enough just to have a good thought. One has to, in some way, enter into action. That is why usually, when people start a practice, they say that they want to realize themselves for the benefit of all other beings. That means they are not trying to arrive at realization only for their personal benefit. Using these words becomes a kind of mental training. That is what we mean by Bodhicitta. Whether one uses words or not, the important point is to have the right intention.

Generally people say that Mahāyāna is more important than Hīnayāna, as Mahāyāna means the ‘great vehicle’ and Hīnayāna the ‘lesser vehicle.’ This is a wrong idea. At the beginning, when the Buddha presented the teaching in terms of suffering, it was at a very low level for common people to understand and to apply. That is why it is called Hīna, or ‘lesser.’ Mahā, or ‘greater,’ means that you are not limited: you have the capacity to integrate more and to go beyond the limitations in your
existence if you know there is benefit. Both are from the Sūtra, the oral teaching of Buddha Śākyamuni. The teachings which Buddha Śākyamuni gave on earth to Indian people constitute Hīnayāna. Buddha can also, without any transformation, talk in a normal way and have contact with other beings who have more capacity, such as nāga and deva, in different dimensions. That is Mahāyāna. If people are capable of going further and applying Tantrism, it means that they have more capacity and knowledge of energy, because our existence also encompasses energy and mind. When we have the knowledge of the function of energy, we can discover the value of Tanric teaching. If we are ignorant of it or if we have no capacity to understand it, then the Sūtra method is more important for us. It depends on the capacity of the individual. We should not judge by saying one is more important than the other. Every teaching has perfect qualifications, and we cannot judge it as good or bad. We can only say something about the capacity of people who follow, and which teaching suits which kind of people.

Since Sūtra has always been the pillar in Buddhist teaching, if you want to present Buddhism, you must present the Sūtra. That is why when Tantric teaching is presented, it is often said that refuge and Boddhicitta must not be lacking. Actually we are incorporating the principles of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna into the practice. Nowadays some important lama and teachers tend to talk about the two truths even when they are giving Tantric teaching. This is really Sūtra and not Tantra, because the two truths are not mentioned in Tantrism. In Sūtra, and in the Mahāyāna Sūtra particularly, the principle of sūnyatā, or voidness, is presented. The Prajñāpāramitā, or ‘Heart Sūtra,’ is one which practitioners of many Buddhist traditions, including Zen, recite. This expounds the voidness of self-nature of our body, our senses, of all the phenomena of our relative condition, thus carrying us into the state of voidness. Finding ourselves in this state we are said to be in the state of absolute truth, the state of meditation. For Tantra, however, voidness is merely the starting
point.

Many masters, when they discuss Tantra, speak about voidness and compassion. As Nāgārjuna said, “If there is voidness without compassion, then that voidness is of no value.” The same is explained in the *Mahāmudra of Saraha*. However, here compassion does not just mean working with our intention, as we understand it at the level of Mahāyāna Sūtra. That which is spoken of as compassion at the Sūtra level is called ‘energy’ in Tantra. In Tantra we try to enter into, and apply, this energy.

A.2 Tantra: the path of Transformation

We have our three levels of existence—body, voice and mind. Buddha Śākyamuni manifested as a human being to teach Sūtra which is more linked to the dimension of body, with the accompanying vow and so on. Linked to the dimension of voice is Tantrism, which works with energy. Voice is connected to one’s breathing, which is linked to the *prāna*. Voice also means sound, which is linked to mantra, and mantra is linked to syllables. That is why Tantrism is also called Mantrayāna. Tantrism is not just about reciting mere words, because the syllables that we recite are symbols of forms of energy. It is very important to understand the principle of the transmission of Tantrism, and how the principle of manifestation is related to it. Otherwise you cannot understand Tantrism.

A.2.1 The Source and Transmission of Tantra

Those people who are very conditioned by Sūtra teaching tend to say that Tantra was also taught by Buddha Śākyamuni. They usually say things like, “Buddha Śākyamuni transformed himself in order to give this teaching.” They also say that one year before his Parinirvana, Buddha Śākyamuni manifested as Kālacakra. You can think of it that way if you want. We live within the limits of time, and therefore have the idea that a manifestation...
must have actually taken place. But we must not think of Buddha Śākyamuni as a stage actor who appears in the theatre, one day as a monk, and another day in the form of yabyum, union of male and female. Tantric teaching does not involve somebody talking and others listening. Tantra is called ‘the teaching of the Sambhogakāya,’ and a Sambhogakāya manifestation like Kālacakra is beyond the consideration of time. Samboghakāya is the dimension of clarity and energy, a dimension which actually manifests its inherent qualities. If we stand in front of a mirror, we find our own reflection in it, because although a mirror itself has no form, it has the potentiality to reflect infinite things. Similarly in the Samboghakāya there is infinite potentiality to manifest. That is why hundreds of forms of deities are presented at the Sambhogakāya level.

Sambhogakāya manifestations arose first to those individuals who had sufficient capacity to receive such a transmission. Take the manifestation of Kālacakra by Buddha Śākyamuni for example. The manifestation did not take place in front of ordinary Indian people who happened to be around. What truly happened was that the people with the capacity to receive the transmission by Buddha Śākyamuni were in contact with this manifestation. Such individuals are known as rigzin (rig. 'dzin).

In the history of Anuyoga in the Šānchera school, there have been rigzin of different types—rigzin of divinities, rigzin of the nāga, and rigzin of other dimensions. Why does one have to be a rigzin to be able to receive the transmission of this kind of teaching? The reason is this. We know that in the life history of Guru Padmasambhava, he did not manifest an ordinary death like human beings, but through a practice known as the ‘Great Transference,’ manifested the body of light. Manifesting the body of light means that the material body enters into its essential nature as light. The essence of our energy means the essence of the elements, represented as colours. We consider that Guru Padmasambhava manifested in this way, and we

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2See pp 115.
cannot see him and his dimension because we have too many karmic traces. A rigzin who has higher capacity will be able to see Guru Padmasambhava and can receive transmission through various types of transformations. The transformation manifested and transmitted comes about according to the conditions that exist at the moment of the event. For example, the form of heruka Hayagrīva has a horse’s head. This is because the class of beings whose form we recognise as having the head of a horse received the manifestation first. Similarly, the manifestation of the Dākinī Simhamuka has a lion’s face, because that is the only way we can describe her. That is why if we want to approach Tantrism, we have to have a wider and more open view.

People generally have limited vision. When we talk about other beings, they wonder how they can understand it. They only know about human beings and animals, and they do not believe that there are nāga, deva and all sorts of different beings. It is not so difficult to understand, even logically. Today, scientifically speaking, there are many solar systems and galaxies in the universe. We cannot say that there are not any other types of beings in other solar systems and planets. Some people say that they cannot see these beings, so these beings do not exist. But we cannot see beyond the other side of a wall, or places a long way away; we cannot see what happened in the past either, but we believe it happened. So, logically speaking, we cannot say that such beings do not exist. There are animals or insects which we can see but which are not able to see us. Similarly, since we are also a sort of animal, there can be beings who can see us but we cannot see them. If we know of such conditions, we can benefit. Otherwise, we can have many problems.

Generally speaking, followers of Hīnayāna teaching say that Hīnayāna is the real Buddhist teaching. They do not recognise other forms of teaching, saying that they are not so sure whether Mahāyāna and Tantra are really the teachings of the Buddha or not. It is not necessary to dispute in this way. It is true that Buddha taught Hīnayāna as man to man, and it is the ‘physi-
ally transmitted’ teaching. Many other types of teachings, from Mahāyāna to Tantra up to Dzogchen, have been introduced into the human dimension from other dimensions for our benefit. For example, we say that *Prajñāparamitā* was taught by the Buddha to the nāga, and later Nāgārjuna introduced it from the realm of the nāga to human beings.

In our relative condition, it is important to know that too, because we can easily get provocations from different kinds of beings. We cannot see them, so we can create many problems by disturbing them, who, in turn, cause serious provocations to us. We will then have to pay for our ignorance.

In the Bönpo tradition, there are many explanations about different types of beings. Modern Bönpo is very much associated with Buddhist traditions in many ways, and ignores many of the ancient considerations. But researching into the Bönpo tradition in villages, where the people still do the rituals of the past, even though they may not be able to explain much, you can find such understanding in the ancient traditional Bön. They have deep knowledge in this area, and in the energy, both of the individual and the individual’s dimension, as well as the energy linking a person and other beings—how one can receive provocations and how one can overcome or pacify such provocations. That is the Bönpo speciality. Not only can we find such explanations in Bönpo books, we can also find hundreds of such books in Tibetan Buddhist teachings. This is because Guru Padmasambhava introduced Bönpo teachings of this type into Buddhism and transformed them with Buddhist principles. In the Ňīnmaba tradition, there are *Déxèg Gagyād* (*bde.gshegs. bka’brgyad*.), or ‘eight series of Tantra,’ most of which are related to Anuyoga. The last two or three of the eight series, called *Jigden Qöddod* (*’jig.rten. mchod.bstod.*), are originally from the Bönpo tradition and system. Guru Padmasambhava also manifested in a wrathful form and created these teachings for the Tibetans. These are very important books.

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3 *Jigden* means worldly, *Qöddod* means ritual, offering.
Because Tibet was originally a Bönpo country in ancient times, Tantrism is more diffused in Tibet. Before inviting Guru Padmasambhava to Tibet, the Tibetan king invited Śāntarakṣita, who was the most well-known pandit in India at that time, to Tibet to spread Buddhism. However, Śāntarakṣita could not succeed, because of strong Bönpo resistance. Later, they invited Guru Padmasambhava, whose teaching is based on Tantrism, which has a lot to do with energy. Ancient Tibetan knowledge was deeply related to the functioning of energy. Even though the two are slightly different, the principle is the same. That is why Tibetans integrated Buddhist Tantric teaching more easily than Sūtra teaching.

A.2.2 Division of Tantra

In the Tibetan Tantric traditions, there is the division of lower and higher Tantra, which, in the Ōṅmamba tradition, is called the outer and the inner Tantra. The lower Tantra is mainly the path of purification and the higher Tantra is the path of transformation. Tantra means the continuation of energy. This is a recognition of the value of energy and everything in an individual’s existence, something never mentioned in the Sūtra. In the Sūtra, the three passions of ignorance, attachment and anger are called the three poisons, and are considered very negative. Because of these three passions, you can produce many negative karma, and as a result, continue in infinite saṃsāra. The cause of this infinite saṃsāra, these three passions, are to be renounced, because they have no value. However, according to Tantrism, even though these are passions, their nature is still energy. Energy has its good and bad aspects, but the root is the same. If you renounce that energy, then you are wrong. If you use the energy and transform the passions, then you benefit. The knowledge of Tantrism is the recognition of this energy.

The most important lower Tantra are the Kriyātantra and the Yogatantra. In Kriyātantra, the most used method is that of
doing practice of Tārā or of Avalokiteśvara, after receiving the appropriate initiation and empowerment. Receiving empowerment also means working with energy—we are preparing to receive wisdom from that deity.

In general, all enlightened beings have infinite commitments to all sentient beings. Everyday when we do Bodhicitta, we are creating the commitment and promise to benefit all sentient beings. In the same way, enlightened beings went through the process, and, therefore, have accumulated infinite commitments. But we do not know if we have any relationship with these enlightened beings or not. If we had some contact with them when they were on their path as Bodhisattvas, then we have a connection. In this case, we are the first people to receive the transmission and can obtain enlightenment through the path of such enlightened beings. Otherwise, receiving an initiation and applying the related method is a way of creating some possibility.

When we receive an initiation, we also have a certain commitment. We must have a painting or statue of the deity, which is considered as a support for the deity. We invite and ask that deity to be present in the painting or statue. Then we offer lamps, flowers and incense etc., and imagine making many offerings to the deity, thus accumulating merits. We pray that we may receive wisdom. Doing his kind of practice for a long time is a preparation for receiving wisdom.

Receiving the wisdom of Tārā or Avalokiteśvara does not mean we will be enlightened immediately. Active preparation for receiving wisdom means we develop our clarity so that we know what the path is and how to develop our knowledge. It is not only praying. There is something to do in our condition. Maybe we can then use a more important path such as that of Yogatantra.

Yogatantra is very similar to Kriyātantra, but there is unification of the deity, such as Tārā, with ourselves. Also we ourselves are transformed into that deity, and at the end, at the unification stage, we realize. Lower Tantra has the name of
Tantra because at the end, you realize the wisdom of the deity which you visualize. The deity becomes a kind of example for your realization.

Yogatantara is a teaching very diffused in Tibet. It is the official Tantra teaching, because it is very similar to ordinary Sūtra teaching. You make offerings of very nice things, and you follow rules. So it is easy to combine with Sūtra.

A.2.3 Higher Tantra

Anuttaratantra teaching is different. It involves the transformation of passions into wisdom. That is why you also break your limits. If you are very controlled with your body, voice and mind, then when you transform, you discover that such control is not the principle. So you break the limits. That is why there are many stories of Indian Mahāsiddhas doing apparently strange things.

In Tantrism, there are many symbols for breaking and integrating. We have the three passions, and they are transformed in three methods. Anger is transformed into wrathful manifestations such as Simhamuka; ignorance is transformed into peaceful manifestations such as Vairocana; and attachment is transformed into joyful manifestations such as Hevajra or Chakrasambhava. These are the three root passions and examples of their wisdom aspects. If we do visualization of a wrathful manifestation, then all circumstances are presented in wrathful form. The offering is no longer that of flowers or incense, but the opposite sort of things like blood and flesh. That is why Anuttaratantra is not so easy to combine with Sūtra teaching. Ordinary people cannot understand: on the one hand we say we must behave like a monk, and on the other hand we are talking about male and female forms in union. In the Sūtra, it says that you should not even drink a drop of alcohol, but in Anuttaratantra, when we do ganacakra or ganapuja, 'cycle of offerings,' we use meat and wine. The Tibetan kings knew that
Anuttaratantra is the most important teaching, but it was also not so good for the ordinary people who could not understand, and it is provocative. So they applied and followed it in secret. In the open, they declared Yogatantra as the official teaching. Teachers only taught Anuttaratantra to disciples in secret, and they applied it personally.

Later, Tibetan masters spread Anuttaratantra by dressing it up in the form of Yogatantra, and transforming the way it was presented. After that, many things such as rituals and ceremonies developed for the transmission of Anuttaratantra. Before that, if a teacher wanted to give an initiation and transmit knowledge, only a small piece of drawing of mandala or a statue was used, just to give the disciple some idea of how to manifest the form and enter into that dimension. It is not like Yogatantra where you put a statue on the altar and then you pay homage in order to receive wisdom. But later, all monasteries were full of statues and maṇḍala of Anuttaratantra. For example, if you go to Shalun monastery in Tibet, there is a very big hall in which the walls are full of drawings of maṇḍala, in the form of art. Such drawings are no longer used only for giving an idea in a transmission.

Today, it is very difficult to perform the Kālacakra initiation. If a master like the Dalai Lama gives this initiation, he must prepare mandala and different objects for many days. If you are not a rich man, you really cannot do it. If someone asked me to give the initiation of Kālacakra, it is impossible for me to do it. It is not because I have not had that initiation myself, or I do not know how to give, but it is because I do not have the objects. I must follow the system as has been presented in the Tibetan tradition. That I cannot do.

Originally, things were very different. Indian Mahāsiddhas went to Oḍḍyāna to receive teachings of Anuttaratantra such as Kālacakra or Hevajra, so that later they could introduce these teachings to India. When they arrived in Oḍḍyāna, they would find the master sitting under a tree or in a cave somewhere,
and they would ask the master to give them his most impor-
tant teaching. The master would probably say something like, "OK, after three days, we meet at such a place in a cave at mid-
night." Many accounts of the histories of Mahāsiddhas describe it that way. So at midnight, the master transmitted Kālacakra, or Hevajra. This means that actually it is not necessary to have many objects. In the drawings of Dzogchen or Tantric masters, we often see that they have a box called sāmadog (za.ma.tog), which is a box to keep objects for practice and for giving trans-
mission. If you ask for an Anuttaratantra teaching, the teacher will take a small drawing of a maṇḍala and something out of the sāmadog and perform the initiation, and then it is finished. It was nothing like these days. Over the centuries, each master added a little in the initiation process, so now it has become very complicated.

Tantra transmission is a kind of introduction. It is about how that transmission was received at the beginning. We al-
ready know that only highly realized beings are able to perceive the transmission by the manifestation in light. Later this trans-
mission is introduced orally by the teacher, giving examples of maṇḍala with figures etc. This is known as initiation. A person enters into that knowledge and applies that method. At the end, the realization is called Mahāmudrā.

In all the four main schools, the final goal of the path of trans-
formation is Mahāmudrā. There are many types of Mahāmudrā teaching being given these days. Particularly in the Gagyūdba, the famous teacher Gāmboba⁴ presented Mahāmudrā in a way which is integrated with Sūtra and Tantra. But there is some-
thing very important you have to understand. Mahāmudrā in-
volves transformation into deities. Just integrating the state of transformation in the state of clarity is Mahāmudrā. If you do not understand this point, you cannot appreciate the importance of transformation, and you can also make other mistakes. Many

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⁴ Gampopa sGam.po.pa. dwag.spo. lha.rse. (1079-1153), one of the main disciples of Mi.la. Ras.pa.
western translators translate the term Mahāmudrā into 'great seal,' which is totally wrong. Generally, when we say seal, we refer to not telling people about something. Here, Mudrā has nothing to do with seal, but actually means symbol, as we normally do with gestures of the hands. It has the function of communication. If there is a manifestation of an enlightened being, it is like a reflection in a mirror. If a dog appears in the mirror, it means that a dog is in front of the mirror. The image in the mirror is a symbol of potentiality, not the potentiality itself. Through that symbol you can understand what the potentiality is. In Tantrism, everything is none other than a symbol. You are reciting mantra, visualising deities and maṇḍala; everything is a symbol for realising the real potentiality. Mahāmudrā means your existence of body, voice and mind is totally in that clarity. If you are transforming into, say, Kālacakra, associated with it is the dimension of transformation, called the maṇḍala. If you are present in it and you are no longer constructing anything, then in that instant, you are in Mahāmudrā. Till you have that presence, you build things one by one, which is called gyedrim, the 'development stage.' It is followed by zógrim, the 'completion stage,' in which everything is integrated with your channels, cakras and energy points in this manifestation. Finally you can get into that clarity. Without this principle, you are missing the important point in Tantrism. You may even think that deity and initiation is like a passport for going to Mahāmudrā as if it is another teaching.

Practice of Tantrism works with movement, that is why we do visualization, as well as singing, chanting and dancing, such as sacred dances, integrating everything in the state of contemplation. They are more important than just remaining in silence. It is easier to enter into the state of contemplation in silence, but both silence and movement are our natural condition. If we know how to use both of them in our practice, then we can realize our practice more quickly. That is why we say Tantra teaching leads one to realization more quickly than Sūtra teaching.
A.2.4 Division of Higher Tantra

In the Ŧīṇmaba school, the higher Tantra is divided into Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga. The first two are the path of transformation and the last, Atiyoga, is the path of self-liberation. In the transformation practice, there are two distinct types of visualization: the gradual and the non-gradual methods. Gradual transformation belongs to Mahāyoga, and non-gradual transformation belongs to Anuyoga. Mahāyoga in Ŧīṇmaba corresponds to Anuttaratantra in other schools. In Anuttaratantra, great emphasis is given to the careful building up of visualization, and it is important to have very clear visualization of the forms and colours of the transformation. The potentiality is called the seed syllable. It means that it has the potential, but you cannot see the result yet. A seed of a flower will only become a flower if you put it in the earth, give it water and sunshine. When it grows up, you get the colour, form and smell of the flower. That is why it is called a seed. In the practice, you slowly develop the manifestation from the seed syllable. You have to mentally build up the details of the manifestation one by one; starting, say, from the first hand on the right, which holds this ritual implement, then the second hand which holds a different object and so on. When you have constructed the entire maṇḍala perfectly, that is the end of the gyedrim. When this visualization is complete for you, then you work more with integrating the visualization through your energy, your channels and cakras. The entire manifestation will then become something really living. In the clarity of this presence, it is called the Mahāmudrā. This is the gradual transformation.

In Anuttaratantra, there is no mention of such a word as 'gradual.' In Anuyoga, Anuttaratantra, or Mahāyoga, is described as 'gradual,' because Anuyoga uses a 'non-gradual' method. From the beginning, the explanation of our real nature, as given in Anuyoga, is presented in the same way as in the Dzogchen teaching. We do not say that there is a seed of poten-
We talk about our state of Dzogchen, the self-perfected state, meaning there is nothing to develop or change. Our real nature is as it is in that way, pure from the beginning. Since it is self-perfected from the very beginning, there is nothing to be created. When it manifests, we say that is realization. It does not mean that when we are realized, we would have changed or developed our real nature, because there is nothing to change.

How does this self-perfected state manifest? It manifests through transformation. That is Anuyoga. Anu means 'superior,' which means, though Tantrism and the path of transformation is important, this particular method is the most essential and important within Tantrism itself. That is why, when we apply the Anuyoga system, we do not need to build things up one by one in the transformation. Having the knowledge of our real condition as it is is considered to be most important in Anuyoga. Manifesting or transforming into the form of a deity means manifesting how it is, not that we are changing, building or constructing. We do not have the state of knowledge ourselves because we are conditioned by dualism. In order to find ourselves in that true condition again, the master will teach the individual and enable him to enter into that state of knowledge which is his own condition. This is called transmission, and it is important to have the transmission and apply it to get into that state instantly. If I transform into Kālacakra in the Anuyoga style, for example, having that knowledge from the beginning, instantly I am in that vision, that presence, and that vibration. We enter into that presence directly instead of constructing something. Just that is sufficient in Anuyoga. That is why it is very different from Anuttaratantra. In the transformation practice, it is not so important to visualize things precisely and clearly. If you cannot see forms or colours perfectly, it does not matter. All you need is an idea. You get the idea in the transmission, and you get the feeling for it and apply it later. If you do not feel and you do not have that vibration, even if you see the colours precisely, it is not important in Anuyoga. In Anuyoga, the state
of realization is called Dzogchen, not Mahāmudrā.

Officially, there is no division into three yogas in the higher Tantra in Gagyúdba or Sakyaba or Gélugba. In those traditions, only Anuttaratantra is recognized, although there are practitioners of Dzogchen—Atiyoga—in those schools. In those schools, there is the division into ‘father Tantra,’ ‘mother Tantra’ and ‘neutral Tantra,’ according to the emphasis in the transformation practice. Sakyaba, for example, recognizes all three types of Tantra, whereas in Gélugba, the founder Tsongkapa (1357–1419) explained that there is only father Tantra and mother Tantra, and there is no neutral Tantra. The real meaning of such division is that, if the method presented in the Tantra puts more emphasis on visualization, i.e. the development stage, it is considered as a father Tantra; if the method puts more emphasis on working with channels and cakras, i.e. the completion stage, then it is considered as a mother Tantra. An example of father Tantra is the Guhyasamāja, and an example of mother Tantra is Cakrasambhava. In some traditions, such as Sakyaba, Kālacakra and Hevajra are considered as neutral Tantra, because the emphasis on the two stages of transformation practice is rather balanced.

Since only the Ōnimbaba school has the gradual and the non-gradual method of transformation, as well as Atiyoga, many Ōnimbaba masters make an analysis of the three yogas—Mahā, Anu, Ati—in such a way as to correspond to the father, mother and neutral Tantra, as a sort of public relations gesture to other Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Such analysis does not in fact correspond at all. All three types of Tantra are gradual transformation methods, and both the gradual and non-gradual transformation practices work with channels and cakras. Each Tantra is a path in itself at this level, so the comparison of the three yogas with the three types of Tantra has little meaning.

“The Tibetan Book of the Dead” describes manifestation as occurring in terms of sound, rays and lights. These are the principles of manifestation. Rays and lights are linked to the
dimension of sound and energy. The transformation is the form which arises with rays and light. That instantaneous manifestation is then brought into the oral tradition, an intellectual explanation is given of various symbols etc., and of the method which we should practise to carry ourselves into that state. The manifestation itself is the way to enter into that dimension. In Tantra, the method that brings us into the dimension of the original manifestation is the path of transformation. The real meaning of the word Tantra refers to our own condition, which is the continuation of energy. So Tantra is the method by which we find ourselves in that condition.

A.3 Dzogchen: the path of Self-liberation

The third inner Tantra according to the Ňñhimaba tradition of Tibetan Buddhism is Atiyoga, also known as Dzogchen. However, it is not Dzogchen in Anuyoga, not the final goal of the path of non-gradual transformation. Atiyoga is not a Tantric path; it is the path of self-liberation.

Ati is Oḍḍyāna language, and it means ‘primordial state.’ The method is about how to discover that state. We also call this state tigle qenbo (thig.le. chen.po.), ‘total tigle.’ Tigle is a sphere of light, the symbol of potentiality. Qenbo is total. So ‘total tigle’ means everything is perfected in that potentiality. It has no corners, signifying the absence of limitations. In some old Dzogchen books, jyāṅqub sem (byang.chub.sems.), or Bodhicitta, is used for Dzogchen. But you must not understand Bodhicitta in the same way as in Sūtra systems. In Mahāyāna teaching, they speak of absolute and relative Bodhicitta. Absolute Bodhicitta is the state of emptiness. But having the knowledge of emptiness and the state of Dzogchen are not always the same. Jyāṅ means purified, without any negativity. Qub means perfected. So just these two words represent gadāg and lhundrub in the Dzogchen teaching.

Atiyoga is the path of self-liberation, but many teachers teach
it in a Tantric way. This is because Tantrism is the most important teaching presented in Tibetan Buddhism, so people tend to consider Dzogchen in terms of the path of transformation. An important Ngönma scholar Jù Mipam\(^5\) wrote a book, in which he insisted that in Dzogchen, there is gyedrim and zógrim, the development stage and the completion stage. Why? Because if one says that there are not these two stages, then the other schools who are totally influenced by the path of transformation will say that Dzogchen is not a valid path. In view of the prevailing attitude of the other schools, some Ngönma scholars found it distinctly uncomfortable to maintain the existence of a perfectly valid path which has nothing to do with transformation practice. As for the other schools, they also found it hard to accept that Dzogchen is a wholly self-sufficient path in its own right.

The result of trying to maintain a smooth relationship with other schools is that many teachers later integrated Dzogchen into Tantric practices. Today when you receive Dzogchen Upadeśa teaching, first of all you receive a form of initiation, and it is considered to be very important. It does not mean that you cannot transmit the knowledge of Dzogchen through initiation. You can, and it is a correct way, but it is not according to the characteristic of Dzogchen of discovering ourselves.

The Dzogchen teaching is called ‘the teaching of the mind of Samantabhadra.’ It means that Dzogchen teaching is given in direct relation to our mind, and not to our body or our voice—energy. We use the mind to enter into the state of knowledge. The principle of Dzogchen is not meditation; the principle is the state of knowledge. There are many practices in Dzogchen to enable us to enter into, develop, and ultimately realize this state of knowledge. It is also at the level of our mind that we integrate this state of knowledge into all of our daily activities in our life.

In Dzogchen, there can be an oral transmission, where the teaching is explained in an intellectual way, or a symbolic trans-

\(^5\) Jù Mi.pham. (1846–1912)
mission, using forms and ceremonies such as initiation, or direct transmission, without using either words or symbols. This is because we have body, voice and mind, the three aspects of our existence. Just as we have the three different paths, the path of renunciation, the path of transformation and the path of self-liberation, there are these three different types of transmission, each corresponding to an aspect of our existence. Oral transmission can very well be done intellectually, but it is not necessarily the most important way of transmission. If a teacher is communicating to a person who has studied Buddhist philosophy for many years, it will be very easy to explain to such a person using Buddhist philosophical system even though it will not work for everyone. For example, one of the root texts in Dzogchen was written by Mañjuśrīmitra, who was a great scholar. For others, perhaps initiation is more important, because they are so used to ceremony. A lot depends on the circumstances.

Dzogchen is generally presented in three series, called Semdé, Lóndé and Upadesa, which correspond to the three ways of transmission. These three series must not be seen as three schools or traditions. They are presented in this way in order to relate to the different capacities of individuals to understand and to enter into the state of knowledge. The capacities of different individuals are obviously not equal. Some need to work more through the control of their body, and some through the control of their mind, in order to find themselves in the state of knowledge. This experience may arise through the master’s direct introduction; even so, there is still something to be worked on, to be developed.

Dzogchen was principally taught by the master Gārab Dörje. His last testament of three statements is a résumé of the en-

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tire Dzogchen teaching. The three series of *Semde*, *Lóndé*, and *Upadesa* are the three ways of working according to Gárab Dórje’s three statements.

Gárab Dórje’s first statement is ‘direct introduction.’ This means that we enter directly into the state of knowledge. In *semde*, the first series of Dzogchen teaching, we work with the four *näljyör* (*rnal.'byor*), or ‘yogas,’ to find ourselves in the presence of the state of knowledge. It does not mean that this series only deals with the introduction of knowledge: there are hundreds of methods for arriving at total realization. The emphasis is on gaining a direct experience of the primordial state of the individual.

The second series of Dzogchen teaching, the *Lóndé*, works with the second statement of Gárab Dórje: ‘not remaining in doubt.’ Not remaining in doubt does not mean arriving at a decision intellectually. We can decide whatever we choose, but it will be false. When we have a truly authentic experience, then there is nothing false, there is nothing to be decided. In *Lóndé*, we work with the four *dá* (*brda.*), or ‘symbols,’ to find ourselves concretely in the lived experience of the state without a shadow of doubt, even though *Lóndé* does not lack a method of direct introduction to, or continuation in, the state.

The third series of Dzogchen teaching, the *Upadesa*, works mainly with the third statement of Gárab Dórje: ‘continue in the state,’ the state about which we have no doubt. The *Upadesa* emphasises less on direct introduction and more on continuing in the the state of contemplation. Again, all methods relating to Gárab Dórje’s three statements are contained in the Dzogchen *Upadesa*. In this series, the *tregqod* and *todgál* (*thod.rgal.*) methods are explained. In the *tregqod* we are told how to continue with the four *jogzāg*, which means remaining relaxed in our present condition, just *as it is*, without changing anything. When the *tregqod* is stable, there is the *todgál* method for bringing about the dissolution of our karmic vision more rapidly.

Our reason for following the teaching is to realize ourselves.
If we can achieve total realization, then we can truly speak of benefiting others. It is our realization that we are interested in. Some people think that if they practise Sūtra, they do not know what to do with Tantra practices. Some people feel that they have followed a master in one tradition, they wonder what is going to happen if they follow the Dzogchen teaching. But in reality, we are not interested in realizing a sect or a tradition or a teaching. Investigation at the level of schools and traditions alone does not come into the process of self-realization a great deal. We want to know the differences, so that we are not confused. We must not fix on the differences. Instead, we should do our best, have awareness and knowledge of the teachings, and integrate everything.
Donba zi (rton.pa. bzhi.), ‘the four agreements of meaning.’ Calligraphy by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
Biographical Sketch of the Author

The following first appeared in the book *The Cycle of Day and Night* by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche with translation and notes by John Reynolds.

The author Nam mkha’i Norbu Rinpoche, was born in the village of dGe’ug, in the lCong ra district of sDe dge in East Tibet, on the seventeenth day of the tenth month of the Earth-Tiger year (8 of December, 1938). His father was sGrol ma Tshe ring, member of a noble family and sometime official with the government of sDe dge, and his mother was Ye shes Chos sgron.

When he was two years old, he was recognized by both dPal yul Karma Yang srîd Rinpoche and Zhe chen Rab byams Rinpoche as the reincarnation of A’dzom ’Brug pa. A’dzom ’Brug pa was one of the great rDzogs chen Masters of the early part of this century. He was the disciple of the first mKhyen brtse Rinpoche, ’Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse dBang po (1829–1892), and also the disciple of dPal sprul Rinpoche. Both of these illustrious teachers were leaders of the *Ris med*, or non-sectarian movement in nineteenth-century eastern Tibet. On some thirty seven occasions, A’dzom ’Brug pa received transmissions from his principal master, ’Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse, and from dPal sprul Rinpoche he received the complete transmissions of the *kLong chen snying thig* and the *rTsa rlung* precepts. In turn, A’dzom ’Brug pa became a *gter ston*, or discoverer of hidden treasure texts, having received visions directly from the incomparable ’Jigs med gLing pa (1730–1798) when the former was thirty. Teaching at A’dzom sgar in eastern Tibet during summer and winter retreats, A’dzom ’Brug pa became the master of many contemporary teachers of rDzogs chen. Among them was Norbu Rinpoche’s paternal uncle, rTogs ldan O rgyan bsTan ’dzin, who was his first rDzogs chen teacher.

When he was eight years old, Norbu Rinpoche was recognized by both the sixteenth Karmapa and dPal spung Situ Rinpoche to
be the mind-incarnation of the illustrious 'Brug pa bKa’ brgyud master, Padma dKar po (1527–1592), was the actual historical founder of the state of Bhutan. Until the early twentieth century, the Zhabs drung Rinpoches were the Dharmarajas, or temporal and spiritual rulers, of Bhutan.

While yet a child, from rDzogs chen mKhan Rinpoche, from his maternal uncle mKhyen brtse Yang srid Rinpoche, and from his paternal uncle rTogs ldan O rgyan bsTan ’dzin, Norbu Rinpoche received instruction in the rDzogs chen gsang ba snying thig and the sNying thig Yab bzhi. Meanwhile, from gNas rgyab mChog sprul Rinpoche, he received the transmissions of the rNy­­ing ma bka’ ma, the kLong gsal rdo rje snying po, and the gNam chos of Mi ’gyur rDo rje. From mKhan Rinpoche dPal ldan Tshul khrims (1906– ) he received the transmissions from the rGyud sde kun btus, the famous Sa skya pa collection of tantric practices. And in addition, he received many initiations and listened to many oral explanations from famous Ris med pa or non-sectarian masters of eastern Tibet.

From the time he was eight years old until he was twelve, he attended the college of sDe dge dbon stod slob grwa at sDe dge dgon chen Monastery, where, with mKhen Rinpoche mKyen rab Chos kyi ’od zer (1901– ), he studied the thirteen basic texts used in the standard academic curriculum designed by mKhan po gZhan dga’. Norbu Rinpoche became especially expert in the Abhisamayālaṅkāra. In addition, with this same master he studied the great commentary to the Kālacakra Tantra, the Guhyagarbha Tantra, the Zab mo nang don of Karmapa Rang byung rDo rhe, the Medical Tantras, Indian and Chinese astrology, as well as receiving from him the initiations and transmissions of the Sa skya’i sgrub thabs kun btus.

From the age of eight until he was fourteen, at the college of sDe dge Ku se gSer ljongs bsad grwa, from mKhan Rinpoche Brag gyab Blos gros (1913– ), he received instructions in the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, the Hevajra Tantra, and the Saṃputa Tantra. By his tutor mChog sprul Rinpoche he was instructed
in the secular sciences.

Also, from the age of eight until he was fourteen, having gone to rDzong gsar Monastery in eastern Tibet, he received teachings from the illustrious rDzong gsar mKhyen brtse Rinpoche on the *Sa skya'i zab chos lam 'bras*, the quintessential doctrine of the Sa skya pa school and, in addition, on the three texts: *rGyud kyi spyi don rnam bzhag*, *lJon shing chen mo*, and the *Hevajra Tantra*. Then at the college of Khams bre bshad grwa, with mKhan Rinpoche Mi nyag Dam chos (1920–) he studied a basic text on logic, the *Tshad ma rig gter* of Sa skya Paṇḍita.

Then, in the meditation cave at Seng-chen gNam brag, he made a retreat with his uncle the rTogs ldan O rgyan bsTan 'dzin for the practices of Vajrapāṇi, Śimhamukha, and White Tārā. At that time, the son of A’dzom ’Brug pa, ’Gyur med rDo rje (1895–), returned from Central Tibet, and staying with them, the latter bestowed the cycle of *rDo rje gro lod*, the *Klong chen snying thig*, and the cycle of the *dGongs pa zang thal* of Rig ’dzin rGod ldem ’Phru can.

When he was fourteen years old in 1951, he received the initiation for Vajrayogini according to the Ngor pa and Tshar pa traditions of the Sa skya. Then his tutor advised him to seed out a woman living in the Kadari region who was the living embodiment of Vajrayogini herself and take initiation from her. This woman master, A yo mKha’ ’gro rDo rje dPal sgron (1838–1953), was a direct disciple of the great ’Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse dBang po and of Nyag bla Padma bDud’ dul, as well as being an elder contemporary of A’dzom ’Brug pa. At this time she was hundred and thirteen years old, and had been in a dark retreat for some fifty-six years. Norbu Rinpoche received from her transmissions for the *mKha’ ’gro gsang ’dus*, the mind-treasure of ’Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse dBang po and of Nyag bla Padma bDud’ dul, as well as the dark retreat, as well as the *kLong chen snying thig*. She also bestowed upon him her own mind-treasures, including that for the Dākinī Śimhamukha, the *mKha’ ’gro dbang mo’i seng ge gdong ma’i zab*
Then in 1954, he was invited to visit the People's Republic of China as a representative of Tibetan youth. From 1954 he was an instructor in Tibetan language at the Southwestern University of Minor Nationalities at Chengdu, Sichuan, China. While living in China, he met the famous Gangs dkar Rinpoche. From the master he heard many explanations of the Six Doctrines of Nāropa, Mahāmudrā, the dKon mchog spyi 'dus, as well as Tibetan medicine. During this time, Norbu Rinpoche also acquired proficiency in the Chinese and Mongolian languages.

When he was seventeen years old, returning to his home country of sDe dge following a vision received in dream, he came to meet his Root Master, Nyag bla Rinpoche Rig’dzin Byang chub rDo rje (1826–1978), who lived in a remote valley to the east of rDe gde. Byang chub rDo rje Rinpoche hailed originally from the Nyag rong region on the borders of China. He was a disciple of A ’dzom ’Brug pa, of Nyag bla Padma bDud ’dul, and of Shar rdza Rinpoche, the famous Bonpo teacher of rDzogs chen who attained the Rainbow Body of Light. A practicing physician, Byang chub rDo rje Rinpoche headed a commune called Nyag bla sGar in this remote valley; it was a totally self-supporting community consisting entirely of lay practitioners, yogis and yoginis. From this master, Norbu Rinpoche received initiation into and transmission of, the essential teachings of rDzogs chen Sems sde, Kong sde, and Man mgag gi sde. More importantly, this master introduced him directly to the experience of rDzog chen. He remained here for almost a year, often assisting Byang chub rDo rje Rinpoche in his medical practice and serving as his scribe and secretary. He also received transmissions from the master’s son, Nyag sras ’Gyur med rDo rje.

After this, Norbu Rinpoche set out on a prolonged pilgrimage to Central Tibet, Nepal, India, and Bhutan. Returning to sDe dge, the land of his birth, he found that deteriorating political conditions had led to the eruption of violence. Travelling on first toward Central Tibet, he finally emerged safely in Sikkim.
128 Biography of the Author

From 1985 to 1960 he lived in Gangtok, Sikkim, employed as an author and editor of Tibetan text books for the Development Office, the Government of Sikkim. In 1960, when he was twenty-two years old, at the invitation of Professor Giuseppe Tucci, he went to Italy and resided for several years in Rome. During this time, from 1960 to 1964, he was a research associate at the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente. Receiving a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, he worked in closed collaboration with Professor Tucci, and wrote two appendices to Professor Tucci's *Tibetan Folk Songs of Gyantse and Western Tibet* (Rome, 1966), as well as giving seminars at ISMEO on yoga, medicine, and astrology.

From 1964 to the present, Norbu Rinpoche has been a professor at the Istituto Orientale, University of Naples, where he teaches Tibetan language, Mongolian language, and Tibetan cultural history. Since then he has done extensive research into the historical origins of Tibetan culture, investigating little known literary sources from the Bonpo tradition. In 1983, Norbu Rinpoche hosted the first International Convention on Tibetan Medicine held in Venice, Italy. Although still actively teaching at the university, for the past ten years Norbu Rinpoche has informally conducted teaching retreats in various countries, including Italy, England, France, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Singapore, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. During these retreats, he gives practical instruction in rDzogs chen practices in a non-sectarian format, as well as teaching aspects of Tibetan culture, especially Yantra Yoga, Tibetan medicine, and astrology. Moreover, under his guidance, there has grown up, at first in Italy and now in several other countries, what has come to be known as the Dzogchen Community. This is as informal association of individuals who, while continuing to work at their usual occupations in society, share a common interest in pursuing and practising the rDzogs chen teachings which Norbu Rinpoche continues to transmit.
Address of some Dzogchen Communities around the world

Comunitá Dzogchen, Merigar, Arcidosso-58031 (GR), Italy
German Dzogchen Community, Konradin Kreuzer Strasse 8, D-7730 Villagen, German Federal Republic
Dzogchen Community of Austria, Kaltenbrunn 8, A-8200 Austria
Dzogchen Community of Denmark, Skovstjernevej 5, 2400 KBW NV, Denmark
UK Dzogchen Community, P.O.Box 1739, Maida Hill, London W9 1PJ
California Dzogchen Community, 4907 Shafter Avenue, Oakland, CA 94609, USA
Conway Dzogchen Community, Tsegyalgar, P.O. Box 277, Conway, MA 01341, USA
Singapore Dzogchen Community, 20 Greenmead Avenue, Singapore 1128
Australian Dzogchen Community, P.O.Box 331, Newcastle*2300, NSW, Australia
New Zealand Dzogchen Community, 8/148 Howe St, Freemans Bay, Auckland, New Zealand
Glossary

bal (dpal.)
baldrul rinpoq
(dpal.sprul. rin.po.che.)
bañ (spang.)
bardo (bar.do.)
cig (tshig.)
dañmedma (bdag.med.ma.)
dañnañ (dag.snang.)
dañmcig (dam.tshig.)
dañhai (bdag.snag.)
danbai nam (brtan.pai. nyams.)
dava (lta.ba.)
déñ dröltogdu ja
(gdeng gro.l.thog. tu' cha'.)

déññis sünjüg
(bden.gnyis. zung.'jug.)
déva (bde.ba.)
diññezin (ting.nge. 'dzin.)
dön (don.)
don (rton.)
donba xi (rton.pa. bzhi.)
dörjéi gu (rdo.rjei. sku.)
dörjé semba (rdo.rje. sens.dpa'.)
Dörjé semba namkà qe
(rdo.rje. sens.dpa'. nam.mkha'.che.)
dráñdön (drang.don.)
dràñbu ('bras.bu.)
draxis (bkra.shis.)
drosdaññräl (spros.dang.bral.)
gadág (ka.dag.)
gagyudba (bka'.brgyud.pa.)
gaññag (gang.zag.)
géxes (dge.bshes.)
gódba (rgod.pa.)
gómba (sgom.pa.)
gómbai nam (goms.pa'i. nyams.)
Goñdrul Rinpoqe
(kong.sprul. rin.po.che.)
gundusání (kun.tu bzang.)
gyár maqadba (nyar. ma.chod.pa.)
gyedrim (bskyed.rim.)
gyúd (rgyud.)
gyúva ('gyu.ba.)

glory
name of a famous teacher
abandoned, gone beyond
intermediate state
word, term
Nairátma, consrt of Hevajra
pure vision
samaya, promise
lustre, transparency
experience of stability
view
having confidence in the liberation,
continue in the state of contemplation.
union of the two truths
pleasurable sensation
contemplation, samādhi
meaning
based on, in agreement with
the four agreements in meaning
Vajrakāya, dimension of the Vajra
Vajrasattva
name of a Dzogchen Tantra
conventional meaning
fruit
good fortune
beyond judgement
pure from the beginning; white scarf
name of a school of Tibetan Buddhism
person?
a learned scholar
agitation
meditation
experience which is habitual
Jamgon Kongtrul, name of
a famous teacher
all good, Samantabhadra
not falling into limitation
development stages
Tantra
movement
Jamyang Kyentse Wangpo, name of a famous teacher
unique taste
Jigmed Lingpa, name of a famous master
one state
as it is
chod practice
remaining as it is
an illness related to low blood pressure
love, compassion
without effort
drowsiness, sleepiness
attitude, behaviour
come forth
element, realm
the great horizon
cuckoo
path
karmic vision
insight
relaxed
self-perfected
effortlessly
Lonchenpa, name of a Tibetan teacher
a class of text
not correcting
name of a woman practitioner
ignorance
without thinking
without thought
not based on
non-dual
not moving
diversity
illness
beyond illness
amineral used for cleaning gold
different types
experience
various
vision of experience
consciousness
appearance and emptiness
násba (gnas.pa.)
nášba diññeizin (gnas.pai. ting.nge.'dzin.)
ñésbar (nges.par.)
ñesjyùñ (nges.byung.)
ñíd (nyid.)
Nñímaba (mying.ma.pa.)
ñús (gnyis.)
ñímed (gnyis.med.)
ño (ngo.)
ñòndró (sngon. ’gro.)
ño rañttogdu drad (ngo.rang. thog. du. sprad.)
ño voññid gu (ngo.bo.nyid. sku.)

Núbqen sañgyás yexes (gnubs.chen. sangs.rgyas. yeshes.)
qa (cha.)
qaxas (cha.shas.)
qen (chen.)
qos (chos.)
qyogluñ drálva (phyogs.lhung bral.ba.)
rañxín (rang.bzhin.)
rigba (rig.pa.)
rigbai kujyírg (rig.pai. khu.byug.)
rimed (ris.med.)
rivo jogáq (ri.bo. cog.bchag.)
rolba (rolpa.)
Sakyaba (sakyapa.)
sa jigba (sa.gciig.pa.)
sámadog (za.ma.tog)
Sândan Migdrón (bsam.gtan. mig.sgron.)
šálva (gsal.ba.)
semba dórjé (sems.dpa’. rdorje.)
semdé (sems.sde.)
semzin (sems.’dzin.)
sínbas (zin.pa.)
tab (thabs.)
Tag jigtogdu jad (thag. gcig.thog.tu. chad.)
tàrqyin (mthar.phyin)
tàrqyinbañ nam (mthar.phyin.pai. nyams)
tobbai nam
calm state
contemplation of the calm state
real, certain
renunciation (in Sutra)
the state of itself
Nyingmapa, particular name of a school of Tibetan Buddhism
two
non.dual
one's own condition
preliminary practice
direct introduction
dimension of the union of the three dimensions ("bodies")

name of a teacher
part
a single thing, partial
great, total
the teaching, the Dharma
without falling into limitations
nature
presence, state of knowledge
the Cuckoo of the State of Presence
non-sectarian
being like a mountain
energy
name of a school of Tibetan Buddhism
single stage
container for keeping objects of practice
name of a book by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe
clarity
Vajrasattva
primordial mind series of Dzogchen teachings
a particular type of Dzogchen practices
completed
method
not remaining in doubt
accomplished
experience of ultimate accomplishment
experience of attainment,
tregqod (khregs.chod)  
cutting loose a bundle; particular name of a Dzogchen practice

Trisöñ Dézan  
(khri.srong. ldeu.btsan)  
name of a Tibetan king

wánbo (dbang.po)  
the senses

wánbo togjasgi dúd  
the demon which blocks the senses

(dbang.po. thogs.bcäs.kyi. bdud.)  
something in a group

xas (shas)  
obstacles to knowledge

xesjyäi dräbba  
prajñā, discriminating wisdom

(shes.byai. sgrib.pa)  
the base

xesrab (shes.rab.)  
union of emptiness and vision

xí (gzhi)  
calming down

xīlhag sünjûg  
however

(zhi.lhag. zung.'jug.)  
correct point of view

xīnäs (zhi.gnas.)  
experience of movement

yañ (yang)  
real object

yandäSSI gava  
mother, consort

(yang.dag.gi. lta.ba.)  
energy

yóvai ſam (g'yo.ba'i. nyams)  
perfected

yuldën (yul.bden.)  
the Great Perfection

yum (yum)  
stages of completion

zal (rtsal)  
without effort

zóg (rdzogs)  
effort

zógba qenbo (rdzogs.pa. chen.po.),  
without effort

zógqen (rdzogs.chen.)  
without effort

zógrim (rdzogs.rim)  
without effort

zolmed (rtsol.med.)  
without effort

zolva (rtsol.ba.)
Guide to pronunciation of Tibetan words

Tibetan words in this book have been transcribed according to a system devised by Namkhai Norbu.

As an aid to correct pronunciation, a more familiar phonetic approximation has in some instances been added in brackets. The advantage of this system of transliteration, however, is that it is relatively easy to pronounce, while it at the same time enables the scholar to know what the original spelling of a given word was. This system is also very similar to the generally accepted Pinyin system for the transliteration of Chinese, with which many scholars are already familiar.

1. This symbol \( ^v \) indicates a low tone.
2. This symbol \( ^` \) indicates a nasalization before the immediately following consonant (as in ingot).
3. This symbol \( ^` \) indicates a stress in the pronunciation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tibetan spelling</th>
<th>English sound</th>
<th>Tibetan spelling</th>
<th>English sound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ga</td>
<td>karma</td>
<td>Já</td>
<td>jade, stressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gă</td>
<td>karma, low tone</td>
<td>Da</td>
<td>tantra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gâ</td>
<td>singable, nasalized</td>
<td>Dă</td>
<td>tantra, low tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gá</td>
<td>gale, stressed</td>
<td>Dăr</td>
<td>standard, nasalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ja</td>
<td>chant</td>
<td>Ba</td>
<td>path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jă</td>
<td>chant, low tone</td>
<td>Bă</td>
<td>path, low tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jà</td>
<td>angel, nasalized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibetan spelling</td>
<td>English sound</td>
<td>Tibetan spelling</td>
<td>English sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bä</td>
<td>amber, nasalized</td>
<td>Qa</td>
<td>channel, with strongly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bå</td>
<td>banner, stressed</td>
<td>Qâ</td>
<td>aspirated h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa</td>
<td>sand</td>
<td>Ta</td>
<td>aspirated, t-ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Så</td>
<td>sand, low tone</td>
<td>Tå</td>
<td>nasalized, nt-ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xa</td>
<td>shore</td>
<td>Pa</td>
<td>aspirated, p-ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xå</td>
<td>shore, low tone</td>
<td>På</td>
<td>nasalized, np-ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xà</td>
<td>shore, stressed</td>
<td>Ca</td>
<td>ts-ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Za</td>
<td>cats</td>
<td>Cà</td>
<td>nasalized, nts-ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zå</td>
<td>words</td>
<td>Ya</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zà</td>
<td>words, nasalized</td>
<td>Yá</td>
<td>yes, stressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Na</td>
<td>nine</td>
<td>Ra</td>
<td>rainbow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nå</td>
<td>nine, nasalized</td>
<td>Rá</td>
<td>rainbow, stressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ná</td>
<td>nine, stressed</td>
<td>La</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ña</td>
<td>ring</td>
<td>Lá</td>
<td>light, nasalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ñå</td>
<td>ring, nasalized</td>
<td>Wa</td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ñá</td>
<td>ring, stressed</td>
<td>Wá</td>
<td>water, stressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ña</td>
<td>new</td>
<td>Va</td>
<td>water, low tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ñà</td>
<td>new, nasalized</td>
<td>Ha</td>
<td>hut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ñá</td>
<td>new, stressed</td>
<td>Hâ</td>
<td>soundless h, vowel in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>low tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ka</td>
<td>aspirated union of k+h</td>
<td>Gya</td>
<td>kiosk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kå</td>
<td>as above, preceded by</td>
<td>Gyå</td>
<td>kiosk, low tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nasalization, nkha</td>
<td></td>
<td>gya, preceded by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nasalization, nghya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibetan spelling</td>
<td>English sound</td>
<td>Vowels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyá</td>
<td>gya, stressed</td>
<td>A — allah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jya</td>
<td>chya, non-aspirated</td>
<td>I — me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jyá</td>
<td>chya, low tone</td>
<td>U — moon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Já</td>
<td>jya, preceded by nasalization, njya</td>
<td>E — way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jýá</td>
<td>jya, stressed</td>
<td>O — ore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kya</td>
<td>k aspirated + y, khya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyá</td>
<td>aspirated, nkhya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qya</td>
<td>cha, aspirated</td>
<td>Final consonants preceded by a vowel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qyá</td>
<td>ncha, nasalized</td>
<td>-g — back</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drá</td>
<td>translation</td>
<td>-ń — ring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drá</td>
<td>translation, low tone</td>
<td>-b — trip (lightly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drá</td>
<td>translation, preceded by nasalization, ntra</td>
<td>-m — hum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drá</td>
<td>translation, stressed</td>
<td>-s — soundless, changes the preceding vowel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra</td>
<td>t-hra</td>
<td>1 as as e in met</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trá</td>
<td>nt-hra</td>
<td>2 is as e in me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lha</td>
<td>hla</td>
<td>3 as as German ü</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hra</td>
<td>sHra</td>
<td>4 es as é in René</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 o as Germon ö</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-d — cat, vowels change as with -s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-n — pen, vowels change as with -s</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-r — car (lightly, the vowel lengthens)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-l — fill, vowels change as with -s</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
“The Dzogchen teaching is a living knowledge which is transmitted and applied. It is not a specialist instrument for spirituality. The teaching is useful for those who want to go on living. If somebody has more faith in it, it is even more useful. For those who do not believe in anything and think that there is nothing after death, they might feel like having a more peaceful life. To find real tranquillity, you must have experience of the state of knowledge and know how to relax. When you discover the real condition for yourself and actually find yourself in this condition, you finally discover the real meaning of relaxation....That is why the learning, application and practice of Dzogchen is indispensable for every individual.”

— Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche